

FERMOSELLE

Fermoselle is a municipality and town in the province of Zamora, located in the autonomous community of Castile and León, Spain. It is situated in the southwestern corner of the Zamora region of Sayago, surrounded by the Duero River to the west and south, and the Tormes River to the south, which converge at the site of Las Dos Aguas or Ambasaguas. On the opposite banks lie Portugal and the province of Salamanca. Its most well-known landscape is found along these rivers, known locally as "arribes," formed by the steep riverbanks that have been used for terrace agriculture since ancient times due to the favorable thermal conditions created by the cliffs. This has facilitated the cultivation of vineyards, olive trees, and fruits that are not as common in the adjacent plains.



The origin of Miranda de Duero as a populated place is still debated by historians, but archaeological discoveries provide evidence of settlement dating back to the Bronze Age. Around the year 716 AD, the Moors defeated local Visigothic tribes and occupied some of the lands, naming the area Mir-Hândul. In ancient times, it belonged to the convent of Astorga in the Region of León, which influenced it culturally and linguistically.

By the late 11th century, León possessed the region as a passageway to Portugal. The settlement of the village of Miranda was developed at the initiative of King Dionisio, in an area located between the lateral margins of the Duero and Fresno rivers. It was in Miranda where the Treaty of Alcañices was signed between Dionisio I and Fernando IV of Castile, establishing the border between the Kingdom of Portugal and the Crown of Castile. Miranda was founded on December 18, 1286, immediately being elevated to the status of a town, with one of its prerequisites declaring that the administrative division would be a fief of the Crown. From that moment on, Miranda progressively became one of the most important cities bordering the Trás-os-Montes region.

The Crown of Castile occupied Miranda de Duero in the late 14th century and remained there until they were expelled by Juan I of Portugal. On July 10, 1545, King John III of Portugal elevated Miranda de Duero to the rank of city, simultaneously becoming the first diocese of Trás-os-Montes through a bull from Pope Paul III dated May 22, 1545, which segmented a significant part of the archdiocese of Braga. Miranda thus became the capital of Trás-os-Montes, seat of the bishopric, which included the residence of the bishop, the canons, and ecclesiastical authorities, the military governance, and the civil center.

EXCURSION TO MIRANDA DO DOURO - FERMOSELLE

THURSDAY JUNE 6, 2024

MIRANDA DO DOURO

09:00 a.m. Departure from Salamanca (Plaza de Fonseca).

10:30 a.m. (Spanish time) Arrival at Miranda do Douro. Visit to the town.

12:00 p.m. (Spanish time) Environmental Cruise on the Douro River Gorges.

2:30 p.m. Arrival in Fermoselle and lunch.

4:30 p.m. Visit to Fermoselle.

6:00 p.m. Departure to Salamanca



MIRANDA DO DOURO

It is a Portuguese city, part of the district of Braganza, in the region of Trás-os-Montes (North) and the intermunicipal community of Tierras de Trás-os-Montes, in the land of Miranda. It is the seat of a municipality consisting of 13 parishes, covering an area of 488.36 km² and a population of 7,482 inhabitants (2011). Its residents have traditionally spoken a language distinct from Portuguese, called Mirandese, a variety of the Asturleonese language. In the village of Atenor, the Miranda Donkey Recovery Center is located, which aims to conserve this native species.



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Castle Explosion.



Miranda de Duero has always been an important town, especially in the Middle Ages, due to its border location, which gave it prominence in history as a battleground in the so-called Seven Years' War, which pitted Spain and Portugal, along with other nations. On May 5, 1762, the Spanish army set out from Alcañices with the aim of besieging Miranda. One of the Spanish projectiles fell into the gunpowder warehouse of Miranda's castle, where up to 250 barrels of gunpowder were stored. The explosion was so massive that it was felt even in the village of Ifanes, within the municipality of Miranda, where the Irish army was stationed. The keep tower and the walls were blown to pieces, killing many militiamen, soldiers, and inhabitants of the city. The governor of Miranda had no choice but to surrender the city. The Spanish army assisted the wounded and took over 1000 militiamen and 100 soldiers as prisoners. At the end of the war, the Spanish army would leave the city in 1763 after a year of occupation.

Pauliteiros

Main article: Pauliteiros de Miranda

The pauliteiros are a group of people who dance to the traditional rhythm of sticks and music in the land of Miranda. It is a warrior dance representing local historical moments accompanied by the sounds of the Mirandese bagpipe and the drum.

They wear embroidered skirts and linen shirts, a brown vest, leather boots, wool socks, and a hat that can be adorned with flowers, and finally, they hold two sticks with which these dancers perform a series of different coordinated steps and movements. The musical repertoire of the stick dance is called "lhazos," and it consists of music, text, and choreography. They are called pauliteiros because they use sticks to accompany the dances.

