

After the Battle of Bailén, King Joseph fled Madrid to seek safety north of the Ebro River. Napoleon, with his imperial pride wounded, gathered an enormous army and marched into Spain on 4 November 1808 to put his brother back on the throne: a month later he would enter Madrid. Yet his plans to subdue the rest of the Iberian Peninsula were upset by the presence of British troops under General Moore in Salamanca. The French set out to meet them in the middle of winter at the same time as the British decided to withdraw to the north-east in what is known as the Englishman's Run.



French cavalry fording the Esla in Benavente.



Napoleon and the Abbess Empress in Tordesillas.

The pursuit led to several clashes and skirmishes on the journey to Galicia. Napoleon led the pursuit until it reached Astorga where he would receive worrying news from Paris and would decide to return to France. His soldiers would continue on to La Coruña, where the British fleet was waiting to transport the men. Moore paid with his life to save his army.

British retreat to La Coruña.



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Napoleonic routes between Spain and Portugal

The objective of the Napoctep Project is the creation of a series of tourist routes associated with the presence of Napoleonic troops in Castilla y León and Central Portugal. The routes elaborated are the following:

Route 1st Invasión of Portugal.

Route 2nd Invasión of Portugal.

Route 3rd Invasión of Portugal.

Wellington Route.

Route of Siege and Great Battles.

Route of Napoleon and the Englishman's Run.

Guerrilleros Julián Sánchez el Charro and el Empecinado Route.

Route of Napoleon and the Englishman's Run

from Almeida to Villafranca del Bierzo

Napoleon Bonaparte.



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Napoleon Bonaparte is one of the most influential and controversial figures in history. His rise from simple artillery captain to holding the most powerful position in revolutionary France took just 6 years. In the process, his boundless talents and charisma earned him an aura of leadership and invincibility. That still wasn't enough for him and he had himself crowned emperor on 2 December 1804.



A French sutler serving soldiers.

His exploits and defeats have filled huge numbers of pages. His time in Spain is one of the less well-known chapters of his story. On the other hand, the deep mark he left on the whole country by imposing his brother, Joseph, on the Bourbon throne is more widely known. The Spanish reaction was to fight to the death to restore their preferred king and, with him, their identity and way of life.

Portugal joined the resistance to form a united front that would culminate in Napoleon's troops being driven back beyond the Pyrenees.

Napoleon leading his troops.



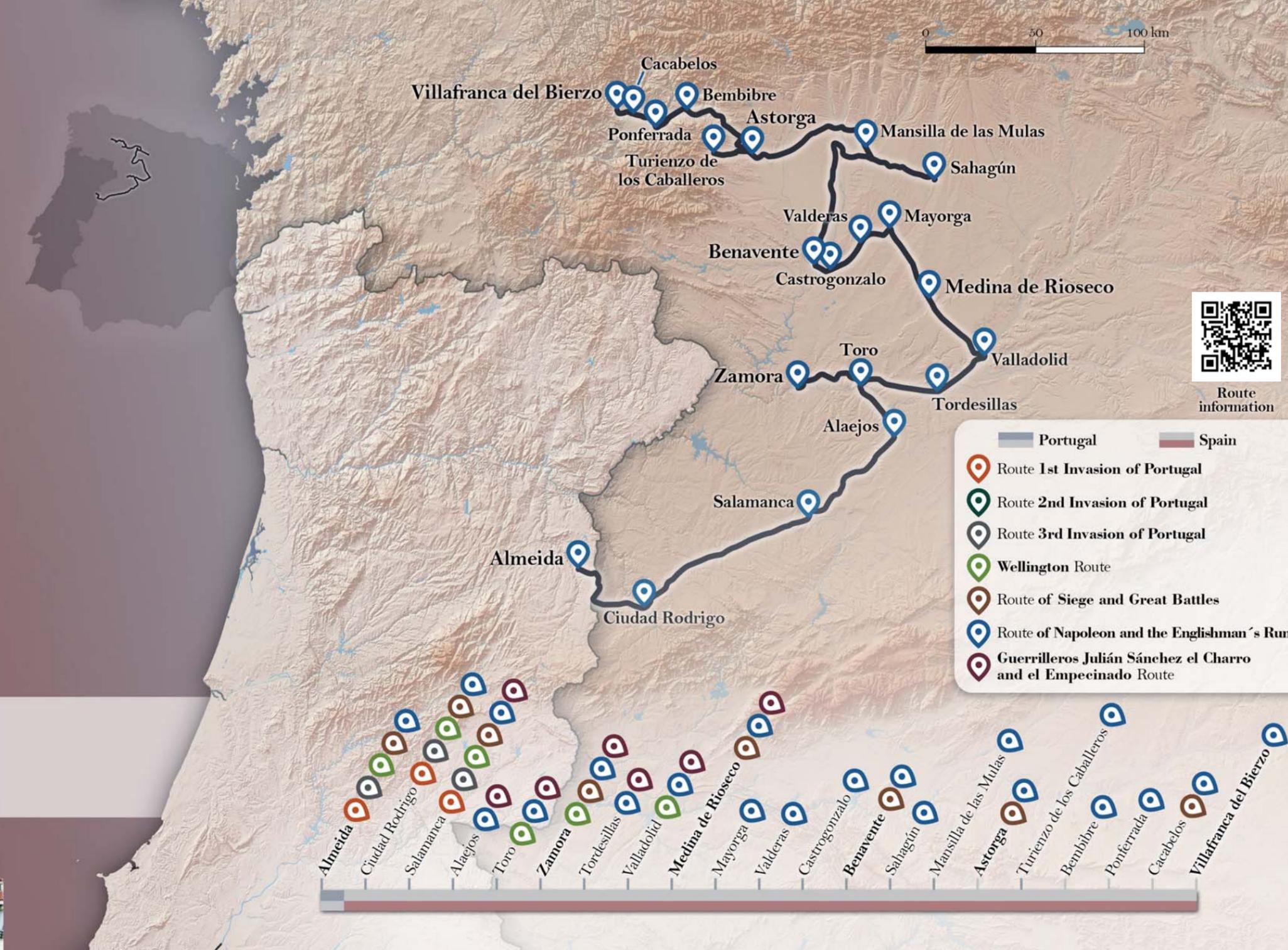
Napoleon and his tour of Castile and Leon in pursuit of his British enemies are the central aspects of the *Napoleon and Englishman's Run Trail*. His mark is clear in the places he passed through, such as Tordesillas, where he named the leader of the Santa Clara monastery Abbess Empress, Medina de Rioseco, in a visit to the 1808 battlefield, and Astorga, where he delegated control of the troops before returning to Valladolid.

General Moor, aware of the dangers of facing the Emperor, left Salamanca through Toro and Zamora and reached the area between Sahagún and Benavente, where he engaged the French vanguard. It was only the greater French numbers that forced a retreat that was close to ending in disaster.



Church of San Tirso in Sahagún.

Church museum of San Antolín in Tordesillas.



There are numerous stories that tell of British soldiers raiding stores of good wine on their retreat. Today we are able to enjoy the heirs of those very wines on several Wine Routes in the area, such as those in Toro, Rueda, and el Bierzo. Other activities linked to the Napoleonic era include visiting the Military Museum in Almeida, the Cavalry Academy in Valladolid, and the permanent "Wellington versus Napoleon" exhibition in Ciudad Rodrigo.



Castle-Palace of the Marquis of Villafranca del Bierzo.



Church of San Benito in Valladolid.

If you want to sleep like an emperor there is no better option than accommodation that oozes history, such as the Posada Real Casa de Tepa hotel in Astorga, the castle in Benavente, and the Parador hotel in Ciudad Rodrigo.

There has never been a more pleasant way to follow in Napoleon's footsteps.

Episcopal Palace and Cathedral in Astorga.

