

## WELCOME TO THE RUTA MARIANA: Itinerary of Marian sanctuaries in Spain, France and the Principality of Andorra

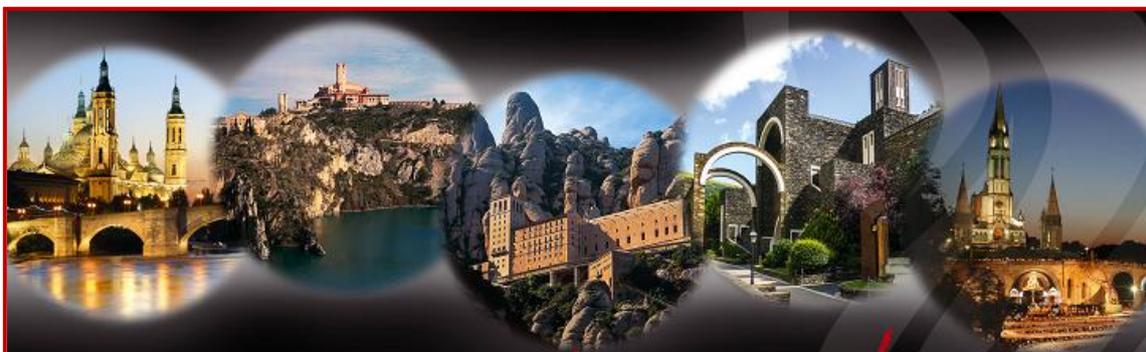
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The Ruta Mariana (Marian Route) can be defined as **“an itinerary of cultural and religious interest that links up the sanctuaries of: El Pilar, Torreciudad, Montserrat, Meritxell and Lourdes. Guided by the faith, spirituality and Marian Devotion, the itinerary possesses a great wealth in touristic spaces, nature, architecture, gastronomy or charming villages with a special enchantment.”**

Its wide variety of attractions becomes appealing to all kind of people and traveler, to the faithful or to the Nature or monuments lover.

Currently, the Marian Route is one of the most attractive tourist & religious destinations in South Europe. This route increases the number of visitors each year becoming one of the fastest growing pilgrimage itineraries, as **it has 5 important centers of Marian devotion.**

The route started as a religious product, however, it tries to become a greater Project. This new idea is a mixed product that includes the cultura, history, nature and monumental side of the different towns, villages and shires located in the surrounding area of the sanctuaries. Promoting these surroundings was one of the goals set by the sanctuaries.



It is the first time that this cooperation between sanctuaries (three from Spain, one French and one from the Principality of Andorra), joining efforts and promoting them as one destination all together becomes a reality.

## LOCATION

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The route goes through the Northeast of Spain, South France and the Principality of Andorra.



Zaragoza and Barcelona are important entrance points, especially for those Spanish and Italian pilgrims and visitors. Also for those coming from South America. Lourdes would be the entrance gate for those coming from Europe.

## MORE ABOUT RUTA MARIANA

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**The Marian Route mixes culture and devotion, art and spirituality, nature and meditation.** In Ruta Mariana spirituality and tourism get mixed in a natural way, as you can see visitor that have arrived attracted by the beauty of the architecture together with pilgrims and faithful that come guided by their believes.

No matter what the motivation is, Ruta Mariana tries to assist in both type of visits... to the devotion centers, as well as to their surrounding areas. By doing so, it forms a global destination that includes two sides (tourist and religious).

In short, it is a destination capable of providing different experiences and emotions to the traveler. We would like that pilgrims, faithful and tourists run into eachother **as they find in Ruta Mariana a different way to know and experience.**



## HOW TO TRAVEL THE RUTA MARIANA?

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The essence of the Marian Route resides in the spiritual value of the sanctuaries and in the historic, patrimonial and natural legacy of exceptional importance that possesses.

**The Marian Route flows through multiple paths.** Many different tours can be designed as it is a very reachable itinerary available through any of the sanctuaries, villages or towns. This is why we believe that the best way to travel the route is the one that fulfills your experience best; taking the trip from a spiritual, adventure or culture point of view.



There is a section in the web site that has several itinerary suggestions. Those suggestions are just some examples. The trip and package programming possibilities are very wide.

## SOME OF THE REASONS TO UNVEIL “THE MARIAN ROUTE”

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### - **Religious Heritage**

- **El Pilar Shrine (Saragossa):** The first Marian sanctuary in the world. This huge urban shrine located in the downtown area is an Aragonese baroque style jewel that holds inside works of art and artistic elements of great value. Some examples of these pieces are the Goya paintings, the altarpiece or the spectacular Holy Chapel; space that houses the venerated image of the “Virgen del Pilar” (image of Virgin Mary on a column).
- **Torreciudad Shrine (Huesca):** Near the city of Barbastro is nowadays one of the most visited places in the region of Aragon. Its privilege location on the top of a mount makes this unique place a perfect natural environment with great landscape views over the lake.
- **Montserrat Shrine (Barcelona):** nestled in the middle of the Montserrat mountain. This religious site is a true open air museum where devotion, culture and nature merge perfectly.
- **Lourdes Shrine (France):** one of the most cosmopolitan places in the world. Its strength resides in the diversity of the people that arrives from each and every continent.
- **Meritxell Shrine (Principality of Andorra):** where pilgrims and visitors pay their respects to the patron saint of the Principality while surrounded by a matchless scenery. The history of the Principality cannot be understood without Meritxell.



### - **Artistic & Monumental Heritage**

- Basilica of El Pilar
- La Seo Cathedral
- Aljafería Palace
- Aragonese Mudéjar style
- Goya's Route
- Loarre Castle
- Jaca Cathedral
- Aragonese Romanesque
- San Juan de la Peña Monastery
- Basilica of Montserrat
- Montserrat museum
- Modernist sculptures museum
- Lourdes Castle
- Betharram Groutes
- Andorran Romanesque
- Andorra Museums

### - **Natural Heritage**

- Ordesa & Monte Perdido National Park.
- Sierra y Cañones de Guara Natural Park
- River Vero Cultural Park
- French Pyrenees National Park
- Posets Maladeta Natural Park
- Montserrat Mountain Natural Park
- Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley
- Sorteny Natural Park
- Comapedrosa Natural Park

### - **Villages and Towns**

- Zaragoza
- Huesca
- Jaca
- Barbastro
- Aínsa
- Graus
- Alquézar
- Roda de Isábena
- Boltaña
- Sabiñánigo
- Lleida
- Lourdes
- Tarbes
- Andorra la Vella
- And much more..

### - **Gastronomic and Wine Heritage**

The different regions, environments, villages and valleys create a different Ruta Mariana of smells and flavors. Along the route, the travelers will be able to find many restaurants that will translate those smells and flavors to exquisite dishes, making this territory a true cuisine paradise.

#### **Wine route & Wineries:**

- Somontano Origin Denomination (Somontano wineries)
- Pla de Bages Origin Denomination (Pla de Bages wineries)
- Penedés Origin Denomination (Penedés wineries)



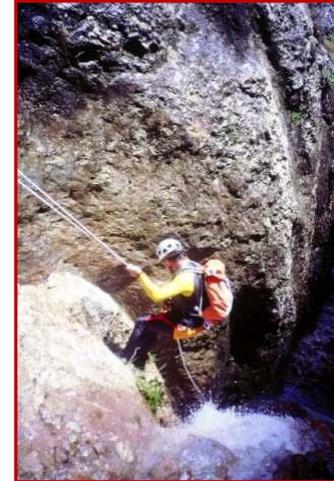
- **Traditions and Celebrations of Touristic Interest**

- Flower offering to "Virgen del Pilar"
- Semana Santa de Zaragoza (Easter parades)
- Semana Santa de Huesca (Easter parades)
- Carnaval de Bielsa (Carnival celebration)
- Fiestas del Pilar (Zaragoza´s festivals)
- And much more..



- **Active and Adventure Tourism. Ski Resorts**

- Sierra de Guara: leading destination in canyoneering and wild river water sports.
- Adventure and active sports on the Pyrenees: Hiking, Mountain bike, rock climbing, wáter rafting...



**Ski resorts:**

- Aragonese Pyrenees: Candanchú, Astún, Panticosa, Cerler, Formigal
- Catalan Pyrenees: La Molina, Masella, Baqueira-Beret, Boi Taull, Espot, Port Ainé, Tavascán, Vall de Nuria
- French Pyrenees: St. Lary, Piau Engaly
- Andorran Pyrenees: Grandvalira & Vallnord

## MORE INFORMATION

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**Web site:** [www.en.rutamariana.com](http://www.en.rutamariana.com)

**Brochure:**

[http://en.rutamariana.com/uploads/docu/docu\\_multimedia/RM\\_ING\\_5sant\\_web.pdf](http://en.rutamariana.com/uploads/docu/docu_multimedia/RM_ING_5sant_web.pdf)

**Video presentation:** <http://en.rutamariana.com/zona-multimedia/videos/>

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