



# RUTAMariana

EL PILAR • TORRECIUDAD • MONTSERRAT • LOURDES

[www.rutamariana.com](http://www.rutamariana.com)

(Travel Agencies Dossier)

## WELCOME TO "THE MARIAN ROUTE" (La Ruta Mariana)

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Dear collaborator / Partner,

Currently, the **Marian Route (Ruta Mariana)** is one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Spain and one of the most growing itineraries in Pilgrimages Tourism with a high increase of visitors in the past few years. Includes 4 of the most important Marian sanctuaries recognized in Europe, as well as in North, Central and South America.

Its **wide variety of touristic options**, makes the route very attractive to any kind of traveler. Above all these options, the route possesses a **great religious, artistic and cultural heritage**, as well as amazing natural resources. This impressive legacy satisfies without doubt, the expectations of any visitor.

The Marian Route is a **well communicated destination with easy access through natural "entrance points"** such as Zaragoza or Barcelona. It has a **rich gastronomy** and a **good hospitality infrastructure**; from modern hotels, to establishments with charm, youth hostels or "Hospederias" (accommodations provide an unforgettable experience in places such as palaces, castles or monasteries).

**As professionals** of this business, you will see the Marian Route a reference in Spain and Europe when designing and organizing a rewarding trip, as it has a **wide variety of options to satisfy your clients**.



## LOCATION & COMMUNICATION

The route goes through the Autonomic communities (regions) of Aragon and Catalonia in Spain and through the regions of Aquitaine and Mid-Pyrenees in France..



**Zaragoza is a key place in this route.** Its privileged position, just 185 miles from Madrid or Barcelona, connects Zaragoza with the main entrance airports for many foreigners. **Barcelona is the other natural entry** gate to the route.

**Highways** provide an easy access to cars and buses:

Madrid-Zaragoza-Barcelona;  
Zaragoza-Huesca;  
Zaragoza-Logroño-Pamplona-Vitoria-Bilbao-San Sebastián;  
Zaragoza-Teruel-Valencia).

**High Speed Train (AVE)** is a fast, effective and affordable mean of transportation. Currently there are connections to Zaragoza from many cities in Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Lleida, Tarragona, Huesca, Pamplona, Sevilla, Cordoba, Malaga...)



**Zaragoza Airport** (with a new terminal built for the International Exposition of 2008), **Barcelona Airport**, as well as the new airports of **Huesca-Pirineos** and **Lleida-Alguaire**, receive a good number of flights and connections with other cities in Spain and Europe. **Madrid Airport** (185 miles away) is an important connection for most visitors from North, Central and South America.

**Barcelona Sea Port** has a regular service with the city of Genoa, Rome or Livorno. It is also a turnaround port or a port of call for many cruise ships.

## WHAT IS “THE MARIAN ROUTE”?

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The Marian Route can be defined as **“an itinerary of cultural and religious interest that links up the sanctuaries of: El Pilar, Torreciudad, Montserrat and Lourdes. Guided by the faith, spirituality and Marian Devotion, the itinerary possesses a great wealth in touristic spaces, nature, architecture, gastronomy or charming villages with a special enchantment.”**

It is then a **multicultural itinerary** with wide variety of additional travelling options to choose from and where each sanctuary has its own qualities and characteristics. These **attributes make easier for professional** in tourism **to organize trips** for vacationing or religious groups, associations, pilgrimage groups or individual customers.

Currently it is **one of the most popular Marian pilgrimage destinations** in Europe, as well as in Central and South America.

This route increases the number of visitors each year. Around **12 million people** visit the four sanctuaries all together. This is the result of the importance and great interest that generates among pilgrims and visitors.





## SOME OF THE REASONS TO DISCOVER “THE MARIAN ROUTE”

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Here you are just some of the multiple reasons why anyone should look forward to discover this route.

### - Religious Heritage

- **Sanctuary of El Pilar** (Zaragoza): The first Marian sanctuary in the world. This huge urban shrine located in the downtown area is an Aragonese baroque style jewel that holds inside works of art and artistic elements of great value. Some examples of these pieces are the Goya paintings, the altarpiece or the spectacular Holy Chapel; space that houses the venerated image of the “Virgen del Pilar” (image of Virgin Mary on a column).
- **Sanctuary of Torreciudad** (Huesca): Near the city of Barbastro is nowadays one of the most visited places in the region of Aragon. Its privilege location on the top of a mount makes this unique place a perfect natural environment with great landscape views over the lake.
- **Sanctuary of Montserrat** (Barcelona): nestled in the middle of the most emblematic mountain in Catalonia. This religious site is a true open air museum where devotion, culture and nature merge perfectly.
- **Sanctuary of Lourdes** (France): No doubt, one of the most cosmopolitan places in the world. Its strength resides in the diversity of the people that arrives from each and every continent. Every year, more than 6 million people arrive to this holy place.



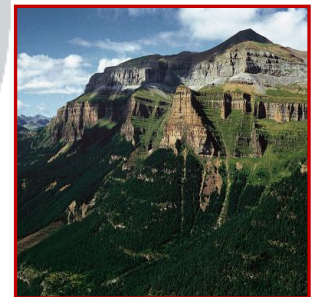
## - Artistic & Monumental Heritage

- Basilica of El Pilar
- La Seo Cathedral
- Aljafería Palace
- Aragonese Mudéjar style
- Goya's Route
- Loarre Castle
- Jaca Cathedral
- Aragonese Romanesque
- San Juan de la Peña Monastery
- Basilica of Montserrat
- Montserrat museum
- Modernist sculptures museum
- Lourdes Castle
- Betharram Grottes



## - Natural Heritage

- Ordesa & Monte Perdido National Park.
- Sierra y Cañones de Guara Natural Park
- River Vero Cultural Park
- French Pyrenees National Park
- Posets Maladeta Natural Park
- Montserrat Mountain Natural Park



## - Villages and Towns

- Zaragoza
- Huesca
- Jaca
- Barbastro
- Aínsa
- Graus
- Alquézar
- Roda de Isábena
- Boltaña
- Sabiñánigo
- Lleida
- Lourdes
- Tarbes
- Pau
- And much more..



## - **Gastronomic and Wine Heritage**

The different regions, environments, villages and valleys make smells and flavors another Ruta Mariana asset. Along the route, the pilgrim or tourist will be able to find many restaurants that will translate those smells and flavors to exquisite dishes, making this territory a true gastronomic paradise.

### **Wine route & Wineries::**

- Somontano Origin Denomination (Somontano wineries)
- Pla de Bages Origin Denomination (Pla de Bages wineries)
- Penedés Origin Denomination (Penedés wineries)



## - **Traditions and Celebrations of Touristic Interest**

- Ofrenda de flores a la Virgen del Pilar (Flower offering to “Virgen del Pilar”)
- Semana Santa de Zaragoza (Easter parades)
- Semana Santa de Huesca (Easter parades)
- Carnaval de Bielsa (Carnival celebration)
- Fiestas del Pilar (Zaragoza’s festivals)
- And much more..



## - **Active and Adventure Tourism. Ski Resorts**

- Sierra de Guara: leading destination in canyoneering and wild river water sports.
- Adventure and active sports in Benasque, Broto, Jaca, and much more
- Hiking, Mountain bike, rock climbing, wáter rafting... on the Pyrenees

### **Ski resorts:**

- Aragonese Pyrenees: Candanchú, Astún, Panticosa, Cerler, Formigal
- Catalanian Pyrenees: La Molina, Masella, Baqueira-Beret, Boi Taull, Espot, Port Ainé, Tavascán, Vall de Nuria
- French Pyrenees: St. Lary, Piau Engaly



- **Conferences, Conventions or Incentive trips**

Another way to visit the Marian Route is through these type of trips. Several cities and towns (Zaragoza, Huesca, Jaca, Montserrat, etc...) have facilities to accommodate the needs of these travelers (convention centers, auditoriums, or other meeting facilities) allowing the visitor to combine work with fervor or pleasure.



## THE MARIAN ROUTE ACCOMODATION NETWORK

The “Asociacion para la Promoción de la Ruta Mariana” (association dedicated to the promotion of the Marian Route) provides a range of **tools created to assist the professionals of travel agencies and tour operators** when packaging their products, program an itinerary or plan a visit. We are trying to provide **information** on the sanctuaries, surrounding area, **what** to visit, **where** to eat, **where** to eat or **how** to get there.



The “**Red de Alojamiento de la Ruta Mariana**” (accommodation network) is one of those tools created for the professionals to facilitate the search, compiling information and booking process. In addition to this we are trying to maximize the effectiveness of the resources by organizing and compiling all the establishments under the same brand, turning this brand in a recognized reference in the religious tourism market.

A good amount of hotels, youth hostels, rural houses with charm or camping areas have joined the network. This is a work in progress, as other accommodations continue joining the network. Travel agencies and tour operators have access to a wide range of accommodations of all categories in each and every area of the route. With so many options, we believe you have now in your hands a tool that can provide a solution to the needs of any of your customers. All this information is now available in the web page of Ruta Mariana under the section “where to sleep”.

## A SECTION FOR THE “TRAVEL AGENCIES” IN THE WEB

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The official web site, in the section called “Planifica tu viaje”, has a **place dedicated to travel agencies** and tour operators.

In this section you will be able to find several companies from Spain (travel agencies) that organize some itineraries about the Marian Route. These companies will be able to help you to organize and to book the different services and facilities for your trips.

### Other Services

Besides the information about the sanctuaries and places to visit, the itineraries..., you can get information about other important services for the organization of the trip.

- Tour Guide companies
- Transportation companies
- Restaurants
- Google map tool
- Suggested itineraries
- And much more..

You can contact directly with these Travel Agencies and Tourist Companies (Tour Guide companies, Transportation companies...) and to negotiate the different booking that you need.

## PROMOTIONAL TOOLS FOR THE MARIAN ROUTE

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We are in the process of translating our promotional tools to several languages. This includes the web page, a brochure and a promotional video. The next links are the Spanish version of these tools.

**Web page:** [www.en.rutamariana.com](http://www.en.rutamariana.com)



**Brochure:**

<http://en.rutamariana.com/uploads/docu/FOLLETO%20RM%20VISUALIZADOR.pdf>

**Promotional Video (Spanish) & other interesting videos:**

<http://en.rutamariana.com/zona-multimedia/videos/>



## THE MARIAN ROUTE: A PROJECT BACKED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

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From the beginning, this project has the support and commitment of local and regional public institutions such as “Turismo de Aragón” (tourism department of the Aragón Government), “Zaragoza Turismo” (tourism department Zaragoza city hall). This support reinforces the importance and magnitude of this European pilgrimage destination. New agreements with other national and international institutions are being studied.

### Contact info: Secretaría Técnica

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#### **Secretaría Técnica of “Asociación para la Promoción de la Ruta Mariana”:**

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