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## Museum of El Bierzo

### TOWN HALL OF PONFERRADA

Since its creation in 1997, the **MUSEUM OF EL BIERZO** is located in the old "Palacio Consistorial y Real Cárcel" (The Old Council Palace and Royal Prison), a remarkable building, an evidence of the civil architecture of the city, built between 1565 and 1771 by order of Philip II of Spain, whose royal shield crowns the main façade. Restored between the 18th and 19th centuries, it housed the city prison until 1968. The outstanding elements of the building are its two courtyards: the interior with beautiful columns of the 16th century and the outside, with a well and a fig tree of the 18th century. The museological journey allows visitors to explore the exciting history of the region from Prehistory to the 19th century, through the archeology of the primitive settlers, the gold of Las Medulas, the coins of the Roman Empire, the footprints of the monks of the "Valle del Silencio" (Silence Valley), the different jewels of gothic and baroque silver, the traditional clothing, the cartography and a valuable collection of historical weapons.



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## "Luis del Olmo" Radio Museum

### TOWN HALL OF PONFERRADA

The **RADIO MUSEUM**, which is named after the prestigious journalist of Ponferrada (León), Luis del Olmo, is placed inside the "Casa de los Escudos" (Coats of Arms House), a manor house built in the 18th century by Francisco García de las Llanas, Perpetual Alderman of Ponferrada, Knight of the Order of Alcántara and Captain of the Militia Regiment of León. The shields of their lineage dominate the main façade, among the aromatic violet flowers of the wisteria that has climbed its walls since the 19th century. The Museum treasures the most relevant radio collection of Spain, showing near 300 devices, among which it is possible to find some exclusive pieces, oddities, microphones, emission valves and other objects related to the Luis del Olmo. The Museum allows to discover in a fun and didactic way the history of the radio in Spain through an extraordinary sound file.



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## The Railway Museum

### TOWN HALL OF PONFERRADA

The former narrow-gauge railway station "Ponferrada-Villablino" is the home of the **RAILWAY MUSEUM**, which tells the history of the mining company called "Minero Siderurgica de Ponferrada", and recognizes and honors the memory of hundreds of men and women who worked very hard in the extraction and transport of iron and coal during the 20th century in El Bierzo and Laciana. The railway, intended for the transport of minerals, also provided passenger services until 1980, being the last one to remove the steam locomotives, being some models of this means of transport - exposed in the Museum - authentic jewels of industrial archeology.

In the Museum, the space "**Estacion Arte**", dedicated to artistic workshops, shows the creations of the plastic artists of Ponferrada and El Bierzo.



## la fábrica de luz

### MUSEO DE LA ENERGÍA



**LA FÁBRICA DE LUZ** is an area of cultural and scientific leisure. The first office open to the public is located in a former thermal power plant, which was in operation from 1920 to 1971. The restoration of this industrial complex has been awarded with the Europe Nostra 2012 Award for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage, granted by the European Union. A space that has been transformed to show a part of the history of Spain, told by its own protagonists. A journey back in time to discover how electricity was produced at the beginning of the last century and how was the life of the people who lived and worked there. Ene.Museo is all this, but it is also participation, temporary exhibitions, workshops, courses, conferences and events. Come visit and see it for yourself!

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Cover photo  
Amando Casado  
Indoor photos  
Local Museums of Ponferrada  
and National Energy Museum



Town Hall of  
**PONFERRADA**  
City Council Department  
of tourism







# The Templar Castle

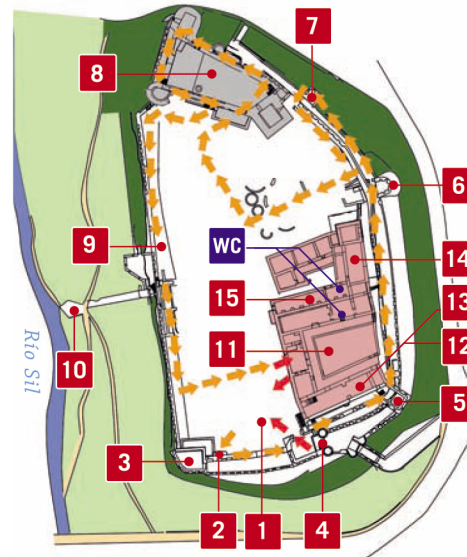
TOWN HALL OF PONFERRADA

THE EMBLEMATIC TEMPLAR CASTLE, WITH AN AREA OF 8,000 M<sup>2</sup>, IS THE MOST IMPRESSIVE FORTIFIED STRUCTURE IN THE NORTH OF THE SPANISH PENINSULA AND ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT TEMPLAR ENCLAVES IN EUROPE.



*The Catholic Monarchs moved their army for the Reconquista of El Bierzo and the taking of the fortress of Ponferrada, which meant a remarkable deployment. The bulk of the troops consisted of 2,900 infantrymen, 650 cavalry lances, 100 soldiers with "espingardas" (cannons) who belonged to the elite troops and numerous soldiers of fortune.*

# Ponferrada



1. TICKETS/INFORMATION/SHOP/AUDIOGUIDES 2. STARTING POINT OF THE VISIT 3. TOWER OF MOCLÍN 4. TOWER OF LOS CARACOLES 5. TOWER OF CABRERA 6. TOWER OF MALVECINO 7. TOWER OF MALPICA 8. OLD CASTLE 9. RONDA DEL SIL PATH 10. CAVE OF LA MORA 11. NEW PALACE 12. OLD TEMPLAR CHAPEL-COUNT'S WINE CELLAR 13. HALL OF ARMS OF THE COUNT OF LEMOS 14. TEMPLAR'S LIBRARY - CENTER OF HISTORICAL STUDIES 15. TEMPLUM LIBRI-EXHIBITION



The **Night of the Templars** is celebrated in Ponferrada every year during the first full moon of the summer.



Templar Cross



Duke of Arjona



Cross of tau



Shield of Ponferrada

Exhibition  
**Templum Libri**

Templar **Library** and **Research Centre**



"THE TEMPLE HAS GOOD KNIGHTS, WHO WEAR WHITE MANTLES WITH A SIMPLE RED CROSS AND A FLAG OR BANNER OF COLORS THAT THEY CALL "BAUCENT" AND THAT GOES BEFORE THEM IN THE BATTLES. THEY WAIT FOR THE ENEMIES AND THEIR FIRST ATTACKS. FIRST ONES TO GO, LAST ONES TO COME BACK. EITHER THEY TOTALLY DEFEAT THEIR ENEMY OR THEY ALL DIE BEING ALWAYS THE LAST TO WITHDRAW".

The **Castle** was initially a small village with a fence made of boulders and mud (12th century), built over the primitive settlement of the Iron Age I and which was later reinforced during the time of the Templars with a wall of lime and boulders (13th century). After being taken away from the Order of the Temple in the 14th century, his new lord, Pedro Fernandez de Castro, erected a castle at one end of the Temple in the 14th century, to his sister Beatriz de Castro and her husband, Pedro Álvarez Osorio, Count of Lemos, who carried out great works by turning what remained of the primitive Templar enclosure into a solid and luxurious palace called the **New Castle**. His grandson, the following Count of Lemos, who adopted as currency the "Tau", revolted against the Catholic Monarchs, who finally, and from 1507, took possession of the fortress.

Its privileged location in the heart of the city, among the murmurs of rivers, mountains and footprints of pilgrims, evokes the spirit of the legendary knight-monks who built it, whose heritage, preserved and rebuilt by the nobles who succeeded them, still lives among its venerable walls.  
**The Templar Castle** is not a single building. It is a walled enclosure in which, in different times and circumstances, buildings were built on the inside and towers and barriers on the outside. During your visit, you will discover how, under each stone, a mystery, a story or a legend is hidden. Every building, every tower, every door, even every stretch of wall, has since the Middle Ages a proper name, a different bond and, in many cases, a shield and an inscription that identifies a different promoter.

Amongst the many treasures that the Castle holds, the bibliographic exhibition of **Templum Libri** is the most breathtaking. It shows the greatness of the most beautiful books in history, that were until recently hidden and kept in private collections, libraries, universities, monasteries and museums. The hundred books that are shown in the exhibition are part of one of the best collections of the world in its genre, which was kindly loaned to the Ponferrada Town Hall by the great bibliophile from El Bierzo called Antonio Ovalle García. This collection along with the thousands of books that are preserved in the **Templar Library** have turned the old fortress into the Castle of books: a magical space for reading, exhibition, research and enjoyment.

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THE TEMPLAR CASTLE IS A CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE, ALSO DECLARED NATIONAL MONUMENT SINCE 1924.

THE CASTLE STANDS, MAJESTICALLY, ON A ROCKY BREAKWATER MARKED BY THE GOLDEN SIL AND THE "CAMINO DE SANTIAGO"(WAY OF ST. JAMES).

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