

HUELVA
LA LUZ
Andalucía

Cuenca Minera



Berrocal

With beautiful landscapes around the Tinto river and ancestral rites such as its Cruces de Mayo, this town jealously guards its past and its future.

Of ancestral rites and customs that have been passed down from generation to generation since time immemorial, Berrocal overlooks the river Tinto, a unique enclave in the world, in one of its most beautiful stretches, when its red waters begin to descend from the Cuenca Minera in search of flat land.

The protected landscape of the river extends over twelve municipalities in the province of Huelva, with Berrocal being the largest in this unique natural area, covering more than 12,000 hectares.

The devastating forest fire of 2004 has been a challenge for a municipality that has known how to protect its heritage in its three aspects: natural, historical and ethnological.



Proof of the latter are its unique May Crosses, which have aroused the logical interest of scholars from all over the country, as each year we witness a festival full of ancestral rites, centuries-old traditions and healthy rivalry between the two brotherhoods, with their beautiful 'coplas de pique'.

With the dressed and decorated beasts, which arrive in the village amidst the cheers of the women of the municipality, a festival full of pagan and religious rites begins in a delightful and surprising mixture: young men dressed as bride and groom thrusting swords into huge bundles, men rolling in rosemary plants scattered all over the village square, solemn processions of decorated crosses...



Dolmens

Berrocal has a valuable megalithic heritage in terms of dolmen complexes.

Dolmens such as Puerto de los Huertos, Casullo and Mascotejo are the result of the subsequent process of expansion and monumentalisation undertaken by the first settlers in the area. Among them, the Casullo dolmen stands out, both for being the oldest in the province of Huelva (4th millennium BC) and for the discovery that was made there, a prehistoric hopper idol with female attributes made of clay with red pigments known as the Venus of Casullo.



Campofrío

Halfway between the mine and the mountains, this beautiful town proudly displays its mixture of landscapes and its unique bullring, considered the oldest in Spain.

Closely linked to the Sierra de Aracena y Picos de Aroche, but historically belonging to the Cuenca Minera, the town of Campofrío is located in one of the flattest areas of the municipality, and its urban structure is an example of a compact mountain centre that has grown around the central area, formed by the parish church and the square, towards which the main streets converge.

On a leisurely stroll through the village, the visitor will be struck by the majesty of the church of San Miguel Arcángel, one of the most important monuments of the municipality. The mostly neoclassical building, dating from the end of the 18th century, was built on the foundations of an earlier temple from the 15th century.



But, without a doubt, one of the main attractions of the town is its bullring. According to surviving documents, it is considered to be the oldest in Spain, completed in 1718. In spite of its simple structure, the Coso de Santiago, when contemplated by the foreign observer, generates a lively feeling of sympathy, because, in the silent solitude of the mountain landscape, it tries to transmit the eagerness, the strong initiative and the great effort of the people of Campofriños to build such an important bullring.

Dolores Cross

Located at the top of La Picota, what centuries ago was a crossroads that connected the mining area with Augusta Emerita (Mérida), is today a beautiful place from which to contemplate the marvellous contrast between the mining landscape and the mountainous setting where Campofrío is located. There stands, slender and whitewashed, the Cruz de los Dolores, an obligatory place of pilgrimage for Campofriños and visitors alike.



El Campillo

A living example of Huelva's mining industry, this locality has been forged around exploitation of the pyritic belt.

With less than a century of history as a municipality, El Campillo, a living example of Huelva's mining industry, has forged a hardy character in a very short time, parallel to its link during almost the entire 20th century to the mining of the pyritic belt, where its municipal district is located.

Its splendid mining past has marked its natural landscape, the physiognomy of the main population centre and, forever, the soul of its people. El Campillo began to be forged as a town when English mining reopened the ancient Riotinto mines at the end of the 19th century.

Marked by the incessant need for labour, El Campillo was shaped by the rectilinear English town planning. The small rural nucleus, located to the northwest of the town, with its simple houses and winding streets, maintains the memory of its rural origins. On the other hand, the town grew spectacularly, acquiring an industrial urban design.



Conditioned in a large part of its 91 square kilometres by mining operations, the municipality is located in the epicentre of the extensive pyritic belt of the southwest of the peninsula, with its magical colours that invite pure contemplation.

Mining heritage

The youth of the municipality has hardly been able to generate great architectural works beyond those derived from industrial activity (bridges, tunnels and the inclined plane of the Fija de vías mineras railway) or agricultural works (such as the water mills that dot the river Odiel), but it has been able to unearth the more remote past, especially those related to mining activity. Several archaeological sites bear witness to the beginnings of mining in the area, especially by the Romans and Muslims. Even earlier, there are remains of collective burials in the form of megalithic burial mounds.



La Granada de Riotinto

With a beautiful mix of mining and mountain landscapes, this small town has an undeniable charm.

Like other neighbouring villages, La Granada de Riotinto is a municipality between the mountains and the mine, which divides its landscape between the lushness of the mountainous region and the Martian landscapes of the ancestral open-cast mines.

With barely two hundred inhabitants, it retains a great charm of whitewashed, whitewashed and typically Andalusian houses. Its houses, streets and stone walls transmit an unquestionable tranquillity. The whiteness of its façades contrasts with the greenery of its mountains and sierras. The key is to take a leisurely stroll through its streets and breathe in the life that mingles in its nooks and crannies.

ts rich heritage includes the 16th century church of Nuestra Señora de la Granada, a very representative example of popular mountain architecture. As well as the fountain-lavadero, which in former times was a meeting and socialising place for its inhabitants and today is extraordinarily well preserved as a symbol of a distant past.



It was built in the 1960s when the houses had not yet been supplied with running water. After that, it gradually lost its social and public function.

Its natural surroundings include the Sierra de la Joya, where orchards blend with mountainous landscapes of hills and valleys. A perfect place for lovers of hiking and rural tourism, as it has several accommodations designed to spend a few days away from the city.

Paths between two rivers

The extraordinary natural beauty that surrounds La Granada de Río-Tinto makes it perfect for hiking. One of the best known is the one that connects the village with the river Odiel, a circular path of approximately 14 kilometres that takes walkers along paths of unequalled value and allows them to discover the area of the source of the river. Hiking enthusiasts can also follow a path that runs along an old road that used to connect La Granada with Nerva. This trail, which is about 10 kilometres long, allows visitors to discover the source of the Tinto river and, as it is not circular, can be extended to the Peña del Hierro area, so that along the way they can see mountain and mining landscapes, a mixture of colours and textures, typical of the municipality.



La Zarza-Perrunal

The past and present of this town cannot be explained without mining, which is the main tourist attraction of a self-sacrificing and magical region.

Located on the border of the regions of Andévalo and Cuenca Minera, this newly created town (by union of these two villages in 2018 previously belonging to Calañas), treasures one of the greatest mining histories of the province, with enclaves exploited from Tartessian times until well into the twentieth century by British and French companies such as the Compagnie des Mines de Cuivre and the Societe des Pirytes Francaise.

In fact, the old mining facilities of La Zarza-Perrunal are one of the main tourist attractions of the town. Around the Corta Los Silos are located the two extraction shafts and the necessary facilities for ore processing, storage and transport. La Zarza preserves the winch of the Algaida shaft.



The crushing installations are located next to the two extraction shafts and the ore storage silos, connected by conveyor belts to the large extraction shafts. The two silos are preserved, one next to shaft 4 and the other next to the Algaida, of identical type.

La Zarza also conserves some of the installations for the recovery of the ore: decantation plants or waste sludge ponds, as well as electrical substations, machine houses, chimneys, workshops, powder stores, reservoirs, pumping stations, etc...

Miner's Monument

It is clear that La Zarza-Perrunal would not be what it is today without mining and, above all, without its miners. A unique and impressive monument, paid for by the town, by the Huelva sculptor Juan Manuel Seisdedos, is dedicated to these self-sacrificing men. It was unveiled in 1986 so that the titanic effort of these people would never be forgotten. As a curiosity, it is worth mentioning that the wagon that forms part of the monument is an identical copy of those used in the past and was made by workers from the mine's machine shop.



Nerva

The unique landscape of this 'land of artists' has been shaped since ancient times by mining activity, the true protagonist of the region.

Located in the heart of the Cuenca Minera region, the town of Nerva has shaped its spectacular landscapes by the Tinto river and mining. In fact, its mining activity is one of the oldest in the world (2nd and 3rd millennium BC), and its surroundings are undoubtedly the most spectacular and significant area of the municipality, with striking shapes and colours, right around the town centre itself.

Its mining landscape, located around the town centre, is striking for its shapes and colours, which are marked by the dynamism of the mining activity itself. Its dumps, winches, acid water reservoirs, etc. stand out, which, as a whole, create a mosaic of unparalleled images. Within this area, the old mine of Peña del Hierro has a special attraction, where many of the landscape characteristics of the mining area of Huelva come together.

In the town centre, the Town Hall stands out above the rest, a unique late 19th century neo-Mudejar style building topped by a three-part octagonal tower with a metal balustrade, semicircular arches and a small dome at the top.



This is the most typical image of Nerva, which also has a bullring of the same date.

Nerva is also a land of artists, as its motto says. Hence, another essential place to visit is the Daniel Vázquez Díaz Modern and Contemporary Art Centre, which houses three collections: by the aforementioned painter, contemporary art and José María Labrador.

Roman past

Nerva offers the visitor numerous archaeological sites that demonstrate the ancestral past of its mining activity, from the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age, such as those of La Lancha, La Chaparrita, the pre-Roman settlement of Cerro Colorado, the settlement of Tres Águilas, Corta Lago... However, it was the Romans who were the true architects of the take-off of mining in the area, from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century, dedicating themselves to the exploitation of silver and copper. Numerous vestiges remain of their passage through Nerva: settlements (Fuente del Ventoso, Cerro del Moro, Corta Lago...), necropolises (Tres Cruces, La Dehesa, Marismilla...), mining operations (Corta Dehesa, Corta Lago, Peña de Hierro), metallurgical workshops (La Chaparrita, Tres Cruces) and roads (La Parrita). Even the name of the town itself, Nerva, is due to the intensive mining activity carried out by the Roman Empire, taking the name of an emperor.



Riotinto Mines

The 'capital' of the Cuenca Minera is full of attractions for the visitor, who will be surprised by landscapes that are more typical of another planet.

The capital of the Cuenca Minera, the centre of everything that happened and happens in the region is located in the town of Minas de Riotinto, a municipality full of great attractions for the visitor due to its history and its present.

It is a peculiar and different locality, whose name comes from the colour of the river which, due to the presence of metal (mainly copper) in its waters, acquires a reddish tone. A visit to this area is, of course, essential to learn about the mining origins and English links in the province of Huelva.

Visitors can enjoy the Mining Museum; take a ride on the railway that used to cover the mineral route; and climb up to Peña del Hierro to contemplate one of the most surprising landscapes, with one of the largest open-cast mines in the world, studied by NASA, due to its similarities to the planet Mars.



And you can, above all, be surprised by wonders such as Corta Atalaya, an enormous open-pit mineral exploitation, an immense crater 1,200 metres in diameter and 345 metres deep, which is the hallmark of this region linked, since the dawn of time, to mining activity.

Another must-see is the English quarter of Bellavista, built in the 19th century to house the British colony that managed the mining activity, and which brings the essence of Victorian England to this corner of Andalusia. House number 21 was built around 1895 and, thanks to a respectful restoration, in its almost 600 square metres you will be able to evoke the daily life of a British family living in the Cuenca Minera in great detail.

The Tinto River and NASA

The river of red waters (due to the contribution of minerals over the millennia) is unique both for its chromatic beauty and for its exceptional environmental conditions. It is so peculiar and interesting that the American space agency, NASA, and the Spanish Centre for Astrobiology have focused on it to study the probable similarity between its environmental conditions and those that could be found on the planet Mars.



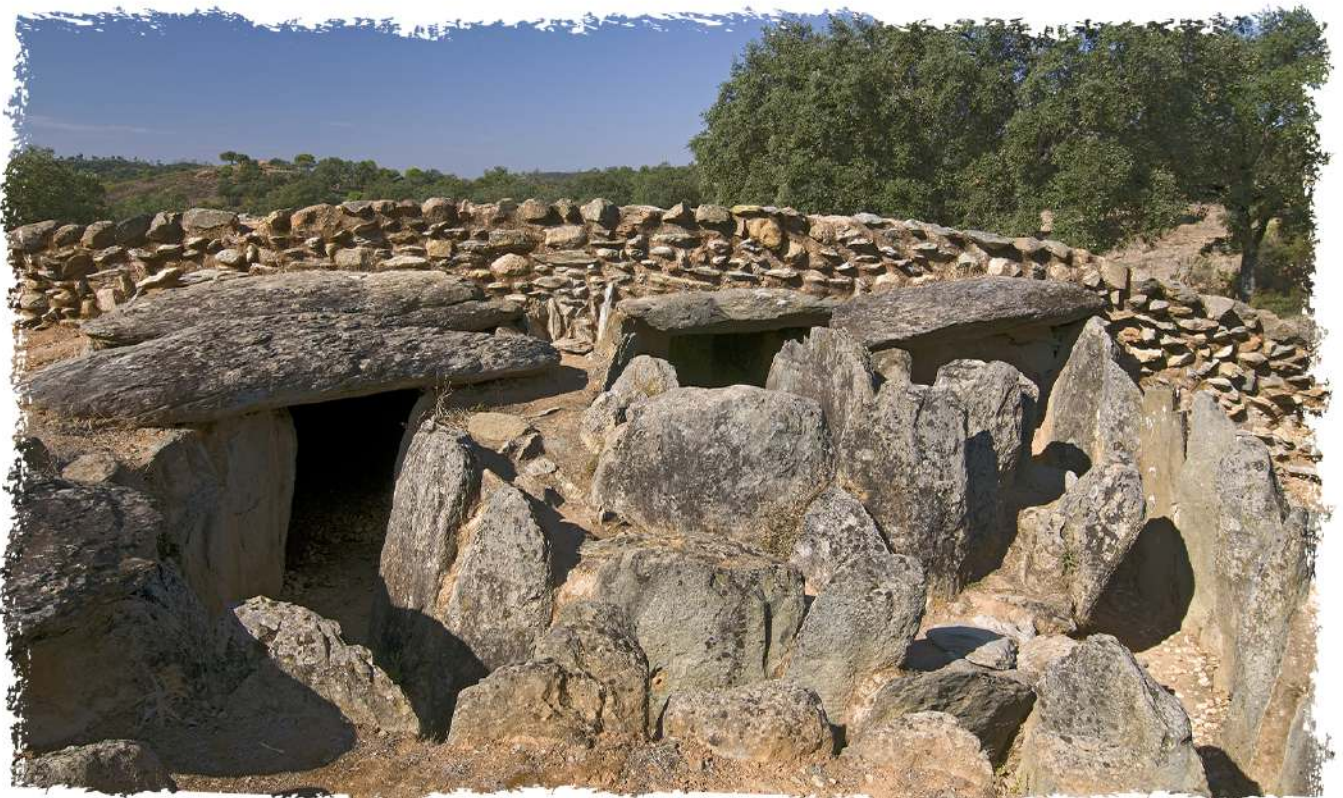
Zalamea la Real

Located at the foot of the Cuenca Minera, this town surprises the visitor with its impressive megalithic past, with sites such as the dolmens of El Pozuelo.

Zalamea la Real, at the foot of the Cuenca Minera de Riotinto, hides, together with its villages (El Buitrón, Las Delgadas, Marigenta, El Pozuelo, El Membrillo Alto, El Villar and Montesorromero) the enormous interest that history has given it since megalithic times, with great attractions for the curious visitor eager to learn about the region's past.

Among these attractions, the dolmens of El Pozuelo stand out above all, constituting one of the most outstanding archaeological sites from the Megalithic period in Europe. It is, without doubt, the most unique feature of the municipality of Zalamea la Real. The complex is one of the most peculiar and significant megalithic funerary groups on the Iberian Peninsula, dating from between 2800 and 3000 BC. A visit is a must.

Next to them is the Chiflón mine, the oldest underground metallurgical mine in Europe. Copper was extracted from malachite in the early Chalcolithic period. Next to it was the settlement where the builders of the surrounding dolmens lived.



A journey through history would not be complete without contemplating the rock engravings of Los Aulagares. Made on large circular stones, they belong to megalithic schematic art, the closest antecedents of symbols prior to writing. They date from 1,800 and 1,500 B.C. They are located in the area of the same name, just 2 km from the centre of the town.

In the town and its surroundings, the visitor would do well to stop and contemplate the beauty of the church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción and the hermitages of San Vicente Mártir, San Blas, San Sebastián and Santo Sepulcro, as well as the numerous fountains and pillars that adorn the town centre.

Anti-smoke' monument

Among the civil architecture of the municipality, important buildings of great value stand out such as the Town Hall, the new station, the bullring (inaugurated in 1879), the Casa Cilla (18th century), the old food market (1904) or the Plaza de Talero, so called because it has a bust in its centre in honour of the deputy defender of the anti-smoking cause promoted by the towns of the mining region, Juan Talero García, thus becoming the voice of the citizens of the Cuenca in the Cortes (Parliament). He is remembered as the great defender of the interests of the citizens in the face of the open air calcinations of the mines that caused so much damage. It is the only monument in the towns of the Cuenca Minera, which recalls the memory of the events of 1888, the so-called 'Year of the Shots', in which many Zalameños were murdered.



Tourist Offices

Information of Interest

Huelva (Municipal)

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959 251 218
turismo@huelva.es
www.huelva.es

Nervas

Centro de Naturaleza "La Estación"

Carretera Nerva-Riotinto, s/n
959 580 034
www.cnlaestacion.com

Centro de Arte Moderno y Contemporáneo

Daniel Vázquez Díaz

Plaza de Hijos Ilustres s/n
959 582 811
www.vazquezdiaz.org

Minas de Riotinto

Mancomunidad Cuenca Minera

Pl. del Minero
959 591 184
www.cuenca-minera.es

Parque Minero

Central de Reservas

Pl. Ernest Lluch, 1
959 590 025
www.parquemineroderiotinto.com

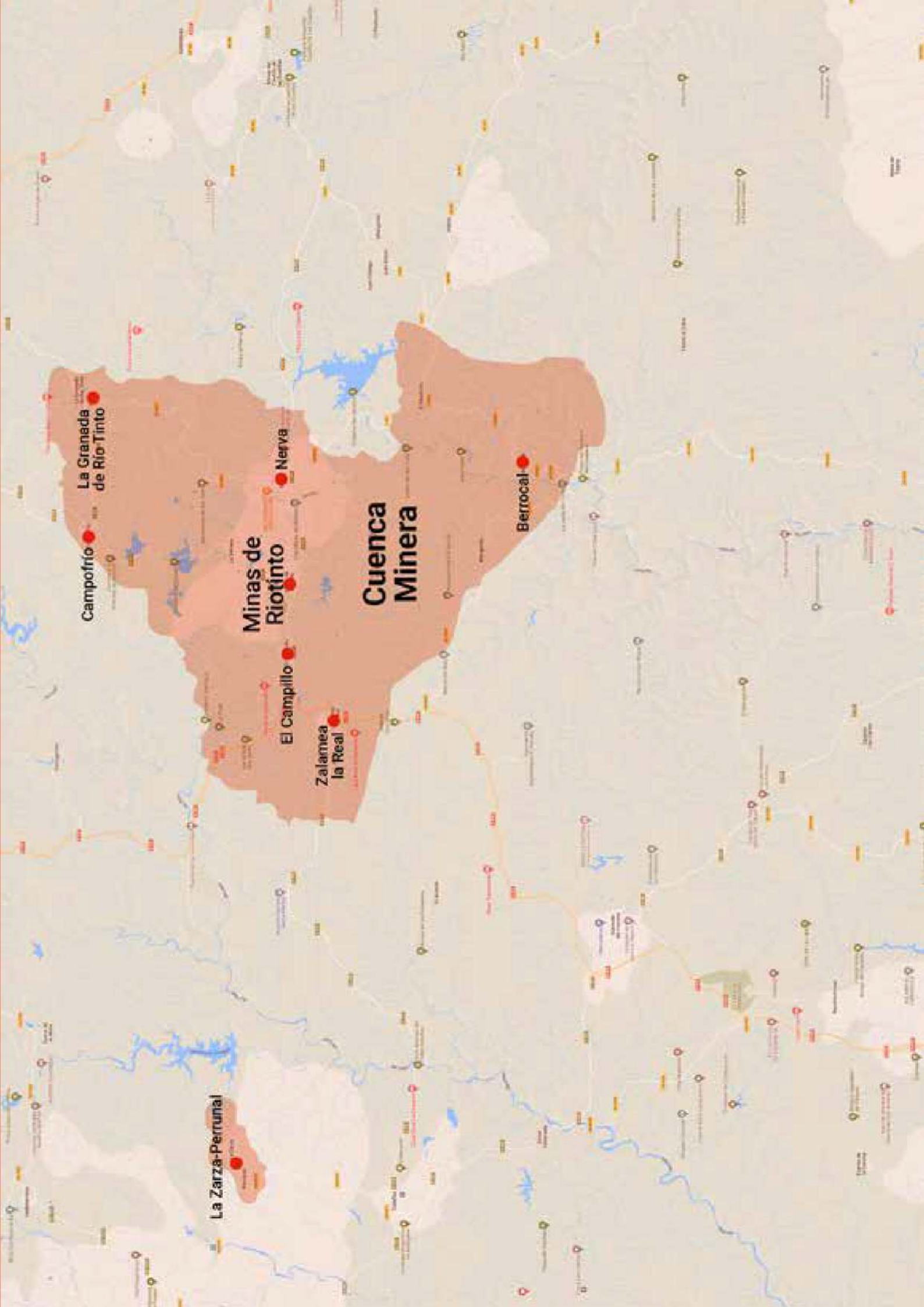
Zalamea la Real

Conjunto dolménico El Pozuelo

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