

You are here:

Main page

>

Lublin

>

International Relations

>

Lublin's Partner and Friend Cities

<https://lublin.eu/en/lublin/international-relations/lublins-partner-cities/alcal-de-henares,9095,w.html>Name: **Partnership agreement**Signing a contract: **14.07.2001**Population: **Population: 186 000**

Alcalá de Henares, **one of the oldest cities** in Spain, and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, is located 30 km to the north-east of Madrid. '**Castle upon the Henares river**' — that's how the city's name may be roughly translated into English.

Celtybers, settled in this area, as early as the ancient times, marking the beginning of Alcalá's history. The city was subsequently taken over by the Roman Empire. The Romans established a colony there called Complutum.

Alcalá de Henares, had been **world's first town** ever planned as a **university campus**. Origins of the University of Alcalá date back to the late 15th century, when Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Archbishop of Toledo, founded the Colegio Mayor, the Colegio de San Ildefonso and 13 other minor colleges on the model of major scientific centres of the time. This was followed by the Colegio de San Filipe Santiago and the Colegio del Rey. The latter was founded by King Philip II of Spain. Built according to the ideal urban planning, so-called Civitas Dei, (City of God), Colegio del Rey, became an example to copy for other European universities and, thanks to Spanish missionaries, also for architects in America. Today, **Universidad de Alcalá** (UAH) is a dynamic research and teaching centre.

Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote's author is a figure to mention when it comes to Alcalá's history. The city offers many exciting things-to-do that are related to the famous novelist. Every Saturday you can board the Cervantes train. There, you will be entertained by the 18th century costume-dressed actors, who will recite passages from Don Quixote and will serve regional delicacies.

48 Calle Mayor street is instrumental in preserving Cervantes' legacy. This is where he was born and raised. The writer lived at this address at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, and a visit to the museum takes you on a journey to his childhood. Visitors can get a glimpse into the Cervantes family daily life. The bedrooms, dining room, bathroom, guest room and even the surgery of the writer's father, are made available to the public.

When in Alcalá, Picot Square — medieval spot for executions or Casa de la Entravista — nicknamed 'the house of the interview', are worth a visit. It was there that the first audience between Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella 'la Católica', took place, hence the name. Today, Town Hall owns this exhibition hall.

Alcalá de Henares **is famous not only** for Miguel de Cervantes and its **Roman past**, but also for its exquisite cuisine. Have a bite of sweet torrijas — Spanish toasts served à la French, or candied almonds — a famous local delicacy. Almonds in caramel, as a snack, date back as early as the 18th century.

For many, Alcalá is the city of storks. They are found in great numbers. Storks may be seen nesting on many towers and chimneys in Alcalá. Alcalá de Henares attracts with its beauty at any season of the year. However, December stands out, as St Lucia's day (13th of December) — the patron saint of the city — is honoured by the residents with bonfires and dances accompanied by live Castilian music.

Alcalá is a modern city with a well-developed chemical, pharmaceutical and services sector industries. It also has a well-assimilated, **Polish community of over 7 000 people**. It was on the initiative of the local association of Polish immigrants '**White Eagle**' that Lublin-Alcalá partnership was signed.

Places of interest:

University of Alcalá;

Cathedral of St Justus and St Pastor;

Plaza de Cervantes;

Statue of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza;

Alcalá de Henares Regional Archaeological Museum.

Address:

Alcalá de Henares Town Hall

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