2 Days Catholic Pilgrimage in Ávila

A Journey of Prayer, Conversion and Friendship with God

Ávila is the city of St Teresa of Jesus and St John of the Cross, two Doctors of the Church who renewed the Carmelite Order and taught the Church how to pray. Behind its medieval walls, this pilgrimage follows Teresa from her birthplace to the convents where she prayed, struggled and was transformed. In 2026, the Jubilee Year of St John of the Cross, the Basilica of St Teresa is a jubilee church where a plenary indulgence may be gained.

Watch our our journey here:

Visiting Relics of St Teresa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOqx0rftUhE

Day 1 – Teresa's City and Birthplace

1. Arrival in Ávila

Begin your pilgrimage with a prayer:

"Lord, as I walk where Your saints walked, draw me into friendship with You."

2. Check-in to Hotel

Settle in, have lunch, and prepare your heart for the journey ahead. Most churches close at midday and reopen around 15:30, but the Cathedral stays open through the afternoon.

3. Monument to the Grandeur of Ávila

In the Plaza de Santa Teresa, just outside the Puerta del Alcázar. A good gathering point to begin, beneath the city walls.

Reflection theme: The Interior Castle

- Teresa compared the soul to a castle with God dwelling at its centre
- Reflect: *What walls have I built that keep God out?*

4. Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

The mother church of the diocese, one of Spain's earliest Gothic cathedrals, with its apse built into the city walls.

Reflection theme: The Living Church

- Pray for the Bishop of Ávila, your own bishop and the Holy Father
- Reflect: *Do I see the Church as my home and family?*

Optional: the nearby Church of San Juan Bautista, where Teresa was baptised.

5. Statue of St John of the Cross

In the Plaza del Corral de las Campanas, inside the walls: the saint barefoot, in prayer, holding a cross.

Reflection theme: Sacrifice and Surrender

- Pray for those going through a "dark night" of suffering or doubt
- Reflect: *Where is God asking me to let go?*

"In the evening of life, we will be judged on love." – St John of the Cross

6. Convent of Santa Teresa and Museum of St Teresa of Jesus

Built over the house where Teresa was born in 1515. Includes the chapel of her birth, the Relic Room and the museum in the crypt. Museum closed Mondays and Sunday afternoons.

Reflection theme: Prayer as Friendship with God

- Venerate her relics and ask for her help in your prayer life
- Seek the Jubilee indulgence: Confession, Communion and prayer for the Pope's intentions
- Reflect: *Is prayer a duty for me, or time with a friend?*

7. Evening Mass at the Basilica of St Teresa

Weekdays at 20:00.

8. End of Day 1

Give thanks for the gift of faith received at baptism, and rest.

"Let nothing disturb you… God alone suffices." – St Teresa of Jesus

Day 2 – The Way of Conversion

1. Monastery of the Incarnation

The Carmelite convent Teresa entered in 1535 and where she lived for 27 years. John of the Cross was confessor here, and his drawing of Christ crucified is in the museum. Early Mass at 8:30 on weekdays.

Reflection theme: Prayer and Conversion

- Teresa struggled for years before her conversion here
- Reflect: *Where have I grown lukewarm in my faith?*

2. Basilica of San Vicente

A great Romanesque basilica honouring Ávila's early martyrs, Vincent, Sabina and Cristeta. Open on Sundays only in the afternoon.

Reflection theme: Faith and Perseverance

- Pray for persecuted Christians around the world
- Reflect: *Would I give up anything rather than deny my faith?*

3. Convent of San José (Las Madres)

Teresa's first reformed Carmel, founded in 1562. Closed Sundays.

Reflection theme: Mission and Reform

- Pray for contemplative nuns and for priests
- Reflect: *What one change would centre my life more on God?*

4. Lunch at Plaza de Santa Teresa

5. Royal Monastery of Santo Tomás

A Dominican monastery of the Catholic Monarchs, with the tomb of Prince Juan. Teresa came here for confession; see her confessional and the Christ of St Teresa. Last entry one hour before closing.

Reflection theme: Mercy and Redemption

- Kneel before the Christ of St Teresa and offer Him your wounds
- Reflect: *What do I need to bring to Confession?*

6. Optional: Los Cuatro Postes at Sunset

Take a taxi across the river for the classic view of the walled city.

7. End of Day 2

Give thanks for the saints of Ávila and the graces of this pilgrimage.

"Lord, lead me, as You led Teresa, from struggle to union with You."

Conclusion of Pilgrimage

As your journey ends:

- Offer thanksgiving
- Reflect on key graces received
- Make a concrete resolution, such as 10 minutes of silent prayer each day

"St Teresa of Jesus and St John of the Cross, pray for us."

Optional Practices

- Attend Mass daily if possible
- Pray the Rosary while walking between churches
- Go to Confession at the jubilee church
- Keep a spiritual journal

This pilgrimage is a journey through walls, convents and relics, but ultimately it is a journey into the interior castle of the heart, where God alone suffices.

Opening hours change by season. Check with the Ávila tourist office before you travel.