

Cognoscenti magazine

Because life is short

POSADA SAN JOSE
CUENCA, SPAIN

Posada San José is a charming small hotel in the famous Spanish city of Cuenca, Spain. Tucked away on the Calle Julián Romero, one block off the Calle San Pedro and just off the Plaza Mayor, it is a world away in terms of noise, principally because automobiles have difficulty navigating the narrow Medieval streets.

Since 1983, Jennifer Morter and spouse Antonio Cortinas have managed the place, which was originally a small palace in the 17th century and later used for religious purposes, notably as a choir school for boys. The hotel has 22 rooms with en-suite bath as well as 9 simpler ones which were once monks' cells. Jennifer herself came to Spain from Canada in the 1970s wanting to improve her Spanish on the road to becoming a United Nations translator—but now, she jokingly informed visiting **Cognoscenti Magazine** editors, “I have my own United Nations right here”—referring to the international character of her visitors.

The world-patrimonial city of Cuenca is justly renowned for its 14th- and 15th-century *colgadas*, or “hanging houses”—and they literally hang off the cliff, making the town a natural fortress. From the spacious, private outdoor terrace of our room at the Posada San José, we felt vertiginous, with the view giving out over the spectacular gorge of the Huécar river.

The rooms are simply but tastefully decorated, with original elements, such as recessed shelves and ornate archways, carefully retained.

In the hotel's stylish café-bar, modern prints adorn the whitewashed walls. Slanted ceilings, abstract art,



Charming rooms with original elements

irregular arches leading from one space to the next, and even uneven walls (where, in some places, the walls are literally a section of the cliff) enliven the space. We sampled a tasty tapa menu including large, fresh green salads guaranteed to please foreigners tired of the meat-heavy Spanish cuisine, as well as several different tortillas—try garlic, cheese, ham or asparagus.

This article was written by contributing editors to *Cognoscenti Magazine*.

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