



LA RIOJA
Apeteece



Monasteries of La Rioja

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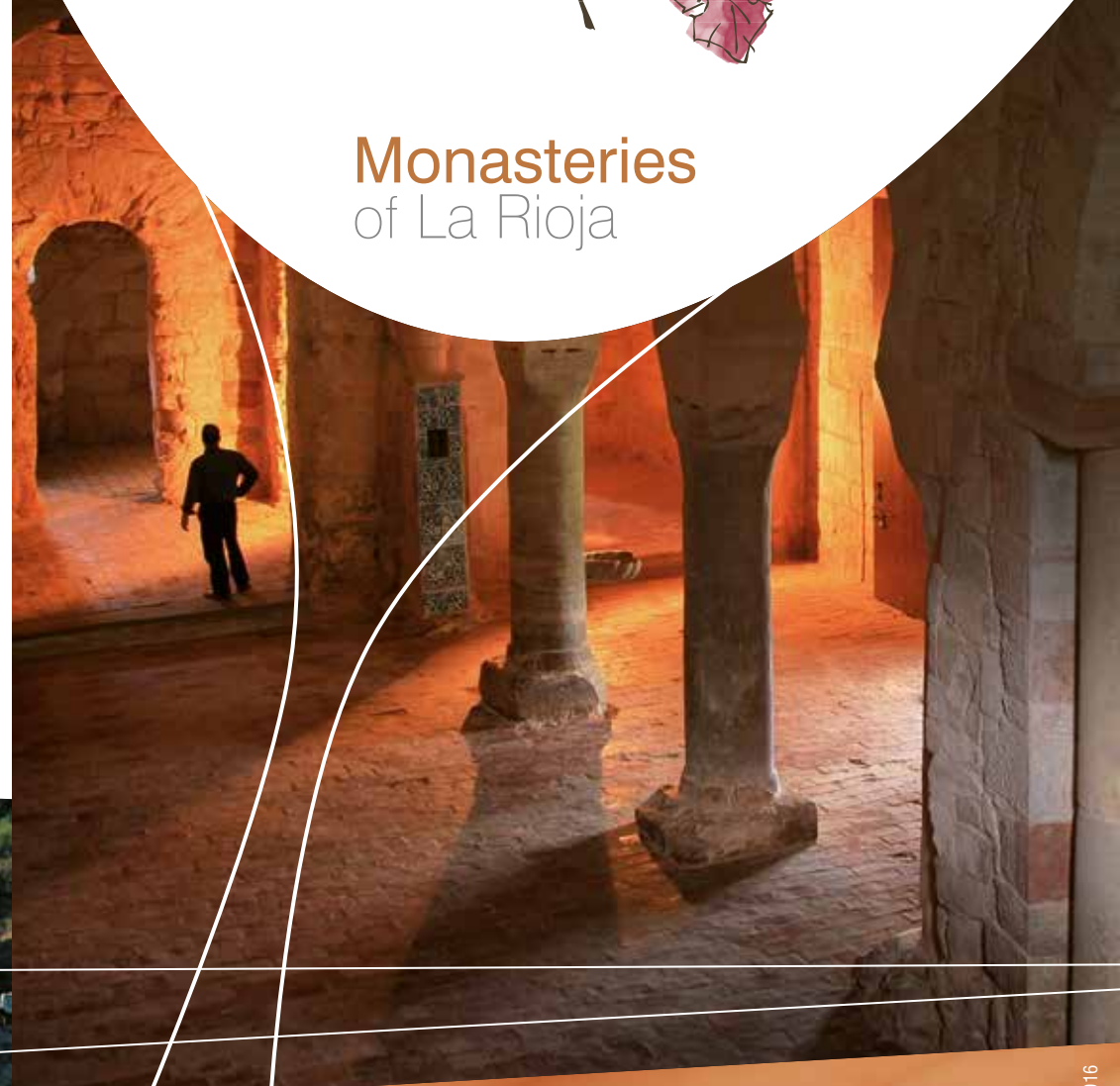
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Monasteries of La Rioja

The 5th century brought the arrival of the Visigoths to the Iberian Peninsula, creating a tense atmosphere that forced valley dwellers to seek safer locations. The area currently occupied by La Rioja provided mountains near the Valley that were difficult to access where the locals could protect themselves and build their homes, digging out caves or using those that had been made by nature.

The caves provided the perfect shelter for **hermits** in the valleys of La Rioja, where Christianity prevailed despite continuous invasions.

Some of the monasteries in La Rioja originated in communities that developed around hermits, the most notable example being the **Monastery of Suso** in San Millán de la Cogolla. **San Millán**, an anchorite monk born in the village of Berceo, settled in a cave where we can observe how successive extensions attempted to provide space for the community of followers that gathered around him. Proof of this are the tombs found next to the monastery, where the Saint's followers were buried to remain close to him even in death.

La Rioja Alta soon rid itself of Muslim domination and the monasteries came under the control of the monarchs of Pamplona, who fostered their development, turning them into major culture centres, where they made beautiful **codices**, full of miniatures adorning the text, such as the **Albeldan Codex** and the **Emilian Codex**. The scriptoria of these monasteries were the most productive of the age. In them, the monks carried out the complicated task of illuminating and copying the codices in order to preserve their content.

Proof of the importance of Riojan monasteries can be found in **San Millán de la Cogolla**, where the first words in Spanish Romance were written, the **Emilian Glosses** in Codex 46 which dates to 964. It is a glossary where we can read Romance words, both interspersed in the text and on the margins. Years later, Codex 60 was written, where words also appear in Romance as well as Basque.

1 Monastery of **Nuestra Señora de la Piedad** Casalarreina

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Exterior of church apse.



Church of the monastery.

It was founded by the Bishop of Calahorra and La Calzada, Don Juan Fernández de Velasco, son of the first Constable of Castile, and his niece, Doña Isabel Alonso de Guzmán y Fernández de Velasco. The young girl entered the monastery taking the name **María de La Piedad** and her uncorrupted body is still kept there.

Cardinal Adriaan Florenszoon blessed and inaugurated the monastery in **1522** on the occasion of his visit to “Casa de la Reina”, the town's old name, on his way to Rome where he was going to be confirmed and crowned as Pope under the name of **Adrian VI**.

The sisters of the **Dominican Order** took possession of the monastery in 1523, although during the Peninsular War they had to move to Burgos as the monastery had become a Field Hospital. Today it is still run by the same order. The monastery took ten years to be completed (1514-1524), using top quality materials—ashlar, brick, wood— thus achieving a very uniform style.

The monastery's **church** is in the Catholic Monarchs style, with a single nave with buttresses on either side, a main chapel and octagonal transept and apse. In the centre of the nave there is the tomb of the founder, a smooth reddish jasper mound with no other decoration except the inscription. The **main altarpiece** is dedicated to the Passion of Our Lord and, particularly, to Our Lady of La Piedad, in whose honour the monastery was founded.

The **main cloister** has two levels, consisting of a square with seven sections per side. The lower level is covered with tierceron cross vaulting. The central keystones of the vaults depict allegories of the Passion with various symbols and attributes. The upper cloister, covered with a flat wooden roof, and with stretches of balusters between the columns, is one of the parts with the richest ornamental decoration.

The **main portal** of the church is conceived in the late Gothic style in the shape of a big altarpiece made of stone.



Main cloister.



Ground floor of the cloister.

There are other facilities as well, such as the high choir, consisting of stalls with 95 seats and two lecterns, the sacristy, chapterhouse, parlour, refectory, etc. completing this magnificent ensemble.



Main portal, a work by Felipe Bigarny.

2 Monastery of Santa María de la Estrella San Asensio



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26340 San Asensio
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Exterior view of the monastery.

Today, various parts of the monastery are open to visitors: the **Puerta de los Caballeros** which was the main portal; the gothic cloister from 1430; the Fountain of the King from the 16th century; the modern sanctuary from the mid 20th century, the **pilgrims' hall** and the **sarcophagus of the archdeacon**.

The Monastery of La Estrella was built on the foundations of an old shrine built as a result of the appearance of an image of the Virgin Mary on a holm oak tree next to a water source. The monastery was originally named **Our Lady of Aritzeta** (Holm Oak in Basque) and later "Estrella" (the Star) because the oak tree in which the image of the virgin appeared had this symbol engraved on one of its branches.

The shrine is first mentioned in 1060, as a donation from **Sancho Garcés III "el Mayor"** to the Bishop of Álava, Nuño, and, in 1088, it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishopric of Calahorra. In 1403, Juan de Guzmán, Bishop of Calahorra and La Calzada, entrusted the custody of the shrine and its lands to the **Hieronymite Friars** of La Morcuera (Miranda de Ebro). Following the 1419 Papal Bull of Martin V, it was made a monastery.

In 1423, the Archdeacon of the Diocese of Calahorra and La Calzada, Diego Fernández de Entrena, paid for the reconstruction of the monastery in line with the style of the era. The Logroño-

born painter Juan Fernández de **Navarrete "The mute"** started to train in this monastery in which he left works executed by his hand which no longer exist today.

The Ecclesiastical Confiscations of Mendizabal in 1835 dispersed the Monastery's assets and brought about its **architectural ruin**. Thus, a large part of its former properties are found in different places of La Rioja: the extraordinary gothic choir stalls are in the church of San Esteban in Ábalos; the organ in Ventosa; the tabernacle and a relief of the Assumption are in San Asensio; the choir books and the image of the Virgin of La Estrella in Briones; and many works, such as the sculptures of the main altarpiece, oil paintings, pulpit, serge, etc. in the Museum of La Rioja in Logroño.

In 1951 the **La Salle Friars** acquired the monastery and reconstructed the ensemble in neo-gothic style, under the direction of the architect Pedro Ispizua, achieving perfect harmony between the new style and the old structures.

"Navarrete el Mudo"

Juan Fernández de Navarrete (Logroño, 1526 - 1579) was the chief painter of king **Phillip II**, who commissioned him to paint several canvasses to decorate the Basilica of San Lorenzo in **El Escorial**.



His contemporaries knew him as the «Spanish Apelles». His mastery is surprising, if one takes into account that he is one of the first deaf-mutes who, in the 16th century managed to acquire a significant general culture, a necessary requirement for painters of the time. His best known work is the "Martyrdom of Santiago", from 1571, when he was already employing the methods of the Venetian school.



Santa María de la Estrella surrounded by vineyards.

3 Monastery of **Nuestra Señora de la Anunciación** **Santo Domingo de la Calzada**

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Pedro Manso de Zúñiga, Bishop of the Diocese of Calahorra and La Calzada, confessor of Saint Teresa of Avila, founded this Abbey. The **Cistercian nuns** who live here moved to Santo Domingo de La Calzada in 1610, when the building of the new monastery began, and stayed in a house adjacent to the shrine of Our Lady of La Plaza until the works were completed in 1621.



Tomb of Don Pedro Manso de Zúñiga.

The **church** of the monastery, is a classical work of the architects Matías de Asteazu and Pedro de la Mata and consists of a nave in the form of a Latin cross, divided into chapels by the buttresses. These have two altarpieces, the one on the left dedicated to San Esteban, the first Christian martyr, and the one to the right dedicated to the Pentecost, the arrival of the Holy Spirit.

In the **main chapel**, there is a magnificent example of Riojan Baroque art, an altarpiece dating from the middle of the 18th century, made of polychrome and gilt wood.

The central niche holds an image of **Our Lady of The Annunciations** flanked by carvings of San Benito, the abbot who



founded monasticism in the West and his sister, Santa Escolástica on the left, and San Bernardo, disseminator of the Cistercian order and his sister Santa Humbelina on the right. Above them, crowning the reredos, there is a sculpture of the Eternal Father.

The ground floor choir, situated at the west end, was used as a cemetery until 1960 and holds the remains of over 200 nuns. Next to the church is a 17th century cloister that stands out for its austerity, in line with Cistercian spirituality.

The monastery has a free pilgrims' hospice located in the old, 18th century Chaplain's House.

Since its foundation, it has been inhabited by Cistercian nun who follow the commitment of the **Cistercian Order**, dividing their lives between the divine office and manual labour, making exquisite pastries, particularly their speciality, the "**borrachuelos**".

Tomb of the founder

The alabaster tomb of the founder, **Don Pedro Manso de Zúñiga** and his nephews, who were also bishops, is one of the most interesting artistic components of the church, located to the right of the main altarpiece showing the richly worked carving of the recumbent statues of the three bishops, accompanied by their respective coats of arms.



The document and old book **restoration and binding workshop** is another interesting feature of the Cistercian Abbey of Our Lady of the Annunciation.

4 Monastery of Santa María la Real Nájera

www.santamarialareal.net



Exterior of Santa María la Real.

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Symbols of the appearance of the Virgin in the cave, with a bell on one side and a lamp on the other and a jug of Madonna lilies in the centre.

The monastery was founded by **García Sánchez III "of Nájera"** and his wife Doña Estafanía de Foix who commissioned its construction in 1052. The origins of its foundation are misted in the legend which tells how the king was out hunting and chased his prey into a cave where he found a mysterious image of the Virgin and a jug of Madonna lilies, a bell and a lantern. Some time later the king conquered the town of Calahorra, under Muslim rule, and built the monastery of Santa María La Real as an offering to the Virgin for her help. He also instituted the **Military Order of the Knights of the Terrace** (also known as the Knights of the Jug) one of the oldest in Spain.

In 1079, Alfonso VI of Castile incorporated the monastery into the **Benedictine order of Cluny** together with the group of priests who lived in it from its creation and who remained until

the Ecclesiastical Confiscation of Mendizabal in 1835. A community of **Franciscan friars** have run the monastery since 1895.

The current **church** of the monastery dates to 1516. It has a nave, two aisles and a transept.

The original cave where the virgin was found is located at the foot of the nave. At its entrance there is the **Royal Pantheon**, which holds twelve sculptures of two dynasties, the Abarcas and the Jimenas, of the 10th and 11th centuries and the dynasty of García Ramírez "the Restorer" of the 12th and 13th centuries. Ten are decorated with recumbent figures and two, those of the founders, Don García and Doña Estefanía, with praying images.



Nave of the church.



Wrought-iron entrance gate to the Royal Pantheon.



Royal Pantheon. Don García and Doña Estefanía.



Tomb of Blanche of Navarre.



On the tombs, you can see the wall of the original cave.



Pantheon of the Princes.

Next door we find the **Pantheon of the Princes** with thirteen renaissance sculptures of descendants of the founding king, Don García, and the tomb of Doña Blanca de Navarra, a superb romanesque piece of the 12th century.

Construction of the cloister began in the early 16th century and is known as the **Cloister of the**

Knights. For centuries it was used as burial place for many nobles. Among these is **Don Diego López de Haro**, founder of Bilbao. At the foot of his tomb lies the Gothic tomb of his wife, Doña Toda Pérez de Azagra. The traceried arches provide a surprising architectural piece well worth visiting.



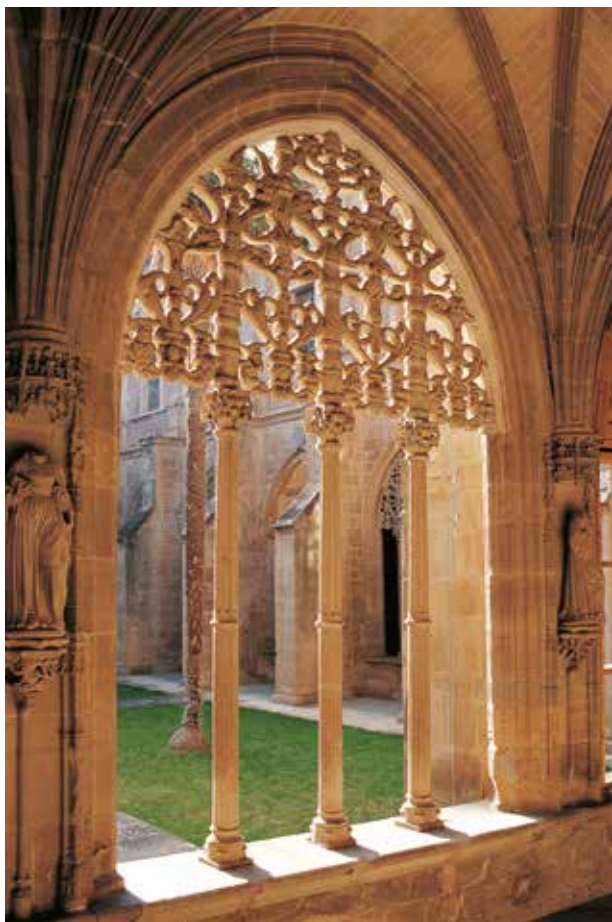
Main chapel reredos

In late 17th century baroque style, of particular interest is the romanesque carving of Santa María La Real holding the Child Jesus on her left knee.



Choir

Dating from the early 16th century in Catholic Monarch style, where we can appreciate the influence of the last stage of the Gothic style and beginning of the renaissance. The carved walnut stalls are a masterpiece of flamboyant gothic.



Tracery in the Cloister of the Knights.

5 Monastery of Santa Elena Nájera



Lady Aldonza Manrique de Lara, the daughter of the dukes of Nájera, founded the monastery in the 16th century, outside of the city, and none of it has been preserved. The current complex consists of a church, cloister, and other monastic quarters within the enclosed monastery.

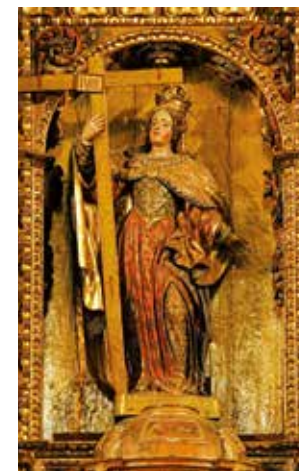
The **church** from the 17th century is the only area that can be visited. It has a Latin-cross layout, with a four-aisle nave, transept, and quadrangular chevet. We can observe very beautiful **altarpieces**, two of which are of the rococo style in the arms of the transept, one of them with the image of the Immaculate Conception from the 17th century, and another with the image of St. Clare. The main altarpiece, a Baroque work by **Mateo Rubalcaba**, is comprised of a pew, a single body with three sections and an attic. In the centre of the body, the sculpture of St. Helena stands out.

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Façade of the Santa Elena Monastery.



Main altarpiece. Image of Santa Elena.

6 Monastery of **Santa María de San Salvador** **Cañas**

www.abadiadecanas.com



Cañas among the vineyards.

Contact and reservations:

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Ticket office: +34 941 379 145

cistercannas@cistercannas.e.telefonica.net



Grapevine decoration.

This **Cistercian Abbey** is one of the first to have been founded in Spain. Don Lope Díaz de Haro, 9th Lord of Biscay and his wife, Doña Aldonza Ruiz de Castro gave the towns of Cañas and Canillas to the nuns of the monastery of Hayuela in 1170 for them to found an Abbey in this location.

Construction of the monastery was slow and there are three clearly distinguishable stages: the **Romanesque** stage, of which there are barely any signs remaining; the **Gothic** stage, which would correspond to part of the church and chapter house, dating from the second half of the 13th century, and the newest part built after the 16th century, in which the construction of the central nave continued, with the side naves remaining unfinished.

The **church of the monastery** is surprisingly luminous, thanks to its two large alabaster windows. The great renaissance reredos, by Andrés de Melgar and Guillén de Holanda was commissioned by the Abbess, **Doña Leonor de Osorio** in 1523 as a triptych about Mary from her birth to her death.



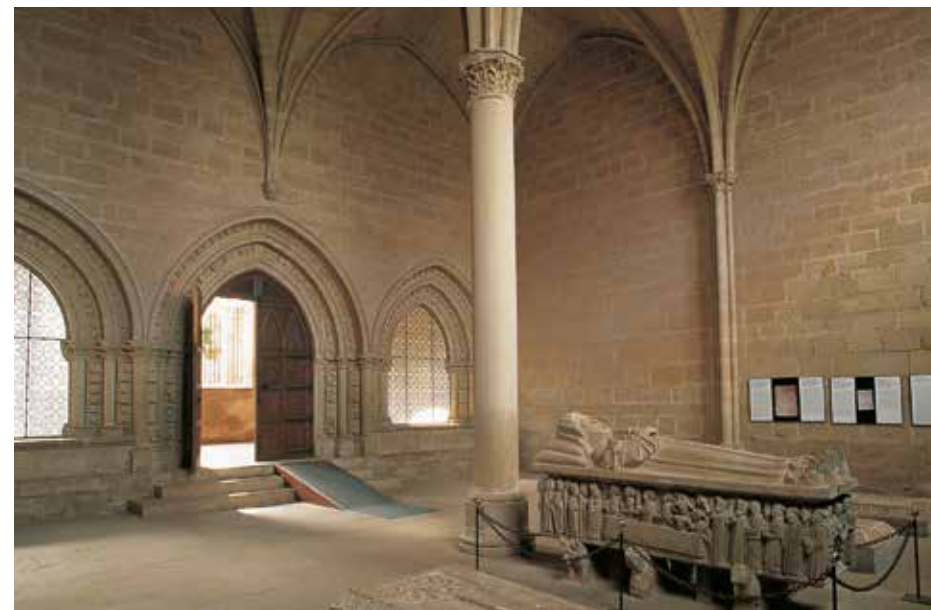
Tomb of Doña Urraca

Doña Urraca López de Haro y Ruiz de Castro, considered the second founder because the 13th century construction took place when she was the Abbess, was beatified and appears in the Cistercian martyrology. Her uncorrupted body lies in her tomb in the **Chapterhouse** since 1262.



The **portal of the chapter house** stands out for its unusual beauty, with three pointed arches decorated with plant motifs. Inside, is the early 14th century, gothic style tomb of **Doña Urraca López de Haro**, daughter of the founders who took orders at a very early age and became the fourth abbess of the community.

The **Relics Hall** holds four collections dating from the foundation of the monastery to the 20th century. Among the numerous exhibits, there is a Spanish Muslim box from Cordova that dates to the



Chapterhouse of the Cistercian abbey of Cañas. The door opens onto the cloister.

The cloister of Cañas

It is square with **two levels**. The **lower level** has is a gallery closed with round arches fitted with grilles. The arches on the **upper level** are blind but there is a glass in the centre of each one. There is a cross in the centre of the patio. surround by a garden that is accessed by corridors from the four galleries.



Virgin and Child.

Relics

The monastery has a valuable collection of relics. Among them, are the horseshoes of Saint James' Horse —collected by Diego López II de Haro at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, which he gave to his sister Doña Urraca— several skulls of the eleven thousand virgins, a piece of Christ's cross or Lignum Crucis, relics of the martyrs of Cardeña of 1609 and a relic of Santa Engracia de Zaragoza dated 1694.



Rich sculptural decoration.



11-12th century. The tithe barn museum holds several altarpieces that were used in the church, including some very interesting carvings, reliefs and paintings.

Santo Domingo de Silos, Benedictine abbot of his eponymous monastery, was born in Cañas. Before that, he was abbot of the Monastery of Suso in San Millán de la Cogolla.

The **community of Cistercian nuns** that have been living in the monastery without interruption since it was founded are dedicated to manual work and prayer. They decorate porcelain, make sweets, manufacture rosaries and they also have a small hostel.



Detail of reliefs.

7 Monastery of **Suso** **San Millán de la Cogolla**

www.monasteriodesanmillan.com

San Millán de la Cogolla is the name given to this ensemble of a village and two monasteries. Its roots lie in the community which grew around the work of a **sainted hermit** named Millán (473-574, 101 years) who spent his life devoted to prayer in caves in the Sierra de la Demanda. Suso —from the Latin sursum meaning “upwards”— is the name given to the older monastery, located by the caves, and Yuso —from the Latin deorsum, “downwards”— is the name of the newer one in at the bottom of the valley. In 1997, the ensemble was declared a UNESCO **World Heritage Site**.

Of the current Monastery of Suso, constructed between the **6th and 11th centuries**, important vestiges remain of the different historic moments it has lived through. The rock caverns in which the hermits lived, the primitive **Visigoth coenobium**, the

Phone and tour reservations:

Date and time have to be booked at the Information and Tourist Office
Tel/Fax: +34 941 37 30 82

All tours are guided.

Tickets have to be collected at least half an hour in advance at the Suso Reservations Office.

turismosanmillan@najera.net



Suso, World Heritage Site.



The outside of Suso.

Emilian Glosses

San Millán was a centre of political and cultural power in the Middle Ages. In its scriptorium, the first words in Spanish and Basque were written. In the Emilian Glosses, a monk translated the Latin text to the vulgar language. Currently, several researchers have dated them to the year 964, the date of Codex 46.



Mozarabic enlargement and finally, the **Romanesque** structures. Access to the monastery is through the portaello, mentioned by **Gonzalo de Berceo**, the first poet in the Spanish language. The tombs of the Princes of Lara and their tutor Nuño are located there, accompanying the three Navarrese queens.

Through the Mozarabic arch with alabaster capitals which recall the time of the Caliph of Cordova in the 10th century, decorated with designs depicting plant motifs and geometrical shapes, we enter inside the Mozarabic monastery with three large horseshoe arches. At the back we can see the remains of the primitive Visigoth construction.

The **burial cave** contains the tomb of the founder from the second half of the 12th century carved out of black alabaster and decorated with a recumbent statue, wearing priest's robes, with a beautifully worked cross on his chest bearing the decoration of



Tomb of San Millán.



Entrance with mozarabic horseshoe-shaped arches.

numbers and plants. It was much visited by devotees, particularly in the Middle Ages, being one of the main pilgrimage destinations, together with Saint James in Compostella.

Centuries later, the **first poet in the Spanish language**, Gonzalo de Berceo, was born in a town near San Millán de la Cogolla. It was from the portaello del Monastery of Suso where he wrote part of his works, as he comments in his prologue to the Life of Santa Oria.

Benedictine monks moved to the monastery in the tenth century. One of their most renowned abbots was Domingo, who was born in the nearby town of Cañas, who is better known as **Santo Domingo de Silos**.



The scriptorium of San Millán

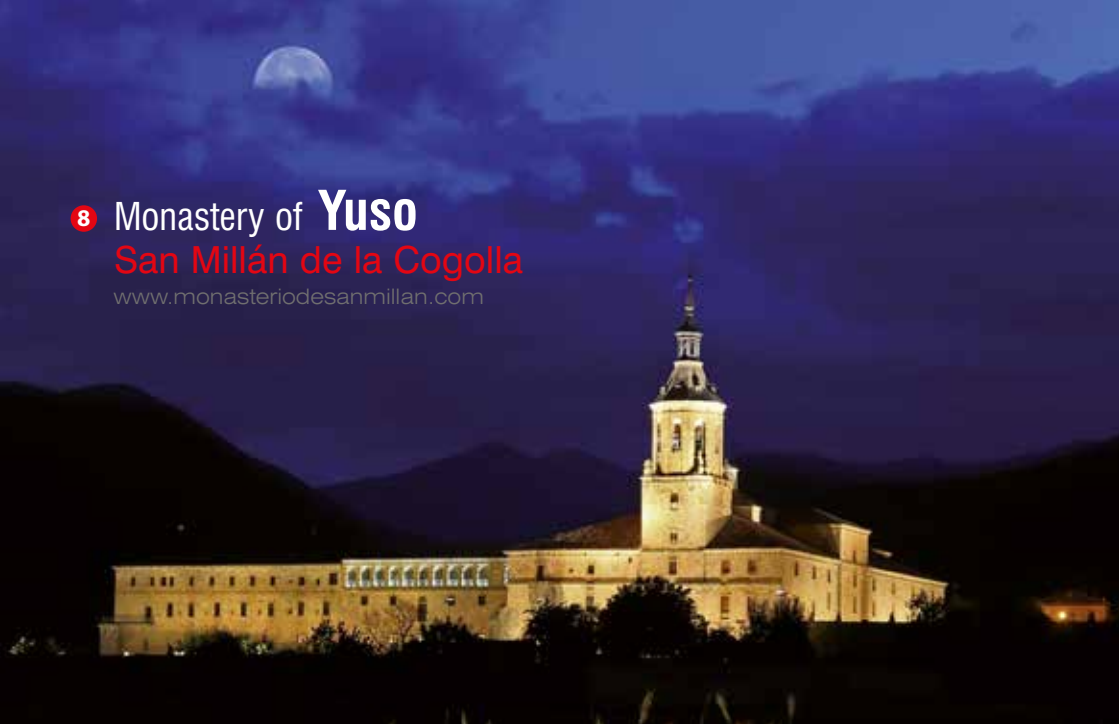
A wealth of manuscripts and codices were produced in the scriptorium at Suso. These include the Emilian Codex of the Councils, dating from 992; the Bible of Quiso, from 664, and a copy of the Apocalypse by Beatus of Liebana written in the 8th century. This makes it one of the main scriptoriums, if not the most important one, in Spain in the Middle Ages.



Monument to Gonzalo de Berceo.

8 Monastery of Yuso San Millán de la Cogolla

www.monasteriodesanmillan.com



Night view of San Millán de Yuso.

Phone and tour reservations:

Phone: +34 941 373 049

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info@monasteriodesanmillan.com

Tours are always with guides and last approximately 50 minutes

The origin of the construction of this monastery is reflected in a legend which tells how king García of Nájera ordered the transfer of the **remains of San Millán**, which were then in Suso, to the Monastery of Santa María La Real in Nájera. The oxen which were pulling the cart stopped in the valley as if the Saint's remains did not want to abandon it, so the monastery of Yuso was constructed on the spot. The current monastery of Yuso was constructed



Chest of San Millán.

between the 16th and 18th centuries by the Benedictine abbots on the ruins of the 10th-11th century **Romanesque monastery**.

The **lower cloister** was begun in 1549 and although its vaults are gothic in conception, it is Renaissance. The top level is classicist in style and it houses twenty-four paintings by José Vexes, whose main theme is the life of San Millán, written by San Braulio, Archbishop of Zaragoza.

The **vestry** is one of the loveliest in Spain, the former chapterhouse started to be used as such around 1693. The 18th century frescos on the ceiling conserve all the rich original colour in spite of never having been restored. There are walnut drawers and chests, over which hang twenty-four oils painted on copper in the Baroque style originating in Flanders, Madrid and Italy. It is all presided by a reredos with a beautiful polychrome carving of the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Angels, with a sceptre and crown.

The **church** of the monastery was begun in 1504. It is catalogued as "decadent gothic". The grandiose altarpiece of the main altar has a canvas by **Fray Juan Ricci**, of the school of El Greco, depicting San Millán on horseback at the battle of Hacinas, won by the Castilian count Fernán González. The extraordinary **wrought**

Portal

The entrance portal of the Monastery dates back to 1661. It features a relief of San Millán fighting next to Saint James in the battle of Simancas. The hallway is from 1689 and provides access to the Hall of the Kings, whose name is owed to four paintings of the kings who were benefactors of the monastery.



Relief of the warring San Millán.

Side altarpieces

The altarpiece on the left has an extraordinary carving of Christ tied to a column, a work by Gregorio Fernández made in 1625 and an oil painting of Jesus, Saviour of the World. The altarpiece on the right has an image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and a canvas of the Our Lady of El Pópulo.



Exhibition Hall

There are replicas of Romanesque ivory carvings of the 11th century relic chests of San Millán from the 11th century and San Felices from the 12th century. Other facilities include a classic refectory and an excellent renaissance pulpit, the Hall of the Language, etc.



Codices and songbooks

This permanent exhibition shows what the scriptorium was like: how books were copied and the materials they used —parchment, various types of pens, inks, etc. The showcases have valuable samples from the Monastery's library. There is also a collection of songbooks with a more artistic presentation.



Close-up of a songbook.

ironwork of Sebastián de Medina from 1676 complete the artistic whole of the main chapel.

The lower **choir stalls** were carved by a Flemish artist around 1640, the retro choir is in French Rococo style, decorated with busts depicting the disciples of San Millán, Santa Oria or Aurea, Santa Potamia, San Sifronio, etc. There is a beautiful Plateresque pulpit decorated with reliefs of the evangelists and symbols of the Lord's Passion.

The shelves for the monastery songbooks hold twenty-five volumes copied between 1729 and 1731 covering the liturgical year. The monastery archives and library are of great value to researchers and it is considered to be among the best in Spain. Here the cartularies and three hundred original volumes are kept.

It was inhabited by Benedictine monks until the confiscations of the 19th century. Nowadays the Augustinian Recollects are responsible for keeping alive the spirit of the monastery.

9 Monastery of Santa María de Valvanera Anguiano



The name of the monastery, **Valvanera**, comes from a Latin expression, Vallis Venaria which means "Valley of the veins of water" since the valley had lots of springs, streams and waterfalls.

It first appears in writing in 1016 in a document of "Convenience and Concord" Sancho Garcés III the Elder, king of Nájera-Pamplona and his father-in-law Sancho, Count of Castile, on the marking of the border between their respective lands.

The building of the shrine dates back to the discovery of a 9th-century **image of Saint Mary** by a repentant thief called Nuño Oñez, according to the Historia Latina written by the Abbot of Valvanera, Don Rodrigo de Castroviejo in 1419. It is the Latin translation of a 13th century text possibly written by **Gonzalo de Berceo** in his "vulgar mother tongue".

Contact and reservations:

Road LR-435. Anguiano
Phone: +34 941 377 044
info@monasteriodevalvanera.es



Cross of Valvanera.

Pilgrimages to Valvanera

Various towns and organizations go on pilgrimage to the sanctuary throughout the year.

The Benedictine monks have kept alive their devotion to the Virgin of Valvanera for over 10 centuries and continue to do so with the same intensity.



Our Lady of Valvanera.

The original monastery was built around the image- It first had a Visigothic church which led the way to a pre-romanesque church that was consecrated in 1073 and a romanesque church dating from 1183 of which only the tower is left. The current church is from the 15th century.

The monastery went through some difficult times when it was set on fire by the troops of Napoleon in 1809 and when it was plundered after the confiscation of Mendizábal (1835-1883).

The main altar of the church holds the niche of the **Virgin of Valvanera**, which can be reached from the side. The upper part is presided over by a Christ panthocrator, and below there are figures representing St Peter, St Paul, St Benedict and St Atanasio.

The rest of the monastery is composed of 20th century buildings in honour of the **Patron Saint of La Rioja**. Homage is paid to Valvanera as the most important carving. The author and date of this work are unknown, but from its characteristics, it could be a sculpture in the **Byzantine-Visigoth style**. Its origin comes from the context of the renewed Marian fervour in Spain in the first half of the ninth century. The Child's robe is a true imperial chlamys, typical of the Byzantines, while the Virgin's tunic has very wide cuffs, as employed by Spanish queens until the 9th century.



Aerial view of Valvanera.

10 Monastery of **Nuestra Señora de Vico** Arnedo



Monastery of Vico, with the peak of Peña Isasa in the background.

The sanctuary of Our Lady of Vico is a lovely place barely three kilometres from Arnedo, located on a small plateau, with **beautiful views** of the river Cidacos and the Arnedo flatlands. The remote origin of this monastery is to be found among the **visigothic anchorites**, who lived in solitude in the local caves.

Contact and reservations:

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26580 Arnedo
Phone: +34 941 380 295
webmaster@monasteriodevico.es



Shrine of Our Lady of Vico.



Interior of the monastery church.



Fray López de Salinas founded the monastery, which reached its greatest splendour in the 17th century.



Ruins of the old Church of the 16th century.

Towards the 10th century, tradition has it that the local Christians hid a carving of the virgin from the coming Arabs. Around 1045, a rich Muslim called the **Kan of Vico** discovered the image and converted to Christianity, building a shrine at his own expense where he retired as a hermit. The oldest remains of the Monastery of Vico are the **ruins of the church** which was begun in the 16th century in Gothic style. It is an ashlar, masonry and brick building with a single nave with three sections, transept and east end with lateral chapels, with the vestry functioning as an extension of the east end. It was completed in the 17th and 18th centuries in baroque style.

Nowadays it is occupied and run by sisters of the **Cistercian Order**, which was founded in the late 11th century, who carried out major reforms before settling there. This order lives a life of contemplation and prayer, although for their maintenance they work in the decoration of porcelain, making cakes and lodging guests in the monastery hostel.

11 Monastery of **San José** **Calahorra**

www.carmelitasdescalzas.net



Façade of San José.

This convent was founded in 1598 in Calahorra by barefoot nuns of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, who are devoted to Saint Joseph, in June 1598. Many were the people who supported the construction of its church, which was consecrated in the year 1642, among whom we should mention the Bishop of Calahorra and La Calzada, **Pedro Manso de Zúñiga** and the Chair of the Trust, José González de Uzqueta and his wife, Catalina de Valdés.

Various facilities within the convent, such as the choirs and the cloister, cannot be visited because they are within the cloister. The monastery houses pieces closely related to **Saint Teresa of Avila**, such as the window of her cell, her reading glass case, the cross which she held when she died, candles, cloths that she used, a tooth and three signed letters. There are also several reliquaries of the 17th century in the manner of classicist altarpieces made of ebony and tortoiseshell of Italian origin.

The monastery has a **hostel** with a spacious interior patio. The Carmelite nuns make delicious sweets and biscuits.

Contact and reservations:

Tenería, 18
26500 Calahorra
Phone: +34 941 131 787
calahoracd@hotmail.com

Tours

The **church of the monastery** is the only facility that can be visited. It was consecrated in 1642 and has a Latin cross layout, with a rectangular east end and a high choir in typical Carmelite style, following the canonical model of the early 17th century.



Church altarpieces.