



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## European Thermal Heritage Day 2023 in Mondariz-Balneario

In its January meeting, the Executive Council of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association has decided to hold the next “European Thermal Heritage Day” in Mondariz-Balneario in Galicia, Spain. The annual event was established by EHTTA’s Scientific Committee in 2018 as a celebration of European thermal heritage and an opportunity to raise awareness of the subject that is at the heart of the Association and its objectives. It is regarded as an example of best practices among the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and won their Best Practices Award in 2019 for the concept.

“This year, 2023, the Declaration of Public Utility of mineral waters of Mondariz turns 150 years and we take this anniversary as an opportunity to celebrate the thermal heritage of the town and region,” explains Mario Crecente, President of the Scientific Committee of EHTTA, the reasons favouring Mondariz-Balneario as location, where the event will take place on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

“We are very much looking forward to hosting the European Thermal Heritage Day 2023,” says Mayor José Antonio Lorenzo Rodríguez of Mondariz-Balneario. “Besides the expert presentations and discussions we will give everyone the opportunity to visit the town and see the great thermal heritage. Being a member of EHTTA and with it a member of a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe brings this great opportunity to share our heritage and the beauty of this place.”

As President of EHTTA, the President of the neighbouring Province of Ourense, Manuel Baltar, welcomes the decision to have another important event held in Galicia this year. “It will foster the communication about the importance of thermal heritage and thermal tourism in this part of Europe, giving leading examples,” he comments.

### Background: History related to thermal waters

The historical origin of Mondariz Balneario is related to the value of its thermal waters. There is evidence of human occupation in the surroundings of Mondariz Balneario since prehistoric times. Archaeological remains from Iron-Age settlements and a wide collection of Roman amphora's, coins, vessels and an old road in the vicinity of the spa have been discovered, proving the continuous settlement over thousands of years. The real boost to the Thermal Town of Mondariz Balneario was the rediscovery of the hot springs in 1862 and 1870. In 1880, Queen María Cristina gave to Mondariz the title "supplier of the Spanish Royal House" and with it the license to use the royal coat of arms. The success of this new-found impetus generated the construction of the "Gran Hotel", designed by Jenaro de la Fuente and opened in 1898.

In the 1990s began a restoration phase of important buildings and sites, followed by the opening of the new spa hotel, the congress centre and the recovering of the Gran Hotel building. During the last three decades the process of recovery and repair of the thermal and cultural environment has brought back the splendour of old times, which the town has been famous for.

More information about the European Thermal Heritage Day 2023 and the programme will be published in due time at <https://historicthermaltowns.eu/european-thermal-heritage-day/>.

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