

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL GEM - SPANISH NUMANTIA



Despite being one of the tourism capitals of the world, Spain has unfortunately been far too often labelled with the image of sun, sand and sea. This is partially thanks to the success of the coastal resorts, yet is also owing to the ignorance of many in terms of what else Spain has to offer. The number of historical sites the Spanish have to offer seems never-ending. It is sometimes sufficient to take a look at Spanish literature to see what the Southern Europeans can offer visitors today. A prime example is portrayed in Miguel de Cervantes's play 'El Cerco de Numancia', one of many pieces of literature surrounding the ancient site of Numantia and contributing to the legends and stories which belong there. Nowadays, Numantia offers one of Europe's most important archaeological sites.

Numantia, which lies an approximate 7 km north of Soria, was the scene of the much glorified Numantine war of around 153-133 BC, during which the locals bravely resisted the onslaught of the Romans before being taken by a brutal siege. There are many stories and theories concerning the behaviour of the locals, including mass suicides, cannibalism and heroic resistance. Whatever the truth may be, the Spaniards of today still refer to 'resistencia numantia' when wishing to express heroism and bravery.

The legends make Numantia Spain's most important archaeological site, at which visitors can view a specially prepared slide show before getting to see typical reconstructions of celtic and roman houses complete with cooking utensils, beds and furniture. The theories and stories surrounding Numantia make the experience all that more romantic and fascinating. It is a must for any tourist interested in archaeology whilst visiting Spain.

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