

## The region of Arlanza

### “Sites of spaghetti western”

**Arlanza River is born in the southern slopes of the Sierra de Neila.** This river has been modeling the landscapes as it passes through the province of Burgos, making this area one of the most stunning natural landscapes with more historical and cultural personality in northern Iberian peninsula.

It's a very steep mountain in the northern slope, softening in its descent to the river Arlanza. This determines the disposition of its forests, composed by extensive juniper in the southern part, hiding in the northern part a real botanical treasure: extensive grasslands of gall oaks. Due to its high environmental value, we can highlight the diverse population of birds and mammals that take refuge in limestone cliffs and forests, these mountains have been included within the limits of the protected landscape of Yecla and Arlanza Sabinares. Outstands the presence of species such as European pied flycatcher, rock bunting, tawny owl, Northern Goshawk, booted eagle. The more you enter the valley, this river and its tributaries form several gorges and canyons:

Yecla Gorge, Ura gorge and canyon of Mataviejas whose rugged landscapes do not leave visitors indifferent. You will also be able to see one of the most important populations of griffin vultures and Egyptian vulture of the peninsula and other rock-dwelling species overwintering as the wallcreeper and alpine sparrow, among others.

Between the Arlanza river and its tributary Mataviejas, at the foot of the Peak of Carazo, in the limits of the provinces of Burgos and Soria, the largest and best preserved juniper in Europe is located. This juniper forms a grassland in Carazo Valley due to its ancient use for pasture of an intensive ranching. The Peak of Carazo is world famous because here was filmed the iconic movie: *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. One of its major and picturesque scenes can still be visited nowadays.

The nearby rock of San Carlos due to its look of natural bastion, was preferred for intense and prolonged human occupation. The wall of an ancient Celtiberic Castro is still visible here since prehistory. From the Medieval period still remain several towers which importance acquires a high strategic value in the time of Count Fernan Gonzalez.

Certainly the history of the city of Burgos has its origins in this context. Located in the tenth century, the most influential monastery of the county of Castilla was the Monastery of San Pedro de Arlanza. Located on a sharp bend in the valley, in an area dominated by a labyrinthine landscape, stand the ruins of this monastery, highlighting the remains of the Romanesque period.

The monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos is worth a visit. Located at the town of the same name, its Romanesque cloister is one of the summits of the European medieval Christian art, dominated by its famous cypress in which shadow we still can listen to the monks chanting famous Gregorian chants. It is one of the cradles of the Castilian language. Cobarrubias is the most important town due to its architecture, preserving great part of its medieval tracing.