

Bouldering in Albarracin, Spain

Written by YDE

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A climbing partner of mine made a trip to Albarracin in October 2007 and was all praise for this fairly new bouldering area. His description was of a magical forest with huge, red boulder stones and giant roofs, which offered a wide variety of problems and still had near endless potential. So instead of visiting one of the usual bouldering haunts this Spring, I decided to give this area a try.

Nestled in the Southern most region of the autonomous state of Aragon, the Sierra de Albarracin is a unique combination of winding valleys and jutting peaks, seamlessly intertwined with the Sierra de Cuenca. The town itself, situated at 1200m, is a magnet for tourists and has a rich history, including being an Islamic state and afterwards a Christian kingdom. This is reflected in the remaining castle walls and towers that line the hills just above the streets. The architecture of the town is charming and it offers a number of bars, restaurants, and hotels for relaxing during rest days. There is a post office and also a number of corner shops that offer limited supplies. Make sure to pop down into town and have a drink at the Molino del Gato, which opens at six (except on Wednesdays) and is often frequented by climbers.

The town is unique in that it is placed in a very remote part of the state, yet still has good transport links and can easily be reached through big cities. Low cost carriers fly to Madrid, Zaragoza and Valencia, and from these three cities one can get to Albarracin in around 3-4 hours by car. It's best to aim for the capital of the region, Teruel, and from there follow the signs for another 40km to the town. Teruel itself has a number of supermarkets, and as I've heard, also a handful of historic sites worth visiting.

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