

Best Natural Swimming Pools in Madrid (my top three)

Sometimes in life, you find yourself taking sides on what really matters: dogs or cats? living in the city or in a town? Here comes a difficult one: pizza or burger? From now on, you won't have to struggle on the next question in Madrid: **day trip to the ocean or hiking in the mountains?** Cause the answer is **piscina natural!!**

Las piscinas naturales, or **natural swimming pools/ponds**, are a pleasant alternative to the more common ones in the city (take a look at our previous post, [my top 4 city swimming pools in Madrid](#)). As far as I know, this kind of pool is **chemical free** and uses the water that flows from a river to fill the **pool**. Here in Madrid, we are lucky enough to live relatively close to a few of them. Since **summer** has now come and it's going to stick around for a while, go give yourself a break and enjoy life in the "*Sierra de Madrid*".

Here are my top three!

(note—they're all open now but I highly recommend calling beforehand to confirm their hours, sometimes they change without warning)

1. Piscinas naturales de Cercedilla (Las Dehesas)



Cercedilla by Marcelo Concina



Cercedilla by ABC

What you need to know:

Cercedilla's pool is my favorite because it's the closest to the city and the easiest one to get to. Before going, you should know that there is a "small" 30-60min walk from **Cercedilla's train station** to the pool. Although you can get a bus that makes it shorter, I'd recommend walking and enjoying the **landscape**. Also, that way you'll really feel you deserve the swim.

Telephone: 91 852 57 40 / 91 852 22 00 (Tourism office)

Schedule: 10am to 8pm (Season 2014: They are open since June 13th!!)

How to get there:

- Quick link to [how to get to Cercedilla](#)
- [Bus from Cercanias train station to the pools](#)

How much is it?

- **Working days:** 5,50€
- **Weekends:** 6,50€
- **Others:** Children and elderly 3,50€ / They also have group prices.

**Note: If it's the first time you go there, ask somebody to tell you in which direction you have to walk.*

2. Piscinas naturales Buitrago de Lozoya

(Riosequillo)



Buitrago de Lozoya by Kripsol



Buitrago de Lozoya by Canalgestión

What you need to know:

My perfect day trip would be visiting **Buitrago de Lozoya** town in the morning, follow by spending the afternoon at the pool while enjoying the view. Buitrago's pool is a bit farther than the one in Cercedilla, and the public transportation is not as convenient. However, the town and the pool deserve a try.

Telephone: 91 293 20 47 (Info) / 91 868 00 56 (City hall) / 91 545 10 00 (Canal de Isabel II)

Schedule: **10am to 8pm** (Season 2014: They are open since June 21st!!)

- **Working days(From Tuesday to Friday):** 11.30 am to 8.30pm
- **Weekends and holidays:** 11am to 9pm

- **Note: Mondays are closed. Better to go on a weekday.*

How to get there:

- Quick link to [how to get to Buitrago](#)
- **Note. Ask the bus driver where to get off, it's not the last stop and you don't want to get lost!*

How much is it?

- **Working days:** 2,50€
 - **Weekends:** 3€
 - **Others:** Children and elderly 1,50€
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3. Piscinas naturales Rascafría (Las Presillas)



Rascafría by rascafría.eu



rascafria by javidemadrid.tumblr.com

What you need to know:

Last but not least, *Las Presillas* pool in Rascafria is the farthest pond from Madrid and the less convenient to go by public transportation. Although the entrance is free and looks like the most natural and authentic. Plus, the bar area is great!

Telephone: 91 869 18 04 (Las Presillas) / 91 869 11 71 (Rascafria City hall)

Schedule: 9am to 9pm

How to get there:

- Quick link [to how to get to Rascafría](#)

How much is it?

- The entrance is free!!
- Parking is 5€ a day.

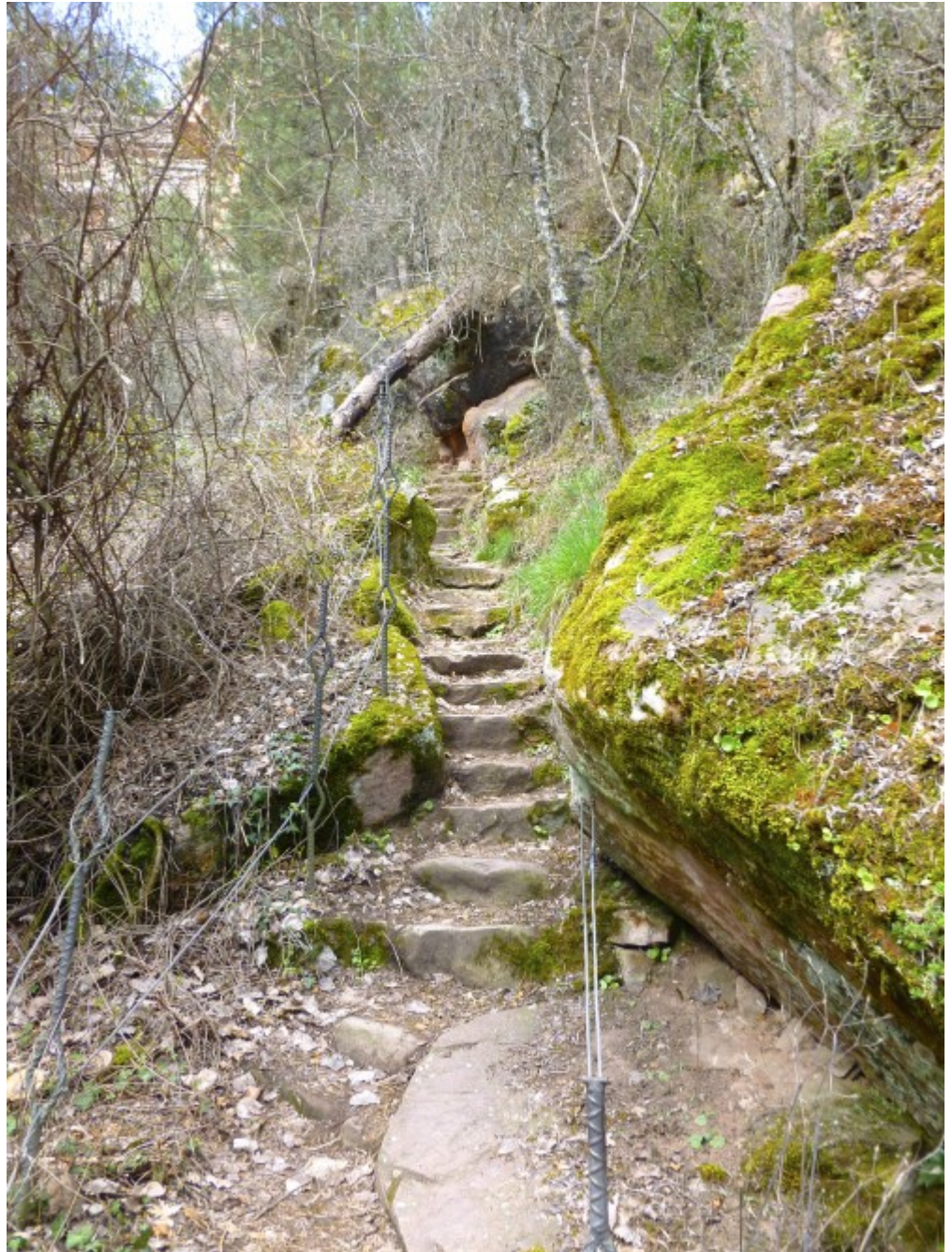
Barranco Virgen de la Hoz (Parque Natural del Alto Tajo) in Guadalajara

No plans for the weekend? Here's a great alternative to barhopping it up in Madrid. Last Sunday, my friends and I decided to discover other **natural beauties of Spain**; get out of the city and smell some fresh air. So we drove to the province of **Guadalajara** to visit what our friend, Carlos, describes as "**the mini Grand Canyon of Spain**".



Just a few hours drive east of Madrid lies one of the country's most beautiful natural parks, the **Alto Tajo**. Inside

this park, you'll witness nature's grandeur, the orange and red cliffs of **Barranco Virgen de la Hoz**. Views from the top of **these cliffs** make you feel as though you've been transported



to Arizona.

With **270 handmade stone steps** ahead of us, our non-athletic friends got worried. But as we walked up, we arrived at a series of "miradores" (lookout points) where we could rest, and take in the views; totally worth it. As we looked down, we could see the side streams of the **Río Gallo** (river) winding below the majestic **Barranco Virgen de la Hoz's** burnt-orange-colored cliffs.



What I liked most about **Barranco Virgen de la Hoz** is that you don't have to be a professional alpinist to make it all the way up. So there are no excuses to enjoy a really nice journey to the top.





Along

the path, the views get better and better.



Finally, after about an hour's climb, we reached our

destination.





Smile!

Oh well,
time to go back to reality. Good bye **Barranco Virgen de la Hoz**, hope to see you again soon...



Before we headed back to Madrid, we went to the breathtaking **Monasterio de Piedra**, where we saw hundreds of waterfalls. We could call it Spain's "**mini Niagara Falls**". More about that later...