

With Recaredo's conversion to Catholicism, in 586, Palencia reached a period of great splendour. However, Muslim invasion and several plagues decimated the population which made easier to King Alfonso I of Castile to conquer the city and subsequent repopulation by King Alfonso III of Castile.

Eventually, it was Sancho III of Navarre who rebuilt the city.

Palencia is the place where the title of Prince of Asturias was awarded for the first time to the heir of the Crown of Castile, after the wedding in 1388 between the Infant Enrique and Catherine of Lancaster in the Cathedral of Palencia. This marriage brought to an end the war between England and Castile.

Palencia has hosted several Councils and Royal Courts which gives testimony of the historical importance of Palencia, which has not been fully acknowledged though.

The city in which the first University of Spain was settled in 1212, has a present population of roughly 80,000 inhabitants and it is perfectly connected and strategically situated for tourists.



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Ayuntamiento de Palencia
Concejalía de Cultura, Turismo y Fiestas

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palencia
in a weeking



Ayuntamiento de Palencia
Concejalía de Cultura, Turismo y Fiestas

Palencia is located on the northern plateau of Spain, within the Autonomous Community of Castile and León. It is the typical Castilian city, quiet and pleasant for the walker. It spreads along three main axes: the river Carrión, the Calle Mayor (Main Street), and the railway.



Archaeological remains confirm the existence of ancient settlements. It will not be, though, till the arrival of the Vaccei, the most modern and powerful people of its time, when Palencia's history really starts to be written.



friday evening

The Cathedral, commonly known as The Unknown Beauty, makes the perfect starting point for the weekend. It is undoubtedly worth a visit and enjoy its five entrances: San Antolin's, the Kings', the Canon's, the Bride and Groom's, and the Bishop's. These last two are the ones usually open to the public.

Once inside the Cathedral, the visitor will be able to understand the artistic significance of this temple, from its 7th century Visigoth-style crypt and 11th century Romanesque remains to the newest works. The visitor must pay special attention to some masterworks such as The Christ of the Battles (12th c.) and paintings by Berruguete and El Greco, the exceptional altar by John of Flanders, the triptych in the retrochoir, and, of course, the tapestry and religious goldsmith works in the Cathedral Museum.



Walking up Jorge Manrique Street you will get to the Main Street, the core of the city. Almost 1km long, it is partially covered with an arcade.

Palencia is also a good place for Gastronomical Tourism. At midday, it is traditional to have an aperitif with some tapas (snacks) in any of the bars in Plaza Mayor, Calle Mayor and its

environs. It is most pleasant to sit at a terrace enjoying a glass of good wine and a tapa, and just watch the world go by....

For lunch there are plenty of restaurants to enjoy the great variety of Castilian fresh products. And for dinner, any of the restaurants and snack bars in the city centre will do. After dinner, you can have a drink at any of the large number of pubs in the Zona Vieja (La Puebla quarter) or the Zona Nueva (Cardenal Almaraz Street).

saturday morning

In the square of Isabel la Católica, stands the church of Our Lady of the Street, of Jesuit style, and for this reason it is also called La Compañía. The Patron Saint of the city, The Virgin of the Street, commonly known as La Morenilla, is venerated here every second day of February.

From here, going along General Amor Street, you will get to San Miguel Church, in the Old Jewish Quarter. It was erected in the 12th -13th centuries and has a beautiful tower. Legend has it that El Cid Campeador married Doña Jimena in this church. Every year, on January 1st, people come to San Miguel Church to celebrate the baptism of the Holy Child.

Opposite San Miguel, the visitor will find the river Carrión. From the pedestrian bridge over the river, an excellent view of the church can be enjoyed. Across the bridge, between the river and an artificial canal built to supply with water the old blanket factories, lies Dos Aguas Park. At the end of the Avenue of Castile, usually referred to as "River Shore", stands the bridge of Abilio Calderón or Iron Bridge, a reminder of the city's bourgeois dynamism in the early 20th century. On the left bank, the present Calle Mayor, always bustling with people, runs parallel to the former one. Filmmaker Juan Antonio Bardem captured this atmosphere in his movie Main Street (1956), which he started shooting in Palencia. If you continue walking along the Calle Mayor you will get to the Plaza Mayor, where you will find the City Hall, a neoclassical style building constructed at the end of the 19th century.



Across the arcaded square stands the Food Market, built in 1898. Here the visitor will find a great variety of typical palentinian products, such as black pudding, suckling lamb, trout, snails, peas, traditional pastry, etc.



saturday evening

One must not leave Palencia without paying a visit to the Museum of Palencia, inside the Casa del Cordón. The Museum owns an impressive collection of archeological pieces, from the Prehistory to the Middle Ages.

Do not forget to stroll along some of the many parks in the city. Palencia is one of the Spanish cities with the greatest extension of green areas in relation to the number of inhabitants. We strongly recommend a visit to the Huerta de Guadián Park. A magnificent garden with a great variety of trees, it also holds the church of St. John the Baptist, which was moved here stone by stone from the north of the province, when a reservoir was made in its original location. There is a Romanesque Interpretation Centre inside.



Close to this park, the visitor will find another one: the Salón de Isabel II Park, which still keeps some of its original romantic features.

sunday morning

Start your day with a walk to one of the landmarks of Palencia: the Cristo del Otero, a larger than life statue of Jesus Christ on top of a knoll. Right under the statue, there is a small church where the builder, Victorio Macho, is buried. Every year in April, the Festivity of Santo Toribio commemorates the martyrdom of the Saint, which was stoned to death here. The local authorities throw "stones" made of bread and cheese to the crowd.



Another outstanding landmark is the Canal of Castile, a 207 km long masterpiece from the 18th-19th century. It was designed for the transportation of crops from the fields of Castile up to the Cantabrian Sea.

In one of the storehouses in the harbours, the Museum of Water has been recently opened. Not far from it, just a 15 minute walk, there is one of the locks of the Canal of Castile, where the visitor will be able to see hydraulic system used to overcome the unevenness of the ground.



Driving 6 km from the Museum of the Water you can get to the top of the Monte El Viejo (850m high and 1,453 hectare wide), the "lungs" of Palencia. It has belonged to the city since 1191 and is used today mainly as a leisure area. Two restaurants, known as Casa Grande and El Refugio, are open here all year round.