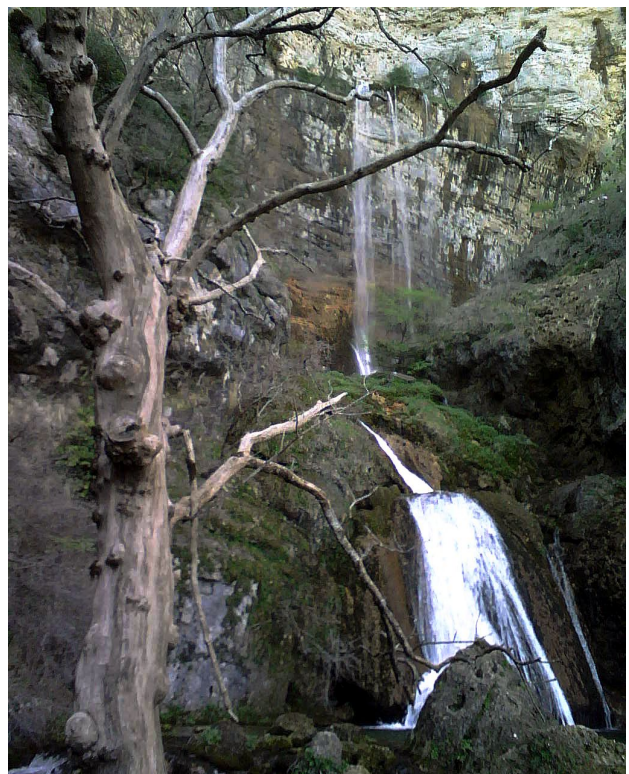




# servas meeting 'SOUTHEASTERN SPAIN' OCTOBER 12-15, 2017

WALKING THROUGH TWO NATURAL PARKS AROUND THE CROSSROADS  
BETWEEN LA MANCHA AND SOUTHEASTERN SPANISH MOUNTAINS

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## **HALFWAY THE MOUNTAINS AND THE PLAINS**

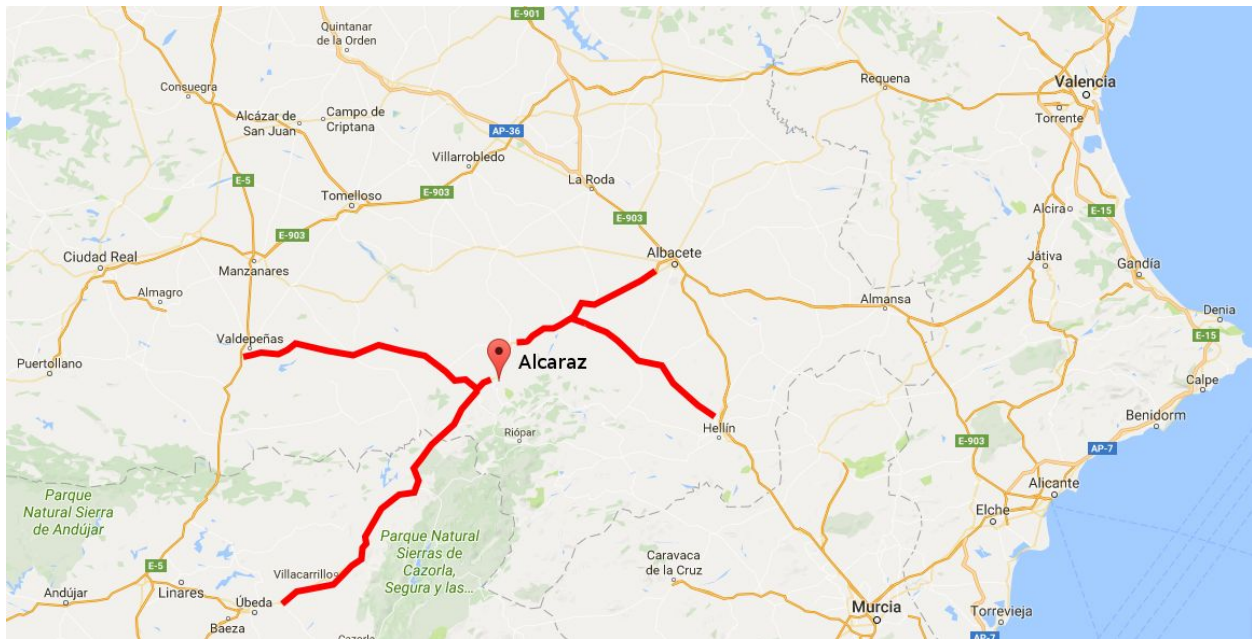
There are very few Servas members in La Mancha, but it is time for you to know our region, just as diverse as stereotyped because of images from 'Don Quijote'. To be precise, in Albacete one can find some of the driest steppes in the Iberian Peninsula, where bustards and larks live, but also watch lagoon complexes, at 1.000 meters above sea level, where flamingos breed and cranes come every year. **Inside a 50 km radius, we go straight from apparently desolated flat lands to a continuous forest and mountain landscape that hides a range of species that are usually found in much northern regions,** right on the border of Andalusia. Canyons and ravines of Júcar River or Ruidera Lakes are another impressive surprise in the middle of monotone inner Spain, and Andalusian Mediterranean mountains have here its last ranges to the East.

That is the reason for us to organize a meeting that we hope to repeat many times, along with encouraging new members in our region and keeping in mind the Servas mutual understanding spirit, which is always the understanding of the environment that shaped our different ways of life.

**We will be lodged in the historic village of Alcaraz,** a Heritage Site that gives its name to a mountain range whose main tourist spot is the scenic **Mundo River source,** which is undoubtedly a must-see. Our base camp will be San Francisco Hostel, a former convent that has been recently renovated with comfortable and inspiring facilities. During our days there, **we will climb to one of the most charismatic peaks in the region, La Almenara, at almost 1.800 m.a.s.l., we will know the Hocino Strait** protected area, where birds of prey and mountain wild goats are easy to watch, and **we will visit some 'Don Quijote' locations like Montesinos Cave, Ruidera Lakes** and Villanueva de Los Infantes, one of the best preserved Heritage Villages in Spain. Those coming from closest places and having some more time (and luck), will be even able to enjoy the red deer rutting bellow in Sierra de Relumbrar, among a typical Mediterranean hilly landscape.

**The programme includes all compulsory Civil Liability and Accidents Insurances** for nature activities in Spain, **accommodation in shared rooms with half board, guided tours and bus transportation once in the hostel.** We hope you feel so excited as us with our first Servas project. See you in October!

# Where are we?



Alcaraz is an historical crossroads between Northern Andalusia, Eastern Spain and La Mancha. From Alicante or Valencia by car, the best option is getting there through Albacete, using the A31 highway and N 322 road. It takes around three hours or two hours 40 minutes, depending on the departure point. You have a three hour-drive from Madrid, and the most convenient way is A4 highway until Manzanares, taking N 430 to Villanueva de los Infantes from there and then go on until our destination. If you come from Andalusia, you must leave A4 at Valdepeñas and follow CM 412. Almería or Murcia have quick connections through A32 until Hellín, and then CM 313 and N 322 roads.

If you prefer public transportation, Albacete has excellent links both by bus or train (regular trains or high-speed) departing from Madrid, Valencia, Alicante, Murcia or Cuenca, and less regular timetables from Ciudad Real. You even have direct buses to Albacete from Madrid Airport. Besides, bus lines between Seville or Jaen and Valencia, operated by ALSA, stop in Alcaraz, as well as in Córdoba, Linares, Úbeda, Puente Génave, Albacete, Almansa or Játiva. There are also two daily buses from Albacete to Alcaraz, at 15.00 and 18.00 h, everyday but Sundays and bank holidays. They depart at 7.45 h from Alcaraz to Albacete on working days, and at 8.15 on Saturdays, not operating on Sundays and bank holidays. It is easy to combine train and bus in Albacete since both stations are just next to each other.

# Meeting programme

**Wednesday, October 11th**

**If you feel like, it is possible to accommodate the night before the beginning.  
Overnight price is 18-20€, depending on the kind of room.**



**Thursday, October 12th**

**Arrival to San Francisco Hostel (Alcaraz) during the day.**

**Early in the morning, we might visit Sierra del Relumbrar to watch red deer rutting with members that came the previous night (we will need a little luck and private cars).**

- 14.00 Lunch (not included).
- 18.00 Guided tour around Alcaraz.
- 21.00 Brotherhood dinner (take something typical from your place).
- 22.00 Presentation of the meeting schedule.

## Friday, October 13th

- 08.00: Breakfast.  
08.30: Departure by bus to **Calares del Mundo Natural Park**.
- 09.00: **Hard hiking** (16 km,  $\nearrow$  720 m  $\searrow$  1.000 m)  
Almenara's range - Almenara's summit (1.796 m) - Riópar
- Easy hiking** (10 km,  $\nearrow$  260 m  $\searrow$  530 m)  
Almenara's range - El Escorial



- 12.00 **Easy hiking group:** end of trail and bus transportation to Riópar.  
13.00: Groups joining in Riópar Viejo and lunch (not included).  
15.00: Visit to the Espiritu Santo Church and the Castle remains.



- 16.00: Transportation to River Mundo Source and visit around.  
18.00: Return to Alcaraz through Estrecho del Hocino protected area.  
19.00: Little walk around Estrecho del Hocino protected area.  
21.00: Dinner at the hostel



## Saturday, October 14th

08.30: Breakfast.

09.00: Bus transportation to **Ruidera Lakes Natural Park**

10.15: Hiking for everybody (14 km,  $\nearrow$  110 m  $\searrow$  220 m)

Montesino's Cave - Rochafriada Castle - Ruidera Lakes



14.00: Lunch at Alonso Quijano Hostel.

16.00: Visit to Hundimiento Waterfall.

17.15: Villanueva de Los Infantes. Guided tour.

19.30: Return to Alcaraz.

21.00: Dinner (not included)

## Sunday, October 15th

09.00: Breakfast and check out.

For those being able to stay until the afternoon, an optional trip with particular cars has been thought for a guided nature tour around some of the protected areas near Alcaraz, such as a La Molata (a little fee would be necessary), or River Madera Ravine (free, although it takes 40 minutes by car to get there).

**NUMBER OF PLACES: 33**

**PRICE:**

**128€ IN SHARED ROOM  
3, 4 OR 6 BEDS**

**110€ IN BUNK BEDS DORMITORY  
(14 PEOPLE)**

