

english

ROMANESQUE ART IN ARAGÓN



▲ San Pedro el Viejo, Huesca

▲ San Juan de la Peña

▲ Rueda Monastery

▲ Uncastillo

ARAGÓN

GENERAL INFORMATION

ARAGON is one of the seventeen Autonomous Regions of Spain. It is located in the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula, equidistant of nearly everything and always close (only some seventy-five minutes from Madrid and Barcelona, thanks to the high-speed train). With 47,724 square kilometers, this old kingdom, which once was one of the oldest nations of Europe, has more than 1,200,000 inhabitants nowadays. On the whole, tenacious people, as kind as warm, with a sarcastic humor and noble intentions.

It will take your breath away, but Aragon is a land that breathes history. If you follow the thousand-year-old marks, you will realize that, in this community of contrasts, Christians, Jewish and Muslims have lived together. Get ready because your adventure starts.

LOCATION



LIVE this land with intensity, feel, feel in the last nerve ending everything that surrounds you. Aragon is a provocation to the senses. Embark yourself on an unforgettable adventure full of sensations where even the stone becomes art by the hand of the Romanesque.

THE ART OF THE STONE

STONE on stone. Placed with great skill and very gently, they invite you to relive other times in majestic castles, churches, cathedrals and monasteries that smell incense, palaces with thousands of stories among their wall and small chapels sometimes located in places that caress the sky.

It is the art of hundreds of buildings that were erected in every spot of this land, coinciding with the birth of the Kingdom of Aragon, a thousand years ago. Semicircular arches and thick walls ended in barrel or groin vault spread among Europe, along the Road to Santiago. If you follow the Romanesque track, you will be able to witness to this exciting period of the history. The walls themselves will tell it to you. And all this, in the middle of unforgettable landscapes. Aragon, among greens, browns and grays.





▲ Obarra

Bridge over the River Isábena ▼

SOBRARBE AND RIBAGORZA

LOCATE yourself in the dawn of the XI century, when master architects that came from Lombardy started to install themselves in the old county of Ribagorza and Sobrarbe. They chose fairytale landscapes of the Pyrenees as the framework for their creations in stone. Little by little, the Romanesque-Lombard art started to spread like wildfire in this key area for the birth of the Kingdom of Aragon.

A stone's throw away from Graus, between the mountains of the Isábena Valley, in the middle of the IX century, the Obarra Monastery was founded, which turned into an important spiritual centre. Nowadays, it struggles to keep standing next to the church of Santa María, of purest Lombard style, which dates from the first years of the XI century. It has a basilical plan and three long naves. Its horizontality states that it is one of the most primitive Romanesque buildings. A few meters away, the chapel of San Pablo is already from the XII century.



▼ Roda de Isábena



▲ Ainsa

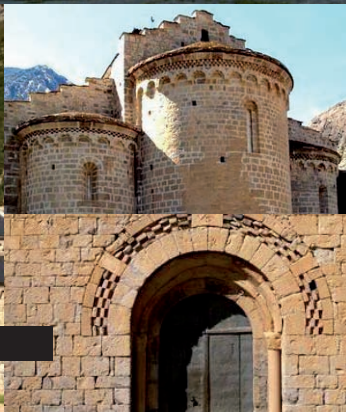
Some kilometers before arriving at Obarra, stop at the path in the Cathedral of Roda de Isábena, which was erected on the ancient see of the bishopric of Ribagorza. It began to be built by the chevet at the turn of the XI century. The three naves and the front would come afterwards, but what you will enjoy, without a doubt, is a walk along its cute cloister weaved with semicircular arches and simple columns with crude capitals.

In the middle of the stillness and the silence, you will find the most Eastern Aragonese monastery. Look for it between Arén and Pont de Suert, in Sopeira, a cold and beauty village sheltered by an impressive rocky massif. The Monastery of Santa María de Alaón was founded in the Visigothic period and was refurbished in the XI century. This church is as austere as the life of these villages, with three naves ended in semicircular apses with blind little arches and the Jaca's checker pattern. It is the simplicity of the stone that becomes art.

In the heart of Sobrarbe, the old medieval town of Ainsa shows up, ready to show you all its charms. Disappear into the walled castle and its legends, along the paved streets and buildings or just travel along its unforgettable porticoed square. In one of the corners, the church of Santa María is waiting for you since the XI and XII centuries. Its charm lies in a nave with semicircular apse and a huge front designed with four archivolts that lean on many other pairs of columns with carved capitals. Have a good look at the crypt riddled with little columns, the triangular cloister and the huge tower with a square plan that once had a defensive role during the medieval period, a religious one, and that is the perfect top artistically talking.

In the same area, you must pay a visit to the Luzás Church in Tolva. It has a basilical plan and three naves ended in semicircular apses, as well as a tower-belfry. Doesn't it remind you about the Alaón one? And in Capella, on the banks of the Isábena, look for the reflection of the San Martín Church or the medieval bridge with seven arches. On the outskirts, ask about the Chapel of Nuestra Señora del Plan. And if you want to continue having a good plan, come closer to Montañana in order to enjoy the front with six archivolts and the fussy capitals of the church of Nuestra Señora de Baldos. In the uninhabited Pano, pay a visit to the Chapel of San Antón and, in La Puebla de Castro, the one of San Román de Castro. You will check that the stones sometimes talk or, at least, captivate.

▲ Santa María and San Pedro de Alaón





SERRABLO

WITH the bluest sky that you can imagine as background and the greenest fields, on the left bank of the River Gállego, a collection of Romanesque churches with Mozarabic overtones, built between the middle of the X and the XI centuries, are the most prized treasure of the Serrablo. The temples arise from this incomparable fusion of styles and usually have a rectangular plan linked to a semicircular chevet, with original decorations in the shade of slender towers. All of them have been given the status of monuments of cultural interest, and they keep the secret of the passage of time among their walls. Some of them protect ancestral traditions, as the division of women and men inside the temple, or the echo of shepherds and flocks that have sheltered inside them from the inclemency of the weather.

Visit all of them. In San Bartolomé de Gavín, an original tower-belfry stands out, on a nave and a rectangular chevet. It has the characteristic large window with three horseshoe arches and the beaded frieze. Do not miss San Martín de Oliván, at the foot of the beauty Sobrepuerto, where the cows are still taken to graze. The Romanesque parish church was raised around 1060, with a plan with a trapezoidal nave ended in tambour apse with half-domed vault. They added a second nave in the flat chevet in the XVI century. The graveyard build onto the wall is still preserved. Very close, San Juan de Busa boasts about Mozarabic details. It was the church of a disappeared village. It withstands the passage of time in the middle of a green grassland with the mountains at the end. Pay a visit to Otal, Orós Bajo, Espierre, Susín, Satué, Lasieso, Isún, Arto, Ordevés, Orna, Basarán (in Formigal at present), Latre and Javierrelatre in the Caldearenas area or San Pedro de Lárrede, said to be the most beautiful one. It has a Latin cross plan, a semicircular chevet and, on the sides, sunken doors with false horseshoe arch. The willowy tower is the dominant element, which has the typical triple opening windows of the area. The aromas and landscapes will intoxicate you in all these villages. The tradition, austerity and peace will strike you.

▼ Basarán Chapel



▼ Susín Church



▼ The Church and the Graveyard of Oliván



▼ Susín



▲ Jaca Cathedral



▲ Jaca Cathedral



▲ Evangelists in the courtyard of the Jaca Cathedral

JACETANIA

THE primitive Lombard art develops and, at the end of the XI century, it takes a giant step forwards, in Jaca. The Cathedral began to be erected in 1076 and the austerity turned into a great sculptural richness in the capitals, modillions, metopes and tympanums. It is the first big Romanesque building in the Peninsula and its style is going to broaden inside and outside the Kingdom of Aragon, along the Road to Santiago. You will see the Jaca's checker pattern in many places, but it was born here. It consists on lines of little squares arranged as on a chess, or the Jesus Christ's monogram between two lions that decorates the tympanum of the western front. In the outside, have a good look at the frieze with a checker pattern in little columns and blind little arches against the wall.

With a basilical plan and three naves divided by pillars in the inside, three apses in the chevet and a wide two-section front, the Cathedral of Jaca has a beauty cloister and a Diocesan Museum with one of the better collections of Romanesque paintings of the world. A real treasure. But Jaca is much more. Go for a walk around the Clock Tower (*Torre del Reloj*) or the Jail (XIII century). These are the only remains that are still preserved from the old royal palace. An impressive sculpture of the king Ramiro will welcome you at the door. The remains of his daughter, Mrs. Sancha, rest in a sarcophagus that dates from the XI century, which is decorated with relieves and is kept in the Benedictines Monastery, which has a Romanesque front.

Now it is in Jaca but it comes from a very close place, Santa Cruz de la Serós. A fairy-tale village with two gems, also Romanesque: the San Caprasio Chapel and the Church of Santa María. This last one dates from the end of the XI century and the beginning of the XII. They have a Latin-cross plan and a crossing covered by a vault on pendentives. The chevet and the tower are solid and, in the tympanum of the front, you can find the Jesus Christ's monogram with Jaca influence. It belonged to an influential women's monastery that had regal support.

A stone's throw away, the Monastery of San Juan de la Peña will dazzle you, witness of the birth of the kingdom of Aragon and the passage of the Holy Grail. Look for the Old Monastery (*Monasterio Viejo*) under an impressive rock. The Benedictines founded it there in the IX century. In the lower floor, there is a Mozarabic church that keeps Romanesque frescos and the "Councils" hall. In the upper one, you will find the noble's pantheon and the upper church, which has a nave with three apses where the rock acts as a cover. The royal pantheon in which the kings of Aragon and Navarre for five hundred years is located there. The present decoration dates from the XVIII century. Do not miss the opportunity to pay a visit to the beauty Romanesque cloister from the XII century. This peculiar collection will confess you the damages that the fires and frosts caused it, so many that, at the end of the XVII century, the New Monastery (*Monasterio Nuevo*) had to be built next to it, in a sunnier grassland, the San Indalecio one. It was erected with Baroque and overelaborate fronts.

▶ Santa Cruz de la Serós



▼ San Juan de la Peña, Old Monastery (*Monasterio Viejo*)



▼ Capital, San Juan de la Peña





▲ Santa María de Iguácel



▲ San Pedro de Siresa



▲ San Adrián de Sasave

After a short and relaxing walk, lean out of the Pyrenees Observation Point (*Balcón de los Pirineos*). You have more Romanesque churches very close, in Botaya, Alastuey and Binacua. Do you want more excitement?

Ok. Let's go for it then. In the greenest and more luxuriant Pyrenees, in the heart of the Hecho Valley, the Monastery of San Pedro de Siresa will meet you when you less expect you in order to leave you speechless. A monument different to the other ones that belong to the Romanesque period, buried deep in a Pyrenean village with flavor. A first building dates from the IX century, but the church that is still preserved dates from the XI century, and it was refurbished two centuries afterwards. It even housed one hundred and fifty monks led by charity, humbleness and magnanimity. The fame of its library went beyond the borders. Alfonso I el Batallador (the Battler) was baptized and educated among the strong walls of this huge building. Have a good look at the Latin-cross plan, at the semicircular and vaulted apse and at the three-section crossing. This National Monument is so austere that its only decoration is the beveled cord and the blind arches. Some fifteen kilometers away from so much spirituality, there is a real natural paradise, the Oza Forest (*Selva de Oza*). The Romanesque can better excel itself with a green background.

From Jaca, you can also pay a visit to Nuestra Señora de Iguácel, which was erected in 1072. It has a rectangular nave covered by wood, three doors with semicircular arches and a semicircular apse. It was also a women's monastery. Nowadays, it is a chapel that invites to make a stop.

You can head for Borau later. Ask about San Adrián de Sasave. It was built at the end of the XI century. In other time, it was an important monastic centre and the episcopal see of Aragon. It even seems that three bishops were buried here and it was witness to the Holy Grail's passage. It has a Lombard-Jaca style and has been buried for years mainly due to the effects of the neighboring gullies, but, nowadays, it is a beauty chapel that keeps thousands of stories among its walls. Do not forget the parochial churches of Bagüés and Abay. You will love them.



▲ San Pedro el Viejo, Huesca



▲ Cloister of San Pedro el Viejo, Huesca



▲ Loarre Castle

HUESCA AND SOMONTANO

YOU will have time to hang around the streets and try the famous marzipan chestnuts and the Russian cake of the city of Huesca, but your first appointment is with San Pedro el Viejo. It was built in the XII century but its origin is previous. A beauty front decorated in relief and a magnificent cloister with sculpted capitals, said to have been sculpted by the handy hands of the master San Juan de la Peña, are the only remains from the Romanesque period. In the chapel of San Bartolomé, the sepulchers of Ramiro II el Monje (*the Monk*) and Alfonso I el Batallador (*the Battler*) are kept. The cloister of the Cathedral of Huesca is also Romanesque, the same as the church of San Miguel or De las Miguélas. In the outskirts of the city, you can stop in order to pay a visit to the Santa chapel. María de Salas.

The Loarre castle erects some thirty-five kilometers to the north of Huesca, towards Ayerbe, whose flat cakes are delicious. Eight towers that still keep the sword sounds protect what was the royal palace, a convent and, recently, a film stage. Films like "Kingdom of heaven" of Ridley Scott or "Miguel and William" directed by Inés París, have been shot in this place. A consistent wall will close your way. It is two hundred meters long and one meter and a half thickness. The towers and the bended entrance made it difficult for the invaders to get in. At the end of the XI century, the monastery, which belongs to the Sancho Ramírez period, is erected. It has a tower, a guarding section and a church into which the light comes through beautiful windows with thin little columns. Do not forget to have a look at the capitals and let the medieval spirit overcome you. La Reina Viewpoint is a luxurious balcony over Hoya de Huesca. What a views! You are in Reino de los Mallos (Kingdom of the Mallets).



▲ Alquézar



▲ Sigüera



▲ Agüero

Lifted up by the cliffs that rise over the River Vero, Santa María Collegiate Church, together with a haughty castle, dominates the charming medieval collection of narrow and paved streets that is Alquézar. You are before two National Monuments. Its walls keep a rich history. The collegiate church, which has an Islamic origin, once was a Benedictine monastery. The Lookout's Watchtower (*Torre del Vigía*), some stretches of the wall, the highest tower and some fragment of the Romanesque church incorporated to the cloister, which belong to the XIV century, are the only things that remain from the XI century. But the present temple is a building that dates from the XVI century. And, now that we are on it, come closer to the wonders that the River Vero keeps, its caves with cave paintings and breathe deeply. You are in the middle of Guara Mountain Range. Art in a natural way.

You will maybe be able to see the nuns that inhabited the Sigüera Monastery, solemn and colossal monastery that was founded by the queen Mrs. Sancha, the wife of Alfonso II. She herself practiced what she preached and entered the monastery when she became a widow. Sigüera ended becoming a royal pantheon and being one of the most important archives in the kingdom. It has a Romanesque-Gothic style and it was built during the XII and XIII centuries in order to house the noble ladies of the kingdom. It was burnt down during the Civil War but, expert on survival, this national monument has a lot to show, starting by its impressive Romanesque door with thirteen semicircular arcades. In the outside, you will be able to check the masterly composition of its volumes; in the inside, you will be surprised by the grandeur of the temple, the tombs and the chapterhouse that, in other time, was riddled with paintings. Some are lost and others decorate the walls in various museums. Today, the monastery's family is made up of fifty Sisters of Bethlehem that pray, read and work for twenty hours a day in loneliness and silence. In the middle of Los Monegros, Sigüera is a source of life.

The Romanesque steps will also lead you the chapel of Santiago, in Agüero, to the church of Santa María de Chalamera, San Miguel de Foces in Ibieca, Santa María la Mayor in Ontiñena and to Tamarite de Litera. There, Santa María la Mayor and the Chapel of San Miguel are waiting for you. You will praise the art of the stone united with the one of the earth again.



▲ Veruela Monastery



▲ Stone Monastery (Monasterio de Piedra)



▲ Rueda Monastery

ZARAGOZA AND DAROCCA

THE Romanesque, which in Aragon is concentrated in the province of Huesca and the Five Towns of Saragossa, was blocked in the rest of the territory by the Muslim presence, which brought the Mudejar architecture with it. In spite of this, remotely, we can find interesting samples of this beauty art. In Saragossa, La Seo cathedral still keeps from the Romanesque the central apse and the Gospel one in order to show us, even nowadays, that it was a magnificent late Romanesque work. The Cistercian monasteries of Veruela, Piedra (*Stone*) and Rueda are other examples of the late Romanesque in the province. The charming city of Daroca will also show you the most southern of the Aragonese Romanesque in the temples of Santa María, San Miguel, Santo Domingo and San Juan de la Cuesta.

▼ Daroca





▲ Uncastillo

▲ Sos del Rey Católico

FIVE TOWNS (CINCO VILLAS)

IF you disappear into the Five Towns, the Romanesque will meet you, especially from the XII century. Border land, nearly all its buildings were designed in order to serve a defensive or military function. On your way, clayey plains, lands of castles as the Palace of Sada in Sos. Did you know that the king Fernando the Catholic was born here? In the Interpretation Centre, through lights, feelings and music, you will be able to travel through time so that His Majesty can welcome you. You should also pay a visit to the Church of San Esteban, which has a vaulted covered balcony that could be closed if there was an invasion. In the Crypt (from the XI century) there are two apses with medieval mural paintings.

In Uncastillo, the medieval flavor can be tasted in half a dozen Romanesque churches, its complicated streets and ancestral homes. San Martín and Santa María with their fortified towers, San Juan, San Lorenzo and San Felices, all of them have an only nave and a very articulated apse.

In Ejea, the San Salvador church keeps its original late Romanesque style in the northern and eastern fronts. The famous tower is already Gothic. You will check that the entire building has a military style.

Do not leave without paying a visit to the Romanesque church of San Miguel, in Biota. In Luesia, the parochial churches of San Esteban and El Salvador, as well as the Chapel of Santa Quiteria, are waiting for you. In Luna, the Church of San Gil and the one of Santiago were erected in the XII century, with its fussy capitals and the decorated front. In El Frago, San Nicolás. You will check that the first impression does also count. You can see it. In Aragon, the stone turns into poetry. Feel it and be moved.

TOURIST OFFICES (OPEN ALL YEAR ROUND)

Aragón tourism office (OPEN ALL YEAR ROUND)
Avda. César Augusto, 25. Tel. 976 28 21 81. ZARAGOZA

► www.turismodearagon.com

PROVINCE	LOCALITY	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Avda. César Augusto, 25	976 28 21 81 / 902 47 70 00
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Eduardo Ibarra, 3. Auditorio (Patronato Mpal. de Turismo)	976 72 13 33
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Glorieta Pío XII, s/n. Torreón de la Zuda	976 20 12 00 / 902 20 12 12
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Plaza de Nstra.Sra. del Pilar, s/n	976 39 35 37
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Estación Zaragoza-Delicias. Avda. de Rioja, 33	976 32 44 68
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Torre, 28 (S.I.P.A.)	976 29 84 38
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	Plaza de España, 1. Cuarto Espacio (Patronato Prov. de Turismo)	976 21 20 32
Zaragoza	Alagón	Plaza de San Antonio, 2	976 61 18 14
Zaragoza	Borja	Plaza España, 1. Ayuntamiento	976 85 20 01
Zaragoza	Calatayud	Plaza del Fuerte, s/n	976 88 63 22
Zaragoza	Caspe	Plaza España, 1. Casa-Palacio Piazueto Barberán	976 63 65 33
Zaragoza	Daroca	Plaza de España, 4	976 80 01 29
Zaragoza	Gallocanta	Mayor	976 80 30 69
Zaragoza	Mequinenza	Plaza Ayuntamiento, 5	976 46 41 36
Zaragoza	Muel	Taller-Escuela de Cerámica. Ctra. Valencia. Km 468	976 14 52 25
Zaragoza	Sádaba	Rambla, s/n	976 67 50 55 / 699 42 58 34
Zaragoza	Sos del Rey Católico	Palacio de Sada. Pza. Hispanidad	948 88 85 24
Zaragoza	Tarazona	Plaza de San Francisco, 1	976 64 00 74 / 976 19 90 76
Zaragoza	Tauste	Plaza de España, 1	976 85 51 54
Zaragoza	Uncastillo	Santiago, s/n. Iglesia de San Martín de Tours	976 67 90 61
Huesca	Huesca	Plaza Catedral, 1	974 29 21 70
Huesca	Abizanda	Entremuro	974 30 03 26
Huesca	Aínsa	Plaza del Castillo. Torre nordeste	974 50 05 12
Huesca	Aínsa	Avda. Pirenaica, 1	974 50 07 67
Huesca	Barbastro	Avda. La Merced, 64	974 30 83 50
Huesca	Benasque	San Sebastián, 5	974 55 12 89
Huesca	Boltaña	Avda. Ordesa, 47	974 50 20 43
Huesca	Canfranc-Estación	Plaza del Ayuntamiento, 1	974 37 31 41
Huesca	Formigal	Edificio Almonsa III	974 49 01 96
Huesca	Graus	Fermin Mur y Mur, 25	974 54 61 63
Huesca	Jaca	Avda. Regimiento de Galicia Local 2	974 36 00 98
Huesca	Monzón	Plaza Mayor, 4 (Porches Ayto.)	974 41 77 74
Huesca	Monzón	Castillo de Monzón	974 41 77 91
Huesca	Panticosa	San Miguel, 37	974 48 73 18
Huesca	Sabiñánigo	Plaza de España, 2	974 48 42 00
Huesca	Torrecedad	Santuario de Torrecedad	974 30 40 25
Teruel	Teruel	San Francisco, 1	978 64 14 61
Teruel	Albarracín	Diputación, 4	978 71 02 51
Teruel	Alcañiz	Mayor, 1	978 83 12 13
Teruel	Alcorisa	Plaza de San Sebastián, 1	978 84 11 12
Teruel	Andorra	Pº de las Minas, s/n. Bajo	978 88 09 27
Teruel	Beceite	Villaclosa, 9	978 89 04 68
Teruel	Calamocha	Pasaje Palafox, 4	978 73 05 15
Teruel	Cantavieja	Plaza Cristo Rey, s/n	964 18 52 43
Teruel	Castellote	Nueva, 47	978 88 75 61
Teruel	Galve	Rambla San Joaquín, 2 (Museo)	978 77 60 47
Teruel	Molinos	Antiguos Lavaderos, s/n	978 84 90 85
Teruel	Rubielos de Mora	Plaza Hispano América, 1	978 80 40 01
Teruel	Torrevelilla	San José, 7	978 85 24 62
Teruel	Valderrobres	Avda. Cortes de Aragón, 7	978 89 08 86

TOURIST INFORMATION PHONE NUMBER: 902 477 000



Gobierno de Aragón

Departamento de Industria,
Comercio y Turismo