

# Madrid's 10 Most Beautiful Surrounding Towns

One of the best things about living in Madrid is that you can easily escape the city center and take a day-trip or weekend getaway to one of the beautiful nearby towns.

These towns have some of the world's oldest universities, cathedrals, monasteries and historic monuments. You'll also find [natural swimming pools](#), mountains, hiking trails and other [adventure activities](#). And make sure to try special dishes like Segovia's *cochinillo*, suckling pig, or Ávila's sugary egg yolks, known as *yemas*.

Here's a list of the most popular nearby towns, plus a few things you should know about each one. Click on each town name below or our category link "[How to get to](#)" for a more in-depth post on each one, and all the different ways to get there.

## Madrid's surrounding towns

1. [Alcalá de Henares](#): free tapas and [Cervantes' home](#)
2. [Aranjuez](#): royal gardens and palace
3. [Avila](#): old surrounding wall from medieval times, cathedral of Avila
4. [Buitrago de Lozoya](#): castle and large reservoir
5. [Cercedilla](#): mountains that are great for hiking, biking, swimming (natural pool) and other adventure activities
6. [Cuenca](#): cathedral of Cuenca, hanging houses and lamb
7. [El Escorial](#): monastery, Valle de los Caídos (20th-century war memorial)
8. [Rascafría](#): nature, restaurant El Paular, monastery of El Paular, hiking trails, natural pool, and a waterfall

9. **Segovia**: Roman aqueduct, cochinitillo (suckling pig), The Jewish Quarter, Alcázar of Segovia (castle) and a nearby town called La Granja
10. **Toledo**: beautiful old streets and architecture, museums, and the synagogue of El Transito. Where three cultures lived in harmony for centuries (Jewish, Christian and Muslim).

