



1 WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE IN MEDIEVAL CASTLES

Located at the foot of the pre-Pyrenean mountain ranges, atop rocky summits or hilltops, stand two of the most important fortresses in Aragón: **the Castle of Loarre and the Castle-Abbey of Monte Aragón**, in Quicena. Their strategic location and history date back to the 11th century, when they were founded by Aragón monarchs to counter the Muslim border and to assault the city of Huesca. Despite the range of avatars, both preserve their military and religious framework – walls, towers, watch towers and keep, guards, courtyards, churches–, and other areas –cistern tanks, store rooms, kitchens, stables–, which reveal what life was like in medieval castles. Furthermore, Loarre is the largest Romanesque military complex in Europe and, therefore, in the world. Thus, this construction has often been used for documentary purposes and featured in major movies, such as Ridley Scott's *The Kingdom of Heaven* (2005).

2 ART, TRAVELLING THROUGH TIME

La Hoya de Huesca introduces visitors to the history of art in just a few kilometres. It boasts some of the most beautiful and precious examples of Romanesque art in the whole of Aragón, such as the church of **Santiago de Agüero**, a monumental building, which is still unfinished, that showcases an array of mason's marks and features unique sculptures: the façade displays a capital with a sinuous and acrobatic dancer and the tympanum depicts the Adoration of the Magi. Near **Ibieca** stands the chapel of **San Miguel de Foces**, built between the Romanesque and the Gothic periods. The construction houses the tombs of the Foces family, with walls decorated with Gothic paintings, a succession of images and scenes – akin to a comic strip –, with colourful figures. Lastly, Huesca accommodates the **Centro de Arte y Naturaleza (Centre for Art and Nature, CDAN)**– Fundación Beulas, an extraordinary contemporary art museum, which specialises in art, landscape and nature and regularly offers courses, educational workshops and activities for kids.



3 ROCKS HAVE A LOT TO SAY

Crags, towers, mallets and other rocky outlines create some of the most emblematic and photogenic landscapes in La Hoya de Huesca. The steep and vigorous forms have been sculpted by unimaginable centuries of erosion, which has responded to the different natural elements and resistance of the rocks in the area. The hard conglomerates in the mallets and the sandstone on the southern mountain ranges have all been modified by the whims of the water and the wind. Don't forget to visit the challenging and incredible **mallos de Ríglas (Ríglas Cliffs)**, a world class climbing location; or the appealing **Salto de Roldán**, with two large crags that act as a huge gateway that lets river Flumen flow into the plain of La Hoya; or the evocative **Peña del Mediodía** which towers up 25m over the locality of **Piracés**. There are many legends that explain these peculiar rocky shapes. Such as the weaving witch of the mallets or the legend of the knight of Roldán, who escaped from the Moors when his horse jumped over the two huge crags.

4 HOW OUR GRANDPARENTS LIVED

Most of our grandparents spent the day out on the fields, working from sun up to sun down. Machines were not used to work the fields. Their houses were not equipped with electricity or running water. Some of the interpretation centres in La Hoya de Huesca recreate the experience of that reality and the changes that have been introduced in recent decades. Near **Castilhabás**, by the **Hermitage of El Viñedo** and surrounded by olive groves, there is a valuable ethnographic ensemble: **an oil mill** that reveals how oil was produced in past times. The village of **Almudévar** accommodates many wineries that have been dug out in the hills. **“El Bodegón”** reveals how wine is produced traditionally. **Salillas** accommodates a **snow dome**, topped with a dome with spectacular ribs, which teaches how snow or ice was stored to preserve food, cool drinks and for therapeutic uses. Lastly, the fountain of Los Moros is a monumental **well-fountain** located in **Albero Alto**, a medieval memento of how the population sought for and treated a very precious resource: water.



5 THE MYSTERY OF MIGRATION

The wetlands, reservoirs and lakes are one of La Hoya's greatest attractions. These locations create exceptional habitats that preserve the biodiversity of the area. The most notable is **Alboré**, located in **Montmesa**, a lake that is currently part of the **La Sotonera reservoir**. Its location at the foot of the Pyrenees grants it major strategic value, especially in the fascinating and enigmatic context of bird migrations. The shallow waters and the shores, bordered with tamarix, accommodate hosts of species, and in the winter flocks of ducks and other aquatic birds make this their temporary home. It is easy to see the hen harrier and the Western marsh-harrier. However, the best season for bird-watching falls within the pre-nuptial migration, in late winter –in February and March–, when dozens of thousands cranes rest in La Sotonera and Alboré before flying over the mountain range on their way to the north of Europe.

6 BIRDS OF PREY AND THEIR WORLD

At the foot of the stunning cliffs in **Ríglas** stands the **Arcaiz** bird interpretation centre. Furthermore, the hills of Sierra de Guara in **Santa Cilia de Panzano**, accommodate the **Casa de los Buitres (Vulture House)**. Both venues fall within the “Vulturis” system, an international bird-watching network which includes the two centres in La Hoya, three centres in Navarra (Lumbier, Ochagavía and Roncal) and one in France, Aste-Béon (Valle d'Ossau). The main purpose of these centres is to protect and disseminate information on the scavenger birds that inhabit the Pyrenees. These centres accommodate exhibitions on the lammergeier, the Egyptian vulture and the griffon vulture, with stunning populations in Ríglas and Santa Cilia. Binoculars in hand, visitors will be sure to catch sight of the birds. It is also possible to see vulture nests thanks to video cameras set up in the mallets, or feeding times in the Santa Cilia dump. Close ups and exceptional sequences provide information on the biology of these majestic birds.



7 WHAT DESKS CAN TEACH US ABOUT SCHOOL

Museo Pedagógico de Aragón (Aragon Museum of Education). At each moment in history, school has always reflected the values of society. It is part of our lives, of the lives of contemporary children and of the lives of children who studied in the past. In this sense, the **Museo Pedagógico de Aragón**, in **Huesca**, is a must for anyone wanting to learn about the history of school and education in Aragón. Furthermore, the **“La escuela de ayer” Interpretation Centre** can be found in the locality of **Linás de Marcuello**, in Loarre. This old school, and teacher's house, showcases a collection that transports visitors to rural schools from the late 19th century and early 20th century. The schools where our parents and grandparents studied reflect the conditions in which they learnt and the material they used: satchels, abacus, posters, desks, school encyclopaedia, prayer books, maps, ink wells, quills and pencil cases, sewing instruments... A host of mementos that we can compare with contemporary times.

8 THE SECRETS OF MIGUEL SERVET PARK

This park, called **Parque de Huesca**, was inaugurated in 1930 and is named after Miguel Servet, an illustrious theologian and thinker from Aragón, who was born in Villanueva de Sigüenza. As well as the perfect setting for a relaxing stroll, the park is an extraordinary botanical garden: it hosts almost 80 species of trees and shrubs including platanaceae, horse chestnuts, plum trees, cypresses, Aleppo Pine, magnolias, willow, holly trees, lime trees, black poplar, thuja, among others. There are unique specimens that make the park an exceptional location: a cork oak specimen, a peculiar crape myrtle, a very rare Ginkgo biloba, which Buddhists consider a sacred plant that is related to longevity and is thought to be a living fossil –270-million year old fossil ginkgo leaves have been found. The park features monuments such as *Las Pajaritas* (Little Birds) –made by Ramón Acín in 1929 as an avant-garde recreation of origami– which are a genuine symbol of the city; or Snow White's house, a reproduction of the house that the seven dwarves lived in which accommodates a toy library.



9 FLUVIAL ADVENTURE IN RIVERS AND RAVINES

The region offers multiple leisure options for kids: hiking, tree watching, water activities... For family-friendly activities, head to the **La Sotonera reservoir** – calm waters – and **river Gállego** – white water –, where several companies offer rafting down the section between Murillo de Gállego and the Santa Eulalia bridge on a pneumatic raft. Children must be over 8 years old to participate. An aquatic-pedestrian outing in the heart of the **Parque Natural de Sierra y Cañones de Guara (Sierra and Guara Canyons Nature Park)** is also highly recommended. Departing from a pretty little village called Nocito, the track sign-posted as S-8 leads the young adventurers into the **La Pillera ravine**, a first-class forest set at the foot of a pre-Pyrenean giant, Tozal de Guara (2077 m). The route crosses the stream in the ravine several times, so make sure you wear shoes that can get wet! The natural pools in La Pillera are the perfect place for a swim in hot weather.

10 THE BEST VIEWPOINTS AND PATHS

North-East of La Hoya de Huesca we find the **Parque Natural de Sierra y Cañones de Guara (Sierra and Guara Canyons Nature Park)**, a protected nature area that is home to important natural and cultural resources and stunning landscapes, inhabited by valuable flora and fauna. The park has two **interpretation centres**: the Pascual Garrido centre in **Arguís** and the Altos de Guara centre in **Santa Cilia de Panzano**. Both venues provide visitors with the specific facts about the park, and information on environmental education activities, workshops and thematic visits. There are two easy paths that are suited to kids and, also, offer some of the best views of the mountain range. Very near Arguís, path S-10 introduces tourists to the **forests and meadows in Bonés**, a beautiful location that is home to the source of river Flumen, and affords amazing views over the Pyrenees and Tozal de Guara. Route S-7 departs from the Vadiello reservoir towards the **cave hermitage of San Cosme y San Damián**. Along the route, tourists will be blown away by the spectacular views of the Vadiello cliffs.



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SANTIA



Located on the skirts of Sierra de Guara, the Santa Eulalia la Mayor watchtower stands over the canyon of river Guatizalema and played an important role during the Reconquest.

The Church of Santiago is accessed by the Agüero road. The turning is located on the right, shortly before reaching the village. Call ahead to arrange a visit inside 974 380 332. To go to San Miguel de Foces, follow the signposts that indicate the way from Plaza de Ibeica. Call ahead to arrange a visit inside 680 269 744. CDAN is located at Avenida Doctor Artero s/n de Buesca (tel.no. 974 239 893, www.cdan.es). It opens all year round and only closes on December 25 and January 1. There are different opening hours depending on the season: winter and summer (morning and afternoon).

3



OIL MIL



El Viñedo oil mill mainly opens during the summer months (closed on Mondays). To visit "El Bodegón" in Almeduvar call 974 250 002. The snow dome is located at the entrance to Salillas, by Las Bodeguetas, and is in a very good condition after the refurbishing works. It accommodates an interpretation centre (ask in the village). The Albera Alto well-fountain is located just 400 m from the village, departing from the square in front of the church.

LA S



CENTRA



Spreading out over more than 700 m², the Centro Arcaz in Riglos is integrated within the environment and is wheelchair accessible. Visitors can contact the centre by phone on 974 561 910 (visits from Wednesday to Sunday). Located in the tower of the church of Santa Cilia de Panzano, the Casa de los Buitres (Vulture House) opens on weekends, public holidays and school holidays. Visitors can contact the centre by phone on 974 340 015. Both centres offer activities for adults and kids. Further information at www.vulturis.net

MUS



The Museo Pedagógico de Aragón (Aragon Museum of Education) (tel. no. 974 235 036) is located in Plaza López Allué s/n in Huesca. Open all year round: Tuesday to Fridays from 9am to 8pm, Saturdays from 10am to 2pm and from 4pm to 8pm, and Sundays and public holidays from 10am to 2pm. Closed on Mondays. Guided tours available. The interpretation centre for the Escuela Rural de Linás de Marcuello (Linás de Marcuello Rural School) opens on weekends and public holidays (from Wednesday to Sunday in August). Call 974 342 161 and 649 307 480 to book a guided tour.

MIG



The city of Husca boasts a huge natural space that spreads out over more than 7 hectares. It is located very near the centre, between San Jorge street, Parque street, Vicente Campo street and Juan XIII Avenue. It hosts diverse flora, as well as several commemorative and artistic monuments.



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Located near river Gallego, the village of Murillo de Gallego, which can be accessed from Huesca along road A-152, is the reference point for all aquatic activities in the region. Several companies offer rafting, canoeing, hydrospeed, etc. To reach Nocito, the departure point for the La Pilleria ravine, take road A-23 (N-330) in Huesca to Arguis, and then take the old mountain road to the Monrepós mountain pass until the La Manzana tunnel. There is a turning towards Belsué and Nocito.

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The Pascual Garrido interpretation centre in Arguis (tel. no. 974 272 003) is located about 200 m from the road N-530 (Huesca-Sabiñánigo). It is the departure point for an itinerary around the Bonés mountain range. The Altos de Guara centre in Santa Cilia de Panzano (tel.no. 976 405 120) can be reached from Huesca departing along road N-240 and then taking road A-1227. Both open on weekends, public holidays, school holidays and for pre-arranged activities. The Vadiello reservoir is accessed departing from road A-1227.

La Hoya de Huesca accommodates a vast selection of contrasting landscapes, which will delight enthusiasts of both wild, abrupt settings and of open areas and smoother environments. There are over one hundred inhabited populations that accommodate interesting examples of the cultural heritage, mostly from the Medieval period, silent witness to the area's splendid past.

Come and See



Come and See