



(1) *Guadalupe* > (2) *Cáceres* > (3) *Mérida* > (4) *Alange Thermal Baths* > (5) *Elvas* > (6) *Évora* > (7) *Monastery of Alcobça* > (8) *Dominican Monastery of Batalha* > (9) *Convent of Cristo* > (10) *University of Coimbra Alta e Sofia* > (11) *Valley of Côa Prehistoric cave art sites*

WORLD HERITAGE SITE ROUTE

The trip starts in **(1) Guadalupe**, in front of the striking 14th century Gothic-Mudejar monastery, where one of Zurbarán's most famous works, 'The Apotheosis of Saint Jerome,' can be seen in the chapel of San Jerónimo. It also houses an embroidery museum and a large collection of illuminated books. The minaret that adorns the Cloister of Los Milagros is unique due to its symbiosis of Islamic and Christian architecture.

Next stop is **(2) Cáceres**, whose historic centre is considered to be one of the most well-preserved medieval cores in the world. The Jewish quarter, the Arab walls, the palaces with over 30 Muslim towers, including the 12th century Bujaco Tower, and the second largest cistern in the world are all well worth visiting. Make sure to visit the Co-Cathedral of Santa María and palaces such as Veletas and Los Golfines.

Next, travel along the ancient Silver Route to **(3) Mérida**, heir to a splendid Roman past. Its theatre, amphitheatre, temple dedicated to the goddess Diana and its bridge all make the ancient capital of Roman Lusitania one of the best conserved archaeological sites in Spain. Not to be missed is the National Museum of Roman Art, an architectural jewel that highlights the treasures found within. One further iconic landmark in Mérida's Roman archaeology is the **(4) Alange Thermal Baths**, which were constructed in the 3rd century and are located 18 km from the capital of Extremadura.

Crossing into the Alentejo region in Portugal, you'll find **(5) Elvas**, a border town that stands out as one of the most heavily fortified cities in Europe. Although some remains date back to the 10th century, the fortification dates back to 1640, the year in which Portugal regained its independence. The Amoreira aqueduct, with its 843 arches, is considered to be one of the most extraordinary constructions of this type in all of southern Europe.

Royal Monastery of Santa Maria de Guadalupe



Fort of Nossa Senhora da Graça. Elvas

Next stop is **(6) Évora**, which has been the residence of the kings of Portugal in different periods. The historic centre was recognised by UNESCO in 1986. Make sure you visit Giraldo Square and, from there, head towards the 12th century cathedral and admire the Roman temple, the Convent of Loios, the museum and the library. You can then wander aimlessly through the white streets and gaze upon the Tower of the Cinco Quinas, the university and the aqueduct, finishing off with the famous Chapel Dos Ossos inside the Church of São Francisco.

The Centro Region is home to one of the country's grandest medieval Cistercian monasteries, the **(7) Monastery of Alcobça**, an impressive abbey included among the seven marvels of Portugal. In addition to being the emblematic monument of the order throughout the 12th century, it was the first entirely Gothic work in Portugal and the second pantheon of the national monarchy.

A bit further north in Leiria, you'll discover the **(8) Dominican Monastery of Batalha** (literally Battle) built to commemorate the Portuguese victory against the Castilians in the Battle of Aljubarrota in 1385. Stained glass, pinnacles and lattices forged from stone shape this symphony that is yet to be completed, as shown by the Capelas Imperfeitas (unfinished chapels).

Not far from here, in Tomar, you'll come across the **(9) Convent of Cristo**, a majestic building famous for its peculiar blend of architectural styles, a sign of Portugal's long and diverse history since the times of the Knights Templar. When contemplated together, the various cloisters, enormous choir and additional monastic buildings give rise to a dizzying mixture of Manueline style, Gothic touches, Arabic influences and evocations of Corinthian and Tuscan columns.

Now take the A13 to Coimbra, cradle of sciences and fine arts. The **(10) University of Coimbra Alta e Sofia** (1290) is a World Heritage Site and an exceptional example of a university town that illustrates the interdependence between university and city. In addition to its well-known Joanina Library, Coimbra is famous for its winding streets and hanging houses. It is also home to marvels like the Machado de Castro Museum and the Church and Monastery of Santa Cruz. Close to the city is Conimbriga, the most historically important Roman settlement in Portugal.

Your trip comes to an end at the Prehistoric cave art sites in the **(11) Valley of Côa**, one of the largest open-air archaeological sites in the world. An extraordinary concentration of petroglyphs from the Upper Palaeolithic (22,000-10,000 BC) can be found here, which is unique among its kind and represents one of the most noteworthy examples of the first artistic creations of human beings.