

Abadía Retuerta: Cultural and Historic Custodians in the Heart of the Spanish Duero Valley

Abadía Retuerta is a five-star hotel and winery in Spain's Duero Valley, less than two hours from Madrid, located in the grounds of a 12th-century monastery.

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recently recertified Abadía Retuerta in Spain. Abadía Retuerta is a five-star hotel and winery in Spain's Duero Valley, less than two hours from Madrid, located in the grounds of a 12th-century monastery. The project's origins are in winemaking, but it has

now become so much more, driven by an ongoing passion to create unique and memorable experiences around wine, gastronomy, nature, art and wellness. The estate spans 1,700 acres of land, and the monastery's 86,000 ft² include spaces full of history and 30 luxurious hotel rooms.



Abadía Retuerta

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CEO at Abadía Retuerta, Enrique Valero said, “Sustainability is a fundamental pillar of our business, and we consider it to be a key value that combines both environmental and social concepts. In our case, we are the custodians of two legacies: we have a natural heritage, spread over 700 hectares in a unique valley shaped by the River Duero, and we have our cultural and historic heritage. Our mission is to pass on these legacies to future generations, in ever better conditions.”

Abadía Retuerta has received a number of prestigious accolades and won several sustainability awards

acknowledging the estate's green credentials and efforts. Most recently it was named Best Winery at the 2023 Hotel & Mantel Awards, organised by the renowned Condé Nast Traveler magazine, an endorsement of the carefully-selected wine list at the resort's different restaurants. Abadía Retuerta was also named Best Winery 2023 at the 39th edition of the Guía Vinos Gourmets Awards. It was commended in the 2023 edition of The World's Best Vineyards, reaching number 27 on the 2023 list, making it the third highest-ranked vineyard in Spain and the leading winery in Castilla y León. It was named "Best Luxury Historical Spa" in Europe at the World Luxury Spa Awards, held in October 2022. In the same month, it won the Award for Sustainability at the 2022 Premios Gourmet, organised by the prestigious lifestyle magazine Fuera de Serie. In addition, the estate now has its own Protected Designation of Origin seal, which it received in May 2022. This seal is an endorsement of Abadía Retuerta's wines as a product with guaranteed origin, quality and tradition. Furthermore, the hotel won a prize at the most recent Membership Awards held by The Leading Hotels of the World, namely that of Sustainability Leader, this accolade further commends the estate's wide-ranging push for sustainability.

Accredited Green Globe Auditor, Ioana Nan, provides a first-hand account of this unique former 12th Century Romanesque abbey.

Culinary Accolades

Two of the restaurants on the hotel premises are Refectorio and Vinoteca. Refectorio Restaurant has been awarded 1 Michelin Star as well as 1 Green Star alongside two Repsol Suns. The Michelin Green Star states the sustainability concept of a restaurant and also recognises the origin and transportation of goods, methods of cultivation, stockbreeding and the handling and processing of food. The many organic products grown at the property's bio-dynamic garden and used in dishes at Refectorio played a major role in gaining the Green Star award. In 2022, their biodynamic vegetable garden was expanded, doubling in size to 2,400 m². Chefs, together with a horticulturist, organise the planting of fruits, herbs and vegetables to be planted for use in kitchens in cooking year round.

Daily menus at the Calicata, Vinoteca and Hospedería restaurants include a dish of the day that features vegetables freshly harvested from the garden. Breakfast menus also focus on local flavors and current culinary trends. Water filled on the property from an onsite well is also served at breakfast tables.

Traditions Kept Alive

Abadía Retuerta's biggest achievement to date is obtaining the Protected Designation of Origin ranking by the EU. It is the culmination of many years of hard work by the wine team, as they have endeavoured to keep an ancient winemaking tradition alive, one that dates back over eight centuries. Not only have they revived a historic winery and kept up with changes within the wine making industry, but the ultimate objective is to produce wines that reflect the region's unique qualities and personality.

Restoration and rejuvenation projects have been carried out at the property for over 30 years. The building where the hotel is located, dates back to the 12th and 18th centuries. The oldest section is the Abbey (built in 1146) which is now a wonderful event location for private and corporate events. The main building renovated in the 1700's houses 22 rooms, formerly the rooms of the residing monks. Hallways are adorned with antique paintings and tapestries.

It is all about reviving the original spaces and uses as designated by the monks, who came from the north of France in search of the sheer magic of this enclave on the Duero River, where they would build their abbey and cultivate their vines. The mission of Abadía Retuerta is to share, generously, this common heritage, and preserve it in optimal conditions to encourage a deeper appreciation of its culture and its commitment to sustainability. Therefore, the newest plan is to recreate the ancient Monks' Garden as it was in the past, creating a secret haven full of aromatic and healing plants.

Modern Sustainability Practices

Another challenge for Abadía Retuerta is how to balance cultural heritage with modern green practices. The property adheres to a robust sustainability management plan. On the technological side, check-ins are fully digital and in 2022, the hotel introduced Infraspark software for intelligent facility management. It allows for greater preventive and efficient maintenance.

Energy conservation is a key focus in sustainability planning. Regular monitoring of energy management is undertaken and photovoltaic panels generate energy in the Bodega or winery. According to Abadía Retuerta's 2022 Sustainability Report, 2% more energy was created in 2022 than 2021. Furthermore, the Winery has a dedicated area that highlights the green efforts of Abadía Retuerta and explains the energy production of the photovoltaic cells which cover its roof. This year, additional photovoltaic cells will be installed to cover 100% of the electricity needed in the hotel and the winery.

The entire energy consumption at the property is covered by natural, renewable and locally generated energies. The hotel also has an osmose system to treat water and a heat exchanger for efficient heating purposes. The energy for preheating hot water is obtained from solar cells and groundwater is used for heating and cooling the rooms via a heat pump. Natural gas is used in kitchens to further reduce electricity consumption.

One of the main tasks at Abadía Retuerta was deriving a solution to problems arising from excess moisture. This was managed through temperature control within buildings. The main feature of temperature control is the continuous heating of the building envelope with warm air, which is usually done via cavities or tubes under the plastering of the outer walls, so that the warm air can rise from the floor tubes over all floors, located behind the walls and the room heated from all sides. In this way, rising moisture can be eliminated and building conservation is assured.

Everlasting Nature

The estate encompasses a 770 ha natural area with 500 sqm woods and a 200 ha wine vineyard, with 40 types of wine. Most of the trees in the woods and grapevines were newly planted, the oldest plants now 30 years old. Abadía Retuerta management works closely with different institutions to analyze how to deal with the challenges of climate change and decide the different kinds of plants, trees and grapevines that are the most suitable without distorting regional characteristics. Typical for the area of Valladolid, most of the woods were populated with pine nuts. Management takes exceptional care with the preservation of nature. There are 7 trees catalogued as unique trees including a 350-year-old Oak. The production of the 100% organic wine is very balanced with a focus on quality and not quantity. No pesticides or insecticides are used, instead a system based on pheromones is incorporated to control insects. There are also a significant number of birds which have re-emerged in the area, thanks to the repopulation of the area with different type of trees and plants. There are also 40 beehives delivering honey for hotel kitchens and to sell in the winery. Another 40 hives are planned for the coming years.

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