

# Out & About in Spain

## Spain and the World Heritage List

Over the last 12 months we have been bringing you information on some of the outstanding places to visit in Spain. Many of these are found on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The World Heritage List includes 890 sites forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value.

These include 689 cultural, 176 natural and 25 mixed locations in 148 States Parties. As of April 2009, 186 States Parties have ratified the World Heritage Convention.



It may surprise you to know that Spain has 41 locations on the list, which is the second highest number of recognised sites in the world. Italy is top of the list with 44 and China stands third with 38 locations. The UK & Northern Ireland currently have 28.

The World Heritage website states:

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. Places as unique and diverse as the wilds of East Africa's Serengeti, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and the Baroque cathedrals of Latin America make up our world's heritage.

What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

UNESCO's World Heritage mission is to:

- Encourage countries to sign the World Heritage Convention and to ensure the protection of their natural and cultural heritage;

# Out & About in Spain

- Encourage States Parties to the Convention to nominate sites within their national territory for inclusion on the World Heritage List;
- Encourage States Parties to establish management plans and set up reporting systems on the state of conservation of their World Heritage sites;
- Help States Parties safeguard World Heritage properties by providing technical assistance and professional training;
- Provide emergency assistance for World Heritage sites in immediate danger;
- Support States Parties' public awareness-building activities for World Heritage conservation;
- Encourage participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage;
- Encourage international cooperation in the conservation of our world's cultural and natural heritage.

The considerable number of UNESCO locations in Spain, of which 20 are related to natural sciences, is testimony to the importance of the links between the country and UNESCO. Spain is very active in the earth sciences.

It has a multitude of ecosystems in a surprisingly small space: mountains with year-round snow, the rather cool and rainy north, dry plains, rainy plains, near desert of the southeast and forests of all kinds.

In addition to the World heritage list there are 33 biosphere reserves currently listed with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere programme (MAB) in Spain. The contrasts make water management and meeting water needs year-round in the driest areas all the more challenging in the country, which has developed a close relationship with the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) over the past years.

## **Spain's World Heritage Sites**

Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, Granada

Burgos Cathedral

Historic Centre of Cordoba

Monastery and Site of the Escorial, Madrid

Works of Antoni Gaudí

Cave of Altamira and Paleolithic Cave Art of Northern Spain

Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of the Asturias

Old Town of Ávila with its Extra-Muros Churches

Old Town of Segovia and its Aqueduct

Santiago de Compostela (Old Town)

Garajonay National Park

# Out & About in Spain

Historic City of Toledo

Mudejar Architecture of Aragon

Old Town of Cáceres

Cathedral, Alcázar and Archivo de Indias in Seville

Old City of Salamanca

Poblet Monastery

Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida

Route of Santiago de Compostela

Royal Monastery of Santa María de Guadalupe

Doñana National Park

Historic Walled Town of Cuenca

La Lonja de la Seda de Valencia

Las Médulas

Palau de la Música Catalana and Hospital de Sant Pau, Barcelona

Pyrénées - Mont Perdu

San Millán Yuso and Suso Monasteries

Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin on the Iberian Peninsula

University and Historic Precinct of Alcalá de Henares

Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture

San Cristóbal de La Laguna

Archaeological Ensemble of Tárraco

Archaeological Site of Atapuerca

Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí

Palmeral of Elche

Roman Walls of Lugo

Aranjuez Cultural Landscape

Renaissance Monumental Ensembles of Úbeda and Baeza

Vizcaya Bridge

Teide National Park

Tower of Hercules