







GUIDE

Francisco García Pavón

INN, WINE AND CULTURE

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GUIDED ADVENTURE

Tomelloso in the footsteps of Francisco García Pavón



Francisco García Pavón (1919–1989), born in Tomelloso, was an influential Spanish writer and literary critic. With a PhD in Philosophy and Literature from the University of Madrid and a professor at the Higher School of Dramatic Art, he is best known as the creator of the humorous detective novels featuring Plinio. His work is distinguished by its blend of intrigue, local customs and sharp social criticism, securing him a pioneering place in the history of quality Spanish crime fiction. The town of Tomelloso is not merely a setting for his stories, but rather the "lifeblood nourishing his tales and novels", with its people, customs and essence permeating every page. He himself stated that he would not have been able to write about any town other than his own.

García Pavón was an award-winning author, receiving the National Critics' Prize in 1969 for El rapto de las Sabinas (The Rape of the Sabine Women) and the Nadal Prize in the same year for Las Hermanas Coloradas (The Red Sisters). He was also a finalist for the Nadal Prize in 1945 with his novel Cerca de Oviedo (Near Oviedo) and in 1967 with El reinado de Witiza (The Reign of Witiza).

In honour of the centenary of his birth in 2019, Tomelloso Town Council, in collaboration with the Municipal Library, devised a Literary Route dedicated to García Pavón.

Below is a detailed itinerary of this significant literary route.



Francisco García Pavón Literary Trail

The trail can be completed on foot in approximately two hours.

1.Churrería "La Rocío" (currently Hotel Paloma)
This establishment was the starting point for many of detective Plinio's investigations and his usual breakfast spot, especially highlighted in one of his earliest stories, "El Quaque".
Calle Campo.

2.Tomelloso City Council, which previously housed the Local Police.
A central space in the Plinio novels, where numerous scenes of case planning take place. It symbolizes the municipal authority represented by Plinio.
Plaza de España.

3.Local Police.
On the ground floor of the building, Francisco García Pavón founded the Biblioteca Municipal.
Plaza de España .

4.Los Portales Inn
An 18th-century building frequently mentioned in the novels of García Pavón. It serves as an important meeting point, place of observation, and constant passage for characters, especially in the work "Ya no es ayer".
Plaza de España.





5.Birthplace of Francisco García Pavón
Although it is a private property, it is an emblematic place in his life and of the domestic environment that inspired many scenes narrated in his work. His father, with republican leanings, secretly painted a matron of the Republic in the house, which was displayed on April 14.
Calle Independencia, 15

6. Francisco García Pavón Municipal Library
It has borne the author's name since 1990 and is a key point on the route. It houses part of his legacy, including original editions, manuscripts, correspondence, and photographs, and hosts numerous literary events.
Calle Independencia, 32.

7.Carpentry Workshop "El Infierno"
This was the carpentry workshop of his grandfather, Francisco García Giner, a place Pavón remembered as a symbol of work, his childhood, and the characteristic aromas of old Tomelloso. His grandfather also influenced the personality of Plinio, giving the character depth and humanity. The doors made in the workshop are still preserved.
Calle Pintor Francisco Carretero, 10.

8.House of Paulina and Gumersindo
The house opposite the grandparents of Francisco García Pavón. Setting of "Cuentos Republicanos".

9.Glorieta María Cristina
A residential, tree-lined area where García Pavón spent part of his childhood. The serenity of this place is reflected in many costumbrista passages of his stories, becoming an emotional space within his narrative.
Between Pintor López Torres and Lepanto streets.

10.Statue of Francisco Martínez Ramírez "El Obrero"
Dedicated to a distinguished figure and friend of García Pavón's grandfather.

11.Tomelloso Casino ("Círculo Liberal")
The coffered ceiling of wood and glass in the Hall of Mirrors was made by the writer's grandfather. The author highlights it as one of the most active social spaces in the Tomelloso of his youth, where gatherings and meetings took place.
Calle Don Víctor Peñasco, 27.

12.Casino de San Fernando
It serves as an indirect setting for encounters, news, and rumors in his novels. Near its façade stands the sculpture of Plinio, his most iconic character, together with Don Lotario; figures created by Carlos Guerra. The idea for the first Plinio story, "El Quaque", arose from a casual conversation on the terrace of this casino with the painter Francisco Carretero.
Plaza de España

13.Garden of Las Historias de Plinio
This urban park displays panels with stories of Plinio. It is the final point of the route and an ideal place for cultural and school activities.
Calle Antonio López García, 10.

In addition to the route, Tomelloso organises literary workshops and public readings, and every year since 1990, it has awarded the "Francisco García Pavón Narrative Prize".



Plinio:
The Detective from La Mancha and his Tomelloso

Plinio, whose real name is Manuel González, is the chief of the Tomelloso Municipal Police. His inseparable companion is the veterinarian, Don Lotario. Pliny solves cases with a mixture of intuition, humour and a deep knowledge of his town and its inhabitants. His method is based on observation and "gut feeling", far removed from the stereotypes of Anglo-Saxon detectives, and he is considered the precursor of the quality Spanish crime novel. He is a human and complex figure, paving the way for later characters such as Carvalho by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

Pliny's first story, El Quaque (1953), was inspired by a story told by Francisco Carretero. The narrative style and descriptions of Pedro Eugenio Cepeda, a retired civil guard who had rented the ground floor of Pavón's family home, also influenced the intrigue of these early cases. Another decisive character was Jareño, the chief of the Tomelloso Municipal Guard, whom Pavón met in his youth and who brought charisma and personality to the character. His paternal grandfather, Francisco García Giner, a man of imagination and common sense, was key to giving Plinio his depth and human richness. The friendship between Plinio and Don Lotario is a recreation of the relationship between Pavón's grandfather and his close friend Lillo.

Tomelloso in García Pavón's work is more than just a backdrop. Although the author did not seek only to "portray his homeland", his impressions of childhood and adolescence, and his limited inclination to write about other places, made Tomelloso the cornerstone of his work. The "early mornings spent going to the vineyards", the "traffic of tractors loaded with grapes", the "bombos" (stone buildings which served as shelters for the peasants), and the "square as a centre for conversation" are popular images enriching his descriptions.



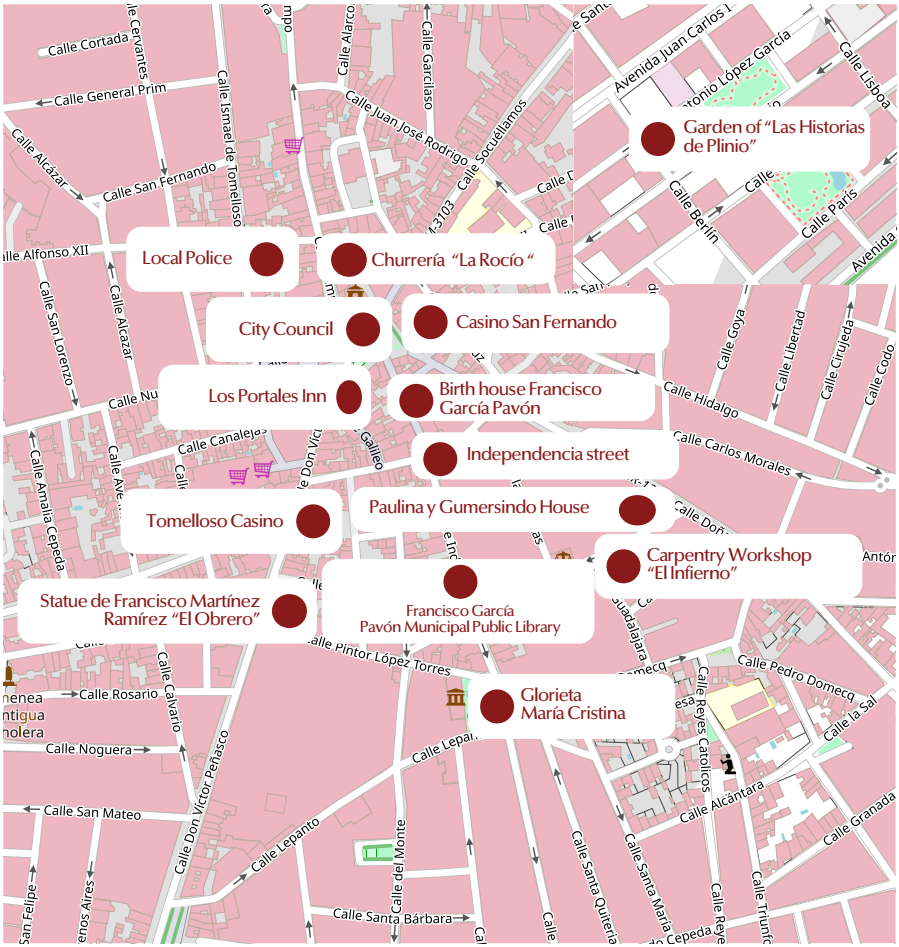
Beyond Plinio:
Social Criticism and Oral Tradition

In addition to the Plinio series, García Pavón explored other genres. His work "La guerra de los dos mil años" (The War of Two Thousand Years, 1967) breaks away from the realism that predominates in his other works, venturing into the realms of fantasy, science fiction and the grotesque. This volume of short stories stands out for its clear desire to denounce the Spanish reality of the time and the recent past, especially the Civil War. Through allegories and political satire, he criticises aspects such as social immobility, political repression and the exploitation of religion by Franco's dictatorship. Some of the stories highlighting this criticism include:

"El avión en paz" (The Plane in Peace) (Chapter VII)
"The Tufted Cemetery" (Chapter II).
"The Wake" (Chapter XVI).
"The Scaffolding" (Chapter XI).
"The Transparent World" (Chapter IX.

The work also satirises Spanish customs and traditions, sexual conservatism and the emerging consumer society. García Pavón uses irony and the grotesque to reinforce his criticism. The censor of the time had already detected the book's "anti-regime intent".





Municipal Tourist Office

Tuesday to Friday: 9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
Saturdays: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
Sundays: 10:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Public holidays: 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m./Mondays: closed

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