

menu.

The Oddities of Salamanca

There are things you should know about our history and our traditions. Some will make you laugh, some will make you wonder and others will leave you speechless. In one way or another, they're all part of who we are today.

LUNES DE AGUAS (WATER MONDAY)

In the 16th century, lust was rampant in the city and that's why King Felipe II banished prostitutes to the other side of the river during the Holy Week. The person in charge of taking them there and bringing them back once that Easter was over, was a priest who was known as the "whore father". Can you believe that people gathered on the banks of the Tormes to celebrate the occasion? They even went as far as to organize a whole party, where they hornazo (see Eat like a Chorro). Water Monday is mainly celebrated as a family party, but since we are in Salamanca, it has also become marked in red in every student's calendar. The party takes place in the area around the Roman Bridge and everyone comes holding their hornazo and a lot of drinks. Please, if you join the party, remember to pick up all your litter.

CHARRO

The Charro button is a symbol of Salamanca and the locals are called charros too. You might ask why? There are several theories, but it seems that the word comes from the word "charro" which in the Mozarabic romance language means a shepherd or a horseman. According to the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, charro also means "overloaded with ornaments or colourful". It is not a coincidence if you have come across the same word in Mexico. The word comes from colonial times. The charros in Mexico are honored in its well-known "charro" dance, the country's national sport. There, being a charro is an honour, and we are proud to be charros too.

THE STRANGE GRAFFITI A.K.A. VÍTORES

When you walk through the center of Salamanca do not forget to look at the walls of the oldest buildings. From the 14th century, only those who were the most cultured and educated could have "graffiti" on the walls. Legend has it that when students got their doctorate, they were honoured with a party including a bullfight and a tag on the wall of the word "VICTOR", written in the bull's blood. However, centuries later, the graffiti was analysed and it was proven that there is in fact no trace of bull's blood on these walls.

Those strange "graffiti" are still called "vítores". The word "vítor" comes from Latin and means "winner". So why does it say "VICTOR" then? At first sight, it may appear to be a C, but it is actually an inverted moon that, in the case of the

University of Salamanca, refers to Pope Benedict XIII of Avignon who known as "Papa Luna" (Father Moon), the protector of the USAL. The University actually patented the typeface.

THE CATHEDRAL CLIMBER (MARIQUELO)

There are those people who climb eight thousand meters and others who climb to the top of cathedrals. We have the latter: The Mariqueles, dressed as a charro, climbs to the spire of the New Cathedral with a bagpipe and a tambourine every single year on the 31st of October. The reason we still celebrate that the Cathedral was hardly damaged during the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and that Salamanca and its inhabitants were left unharmed.

THE "MARISECA"

The Festivities and Fairs of Salamanca in September, in honour of our patron Virgen de la Vega, are so important, that we must let the people know. For this, we call in the firefighters and the police to put a metal bull (the Mariseca) on the roof of the Town Hall. For everybody who is born in Salamanca, this symbolic nature still marks a crucial part of the year. The tradition is still going strong to this day.

HOLY WEEK

The whole of Spain celebrates Holy Week, but every city has its own way of celebrating. In Salamanca, the festivities have been declared of "International Touristic Interest". If this is something you are interested in as well, we recommend you visit the Arrabal parade which takes place on Holy Thursday. In this parade, the statue of the Virgin Mary is carried only by women. To give you an idea, it weighs between 500 to 1000 kg. And they say women are the weaker gender.

Another interesting parade is the University Brotherhood parade. Every year, they renew their traditional ritual, the Promise of Silence in the Patio de Escuelas, in front of the University walls. Join them and witness how silence reigns in the historic center.

NO, WE DON'T HAVE KU KLUX KLAN IN SALAMANCA

It often happens that tourists coming to Spain during Holy Week are terrified when they see the parades. No, we have not gone crazy and are not wearing Ku Klux Klan robes. So take note, this celebration has been here much longer than some crazy Klan. The "nazarenos" and "penitentes" wear the cone called "capirote" as a way to be closer to heaven. The strange thing is that the origin of the cone comes from the time of the inquisition. In those days, sinners had to wear them so no one would know they were sinners. Funny how we changed negative meanings into positive ones.

PRACTICAL INFO

WE EAT LATE

On the rest of Europe eat early! Around here, breakfast is around 8 or 9, lunch is between 13:30 and 15:30, and dinner can be all the way from 20:00 till 23:00. So if you go for lunch at 12:00 sharp, don't be surprised if they can't serve you yet! At noon we prefer to drink Vermouth, so you won't be totally alone, but people will stare.

OPENING HOURS

It's useful to know that small shops generally open from 10:00 to 14:00, and then reopen from 17:00 to 20:00 or 21:00. We need our afternoons nap. Don't plan on Sunday shopping, unless you want to go to the 24 hours supermarket. Everything else will be closed.

EVERYTHING CAN BE FOR FREE

Yes, you read that correctly. We are talking about almost all the monuments and museums in Salamanca, if you go at the right time. To find out where and when you can get free tickets to all these places, you can either visit the tourist office or check ydea.es/en

PARTY ALMOST EVERY DAY

Salamanca is especially famous for its partylife. The busiest days are Thursday and Sunday. If you want to know where to go, just check the map

THE CLIMATE CHANGES DAILY

In Salamanca you can experience up to a 15 degree change in temperature in a day. It is not unusual for us to leave the house in the morning with winter clothes on and come back in the afternoon holding all the clothes and stripped down to a t-shirt.

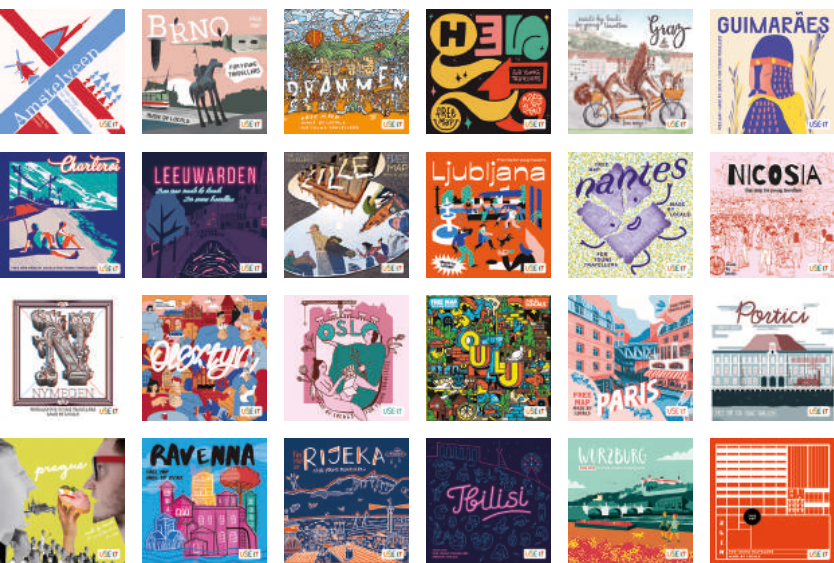
MOVING AROUND

The city is easy enough to walk, but if you want to go further you can go by bus (1,05€/one way) or rent a bike. If you are staying longer, go to the Oficina de Salamanca de Transportes on Grand Via street and buy a travel card (which has 21 deposit and the first charge has to be at least 3€). With a travel card, your journeys will cost you only 0,56€/one way. Don't expect Uber here, we only have our beloved traditional taxis. For more info, check ydea.es/transporte-publico.

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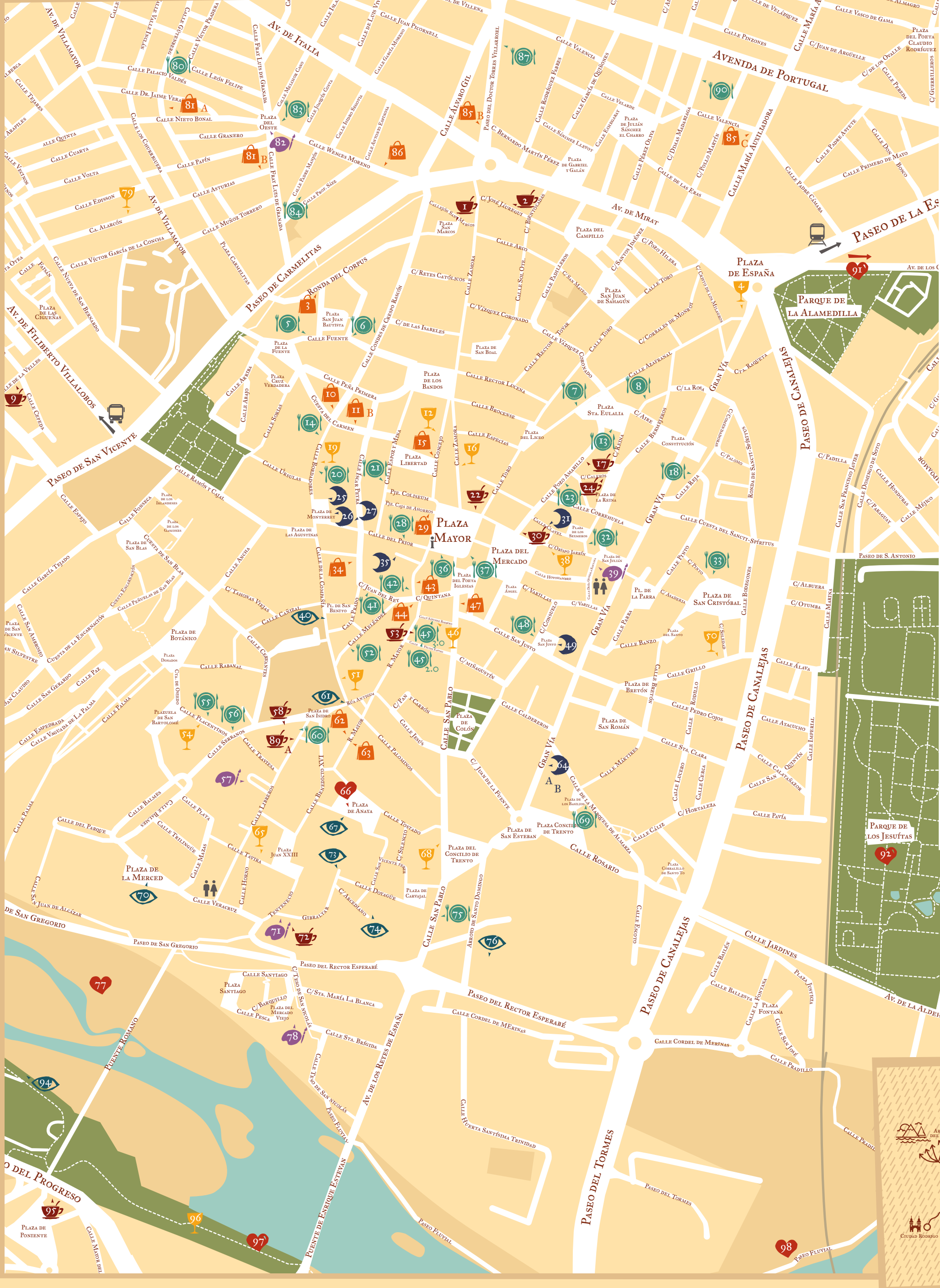
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77 CHEAP AND TASTY PINCHOS

Every morning, hungry students fill La Taberna de Ángel with their smiles and noisy chatter. The tavern is one of our most traditional bars and it defines the student spirit of the city well. They serve some very delicious grilled pinchos with prices that make it clear why they are still a stronghold, right in the middle of the tourist area.

78 BIG TOAST FOR 2€

The adolescence of all Salamantinos was marked by the delicious milkshakes of Café Bar Mandala. And the display case full of sweet goods. And the toast with ham and oil for breakfast. For 2€ you will eat like a king.

79 TASTE OF PORTUGAL

It has been 10 years since some Portuguese citizens set up shop here to sell their addictive sweets to the innocent souls of Salamanca. It has become so popular that there are already three "La Portuguesa" coffee shops in Salamanca. If you have not yet tried the famous and delicious pastel de nata, or a croissant with the typical Portuguese dough, this is your chance.

60 POPULAR WITH CELEBRITIES

In Salamanca, trendy restaurants are measured by how many famous people visit them. Lately, Corte y Cata is one of the most popular ones which is not at all surprising. They have a kitchen worthy of the best restaurants with quality produce cooked by professionals. They are experts in Iberian pork meat and their Iberian ham. The well-ventilated historic building in the old town also does the trick. If you want to go without spending too much, we recommend the executive lunch menu (Monday to Friday for 18€).

61 THE CORNER OF THE 2 WOVES

Coño (meaning Wov in English...) is a very common expression in Salamanca. When we walk past this corner we usually say it three times: "¡Coño la Clerencia!" (Wow, the view of the Clerencia!) and "¡Coño, que frío!" (Wow, it's cold!). Yes, it's a windy corner indeed. When you arrive here, look at the postcard image, that's the cover of our map. Now there's a fourth reason to shout Coño!

62 CROISSANTS AND COFFEE

We confess. It often happens that we wake up a little late and we don't have time to sit down and have a calm breakfast. That is when we just go to some of Crossanteria Paris's delicious croissants. The chocolate filling, together with a coffee, never fail to give the boost we need.

63 HIGH QUALITY TEA

There is no doubt that, sooner or later, you will pass by Ria Mayor and El Motín del DÍ. Did not expect a heavy winter in Spain? Then you will appreciate their warm cup of pure quality to take away.

64 NOSTALGIC 90's AND 00's

La Chica de Ayer is known for organizing terrific concerts by local groups. So we really missed them during the Covid months... Afterwards, they usually dive into the 90s and 00s. Admit it, you still go crazy for a Spice Girls song.

64B SPONTANEOUS PARTIES

During the week, the best unplanned parties are born in Centenera. On Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday nights there is usually a jam session where the best (mainly) jazz and progressive rock musicians in Salamanca go to give it their all. When you add the good drinks and snacks into the equation, a visit to this bar is pretty much mandatory.

65 ZODIAC FRESCO PAINTING

The University symbol represents the sky that was seen in August nights in the 15th century — with added astrological illustrations. Can you believe that we only rediscovered this beauty in the middle of the twentieth century? At first it was located in the old library (San Jerónimo) but after all those years, time had taken its toll on it. We restored El Cielo de Salamanca fresco and moved it to the current location: the University Museum, in the Patio de Escuelas Menores. We managed to save a third of what was in the library vault, the rest was unfortunately too damaged by rain and could not be restored. We visits every day from 10:00 to 14:00 and also 16:00 to 19:00 (except on Sunday).

66 CHILL IN FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL

In what other city than Salamanca can you sit on the grass in the middle of the historic center, have a snack and enjoy the historical plot surrounds you? At Plaza Anaya, if you are lucky, some students will be playing guitar or singing. If you are unlucky, they won't be very good at it.

67 ASTRONAUT ON THE CATHEDRAL WALL

You may wonder what an astronaut is doing on the facade of an 18th century Cathedral. We'll give you a clue... At the end of the 20th century, a reconstruction was commissioned (you can tell the difference by looking at the change in colour). The stonemason artist Miguel Romero was given artistic freedom and he wanted to honour Neil Armstrong. Now look at the facade again and try if you can also spot a demon with three scoops of ice cream.

68 BARN CONVERTED INTO A BAR

This place has a lot of history. During the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, it served as a bomb shelter. Before that it used to be a teachers' storage room, and in the seventeenth century, the unit students still housed their horses here. Hence its name - "The Stables (Las Caballerías)". Today it is a busy bar where you'll find traditional and cheap pinchos.

69 MORUCHA BURGER AND NATURAL WINES

Great goods, what a location! So central but at the same time in a quiet square without cars... and Vinodori's spectacular terrace is open 7 months a year. They have natural wines, which are not easy to find, the food is delicious, with vegetarian options, and the waiters are charming. The Morucha hamburger and the Iberian secret with Pedro xerém are also a must-try. And pink pepper is to die for. Do you need any more reasons?

70 SUNSET FROM THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

Ah, the beautiful summer. Ah, the beautiful Spanish sunset. Ah, your beautiful eyes. Since Mercedes botanical garden is among the science faculties, chances are that those students will keep you company for the beautiful moment, though.

71 ART NOUVEAU AND ART DECO

Casa Lis was built as a house for Don Miguel de Lis, a big businessman of the 19th Century in Salamanca. Based on iron and glass and following industrial style it has been a unique building in Salamanca. After D. Miguel died, the house was several families more. But in the 60s for political reasons it has been abandoned and lost its shine for a while. Fortunately in 1981 the town hall have taken care of it and transform it to Art Nouveau and Art Deco museum with 19 exhibitions (for some of us some us terrified) porcelain dolls, beautiful chryselephantine statues - unique collection disposed in such quantity to the world, or incredibly designed glass vases.

72 CAFÉ IN ART NOUVEAU MUSEUM

Casa Lis is fairly elegant and El Café de Lis does not break its style. No matter the season or the weather, from here, Salamanca always looks full of colour thanks to the glass windows. Do you fancy a cappuccino or do you prefer a hot chocolate? Oh, and if you're here on Thursday between 11:00 and 13:00, you can visit the museum for free.

73 PATIO CHICO

Patio Chico is without a doubt, one of the hidden treasures of Salamanca. Accompanied by the two cathedrals, it is one of the most beautiful and peaceful places in the city. You will enjoy a view of the cathedrals and the Torre del Gallo, not very known, but unique. If you want to take a walk while discovering the impressive Charro old town, this is where to start.

74 GARDEN OF LOVE

It does not get more romantic than the Huerto de Calixto y Melibea garden. The name of this garden is taken from the love story of Calixto and Melibea, who... well that would take a while. You can look up "La Celestina" on Wikipedia tonight if you are interested in the full story. For now, just imagine. When you enter, go to the viewpoint on the wall and turn around. Do you see the Cathedral? Now try to fight the urge to take pictures. Memorise it!

75 VEGAN MECCA

El Laurel is a restaurant that vegans and vegetarians will adore. Unfortunately, it is not open all year round and they also close on Mondays. The lunch menu on weekdays cost 11.90€ and it will not disappoint. Reservation is essential, though.

76 JAZZ AND PEACE UNDER THE SKY

There are three reasons why you should visit this little garden of Santo Domingo de la Cruz. First, the beautiful view of the cathedral. Second, the occasional exhibition and third, the silence. So, when you get there don't hesitate to enter if you don't see anybody (unless everybody is as smart as you and is using our map). Check their agenda searching on Google for some summer jazz concerts.

77 CHILL ON THE GRASS NEXT TO THE ROMAN BRIDGE

This place is a cliché that we never get bored of. Grab a blanket, something to snack on and join us on the grass. Enjoy the best views that Salamanca has to offer.

78 BRILLIANT CAR MUSEUM

Want to see the car used by Fernando Alonso during the 2009 season up close? The Museo de Historia de la Automoción is a must if you are a fan of cars. Formula 1 and history from the first automobiles to the prototypes of the cars of the future.

WHERE NEXT



79 BEERS WITH MATES

This modern looking bar was designed by Juan González (@art212). Everywhere you go, you will find about 8-10 different draft beers, some that they serve permanently such as Bizarra (Salmantine beer), and others on rotation, like the Estrella Galicia's special editions with rare flavours. You will find the characteristics of each one explained on a huge blackboard, which makes for the perfect opportunity to taste and learn. They also have a big assortment of sausages, served with pickles and sauerkraut in German style.

80 VEGAN FOOD AND BOARD GAMES

Vegans of the world, this place is yours. Savoury, sweet and budget friendly. After visiting El Vidriero, even non-vegans might realize that being vegan is not just eating lettuce and pasta. Ask the staff for one of their board games if you want to stick around.

81 SECOND-HAND

Ready to buy second-hand? In El Armario del Oeste (@elarmariodeloeste) you find plenty of vintage clothing and accessories. Amarga (@amargaaest) also adds local art. If you haven't found your souvenir yet, surely you will find it in one of those second-hand shops in the alternative and young Oeste neighbourhood.

82 STREET ART NEIGHBOURHOOD

The Barrio del Oeste fights for equality, defends minorities, organizes many events and has a Urban Gallery made by street artists. Every year in April, young and established artists from Spain and abroad come to spray fresh paint in the Urban Gallery and the rest of the neighbourhood. You could check the impressive pieces online (https://galeriaurbanbarrioeste.es/), but it is better in real life. Lose yourself in the streets and feel the soul of this alternative neighbourhood.

83 THE EVER-CHANGING SPACE

In the heart of the Barrio del Oeste neighbourhood lies this place that is hard to describe. La Salschicheria is a restaurant, an exhibition hall, a space for book presentations and a concert hall. It is an innovative place and probably the most hipster neighbourhood. Try their daily menu (14.50€) or tapas.

84 BACK TO THE 60S

This mythical bar in the Barrio del Oeste is stuck in the 60s. The decoration has hardly changed, and neither have the tapas, good beer or the habit to watch a game with friends. Undoubtedly, El Manzanao is one of those life-changing places, one of those that our parents used to go to and that has been able to adapt to new times without losing its essence.

85 IRRESISTIBLE DESSERTS

We don't know what the mystery recipes are for the desserts at Pastelería Gil, but they are so good that one will certainly not be enough. We Salamantinos like to buy them both to celebrate and as a Sunday treat for our friends or families.

86 BOOKS AND COFFEE

It's called stationary but it could be called a bookstore, showroom, cafeteria, relaxation room... The owners of the Papelería Yuste are a lovely family. If you feel like having a little break, sit back and enjoy the aroma of your hot coffee that you can order there, your piece of homemade cake and the beautiful harmony of the places of colorful books and progressive rock musicians in Salamanca go to give it their all. When you add the good drinks and snacks into the equation, a visit to this bar is pretty much mandatory.

87 IF YOU WANT TO BE SURPRISED

Limon Serrano is a typical dish from the Sierra de Francia that mixes different flavours in a curious way - fresh lemon and orange with chorizo and boiled eggs. You won't find this meal in Limón Serrano bar, but this is how we could describe their kitchen. Go to Google Maps and look at pictures. With their "Carta Verde" (green menu) it is highly recommended for vegetarians. Oscar - the owner - is a warm person who lights up the whole place.

88 TRY RUFADAS BREAD

The Van Dyck area drives us Salamantinos crazy. It is the paradise of tapas everywhere. But you can also find Rufas bread of the largest and best situated. It has the whole usual range, but also Rufadas, a kind of bread with different fillings. They are good value for money, quite large for only around 1.50€.

89 RUN BY THE RIVER

Whether you like to walk, run or cycle, we recommend this lovely path along the river to warm up those muscles. It's 1.6 km from the Iron Bridge to the Pasarela de la Fontana. If you want to go a bit further, continue to Aldehuela (+1.6 km) or to the Don Quijote campsite (+6.4 km).

90 PICNIC ON THE RIVER SHORE

In Salamanca we also have a beach. Don't expect miles of white sand with crystal clear waves, but in La Aldehuela you can at least sunbathe and picnic on the banks of the Tormes river. In addition, the local bars specialise in barbecues. They are ideal for a snack or even dinner. It is also a perfect area for running, outside workout or just feeling the ease of the path that goes along the river and the Isla del Soto. You will have kilometres to run in nature, only about 40 minutes walking from the Plaza Mayor.

100 GREEN RIVER ISLAND

On the Isla del Soto you can go for a run, ride a bike, walk the dog or just watch the birds. The island is surrounded by the river on all sides (what a surprise, right?) and therefore it is one of the greenest places in Salamanca.

WATER MONDAYS (LUNES DE AGUAS)

APRIL - THE MONDAY AFTER EASTER MONDAY
See "The Oddities of Salamanca"

THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AND MODERN ARTS RUNS

Once a year, during Festival de Luz y Vanguardias, the city is transformed into a stage in which local and international artists bring the monuments of Salamanca (always the Main Square, usually the Shell house and the Cathedral) to life through video mapping. Lights + Music + Art + History + Salamanca = a magical atmosphere and unforgettable experience. No entrance fee!

FERIAS Y FIESTAS DE SALAMANCA SEPTEMBER

Every year, during the second week of September, we celebrate Our Lady Virgen de la Vega. We do this by roaming the streets of Salamanca, with free concerts by underground bands, dance, theatre, acrobatic and other performances, traditional markets, fireworks and scrumptious pinchos from the booths, serviced by local restaurants and bars.

UNIVERSITY NEW YEAR'S EVE (NOCHEVIEJA UNIVERSITARIA) DECEMBER

The last Thursday before Christmas break at the university students are summoned to the Plaza Mayor where DJ's will give it all they've got to make you dance and forget the cold. Afterwards, the tour of the clubs begins. You have only experienced it real for all you make it till the morning, by the keep a check on the alcohol. The Main Square party is free.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE OF CASTILLA Y LEÓN

At this festival (we simply call it FACYL!) you'll get to see performances and live concerts by national and international artists. The stages for these shows are usually in the Plaza Anaya and the Patio Chico. Two places with a view of the most emblematic monument of Salamanca: our old and new Cathedral. facyl-festival.com