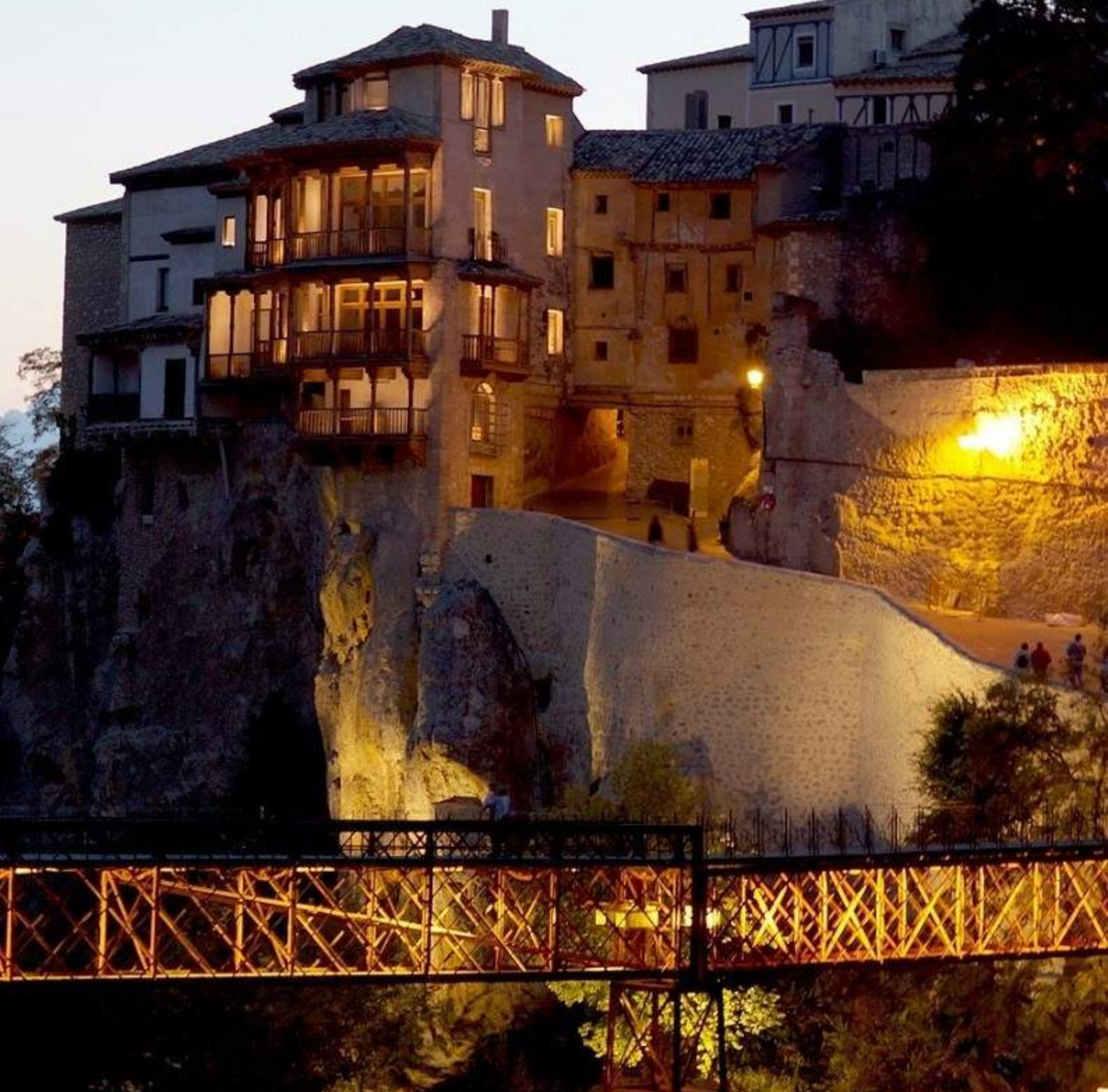


Cuenca Spain Travel Guide



BY LUCINA RIDGWELL

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1. Step back in time

The old part of the city of Cuenca Spain is placed high up in the mountains of east-central Spain, situated above the gorges of the Huécar and Júcar rivers below.

The old town is compact and all around it is green or stone. This idyllic Spanish town is located in the region of Castilla la Mancha, a region that has been designated with UNESCO status due to its' wealth of monuments.

This city has witnessed thousands of years of history, but as it is so well preserved it has been given the UNESCO World Heritage Site status. It is easy to get to Cuenca to and from Madrid by train or bus and thus could be seen by some as a day trip.

However, in order to really immerse yourself in the atmosphere of cobbled streets and this part of historic Spain, you need to spend at least a weekend here.

2. Cuenca Spain Hanging Houses

Cuenca is most well known for it's hanging houses. Built over a rock and situated above the gorge in the 15th century, Las Casas Colgadas are the only remaining samples of this type of building which was once common in this city. It is possible to enter the hanging house which is now a modern art museum.



Photo credit: Diego Delso [CC BY-SA 4.0]

The views of the hanging houses and the Huécar River gorge are also spectacular from the Bridge of Saint Paul. You need a head for heights to walk across this bridge that spans the width of the gorge.

3. El Greco

There is however a lot more to historic Cuenca. The Bishops Palace features a remarkable collection of religious art. The star of the show has to be its' piece by El Greco and the handcraft carpets by The School of Cuenca.

4. Foodie paradise



Photo credit: Restaurant Posada San José

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Cuenca is known to be a foodie paradise and this is certainly the case. There are plenty of great places to choose from. Our favourites were Figon del Huecar and Posada de San Jose's Restaurant.

Both of these restaurants offer a fantastic view over the Huécar River gorge that you can enjoy whilst sipping your Spanish wine and eating tasty variations of regional or country dishes. Cuenca has a passion for meat and tender lamb is its' speciality.



Photo credit: Restaurant Posada San José

5. Beautiful monuments

Head up to the remains of the Castle, which was once an ancient Arab fortress. The Castle was home of the Holy Inquisition after 1583, and it was destroyed during the 9th century by French soldiers during the Spanish War of Independence. The views from further up the hill are some of my favourite memories of Cuenca.



Cuenca Cathedral

The old convent of San Pablo is now a Parador, but you can still enter and take tea in the courtyard or the old chapel, giving you a sneak preview of this remarkable place. The convent of Saint Paul was built in the 16th century by command of the priest Juan del Pozo, a monk belonging to the Dominican Order. The church was finished in the 18th century, in Rococo style.

The cathedral of Our Lady of Grace and Saint Julian was built from 1182- 1270. The facade was rebuilt after its' collapse in 1902. This creates an interesting mix between the old and new. This can be clearly felt within the cathedral when walking around.

The cathedral is located on Plaza Mayor, which is the heart of the old town and circled by lots of little tabernas, each offering seating on the square. Sitting there then allows you to have yourself a Tinto de Verano while sitting in the sun, all whilst taking in your surroundings.

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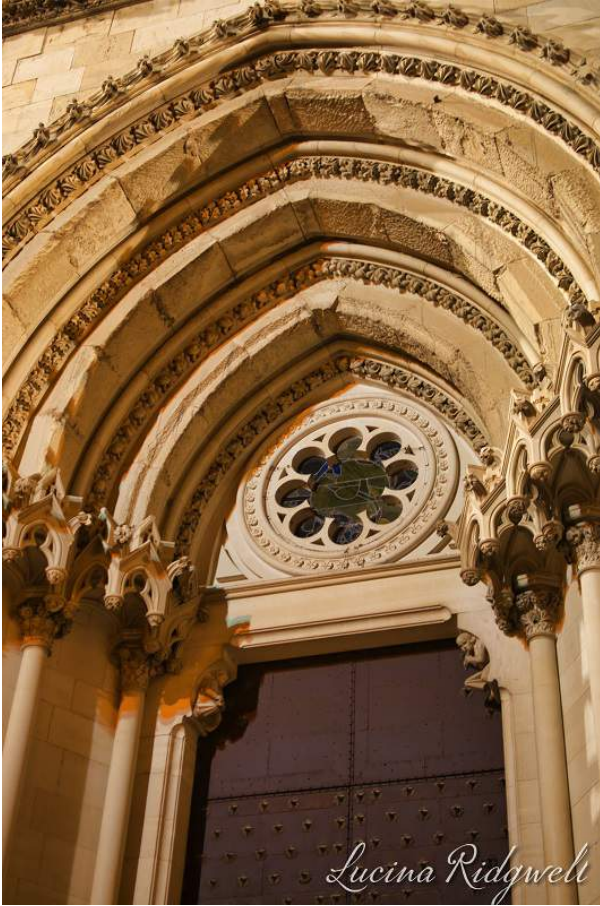


Photo credit: Lucina Ridgwell

The archaeology museum is a small but interesting to museum to wonder around and it contains many Roman artifacts from the Archaeological Park of Segobriga.

6. Bring your walking shoes

Be sure to take your walking shoes with you for this trip, as well as the area being hilly, you also have a multitude of walks around the gorges and beyond if you have the time to spare during your trip to Cuenca.



Photo credit: Lucina Ridgwell