

# 2017 Holy Year



AÑO JUBILAR 2017  
CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

## CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

MURCIA - ESPAÑA

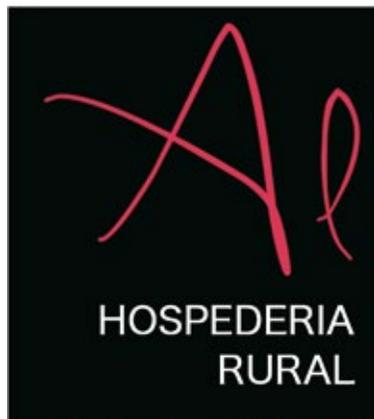
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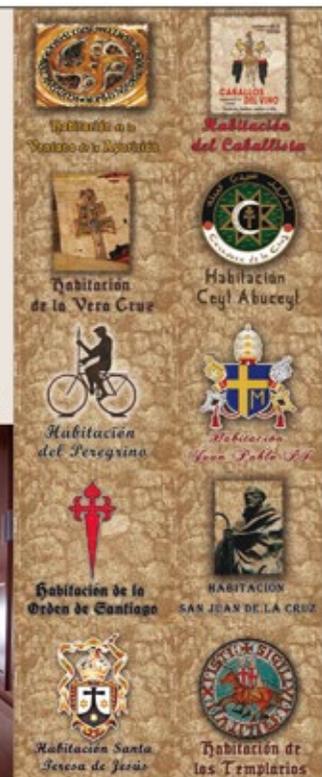
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*Facade Basilica-Sanctuary and castle wall*

## SITUATION

Caravaca de la Cruz, district of almost de 26.000 inhabitants and covering an area of 859.51 km<sup>2</sup>, is the main town of the extensive district in the north-west of the Region of Murcia and a reference point for many municipalities in the neighbouring provinces of Granada, Jaén and Albacete.

Caravaca de la Cruz (38° 06' N 1° 52'O) is situated 625 m above sea level and has a dry, not very continental, it has a continental

climate with continental influence and dry summers with oscillating temperatures from moderate to very warm, cold winters and soft and rainy springs. Medium annual temperature is 12° C. The district is mainly in a high altitude since two thirds are above 800 meters. The most mountainous areas of the district are to the north and west: Mojantes sierra (1,605 m.) and Gavilan sierra (1.477 m.). It is crossed by the Argos and Quipar rivers, which cross the district from west to east, it is an area rich in agricultural resources, which has led to its being settled by numerous peoples since ancient times.



## A LITTLE HISTORY

The first vestiges of a settlement in the Palaeolithic era are found within today's municipal area. Other cultures then began to settle on these lands, as vouched for by the Neolithic, Agar, Iberian and Roman sites found. Afterwards the Order of the Temple took over the township and, later, the Order of Santiago.

The primitive urban layout of the city that ended at the hill of the castle was shaped in the Medieval period. It is also in this period when the Cross is thought to have reached Caravaca. But it was the conquest of the Kingdom of Granada that brought significant economic, social and demographic growth for Caravaca.

However, Caravaca cannot be considered to have been a town proper until well into the Middle Ages, i.e., the period of Moslem control. In excavations carried out in the Basilica-Sanctuary, pottery material was found that speaks to the existence of a Roman establishment between the 1st and 4th centuries AD.

After this came a period with no references to the township until the 12th century, with the appearance of pottery remains. The almost total inexistence of texts from the first centuries of Moslem control is an indication of its little importance as a town; Al-Himyari refers to 11th-century Caravaca as a village belonging to the Mula district. The need to protect this small outpost led to the construction of a rudimentary fortification providing shelter for people and animals at the top of the hill where the Basilica-Sanctuary stands today. In the final stages of Moslem control, the isolation of the

Taifa Kingdom of Murcia forced its King, Mohammed Ibn Hud, to offer vassalage to the King of Castile, Ferdinand III, requesting protectorate over Murcia. The Capitulation of Alcaraz was signed in 1243 and on 1 May that year the then Infante Alfonso (who would later become known as "Alfonso the Wise") took possession of nearly all the kingdom, including Caravaca, in the name of Castile. In July that year, the Catalan Berenguer de Entenza took possession of the village. A few years later, in 1266, Caravaca, Cehegín and Bullas were handed over to the Order of the Temple. After the latter's disappearance, it was the Order of Santiago who took control of the town, first in fact and later in law when, in around 1344, through a privilege dated in Toro on 3 August of that year, King Alfonso XI granted the towns and places of Caravaca, Cehegín and Bullas to his bastard son Fadrique, then a grand master of the Order of Santiago.

With the taking of Granada by the Catholic Kings, the development of the city per se began. The high point of its political and economic growth came in the 18th century, largely favoured by cereal and hemp exports. Its economic resources at the start of the 19th century were calculated as lying in the pine mountains and esparto grass, the production of cereals, flax, oil, pulses, fruit and vegetables, hemp, in sheep and goats and in the soap, cloth, canvas and brandy industries.

Today Caravaca de la Cruz is a modern, services-driven city with a wealth of facilities of all types: health, education, commercial.. and a modern highway that connects it with Murcia in under an hour, all of which, together with its farming activities and industrial sector, make it a dynamic and enterprising town.

## THE CROSS OF CARAVACA

**ORIGIN.** The Santísima y Vera Cruz of Caravaca is a cross of oriental origin and patriarchal appearance, therefore double crossbeam of four arms. It is believed to have belonged to the patriarch Robert of Jerusalem, who was the first Bishop of Jerusalem once it had been won from the Muslims in the First Crusade (1099). In Caravaca de la Cruz, it has been venerated since the 13th century, specifically around the year 1231 in which, according to tradition, was the date of the miracle of its appearance.

**CHARACTERISTICS.** The Caravaca Cross is a “Lignum Crucis”, meaning a piece of wood that came from that upon which Christ was crucified, conserved in a reliquary in the form of a crossbeam. Since ancient times, this cross has been recognised by the Catholic Church as a “Vera Cruz” (True Cross), granting papal bulls and indulgences to the pilgrims who came to worship at it. Similarly, in 1794 the Church granted the “Culto de Latria” (equivalent to the Cult received by the Most Holy Sacrament).

**TRADITION OF THE APPEARANCE.** Tradition tells us that the reliquary appeared on May 3rd 1231, and states:

“The lands of Caravaca had been conquered by Abu-Zeit, Almohad Sayid of Valencia who, according to history, was currently in residence here. It is said that, among the Christian prisoners, there was a priest from Cuenca called Ginés Pérez Chirinos. The Sayid interrogated the prisoner about his occupation, to which he replied “giving mass”. The priest’s reply filled the Sayid with curiosity, ordering that everything required should be brought so that Chirinos could demonstrate the liturgy in the main hall of the Alcázar. Soon after Chirinos started to speak, he stopped and said it was impossible to continue the ceremony as there was no cross on the altar. It was at that exact moment that, through the window of the hall, two angels appeared, carrying a cross which they placed on the altar so that the priest could continue the Mass. Tradition has it that on this miraculous appearance, the Sayid and his followers converted to Christianity”.

**DISSEMINATION OF THE CROSS.** The dissemination of the Cross of Caravaca all over the world was due to the numerous religious orders established here. These were primarily Jesuits and Franciscans who, in their missionary work, spread the word of the Cross of Caravaca all over South America and Europe.

# “IN PERPETUUM” (IN PERPETUITY) JUBILEE YEAR

In February 1998 Caravaca was granted the privilege of one Year Perpetual Jubilee around our Patron Saint, The Holy Vera Cruz, in a document issued by the Supreme Pontiff, John Paul II, through the Apostolic Penitentiary of the Holy See. The granting of “Holy Year”, the fifth in the world together with those of Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela and Santo Toribio de Liébana (Potes), means celebrating a Jubilee year every seven years. This event will take place again in 2017.

One of the reasons for the Jubilee year being granted is a religious fact, whose significance dates back more than 7th century in the history of Spain, of the Region of Murcia and of Caravaca de la Cruz; the presence of the Holy and True Cross in these lands since the 13th century, whose Eastern origin has been unquestionably proved and which Christians believe contains deposits of several splinters from the “Lignum Crucis” on which Jesus Christ died.

This fact has represented the development, over seven centuries, of a religious cult rooted within the heart of the Christian faith and admitted by the Catholic Church, to the extent that the Vatican assigned it (18th century) the cult of “Latria”, the equivalent to that professed to the Blessed Sacrament.

This reality went beyond the strict, regional and even national geographical limits, converting Caravaca into a neuralgic spot and one of religious reference, having its maximum zenith in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, times when the real religious character of the Holy Vera Cruz had priority over other ones attributed later on of esoteric character.

The faith regenerated around the Holy Relic mainly propitiated, in the centuries mentioned, and even earlier, real currents of pilgrimage to

the Sanctuary from many different points of the Spanish geography; to the extent that in the mid 16th century a Hospital was established in the town, the “Buen Suceso”, whose main purpose was to attend the pilgrims.

In addition, and in order to propitiate, disseminate and maintain the cult to the Vera Cruz, today’s Royal and Illustrious Brotherhood of the Holy Vera Cruz of Caravaca arose, whose origins, proven by documents, date back to the Middle Ages and which, already in the 17th century, was canonically instituted, based on the constitutions of Clement VIII and Pablo V. The value of the aforementioned pilgrimages is proved by the Jubilees decreed in different years of the 16th and 17th centuries, on the occasion of the different festivities of the Cross (May, July, September) or the specific request made by the Brotherhood in 1663 to Pope Alexander VII, for brotherhoods from different areas of Spain to be admitted into it (which was a fact).

Another two reasons may act as motives that justify the ecclesiastic concession of the Holy Year. On the one hand, the fact that some years ago, in 1981, a Jubilee Year was granted to Caravaca (perhaps the first in its history), on the occasion of the celebration of the 750th anniversary of the Appearance of the Vera Cruz in Caravaca and later in 1996 another Jubilee Year was granted, which attracted more than 700,000 pilgrims to the town. On the other hand, the desire to clarify, on a national level, the real meaning of the Vera Cruz of Caravaca, as a symbol of Christian faith, face to the simplistic and distorted diffusion that has been done in the recent past regarding this saint relic.

Finally, the joint action of several institutions (Town Council, Brotherhood, Bishopric, Autonomous Community), has led, along with the previous experiences, to an improved organisation and greater dissemination of the knowledge and devotion of the Cross, with a progressive increase of visitors and an increase of the religious-cruciferous sense of these.







*Presbytery Basilica Sta. Cruz*

## MONUMENTS

### **CASTLE - SANCTUARY OF THE STMA. Y VERA CRUZ:**

It has two distinct parts: the walled enclosure and the Basilica-Sanctuary. Its origins are Islamic (10th and 11th centuries) although it has since undergone numerous changes. Its walls (12th century) have been renovated on several occasions. The wall today has 14 towers of different shapes and sizes. The fort was of the Order of the Temple and later that of Santiago. The castle was used as a military fortress in the War of Succession (1700-1713) and the War of Independence (1812). It was in the 17th century, in the heart of the ancient fortress, (specifically between July 16, 1617 and May 3, 1703) that the Sanctuary of the Vera Cruz was constructed, later having an extension built: its splendid 18th century Baroque façade, with local marble. The complex, in line with the style imposed by Juan de Herrera in the Monastery in El Escorial, was declared a National Historic-Artistic Monument in 1944. The presence of the Vera Cruz has contributed decisively to its preservation. Worth mentioning amongst those who were involved in its construction are Miguel de Madariaga, José Bastida, Melchor Luzón, Alonso Ortiz and Antonio del Campo. The church is of a Latin cross floor plan, with a running tribune along the side naves and dome in the transept. These naves flow into the centre through flared arches.

The Museum of the Vera Cruz is located in the rooms of this Basilica-Sanctuary (see Museum section).

**PARISH CHURCH OF EL SALVADOR:** This beautiful example of religious architecture, a jewel of Murcian Renaissance, was built between the 16th and 18th centuries. The church, unfortunately unfinished, consists of a hall floor plan and has three naves which rest on ancient walls and four Ionic-style ribbed columns (almost two metres diameter each), supporting at a great height the gothic cross-ribbed domes. Seven chapels, paid for by several of the noble families of the city, line the three naves. In some of these, one can see magnificent railings by craftsman, Ginés García. Among the designers worthy of mention are Jerónimo Quijano and Pedro Monte de Isla. Among the builders were Juan Garzón, Pedro de Homa and his nephew Martín de Homa, Pedro de Antequera, Pedro and Andrés Monte, Damián Plá and Miguel de Madariaga. Also worth mentioning in this church is the high altar reredos by José Sáez, from the dissolved church of the Jesuits. Also remarkable are the rich examples of paintings, gold and silverware, cast iron and sculptures of the school of Salzilla. Its exterior features a façade which is divided into two bodies: the lower in the form of a triumphal arch; on the second, a niche topped with a curved pediment flanked by two shields (the town's and Santiago's). Also worthy of mention is the famous harpy with woman's head and chest and bird's body and claws, situated in the area known as "death's corner", about which many legends have been weaved. But its most striking exterior feature is its impressive tower, the bodies of which are in masonry, the last one topped by the bell tower. The church of El Salvador was declared a National Historical-Artistic Monument in 1983.



*Cloister Convent N.tra S. del Carmen*

**THE BULLRING:** It was built on the site of the old Franciscanos convent of Santa María de Gracia and opened in 1880. In 1926 it was remodelled, adding then its splendid neo-Mudejar front. Between 1995 and **CHURCH OF NTRA. SRA. DE LA SOLEDAD:** It is a 16th-century church, which was later remodelled, giving it its current appearance of a fortified temple. It is characterised by its sober Renaissance lines, it being, at one time, the first parish church the town had. It is currently the site of the Archaeological Museum, which exhibits remains dating from the Paleolithic age to the Middle Ages.

**PARISH CHURCH OF LA PURISIMA CONCEPCIÓN:** A magnificent example of popular religious architecture of the 16th century. Worth seeing from the inside is the Mudejar coffered ceiling, whose structure is supported on six Doric columns set into the walls of the church's single nave, above which the respective half-point arches cross over, supporting the wooden beams. In the central vaulted niche, the high altar reredos of La Purísima Concepción by Francisco Fernández Caro is remarkable. Also worth visiting is the so-called Tower of the Shepherds, a tower with four sections: three of ashlar stone masonry and the fourth that completes it with solid brick. In October 2008 has been inaugurated after an important general restoration of the whole building.

**CONVENT AND CHURCH OF NTRA. SRA. DEL CARMEN:** In the convent's foundation (1-X-1586) Father Juan de la Cruz, who was seven times in our city, intervened personally since he was requested to do so by Mother Ana de San Alberto, founder and prior of the Discalced Carmelite Mothers of Caravaca. The Order entrusted the creation of this convent to Father Nicolas Doria who delegated in Father Juan de

la Cruz, Provincial Vicar for Andalusia. In the beginning the Carmelite sisters placed the Holy Sacrament in a "small poor house" which they let near the church of Our Lady of the Conception. On the 1st March 1587 the convent moved to its present site. The project was carried out by the Order's architect, Father Alberto of the Mother of God and this was rendered possible thanks to donations from the Order of Santiago and, above all, to the special aid of Mr. Rodrigo Moya and Mrs. Mencía Monreal Chacón. In 1836, with the Mendizábal alienation, the Carmelite sisters abandoned the city. After 68 years of obliged absence they returned on September, 29 1904. Nowadays, the Convent shelters in his interior a hostelry.

**CONVENT AND CHURCH OF SAN JOSE:** It was founded by Santa Teresa de Jesús in 1575, being the twelfth convent of nuns of the 17 that she finally established through the efforts of the PP. Julian of Avila and Antonio Gaitán of the mother Ana de San Alberto, first prioress. It emphasizes its beautiful church of baroque rococo style, of century XVIII.

Caravaca de la Cruz, is part of the so-called "Twin Cities for Santa Teresa de Jesús" project, which began to work together with the rest of the foundation cities two years before the celebration of the fifth centenary of the birth of the saint (March 28 Of 2015.) In this project the historical, cultural and religious values of the Carmelites, especially of Santa Teresa de Jesus, but also of San Juan de la Cruz, who was deeply linked to Caravaca, have been revealed.

This project has achieved a successful continuity, being today known as the "Huellas de Teresa".



*The Stma. Cross in the Convent of Sta. Clara*

**THE “TEMPLETE”:** A building of Baroque style and hexagonal floor plan, it is set in a circumference. Four sections are clearly distinguishable: the podium, on which the building is set and where the pillars stand; the main body which encloses the area and shapes the monument; the dome over the closed drum roof of Arab slates and, finally, the lantern with six openings. The work is by José López. Its construction started in 1762 and was completed in 1801. This building is also known as “El Bañadero”, referring to the rites that have taken place there every May 3rd since 1384. These can be said to be the origin of the festivity which takes place during the first week of May which is celebrated in honour of the Santísima y Vera Cruz de Caravaca.

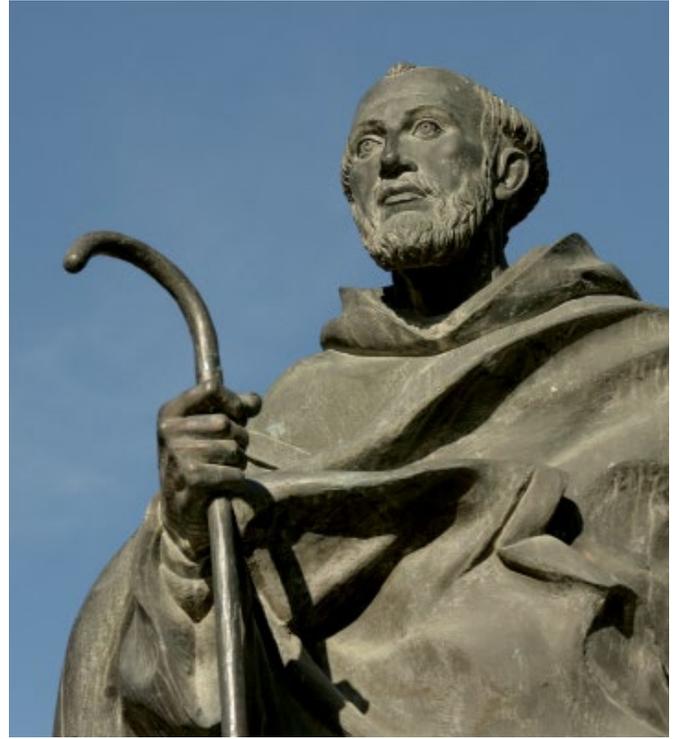
**TOWN HALL:** The construction of this Baroque building was ordered in 1737. The work of Jaime Bort in most of its original layout, it later underwent modifications by Friar Juan de Santa Teresa and Juan García Galán, and was finally built by the master builder from Caravaca, Antonio del Campo. The main work was completed in 1762 and the first meeting was held on January 3, 1763. In the Assembly Hall, one can see an enormous oil painting on canvas, a copy of an original by Rosales which is now on view at the Prado Museum. The subject of the painting is the testament of Queen

Isabel La Católica. The city’s coat of arms can be seen on the third floor of the building. On the left is the “almudí” or “alhóndiga” (grain exchange warehouse) which is now municipal offices. It was completed in 1807, as it says on the stone beneath the window on the third floor. The City Hall underwent extensive refurbishment works that have converted the building into one of a modern and functional interior.

**MONASTERY AND CHURCH OF SANTA CLARA:** Founded in 1609, the church was built on the site of the chapel of San Bartolomé which, along with another thirteen, was part of a Via Crucis that ended at the Chapel of La Reja (the well-known Calvary). Construction of the church was completed between 1715 and 1718. Its floor plan is of a Latin cross and its vaults are groined in the transept and barrelled in the centre aisle. At the top there is a small hole through which the Clara sisters drop thousands of rose petals on the morning of May 4, when the Vera Cruz enters the church. The façade, in stone, is divided into two sections: the first is straight and frames the access door; the second, upper one, has a vaulted niche finished with empty shells. The “Clarisas” nuns elaborate sweet craftsmen and traditional.



*Church of the Company of Jesus. Cultural center*



*Monument of San Juan de la Cruz by Rafael Pi*

**CHURCH OF COMPAÑÍA DE JESÚS:** The construction of this building was completed in around 1614 and follows the model of Jesuit architecture, with its floor plan of a single nave and connecting side chapels. Its dome has a lantern complete with illuminated opening, and is finished with decorated shells. This building was originally founded as a School and comprised the church, cloister and many rooms for pupils and teachers. The building lost its original use after the Jesuits were expelled from Spain by King Charles III (1767). After the Mendizábal alienation the building was privately owned. It is currently a local government-owned building that functions as a Cultural Centre.

**TOWER OF LOS TEMPLARIOS:** Situated in the beautiful setting of the Springs of the Marquis, it is a 16th century building that was probably constructed on an earlier one of Templar origin (hence its name). It currently houses the Nature Interpretation Centre.

**HERMITAGE OF SAN SEBASTIAN:** A building – today the site of the “Caravaca de la Cruz” Musical Ensemble – from the early 16th century, located in Plaza del Santo, with a rectangular floor plan and a gabled, wood-framed roof that rests on three pointed diaphragm arches; it contains a presbytery and choir stalls overlooking the nave, with the church divided into three planes. Inside, of note are the late-Gothic wall paintings by way of an altarpiece.

**HERMITAGE OF LA REJA:** This rectangular shape building was constructed in the 17th century. It is one of the few remaining of the fourteen that once formed the Via Crucis. On the railing giving it its name, a stone shows the names of those who ordered its construction: Francisco Muñoz de Otorola and Catalina López.

**HERMITAGE OF SANTA ELENA:** This is a small, single-nave church built in the 18th century. Important here is the adorned image of Our Father Jesús Nazareno, of great popular devotion. This is where the solemn ‘foot-kissing’ ceremony takes place on the first Friday of March.

**OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST:** In addition to these monuments, visitors will discover Plaza del Arco, with the Monument to the Moor and the Christian, Plaza San Juan de la Cruz, with a Monument to the Saint. On the slope of the castle the monument dedicated to the career of the Wine Horses, the three sculptural monuments by Rafael Pi. In the place of the Horses of the Wine there is also a monument dedicated to this celebration, and in front of the main entrance to the castle is the monument to the Pilgrim on a Bicycle by Antonio Campillo. Visitors can also wander the many streets that boast magnificent large homes from yesteryear.



*Lateral zone of the interior of the Archaeological Museum of La Soledad*



*Arqueta of the Sta. Cruz of the Master Lorenzo Suárez de Figueroa  
Any 1390*

### **MUSEUM OF THE “VERA CRUZ”:**

Located in the premises of the Basilica-Sanctuary, it houses collections of ornaments, silverwork and paintings. In the art gallery the following can be highlighted: “The healing of Tobias”, an oil painting on canvas by the Caravaca painter, Rafael Tego, one of the best portrait painters of the Spanish 19th century, in neoclassical style; “Saint Francis in the Blackberry Bush”, an oil painting on canvas (17th century) from the Ribera School. Another six oil paintings on board from the 16th century also stand out. These are originals by Hernando de Llanos, a painter who was a disciple of Leonardo da Vinci, and which narrate the Miracle of the Appearance.

Among the ornaments, the “Chasuble of Chirinos” (Moslem brocade adapted to the form of the liturgical ornament that the priest Chirinos is believed to have been wearing at the time of the miraculous appearance of the Cross).

Among the silverwork we find the Monstrance of the Cross (start of the 16th century), a gift from the first Marquis of Velez, Pedro Fajardo. The “Portacruz de los Baños”, a gift from Luis Fajardo, the second Marquis of Velez, is another important piece. Worth mentioning, in the Chapel of the Cross, is the gilt-coated silver box-case donated around 1390-95 by the master of the Order of Santiago, Lorenzo Suarez de Figueroa. In this museum is also the processional cart of the Santísima Cruz, conjunction of polychrome carvings and elements in silver that result in an exceptional work of goldsmithing.

Part of the old plan of the Castle can now be visited, an old dungeon from the time can be seen.

**ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM “LA SOLEDAD”:** The Archaeological Museum is a top quality facility situated on the Castle hill, in mid historical centre and inside a building with great patrimonial value, which is the old church of Ntra. Sra. de la Soledad, the first parish church founded in Caravaca de la Cruz.

It houses pieces of great value, the fruit of the many findings made in the excavations carried out in different archaeological sites, above all those carried out in the Iberian-Roman complex of “The Incarnation”. In this museum we can find ceramics, arms, coins, architectonic elements, etc.



*Fiesta's museum*

**MUSEUM OF THE “FIESTA”:** This is located in the C/ De las Monjas, nº. 19, the old House of the Uriba. It develops a museographic project accessible to the general public and especially adapted to the blind. Here Christian and Moorish costumes are exhibited, as well as ornaments used in the festivities offered in honour of the Holy Vera Cruz, held from 1 to 5 May, as well as the neckbands used to harness the “Caballos del Vino” (Horses of the Wine) on the morning of the 2nd of May (cloths embroidered in gold, silver and silk).

**ETHNICAL MUSIC MUSEUM OF BARRANDA. THE CARLOS BLANCO FADOL COLLECTION:**

The Barranda Museum of Ethnic Music, the Carlos Blanco Fadol Collection, is a themed museum the aim of which is to offer people from all walks of life the forms, sounds and general information about instruments and music from around the world. The task of bringing together this collection of ethnical musical instruments took Carlos Blanco Fadol some forty years to complete, from the five continents, culminating in this unique exhibition.

The Barranda Museum of Ethnic Music offers an themed exhibition of these instruments to offer visitors a greater understanding of the functions for which they were created or the uses that they acquired over time. On display are instruments associated with religion, slavery, magic and witchcraft, instruments that mimic the sounds of animals, others used for love conquests, instruments of nomadic beggars or instruments of war... A whole host of sensations for listening and looking, a point of reference to provide future generations with knowledge about the musical culture of people throughout the world.



*Museum of Wine Horses. Harnessed horse*

**HOUSE- MUSEUM OF THE WINE HORSES:** In the former house of the family Muso Muñoz Melgarejo, of the 18th century, totally rehabilitated, is located this space dedicated to the Wine Horses, the famous festival of the city. A tour from his origins up to the current importance where all the aspects of the “fiesta” are represented: the morfologic competition, the design, embroidery and pieces of the dress of the wine horses, the race ... Across diverse rooms and audio-visual it tries to transmit and to spread proudly the roots and the present of a feast that at present is candidate to Cultural Immaterial Heritage of the Humanity.

**“ANGEL REINÓN” ETHNOGRAPHICAL MUSEUM:** The “Ángel Reinón” Miniature Ethnographical Museum is situated right in the centre of Caravaca de la Cruz. You will be able to follow a detailed route concerning traditional trades and human activities most of which have disappeared or have been deeply transformed. The collection consists of over 400 exclusive miniature pieces of great

formal perfection, in iron or wood, making up a unique collection. Each object is unique and is made entirely by hand and perfected by sanding and filing, with a surprising level of detail. Within the collection we must stand out, for great perfection and the number of working hours spent by the artist to create them, the tractor, the forge wheel, the farming mouldboards and a simply extraordinary cart.

**CARRILERO MUSEUM:** This exhibition space is located in what was the seat of the Muñoz Otarola family and the home of Caravaca-born artist José Carrilero, where visitors can admire 90 sculptural and pictorial works by the local sculptor.

The space delivers on the artist's wish to have his works, which for some time were dispersed around different cities, on permanent display in his home town.

The work of the Caravaca-born artist is characterised by an expressive harmonisation of classicism with renewed postures, the fruit of his personal contribution. Outstanding features of his sculptural work are his special treatment of the human figure, contrasts of light and shadow and his treatment of surfaces.

All of this, together with the special focus on action and movement and his ability to produce dramatic feelings from formal resources, comprises a mature body of work with significant national and international projection.

**NATURE INTERPRETATION CENTRE:** Located in the so-called “Tower of the Templars”, a 16th century building, it is situated at the entrance to the main avenue of “Las Fuentes del Marques” and about which popular imagination has woven many legends. The Visitors Centre is the didactic culmination of all the singularity, attraction and naturalism, not only of the framework already described, but the whole North-eastern area of the Region of Murcia. Here, the aim was to take advantage both didactically and interpretatively, of the appropriate conditions of the place through the different studies and projects carried out, fostering the information and environmental education of the user and visitors of Las Fuentes, promoting the ludic and cultural offer of Caravaca de la Cruz, as well as increasing the tourist offer in the field of Nature Tourism.

**EXHIBITION “CRUX CARAVACENSIS”:** A tour throughout the history of the Cross of Caravaca from the 15th to the 19th century in Germany, Austria, Poland, France, Czech Republic, Italy and the Netherlands. The small copies that are shown in this exhibition arrived in those countries either through some Religious Orders, or carried there by pilgrims who had been drawn to Caravaca and its miraculous Cross and had decided to pay it a visit. Tradition, culture and religion blend into one another in these unique rooms, where the ineffaceable trace of the Cross of Caravaca around the world is shown on their stone walls.

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(MURCIA)

# AREAS OF ARCHEOLOGICAL INTEREST

One of the places of greatest archaeological interest in the region is Caravaca de la Cruz and within it a place called Estrecho de Las Cuevas, a little valley crossed by the river Quípar near to the La Encarnación district.

Places of great archaeological interest in the town of Caravaca de la Cruz:

- **CUEVA NEGRA (MID PALEOLITHIC):** Situated in the La Encarnación archaeological complex. This site is approximately 800,000 years old. Findings here include teeth and bone fragments of European fossil man of the pre-Neanderthal type and bone remains of animals of the period. This site's Palaeolithic remains form a unique "achelense-levaismo musteroide" collection, being the oldest find of this classification in Europe. The archeologists have stated that the fire of the Black Cave has an antiquity of 800,000 years, for what the deposit turns into obliged reference of Europa's Pleistocene.

- **LOS MOLINOS DE PAPEL (CALCOLITHIC):** Archaeological site on the high terraces of the valley of the river Argos to the south of the Caravaca de la Cruz urban area. The structures to be found in this settlement are silos, bottoms of huts half dug into the rock and ditches. An Ibero-Roman phase and an Islamic phase have also been recognised. Near to the settlement a burial ground dated at 4,500 years old has been found with over 1,300 human skeletons and 50 dog skeletons, making it the biggest and most important prehistoric burial ground in the Iberian peninsula.

- **LA PLACICA (MID BRONZE-AGE SETTLEMENT):** Situated in the La Encarnación archaeological complex, it is the largest find of this period (1800-1200 BC) in the region. Protected by a defensive wall, it occupies the upper plain of a hill with lateral escarpments and is bordered, on its left flank, by the river Quípar. Not excavated.

- **LOS VILLARES (IBERIAN SETTLEMENT):** Also situated in the La Encarnación archaeological complex. This settlement is located on the right bank of the river Quípar on a wide plateau protected by a wall with rectangular towers in the South and East sectors. Inside the settlement, at its Northeastern end there is a slightly raised sector in the form of an acropolis. It may have been inhabited between the 6th and 3rd centuries BC.

- **LOS VILLARES (IBERIAN SETTLEMENT):** Situated in the La Encarnación archaeological complex. It is a new settlement situated on the left bank of the river Quípar, facing the Los Villares site and probably founded at around the same date. It has a large sloping surface area protected by a high wall. Building and street construction and layouts are to be found within. This site could be that of the Roman settlement of Asso, mentioned by the geographer Ptolomy in the 2nd century. Not excavated, except for the Iberian necropolis.





· **CERRO DE LA ERMITA (IBERO-ROMAN SANCTUARY):**

Situated on a hill to the South of the La Encarnación archaeological complex, delimited by the La Ermita and Los Canteros ravines and beneath the current structures of La Ermita and its immediate vicinity. It consists of two Roman temples in the Ionic style that replaced at the beginning of the 2nd century BC the fragile buildings of an earlier Iberian sanctuary. In three successive construction phases the temples were enlarged and monumentalised. In their initial phase they are the oldest Roman temples to have been discovered to date in the Iberian Peninsula.

· **CERRO DE LAS FUENTES (ROMAN):** Located in the Archivel district, it includes a late Roman republic castle dating from the 1st century BC, the period of the civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompeius Magnus. The construction has an excellent and original defensive system with access door flanked by square towers and an outer wall with rectangular bastions of 11-m in length, acquaintance in the military Roman architecture as titulum. The indications of human presence on this hill (with brief intervals of abandonment) run from an Argaric settlement in the second millennium before Christ - the initial settlement was at Casa Noguera - through to the 9th century AD, in the Islamic period.

· **ERMITA DE SINGLA (ROMAN):** Near to a hermitage belonging to the Singla district are the remains of a Roman rural settlement of the II-III centuries AD, on which a necropolis was later erected (4th to 5th centuries BC). This Roman site is one of the many - although smaller - in the area, demonstrating the extent of the Romanisation of Northeast Murcia, comparable with that of the Region's coastline.

· **EL EMPALME BATHS (ROMAN):** Situated between Caravaca de la Cruz and Cehegín at a crossroads called El Empalme. Two periods of occupation can be distinguished: in the 1st century AD and in the 6th - 7th Centuries AD. The baths building has its rooms set out in a rectangle, including the changing room, the rooms for cold, temperate and cold baths. Built on to the latter is a deep well (which probably housed a waterwheel) and a large swimming pool.

· **LA CABEZUELA (ROMAN):** This site situated in the Caravaca district of Barranda, near to the place known as Fuente de las Tosquillas, we find the remains of a Roman tower dating from the 1st century BC, used to watch over the valley formed by the rivers Argos and Quípar, in the same dates that the Hill of Archivel's Sources.



*Medieval Market*

## CRAFTS

It is necessary to emphasize that, as the name of the city is tied to the Cross, one of the principal works of crafts, that one comes realizing from ancient times, it is the production of reproductions of Caravaca's Cross on the part of the local jewelers, from the simplest in silver up to works of enormous quality and artistic value realized in gold.

Between other activities of the sector that have implantation in the municipality we can stand out: the production of nougats and typical sweets like the alfajor and the yolks, the exquisite cold meat, the bakery, the apiculture and his derivatives, the design and the decoration of interiors, the trinkets and the works in metal with special dedication to the suits and ornaments used in typical events like the "Fiestas" of Caravaca and other cities, the forge and artistic locksmithing, the manufacture of traditional trunks, the confection of magnificent artistic embroideries, the production of natural essences, the carpentry and cabinet-making, the haberdashery and his complements, the footwear with the traditional espadrilles, etc.

In a visit to our city, on weekdays, it will be able to find workshops and workrooms in which the supply, the decoration and the gift put to his disposition with the captivation of the well made things.

Because the changes that have taken place in this sector, and to give response to his worries and problems, there was created the Association of Craftsmen and Producers "La Corredera".

Throughout the year our town hall promotes the celebration of several events that varied visitors offer to our samples of the occupation craftsman:

- **THE " MARKET OF THE PILGRIM "**. It is celebrated in the walk of "La Corredera" of our city. Between 10:00 h. and 14: 30h. the third Sunday of the months of October to April, and the third Saturday afternoon of May and June (of. 17: 00h to 21:00 h.) Here it is possible to have an agreeable meeting with local and regional craftsmen who offer the better of his products put to the service of the good one to eat, of the gift and the decoration in the middle of an environment that in every edition is inspired in a different subject matter.

- **THE " MARKET OF RURAL TRADITIONS "**. It is celebrated always last weekend of January together with the "Fiesta de las Cuadrillas" in one of our villages, Barranda. Here we can find an exhibition of useful peasants and equipment of tillage, a workshop of distillation of fragrant plants, a tavern to enjoy the typical meat to the ember and the craftsmen's great variety that offer his traditional products of supply, decoration and gift.

- **THE " MEDIEVAL MARKET "**. It is located in full center of the historical hull - artistically of the city: In the square of the Arch and New square, and in the street Puentevilla, Las Monjas street, Major street, Santa Clara Walk, etc. It is celebrated during the " bridge of the constitution ", about the 6th, December 7 and 8. Here the crafts with capital letters give itself appointment in our city, coming craftsmen of the whole national geography with the better of his products and, together with them, the whole series of activities for the enjoyment of the visitor: demonstrations, games, animations of street and different shows for small and big, between that the great Medieval Tilt stands out.

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## FAIRS AND FESTIVITIES

### **FESTIVITIES IN HONOUR OF THE STMA. Y VERA CRUZ:**

**Pronounced of International Tourist Interest.** They take place from May 1st to May 5th. Celebrated in honour of the Santísima y Vera Cruz, patron saint of the city, they commemorate events that occurred during the lengthy period in which Caravaca was a town on the border of the Nazarene kingdom of Granada. Ethnologically, they are of great interest, particularly the festivity of the Wine Horses.

On the morning of May 2nd, the appearance of the Holy Reliquary in 1231 is celebrated. Due to this miraculous appearance, the Moorish warden of the town and all his men adopted the Catholic faith. The Appearance Mass is traditionally held on the morning of May 2nd in the small shrine. It is also the only day that the Wine Horses come out onto the streets. **THIS IS A UNIQUE IN THE WORDL WORLD FIESTA.** At first the purpose of these horses was to take the wine to the Sanctuary to be blessed. As time

passed, the wine skins were replaced by luxuriously embroidered blankets, genuine works of art. This unique festivity includes two different contests: the race or test of speed, and the trappings or way in which the horses are harnessed. That same afternoon, the Moorish and Christian Bands simulate a battle to commemorate olden times. The Most Holy Cross is taken in procession from the Basilica-Sanctuary to the Parish of El Salvador.

There are further parades on May 3rd. In the morning, the Children's Parade and the race of ponies, where children show their ability to understand the festivity from when they are very young. In the afternoon, there is a Parliament between the Moorish and Christian Kings and a new simulated battle, followed by the Bathing of the Cross ceremony to bless the water that irrigates the fields of Caravaca. On May 4th there is a grand Parade along the City's main road. Finally, May 5th is a day of deep religious feelings, with a multitudinous procession accompanying the Cross to the Basilica-Sanctuary where it will remain for the rest of the year.



*Fiesta of the Squares of Barranda*

**FIESTA OF LAS CUADRILLAS: Declared National Tourist Interest.** This is held in the Caravaca village of Barranda. There is an interesting Festival of Quadrilles (traditional local folklore: animeras, pardicas and jota dances, etc.). This festivity was first held in 1979, supported by the festivity of La Candelaria, Patron Saint of Barranda. The Quadrilles, following their ancient incorporation under the wing of the church, performed various rites that are still practised even today. They are formed by a group of six to fifteen musicians.

They play string and percussion instruments, although some of the quadrilles also play wind instruments. They play tunes for individual dances and Christmas carols.

The Festivity of the Cuadrillas is held on the last Sunday in January.

**EXALTATION OF THE VERA CRUZ:** Is held on 14 September and is a religious Fiesta. The solemn “Quinario” begins on September 10<sup>th</sup>, with a series of religious acts beforehand in the Basilica-Sanctuary.



**CARAVACA'S FAIR:** The Fair of Caravaca de la Cruz, which is held on the second weekend of October, offers visitors exposure and sale of agricultural machinery and automotive, with a program of parallel activities adapted to different tastes and ages, such as demonstrations, Tastings and sale of gastronomic products, Antique Market, collecting and second hand, organized by the Association of Artisans "La Corredera" Caravaca de la Cruz activities of animation and live music.

**SEMANA SANTA:** Caravaca de la Cruz celebrates its Easter Week with different acts and processions of Nazarenes with images that recall the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. It is then when the image heritage of the churches of the town comes out into the streets in processions organised by the different Brotherhoods from Holy Tuesday to Good Friday.

*Easter.  
Christ of the Volunteers*

# THE VILLAGES OF CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

• **LA ALMUDEMA.** Situated in the southeast sector of the municipality, in the basin of the Quípar river that links the provinces of Murcia and Almería. Its name appears to go back to Muslim times; it seems that in the 15th century, this area was already known as La Almudema. This country district has a church that was built in 1769.

• **ARCHIVEL.** Archivel Village includes not only the main town and houses of Casicas and Noguericas, but also a complex of outlying estates. It is set in the corridor that runs to Campo de San Juan (Moratalla) in the basin of the Argos river, west of Caravaca. Archivel has a 17th century church, although it was renovated several times in the 18th and 19th centuries and is currently undergoing refurbishment. Archivel's economy has always been based primarily on agriculture.

• **BARRANDA.** It is set at a crossroads, the most important of which is the highway to Granada. It comprises the following areas: Barranda, El Altico, La Cabezuela and La Vereda.

• **BENABLÓN.** This village lies on the right bank of the Argos River basin. To the east, it borders with Vega de Caravaca. Since the Middle Ages, Benablón has been under the jurisdiction of the Council of Caravaca except in the 19th century when it became a deputation of the recently created Town Council of Archivel.

• **LA ENCARNACIÓN.** It is located to the Southwest of Caravaca plain. Its population is currently distributed in three areas: La Encarnación, Arrabal de la Encarnación and scattered. Christianity appeared early in the area, resulting in the transformation of the Roman Temple, preparing it for Christian worship. There are still some remains of the Muslim period, among them the so-called Cave of the Moorish King. La Encarnación has been present in Caravaca throughout the history of the area through the municipality's worship of the Virgin de La Encarnación.

• **EL HORNICO - TARTAMUDO.** El Hornico was known in the 16th century as Forno de Arana (Oven of Arana). As for Tartamudo, its name dates from the 16th century. El Hornico, historically ascribed to El Moral, has always been under Caravaca's jurisdiction whereas El Tartamudo became a deputation of Archivel.

• **LA JUNQUERA - MORALEJO.** La Junquera includes the hamlets of La Junquera, El Moralejo and La Capellanía, plus the complex of outlying estates belonging to each of them.

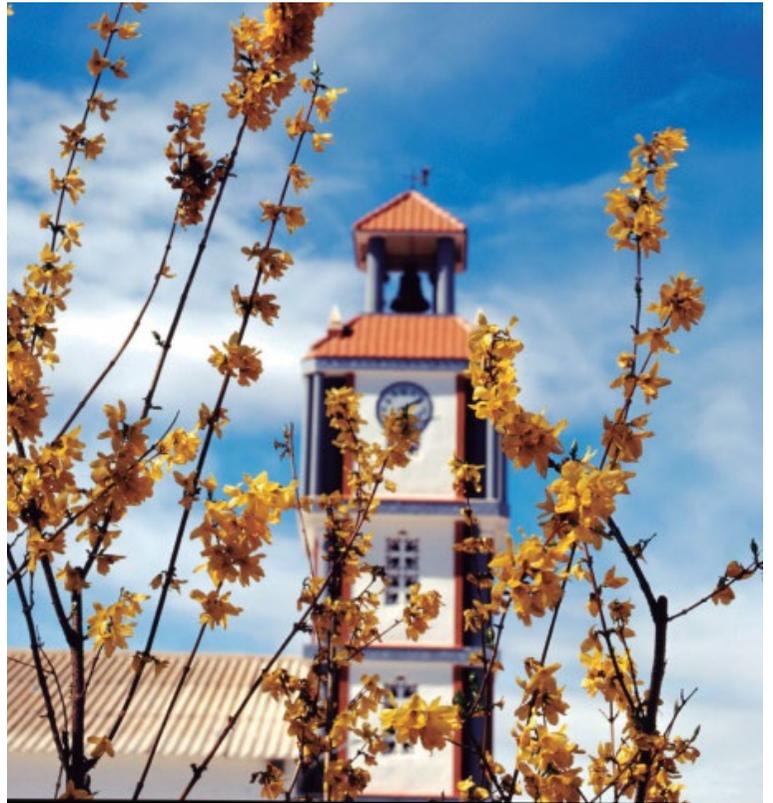


La Almudema



Navares

- **NAVARES.** This includes the towns of Navares de Arriba and Navares de Abajo plus the outlying estates. This area includes the beautiful setting known as Fuente de Navares.
- **PINILLA.** The town's centre is in the basin of the Quípar river. It has recently taken the name of Pinilla de San José.
- **SINGLA.** Single village currently covers only the towns of Singla de Arriba and Singla de Abajo plus a number of outlying estates.
- **CANEJA.** Caneja lies at the foot of La Serrata mountain. The name of Caneja has been known since the Middle Ages as it remains today. Its having been a settlement in Roman times is almost a certainty.
- **EL MORAL - ENTREDICHO.** The lands of this village are very close to the ancient kingdom of Granada, in the centre of the medieval border between Granada and Murcia.
- **LOS ROYOS.** Los Royos village includes the territories of Los Royos de Arriba and Los Royos de Abajo, Retamalejo, Poyos de Celda, Peñicas, Tarragoya, Morales and Campo Coy. Los Royos, main centre of the village, lies at 970 metres above sea level in an area close, almost bordering, the boundary of the province of Almería.
- **LOS PRADOS.** Situated on the left bank of the Quípar river basin, it lies 771 metres above sea level. The history of Los Prados can be linked totally and in all senses to that of La Encarnación, as their origins are the same.



*Pinilla de San José*



*Los Royos*



## NATURE PARK

### SPRINGS OF THE MARQUIS

This is one of the town's great attractions. It is a Nature Park classified a historic site, just 2 km from the city. Access can be gained from Avda. de los Andenes (by car, along Camino de Mayrena, or along Camino del Huerto if you prefer to Walk). The estate owes its name to the Marquises of San Mamés and the several springs of water there. It is the water and its distribution through ditches and channels that gave this pleasant green area its name. There are our main springs, two of them in the form of "frying pans".

Also of interest are "The Caves of the Marquis" which are situated on a hill overlooking the springs.

Here we also find the Youth Hostel which can accommodate 44 people and from where a variety of activities are organised, such a monumental routes, landscape routes, gastronomy routes, rambling, nature awareness studies (It Is close to the Nature Interpretation Centre), conferences, exhibitions, etc. which form a fundamental complex for this magnificent setting.

The Nature Interpretation Centre or Visitor Centre Is In the Tower of the Templars, a site located at the top of the main promenade of "The Springs of the Marquis".



# GREEN ROUTE OF THE NORTHWEST

The Green Route of the Northwest constitutes one of the most important ecological corridors of the Region of Murcia, crossing part of the province and turning into a tourist resource of the first order. The Route takes advantage of the former railway tracing between Murcia and Caravaca de la Cruz, and during the tour we can admire landscapes of great beauty and variety typical of the natural and cultural heritage of the Region of Murcia, in which are included three natural spaces inside of the Network Nature 2000 and numerous places catalogued Well of Cultural Interest (BIC).

It is a 78 kms tour of natural way that crosses 9 cities of the province: Murcia, Molina de Segura, Alguazas, Campos del Río, Albudeite, Mula, Bullas, Cehegín y Caravaca de la Cruz.

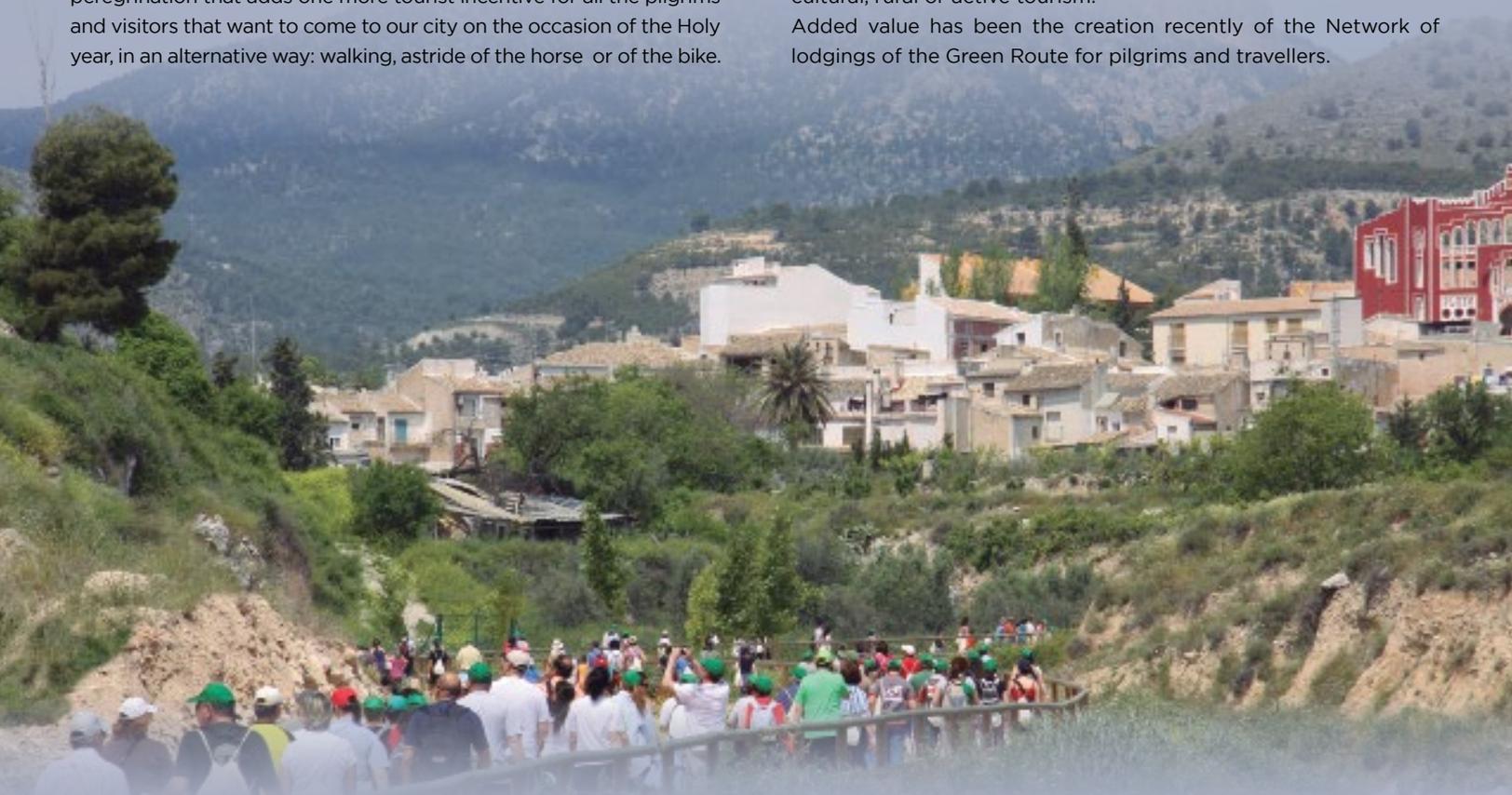
Along the Green Route of the Northwest, in addition, is overlapped the “Camino de la Cruz” (The route of the cross), named GR-252 (apostle route) Camino del Levante ( Road of the east) whose beginning is in the Alicante locality of Orihuela, and it supposes an important way of peregrination that adds one more tourist incentive for all the pilgrims and visitors that want to come to our city on the occasion of the Holy year, in an alternative way: walking, astride of the horse or of the bike.



*Hostel of pilgrims. Old Train Station Caravaca de la Cruz*

This route is important due to the fact of that it puts together in the same product a long series of attractions that reinforce the tourism of the region of Murcia in several areas, as the religious, cultural, rural or active tourism.

Added value has been the creation recently of the Network of lodgings of the Green Route for pilgrims and travellers.



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## GASTRONOMY

Caravaca de la Cruz's top-notch gastronomy is bound up with its local agricultural and meat produce. It includes migas and all sorts of rice dishes: with rabbit, chicken, chickpeas, snails, saffron milk-cap mushrooms, cod...(bear in mind the proximity of Calasparra, with its Designation of Origin rice).

These dishes are highly sought after in the area.

Also of note is lamb en tartera an grilled lamb (local segureño lamb is classified with the designation PGI, or Protected Geographic Indication), pork sausages, stews (spinach, celery, etc.) and, above all, desserts, which include yemas and alfajor (a typical local Christmas sweet), as well as homemade liqueurs like mistel and coffee liqueur, constituting a rich and varied menu that delight all visitors.





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