

FIESTAS

Fiestas in honour of the Most Holy and True Cross (International Tourist Interest status)

These are the most important fiestas in the city and are held every year between 1st and 5th May. Apart from the religious celebrations and ceremonies which are held there are also parades featuring the Moors and Christians and the world-famous Running of the Wine Horses, in which the horses are bedecked with exquisitely hand-embroidered shawls, which are works of art in themselves. This festivity has been named by UNESCO as an element of World Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Fiesta de las Cuadrillas (National Tourist Interest status)

This event takes place in the outlying village of Barranda and consists of a gathering of “cuadrillas” (traditional folk music and dancing groups). The first such event was in 1979 during the annual Fiesta de la Candelaria, the Patron of Barranda, and it is now held every year on the last Sunday of January.

SURROUNDING AREA

The natural beauty spot of Las Fuentes del Marqués

This beautiful location just two kilometres from the city contains the most important natural springs in the Region of Murcia and an impressive diversity of woodland. There are numerous facilities and it can be reached either by car on the Avenida de los Andenes and then the Camino de las Fuentes, or on foot along the Camino del Huerto.

At weekends and on public holidays road traffic is restricted and there is an overflow car park not far away. For further information see www.lasfuentesdelmarques.com.



The archaeological site of La Encarnación

At this location in the outlying district of La Encarnación there are numerous archaeological remains dating from different ages: the Middle Paleolithic, the Middle Bronze Age and then the Iberian and Roman Republic periods as well as the Middle Ages. Of special interest are the Cueva Negra and the Roman temples.

Vía Verde del Noroeste, the North-West Greenway

This hiking and cycling route runs between Caravaca de la Cruz and the city of Murcia, largely following the track bed of the old railway line, and is a part of the Camino de Levante branch of the Camino de la Cruz pilgrimage route, which begins in Orihuela in the province of Alicante.

Other locations of natural interest

- The beauty spot of Las Tosquillas, one kilometre from the village of Barranda
- The beauty spot of La Muralla in the outlying district of Archivel

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Among the highlights are the reproductions of the Cross of Caravaca, the “yemas” (a confectionary speciality) and the spectacular embroidered shawls worn by the Wine Horses. During the long weekend around Spanish Constitution Day on 6th December there is a large Medieval Market featuring not only numerous arts and crafts stalls but also a wide range of activities for visitors of all ages.

During the year the Pilgrims’ Market is held in the Paseo de la Corredera and again, as well as the arts and crafts stalls, there are workshops, demonstrations and numerous activities for children.

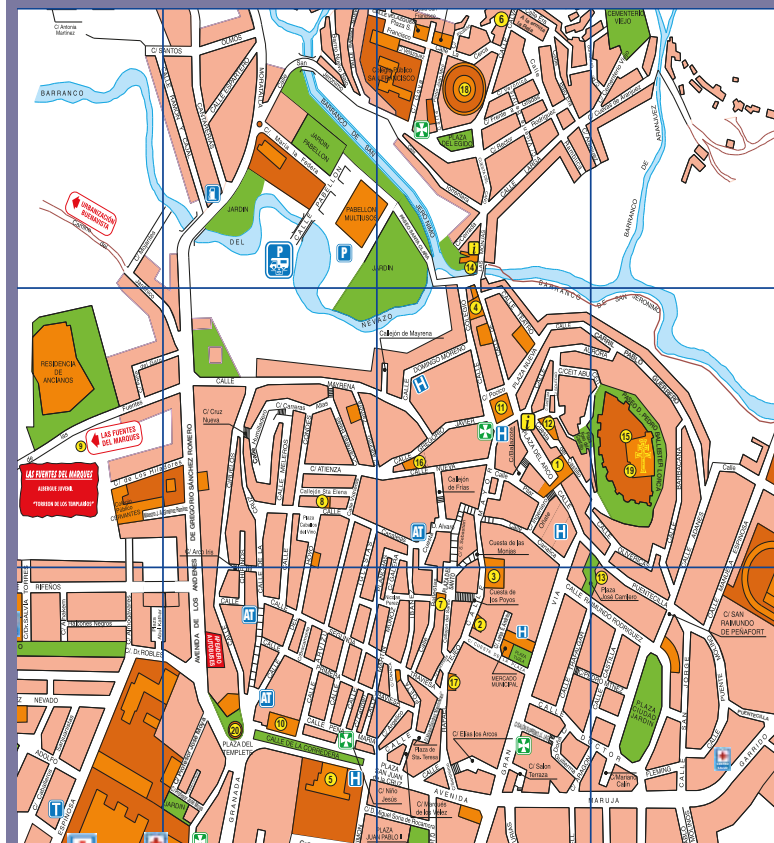
GASTRONOMY

The local cuisine is linked to the cattle and crop farming of the area. Especially worthy of mention is the meat of the Segura goat, a native breed which is used in the exquisite dish of “tartera”. Also worth highlighting are the cold pork products, the soups, “migas” and all kinds of rice dish, and in terms of sweets the highlights are the Caravaca “yemas” and “alfajor”.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

1. AYUNTAMIENTO
2. IGLESIA DE LA COMPAÑIA
3. CONVENTO SAN JOSE
4. CONVENTO SANTA CLARA
5. NTRA. SRA. DEL CARMEN
6. ERMITA DE LA REJA
7. ERMITA DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
8. ERMITA DE SANTA ELENA
9. FUENTES DEL MARQUÉS
10. PARROQUIA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN
11. PARROQUIA DE EL SALVADOR
12. MUSEO ARQUEOLÓGICO LA SOLEDAD
13. MUSEO CARRILERO
14. MUSEO DE LA FIESTA
15. MUSEO DE LA VERA CRUZ
16. MUSEO CABALLOS DEL VINO
17. PALACIO DE LA ENCOMIENDA
18. PLAZA DE TOROS
19. BASÍLICA SANTUARIO DE LA STMA CRUZ
20. TEMPLETE
21. TORREÓN DE LOS TEMPLARIOS



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Thank you for visiting Caravaca de la Cruz. We invite you to park your motor vehicles and get to know the beauty of our city on foot or by bicycle, helping to make this a sustainable tourism destination.



Caravaca
Turística



CARAVACA
DE LA CRUZ
AÑO JUBILAR

CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE



CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

The Most Holy and True Cross of Caravaca

The True Cross of Caravaca has been in the city after which it is named since the 13th century. It is a “Lignum Crucis”: in other words, it consists of fragments of wood belonging to the cross on which Christ was crucified. These fragments are preserved in a reliquary which is itself in the shape of a two-bar cross.

The Holy Jubilee Year “In Perpetuum”

In 1988 the Vatican awarded an everlasting Holy Year to the Most Holy and True Cross, to be held every seven years, and the first of these took place in 2003. This made Caravaca de la Cruz the fifth city in the entire Catholic world to enjoy this privilege, alongside Rome, Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela and Santo Toribio de Liébana.

Caravaca de la Cruz

Caravaca is the leading city in the north-west of the Region of Murcia. The municipality occupies an area of 589.91km² and is home to over 26,000 people, while the city itself is 625 metres above sea level.

Numerous archaeological sites show that humans have lived here since prehistoric times. During the Middle Ages this was frontier territory between Moorish and Christian lands and it was placed under the control of the Order of the Templars until they were disbanded, after which it passed into the hands of the Order of Santiago.



From the 16th to the 18th century there was a boom in construction in Caravaca and various religious orders settled here, and today it is a modern city with a wide range of facilities and services.

The Basilica of the Most Holy and True Cross

Built high on the hill which looks out over the city, the Basilica consists of two very different parts: the fortified area and the place of worship. The walled compound features fourteen towers while the 17th-century church is clearly influenced by the Herrerian style of 16th and 17th century Spain. The most eye-catching feature is the splendid 18th-century baroque façade, built using locally quarried marble.

The parish church of El Salvador

One of the jewels of Renaissance architecture in Murcia, this is a hall church with magnificent ionic columns supporting a beautifully vaulted ceiling. Among the outstanding features are the imposing tower and the main altarpiece. A relic of Saint John Paul II has been kept in the church since 2005.

Templete

The Templete, built by José López in the 18th century, is a circular structure consisting of various parts: the podium on which the building stands and from which two pillars arise, and then the main body of the structure, the drum and dome, and the roof lantern with its six windows.

The parish church of the Purísima Concepción

The most impressive features of the church are the superb Mudéjar artesonado ceiling and the figure of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, which was sculpted by Francisco Fernández Caro. Also of interest are the belltower and the baroque altarpiece.

The former monastery and church of San José

The monastery was founded in 1576, while Santa Teresa de Jesús was still alive, and is most notable for its austerity, which is in marked contrast with the 18th-century church which was built on the site of a more primitive place of worship also dedicated to San José. Without doubt this is one of the finest examples of rococo baroque architecture in the Region of Murcia.

Plaza de Toros

The bullring was built on the site of an old Franciscan monastery and was first opened in 1880. A remodelling in 1926 included the addition of a splendid neo-Mudéjar façade, and during restoration between 1995 and 1999 the façade was returned to its original condition and a new spectator stand was built.

Other monuments

Other buildings of interest include the Former Church of the Compañía de Jesús (now a cultural centre), the Town Hall, the monasteries and churches of Nuestra Señora del Carmen and Santa Clara, the church of San Sebastián, the church of La Reja and the Torreón de los Templarios.

MUSEUMS

Museo de la Vera Cruz

This museum is inside the Basilica and the exhibits include paintings, gold and silverwork, ornaments and documentation, all related to the True Cross. It is also possible to see the archaeological remains of the old medieval castle as well as the recovered moat, created during the Peninsular War, and one of the old water storage cisterns.

Museo de la Fiesta

Housed in the palatial home of the Uribe family, this museum explains the origins of the fiestas of Caravaca, the rituals which define them and the celebrations which form an essential part of them. Visitors can see, among other things, the uniforms in which Moorish and Christian groups parade and, above all, the magnificent embroidered shawls which are worn by the Wine Horses.



The La Soledad Archaeological Museum

Here, in the former church of La Soledad, visitors can learn about how our forefathers lived through a series of exhibits dating from the Paleolithic and the Neolithic to the Copper Age, the Argaric culture, the Iberian tribes, the Romans and the Middle Ages.

Casa-Museo de los Caballos del Vino

This museum is dedicated to the Wine Horses, tracing the development of the tradition from its origins to the present day and illustrating all facets of the fiesta. The roots and current format of the celebrations are explained in the different exhibition rooms and through audiovisual presentations.

Ethnic Music Museum and the Carlos Blanco Fadol collection in Barranda

The museum is home to one of the largest collections of musical instruments in the world, with examples of hand-crafted instruments from all five continents.

Museo Carrilero

Artist José Carrilero was born in the former palatial home of the Muñoz Otárola family and their descendants, the Marquises of San Mamés de Arás, and the building is now a museum in which an excellent sample of his sculptures and pictures can be admired.

The Nature Visitors Interpretation Centre

Inside the tower known as the Torreón de Los Templarios, in the beauty spot of Las Fuentes del Marqués, the centre is dedicated to the history and traditions of Caravaca de la Cruz, the local flora and fauna, the ecosystem of the Fuentes del Marqués and the natural wealth of the north-west of the Region of Murcia.

