

Situated In the heart of a wide plain, Bañares is a Medieval Town rich in agriculture, visitors can marvel at the beautiful chapel of Santa Maria de la Antigua, and find fine hospitality at the local campsite which not only has sublime installations but is spacious, in which 1500 campers can be looked after.

Bañares has seen its population decrease over recent decades. Between 1900 and 1950, considerably increasing its population, from 902 inhabitants to 995. However, after that year it began to experience a demographic decline.

Bañares is only 15 km from Haro and 44 km far away from Logroño the major tourist draws of the area. Its altitude is 591 meters and it occupies 29.7 square kilometers of land, of which 94% is area for agricultural exploitation.

HISTORY

On February 5, 1075, the Kings of Najera, Don Sancho the noble and his wife Doña Placencia donated the monastery of Santa Maria de Zaldo of Bañares at San Millan.

In 1157, the plain of Valpierre, next to Bañares, was the scene of two battles between the troops of Sancho III of Castile and Sancho the Wise of Navarre, having tried to exploit the death of Alfonso VI of Castile to conquer territories.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CHURCH AT BAÑARES AND THE MONASTERY OF SANTA MARÍA DE ZALDO.

In 1075 there are records indicating a church and Monastery of Santa Maria de Bañares existed.

An autonomous monastery was later set up in 1082 which was linked to the monastery of San Millan. Afterwards in the mid-sixteenth century, although it was still standing, there are few details.

ROMANESQUE PARISH OF THE HOLY CROSS

What we today call Hermitage, is the ancient parish church of the Holy Cross, containing a work described as a jewel of the XII century Romanesque art. Today, the work has been moved to the western part of the gothic church, which previously was placed at the head of it.

Restoration works and the transfer began in July 1975 and ended in August 1976. In this work, it's intention was not to respect the original vision, so it would look that it had been newly built.

Nowadays the remaining original elements are the stone carved facade and arches of the entrance. The carved facade stands out for its beauty, showing the group of the Virgin seated in majesty and grace, having on his knees left the child Jesus, San Jose, and to its right the adoring Magi.

On the colonnade you can find the pure and simple Romanesque arches that belonged to the old church and monastery of Santa Maria de Zaldo.

A magnificent Original forge can also be seen on the entrance door, which was restored by D.Julian Tofé, blacksmith Villa.

ARK OF SAN FORMERIO

It is a jewel of Romanesque art made in Spanish gold and enamel. It has the usual form of a funerary urn and measures 60 inches long, 35 wide and 6 high.

It is made of wood covered with enamelled copper plates. Art scholars, put the casket in the middle of the twelfth century, being a work of the most important archaeological importance in Spain.

GOTHIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS. CENTURIES XV AND XVI

Beginning in approximately 1490 and constructed around 1510. It measures 48 meters long, 17m wide and 17.3 meters high.

The first phase restoration of the roof and interior portion began in 1968, resuming in 1974 and ended March 17, 1975. It was designed by master mason Martín Ruiz de Albiz, who made restorations Zarraton, Son Torcuato and Treviana.

BALDAQUINO

It was the first work performed after the previous altarpiece burnt down. It is a gigantic shrine of 3 bodies, all in gilt carved wood. This work was contracted by Master Santiago del Amo, on May 17, 1718.

CHORUS

It is the work of Santiago del Amo, carved in walnut as well as the lectern, and in all the amount of 20,036 reales was paid.