

## How do we plan our routes?

Planning a route seems a relatively simple thing, especially today that we have Google Maps, but doing it well is not that simple, or at least it is very laborious, and this is precisely what gives added value to our work.

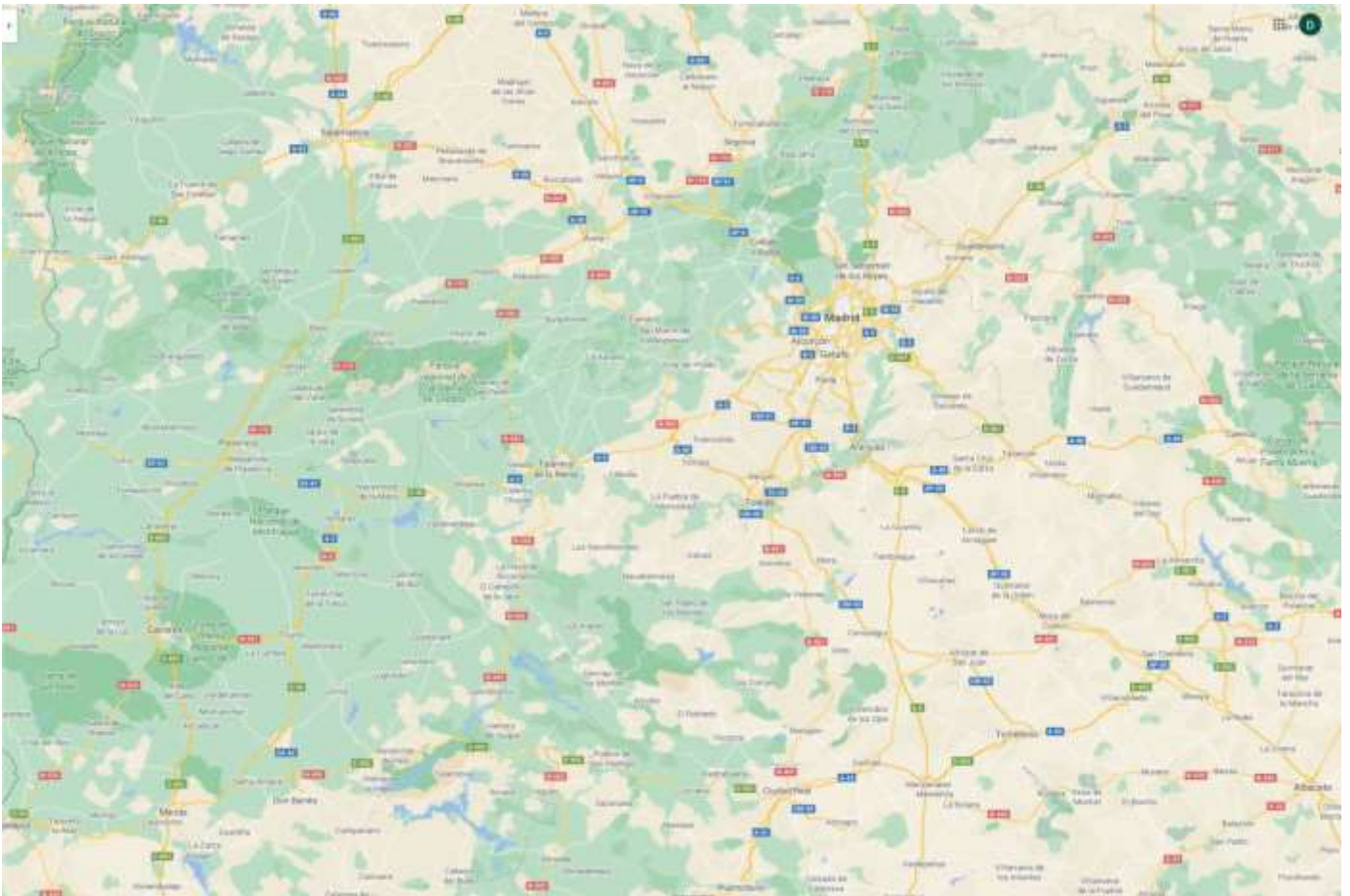
In the following text we are going to show you the process we follow to plan a route

The process of creating one of our routes consists of the following steps:

### 1.- Determination of the geographical area.

We have divided all of Europe into different geographical areas with a size in which we could plan a route of between 7 and 13 days. In this way we obtained more than 80 zones, but most of them were not interesting enough from a biker point of view, that is, their roads were not attractive enough to justify a road trip, so we finally focused on less than 30 areas that did have roads of sufficient quality to be able to trace an interesting route. We are going to give as an example for this article one of those areas, CENTRAL SPAIN.

The first thing we do is take the Google Maps map of the entire area as a base:



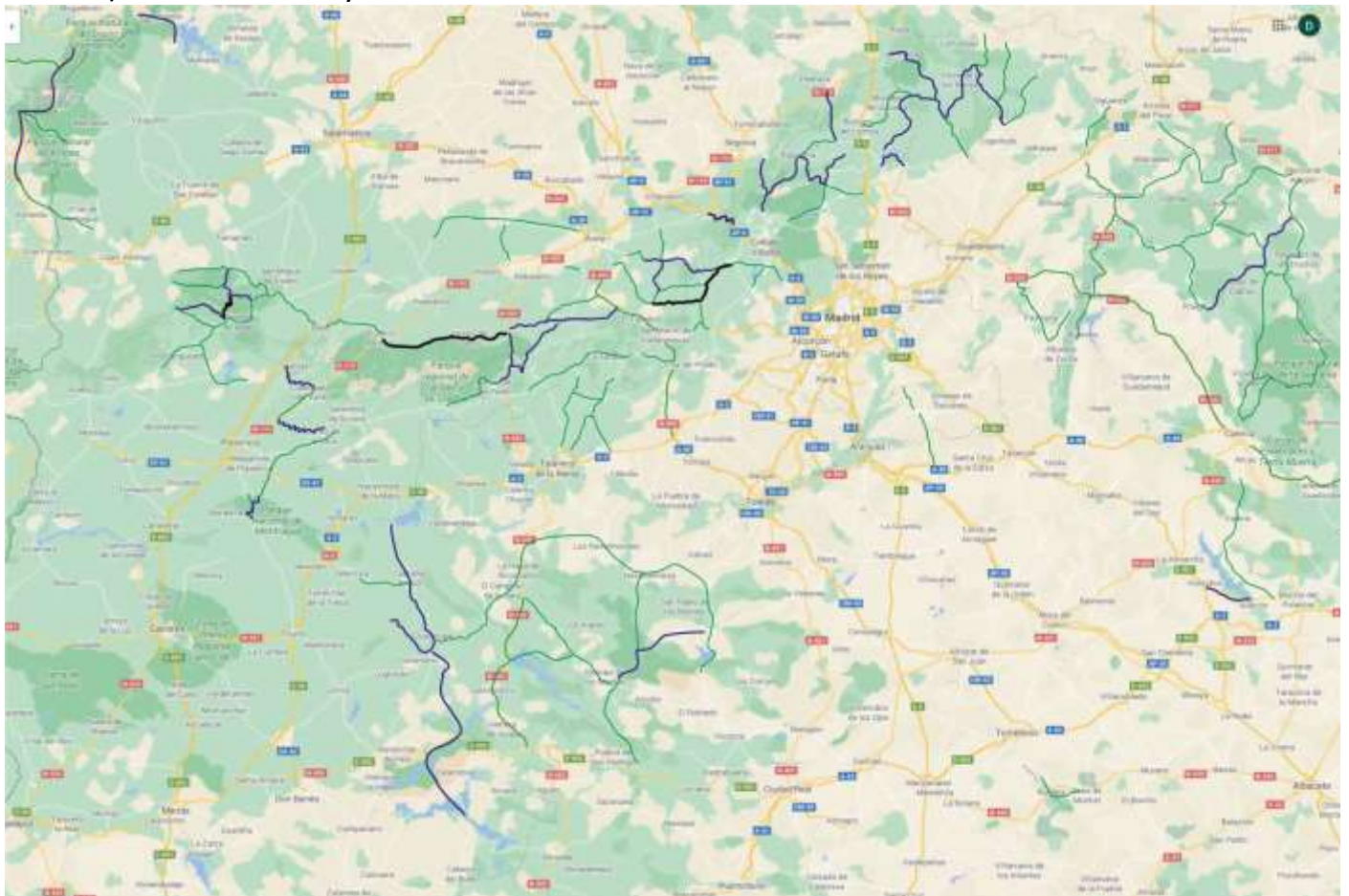
## 2.- Determination of the best roads

On this map we highlight the best sections of road, which in turn are divided into three categories.

1.- Essential, (in black) .- These are sections that must be on the route, even if this implies the modification of it. They are generally those mythical sections that you could also find in Internet forums.

2.- Excellent, (in blue) .- They are fantastic sections that should be incorporated into the route, at least for the most part, since there are times when, due to the duration of the tour, we have no choice. to give up any of them.

3.- Very Good, (in green) .- They are very good sections that it would be desirable if they were included in the route, but in which, frequently, it is necessary to give up, either by choice, (cases in which there are many green roads in the same area and you have to choose) or because they are isolated and remote.



We obtain these sections from three sources, in order of importance they are:

- 1.- Our own experience of more than 30 years traveling by motorcycle and of more than 10 years planning routes.
- 2.- The recommendations made by our associates in each area.
- 3.- The information we obtain on the Internet, after being verified.

On this third point I want to make a comment. It is true that on the Internet you can find a lot of information about motorcycle routes, but the biggest problem is determining the quality of that information. Not all the sections that can be found on the Internet are as good as they say, nor are you going to find all the sections that are excellent. For this reason, the Internet is not a reliable source for planning a route. Despite this, we search the Internet for information about routes, (to a great extent also to see what is being done in this sector), and from time to time we find something new that we did not know. From here begins a verification process that is done as follows.

If that section is available on Google Street View we will go through it all. This allows us to see the layout of the roads, the state of these, and the landscapes. I can say that I will have travelled tens of thousands of kilometres from my computer screen, because it is an excellent system to verify a route, but it is very laborious, since analysing an entire route takes several hours.

If the section is not available in Street View, (this is very frequent), we consult with our associates, (rental companies), in each country, and if they do not have information about that section either, we will keep it on hold until we can verify it at stop by next time we organize a prospecting trip. In this way, we manage to avoid unpleasant surprises as much as possible, such as encountering unpaved areas, roads with restricted use, etc.

### **3.- Determination of the possible places in which to finish a stage.**

We start from the assumption that most of our clients want to stay in high-class hotels and that many of them also want to visit places of interest at the end of their motorcycle journey. For this reason, the third phase of planning the route is to determine in which places we can have excellent hotels, where we can plan a night, and to determine those places where it is fully justified to spend a night for the interest cultural that the place may have.

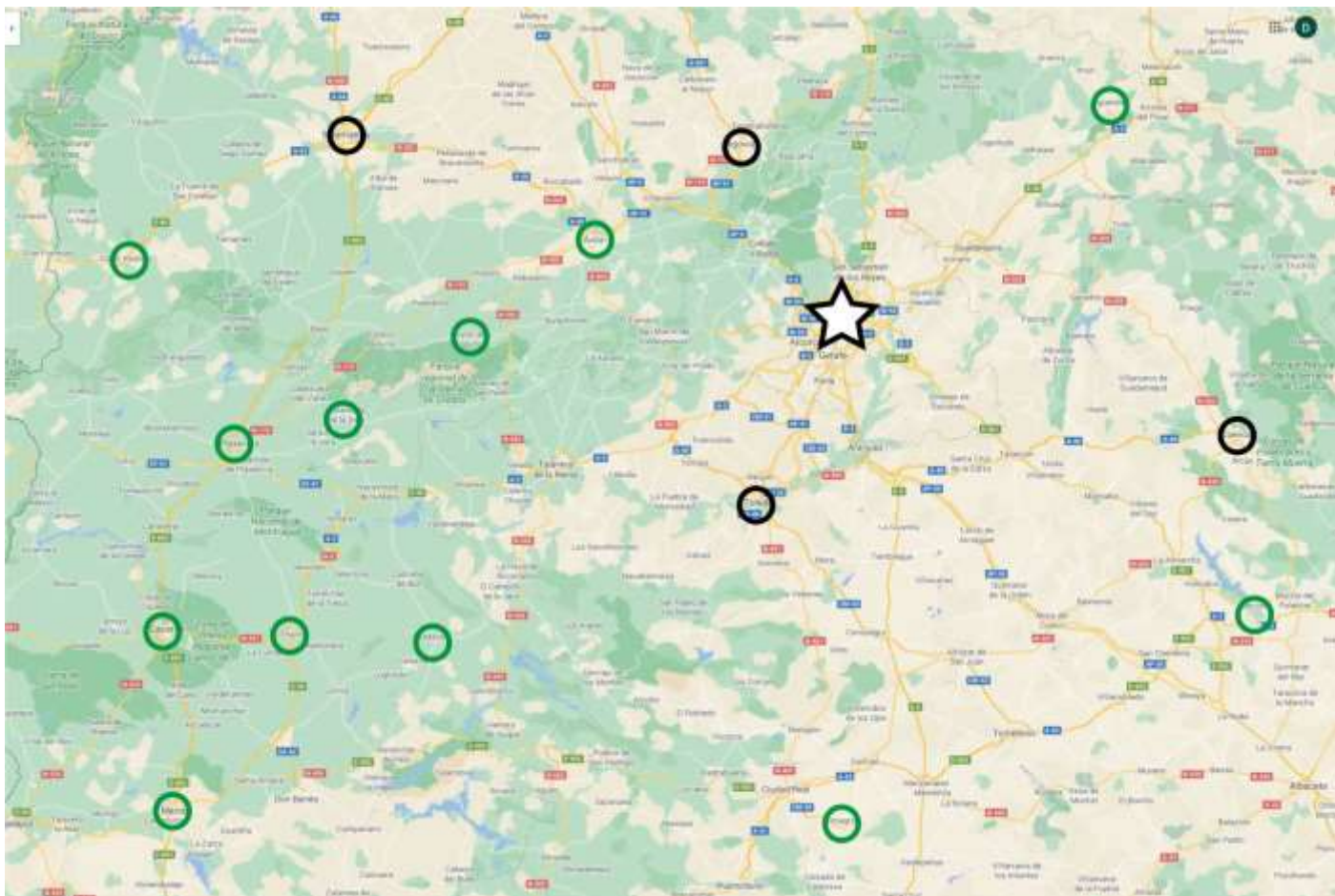
For this reason we divide the possible places to sleep into two groups.

1.- Essential places for their cultural quality, (in black)

2.- Places where we can have an excellent hotel even if the place is not particularly interesting from a cultural point of view.

In this way, we include the possible end-of-route points on the map as follows:





On the map you can see that there is a star, (Madrid), which is an obligatory point since the tour begins and ends here, since it is the point where the most important airport in the area and / or the motorcycle rental company are located.

Then there are 16 circles that are the possible places where we could plan to spend a night, of which 4 of them are black, which would be:

Toledo.- Probably the most monumental city in Spain. Not only do we consider that it is an obligatory stop, but we would even recommend considering a day of rest there. But this, of course, is optional.

Segovia.- A very beautiful city with three fabulous monuments, its huge Cathedral built between the 16th and 18th centuries, its imposing 12th century Alcazar and its famous 1st century Roman aqueduct, which make it a must-see destination.

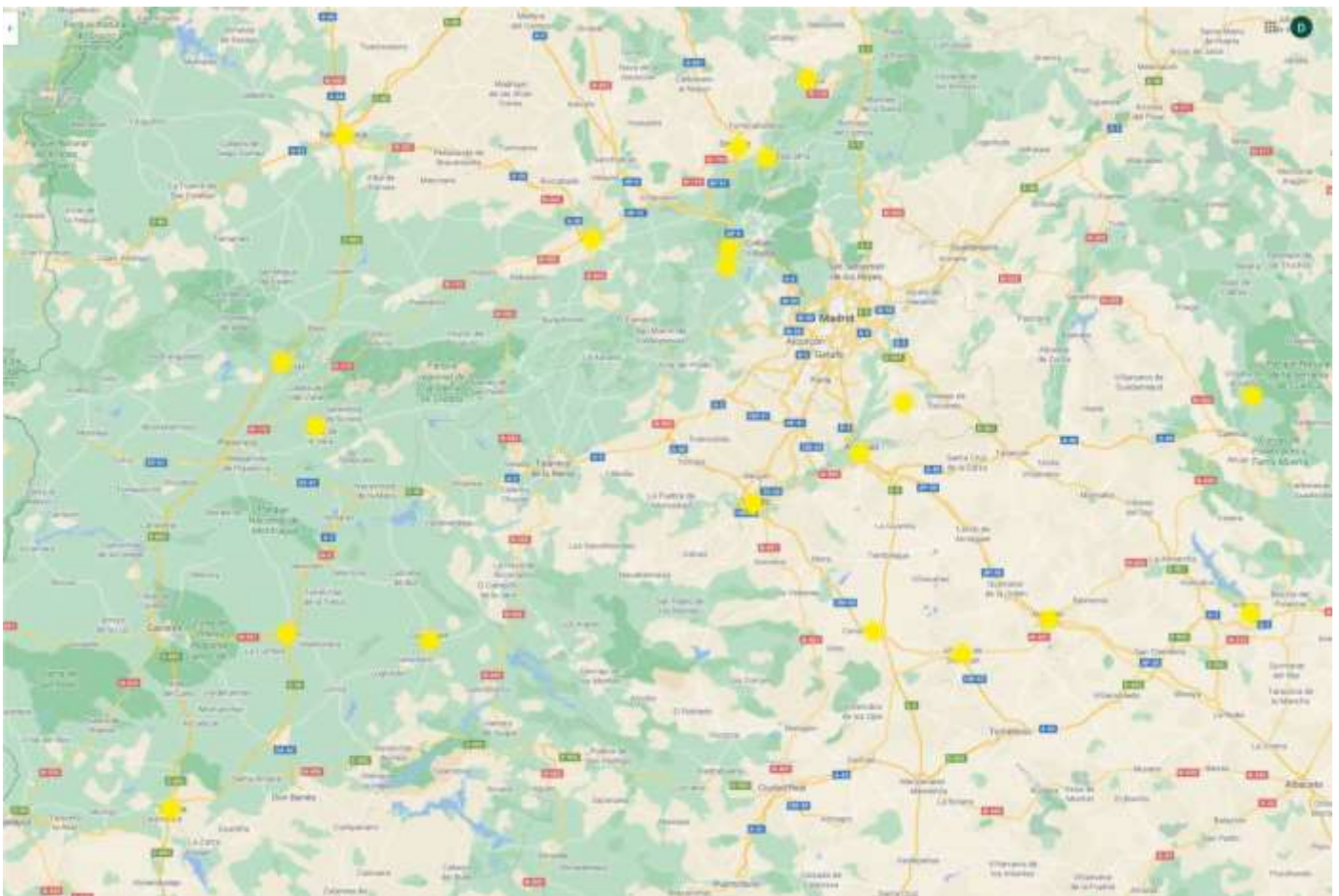
Salamanca.- Cradle of the oldest university in Spain, (13th century), it is a very beautiful city with a beautiful Plaza Mayor and many monuments.

Cuenca.- Another very beautiful city in which its Cathedral and its hanging houses stand out. In addition, Cuenca is surrounded by excellent roads, which makes it a mandatory stop for us.

In addition to these 4 points we have 12 places (green circles) where we can plan an end of the stage having an excellent hotel. As we will only need some of them, which one we will choose will depend on the durations of each stage in order to balance the trip as much as possible.

#### **4.- Determination of points of tourist interest**

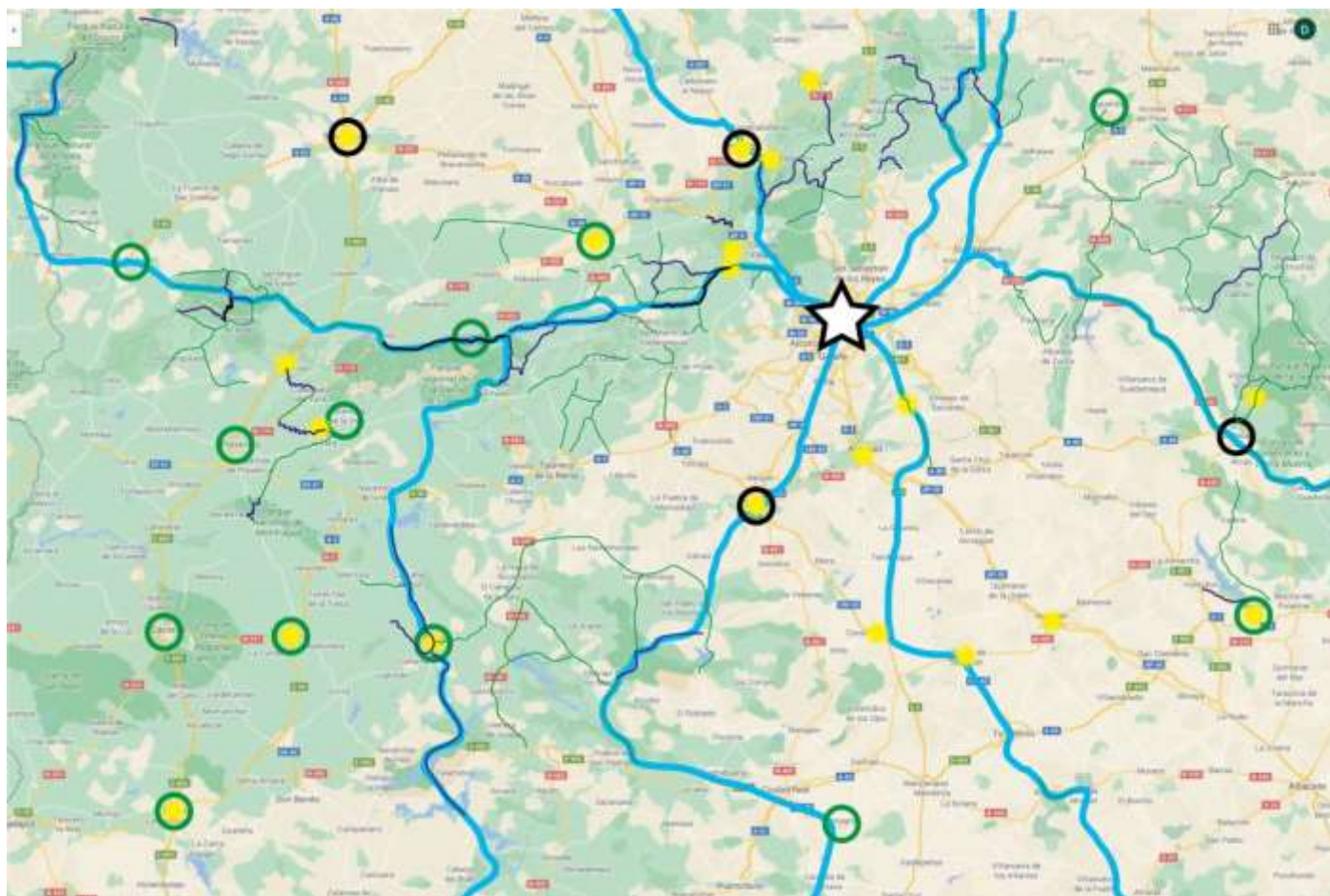
The next step is to include the points of tourist interest that we can find on the route, both at the destination and during the route. In the following map you can see with yellow suns places of tourist interest that can be of many types, monuments, museums, natural places, restaurants, etc., but all of them with special interest, so they more than justify passing the route through them .



#### **5.- Determination of the sections already included in other trips.**

Our goal is that sections of road are not repeated between our tours, so that when you make your next trip you will not find yourself with the feeling of saying, “I already rode this road on my previous trip”. For this reason, the routes of the other tours are taken into account, to avoid them as much as possible. In this way, with everything, we would have:





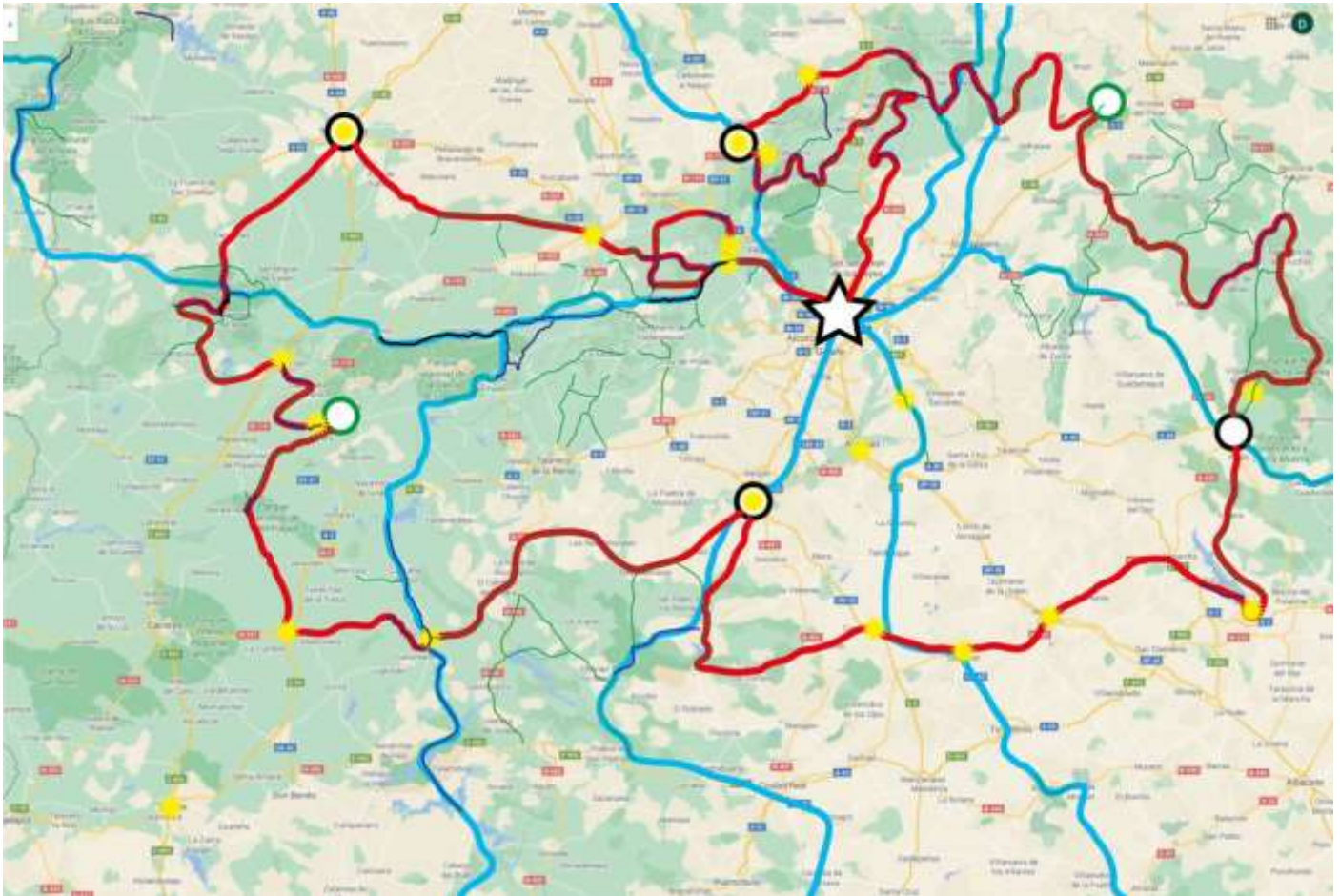
## 6.- Planning of the basic route.

With all this we draw the basic route stage by stage under the following guidelines:

- 1.- The duration of the riding time of the stage should not be over 6 hours, and in no case longer than 7 hours. Our experience shows us that from the 5th hour, the riding becomes much more tiring, so more than 6 hours of riding make the stage unpleasant. Sometimes we make exceptions and that is why some of our routes exceed 6 hours, but we always offer shorter alternatives.
- 2.- The duration of the tourist visits that exist in it will be taken into account in the duration of the stage, so that if a stage has many tourist visits, or of foreseeably long duration, the duration of the riding time will be reduced.
- 3.- If a stage exceeds 5 hours, there must be a good alternative below 5 hours, if it cannot be, the possibility of an extension that divides the stage in two must be offered. An example of this is our first stage of Tour No. 2.- Northwest of Spain. Madrid - Ciudad Rodrigo. This stage is fabulous but it lasts 5:39, without being able to offer a good shorter alternative, since the only possibility to reduce the stage would be to take the highway (3:01 hours), but where everything is lost interesting. As we understand that not all our clients are willing to undertake such long stages, and not being able to offer a good shorter alternative, in this tour we offer to divide the stage in two; Madrid - Gredos and Gredos -

Ciudad Rodrigo, but since they were too short then we expanded them a bit, giving different alternatives to the client.

In this case, the basic route planning was:



With the following table of distances and times:

Día	Desde	Hasta	Km.	T. Rodaje
1	Madrid	Salamanca	314	5:11
2	Salamanca	Jarandilla	300	6:04
3	Jarandilla	Toledo	377	5:56
4	Toledo	Cuenca	409	6:10
5	Cuenca	Sigüenza	306	5:03
6	Sigüenza	Segovia	286	5:10
7	Segovia	Madrid	281	5:30
	<b>325 Km/Día</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2273</b>	<b>39:04</b>

As you can see, the route has been traced by trying the following:

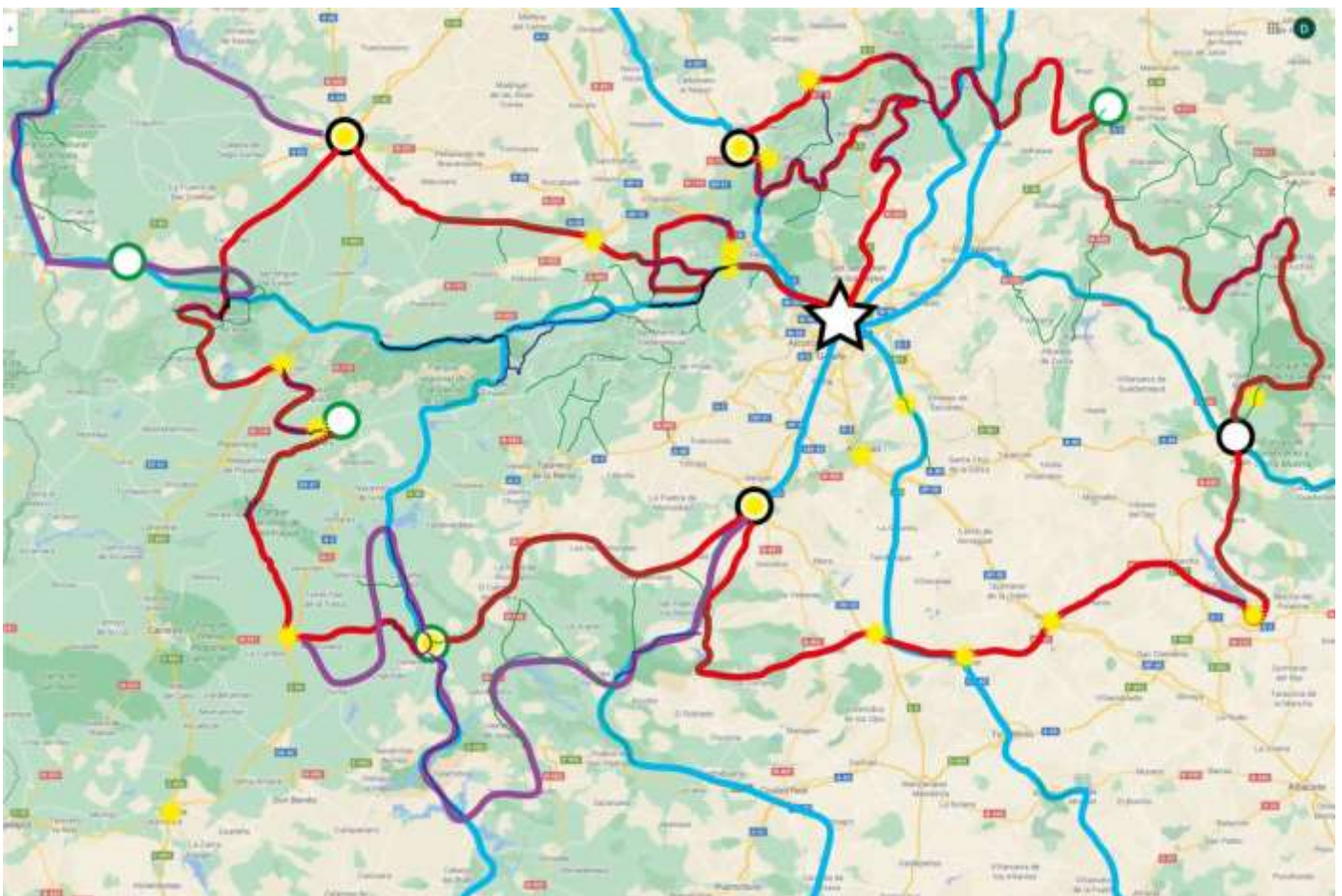


- 1.- Include the maximum number of good sections.
- 2.- Avoid making the route coincide with that of another trip, (as you will see the red route and the blue routes intersect, but they are barely mounted)
- 3.- Include ALL the black circles, that is, the cities that we consider especially interesting from a cultural point of view.
- 4.- Include the maximum number of yellow suns, that is, places of tourist interest.
- 5.- Maintain the duration criteria mentioned above.

## 7.- Planning of extensions

In all our tours we offer optional extensions for those clients who have more time to make the trip. There are basically three types of extensions.

- 1.- Places where we recommend an extra day to visit the city, in our example it would be the case of the city of Toledo.
- 2.- Deviations from the basic route to travel roads or visit especially interesting places that were outside the basic route, or stopovers that allow us to divide a stage into two. In these extensions, there may be a coincidence with other trips.
- 3.- Stopovers at intermediate points that divide a stage in two to make it shorter or include more good roads.





In general, we add extensions until we reach the maximum number of days for each type of tour. As in a medium tour the maximum number of days is 13 and in this tour the basic route has been 7 days, we have time to add up to 6 extensions and in this tour we opted for the following:

- A.- Rest day in Toledo.
- B.- Diverted to Ciudad Rodrigo.
- C.- Stopover in Guadalupe.
- D.- Stopover in Alarcón.
- E.- Detour to Valencia.
- F.- Rest day in Valencia.

Each of these extensions adds a day to the duration of the route, and the client can add them as he wishes, but in some cases one extension depends on another, such as the example of the rest day in Valencia, which obviously requires that first the detour to Valencia has been made. For this reason, the PDF of each tour includes a diagram of the extensions such as the following:



In this way we see that, in this case, extensions A, B, C, D and E can be added independently to the basic route as the customer deems best, but that extension F requires that extension E be previously included.

With these extensions, the client can adjust his trip at his will from 7 days, which would be the basic route, up to 13 days, which would be the case of adding all the extensions.

But this gives a huge number of possibilities that would be:

7 days.- 1 combination	8 days.- 5 combinations	9 days.- 11 combinations
10 days.- 20 combinations	11 days.- 15 combinations	
12 days.- 5 combinations	13 days.- 1 combination	

Which gives rise to a total of 58 possible combinations or versions of this tour. Obviously choosing between 58 versions is not easy, so to help our client to do so, we are going to present the extensions in the order in which we would include them. Therefore, if a client has 10 days, we would recommend the first 3 extensions, that is, A, B and C. But, of course, the decision is up to each client based on their personal preferences.

## **8.- Management of each stage.**

Once the basic route and the possible extensions have been designed, we proceed to work on each of the stages, carrying out the following actions.

8.1.- Choice of intermediate points.- A stage is made up of a series of intermediate points, (normally between 8 and 12), which are the ones that will allow you to follow the route along the roads that we have chosen. Of course, if there is an element of interest on the route, this will be an intermediate point, but if you have to look for a point just to trace the route, you usually look for a point that also provides something, such as a viewpoint, (which will allow you take a photo), a bar, (which will allow you to have a coffee), a gas station, (which will allow you to refuel), etc.

8.2.- Calculation of autonomy and search for gas stations. If you follow our recommended routes you will find there a gas station with a maximum distance of 300 km from the last one. As 300 km is a distance that practically all motorcycles can cover, you will not have to worry about looking for gas stations, which in some areas can give you a hard time.

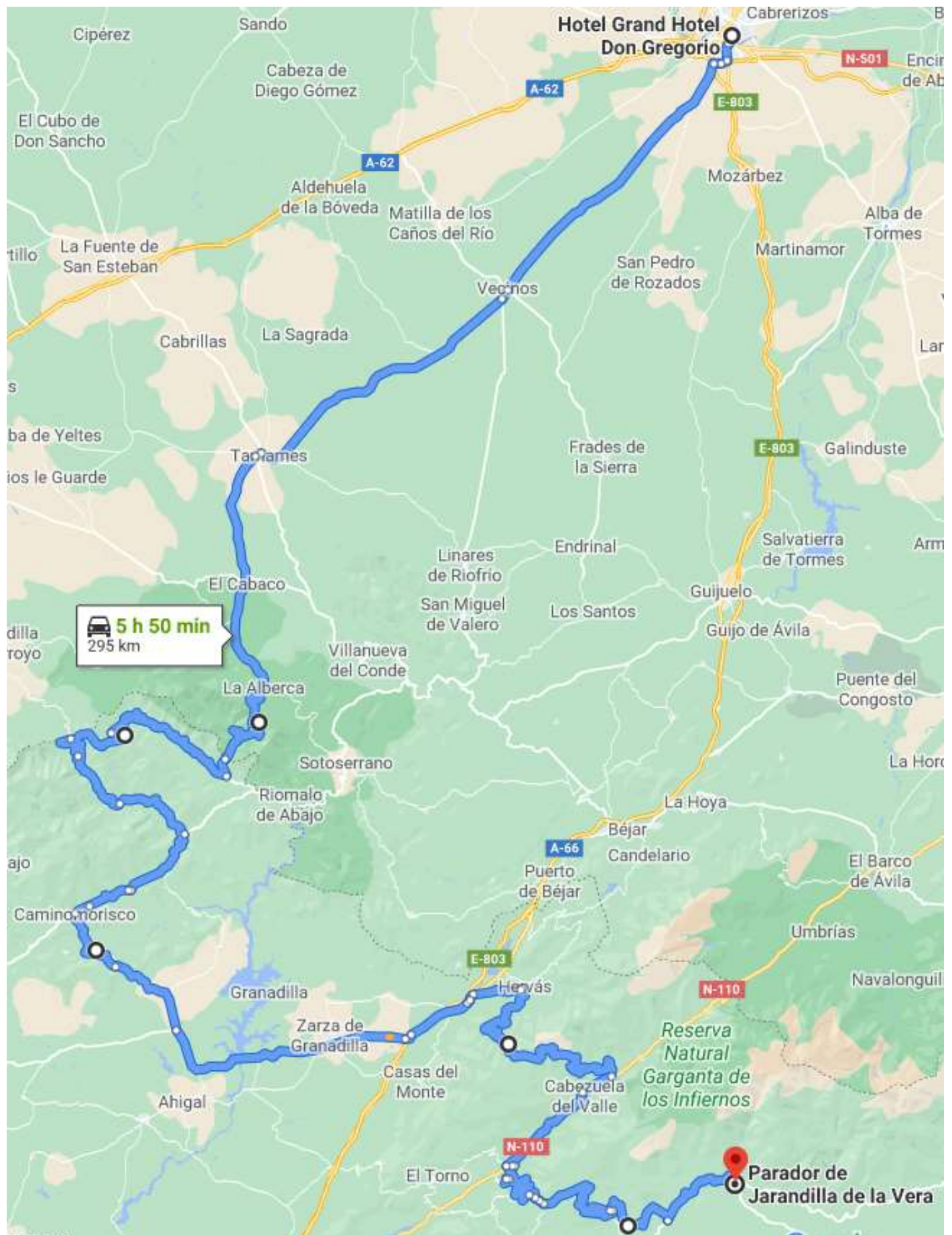
8.3.- Obtaining the number of curves, an excellent indicator of the quality (and also of the difficulty) of the route. For more information on this, read our article, "[Why do we count curves?](#)"

8.3.- Creation of the Google Maps links of the recommended route and of all the alternatives.

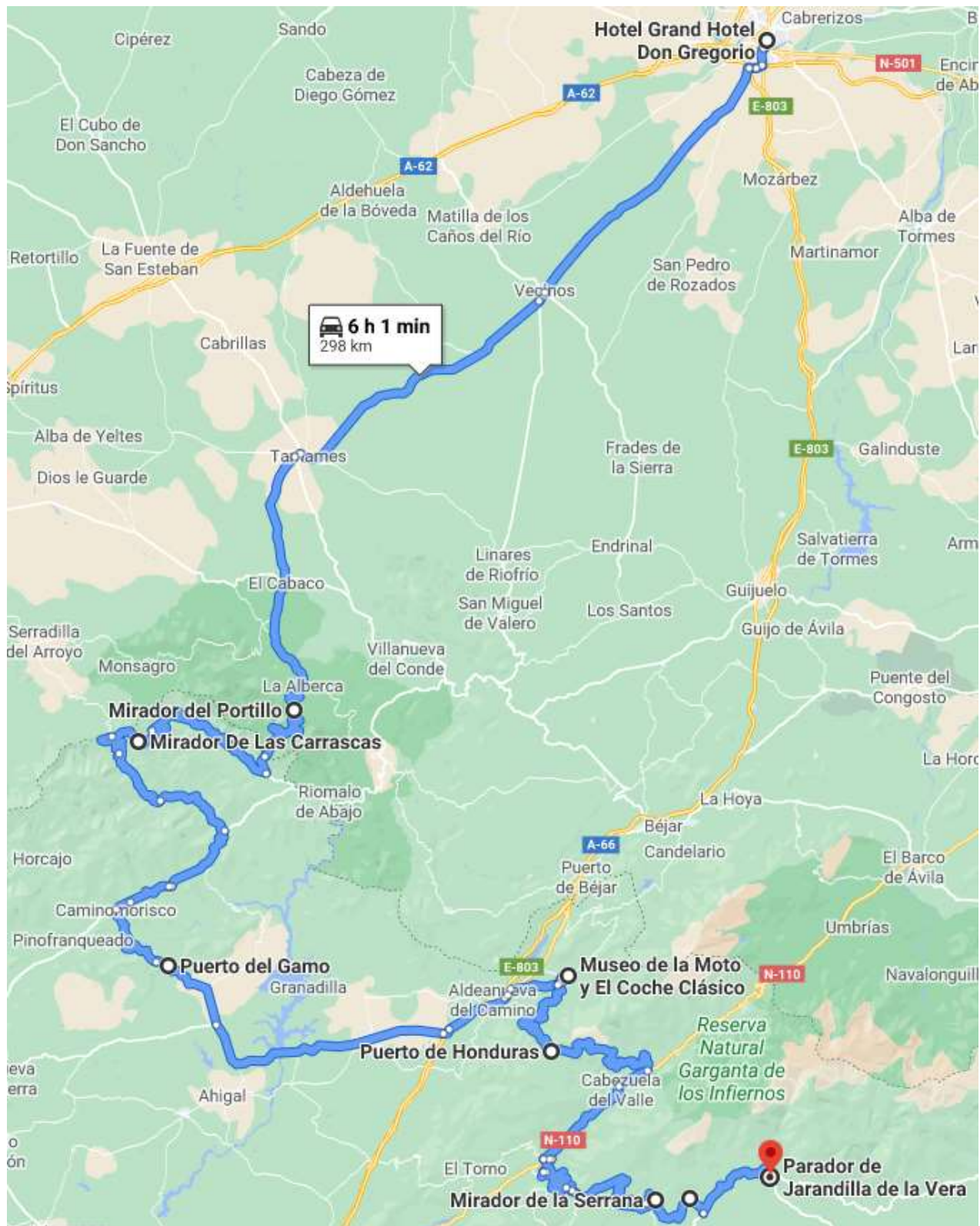


Let's see an example of how we manage each stage with the Salamanca - Jarandilla stage.

The first thing is to see which is the best route from a biker point of view:



Now we are looking for intermediate points that are of some interest.

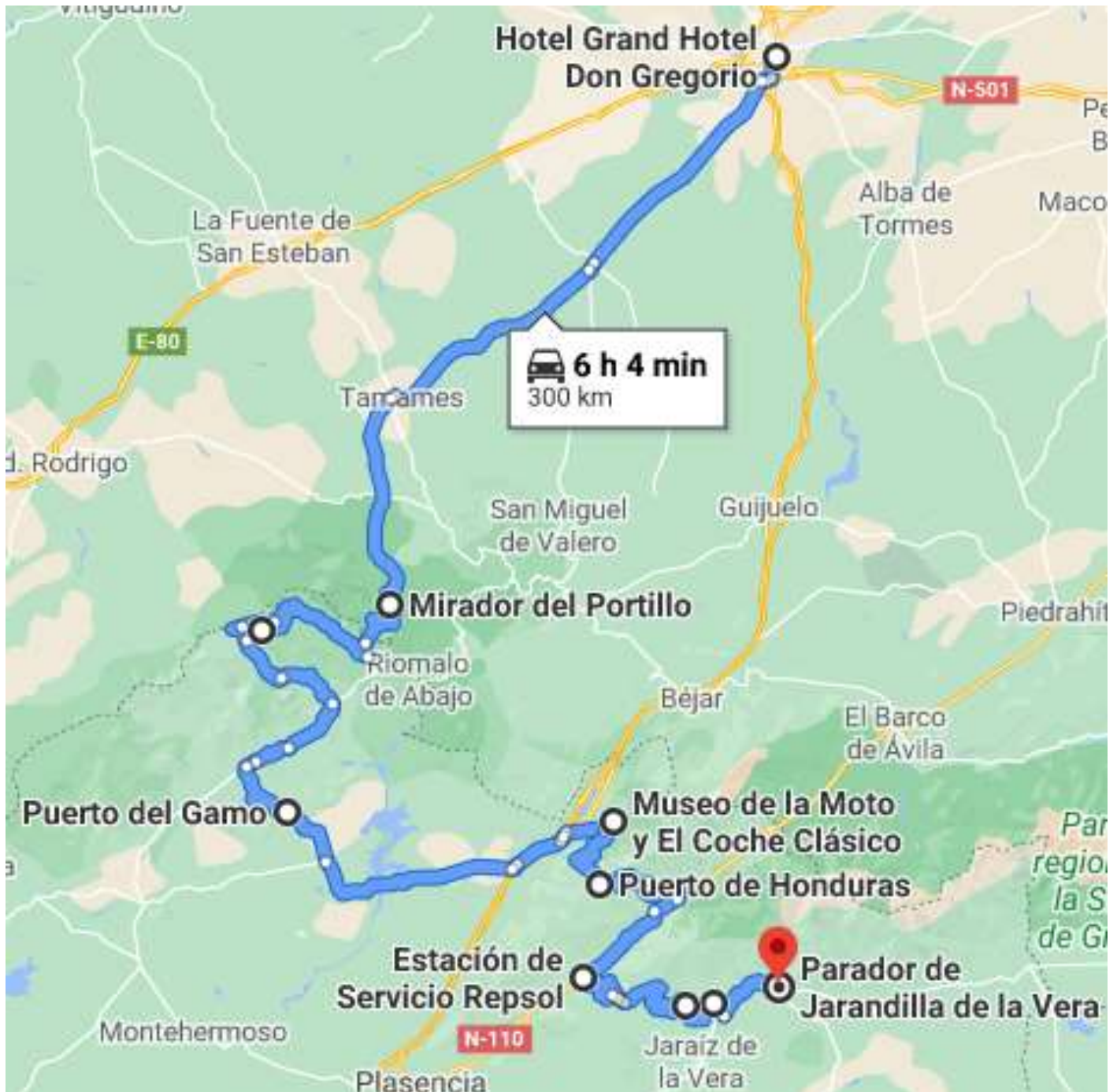


As you will see we have chosen:

The monastery of Yuste, already very close to Jarandilla, where Emperor Carlos I retired.  
Three viewpoints where you can safely stop the motorcycle to take beautiful photos.  
Two mountain passes, both with secure parking areas.  
A motorcycle museum, which you may want to visit



Once this is done, the autonomy of the motorcycle is planned. In the previous stage you would have refilled gasoline 22 km before reaching your destination, so we have to look for a gas station around kilometer 240 of the route, and without going beyond 278. The most suitable gas station is at kilometer 251 of our route, on the N110, shortly after the detour to Piornal, including this gas station only deviates the route by 2 km, so it is the ideal one. In this way:



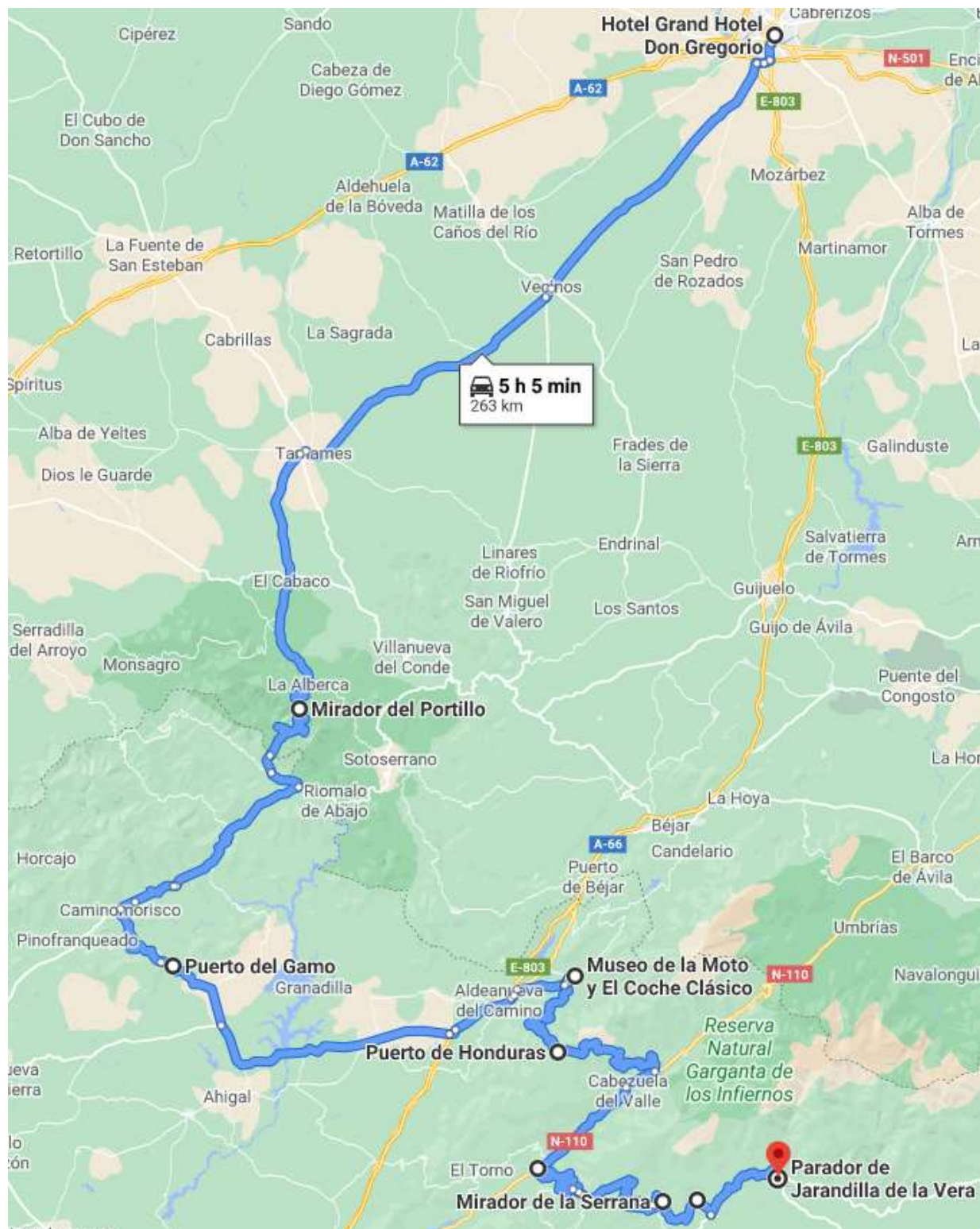
And we already have the route, including the hotels where the client would stay, if you asked us to reserve them or to include them in the route, and whose link to Google Maps would be:

<https://goo.gl/maps/ifyoTMtxnW9KecH17>

Now the curves are counted whose result is 1,137 curves in 300 km, that is, a curve / km ratio of 3.79 which is quite high, so this indicates that it will be a very fun stage but perhaps a bit complicated for a rookie pilot.

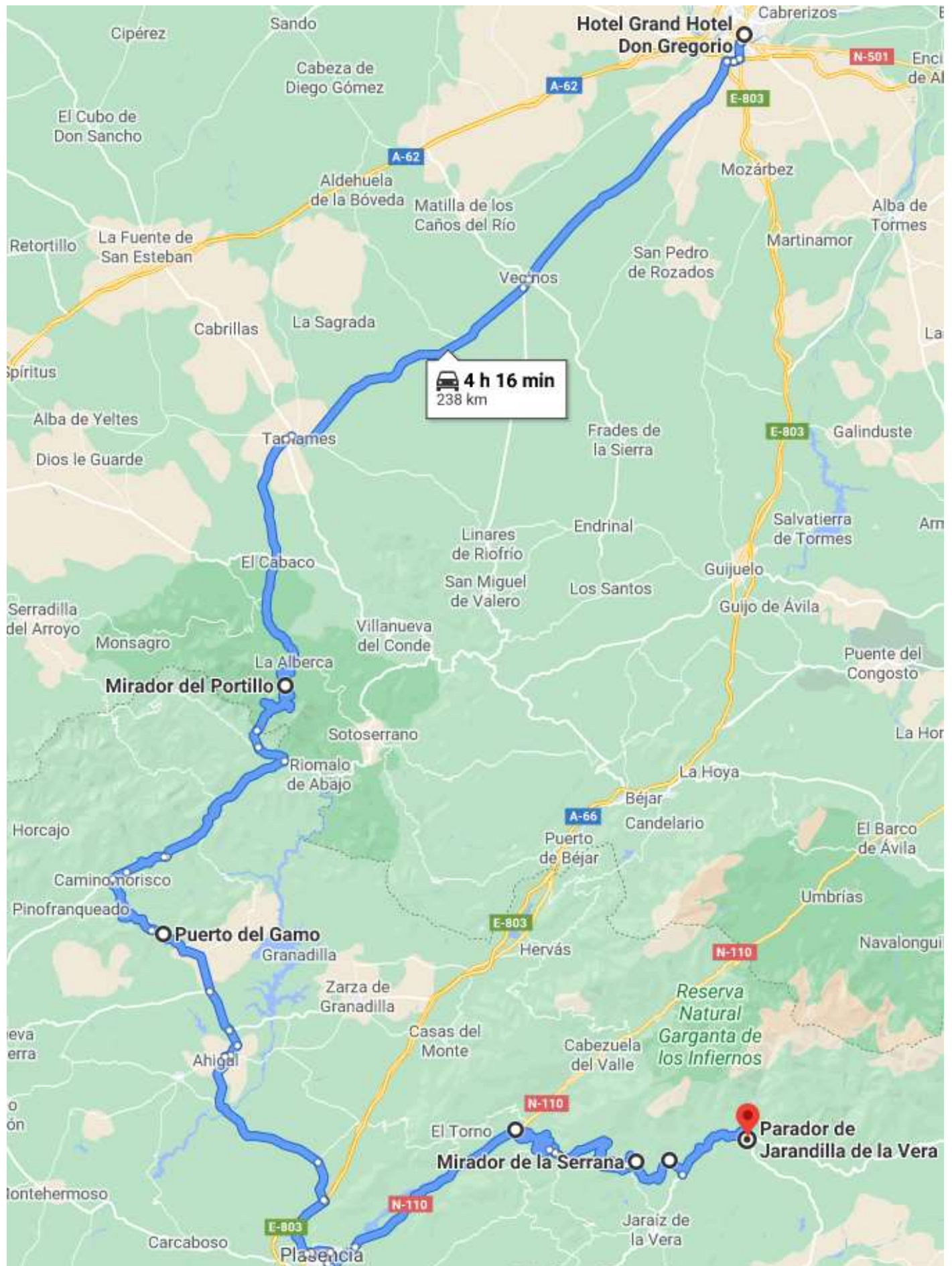
As the stage is long, (a little more than 6 hours), and complicated, (1,137 curves), maybe you may prefer to use one of the alternatives. In this case we will offer you the following alternatives:

Alternative 1.- Eliminating the Carrascas viewpoint reduces the route to 263 km in 5:05 hours, thus reducing the stage by almost one hour.



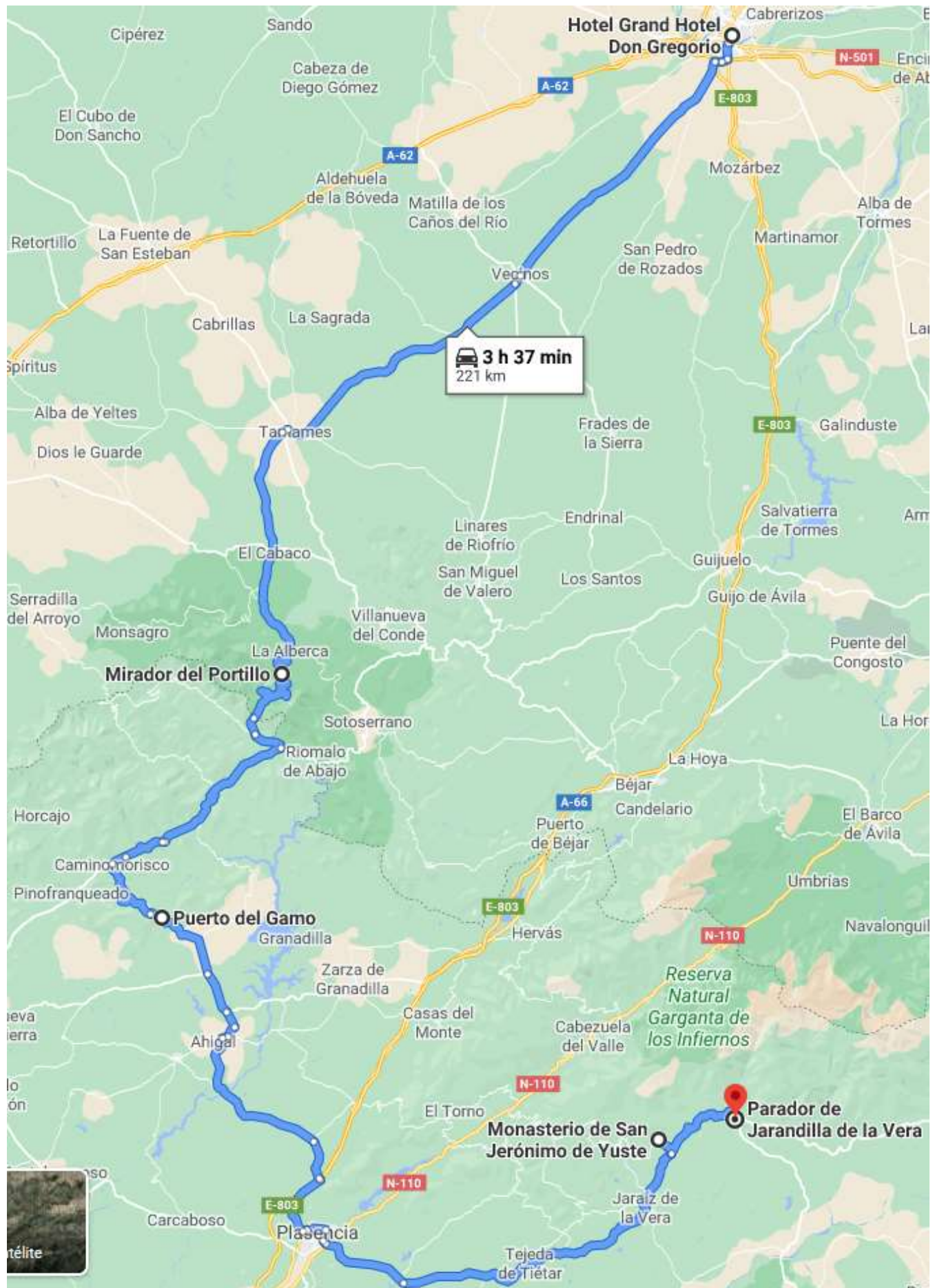


Alternative 2.- Also eliminate the Hervás museum and the port of Honduras. This alternative is 238 km in 4:16, so it reduces the total stage in 1:48 hours.



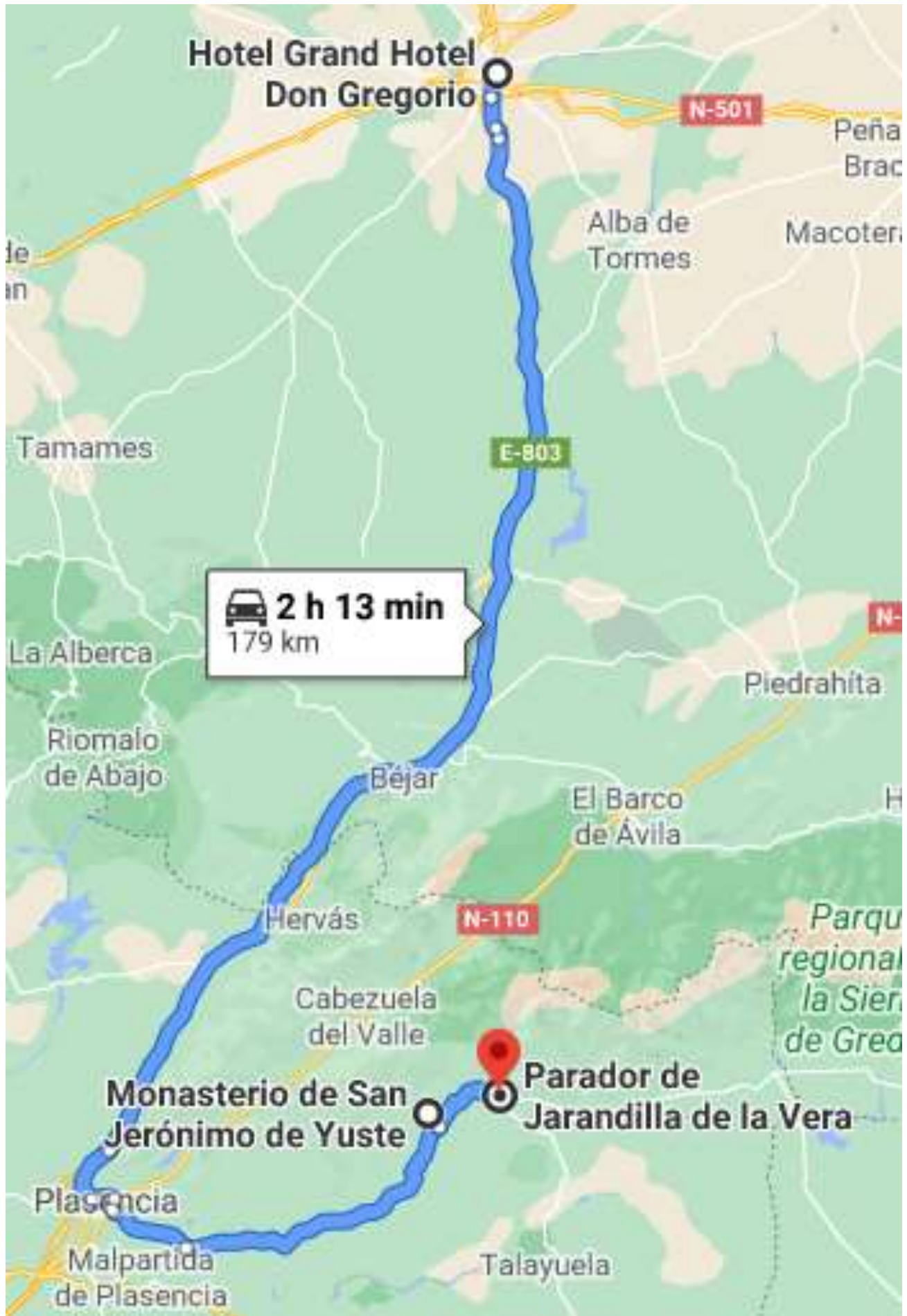


Alternative 3.- Also eliminate the service station, and the Serrana viewpoint, this route would be 221 km in 3:37, so we are reducing almost 40 minutes on the previous alternative.





Alternative 4.- It already eliminates practically all the intermediate points, except for the Yuste Monastery, which is practically in Jarandilla and whose elimination only remains 10 minutes.



And the shortest route would be the one that goes direct, which would be 176 km in 2:03. Therefore, in summary, we are going to offer you 6 routes that would be:

Route	Km	Riding Time	Quality	Quality/Time Ratio
Full route	300	6:04	100%	1.00
Alternativa 1	263	5:05	90%	1.07
Alternativa 2	238	4:16	70%	1.00
Alternativa 3	221	3:37	50%	0.84
Alternativa 4	179	2:13	30%	0.82
Shortest	176	2:03	20%	0.59

For you to choose the one that seems most appropriate depending on your personal preferences, the weather situation, etc. But you must bear in mind that time reductions also imply a reduction in the quality of the trip. From an absolutely fabulous stage that is the full one to a boring highway trip that is the shortest route, each reduction reduces the quality of the trip, so in the fourth column, we show you our opinion on what percentage of quality of the route it remains in each alternative, so that you have an element of judgment when choosing your route. As you will see in our example, the first alternative saves an hour of travel, which would be 17% of the duration, but we consider that only 10% of quality remains. However, the third alternative subtracts more quality, (50%), than time, (only 40%). For this reason, in the last column we show you the Quality / Time ratio that tells us that the optimal alternative is the first, (it even has a better ratio than the full route). In any case, of course, it is up to each client which alternative to choose.

## 9.- Final preparation to send to the client

The last phase of the route planning is to prepare the route book that we send to the client. In these books you will find extensive information, not only about the route but also about the points and cities that you are going to visit. Our road books are our pride, because, as far as we know, nobody does anything remotely the same. You can see an example of our road book in our section [How do we send the information](#).

But in addition to the road book that already contains all the links to the routes to open on your phone, we will also send you a GPX file to program your GPS.

Therefore, as you have seen, our routes are prepared with great professionalism. Of course, you can plan the route on your own but it will be very difficult for it to reach a level of quality close to what we offer you, basically because we invest about 80 hour of work in a medium tour, to be amortized with 20 clients, and you will not to spend so many time planning your route.

**To have an excellent trip, having the best route is an essential element, and this is what we are offering you.**