

Sample Inntravel Customer Documentation

These documents demonstrate the supportive style of the notes that we supply with the ticketing pack for your independent holiday. Please note that details in sample documents are not updated or checked for accuracy, and in some cases they are for holidays that are no longer available through Inntravel.

On the Trail of the Conquistadors

This journey takes you to the two very different faces of northern Extremadura, where you can combine walking in varied landscapes in the homeland of some of Spain's greatest adventurers with visits to grand towns and cities, the legacy of the age of discovery.

We wish you a very pleasant journey.

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Assistance:

In the rare event that you should encounter any problems during your stay, please contact the owners/agents in the first instance as they act as our representatives. Please do not wait to report any dissatisfaction until you return to the UK as problems can only be rectified if you give us the chance to do so at the time.

24-hour emergency contact with Intravel

If you need to contact Intravel out of office hours on urgent matters, please phone **XXXXX XXXXXX**.

Your initial call to this number will be taken by our emergency assistance service. Please provide them with your contact telephone number, location, booking reference number (if you have this easily to hand) and a brief description of your problem; they will then immediately contact Intravel's 24-hour Duty Officer, who will call you to assist.

Please do not call this emergency number for routine matters or enquiries which can be most effectively handled by our full team during office hours.

The local emergency services in Spain can be summoned on 112.

The international dialling code for Spain from the UK is 00 34.

These notes have been compiled carefully by Intravel with the best information available. We welcome any comments you may wish to make on this information to help us improve our level of customer service.

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Documentation for Your Holiday

Your information pack includes:

- Tickets (please double-check these)
- Accommodation vouchers
- General information on your holiday
- List of hotels
- Directions for reaching your hotels
- Suggestions for sightseeing
- Driving map (Michelin 576)
- Walking maps: **Around Jarandilla:** 1:25,000 Map 1; 1:25,000 Map 2. **Emperor's Route:** no map necessary
- City plans and local information : Trujillo, Plasencia, Cáceres, Guadalupe, Monfragüe (as available)
- Foreign office travel advice

You should already have received the following documents with your holiday confirmation/invoice (please let us know if you have not received these):

- Your insurance policy documents (if applicable)
- 'Driving in Europe' leaflet
- 'Spain' Country Information leaflet

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Your Hotels

Parador de Trujillo

C/ Silva

10200 Cáceres

Tel: XXX XX XX XX

Parador de Jarandilla de la Vera

Avda. García

10450 Jarandilla de la Vera

Tel: XXX XX XX XX

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Historical Extremadura

Extremadura is an old name, originally referring to the small amount of territory in present-day Spain and Portugal that lay outside Moorish control. In the 10th –11th century, this meant land north of a line drawn along the Douro valley - from around present day Coimbra in western Portugal to Soria in the east. During the C12th and C13th the border of Extremadura steadily advanced as the Christian armies pushed south, and by the late Middle Ages both the Christian kingdoms of Castile and León held separate provinces with this name. Under Ferdinand III, King of León and Castile (1217-1252) a new unified territory of Extremadura was created – one that occupied similar borders to today.

Throughout your holiday you cannot help but be aware of the period of history that accompanied this re-conquest of Spain and of the four centuries that followed. It is a period in which land hungry, northern nobles resettled the land in return for their loyalty to the crown. Large feudal estates were developed and the aristocracy grew rich on agriculture and commerce. In turn their prosperity produced an extra-ordinary growth in civil and ecclesiastical architecture which are still visible today – the Parador at Zafra and Jarandilla, the great señorial houses of Cáceres, the Monastery at Guadalupe and smaller gems, such as the Convent of Santa Clara in Zafra.

It was also a time when men from noble and humble backgrounds took part in the exploration and exploitation of the Americas. Extremadura contributed large numbers of colonists to the new lands and provided many of the controversial Conquistadors – Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro, Hernando Soto. The fortunes that were made in the Americas added to the prosperity of the region, and these men are well remembered in their home towns and villages, such as Trujillo and Barracotta. Large numbers of poor and landless peasants also joined the exodus, in search of new prosperity. In the small village of Trujillo, this amounted to nearly one fifth of the population.

A brief historic framework for your holiday:

- 218BC. Scipio lands at Ampurias and establishes a Roman presence in Iberia
- 25-20BC. Iberian Peninsula is finally conquered by the Romans and divided into the 3 provinces into Baetica (similar to modern day Andalusia and Southern Extremadura), Lusitania (similar to modern day Portugal, Mérida founded as the capital) and Hispania Citerior (the rest).

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- 405 – 470 AD Rome loses power in Spain. The Visigoths take power.
- 710AD Moorish conquest begins – the Goths make their last stand at Mérida in 711 before fleeing to Asturias to join the local defenders – these peoples form the nucleus of opposition which, through many generations, becomes the reconquest.
- 1085 – Toledo captured by Christian forces and reconquest begun in earnest
- C13th – Extremadura created as a unified Christian province
- 1492 – Last Moorish Kingdom at Granada defeated by Isabel and Ferdinand. Columbus sets sail for ‘the Indies’ and initiates the founding of a Spanish Empire.
- 1503 – Seville becomes the central regulating authority for exploiting the Indies
- 1519 – Cortés conquers Mexico

Extremadura today

Today's region occupies a land area of just over 16,000 sq miles and houses a population of a little over 1million (twice the area of Wales and 1/6th the population density). Your holiday is centred on the northern province of Cáceres (pronounced Cath-e –res) where there is a great diversity of landscape and the presence of a large rural population often gathered together in small villages. In the far north, the province is bounded by the Sierra de Gredos - a granite upland divided by deep valleys. South of here are large plains covered in managed forests of holm and cork oaks. The quartzite sierras of Monfragüe and Villuercas cross the centre of the province, and beyond lie the mountains of Montánchez and San Pedro. The plains are pierced by granite outcrops, providing sites for fortified villages such as Trujillo. In travelling from Trujillo through Monfragüe and into the Vera valley below the Gredos, you will have chance to observe these changing landscapes.

Given the evidence of the huge wealth that did flow into this area, it is paradoxical that this region is now the poorest in Spain. When you look at Extremadura today it is important to remember that the average income in Extremadura is only half of that in Catalunya and has an unemployment level of approximately 20%. This figure masks an even higher rate of

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inactivity, with a lot of temporary seasonal work. The economy is dominated by the service sector (60%), and has a very low industrial base. 25% of the population continue to work on the land where the countryside remains partitioned into latifundios, i.e. large estates, owned historically by absentee landlords and farmed by landless day labourers. The herding and grazing of cattle, sheep and pigs that began in the C13th still remains an important source of revenue, but other types of farming such as the growth of olives, vines and wheat have steadily increased in importance.

Extremadura is now the subject of a number of Governmental and EEC initiatives to try and improve the lives of its people. Tourism, despite the richness of its cultural and natural resources is also relatively under-developed, and hopefully will contribute to the regeneration of its economy as Extremadura becomes better known to the outside world.

Flora and Fauna

Unsurprisingly, the diverse landscapes and lack of industrialisation has allowed a varied flora and fauna to survive. In total there are over 2000 species of flowering plant, including 40 orchids, and 420 species of vertebrate, the majority of which (375) both live and breed here. Most visitors are struck by the sheer abundance of bird life, especially raptors. Large numbers of black kites wheel overhead, and vultures as well as eagles are commonly seen. You visit an especially important ecological site during your visit – the Monfragüe Park, a UNESCO biosphere and National park.

In Monfragüe, the abundant water of the dammed Tajo and areas of intact natural forest attract large numbers of birds. Here you find the largest concentration of black vultures in the world, 11 pairs of Imperial eagles and the unusual black stork. You will be unlucky not to see Griffon and Egyptian vultures as well as smaller birds such as the azure winged magpie and bee-eaters during your walks. In autumn, the deer are in heat and the valleys ring to the mating calls of the stags. The genet, wild cat, Iberian lynx and marten are all here, but of course rarely seen.

April and May are great times to appreciate the flora of the sierras. Monfragüe and the Gredos are especially rich in plant life – which varies immensely with altitude and aspect. You can expect to see swathes of French lavender and the large flowered gum cistus. In early summer, the uplands of the Gredos are covered in gorse, furze and broom - carpeting the upper slopes in a golden yellow and scenting the air with vanilla. Below this,

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pockets of fern filled oak and laurel woods clothe the valley sides. Bring your binoculars and pocket wildlife guides!

Gastronomy

The people of Extremadura, despite their relative poverty are warm and generous. This is reflected in your experience on visiting rural bars of the north, where the custom of providing a free tapas with each drink that you order, persists. In the area around Jarandilla we encountered bars continuously cooking small pieces of juicy pork on a hot plate to ward off the ill effects of drinking without eating!

The cuisine of the area reflects the richness of the local produce. Dried hams from acorn fed pigs and *embutidos* – varieties of pork sausage are extremely good, including morcilla – a type of lightly spiced black pudding, which around Zafra sometimes has liver mixed into the sausage. Excellent cheeses abound – look out for Los Ibores and the Tortar del Casar, (a liquid cheese from Trujillo) which is considered to be one of the finest in Spain. Try the Retinto beef, a local breed which is often served as a simple succulent steak, but sometimes accompanied by a more complex sauce.

Popular dishes include migas, a traditional country meal of breadcrumbs, usually mixed with embutidos. Gazpacho is common here as is the less well known ajo blanco, a cold soup made from garlic and almonds. Calderetas are stews usually made with kid or lamb in the north and also with pork in the south. Other popular stews include rabo de toro (oxtail) and chanfaina – a sort of Castilian hot pot made with lamb's offal.

Spiced cakes and biscuits are frequently a feature of breakfasts, and often give you a sense of a residual Moorish influence. Otherwise taste them at merienda, the Spanish tea time, when the locals flood to the cafés to take coffee and cake.

Eating and Drinking

As in the rest of Spain, eating hours are much later than in the rest of Europe. This is just a question of getting into the swing of the local way of doing things – although if you are likely to feel peckish at your normal meal-times, it might be an idea to have a snack handy to keep your strength up for the main meal to follow! The main meal in Spain is at midday (around 2pm), this is when you will find the small bars and restaurants at their busiest, whereas dinner (usually after 9pm) is certainly a quieter affair mid week in

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the restaurants. Most bars and restaurants will display a *menu del día*, a three course meal consisting of set dishes (and which is normally good value) with some drinks included. In some of the more sophisticated hotels and restaurants you will find a *menu de degustación*, an elaborate menu with more courses and generally costing about double the *menu del día*. Sometimes the *menu de degustación* consists of fairly small portions of several different local dishes, designed to allow you to sample a range of the local cuisine. If you have plenty of time and an empty stomach it is an excellent way to sample the local cuisine.

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Suggested Itinerary:

Day 1:

Travel to Trujillo

Day 2:

We have arranged for a privately guided town tour, taking in the older Moorish architecture of the castle and cisterns combined with later monumental architecture. The tour ends with a wine and cheese tasting (pay locally 50 cents).

Day 3:

A choice of 3 walks in the beautiful Monfragüe Park is provided. Alternatively, visit the nearby mediaeval walled town of Cáceres following a specially prepared town trail.

Day 4:

Visit the Monastery of Guadalupe with an opportunity to walk in the nearby sierra.

Day 5:

Travel to Jarandilla de la Vera, visiting the historic walled town of Plasencia, en route.

Day 6:

Visit the well-preserved, mediaeval village of Garganta de la Olla and take a beautiful ridge walk overlooking both the Jerte and Vera valleys.

Day 7:

Starting from the Monastery of Yuste, walk the relaxed 'Emperor's Route' through the village of Cuacos de Yuste, winding your way amongst groves of fruit to end at Jarandilla.

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Directions to the Parador in Trujillo

From Madrid Airport

From Madrid airport you take the access road from the airport to join one of the outer ringroads of Madrid (M40, M45 M50) in this case the M40. Follow this road clockwise until you reach either the toll road R-V or the regular motorway A-V, this motorway takes you all the way to Trujillo.

- As you leave the airport via the airport access road (the **M-14**) **follow signs for M-40**
- You actually do not come off this access road – just continue to the end ignoring all exits) as you will eventually come to the M-40.
- Once on the M40, you will see signs first for the R-V rather than the A-V, the R-V being the equivalent but a toll motorway. It only lasts for about 30 km and then joins the A-V. Keep on the M40 following signs for R-V and subsequently both. If there is a lot of traffic we recommend you take R-V and pay the toll (it can be paid by credit card or cash and is under 10 Euros)
- Whichever exit you take continue on this road right to Trujillo.
- Take the A-V Trujillo South (sur) turn off the motorway. Reach a roundabout and turn left, signed for Trujillo/Cáceres and Badajoz.
- Reach a T-junction and turn right for Trujillo and Cáceres to arrive at Trujillo with large grain stores visible on the right and to the left. Continue straight on.
- Ignore the large sign taking you right for Trujillo, but slow down and get ready to turn immediately after.
- **Careful!** Immediately after this main junction bear off left onto a slip-road running parallel to the main road.
- Continue onwards seeing a ruin ahead.
- Just before the ruin, you come onto one half of a roundabout, which you use to turn right and cross the main road, passing the ruin to your left.
- Enter town, signed Plasencia/EX-208.
- At the next roundabout, turn left, signed Plasencia/Torrejón.

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- Take first right, signed Parador.
- At a fork, bear left, still signed Parador.
- At the end of the street, turn left to immediately notice the car-park for the Parador on your right.
- However, please don't park here yet, but take next right uphill to find the entrance to the Parador on your right.
- After checking in, the hotel will arrange for you to be able to park in their car-park if you so wish. There is also plenty of parking in the street.

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Trujillo

Built on a ridge, Trujillo occupies a historically strategic position overlooking the plain between the Tagus and Guadiana rivers. There is evidence of a prehistoric settlement on this site but Trujillo came into its own and shed its dependence on local subsistence farming during the Moorish occupancy, of the 10th and 11th centuries and turned it into the fortress town that it is today. Following the reconquest at the end of the 13th century there began a period of relative prosperity, fomented by successive kings who promoted settlement in the area. In the mid 15th century under pressure from the growing nobility in the town, Trujillo was granted city status by Don Juan II of Castilla. The most significant characteristic of Trujillo is its pioneering and 'conquistador' legacy and it is often referred to as the city 'where two worlds meet'. From this city it is said that some 750 inhabitants left to discover and conquer lands across the Atlantic, amongst them were the (in)famous Pizarro who conquered Peru, Orellana who discovered the Amazon and García de Paredes who founded the town of Trujillo in Venezuela. So widespread was the thirst for conquest that there are towns and cities bearing the name Trujillo in Puerto Rico, Chile and Colombia.

Today, Trujillo is a place with *duende* – loosely translated as magical quality. Every corner in this city, every little street, square or palace talks to the visitor about old days, stories of knights, conquest and a bygone 'splendid' age. A simple walk among its houses and palaces presents an opportunity to discover its subtle treasures - a coat of arms sculpted in golden stone, a noble 16th century doorway, and intricately designed *corner balconies*. The main square is, without doubt, one of the most atmospheric we have come across in Spain; as the sun sets and the Trujillanos step out for their evening stroll and congregate on the terraces there is no better place to sit and observe.

Your guided visit on the morning after your arrival will take you through these historic streets and into the most important cultural monuments, the rest you can discover at your own pace. The tourist office is very good compared to many in this area.

Eating out: other than at the excellent parador restaurant (see below), we have enjoyed good regional cuisine at the Corral , Pza Rey, tel XXXXXXXX and at El Plaza, C/Mayor, tel: XXXXXXXX. There are many more restaurants

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and bars to suit most tastes in and around the Plaza Mayor and we would be happy to receive and pass on any further recommendations.

Parador de Trujillo

The parador is housed in the former Santa Clara monastery, the building dating back to the 16th century. At the heart of the building are two delightful cloisters. The rooms and public areas are spacious and elegantly furnished.

There is a swimming pool and a bar. There are a limited number of places in the garage that can be booked for a small local charge.

We include a regional dinner from a 3 course set menu (with choices) in the parador restaurant on your first evening – drinks are not included. If you wish to dine on subsequent nights please reserve and pay locally. Specialities of the restaurant include tomato and cumin soup, the cochinito de montanera (roast suckling pig) and the local Iberian sausages and hams.

Trujillo guided tour

Your English speaking guide usually Maite Alvarez will come and meet you in the reception of the parador at 1000 on the day stated on your itinerary. The guided visit of Trujillo's monuments usually takes about 2-3 hours and will take in the following sights (all entrance fees are included):

- Pizarro museum
- History of Costume museum
- 13th century Church of Santiago Apóstol, XIII century
- Castle and surroundings
- Altamirano - Moorish Palace

The visit finishes at the cheese and wine museum, with displays of local produce. There is a chance to taste and buy the cheese and wine, tasting is to be paid for locally. Tasting tickets at 50c each are purchased in the museum and allow visitors to have a sample of wine or cheese.

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Monfragüe National Park

The Monfragüe Park is an enormously important ecological area, a UNESCO Biosphere and recently promoted from a Natural to a National Park, heavily protected with large tracts of land now out of bounds to the public. The Park covers an area of 17,000 hectares and runs along the borders of the dammed River Tajo and is enclosed by two mountain ranges.

The reserve contains important stands of Mediterranean woodland, scrub and the characteristic 'dehesa' of Extremadura – natural woodland shaped by human intervention. 200 species of vertebrate breed in the Park and it is particularly well known for the bird life - 15 species of raptors alone - as well as being home to the vanishing Iberian Lynx.

You have a choice of 3 routes in this unique area – 2 of the routes (Walk B and Walk C) can be linked to make single 'figure of 8 walk' as they overlap at the hamlet of Villareal de San Carlos. Make sure you visit the Monfragüe Information Centre on the left at the beginning of the main street through Villareal.

Road directions to Monfragüe

- From the Parador car-park, turn left and immediately right.
- Head down the hill to the STOP sign and turn right.
- Reach a T junction and head left, direction Plasencia.
- Keep on the EX 212 for 13km, passing through Torrejón el Rubio to reach the new large river bridge crossing the Rio Tajo.
- The shorter version of Walk A begins from the car park on the south side of the bridge. For the full length version of Walk A and for Walks B and C, cross the bridge and continue for a further 3km to reach the hamlet of Villareal de San Carlos on your right.

NB: If you are thinking of doing the full length of Walk A (14km, beginning at Villareal de San Carlos), drive slowly as you leave the new river bridge and in about 700m you should be able to pull off the road and see the old bridge (the Puente del Cardenal) lying just above the surface of the river. The route is best done when the old river bridge over the Rio Tajo is above water. You can spot whether this is so – it is easier to navigate than it looks from a distance and only needs to be just above the river. If it looks impassable then you have two choices: complete the full length of the route by initially

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walking from Villareal down to the river and up to the new road and crossing over the new bridge to reach the Fuente del Francés, or shortening the route by parking at the southern side of the new bridge, and beginning from there (option A2 in the walk notes).

Walk A: Castillo de Monfragüe Circuit (14km, 4hrs, 30mins)
(Shorter version, A2: 9km, 3hrs)

To see how are walking notes work, please look at our [Sample Customer Documentation for our Walking holidays](#).