

# 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, cochinitillo (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).



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## San Lorenzo del Escorial



## What to see:

El Escorial is famous for its beautiful *Monasterio* which was built between 1563 and 1584. We recommend going inside the monastery, even though the entrance fee costs €10.

Once you've visited the monument, it's absolutely necessary to take a walk around the charming little town. Grab a seat at a *terraza* and enjoy the pure air of the city's mountains, known as *la sierra de Madrid*.

## How to get there:

### • **By cercanías train ([map](#))**

**Depart from:** Sol, take Cercanías Line C3

**Schedule:**

Departure ([Horario Sol-El Escorial](#))

Return ([Horario El Escorial-Sol](#))

**Duration:** approx. 1 hour

**Price:** 5,40€ (round trip 10,80€). Buy tickets from machines inside Sol's train station.

*\*Note: you will have to walk 15 min or take another bus to get to the center.*

## • By bus

**Depart from:** Moncloa, take bus line 661

**Schedule:**

Bus line [661](#) (every 10-15 min)

Bus line [664](#) (every 10-15 min)

**Duration:** approx. 1 hour

**Price:** 4,20€ (round trip 8,40€). Buy tickets on the bus.

## Where to find it on a map:

