

SEGOVIA

Villacastín



PUBLISHED BY

Prodestur Segovia

Plaza Mayor, 9 - 40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 466 070 - Fax. 921 460 492
info@prodestursegovia.es
www.segoviaturismo.es

DESIGN

Agenda Comunicación S.L.
Tel. 921 447 176
www.agendacomunicacion.com

LAYOUT DESIGN

CARPASARA-graphic design
Tel. 677 574 223 - 91 415 13 84
www.carpasara.com

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The municipality (town) of Villacastín is located southwest in the province of Segovia, to which it belongs, and bordering with the province of Ávila, with a current population of 1,700 inhabitants.

Villacastín opens its doors and invites you to visit. It is located in a ravine with an area of 109,800 square kilometers. Its altitude hovering around 1,100 meters above sea level makes it one of the highest towns in the Castilla and León region. It serves as a separation point to two distinct settings: the rocky ground, useful for pastures and deep earth for farming crops. These special topographical conditions form a binomial between cattle raising and agriculture which gives Villacastín its very own hue.

The municipality (town) is watered, among others, by the rivers: Cardeña, Alameda and Santa Cecilia and the streams Lavadero of Aceña and San Bartolomé. Connections with the rest of the province and surrounding provinces can be done by taking the N-VI Madrid-La Coruña, the N-110 from Ávila to Segovia, the A-6 Villalba to Adanero and AP-51 linking Villacastín with Ávila. The town is 30 km from Ávila City Center; 36 km from Segovia City Center and 74 km from Madrid Capitol. Tradition and dynamism are united in this crossroad of roads.

The origin of its population still has not been defined, but as a stopping place on the route heading northeast, it once franked the Sierra of Guadarrama. Presumably it would have been populated from the beginning of time.

A roman road runs not far from the town therefore it has been attributed with Roman descend. It is said that in one of his



journeys with his troops a general named Castán built a recreation villa for him and his men which led to the beginning of construction of other buildings in the area.

Others give the version of "Villa of the Castles" latching on to the sight of four castles represented in the town shield, castles of which nothing remains today.

La Matilla, Navalpino, Amanuel, Quejibar, La Fresneda among others are names of other villages in the past, now territory, that have given shape to the current Villacastín.

In the early and late Middle Ages the village develops and grows due to its privileged location. It establishes itself as a crossroad of roads and streams causing the



expansion of livestock and farming industries. This period ends at the end of the XVI century when the number of its inhabitants begins to decline.

Those were the times in the reign Felipe IV, the monarch who finds himself in economic hardship and in order to afford the expenses of the Crown and cost of making coffins for the Royal Family implements the notion of servitude.

Using his power and privilege on September 2, 1626 a deed to exempt and separate Villacastín from the jurisdiction of Segovia is granted making Villacastín an independent town.

After multiple bureaucratic procedures and forming a new standard the King confirms the title of Town in a document dated March 26, 1627, as represented on the town shield. From this date, Villacastín begins journey loaded goodwill towards the future, going "from village to a free and organized Town".

Overtime, Villacastín has consolidated itself as a town that is strategically located where many roads meet. Due to this the service sector and natural product transformation industry is currently growing; industries which include the exploitation of granite, meat products, livestock, flourishing network services and hostelry.

The tourism potential of Villacastín is not only limited to the hunting and culinary aspects. In fact, it expands to the friendliness and welcoming capacity of its citizens to visitors, in its artistic monuments and beautiful streets, in short, it is a place where any visitor can feel comfortable and integrated, even if it's for a few hours, one can enjoy the peace and quiet that emanates from a Castilian town.



What to see?

Guildhall

Located in the main square this building sits over thirteen arches which stand at unequal heights due to the declining soil. Since 1575 these arches support the Town Hall and on that side of the square you can see porches of unique beauty. At the top you will see four town shields.

Our Lady of Angels Monastery

Work on the convent began in 1621 under the auspices of Juan de Pedraza and the Counts of Molina Herrera and construction took eight years to complete. The monastery has been occupied by Franciscan Clarisse nuns since December 4, 1632 until today. The church of this convent is chaired by a Renaissance altarpiece that contains a canvas of Santa Clara and San Francisco.

Church Parish

Two illustrious XVI century people are traditionally associated with the construction and design of the temple: Rodrigo Gil de Hontañón gave shape to both auditoriums and domes and Fray Antón of Villacastín, a native of this land and a man highly trusted by Felipe II, to give a certain Herrera Style to the exterior of the building. The building was designed in an Herrera Style on the outside and Gothic on the inside.

It has three buildings separated by slender columns supporting ribbed vaults. It has Renaissance Style altarpieces and pictorial paintings. The main altarpiece was traced by Jesuit Andrés Ruiz in 1589.

It looks like triptych, not too open, and it consists of four rows with fluted columns.

In the middle of the aisles of the "Catedral de la Sierra"



as the Marquis de Lozoya called the church of Villacastín are altarpieces dedicated to the Christ on the cross slope and The Sacred Heart.

The last two altarpieces are to the right and left respectively and are of Our Lady of Carmen while the altar is of San Francisco. The pulpit is from the XVI century. The temple was declared a National Monument on July 8, 1944.

Our Lady Carrascal Shrine

In Villacastín the devotion of the townspeople revolves around two patrons who are San Sebastián Martyr and the Virgin of Carrascal. The shrine of Our Lady of



Carrascal is built on a hillside crowned by large rocks. The path leading to it is still wild and lined with trees. It is shaped like a bottle: A square body up to the head then shaped like a space capsule and finally a long rectangle. Several transformations have modernized the shrine throughout the years. The day of the Ascension in the month of May is a very important holiday.

Charity Shrine

The shrine of the Virgin of Charity was completed in 1751 in the plot of a house and sold in the year 1749 by the chaplaincy of Juan Pérez de Córdoba. Engraved on the lintel one can see "Our Lady of Charity shrine 1751." The shrine contains a polychrome Baroque Style altarpiece.

Saint Christ of the Valley Shrine

Formally known as Corpus Christi shrine. This shrine is a consecrated chapel of the Divide Crucified. There is no proof of the altarpieces it had but the largest contained a crucifix. Due to this and its location the shrine came to be called Saint Christ of the Valley shrine perhaps in the XVII century.

Shrine of Santa Vera Cruz

This hermitage is also devoted to the Divine Crucified. The main focal point of the chapel is at the front of the room and to the sides there are two altarpieces dedicated to San Juan and Our Lady. It seems that there was never sacristy, but there was a porch, which has six brackets still embedded on the wall. The buttresses and campanile are relatively new and appear to be of our days. About twelve meters ahead of the gable there is a stone cross as if it were an ordeal.

Shrine of the Slaves

Diego Hernández is responsible of the construction of the building. It is a rectangular building with a sacristy at the front and a portal at the back. It consists of a baroque altarpiece which displays a canvas between the doors.

Monument to the stork

Villacastín is the only municipality in Spain who has dedicated a monument to this friendly and popular animal. Located on the facade of the church of San Sebastián which gives sight to the main road, one will find the construction tribute to the Stork. It is made out of wrought iron and rests the in a granite monolith base.





Let's party!

Patron Holiday - January 20th

San Sebastián Martyr, Villacastín patron.

St. Agatha - February 5th

Holiday for all married women.

Major Holidays - Last week in August

Morning and night running of the bulls with loose heifers from the Main Square to the Caños Square, running of the bulls on horseback, clay pigeon shooting, parade with floats created by the various social clubs, and flower offering to the Virgin of Carrascal...

Ascension of Our Lady of Carrascal - May

In the morning a mass and an auction take place while refreshments are provided by the stewards who serve the Virgin that year. In the afternoon there is a procession with the statue of the patron saint accompanied by the traditional Jota Castilian Dance followed by the auction of rods that hold the bier on which an image is placed on during a procession. In the evening refreshments are served and the final bidding of the auction which started in the morning takes place.

Exhibition Fair of livestock and crafts - May

Folklore Festival "Villa de Villacastín" - July

Gastronomy



Typical dishes are Castilian soup, butter beans from La Granja, various game dishes, lamb stew along with authentic delicacies from the menu of any restaurant, of course roasts (lamb or suckling pig) without forgetting a diversity of sausages, blood sausages and other cold cut meats from the various provinces where they are famous.

Folclore

The dances and performances are popular folklore; The people dance Segovian Jotas and sing to nostalgic songs which give the beat to the flute and drums while dressed in traditional Segovian costumes.

How do I get there?

From Madrid, take the N - VI Madrid - La Coruña or the AP-6 Villalba - Adanero (83 km).

From Segovia, take the N - 110 to Villacastín. (35 km).

From Ávila, take the N - 110 to Villacastín or the AP - 51. (30 km).

By bus, several bus lines from Madrid and Ávila.
Jiménez Dorado Buses

· **Madrid:** Madrid South Bus Station
C/ Méndez Álvaro, 83.
Tel. 91 468 45 11
Tel. 91 468 42 00
· **Ávila:** Ávila Bus Station
Av. Juan Carlos, 1
Tel. 920 229 520

Other information of interest

Segovia Capital distance: 35 km.

Area: 109,57 Km².

Altitude: 1.099 m.

Population: 1.585 inhabitants.

Patron Feast: 20 January.

Tourist

Establishments

For more information at:
www.segoviaturismo.es



Where do I find information?

City Council of Villacastín

Plaza Mayor, 1
40150 Villacastín
Tel. 921 198 008
Fax. 921 198 005
aytovillacastin@gmail.com

Tourist Office

Plaza Mayor, 1
40150 Villacastín
(Next to city Hall)
Tel. 921 198 547
www.villacastin.es
turismovillacastin@gmail.com

Prodestur Segovia

Plaza Mayor, 9
40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 466 070
Fax. 921 460 492
www.segoviaturismo.es
info@prodestursegovia.es

Segovia Sur

Ctra. Segovia, 5
40191 Espirido
Tel. 921 449 059
Fax. 921 449 075
www.segoviasur.com
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TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

CAPITAL

Prodestur Segovia
Plaza Mayor, 9 40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 466 070 / Fax. 921 460 492
www.segoviaturismo.es
info@prodestursegovia.es



Tourist Office
Plaza Mayor, 10 40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 460 334 / Fax. 921 460 330
www.turismocastillayleon.com
oficinadeturismodesegovia@cjl.es



Visitor Reception Center
Azoguejo, 1 40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 466 720 / 21 / 22
Fax. 921 466 724
www.turismodesegovia.com
info@turismodesegovia.com

Other tourist information points

Tourist Information Point in the City Walls
Plaza del Socorro, 2 y 3 40001 Segovia
Tel. 921 461 297
www.redjuderias.org

Bus station

Po. Ezequiel González, s/n 40002 Segovia
Tel. 921 436 569
informacion.estacion@turismodesegovia.com

AVE (high-speed rail) station

Estación Segovia-Guiomar
Ctra. de Juarillos, s/n 40195 Hontoria (Segovia)
Tel. 921 447 262
informacion.ave@turismodesegovia.com

Association of Official Tour Guides of Segovia

Tel. 691 117 197
www.guiasdeturismodesegovia.es
guiasdeturismodesegovia@yahoo.es

Central Reservations Office of Rural Tourism in Castille and León

Tel. 979 178 137
www.castillayleonesvida.com

Association of Rural Taxis in Segovia

Plaza Mayor, 1 40150 Villacastín (junto Ayto.)
Tel. 921 198 547
www.villacastin.es
turismovillacastin@gmail.com



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