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, cochinillo (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).*