

Madrid

Cultural Guide

Ve más allá

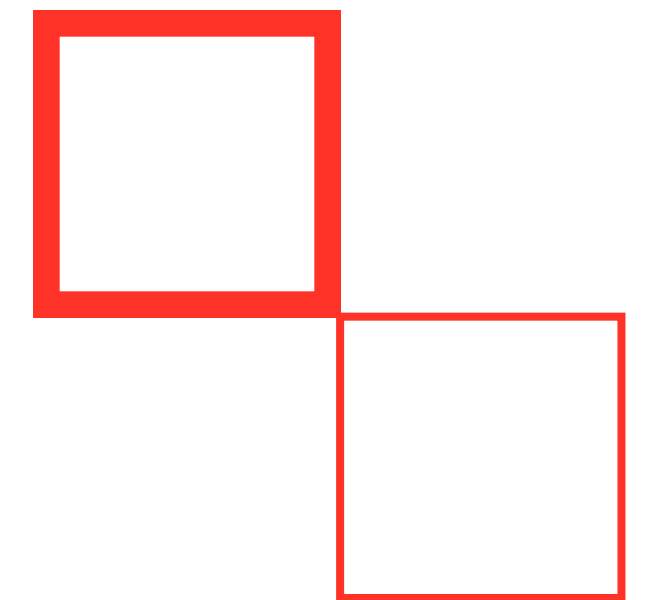
Madrid

A vibrant and cosmopolitan city

Madrid is a city that offers a wealth and variety of leisure activities for all tastes, merging **antiquity, modernity and culture** in every corner. From majestic museums such as **the Prado and Reina Sofía**, to the lively neighbourhoods of **La Latina and Malasaña**, the Spanish capital offers many options worth exploring.

Enjoy a leisurely stroll through **El Retiro Park**, take in emblematic sites such as **Puerta del Sol**, immerse yourself in the **vibrant nightlife of Gran Vía** and don't forget to indulge in the amazing local **gastronomy**.

The city is also home to some charming **natural areas** where you can **relax and enjoy the fresh air**. You're guaranteed to find something fun to do, whatever it is you like doing.



Discover **Madrid's** neighbourhoods

Madrid is divided into neighbourhoods, each with its **own personality**, from the historic neighbourhood of La Latina to the more elegant Salamanca neighbourhood; each of them offer a variety of unique experiences not to be missed



Los Austrias

Also known as El Madrid de los Austrias, this neighbourhood is characterised by its **narrow-cobbled streets, traditional architecture and rich history**. Some of the most emblematic places in this district are **Plaza Mayor, the Royal Palace, Almudena Cathedral and San Miguel Market**.

Barrio de las Letras

Also known as Barrio de las Musas, or Neighbourhood of the Muses, this central district is filled with a special charm and owes its name to **the writers who lived there during the Golden Age**, including Cervantes and Lope de Vega. Check out its **façades decorated with literary quotations** and quaint antique shops.





Barrio Salamanca

One of the city's most elegant neighbourhoods, located in the heart of the city, it is known for its **sophisticated shops selling the best luxury goods** from international designers and its **exclusive restaurants**. In addition to the shopping on offer, you'll also find plenty of buildings displaying neoclassical and modernist architecture.

La Latina

It is one of Madrid's liveliest neighbourhoods, known for its historical and cultural atmosphere. You can visit its **typical taverns in the Cava Baja area**, the **Mercado de la Cebada** and its traditional flea market with a modern touch.





Chamberí

This is one of the **most traditional** neighbourhoods, located in the heart of Madrid. One of its most emblematic spots is **Plaza de Chamberí**, a former metro station now converted into a cultural space that draws you in with its **bohemian atmosphere**. In addition, the numerous **bars, cafés and restaurants** make it one of the top places to visit.

Chueca

Another vibrant central neighbourhood full of **energy and joy**. It has become an important cultural centre, and it's simply a joy to get lost in its streets adorned with **colourful murals**. Enjoy its cosmopolitan atmosphere and **nightlife**, making it one of the must-see places in this respect.





Sol and Gran Vía

These are two **iconic areas** of Madrid. Puerta del Sol, Gran Vía and their surroundings are the **epicentre of Madrid's tourist and cultural life**. Puerta del Sol is a bustling spot with shops, restaurants and emblematic buildings. Gran Vía, also known as **Madrid's Broadway**, is home to countless cinemas, theatres and shops

Malasaña

This is the most **bohemian and modern** area of the city. Its name comes from Madrid heroine Manuela Malasaña, an icon during the uprisings against French troops on **May 2nd 1808**.

A reference for its **underground culture and retro fashion**, it has turned into a cultural and artistic focal point. Its cobbled streets, **vintage shops, cosy cafés and lively nightlife** fuse the modern with the traditional.



Regional festivals

Regional festivals are celebrations rooted in the culture of the city, reflecting the **customs, histories and significant events of the community**. Regional festivals provide an opportunity to come together and share their heritage.

Here are some of Madrid's most noteworthy festivities so that you too can partake in its traditions and customs.



San Isidro

The feast of San Isidro is the most important celebration in Madrid, commemorating the **patron saint of the city**, San Isidro Labrador. Held in **mid-May**, it is one of the city's most charismatic festivities.

Madridenians dress up in the **typical chulapos and chulapas costume**, which dates back to the 19th century, and indulge in traditional sweets such as buñuelos de viento, or nun's puffs.

In addition, many **concerts, traditional dances, fairs and sporting events** are also held. The **Pradera de San Isidro** is the emblematic place where Madrilenians gather to enjoy **picnics and outdoor activities** during this festivity. Make sure you don't miss it!

La Paloma

The **La Paloma** festivities are another of Madrid's most important celebrations, held in honour of the **Virgen de la Paloma**, also patron saint of the city. It takes place in **mid-August**, when the streets of the La Latina neighbourhood are filled with **music, dancing and cultural activities**.

You will find processions in honour of the virgin, concerts, people performing Madrid's **traditional chotis dance**, and **street vendors and parties galore**. Now it is a perfect combination of religion and celebration, offering a chance to become immersed in **tradition and fun**.



Places of interest

There are other areas of Madrid that offer a **wealth of architectural and cultural attractions**, from places steeped in tradition, such as **El Rastro** and **San Miguel market**, to the capital's most iconic works of architecture, such as **Plaza Mayor**.



Plaza Mayor

Plaza Mayor is one of the **most beautiful and lively places in Madrid** that you simply have to visit.

This beautiful rectangular square, measuring 129 metres long and 94 metres wide, is surrounded by important buildings such as the Casa de la Panadería, the Arco de Cuchilleros and the statue of Philip III. You cannot leave the city without sitting down at one of its terraces and trying a traditional **squid sandwich**.

Puerta de Sol

The city's nerve centre, Puerta del Sol is presided over by the **statue of the Bear and the Strawberry Tree**, the symbol of Madrid that marks **Spain's kilometre zero**, the heart of the country's road network. Try **chocolate and churros** in one of the city's iconic chocolate shops, such as San Ginés, or a napolitana pastry in La Mallorquina. Its most famous resident is the **Royal House of the Post Office**, whose clock tower is broadcast all over Spain as the country rings in the new year.





Plaza de España

Another place that can't be missed is Plaza de España, the starting point of the famous Gran Vía, **the city's art and culture artery**.

Some of the historic buildings found along it, such as the 142-metre-high Torre de Madrid, the modernist Casa Gallardo and the **monument to Miguel de Cervantes**, are well worth a visit in their own right.

Take the lift to the top of Edificio España and enjoy **360-degree panoramic views of the city while you sip a cocktail at Hotel Riu's rooftop terrace**.

Mercado de San Miguel

Foodies simply must visit San Miguel market, one of the **most iconic markets** located right in the centre of Madrid.

It is characterised by its iron architecture and **more than 30 stalls where you can try many of the typical dishes of the area**. Any time is a good time to visit, but people tend to go there for **evening tapas**.





Gran Vía

Gran Vía is one of the **most famous streets** in Madrid and a must-see for all first-time visitors to the city.

It is one of the streets with **the highest concentration of shops**, along with the popular Calle Fuencarral, although it's better known for its **important theatres**.

Círculo de Bellas Artes

At the end of Gran Vía is one of the best **viewpoints in Madrid**: the rooftop terrace at the Círculo de Bellas Artes. This cultural centre was founded in 1880 by a small group of artists and nowadays it is a spectacular place to enjoy good company, **a drink at sunset** and unique views of the city.





Temple of Debod

The Temple of Debod, near Plaza de España, can be visited throughout the day, but this is definitely one of things that is **best at sunset**.

This **2,200-year-old Egyptian temple** is the ideal place for some peace and relaxation while taking in a **sunset in special surroundings**. A few metres from the church is a viewpoint overlooking **Casa de Campo, the Royal Palace and Almudena Cathedral**.

Cable Car

After visiting the Temple of Debod, very close by, on Paseo de Pintor Rosales, Madrid's cable car **takes you to Casa de Campo park, offering some of the best views as you fly over Oeste Park**. Get ready to enjoy fantastic views of the Royal Palace and the whole city; this is undoubtedly one of the best ways to see Madrid.





Royal Palace

It was the **official residence of the King and Queen of Spain** before they moved to Zarzuela Palace, and its beauty is guaranteed to leave you in awe.

It is currently used for **tourist visits and for state and official events**. The adjoining **Plaza de Oriente and Sabatini Gardens** provide you with the perfect angle for incredible photos of the palace. If you visit its interior, you'll be transported back in time as you walk through its luxurious halls, the royal chambers, the Royal Pharmacy and the spectacular Royal Armoury, which holds one of the most important collections in the world.

El Rastro

El Rastro flea market is another of the most charming places, although it is only open on **Sundays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**. This **open-air market has more than 400 years of history**, selling everything from second-hand goods and old books to coins, records and much more.

Once you're finished shopping, enjoy some **typical tapas** in the bustling taverns surrounding it.



Museums in Madrid

Madrid has a rich collection of museums displaying everything from **classical to contemporary** art. **Prado Museum** is a **cultural gem** thanks to its unique collection of paintings from all over Europe. **Reina Sofía Museum** is where you can see Picasso's iconic painting **Guernica**, while the **Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum** is home to exhibits with a wide range of styles. All three are a must for art and culture lovers.



Prado Museum

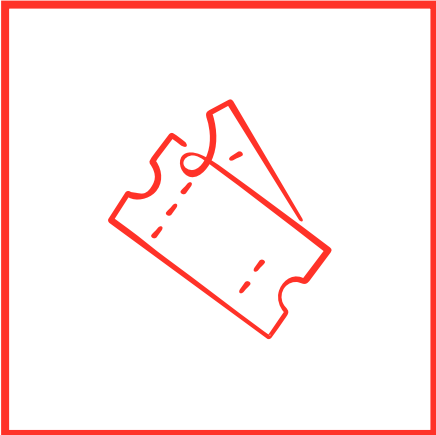


You can visit some of the most famous works from **Velázquez, El Greco, Goya, Rubens and Bosch**, among others.



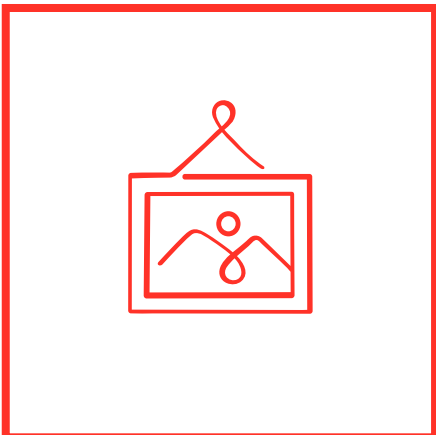
Monday to Saturday:
From 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Sundays and public holidays:
From 10:00 am to 7:00 pm



[Tickets](#)

Reina Sofia National Art Centre



You will be able to visit the finest works of some of Spain's greatest artists, including **Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí and Joan Miró**.



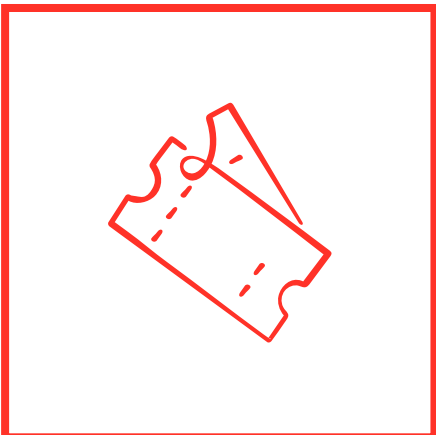
Main venue. Sabatini Building and Nouvel Building:

Monday to Saturday
(closed on Tuesdays)
From 10:00 am to 9:00 pm

Sunday:
10:00 am to 2:30 pm

Free admission days:
Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays*:
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

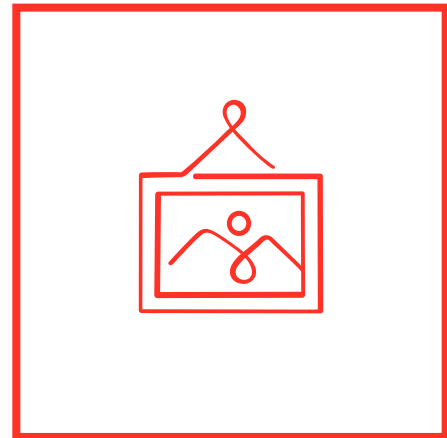
Sunday:
12:30 pm to 2:30 pm



[Tickets](#)

(*) Free visits at these times and days are available for individuals only.

Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum

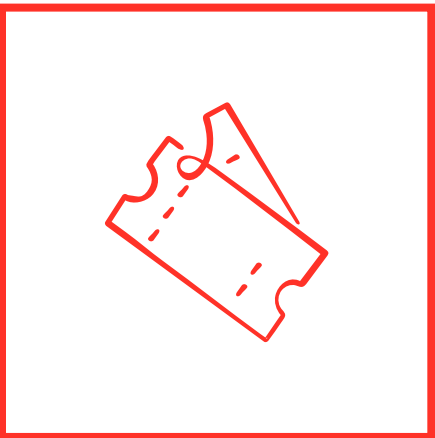


It is home to some of the most famous paintings by **Duccio, Monet, Degas, van Gogh** and many more.



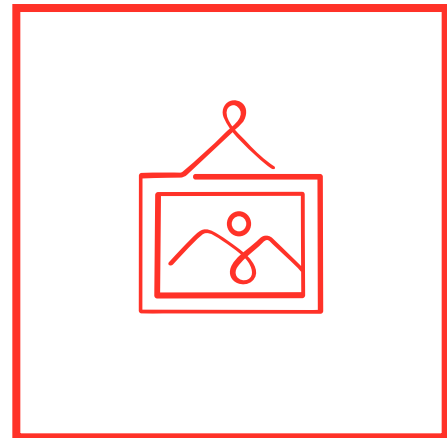
Monday to Saturday:
From 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Tuesday to Sunday:
From 10:00 am to 7:00 pm



[Tickets](#)

Sorolla Museum

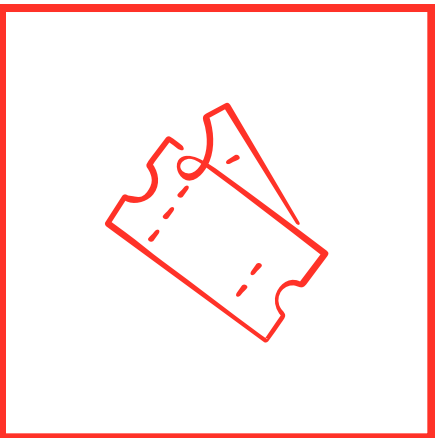


Authentic works by **Joaquín Sorolla**, including paintings, objets d'art, furniture and other works of art.



Tuesday to Saturday:
From 9:30 am to 8:00 pm

Sundays and public holidays:
From 10:00 am to 3:00 pm



[Tickets](#)





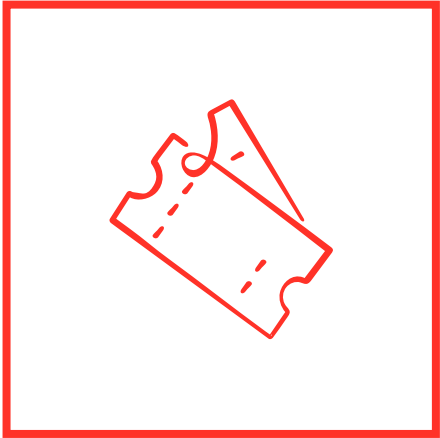
CaixaForum Madrid



Themes ranging from **music and performing arts** to **architecture and design**.



Monday to Sunday and public holidays:
10:00 am to 8:00 pm



[Tickets](#)

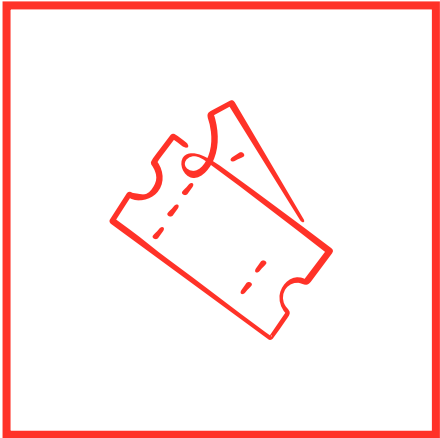
Matadero



Theatre, festivals, live music, film and audio-visual projects, conferences, talks and workshops.



Monday to Sunday:
From 9:00 am to 10:00 pm

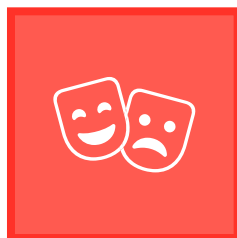


[Tickets](#)

Theaters in Madrid

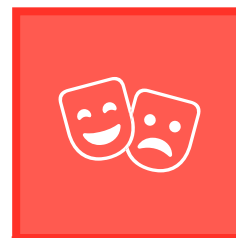
Madrid is home to a number of theatres of all kinds, with there being something for all tastes. **Teatro Real** is a benchmark for **opera and classical music**. **Lopez de Vega** and **Coliseum** theatres offer a wide range of **musicals and shows**. The **Teatro Circo Price** offers a programme that combines **circus, theatre and music**. With such a vast array of options, you're bound to find a show that suits your taste.

Theaters in Madrid



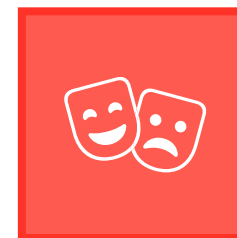
Mementorium

Mentalism and magic shows.



Teatro Rialto

It hosts plays of all kinds, as well as **musicals, classics and magic shows**.



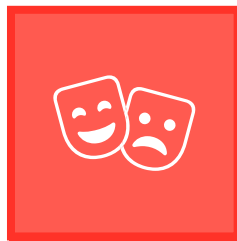
Teatro Lara

It is one of the oldest theatres in Madrid and hosts **plays and concerts**.



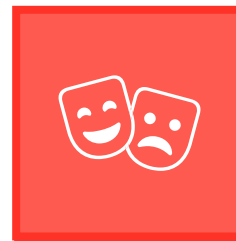
Teatro Coliseum

The place to go for **musicals**.



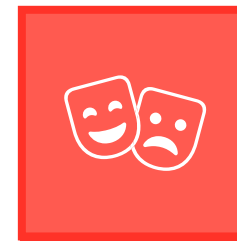
Teatro Real

It is a benchmark in opera both nationally and internationally.



Teatro La Latina

A theatre specialising in **comedy**.



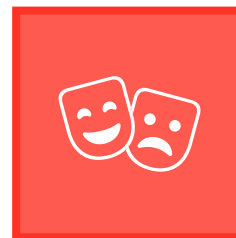
Teatro Nuevo Apolo

A wide variety of **musicals, comedy and dance** performances.



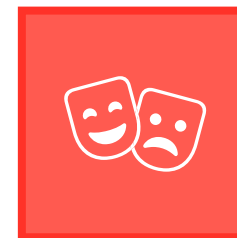
Teatro Español

With shows ranging from classical to more contemporary works.



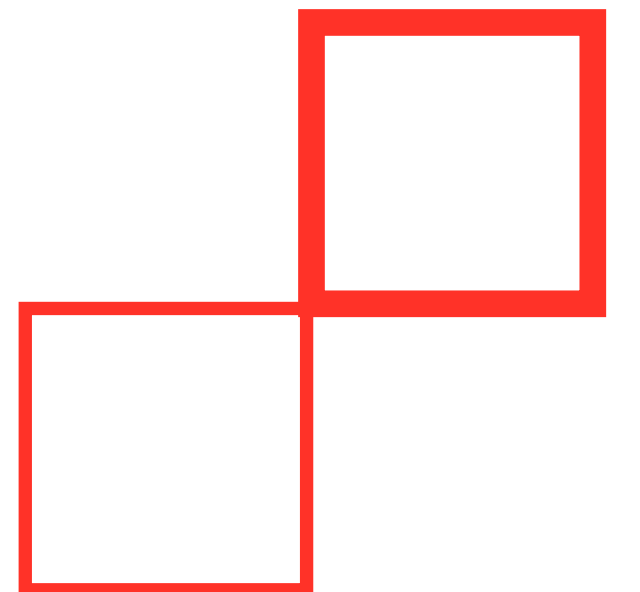
Teatro Calderón

Magic shows and musicals.



Teatro Lope de Vega

If you love **musicals**, this is the theatre for you.



Outdoor spaces

Madrid also has plenty of options for nature lovers. **Did you know that Madrid is the city with the second-most trees in the world?** It has the distinction of being one of the world's most tree-friendly cities, which means that it has lots to offer.

Keep reading to find out about some of the most notable spots to visit.



El Retiro Park

El Retiro Park is a historic open-air space that must be on everyone's list of places to visit. This wonderful place offers an opportunity to **disconnect from the noisy city**, the ideal spot to **go for a walk, practice sports or just take in the scenery**.

It has a huge **lake** where you can take a boat ride to the marvellous **Crystal Palace** and contemplate the Alfonso XII monument. It is one of the busiest places in Madrid and is always full of life.



Campo del Moro Gardens

This beautiful place is also full of history, as its creation was ordered by Philip II. With more than **20 hectares of classical gardens**, with the Royal Palace serving as a backdrop, it is one of the most-visited attractions in Madrid. It also hosts concerts and is home to a number of bars and cafés.



Madrid Río

Madrid Río is a recently created park and a natural and cultural space that is **surrounded by the Manzanares River**. It blends historical monuments with leisure and cultural facilities, all made with environmentally friendly and **sustainable materials**.

Its beach is made up of **three water enclosures with water jets, surrounded by large areas to unwind**. It is definitely worth a visit if you're looking for somewhere to relax in unbeatable surroundings.



Casa de Campo

This is another park with a lot of history. During the reign of Ferdinand VI, it was declared a **royal forest**, and in 2010 it was declared a **Historical Site of Cultural Interest**. It is the largest park in Madrid, **five times bigger than Central Park in New York and Hyde Park in London**.

Inside it is a range of facilities, such as **the zoo, its recently remodelled lake and the amusement park**. However, it's much more than just a park; it has plenty to offer and must be visited during any trip to Madrid.



Royal botanical garden

Located in the heart of Madrid, it was declared an **artistic garden in 1942** and it is one of the most beautiful places in the city to visit if you like nature. Its greenhouses and gardens are steeped in history and you'll just want to wander around for hours on end!

This space is managed by the Spanish National Research Council, which organises a multitude of **informative and scientific activities for all ages**.

Madrid's surroundings

Here are some of the best places that you can visit **less than two hours away** and where you can find fine **architectural, gastronomic and natural gems**.

Find out more about the region's culture and enjoy yourself on one of our proposed tourist routes.



El Escorial

One of the most-visited destinations in the Community of Madrid, the **Monastery of San Lorenzo** features incredible Renaissance architecture and has been declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The town itself and those in the surrounding area are also worth a visit.



M-505
47 min drive



**C3 and C8
commuter train**
1 hour journey



Segovia

Segovia has been declared a **World Heritage Site** and has three must-see monuments: **the Roman aqueduct, the cathedral and the Alcázar** castle.



A-6 and AP61
1 hour drive



Chamartín Station
26 min journey



Aranjuez

Another destination we recommend visiting is Aranjuez and its marvellous **Royal Palace and gardens**.



A-4
44 min drive



Atocha Station
45 min



Alcalá de Henares

Toledo's historic city has been designated **World Heritage Site** status by UNESCO, and it is known worldwide as the city of Miguel de Cervantes. Its **wealth of architecture and palaces** make it a must-see.



A-2
42 min drive

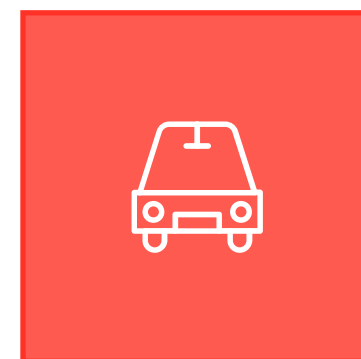


Atocha Station
41 min journey



Toledo

It has a majestic Alcázar and is a melting pot of cultures, home to a **cathedral, mosques and synagogues**.



A-2
1 hour drive



Atocha Station
35 min journey



Ávila

Another **World Heritage Site**, its **walls are the best preserved in Europe**, with more than 2,600 metres of battlements and towers, while it is also famous for its gastronomy.



A-6
1 hour 20 min drive



Príncipe Pío Station
1 hour and 30 min journey

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