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Paradores

by [Kimberly Krol](#) on Oct. 31, 2014

Last week I experienced my first *parador* stay. Paradores in [Spain](#) are luxury hotels located in historic buildings. Alfonso XIII of Spain founded the high-end chain in 1928 as a way to promote tourism in the country. Each one across the brand is different from the next, reflecting the local culture and cuisine of the area.

On my recent stay at the [Parador de Lorca](#), I had the chance to speak with the property's director, Juan José Asensio Dólera, who has worked at several properties in the brand. He was an excellent resource for learning more about the philosophy of Paradores.



In 1928, the Paradores were strategically located as stopping points for road travelers. The motives behind new openings are to preserve the historic heritage of a place or region and to attract tourism to different areas of Spain. In some areas, the Paradores give identity to the area and are the reason people visit.

Foreign travelers do tend to stay in Paradores, known across the brand for service and quality consistency. Brand-wide, the accommodations are specialists in MICE, banquets, restaurants, lodging and spas. The food outlets at the Paradores are leaders in creating menus for vegetarians, diabetics and those with gluten sensitivities. Paradores are the only accommodations in Spain with a large percentage of their income, 48 percent, from restaurants.



Currently there are 94 Paradores throughout the country and the islands; the next to open will be in Galicia, which already has 11 throughout the region.

An advertisement for Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa, Thailand. It features a scenic view of the resort and a Starpoints credit card. The text says "Earn up to 25,000 bonus Starpoints, enough for a weekend getaway" and "Get rewards to rave about. Learn more".

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A Facebook social plugin showing the Global Traveler page. It includes the text "Find us on Facebook", "Global Traveler", "Like", and "35,710 people like Global Traveler." Below this is a grid of profile pictures.

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An advertisement for Global Traveler magazine. It features the text "Share the world" in a script font, "Give the gift of Global Traveler magazine this holiday season!", and "Click here to subscribe". There is an image of a magazine cover for Greece.

Parador de Lorca was recently voted Best Parador in the Chain by TripAdvisor. Opened in the last few years, it was built on the site of [Lorca Castle](#), offering glimpses of the archaeological site and taking guests on a journey through the 15th-century synagogue, the Muslim cistern, Almohad walls and the Fortress of the Sun (the castle citadel).



My two-night stay kicked off with lunch in Restaurante Helios, located on the third floor, and offering a number of regional and Spanish specialties. I particularly enjoyed the rice stew and cod dishes. I then enjoyed a relaxing hour in the different pools of the spa's water circuit. The next morning, after indulging in an awesome breakfast buffet, it was convenient to begin sightseeing; right outside the doors of the Parador de Lorca is an archaeological playground to explore.

The guestrooms were modern, up-to-date and comfortable, and the Parador de Lorca also offers ample meeting and event space. The location is unique, quiet and peaceful, affording stunning views from its perch above the city and offering friendly service.

— Kim Krol, managing editor

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