

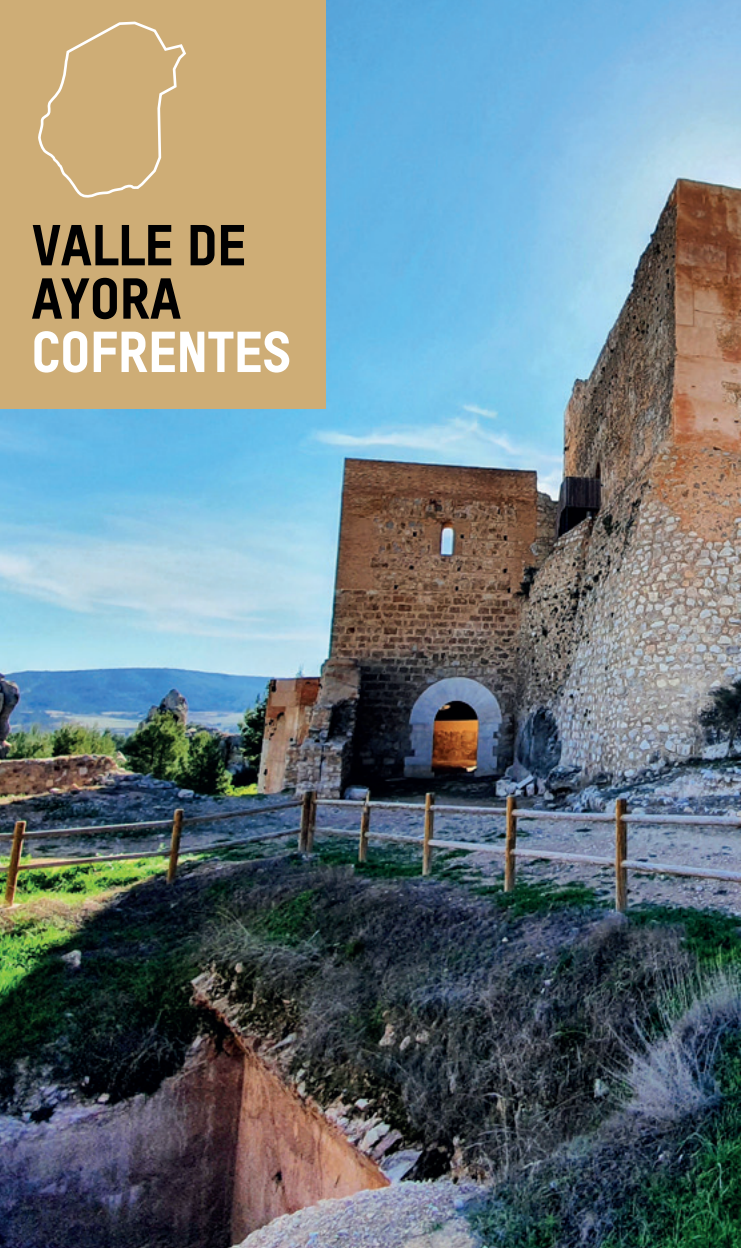
regions of the province
of Valencia

VALLE DE AYORA COFRENTES

A scenic landscape photograph of the Valle de Ayora in Cofrentes, Valencia. The image shows a calm river reflecting the surrounding greenery and a castle on a hill in the background. The sky is blue with light clouds. The text 'VALLE DE AYORA COFRENTES' is overlaid in large, bold, black and white letters.



VALLE DE AYORA COFRENTES





A region in the southwest of the province, the rugged mountains that flank it to the west act as a borderline with the province of Albacete.

The **Valle de Ayora** begins to form to the south of this locality when it leaves behind the plains (*Llanos*) of **Almansa**, where the famous battle was waged. There, between the *Sierra Palomera* mountain range and the *Caroche* massif, the Valley follows the course of the River Cantabán, until it reaches **Jalance**, where we could say that it changes valley and we enter the sector of **Cofrentes**.

In between are the villages of **Jarafuel**, **Teresa de Cofrentes** and **Zarra** and, a little further away, **Cortes de Pallás**. The Valley is like a green carpet surrounded by lofty mountains,



Ayora's Castle



Chirel's Castle,
Cortes de Pallás

with altitudes exceeding a thousand metres, covered in pine trees and rosemary, broom, esparto grass and thyme, alternating with junipers, kermes oak and arbutus trees. Puntal del Conejo (1066m), Montemayor (1105m), Caroché (1128m) and the Pico Palomera which, standing at 1260m, is the region's highest peak.

All the water in the Valley flows into the Júcar, which enters the region via **Jalance** through a beautiful, rugged canyon called **Chorros de la Jávea**.

HIKING_

Hiking is a popular activity in the region.

The GR-7 path passes through the southern sector of the region, from **Cortes** to the Caroché, and there is also the Senda Cavanilles -SL.V.1 3- path, which covers one of the northern flanks of the *Muela de Cortes* rock platform and offers activities like camping, fishing in the River Júcar and the Cortes reservoir, hunting in the Muela de Cortes National Reserve, kayaking on the Júcar, the Cabriel and the Cortes reservoir; climbing on the Júcar cliffs upriver of **Jalance**, mountaineering on the Pico

Hervideros' Spa,
Cofrentes



Caroche and in the Sierra Palomera mountains, caving in the Hermosa, Don Juan or Quebradas caves, paragliding and mountain biking (**Cofrentes** BBT Centre).

Worthy of note are the nature walks in the municipal area of **Ayora**, such as the *Ruta de la Hunde-Palomera* and *Ruta del Agua* nature routes, and other walks declared of Tourist Interest, like the *Ruta del Hilo Rojo*.

In addition to these, there is a broad offer of culture concentrating on visits to major castles, like the 13th-century Reconquest castles of **Ayora**, **Cofrentes** and **Jalance**, churches and shrines like the 16th-century Church of the Assumption (Iglesia de la Asunción), the 13th-century church of Santa María la Mayor, and the Rosary Sanctuary in **Ayora**; the church of Santa Ana in **Zarra** (18th century, with a bell tower that is separate from the church), or places of historical interest like the Iberian settlement of Castellar de Meca (4th century BC), with its impressive access route carved into the rock; shelters with cave paintings (Tortosillas, el Sordo and Los Montesés); and standout natural beauty spots like the extensive pine forests of La Hunde, with the Cadena pool and the Rincón de San Pascual, with the impressive Arch (possibly an Iberian sanctuary) in **Ayora**. The Cerro Agrás (ancient volcano), el Corbinet and the springs of Tobarro, el Ral, Bella, la Carrasca and la Barbullá. The *Balneario de los Hervideros* hotel-spa in **Cofrentes**, open all year round and with all kinds of medical and accommodation services.

Cortes de Pallás is a beautiful inland village in the province of Valencia, bathed by the River Júcar and with many tourist attractions, mostly associated with its rugged natural landscape, its beauty spots, its tasty gastronomy and the variety of activities available.

It has numerous springs, caves with stalactites and stalagmites, cave paintings, and also the **Cortes de Pallás** reservoir, where water sports like kayaking, pedal boats and paddle boarding are available.



Don Juan's Cave,
(Jalance)

In terms of monuments, particularly worthy of note is the 18th-century baroque parish church of Our Lady of the Angels (*Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*). Also the *Palacio del Barón de Cortes de Pallás*, a 17th-century mansion.

Also noteworthy is the Conifers Park in **Jarafuel**, and the Nature Classrooms of la Hunde and el Moragete, the Las Jaras Tourism Camp and the Palomeras community Hunting Reserve (*Coto Social*). This is not forgetting the contributions made to today's world by modern technologies, like the **Cofrentes** nuclear power station and the major hydroelectric complex of Cortes-La Muela, with an impressive underground power station. Between **Cofrentes** and the **Cortes** dam there is a navigable section of almost 14km, through stunning landscapes. There is a river route through the attractive natural surroundings next to the Muela de Cortes national reserve, with spectacular secluded landscapes to enchant visitors all year round.

Also worthy of note are the fields of **Jarafuel**, which are used to grow hackberry, a tree with fibrous and malleable branches

used in the traditional manufacture of walking sticks, clothes hangers and farming implements.

It is one of the most interesting beauty spots, not only in the province, but also the whole Valencia Region.

It forms a kind of large platform, with an average altitude of almost 900m, hemmed in almost all around by vertical walls of rock (*cinglos*), which make it a small natural fortress, bound to the north by the canyons on the Júcar, and to the east by the Sácaras Valley. Its highest point is the Cinto de las Cabras (1107m).

To take advantage of these natural features and the traditional presence of mountain goat in these mountains, a National Game Reserve was created there, occupying some 36,000 hectares (around 90,000 acres). Now, in addition to the mountain goat, it is also home to European mouflon, deer, foxes, wildcats,



Jarafuel



Honeycomb cutting,
Ayora

wild boar, genets, hares and rabbits; also birds of prey like the booted eagle, golden eagle, short-toed snake eagle, tawny owl, kestrel, hobby, sparrowhawk and other smaller species, such as the hoopoe, jay, red-legged partridge and woodpigeon.

GASTRONOMY_

Particularly noteworthy are the dishes prepared in the villages in the Valley, like *gazpacho de monte*, a stew of small game served on the traditionally prepared flatbread. A variety of stews (*ollas and potajillos*), *morteruelo* (a loose pâté of small game and pig's liver) and *calducho* (a thick blood pudding soup) are hearty, wholesome dishes, particularly recommended in the colder months. Also worth a mention are *ajetao* (a dish of beans, potatoes, cod and garlic), *ajotonto* (ham, mushroom, potatoes and garlic), *trigo picao* (a wheat and mixed vegetable broth) and *gachamigas* (a savoury porridge). The most popular sweets in the region are *grullos* (fried pastry and honey), *agua-*





miel (pumpkin, honey and orange) and *almendrados* (almond biscuits). Not to mention the region's peaches and cherries.

In **Jalance** there is a family business producing exquisite traditional preserves, as well as honey, the production of which is almost ancestral; honey collection is documented in cave paintings and still goes on today, with the *Primer Corte de la Miel Fair* held in **Ayora** in October every year.

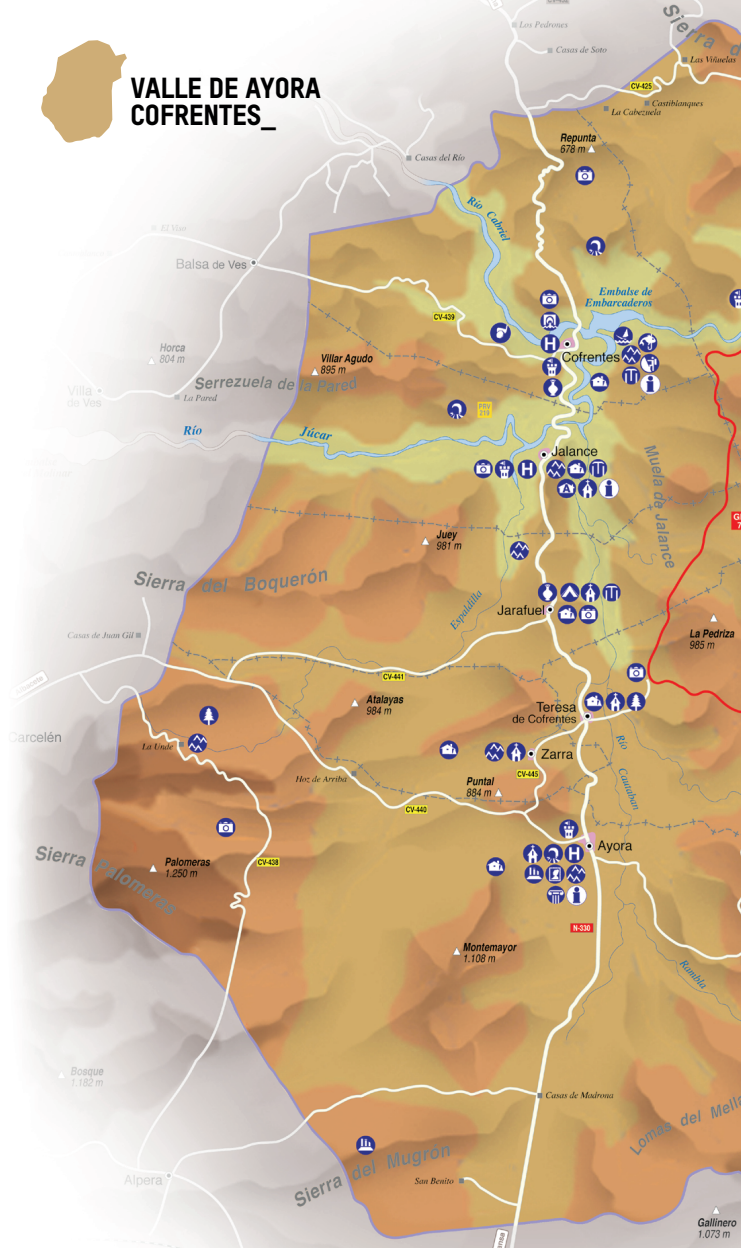
FESTIVALS_

One event in the festive calendar that stands out because of its originality is the refreshing Water Battle (*Batalla del Agua*), held in **Jarafuel** in the second fortnight of August.

Also worth noting are the Holy Innocents' Day (Día de los Locos), celebrated on 28 December, and Mardi Gras (*Carnaval*) in **Jalance**, not forgetting the Holy Week processions in **Ayora**. Other notable festivals in **Ayora** are the Patron Saint Festivals held in August and the fair declared a Valencia Region Festival of Tourist Interest, the *Primer Corte de la Miel*.

In **Cofrentes**, sometime around 1 May is the festival of "La Maderada", where timber is transported down the river. In **Teresa**, one date in the calendar the locals never miss are the festivities in honour of St Blaise (*San Blas*) in February.

VALLE DE AYORA COFRENTES_





	Tourist Info		Golf
	Tourist Municipality		Spa
	Historical Building		Archaeology
	Water Sports		Nature
	Fishing		Castle / Palace
	Hunting		Religious Monument
	Campsite		Hostel
	Panoramic View		Mountain Sports
	Rural Accommodation	Walking Trails	
	Camping Area		Long Distance Trails (+50Km)
	Hotel		Local Trail (-10Km)
	Museum		GR (Long Distance) Trail Line
	Cave	0 5 km	
	Handicrafts		

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