

regions of the province
of Valencia

LA SERRANÍA



LA
SERRANÍA
REGION





The region of **La Serranía** is one of the steepest areas in the Valencia Region, crossed by the River Turia, various sections of which flow through narrow gorges and ravines, offering a spectacular landscape.

The geographical heart of the region is the **Benagéber** reservoir. The region has some of the highest mountains in the province of Valencia. The foothills of the *Sierra Javalambre* mountains are home to some of the biggest forests in the Valencia Region. The region is very extensive (1392km²), the second largest in the Valencia Region. Its territory is ideal for activities like hiking, mountaineering, climbing, kayaking, bicycle tourism and horseback rides.

As far as historic-artistic heritage is concerned, we find the spa of *Verche*, which has gastronomic treats to tempt visitors. Quality wines are produced in the area, particularly in the Alto Turia: in **Villar del Arzobispo** and in **Pedralba**. Although it has a low demographic density, its density of attractive beauty spots is one of the highest.

HISTORIC-ARTISTIC HERITAGE_

The region has been inhabited since prehistoric times, as witnessed by the small caves with cave paintings like those of Tío Escribano in **Titaguas**, in the Falfiguera ravine, in **Chulilla** and the Corrales de Silla in **Tuéjar**.

It also has archaeological sites with Iberian settlements like La Seña in **Villar del Arzobispo**, el Carnoso in **Andilla**, and the hill of la Viña in **Higueruelas**.

There are remains from the period of Roman domination in **Alpuente**, in its Castle and other places in the town and, in particular, in the towns of **Tuéjar**, **Chelva**, **Calles** and **Domeño**, where we can find the region's most representative monument, the Roman Aqueduct of **Peña Cortada**, a major work of hydraulic engineering set in a stunning beauty spot.

From the Arab period we have part of the remains of the Castle of **Chulilla**, the former fortress of **Alpuente**; the watchtower known as *Torre del Cortijo* in **Aras de los Olmos**, the watchtower (*Torre Vigía*) that crowned the fortified hamlet of what is now **Sot de Chera**, the *Castillo de los Murones* in **Gestaltar**, and



Tuéjar's Weir



Benagéber's
Reservoir

entire districts of the historic old town of **Chelva**, **Benacacira** and **el Arrabal**.

In times of Arab domination, **Alpuente** was the capital of a small Taifa Kingdom, which would occupy part of **La Serranía** and even minted its own currency. This period also has the remains of the Castle built on a huge rock, a parish church with an octagonal bell tower (14th century), the Medieval Kiln (*Horno Medieval*), which currently houses the Museum of Ethnology and History, and the former *Aljama*, or mosque, which is currently the seat of the Town Council.

Alpuente still has the Gothic Aqueduct of *Los Arcos*, the Palaeontological Museum and a site with dinosaur tracks that can be visited.

Particularly worthy of note are the activities related to palaeontology: excavations “in situ” every year, a workshop for recovery of fossils, and visits to ichnites dating from 140 million years ago.

A standout feature in **Chelva** is the large Archpriest Church of Our Lady of the Angels (*Iglesia Arciprestal de Ntra.Sra. de los*

Ángeles), and the same is true of Tuéjar. Also worthy of note are the churches of **Andilla**, with a valuable collection of canvases by the painter Ribalta and the Archpriest Church of Our Lady of Peace (*Iglesia Arciprestal Ntra Señora de La Paz*) in Villar del Arzobispo. In the small village of Corcolilla (**Alpuente**) they venerate the image of Our Lady of Consolation (*Virgen de la Consolación*) which, it is claimed, is the oldest in the Valencia Region.

Notable amongst the shrines in the region are the Sanctuary of the *Virgen del Remedio* (**Chelva**), the Sanctuary of *Santa Catalina* (**Aras de los Olmos**) and the Holy Cross shrine (*Ermita de Santa Cruz*), which is the former mosque in **Chelva**.

And, finally, we recommend a visit to the “Pedralba 2000” Museum of Modern Art.

NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT_

The **Benagéber** reservoir stores large reserves of water for the city of Valencia. This big artificial lake is one of the main tourist images of the inland area of the Valencia Region and a perfect spot for kayaking and canoeing.

The following are highlights from the multiple beauty spots in the vicinity of the River Turia: Los Rubiales, La Caballera and Los Conquetes in **Aras de los Olmos**. Fuente Cañizar, in **Titaguas**; Los Felipes in **Tuéjar**; Los Grilluelos and Charco Negro in **Benagéber**; Molino Puerto and Caídas de Barchel in **Chelva**; Puente Alta in **Calles**; and la Peña María in **Gestalgar**,



Alpuente



Panoramic View
of Chelva

which is an impressive enclave. The river beach of **Bugarra**, and los Cañones del Turia as the river flows through **Chulilla**, a gorge with vertical walls 160 metres high and 10 metres wide.

The upper reaches of the River Turia flow through the towns of **Aras de los Olmos**, **Benagéber**, **Chelva**, **Titaguas** and **Tuéjar**, and has led to them being declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Starlight Destination, with the name “**Alto Turia**”.

Aras de los Olmos, **Titaguas** and **La Yesa** have astronomical Observatories that form part of the Starlight project.

We recommend other beauty spots such as: El Pico del Remedio in **Chelva** (a 1054m-high peak), La Muela de Santa Catalina in **Aras de los Olmos** (1135m), El Barranco de Arquela ravine in **Alpuente**, and Tuéjar’s Weir (El Azud), La Peña Roya, La Peña Mosén and La Montaña de la Muela in **Chulilla**, Los Molinos in **Alcublas**, el Carnoso in Andilla, La Mulatica in **Andilla**, Cueva del Vizcaíno in **Bugarra**, La Torre Seca in **Casinos**, Peña del Rodeno in **Higueruelas**, the Pino sombrero (a pine tree with a hat-shaped crown) in **La Yesa**, Cima de Los Huertos in **Losa del Obispo**, el Palmeral **Pedralba**, Las Toscas in **Sot de Chera**, and El Cerro Castelar.

The countryside and the orography of **Sot de Chera** are an important natural resource, with a number of delightful beauty spots. The area is ideal for nature-related sports: hiking, mountaineering, climbing and bicycle tourism, and it also has the Chera–Sot de Chera Nature and Geology Park.

NATURE SPORTS_

The main track that crosses **La Serranía**, from north to south, is the GR-7, which enters the region at **Andilla**, before continuing through el Valseco and the Rambla de Alcotas in the direction of **Chelva**, passing between the Peña Cortada rock and the Gypsy Fountain (*La Fuente de la Gitana*), at the foot of the *Pico del Remedio* peak. The GR-7 continues to **Benagéber**.

After passing the Benagéber reservoir, the GR-7 heads towards the towns of **Chera** and **Requena**.

Numerous short distance paths, including the P.R.V.-93 (Chelva-La Mozaira-Tuéjar), the P.R.V.-91 (Chelva-Pico del Remedio-Rambla de Alcotas), and the P.R.V.-92 (Chelva-Roman Aqueduct of Peña Cortada-Calles).

Climbing enthusiasts will find the steep rocky walls next to La Hoz del Turia river gorge and La Muela del Castillo in **Chulilla** a perfect location for this activity.

And you can go kayaking and canoeing in either of the region's two reservoirs.

The more daring might want to overfly the peaks of Villar del Arzobispo in a paraglider.

Calles offers bushcraft activities and survival courses where you will learn how to obtain and manage water, fire, shelter and food during a few days' excursion into nature.

In **Andilla** we find the "La Mulatica" Via Ferrata, quite a challenge for those who love freedom and different experiences.

If camping and peace and quiet are more your thing, **Bugarra** has a campsite on the banks of the River Turia where you can enjoy a stay in the heart of nature.

For mountain bike enthusiasts, the towns of **Andilla**, **La Yesa** and **Higueruelas** in particular have created a network of paths more than 150km long, with different levels, which will delight the more professional riders as well as the occasional cyclist, and also a permanent motocross circuit.

If you are looking for more family-oriented activities, **Sot de Chera** offers environmental education activities: zip line, Tibetan bridge and more in its hostel (*Albergue*).



Aras de Los Olmos

GASTRONOMY_

As in other inland areas, the gastronomy is robust and hearty. “*La Olla*”, a kind of stew, is one of the dishes you will find in most of the towns and villages in the region, with different ingredients depending on the season and the local products used to make it: *Olla Churra*, *Olla de Pueblo* and *Olla de Pencas* are different combinations of pulses, vegetables and meat. *Gachas* (savory porridge), *migas* (based on fried breadcrumbs), *gazpacho serrano* (mountain gazpacho) and dishes using pork products, together with homemade cold meats, complete the typical gastronomy of the inland area. And if you wash them down with the excellent white wines from **Alto Turia** and the wines of **Villar del Arzobispo**, **Calles** and **Alcublas**, each of these succulent dishes will take on a different flavour.

Traditional crafts in the region combine the action of Nature and of man; extra virgin olive oil is highly regarded by cookery enthusiasts and professionals, and there are a number of cooperatives in the region that produce it.

The region’s confectionery is also very representative, and common to the majority of the towns and villages we find *rollicos de anís* (baked pastries with aniseed), *malhechos* (with walnuts,



Cold Meats

“cazalla” liqueur and sugar), *congretes* (an Arab sweet with aniseed or “cazalla” liqueur) and *higos albardoas* (doughnuts stuffed with fig).

There is a long tradition of bee-keeping in the region, with a large honey production sold inside and outside the La Serranía region, in particular the honey produced using traditional methods in **Alcublas**, **Aras de los Olmos** and **Chelva**.

La Yesa is noted for its traditionally brewed beers.

FESTIVALS_

The region’s festive calendar begins with the celebration of *San Antonio Abad* (17 January) in the majority of the region, with a notable event being the *Cuentantón* in **Chelva**, a Festival of Oral Narrative.

Carnival (or Mardi Gras) is a break from the religious festivals. It is increasingly rooted in the region, principally in **Villar del Arzobispo**, where it is celebrated in a very peculiar way and has recently been declared a Festival of Regional Tourist Interest.

When spring arrives, some towns and villages celebrate *La Enramá*, the most traditional and deep-rooted festival in **Chulilla**, held on the first weekend in May.

The *Canto de los Mayos* (a song and music festival) in **Chelva** (30 April), the pilgrimages in **Aras de los Olmos** (25 April), **Alcublas**, **Andilla** and **Pedralba**, and the patron saint festivals in **Alpuente**, the *Pueblos Amigos* Fair in Benagéber (May), will give way to the summer festivals, held in the majority of the towns and villages between August and September, in honour



Carnival
Villar del Arzobispo

of the locality's patron saint. With the August Virgin (*Virgen de Agosto*) celebrations as the main festivity (notably the one in **Tuéjar**, with the Entrance of the Moor (*Entrada del Moro*), every five years; and in **Aras de los Olmos** every seven); this completes the long list of festivals and celebrations held throughout the year. **Titaguas** celebrates its Patron Saint Festival in the first ten days of September, and every seven years the so-called "fiestas gordas" (big festival) take place. Another event, held on the last Saturday of July, is the *Noche de las Velas*: at nightfall, the public lighting is switched off and thousands of candles are lit, forming figures, as well as workshops and music performances.

Notable amongst the pilgrimages (*romerías*) is the one in **Alcublas** to the Holy Cave (Cueva Santa) or the one from **La Yesa** to **Cuevarruz**, or from **Losa del Obispo** to the Calvary, a hill near the town which is home to the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows (*Ermita de la Virgen de Los Dolores*).

LA SERRANÍA



TOURIST INFO



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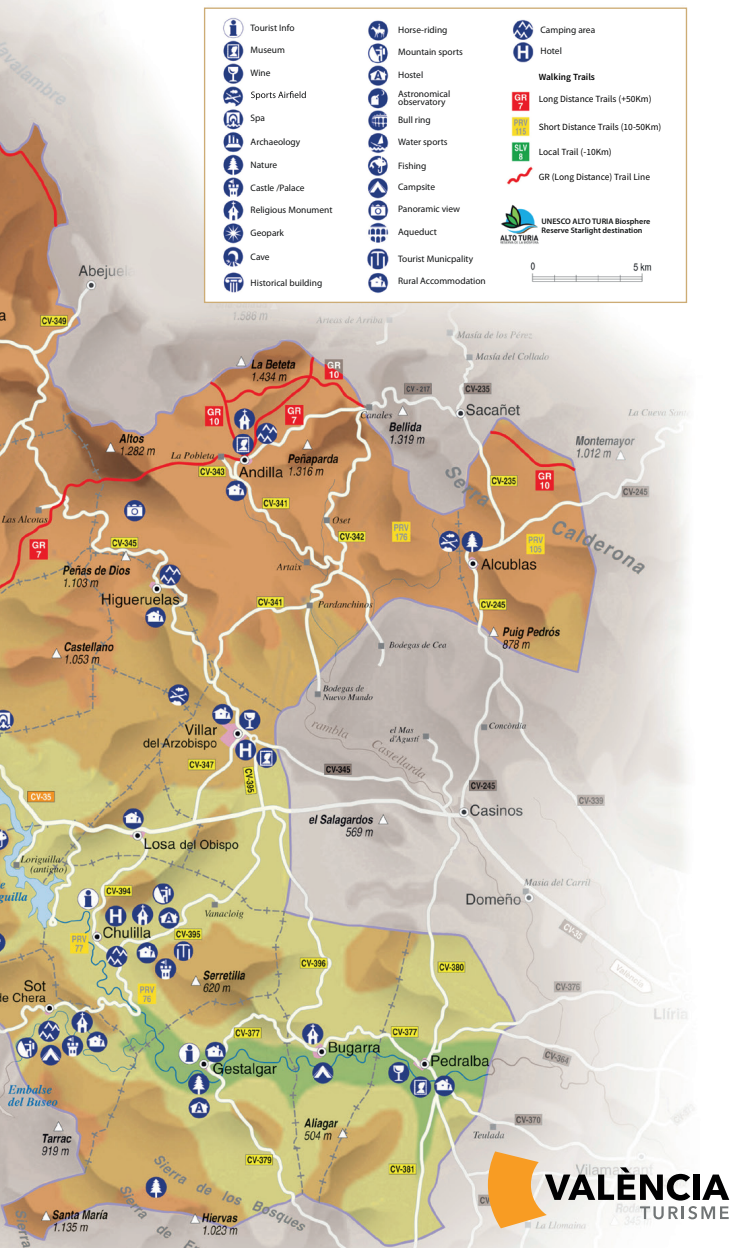
Tourist info Gestalgar

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Tourist info Alto Turia - Tuejar

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	Tourist Info		Horse-riding		Camping area
	Museum		Mountain sports		Hotel
	Wine		Hostel	Walking Trails	
	Sports Airfield		Astronomical observatory		Long Distance Trails (+50Km)
	Spa		Bull ring		Short Distance Trails (10-50Km)
	Archaeology		Water sports		Local Trail (-10Km)
	Nature		Fishing		GR (Long Distance) Trail Line
	Castle /Palace		Campsite		
	Religious Monument		Panoramic view	UNESCO ALTO TURIA Biosphere Reserve Starlight destination	
	Geopark		Aqueduct	0 5 km	
	Cave		Tourist Municipality		
	Historical building		Rural Accommodation		





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