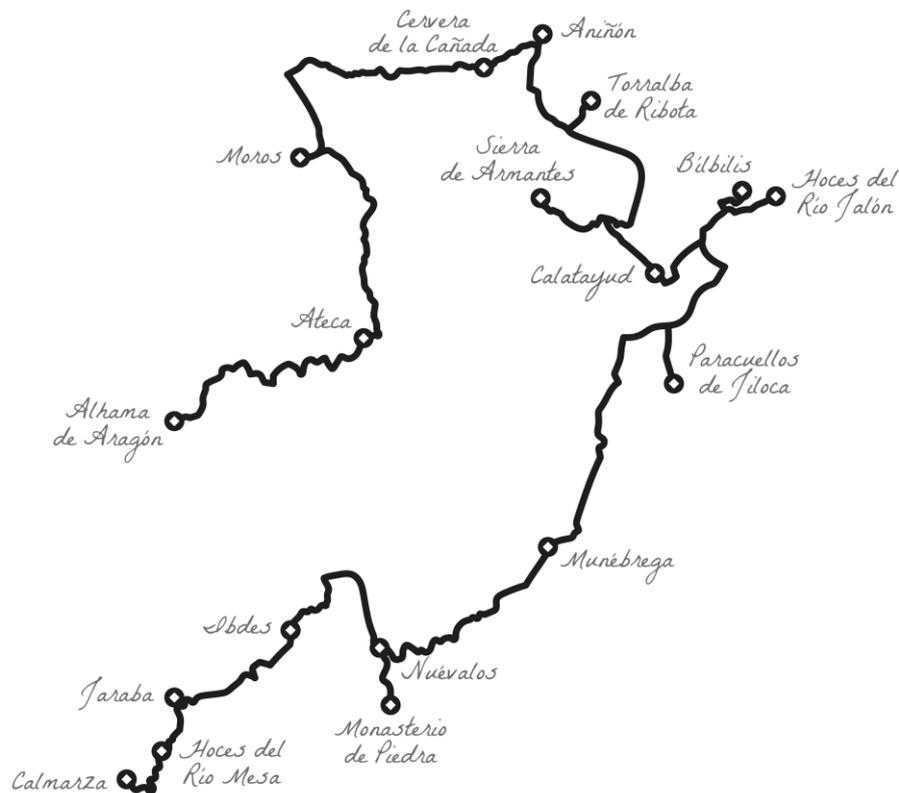


THE ROUTE OF WATER AND MUDÉJAR STYLE

On this route we discover areas of impressive contrasts with an incomparable variety of landscapes and an area marked by the presence of water. Here the high peaks that watch over the Moncayo Mountains meet the splendid water surfaces that animate the thermal baths and the lush Monasterio de Piedra. In this region, nature also offers us such beautiful landscapes as the gorges (Hoces) of the Jalón, Piedra and Mesa rivers or the fascinating Sierra de Armantes mountains. The region has dozens of magnificent fortresses and ramparts. But the huge heritage does not end here. On this route we will discover magnificent examples of porticoes, Renaissance palaces or the paintings of the great painter Goya in Calatayud. Spectacular towers and Mudéjar churches that have been declared World Heritage Sites, such as Cervera de la Cañada, Torralba de Ribota or Aniñón (true jewels of Aragón's Mudéjar art) shine with their own light. From the ruins of the Roman Bilbilis to the beautiful 19th century thermal baths of Alhama de Aragón, there are many great enclaves that this area offers us.



The route of water and mudéjar style



IF YOU START IN ALHAMA DE ARAGÓN

START

Alhama de Aragón is a town in the province of Zaragoza, in Aragon.

Alhama de Aragón

Alhama is located on the left bank of the Jalón River and is surrounded on three sides by high hills, with the other side open to the plain of the river. It is impossible to speak of Alhama without mentioning its splendid thermal baths (a true motor for the economy for centuries). The town's greatest wealth lies in its thermal springs, already used by Romans and Arabs. There are eight springs in Alhama, but the most spectacular angle in Alhama is a thermal lake that is unique in Spain, with an area of two hectares and a large stream of crystal clear water that sprouts at 34° C. The thermal waters of Alhama are the most spectacular in Spain.

Alhama has a picturesque city centre, which is the result of Muslim rule. There are good examples of popular architecture such as the Town Hall, the Casa Palacio House (a splendid example of perfectly restored Aragonese civil architecture from the 16th century) or the Palace of the Padilla family, just a few metres from the previous one.

Among the monuments, the Natividad church in Baroque style with its Mudéjar tower is worth mentioning. Of particular interest is the decoration of traditional Mudéjar plaster that covers the vaults. Another outstanding element is the airy white stone tower of its castle, constituting the oldest building, probably from the 14th century.

Accommodation, restaurant, petrol station

POINT 1

Leave Alhama de Aragón via the N-II in the direction of Ateca. After 12.5 km you will reach your destination.

Ateca



Of ancient origin and mentioned in the medieval epic `Cantar de Mío Cid`, this town is located in a privileged position on a hill at the confluence of the Jalón and Manubles rivers.

From a distance, the slender profiles of the two towers that stand out in the urban landscape are clearly visible: the 16th century clock tower and the bell tower of the of Santa María church, one of the iconic UNESCO World Heritage Sites of the Aragonese Mudéjar. The Clock Tower, which has been a leaning one since its construction, is located at one end of the castle, which is now used as accommodation. The monumental temple of Santa María was built around the 14th century, extended in the 16th century and extensively reformed in the Baroque period. Due to its slenderness and monumentality, the tower is the most outstanding element, with a beautiful ceramic and brick decoration that precedes the oldest part of the 14th century church.

The medieval city was surrounded by a city wall, and three of the four gates are still preserved. The San Francisco Church and the Town Hall (a typical 18th-century Aragonese palace with an exchange, balconies and a gallery with pillar arches) also stand out within its heritage.

Accommodation, restaurant, gas station, caravan park.

POINT 2

Leave Ateca via N-II. Take the A-1502 and after 11,0 km you will reach Moros.

Moros

Moros is the first village we meet when we enter the valley of the Manubles river from Ateca. The picturesque village is situated on a rocky promontory, which means that the structure of the village is defined by narrow, almost parallel alleys on different levels, connected by steep passages. The town centre has preserved all the characteristics of a medieval village with the ruins of a fortified castle high on the rock.

Towards the centre of the village, on the rocky ridge overlooking the village, stands the Santa Eulalia church. It was built in a simple Mudéjar style in the 14th century. The present appearance comes from the renovation of the church in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Outside the town there are other interesting corners such as the weir parallel to the river and the 18th century Virgen de la Vega hermitage. A stroll along the paths that

The route of water and mudéjar style



cross the Manubles valley is always worthwhile to discover viewpoints such as that of San Blas and impressive vertical cliffs such as those of the Mallos de las Cálcamas.

Accommodation

POINT 3

Leave Moros on the A-1502 to take the A-2504 further ahead and cover the 14.0 km to Cervera de la Cañada.

Cervera de la Cañada

In the Ribota River valley, Cervera de la Cañada stretches along a gentle hill next to the N-234 road. The town was the site of the 14th century war between Aragón and Castile, known as the War of the "Pedros".

At the highest point of the village and next to the remains of an ancient fortress rises the dominant Santa Tecla church. The temple has been declared an Asset of Cultural Interest and is one of the churches that UNESCO highlighted when it declared the Mudéjar Aragonés a World Heritage Site. (The Mudéjar Aragonés was added to the list because it has its own style throughout the world, is in good condition and has unsurpassed beauty). The church is an example of the fortified churches and, thanks to an inscription inside, we know that the building was completed in 1426 by the architect Mahoma Ramí. Its sober exterior, without ornaments, in no way suggests the decorative richness of the interior. Behind the door, this simplicity becomes a richly decorated world that unfolds in a chromatic and ornamental explosion based on Gothic and Mudéjar pictorial and sculptural elements.

Restaurant

POINT 4

Leave Cervera on the Sagunto-Burgos/N-234 road and continue on the A-2504 for 3.0 km to Aniñón.

Aniñón

The route of water and mudéjar style



Aniñón is located at the foot of the Sierra de la Virgen Mountains, near the Ribota River. At the foot of the hill stands the Virgen del Castillo parish church; it is impressive both outside and inside. The church is the result of a series of buildings dating from the 14th century, and is surrounded by ancient battlements - a sure sign that the church was once a fortress or castle. The older part is in Mudéjar style: the bell tower and the monumental and powerful western gable (the façade of this church together with the wall of the parish church of La Seo are probably the two best Mudéjar examples in Aragon). Both elements, tower and façade, have a beautiful geometric decoration with ceramic inlays and constitute a jewel of Mudéjar architecture in the Ribota Valley along with Santa Tecla in Cervera de la Cañada and San Félix in Torralba de Ribota.

In addition to the church, Aniñón is well worth an easy-going stroll through its whitewashed streets, most of which have retained their medieval character. The Puerta de la Villa Tor, the old hospital, now the Town Hall, the Oil Interpretation Centre and the three hermitages are good reasons for an unhurried visit.

Accommodation, restaurant

POINT 5

Leave Aniñón via Calle Mosén Jacinto Verdaguer in the direction of the A-234 and after only 10 minutes you will reach Torralba de Ribota.

Torralba de Ribota

Torralba de Ribota is located on the right bank of the Ribota River, at the foot of the Sierra de la Virgen Mountains. It seems that the name of the village comes from the 14th century white stone tower near the village. It was at this time that the construction of the parish church of San Félix began.

San Félix is a church fortress with Islamic elements at the top and late Gothic at the foot. The temple is a masterpiece of the Aragonese Mudéjar, thanks to its perfect state of preservation, hardly altered since the 15th century. The other reason is that it is a large building with a magnificent headboard, ribbed vault, windows and paintings. The spectacular ornaments are the luminous point of this unique building. The interior is a complete ensemble of colours, shapes and pictorial motifs that decorates the entire temple without leaving a single point without decoration. The openwork plaster covers arches and oculi and simulates an exquisite lace that diffusely filters the light. The exterior decoration is based on brick friezes and embroidery cloths. A whole series of textures of colours, volumes, light and shadow that surround the church in a luxurious packaging.

Accommodation

The route of water and mudéjar style

**POINT 6**

Leave Torralba via Calle Moral and turn left onto the N-234, then turn right towards Camino de las Pozas.

Sierra de Armantes Mountains

Situated between the rivers Manubles, Ribota and Jalón, this is one of the most characteristic and hard-to-find lunar landscapes. A landscape of great beauty, dotted with gorges and hills, dominated by gypsum in the lower areas and clay and loam in the higher areas, giving it a strange contrast between reddish and white tones. The wind and the water have formed beautiful rock formations with whimsical, slender and elegant shapes. This erosion process is responsible for the so-called "Castillos", fantastic geological formations that dominate this mountain range.

To get to this place, the traveller must take the old road to Soria before reaching Calatayud. The road is unmistakable, with pines on both sides. It is a circular route to the Mirador de la Cruz de Armantes vantage point. The ascent takes place via the Bartolina Gorge and the way back via the pretty Salto Gorge. The highest point of the route is the Mirador de la Cruz de Armantes vantage point (with a large black iron cross). From here you have a wonderful view over all the valleys, the villages of Villarroya de la Sierra, Villalengua and Moros and the Sierra de la Virgen mountains.

POINT 7

Leave the Sierra via Camino de las Pozas straight ahead to reach Calatayud after 7.1 km.

Calatayud

The history of Calatayud dates back to the Roman Bilbilis. The Ayub Castle, which gives the city its name, is of Islamic origin. The Muslim influence has been evident for centuries in wonderful examples of Mudéjar art, which is now a UNESCO World Heritage. Good examples are: the San Andrés, San Pedro de los Francos and Nuestra Señora de la Peña churches, as well as the Santa María and Santo Sepulcro collegiate churches. The San Juan el Real church still contains some pendentives painted by the young Goya.

It is evocative to walk through the streets of the old Jewish quarter, narrow, winding and with all their medieval flavour.

The route of water and mudéjar style



But you can also discover the wealth of Calatayud by walking through the other streets. From the palaces of the 16th century and earlier to civil buildings such as the Town Hall, the Palace of the Baron de Warsage, Sesé, Erlueta, Pujadas or even Plaza de España. Let's not forget the gates of the wall like those of Terror or Saragossa. The region has one of the four Designations of Origin for wine in Aragón: the D.O. Calatayud, with wines of excellent quality and recognised prestige.

Accommodation, restaurant, petrol station

POINT 8

Take the Ronda Campieles from Calatayud. At the roundabout take the second exit and continue to Bilbilis.

Bilbilis

The Municipium Augusta Bilbilis is located at 5 km from Calatayud and achieved the status of a Roman city at the time of the Emperor Augustus. In 1931 the ruins were declared a Historical-Artistic Monument, in 1985 they were listed as an Asset of Cultural Interest within the Site category, and in 2002 they became a Complex of Cultural Interest, Archaeological Zone Category.

Bilbilis was founded on a Celtic-Iberian settlement. The settlement included the Bámbola, San Paterno and Santa Bárbara Hills. From the village, the natural crossings from the Ebro valley to the plateau were controlled, making Bilbilis the economic, political and administrative centre of a large region, most of which coincides with today's Comarca de Calatayud. Bilbilis flourished in the first century, when its emblematic buildings (the Forum, the Thermal Baths and the Theatre) were erected. During the reign of the Emperors Augustus, Tiberius and Caligula, Bilbilis minted its own money. The great crisis reached the city in the third century, and in the fifth century Bilbilis was already an abandoned city. Starting in the Middle Ages, stones were broken in Bilbilis for the construction of the Islamic and Christian Calatayud, and this plundering lasted until the 20th century.

A visit to the ruins should be concluded with a visit to the Museo de Calatayud. The museum exhibits the most important archaeological finds recovered.

POINT 9

From Bilbilis towards northeast, take direction Huérmeda. This is where the Hoces del Jalón gorge begins.



The Hoces del Río Jalón Gorges

The Jalón River flows through several mountainous and rocky stretches on its way to the Ebro River. This is what happens in the "Hoces del Jalón" gorges between the hamlet of Huérmeda and, approximately, the village of Morata. Shortly after leaving behind the Huérmeda district (in Calatayud), we find the Villalbilla area, a pretty place where the Ribota river flows into the Jalón.

Here, where the road goes up the Campiel Pass, the road gets narrower. Shortly before the descent ends we find on the left the road leading to the small hydroelectric power station, the dam and the old ammunition dumps of the Spanish army. These are artificial caves dug into the rocks of La Mora and used until recently to store materials and ammunition. From the top of this rock we have a spectacular panoramic view of the Jalón Valley and the Ribota River. The river will accompany our path at the foot of a wonderful cliff. The path meanders 15 km through the massif of the Virgen and Vicor mountain ranges in a beautiful and rugged landscape. A little later, the towns of Embid de la Ribera, Paracuellos de la Ribera and Saviñán await us; very pretty places to take a break.

POINT 10

Leave Huérmedes to take the N-234. Take E-90/A-2 and N-234 in the direction of Paracuellos del Jiloca. After 12.0 km you will reach your destination.

Paracuellos de Jiloca

The village is located on the left bank of the Jiloca River. In the 11th century the Muslim occupiers built the Xiloca Castle on a rocky promontory that dominates the river valley. Only a few vestiges of the castle remain. It was on this rocky promontory and the foundations of the castle that the San Miguel church was built in the 16th century. It is a Mudéjar-style temple with only one nave, of which the monumental dimensions of the building and the Mudéjar tower are worth seeing.

The thermal bath of the village is particularly worth mentioning. Paracuellos is known for the sulphurous waters of its two springs, which have been part of a thermal bath since the 19th century. In 2008 one of the largest and most modern thermal baths in Europe with sulphurous springs was opened (2,500 m² of thermal baths, beauty and relaxation treatments). The complex has paths and gardens surrounded by lush vegetation, which, in combination with mild temperatures in winter and cool summers, has a calming and invigorating effect.

The route of water and mudéjar style



Restaurant

POINT 11

Leave Paracuellos via Avenida Valencia/N-234 and take the A-202 in front to reach Munébrega after 15.4 km.

Munébrega

The village is located between the Rambla del Molino and Olivo gorges. The remains of Celtic-Iberian settlers have been found here.

In the 14th century, the Nuestra Señora de la Asunción church was built in Mudéjar style, although the church was rebuilt in Gothic style in the 16th and 17th centuries. Two high, square twin brick towers flank the building. The building stands out because of its dimensions compared to the town centre. In the church there is a museum with two rooms; the first room is in a former 17th century choir, and the second in the former 16th century parsonage.

In the village there are five fountains that visitors can discover during a relaxing walk.

Accommodation, restaurant, petrol station

POINT 12

Leave Munébrega on the A-202 until you reach Nuévalos after 12.3 km.

Nuévalos

Nuévalos is located on a hill that dominates the confluence of the Piedra and Ortíz rivers, next to the Tranquera reservoir. The castle was built in the 14th century on a spur overlooking the fertile plain of the Piedra river. The San Julián and Santa Basilisa church was built in the 16th century on a small Gothic hermitage on a rocky promontory next to the ruins of the castle.

The waters of the Tranquera reservoir are partly within the municipality and make Buévalos a very suitable tourist attraction for water sports and fishing.

The route of water and mudéjar style



In the Valdehierro gorge, 5 km from the village, there are salt mines that have been in operation from the 13th to the 20th century. (They were then abandoned due to lack of profitability.) The salt works were owned for centuries by various administrators, such as the inhabitants of Nuévalos and the monks of the Monasterio de Piedra. Today, the salt extraction plants are in an exceptionally good condition, both the wooden channels that transported the salt water and the ponds in which it was stored until it evaporated and the salt was extracted.

Accommodation, restaurant, petrol station, camping site

POINT 13

Leave Nuévalos on the A-202 and after 3.3 km you will reach the Monastery of Piedra.

Monasterio de Piedra

If there is one place where art, nature and water go hand-in-hand, it is the Monasterio de Piedra Monastery.

Located in Nuévalos, the monastery is a natural park in which the Piedra River has formed a series of imposing and wonderful waterfalls, a lake with crystal clear waters and caves of impressive beauty in the splendour of a green park. The park offers us a pleasant experience thanks to a tour of about two and a half hours through an unusual garden, where the sound of water in the waterfalls, caves and lakes leads us through a place of dreams. In addition, from March to October you can enjoy a wonderful exhibition on the free flight of birds of prey.

The visit is completed by a guided tour through the 12-century Cistercian monastery, of which several rooms can still be visited and which combines different art styles. It is said that it was in these rooms that the first chocolate was produced in the European continent. It is also the home of the Calatayud Denomination of Origin Wine Museum, which reveals all the secrets of this drink to us in an entertaining way.

Accommodation, restaurant

Don't miss the park and the waterfalls of the Monasterio de Piedra Monastery

When visiting the Jardín Histórico (Historical Garden) de Monasterio de Piedra, we enter a surprising landscape, a true garden where vegetation and water are the main characters. On this spectacular itinerary along paths and paths, we encounter beautiful waterfalls, streams, lakes and caves in the shade of centennial trees and an extraordinary flora. Its unusual geological location, fed by the Rio Piedra River, forms a

The route of water and mudéjar style



unique space with an amazing variety of flora and fauna. It is no coincidence that the first fish farm in Spain was established here 150 years ago, and it is considered to be an ecosystem of exceptional biological wealth.

POINT 14

From Monasterio de Piedra take the A-202. After passing through Nuévalos, take the A-1501 to reach Ibdes after 11.1 km.

Ibdes

The village is located on a hill on the left bank of the Mesa River. The San Miguel Arcángel church is a late Gothic temple made of reddish sandstone, built in the 16th century over another 14th century temple. There are several mansions in the town, including the Town Hall (a Renaissance building from the 16th century), the palace building in Rúa Street No. 5 and the palace building in Monreales Street.

The Gruta de las Maravillas (Grotto of Wonders) is located in the hamlet of San Juan. This cave, which contains stalactites and stalagmites that are about 50,000 years old, consists of two galleries measuring 15 and 46 metres in length. Nearby is the Paradera waterfall, a pretty waterfall of the Mesa River in a picturesque area.

Accommodation, restaurant

POINT 15

From Ibdes take the A-1501 until you reach Jaraba after 7.5 km.

Jaraba

Jaraba is located on the banks of the Mesa River. The surrounding area of Jaraba stands out for the large gorge formed by the river on its way to Calmarza, with imposing reddish limestone walls.

The Santuario de la Virgen de Jaraba sanctuary at the beginning of the Barranco de la Hoz Seca gorge is remarkable within the heritage of the place. This is one of the corners with the greatest natural charm in the Jalón Valley. Also interesting is a visit to the Transfiguración church in the town centre. The civil architecture is particularly noted for the Town Hall or the very large, recently constructed "Monument of Water" fountain.

The route of water and mudéjar style



The village Jaraba lives thanks to and for its thermal waters. With its three thermal baths, Jaraba is something like a great power of thermal baths. In the middle of the 19th century, today's baths were built. They have recently been declared an "Asset of Aragonese Tourist Interest".

The Barranco de la Hoz Seca gorge is reached by a 3 km long path starting on the road from Jaraba to Calmarza. At the entrance to the gorge, the view of the aforementioned sanctuary is breath-taking. In this karting landscape we find numerous cattle stables and old lime kilns, recently restored and used by the neighbours in the past. We continue to the right up to the most western Levantine cave paintings on the peninsula in a shelter in the Benedí rock, next to the gorge.

Accommodation, restaurant

POINT 16

From Jaraba, take the A-1501 for 2.6 km to Cañón del Río Mesa.

Hoces del Río Mesa Gorge

The Mesa River rises in the province of Guadalajara and enters the province of Aragón, forming a 5-km-long gorge between Calmarza and Jaraba. This is the so-called Hoces del Río Mesa gorge (declared a "Site of Aragonese European Interest"). While walking through the interior of the gorge, the spectacular vertical walls on both banks of the river, which are up to 100 metres high, are impressive.

The gorge is very popular with climbers and is home to one of the largest colonies of griffon vultures on the peninsula. The gorge is also a Special Bird Protection Area and a Site of Community Interest. Numerous fish species live in the clear and clean water of the Mesa river, which is partly open for free fishing. At the bottom of the valley, on the banks of the river, there is a forest of poplars, white poplars, and willows. The geological characteristics of the area make it suitable for the pursuit of sporting activities such as climbing, cycling... There are also signposted trails: Sendero de la Pedriza, Los Miradores, GR-24.... of little difficulty.

END OF THE ROUTE

Go south along the Mesa River on the A-1501 towards the Z-453 to reach Calmarza after 4.5 km.

The route of water and mudéjar style



Calmarza

Six kilometres from Jaraba, Calmarza is situated on a promontory in the "Hoces del Río Mesa" gorge. The well-preserved nature that surrounds the town makes this municipality an ideal paradise for relaxation, with the impressive gorge dominating the landscape. Here the contrasts are spectacular, alternating between dry rocky stretches and splendid fields irrigated by the waters of the river Mesa.

The Asunción church stands out in its heritage. It is a 17th-century building built on top of an earlier one, of which the entrance door with a round arch has been preserved. The Torre del Señorío or Palafox Tower is a civil building that stands on the edge of the slope. It is a solid masonry building reinforced with ashlar in the corners, built around 1500.

The abundance of water in the Mesa River allows us to find a small waterfall next to the municipality, known as Pozo Redondo (round fountain). In order to be able to observe it, a lookout point has been placed in front of it, and this can be reached by a wooden staircase.

The natural attractions near Calmarza have made it possible to prepare several signposted paths.