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There are plenty of sculptures, squares and streets named after Miguel de Cervantes in Alcalá de Henares. Why is this? Why people in Alcalá like Cervantes so much?



Cover of the book

We are going to show you some of appearances of Miguel de Cervantes and Don Quijote in Alcalá de Henares. But first things first. Do you know who Miguel de Cervantes is?

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra was a Spanish novelist, poet, and playwright. His magnum opus, *Don Quixote*, is considered the first modern European novel, and he is known as the greatest Spanish writer of all time, as well as one of the best universal writers. If you've never heard of Don Quixote, check out this link, and start [reading the novel](#) today!!

Spanish, the language of Cervantes



Cervantes and Don Quijote in Spanish coins

Have you noticed that Cervantes is engraved on some of the Spanish coins? His influence on the Spanish language has been so great that it is often called 'la lengua de Cervantes' (the language of Cervantes). This is also the reason why the official institute of the Spanish language is called 'Instituto Cervantes'.

You can imagine Alcalá is proud of this fact, and therefore he appears all around the city. Let's have a look at some of his most important appearances!



Cervantes in Cervantes Square

Cervantes was baptized in Alcalá

The coolest thing is **Cervantes was baptized in Alcalá, in Santa María's Church on October the 9th in 1547**, and that is why we celebrate The Week of Cervantes every year at this time.

At the end of Plaza de Cervantes are the remains of the church where Cervantes was baptized: the tower of Santa María, the Oidor chapel and a bit more. It was destroyed during the civil war.

Cervantes is the meeting point in Alcalá

First of all, **his sculpture is in the center of Plaza de Cervantes**. This is the meeting point of Alcalá's inhabitants, and we even lovingly call this statue 'el Monigote' (it translates to something like stick figure or rag doll). It is very funny!!

It has certainly become a beloved landmark since Carlo Nicoli designed the statue in 1878. It looks light but it is actually made of bronze, 2'09 meters high (6 feet 10 inches) and weights 750 kgs (1653 pounds or 118 stones).

Cervantes Birthplace Museum

Another significant place you can't miss is the [Cervantes Birthplace Museum](#) or “**Casa de Cervantes**”.

It is a monographic museum placed in Calle Mayor, and housed in the building where the writer was born. It brings to life the various areas of an affluent household during the 16th and 17th centuries, recreating an environment intended to provide visitors with a sense of the former residents as they went about their daily lives.

Take a photo with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza in Alcalá

At the front entrance of the Cervantes Birthplace Museum, you'll find a charming **statue of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza**. They welcome you, and invite you to sit with them and snap a picture. In fact, it's a must: when you visit Alcalá de Henares, you have to take a photo with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.



Don Quijote and Sancho in Calle Mayor, waiting for you to take a photo with them.

The statue is the work of Peter Requejo Novoa and was inaugurated on April 24th 2005, commemorating the fourth centenary of the publication of *Don Quixote*. It is cast in bronze and life-size.

Other appearances of Cervantes in Alcalá



Statue of Don Quijote in Vía Complutense

These are the best known Cervantes references in Alcalá, but there are plenty more of them throughout the city.

For example, close to the bus station on a rotunda in Vía Complutense you can see a **giant sculpture of Don Quixote**. This work was made by [Enrique Carvajal](#), and it belonged to a huge exposition of sculptures that took place in Alcalá during 2008. In fact, this was the only statue that stayed here, the 60 remaining sculptures were moved to Toledo from where they continued their tour of Spain.

Just look around, and you can easily spot more examples. Don't you think it's crazy the amount of Cervantes memorabilia placed all around Alcalá?! Probably, it is. We are obsessed!!