

Castellón de la Plana

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be discovered" *Carl Sagan.*

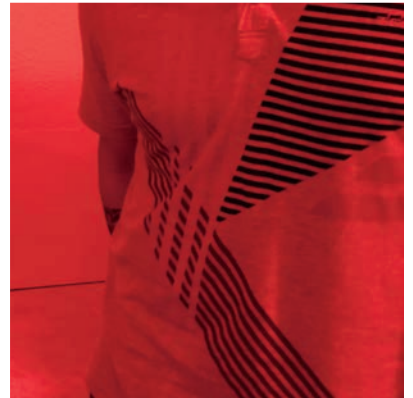
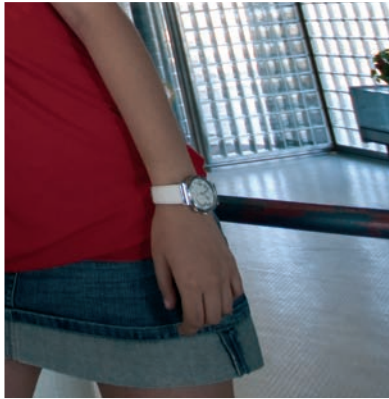
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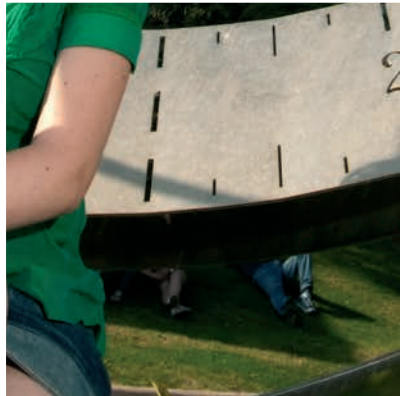
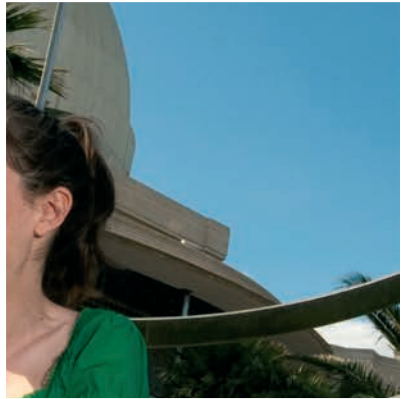


Castellón de la Plana. An unusual city full of details to discover

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Castellón de la Plana, an open-air museum



Castellón de la Plana, a city within reach

Tradition and modernity combine in Castellón de la Plana, capital of Castellón province and fourth largest city, in terms of inhabitants, in the Comunitat Valenciana.

For years the provincial capital has been revitalised and has become a top class tourist destination thanks to its excellent communications with Spain's most important cities, its historic monuments and the privileged climate it boasts.

Moreover, its proximity to the sea makes it an excellent destination, since visitors who go there to get to know it can split their time between its wide-ranging cultural offer and the excellent beaches surrounding it.



Plaza Huerto Sogueros.

Castellón de la Plana was born as a city in the 13th century (1251) thanks to the founding charter granted by the king, Jaime I, in which the inhabitants of the area were allowed to move from the mountainous area where they were living down onto the plains where the city stands to this day. But the history of Castellón did not begin then, since records of older cultures have been found



Caballeros street.

Origins

- Founding: **Jaime I granted the Charter for the move from the hill to the plain**
- Year founded: **1251**
- Official languages: **Spanish and Valencian**

in El Grao, confirming that already some 2,000 years ago there were Iberian settlements there, and subsequently Roman, dedicated to maritime trade in the Mediterranean area. In the 8th century nearly the entire Iberian Peninsula was invaded by Arabs and this area was no exception. Various farmsteads near to the Desert de les Palmes date from that era and were the refuge of the city's founders. In 1233 King Jaime I conquered these parts and liberated their inhabitants from Arab

domination. The conquest and the subsequent key moments for dating the creating of the city of Castellón de la Plana. **The great devotion the people of Castellón feel towards King Jaime I is understandable then, since as well as founding the city he granted a series of privileges in subsequent years, enabling the town to grow and position itself as an outstanding commercial enclave.**

Amongst these privileges, the union of the city

tree an image of the Virgin of Lledó, who became the city's patron saint. In the war of Succession, the positioning of Castellón on the side of the archduke Charles of Austria, vanquished in that conflict by his adversary Philip V, subjected the city during the 17th and 18th centuries to the central Bourbon administration. Already by the 19th century, Castellón de la Plana was experiencing its period of greatest urban growth thanks to the



Arcipreste Balaguer street.

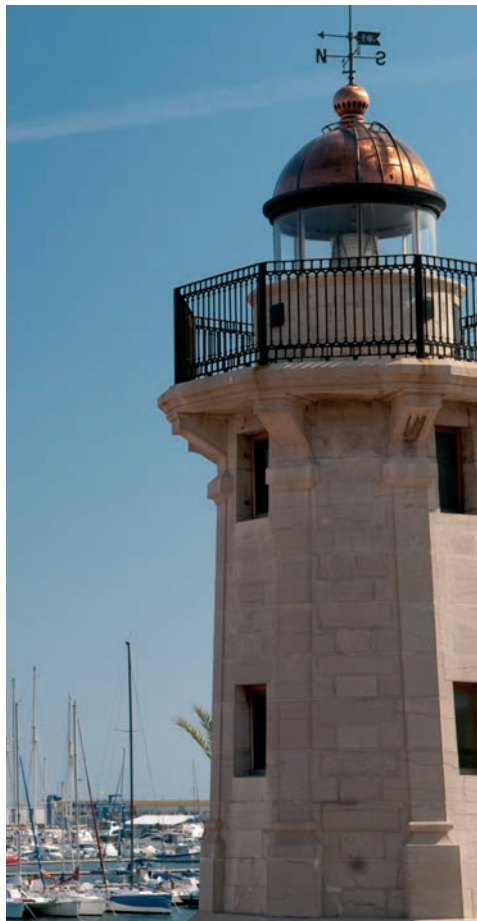
with El Grao turned out to be crucial for achieving the opening up of maritime traffic and the subsequent increase in the city's economic possibilities.

Jaime I's successor, Pedro III – the Great – gave the definitive push in conceding it, in 1284, the faculty of self-government and of having its own municipal organisation. The constant wars between feudal lords, which dominated the Middle Ages, were the direct cause of the city's protection with ditches, walls and towers. The city's co-cathedral dates from this same era. Another date that stands out and is very important for the people of Castellón is 1366, the year when a peasant, Perot de Granyana, while he was working, found under a hackberry

demolition of the city walls that had until that time held the city in a straightjacket. Some of the best-known buildings and infrastructures of the capital date from this period, like the Provincial Hospital, the Old Casino, the Main Theatre and the Ribalta Park. This growth corresponds with a period of economic expansion due to the industrialisation that took place in the area and the commercialisation of hemp, making it necessary to enlarge the port and create some better connections of the city with the port area. The economic, social and cultural change that took place in Castellón de la Plana during these years caused the opening up of the city and its consolidation as the provincial capital and a centre of reference. The

ceramics industry, which in the 21st century is still the province's chief economic resource and one of its identifying marks, was also responsible for the economic growth the region experienced in the 19th century. This sector, along with tourism and agriculture is today one of the city's chief economic resources.

Castellón de la Plana is a perfect place to live and enjoy, since its size makes it convenient, but with a wide-ranging cultural and leisure offer. In addition, it has a typical

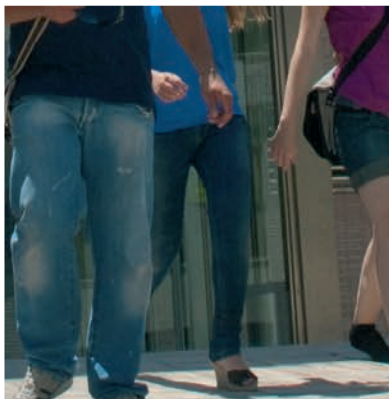
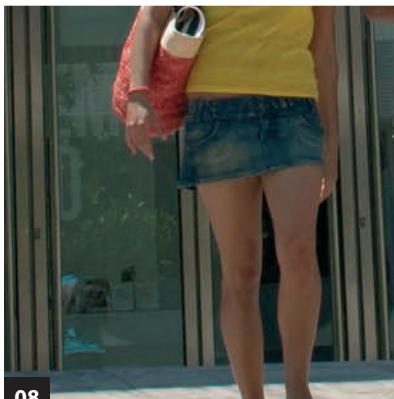
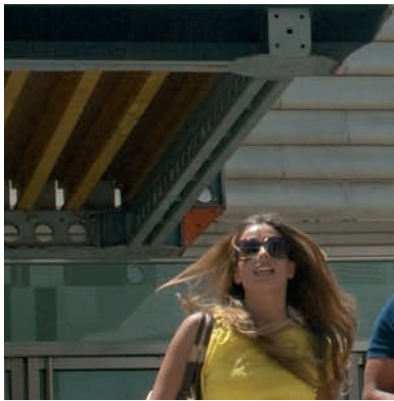


Detail of the lighthouse in the Grao area.

Mediterranean climate with mild winters and hot summers that are alleviated by the sea breeze reaching the city due to its proximity to the sea and keeping the average temperature around 18°C. The quietness of its streets is an invitation to walk around and lose oneself among the historic plazas and alleyways of the historic centre. Passing through the city it is possible to find anything from a beautiful Gothic-Renaissance bell-tower to a modern sculpture by Ripollés, one of Castellón's current artists most renowned internationally and whose amusing works surprise in the most unexpected corner. Culture plays a fundamental role in Castellón's capital and good proof of that are the many places that may be found in the city dedicated to it, as is the case of the Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló (EACC), the Fine Arts Museum and the Planetarium. Moreover, it has an outstanding offer of urban art with close on two hundred sculptures in the streets, making it an authentic open-air museum and which, along with the use of the walls of different buildings as canvases, confer on the city a modern and cosmopolitan air. Four kilometres away from the centre is the district of El Grao, Castellón de la Plana's maritime area with the city's three beaches: Serradal, Pinar and Gurugú. During the last decade, Castellón's Universitat Jaume I, better known as the UJI, has grown considerably, rejuvenating the city and turning it into the destination of thousands of students from Spain and abroad, which has broadened the night-time and leisure offer in Castellón's capital.



Discovering Castellón de la Plana



Itinerary 1

Strolling around the centre



- 1** Plaza mayor (Main square)
- 2** Town Hall
- 3** Co-cathedral of Santa María
- 4** El Fadri
- 5** Central Market

- 6** Lonja del Cáñamo (Hemp Trading Hall)
- 7** Castellón Ethnology Museum
- 8** Puerta del Sol
- 9** Casino Antiguo



Plaza Mayor [Main Square] or Arcipreste Balaguer street.

The urban centre, Mediterranean throb

Main Square

The Plaza Mayor, or Main Square, is the best starting off point for sightseeing around Castellón. This iconic public space is the scene for the city's great events and a dumb witness of the little everyday stories. **Its existence is linked to the foundation of the town itself (1252), although the arrangement of the buildings that form it has been changing over the centuries.** The place currently occupied by the circular fountain at the centre of the plaza was, in the past, the spot where a great laurel tree sent down its roots deep into

the ground, wise custodian of the secrets of Castellón in the past. The fountain took the place of the tree during the makeover of the plaza, but the memory of the earth and the water can still whisper in the ear of the inquisitive visitor the right way to go. The city's epicentre, its naval, the perfect spot from where to capture the Mediterranean throb, the warm light, the rich history treasured in the texture of its stones... So then, let's start the visit from this place. Let's play at letting ourselves be carried along and enjoy spinning round through 360 degrees on the spot. To the spine-tingling dizziness caused by returning to this childish game, is now added the view, almost in movement, of those regarded as the most charismatic buildings of the city, its four excellent letters of presentation. Right now we are ready to stop our spinning and enjoy the first stop on this route that carries us on a journey through the city's heritage.

Town Hall

Let's get to know the headquarters of civic and political life. The former Palau de la Vila, being both town hall and prison, was located on the site currently occupied by the offices of a banking institution, close to the Plaza Mayor. The ruinous condition the old building was in by the mid-17th century moved the town council to seek a new and more worthy site for building the seat of the town's civic power.

After long deliberations and some hesitation, the board appointed to take such an important decision granted permission to start the work. The new building was destined to occupy its present pre-eminent position in place of the four dwellings that made up the block, its walls rising over the same land where, centuries ago, the mortal remains of the local people were laid to rest. **In 1687 the master builder Gil Torralba was entrusted with drawing up the plans, although after two years of interruption to**



A laurel tree used to stand on the spot now occupied by the fountain in the Plaza Mayor.

the works the foundation stone was laid in 1689, the direction of the works falling to the master builders Melchor Serrano, Alcázar, Claret and José Serrano. On 2nd February 1716 the move to the new building was undertaken, under the pressure of the imminent collapse of the old municipal building. Nevertheless, the recently inaugurated town hall would have to wait several decades to rest from the incessant bustle caused by the constant building works, modifications and alterations. Between 1799 and 1806, the prison quarters were extended; years later, in 1843, alterations were made to the assembly hall, redecorating it and adding an



Did you know...?

Castellón de la Plana stands on a plain, although curiously, it is the capital of the second most mountainous province in Spain, after Asturias.

allegorical painting of Castellón city on the ceiling. The final decades of the 19th century were also a constant to-ing and fro-ing of craftsmen working on numerous refurbishments of small and medium range. The 20th century would bring a whirlwind of change and, in the wake of this hurricane of ideas for renewal,



Main façade of the Town Hall.

various works were carried out on the main façade of the building.

The municipal architect Francisco Tomás Traver decided to change the iron railings at the windows for stone balustrades, and he replaced the huge balcony running round the main floor with three separate balconies.

By 1916, the best-known face of the building already looked almost identical to how it is today. After the tumultuous years of the Civil War (1936-1939), the alterations continued. This time action was taken on the sides and the main façade, the balustrade was added to

crown the building and the former iron balconies were replaced taking the place of the stone ones.

The latest alterations to the building were made in the 1950s and '60s, directed by the architect Manuel Romaní Miquel.

Now that we know all the details of how the present building came into being, it is easier to appreciate the life history enshrined in each of its stones. Its serene elegant look is that of the wise elder observing, advising, protecting the local people and visitors passing before its constant gaze.

We pause before it, passing our eyes over its history as it whispers to us of the infinite moments it has witnessed. Resuming our journey now, we enjoy the next stop on this itinerary that leads us to discover, step by step, the heritage of the capital of la Plana.

Situated just a stone's throw from the town hall, although separated from it by the passage of several centuries of history, what was for over six centuries the town's only parish church awaits us.





The arch of the Co-cathedral represents an outstanding example of the Gothic style.

Co-cathedral of St Mary Major

Also called the church of St Mary Major, it was planned towards the end of the 13th century (1288) following the scheme of the church of the same name in Sagunto. **However, this early building enjoyed a very short life, being devastated by a spectacular fire that left it totally ruined.** The town council took the decision to provide the town with a new Major

Church, essential as the parish centre, a meeting place for the faithful, the town's liturgical seat and an identifying element for the emerging city. The new church was built ex novo during the course of a century and a half but nevertheless, between its new walls part of that short-lived 13th century church lived on. Its masonry, the stone, the bones of that ephemeral building were reused for the new work, thus granting them a unique chance of enduring through time.



North door, in the Plaza de la Hierba (15th century).

Did you know...?

The Co-cathedral of St Mary conserves valuable pieces of gold and silverwork. The complete north face and part of the other two remain from the Gothic era. It also conserves a painting by Ribalta and a carving by Vergara.

The new church was consecrated on 3rd March 1549. Elegant and restrained, the sense of a single space and the functionality of its forms predominating, its style responds to the architectural characteristics proper to the particular Gothic style that extended through the domains of the Crown of Aragon during the

14th and 15th centuries. The floor plan was of one single nave divided into five sections, a pentagonal apse with two side chapels and a central one for the choir, as well as chapels between the buttresses, covered with cross vaulting over the nave sections and star vault over the apse.

The church had three façades: two side ones, situated on the third section of the nave, and another on the main façade, these along with some nails being the only elements conserved in the rebuilding.

As the centuries passed, the building was enriched with a series of alteration and additional building works, amongst which the Communion Chapel stands out, erected by Juan Ibáñez between 1662 and 1670. The 19th century also left its mark clearly on the Co-cathedral, being the subject of a redecoration that included the execution of a new painting in romantic-gothic taste, with simple antiquated colouring, proper to the artistic trends of the dawn of the 1900s.

While the fire of the 13th century checked the durability of such an iconic place of worship, the early decades of the 20th century had an even greater shock in store: the church was demolished by a municipal



agreement on 17th November 1936.

The church almost disappeared entirely, part of its masonry being reused in the building of the basement of the municipal abattoir.

After four years of demolition and abandonment, a new project, entrusted to the architect Tomás Traver in 1940, motivated the rescue of the building, following the lines of the almost disappeared church and taking as its starting off point the composition of its main façade, which despite everything remained standing. In 1960, the new church took the rank of co-cathedral with the creation of the Segorbe-Castellón diocese, and from that time has been the subject of continual rebuilding works, which have been interrupted and resumed on various occasions during recent decades. In 2005, the work on the exterior fabric



North door of the Co-cathedral (15th century). Plaza de la Hierba.

of the building has finished and its roof has been completed, along with cathedral dependencies, clerical dwellings and parochial dependencies accessed from Arcipreste Balaguer street. **In its over 600 years of life, it has seen the town's growth into a provincial capital city,**



The windows of the Co-cathedral were restored in 2008 by Carlos Muñoz de Pablos.



Did you know...?

El Fadrí is a free-standing bell-tower built next to the Co-cathedral of St Mary, since it is owned by the municipality, while the church is not.

witnessing the small late mediaeval town evolve into the city growing into the 21st century. It has wept at funerals and applauded joyous ceremonies; suffered bitter times of decline and reborn slowly, year after year, stone on stone.

And together with its ancient masonry has been worth the trouble of enjoying its presence, sensing the austere and peaceful atmosphere while we direct our eyes towards its faithful companion.

El Fadrí bell-tower

At its feet we feel dwarfed, beside it we pass from the road to the market. It listens inquisitively when we stop to chat in its shadow, and looks elegant on the grand or festive days of the year. It may certainly be regarded as the city's symbol, the icon that

El Fadrí is one of the most representative monuments of the city.



El Fadri tower.

represents it, its handsome waiter eternally single, its Fadri, the fine upstanding bell-tower that wants to be the centre of attention of the countless gazes and praises.

It was in 1437 that the Castellón town council decided it was necessary to build a bell-tower in the city. The population was on the increase, slowly but surely, and its church of St Mary Major, would soon need to have a companion nearby. The works began in a modest way in 1440, receiving a strong boost years later,

under the direction of the master mason Saera. By 1459, the bell-tower had grown to the height of its first level, and yet, just when it was eight metres from the ground, the master mason left the city, leaving the works in a lazy lethargy of over a hundred years. The works were resumed in March 1591, under the new direction of the Portuguese, Damián Méndez, resident in Valencia, who together with two master masons had to continue the building of the bell-tower. However some discrepancies



In addition to its bells, the building has various dependences like the Clock Hall.

in the execution of the works pushed the council to terminate the contract. A new stoppage of the works held up progress on the tower for a time, until the legal proceedings had been resolved, the order for payment of the project went to the offer presented jointly by six master masons.

Francisco Galiança de la Lancha, Pedro Crosali, Marc Volsanys y Antoni and Joan Saura brought the work on the bell-tower to a happy conclusion in 1604, precisely as shown on the commemorative plaque above the lintel of its doorway.

Once the architectural work was finished the bells were immediately hung and then in the following century, in 1735 the peculiar triangular shaped capital was added to crown

the top, giving Castellón city its characteristic profile. Simple and bare of ornamentation, the belfry houses the bells Ángel, María, Vicente, Jaime, Dolores, Victoria, Cristina and Joaquina; and on its pinnacle, at its highest point, the weathervane in the shape of a lion crowns the capital that protects the noble Cristóbal, the bell that chimes the hours, and also housing the lesser bells Ana and Lledó. Standing 58 metres tall on an octagonal base, a steep circular stairway winds its way up through the four levels, enabling access to the remotest corners. The clock chamber, the ecclesiastical cells, the bell-ringer's dwelling and the belfry itself guard in silence the secrets of those who passed through there in past centuries. Its doors open for us to have a look around inside,



Triangular capital that crowns El Fadri.

Did you know...?

Wandering around the streets of Castellón de la Plana is like looking around an open-air museum. Over two hundred sculptures deck the city and turn a simple walk into an enriching visual experience.



catching a fleeting glimpse of its treasures, giving a bird's eye view for an instant and making us believe we can win the race against time. Previously access was only on the Bank Holiday Monday of the city's Magdalene festive week, now it is possible to enter the tower from Monday to Friday on non-festive days at noon. It is a good idea to arrange a visit by calling Tel: 964 227 556... The rest of the year it remains closed, sealed, impassable. Because the timeless solitary gentleman likes to be looked at and have all have his height admired, as he keeps watch over those who approach, made to feel insignificant, down there... on the ground.

Central Market

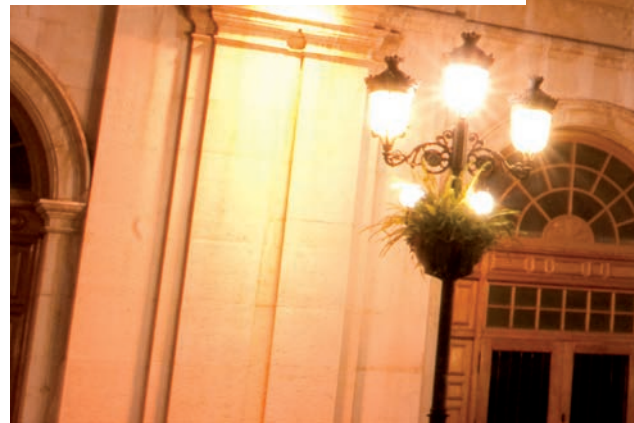
Colourful, noisy, fun, surprising, the market becomes our next obligatory stop, a box of surprises that will help us understand the Mediterranean and extrovert character of the city we are visiting.

We start to get to know it with all five senses, calmly, unhurried. Let us be carried along by the

dance of colours, flavours, textures and aromas that mingle at its stalls, placing within easy reach the best products of the earth, the market gardens and the Mediterranean sea.

The Central Market is the place for meeting up, chatting, passing through. Between its walls the mechanical anonymous hurly burly of the hypermarket is left behind and we return to the flavour of commerce from past times.

It offers us the close greeting, the exchange of delicious recipes, the meeting between neighbours. It offers the chance to watch the



Central Market.

show from the stalls or become players in the cheerful bustle of the daily routine. The warm, friendly, jolly atmosphere of the market spreads out to the adjacent streets too.

The throb of the city steps up its rhythm in these streets and plazas, busy day and night, full of local people on their way to or from work, local traders, older folk and youngsters passing through, students and visitors.

Whether morning or evening, winter or summer, a visit to the centre must be completed with a stop at the terraces crammed onto the plaza Santa Clara and the nearby plaza de la Pescadería.

Having lunch under the warm sun of a winter

morning, drinking a cool fresh horchata [tigernut milk] as a summer snack and having *tapas* in the alleyways packed with cheap bars, are some of the sane customs that we should not pass by without trying, whether we are residents of the area or come from elsewhere to get to know this city.

The heart of the town, the starting off point for our sightseeing, the peculiar space described by the town hall, church, bell-tower and market. A solemn place and at the same time calm, where everyday stories are interwoven in the warmth of the four buildings that reflect the essence of the present city and the memory of the past Castellón.





Sculpture: Mano de pilotari (by Manolo Boix).

From mediaeval Castellón to the commercial heart of the present city

Caballeros street

Our tour of the city continues along the streets Caballeros and Colón, pedestrian thoroughfares that take as their starting off point the Plaza Mayor and stretch out to the north and west respectively.

It is a pleasant and peaceful walk thanks to the ongoing restriction to vehicles implemented in recent years, an initiative that has made it possible to successfully achieve a historic town centre with less noise and perfect for being discovered at walking pace.

Caballeros street draws a straight line north from the Plaza Mayor to reach the Plaza de las Aulas at its other end, a space where the building that houses the Provincial Council stands. We find

ourselves on one of the oldest streets, one of the arteries that have carried traffic through the town's life since the time of its founding on the plains in the second half of the 13th century. Its name, "gentlemen" or "knights" recalls the noble lineage of those that lived there and, despite the city's years of vertical growth scarcely favouring the conservation of beautiful buildings, recent efforts to rescue the architectural heritage have returned the splendour of some gems that we will go on to visit now.

Right on the corner of the crossroads with Colón street, previously Zapateros, and the aforementioned Caballeros street, stands the recently restored building of La Lonja del Cádiz [Hemp Trading Hall].

It is enough to cast a fleeting glance over its walls to guess the bustling and particular history of life suffered by what is currently the headquarters of the Universitat Jaume I de Castelló.



One of the most beautiful features of the Lonja del Cádiz is the *Alegria de Oilet* with motifs from Pompeii.

La Lonja

The building work on the Fadrí had finished in 1604, when the town council decided to purchase the house sited on the aforementioned corner with the intention of pulling it down. The new open space would be destined to carrying out commercial and trading activities, the most important being the Monday market, which had been held in Castellón since 1312. However, a year later and the demolition works already begun, the proposal gained strength to erect a covered arcade for the sale of fruit, following the urban trend of building these "lonjas" that was spreading through other Spanish cities like Valencia or Zaragoza.

The building works were started in 1606 and continued until 1617, due to the grave economic crisis caused by the expulsion of the Moors decreed in 1609.

The original market building, designed by Francisco Galiança in renaissance style, had just

one body with two façades opening onto the streets Zapateros (now Colón) and Caballeros respectively.

The large arches resting on Etruscan columns that can be admired nowadays date from this early stage of the building's life, forming a large public space open to the exterior with an arcade sheltering the fruit market and most importantly, housing all the trading activity of the highly-prized and indispensable hemp.

In 1792 this municipal property, in a ruinous state, was sold to the French trader Joan de Matheu, in return for his commitment to maintain the building and the right to raise an upper storey.

The new property is made up of the dwellings next-door to the dependencies of the upper floor and, in this way, the building acquires its peculiar characteristic: the first floor is a family dwelling built in late Baroque style and privately owned, while the ground floor is owned by the municipality and is for public use.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the city needed a large space for trading, so the town council decided to sell the Lonja to a private buyer in 1906, intending to build a larger building for commercial activity.

At that time the penultimate architectural and pictorial intervention was carried out on the building. The ground floor arches were closed in and a mezzanine floor was constructed, at the same time as the new mural decoration was entrusted to the brush of the well-known painter Vicente Castell. The property suffered a sad process of degradation during the 20th century, despite its being declared a historic-artistic monument in 1984.

A light at the end of the tunnel of abandonment has granted the building a new opportunity. La Universitat Jaume I, created as an institution in 1991, acquired La Lonja in 1999 with the intention of rescuing it and giving it a new use: converting it into an urban centre, the perfect meeting place for holding courses, exhibitions and conferences right in the heart of the city. Thanks to that,



and the skilful project for rehabilitating the building, the centuries-old Lonja del C namo has managed to reach the present day displaying an excellent appearance which both respects and integrates the legacy of its past history.

Its open arcade welcomes us at the crossroads of two streets that open the way to the heart of the old town, while its modern installations provide an encounter with the culture and intellectual buzz of the capital of la Plana.



The Lonja del C namo is classified as being of cultural interest and figures in the Inventory of Valencian Cultural Heritage.

Museu d'Etnologia de Castellón

The tour continues along Caballeros street. Just a stone's throw from the Lonja del Cádiz, a little over a minute's walk away, an elegant stately home from the 18th century invites us to cross its threshold and venture inside on a journey back into the past.

The house of the Matutanos, currently the city's Ethnology Museum, encloses within its solid walls the structure of a typical 18th century house of Castellón's nobility: a spacious vestibule onto which various rooms open, a main staircase which links the two storeys and a generous interior patio in its rear part. Spaces inhabited by the Escalona family and later the Matutano family, which were subdivided as time went by and were resold as multi-family dwellings.

From 1931, the Castellón Cultural Society had its headquarters here and, on 21st December 1932 outstanding representatives of various Valencian organisations met around its grand table.

On that date the bases for the unification of Valencian spelling were agreed on and approved, better known as the Normes de Castelló or Normes del 32, a legal instrument codifying the spelling of the official language of the Comunitat Valenciana. In 1978, the Provincial Council acquired the ownership of the building to set up the Fine Arts Museum, until its transfer to the current location on the Hermanos Bou avenue, in 2001.

When the latest refurbishment of the building had been completed in 2007, the noble house was converted into the premises of the Castellón Ethnology Museum, the institution that inherited the collection kept until then at the Ermita de Sant Jaume de Fadrell.

The collection of items that may be viewed is the result of generous donations by numerous local people of the city and its farming societies which,



Ethnology Museum.

thanks to their interest and concern allow us to know the traditions and ways of life of former times, very different in appearance although not so far distant. From the entrance doors inwards, the museum invites us to let the imagination fly, bringing back memories and entering into the daily round of our forebears.

Going around its rooms we discover the urban and rural trades and occupations, country implements, clothing and outfits, methods of cultivation, intimate and domestic spaces, popular festivities, traditions, rituals and even perhaps the tiny secrets of the everyday world. After the visit to the museum, it is well worth giving ourselves a few minutes peaceful wandering down the quiet Caballeros street; despite its historic importance, this iconic thoroughfare was not able to escape the phenomenon of the densification of the old town centre which took place in the Castellón of the '60s.

Nevertheless, some central dwellings were more fortunate and have remained standing until our times, helping us to imagine and understand the way this part of the city must have looked in past times. Among some interesting examples we find the Casa Gasset (1910-1911), which occupies number 47 of Caballeros street.



Detail of ceramic pieces in the form of fish-scales.

It is a good example of eclectic cosmopolitan building, proper to the trends of the early 20th century.

Its architect, Francisco Tomás Traver, incorporated some extremely interesting decorative motifs into this two-storey dwelling. Notable is the ornamental element of the ventilation strip of the roof formed by a piece with a central oculus or circular window and a semicircular crown to finish the ends.

Modernist touches are displayed in the tiny friezes decorated with colourful ceramic tiles over all the openings and underneath the six windows of the upper floor, without forgetting the tiny delicate pieces like fish scales and leaf motifs covering the panel of the first and second floors.

Isabel Ferrer street

We continue our tour wandering around the quiet streets that preserve the historic flavour and personality of the city centre. As we pass we find tiny shops and fancy little restaurants offering careful attention and recipes combining the Mediterranean flavour with touches of painstaking originality.

The close atmosphere that is breathed in the area could be the perfect seasoning for having lunch or supper at an agreeable establishment and

gathering strength before continuing on our way. It is pleasant losing oneself amongst the alleyways that cross what was originally the first walled enclosure of the town: barely 18 hectares that made up the space between the Plaza del Rey to the west, the streets Clavé and San Luis to the north, and Gobernador and Gasset to the east and south, respectively.

In this area numerous one- or two-storey dwellings have remained standing and, thanks to the good taste and initiative of the locals, they are gradually recuperating their former neighbourhood feel.

It is becoming more and more frequent to find the façades decorated as in the olden days, with their balconies and doors displaying decorative pieces and flower-filled plant troughs. A new sensitivity is at work in the centre encouraging its recuperation as a characterful city centre, as the ancient origin of the city that grew from the mediaeval transplant into the Castellón we know today. Crossing the streets Isabel Ferrer and Cervantes it will prove to be a wisely chosen itinerary, in order to reach, in a few minutes, the streets Enmedio and Colón, much busier and noisier thoroughfares due to their abundance of shops and businesses.

As we pass we can look at the careful window displays of small craft shops, agreeable cafés, traditional baker's and a few unusual shops of curios and antiques and traditional clothing, displaying in their windows such beloved and valuable items that it is almost impossible not to pause and take an inquisitive look for a few minutes. Narrow, charismatic streets, where the neighbours still greet each other and chat, preserving that familiar close-knit character.

Streets that sleep and wake up at a slow pace, they welcome us generously and

recall what was the scene of loves and hates, chance encounters and business, lives now anonymous that resided in them in past times...

Warmth of familiarity that makes us feel at home as we pass between houses whose hearths years ago cooked the delicacies of the rich, the soups of the poor, a mosaic of mingled aromas dating from the times when those streets were peopled by Moors, Jews and Christians alike.



Cervantes street.

Enmedio street

The city was barely twenty years old after its transfer and re-founding on the plain (1251) when it recalled the demolition of the walls that protected the population on the west to build a new defensive enclosure on what is now the Avenida del Rey Don Jaime.

This displacement of the city wall to the west enabled the proliferation of new quarters that put up their dwellings based around two parallel axes: two new streets which, taking the already existing Mayor street as their reference, were





Enmedio street.

Fairly busy during the week and completely crowded on Saturdays and festive days, the central shopping district par excellence since the best known fashion firms have their headquarters here, as well as accessories shops and shoe shops.

named as “carrer d’Enmig”, and “carrer d’Amunt”, or “Enmedio” [middle] street and “de Arriba” [upper] street (now Alloza), respectively. Undoubtedly, the people of Castellón in the 13th century could presume to have at their disposal an overwhelming logic when it came to deciding on the place names of their burgeoning city.

The passing of eight centuries of history has left its scars in the appearance of this much-loved street. Flanked in the past by low-rise dwellings, its present profile is that of the greatly contrasting heights characteristic of the city centre.

Maybe the outward appearance has changed, but the lively atmosphere that is breathed from its northern end as far as its southern end at the Puerta del Sol, has remained unaltered through time.

Older folk recall how chitchat and gossip were exchanged between neighbours there while others would be on the lookout for the opportune careless moment to launch a barefaced flirtatious compliment, receiving a furtive smile as a prize.

Clandestine glances between lads and lasses, mature serenity in the steps of the elderly, longings for a better future colouring the

dreams of young servant girls, whilst better-off young men used this street to flaunt their enviable wealth.

Sunday evenings arm in arm, sauntering and socialising, when the most important thing was to look at each other and look again, and in passing, to be seen. A pedestrian area, perfect for losing oneself browsing amongst shop windows or just taking a turn around, without forgetting that “in the middle” street, can offer us much more than that.

In the distance between one shop and the next, or perhaps after having a good coffee, it is worth discovering the architectural heritage that has survived time.

Don't miss seeing...

Church of Sant Miquel

c/ Enmedio, 17

Caja Castellón Exhibition Centre

The building of this church began in the second half of the 17th century, coinciding with an economic boom time and an increase in the city's population.

In May 1679 St Michael's Brotherhood of Labourers requested the Council to grant them the site with the intention of raising on it a chapel in honour of the Archangel St Michael.

After several decades of works with some periodic interruptions, the date etched over the entrance door to the sacristy recalls that 1725 was the year when the work was finished and the moment when the first mass was celebrated in that place of worship.

The period of French domination left its mark on the history of this chapel, losing its sacred nature

from 1812 to 1913, and being turned into a prison and stable after having been secularised. Once this tumultuous period was over, some improvements were made in the chapel, the most notable being the fitting of the present chancel in 1881 and the renovation in 1900 of the black and white paving, which remains to this day.

The church was used for worship uninterruptedly from 1913 until 1936, in spite of it being attempted in 1931 to use it as the Law Courts.

In the years following the Civil War, coinciding with the reconstruction works of the battered Church of St Mary, the church of Sant Miquel was reopened to worship and some restoration works were carried out.

Nevertheless, its doors were closed again during the 1970s, which served as a pretext for the Castellón bishopric to try to sell it, arguing its disuse and scant artistic value.

The small chapel dedicated to Sant Miquel was even used as a warehouse, plunging it into a

progressive and lamentable state of decay. In 1987, its road to ruin was halted when it was acquired by the Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de Castellón, the predecessor of the present day Bankia savings bank.

After a healthy restoration process, the church of Sant Miquel has recovered its privileged place at the heart of Castellón, taking in excellent art collections thanks to its new function as an exhibition hall.

Casa Forés (1923-1926)

c/ Enmedio, 53

Property of five floors undertaken by the famous Castellón architect Francisco Tomàs Traver, between 1923 and 1926. The exceptional design of the dwelling shows the influence of academic classicism and of the Barcelona Universal Exhibition of 1888. The façade of Casa Forés is composed over a marked verticality, broken in its upper part by the gaps between pilasters that open up onto the final floor.

The magnificent sculpture on a pedestal stands out, representing Mercury, god of

Details of buildings, Enmedio street.





commerce and eloquence in Roman mythology.

Unfortunately, the building situated right opposite has not survived to the present day. Had it been otherwise, we could have contemplated the beautiful statue of Minerva, goddess of wisdom, the arts and war, presiding, majestic and serene, over the property's façade.

Casa dels Quatre Cantons (1924 -1925) c/ Enmedio, 59

Number 59 on Enmedio street, currently the commercial office of an important fashion firm, is another excellent demonstration of unusual architecture in the city centre. The dwelling, known as Casa dels Quatre Cantons (house of the four corners), expresses the personal tastes of its owners, the influential family from Seville that had it built in the 1920s. The design of the



façade combines elements extracted from the Andalusian culture with others that respond to historic codes reminiscent of renaissance, Baroque and floral gothic. Undoubtedly, the beautifying element is the ceramic tiles that currently display a good state of conservation thanks to the rehabilitation of the building undertaken a few years ago.

Casa García-Petit (1897) c/ Enmedio, 85

Late 19th century house, in which the predominating vertical sense of the façade is appreciated, its windows diminishing in proportion to the height of each floor. The wooden glazed balcony on the chamfered corner, added in the 1920s, and the triangular fronton crowning the top floor, decorated with scrolls and acanthus leaves on the tympanus, confer great beauty on the building.

Casa Giner (1897) c/ Enmedio, 87

Built in 1897, under the design and direction of Vicent Cerdà, the careful design of each of its features adds an element of surprise: the delicate sgraffito work, the balcony railings and the framing of the spaces on the second floor with curved frontons and columns. **The lovely building boasts an excellent state of conservation thanks to the rehabilitation carried out in 1986 by the architect Xavier Batalla López, work that won him the Comunitat Valenciana Architecture Prize in 1987.**



A large number of shops for enjoying Castellón's life. Colón street.

Colón street

Our sightseeing continues along the most charismatic thoroughfares of Castellón de la Plana, the ones that have made up the city's layout since its earliest days of existence.

The present day Colón street formed a part of the original town, although its first inhabitants in the 13th century knew it as Sabaters (Zapateros) [cobblers] street, a clear allusion to the footwear craftsmen's guild that had its headquarters there.

At the beginning of the 20th century the name "zapateros" was replaced by that of Colón [Columbus], as a tribute to the discoverer of the Americas.

The thoroughfare retained its original cobblestones until a few years ago, a peculiarity that gave it a genuine and elegant appearance. However, the original paving was replaced by a new red shade, conferring greater uniformity to the whole pedestrianised historic centre.

Despite this change of image, the street continues to maintain its particular charm, inviting us to wander through it amidst the bustle of its shops during the day, and even at night when silence reigns over the city and the artificial lighting enables us to discover new details and subtleties.

In this street we find some shops selling a variety of delicious foodstuffs: wines, cheeses, seasonings and sausage-type preserved meats,

recommended for the more select and discerning palates. There is also a notable presence from the textile, clothing and footwear sectors, businesses whose activity maintains the memory of the traditional trade so strongly linked with Castellón's history. To complete our tour around the historic centre and the area of shops, we will head for Alloza and Enmedio streets, without missing out the interesting architecture of some of the buildings flanking the straight line traced by Colón street.

Don't miss seeing...

Casa Navarro (1919-1920)

c/ Colón, 55 (on the corner with Alloza street)

Situated at one of the liveliest spots of the commercial area, this dwelling, built in the 1920s, was designed to meet the dual function of being a shop in its ground floor and a dwelling above.

It is an eclectic building with some neo-Gothic and historicist touches, with its façade making a feature of the elegant glazed balcony occupying the chamfered corner on the first floor.

Undoubtedly a privileged spot from which its owners could observe the hustle and bustle of the passers-by in the street below going out to do their shopping, taking a stroll or simply admiring the carefully arranged window displays of this area.



Bow-window on the corner of the Navarro house.

Casa Segarra–Bernat (late 19th century)

This is a small building of dwellings between party walls, designed by the architect Francisco Tomás Traver towards the end of the 19th century. He used an eclectic style in this building, with details in the ornamentation that connect with the Imperial style and French architecture of the second half of the 19th century. The exterior is dominated by the wooden glazed balcony of the main storey and the framework of the attic's façade, with a "Borrominesque" frontage that opens in the centre to reveal the window.

Alloza street

Passing along Alloza street will serve to complete our tour around the most commercial and central streets of Castellón.

A pedestrianised historic centre ideally suited to covering all the distances on foot, by bicycle

or tram and allowing us to go at our own pace and decide how long to spend on each visit.

The old street of Arriba, the "carrer d'Amunt", came into being as a result of the urban layout being extended twenty years after the population settled on the plain.

As we already saw previously, the streets named "Enmedio" [in the middle] and "d'Amunt" or "Arriba" [upper/above] grew up as from 1271.

Some Castellón folk still know them by their former names, despite this street being dedicated to the distinguished engineer Leandro Alloza, named "Favoured Son of the City" in 1882 for his part in the blueprint for the construction of the port.

It is curious that the street presents quite a different atmosphere in each of its two halves. From the junction with Colón street, formerly Sabaters, to its southern end, there are plenty of shops, especially for gifts, accessories and fashion.

Whereas the northern half of the street, up to where it comes out at the Plaza de Clavé, displays a more peaceful and quieter atmosphere, with just the bustle here and there of one or two shops and various cafés and pubs decorated with excellent taste, which well deserve making a pause on our way if we are visiting these streets in the evening or at night. The same as its neighbours Colón, Enmedio and other adjacent streets, Alloza follows a straight line, enclosed by the tall dwellings built in the demographic boom of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. The effect of walking through such narrow streets, flanked by disproportionately large buildings, makes us forget at times that between these modern buildings there are others of great beauty and architectural peculiarity, which we must learn to rediscover.



Don't miss seeing...

Casa Fabra (1918-1923)

c/ Alloza, 109

A building contained within the eclectic trend and carried out by the architect Manuel Montesinos Arlandis. It is composed according to two vertical axes, except for the ground floor, recently modified, which opens the only space that occupies nearly the entire façade. The straight balconies, occupying the spaces in the façade and on the first floor are noteworthy, and our attention is attracted by the glazed balcony, slightly chamfered and decorative shapes to the timbers and ironwork.

Casa Pardo (1915)

c/ Alloza, 130

A building made up of ground floor and two upper floors in a style that could be included in the Valencian modernist trend. The design of the façade is characterised by the predominance of symmetry, around a central downward axis and by the marked verticality, broken only by the balcony running along the first floor. Some decorative elements, like the railings, the shapes of the entrance door and the green coloured ceramic tiles embellish the house with clear allusions to Valencian modernism.

Church of St Nicholas

c/ Alloza, 143

A small place of worship set on the site where, according to tradition, the old mosque of the mediaeval city stood. The first news of Christian mass being celebrated in this place goes back to 1536, although the present day appearance of the church is the result of

successive alterations carried out from the 16th century up to the 20th. The side chapels date from the 17th century (1686), while the enlargement of the sacristy and the house of the recluse priest correspond to 1736 and 1780, respectively.

At the beginning of the 19th century the sculptural work of the larger reredos was contracted (1806) and a little later, in 1828, the present façade was put up, as indicated on the inscription over the lintel of the doorway.

The church of St Nicholas was even used as a Masonic Lodge from 1932 until 1938, although it was reconciled with the church after that, and a while later some new alterations were undertaken, perhaps with the aim of obliterating all that might recall the Masonic cult. Already by the 1980s, the whole of the interior had been gilded and painted.

This building, of popular architecture at the outset, has suffered successive alterations, adopting by this means the architectural forms and fashions of the different eras in which it was modified. Every 6th December, on the feast day of San Nicolás de Bari, High Mass is celebrated, accompanied by the joyous chanting. If you happen to be in the city on this day, it is well worth paying a visit, not only to see the religious rituals, but also to enjoy the more popular and traditional aspect of the festivity: popular serenades being sung and noisy firecrackers and rockets being set off, a perfect soundtrack for tasting the delicious blessed breads that the street neighbours prepare according to an ancient recipe and generously share with all those who attend.



Did you know...?

The Puerta del Sol is where hundreds of Castellón folk choose to eat the twelve grapes every 31st December to see the New Year in.

Puerta del Sol

An elm tree used to provide shade and give a welcome to those entering the mediaeval walled enclosure by the portal situated at the southern end of Enmedio street.

La Puerta del Sol, which used to be named the Portal de l'Om [of the elm], is nowadays a busy commercial and business area, at the same time as being the scene of important moments in the city's public and collective life.

An elegant backdrop for the procession of the Three Kings on horseback for Epiphany and the street parades and marching bands for the Magdalene festivals. We find ourselves at the former meeting point of the numerous roads and highways coming from the towns and villages situated to the south of the city. The passing traffic of travellers and traders caused numerous wayside inns, hotels and cafés to proliferate, while beautiful buildings were built to

house financial and cultural institutions. Such is the case of the Banco de Castellón, a lovely construction designed by the architect Francisco Tomás Traver at the request of the city's Círculo Mercantil. That entity acquired the site previously occupied by the Posada del Ferrocarril [Railway Inn] to put up its banking headquarters in 1923. It is an eclectic style building, integrating classicist elements with others proper to the modernist trend prevailing at the time of its construction. Unfortunately, some of the decorative motifs were obliterated in subsequent alterations, although others were fortunately preserved, like the characteristic clock that crowns the chamfer of the fourth floor. To this day it retains its merchant banking function.

Casino Antiguo

At number one of the Puerta del Sol stands a building of notable beauty, an indispensable architectural gem that gives this corner of the city the privilege of being the centre of elegance and distinction, the Old Casino.

The city's first casino was originally located on Caballeros street, after it was set up as an entity in 1814 by the Baron of Benicàssim.

After a few years set on the four corners (junction of Enmedio and Colón streets), it was moved to the Palacio de los Tirado, which it occupies at present. That palace stood on the outer face of the city wall from the mid-17th century, but the lack of functionality of its original form led to a competition being held for designs to make alterations to the building in

1922. The architects Francesc Maristan and Joaquin Moragas, entrusted with this work, proposed a new interior layout while achieving the elegant appearance the exterior displays today. Outstanding amongst their contributions are the refurbishment of the two façades, the decoration of the ballroom, and the construction of the rectangular tower on the second floor, of eclectic lines and a touch of inspiration from the Salamanca "plateresque" [of silversmithing] style.

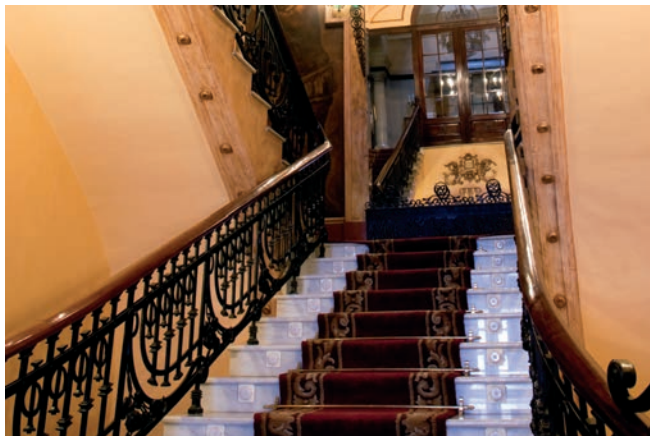
After the Civil War, in 1948 one of the ballrooms was pulled down due to problems in the foundations and some spaces were redecorated by the firm of Mariano García.

Towards the end of the '60s a general makeover, directed by the architect Vives, was undertaken and included an extension to the building. It is fun to make an imaginary trip back in time to a past of luxury soirées at the Casino Antiguo. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the crème and flower of genteel society, showing off their best finery, hairdos and jewellery, to the rhythm marked by the musicians. Endless stories and secrets, love affairs and business deals took place behind its

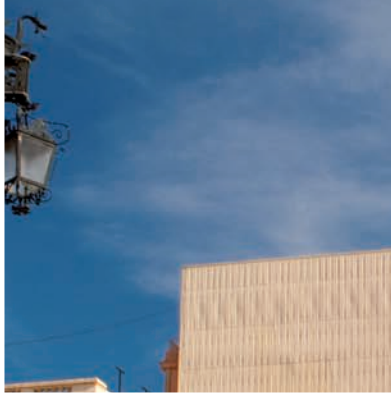
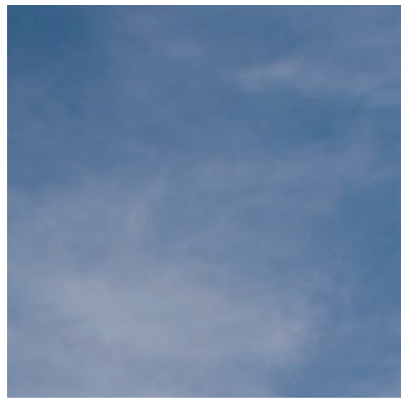
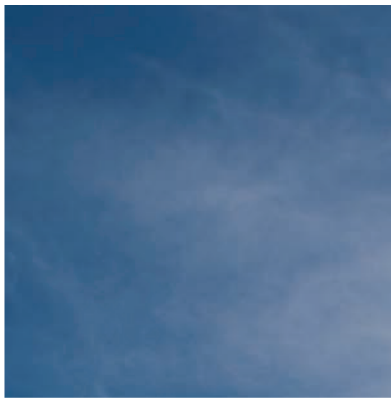


doors, swathed in the scent of expensive perfumes.

It has currently stopped being a closed and exclusive club, to become a pleasant place for cultural and culinary gatherings. The Casino Antiguo is open to all-comers to enjoy an exquisite programme of jazz and blues concerts, conferences or debates in its salons and garden. Intensive cultural activity that may be accompanied by good cooking served in its salons daily.



The Casino forms part of the cultural life with interesting series of jazz and blues.

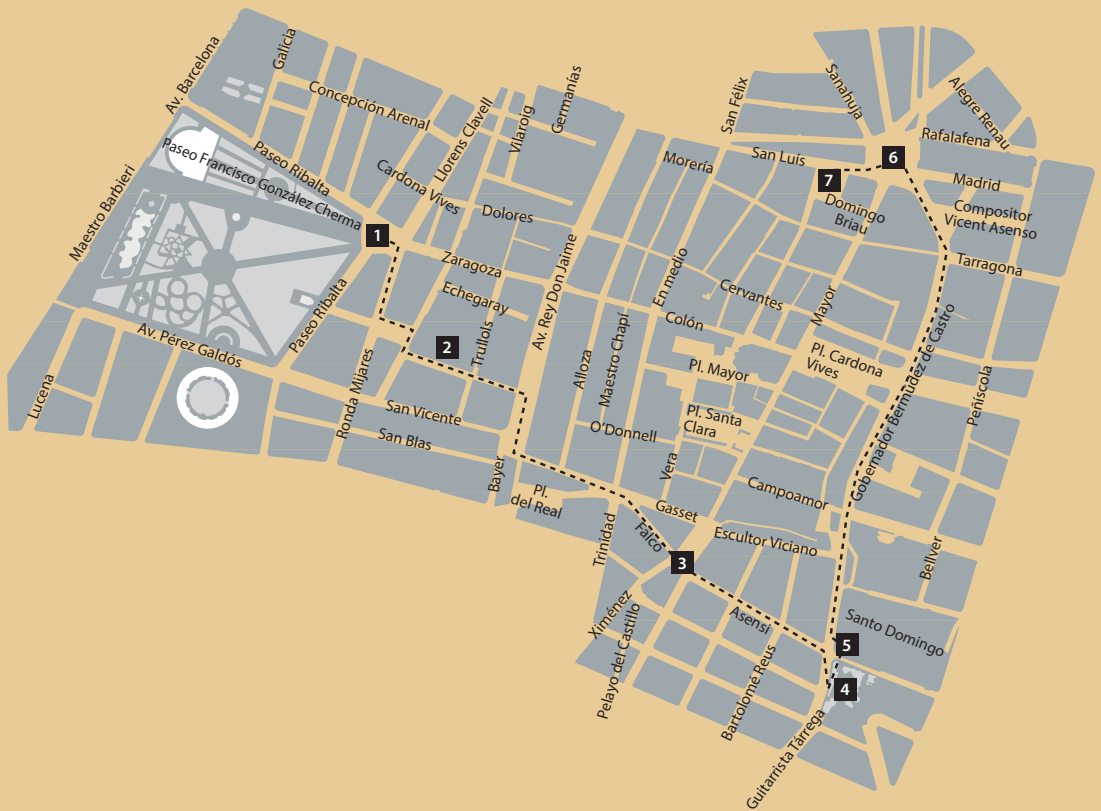


Charming streets



Itinerary 2

Route around the plazas



1 Plaza Independencia

2 Plaza Huerto Sogueros

3 Plaza La Paz

4 Plaza Fadrell

5 Plaza Na Violant

6 Plaza María Agustina

7 Plaza las Aulas



Rey Don Jaime avenue.

The heart of the city

We will follow a circular route that will take us through the most iconic plazas of Castellón city. A route that goes around the old town centre and will allow us to explore its most unusual corners.

Plaza Huerto Sogueros

Just a few steps from the Plaza de la Independencia we find this pedestrian plaza in which the sculpture *Les Cordeliers* by Juan Ripollés particularly stands out.

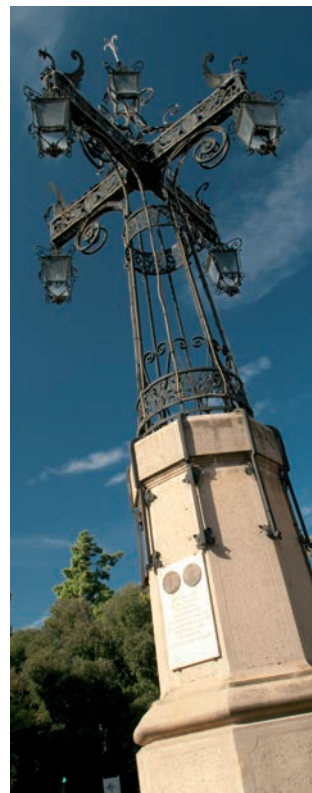
The plaza is constructed over a place where hemp was grown, former driving force of the city's economy.

On the basis of the hemp, a powerful manufacturing industry grew up producing alpargatas [traditional rope-soled canvas shoes], bags and hats amongst other things. At one end of the plaza we also find an impressive

statue of the king, Jaume I, founder of the city. Also worthy of special attention is the ancient Treasury building. The plaza has in recent years become an authentic meeting place for the city's inhabitants who, gathered around the typical kiosk, enjoy the benevolence of the Mediterranean climate. A dynamic and lively plaza representing the spirit of an openhearted, jovial and colourful city.

Plaza de la Independencia

We start this tour beside the Ribalta park, at the Plaza de la Independencia, where we find one of the most interesting landmarks of Castellón: the Farola, which gives its name to this same plaza in the popular sphere. The Farola was built in 1929, carried out by the architect Maristany

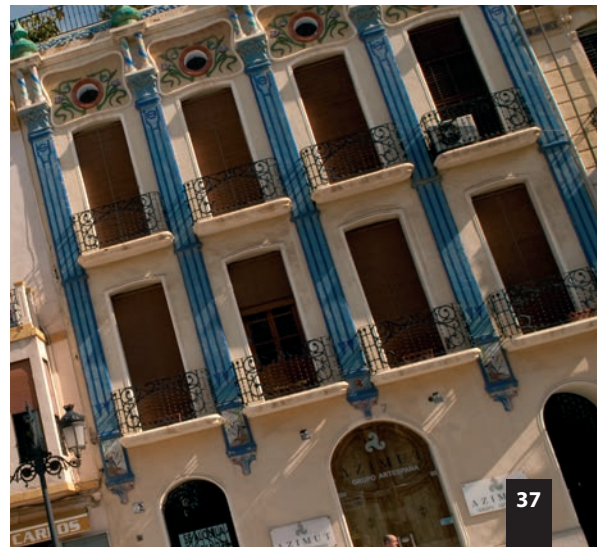


The iconic Farola is present every year at the coronation of the city's patron saint, the Mare de Déu del Lledó.

over the exact spot that was crowned by the image of the city's patron saint, Santa María del Lledó. The Farola reigns in the plaza and, around her rise some important buildings. Situated on the Plaza de Tetuán, quite naturally, a powerful building catches our attention, the Correos [national postal service] building.

The powerfulness of the modernist work draws the eye due to the rounded shape of its corners, its neo-Moorish ornamental finishes and the balanced, harmonious unified image it gives. **The building was constructed in 1932 and is the work of the architects Demetrio Ribes Marco and Joaquín Dicenta Vilaplana.** Examples of modernist buildings do not end at the Plaza de la Independencia with the Correos building, since at number 7 we come to the Casa de las Cigüeñas, with its crenellated tower and ceramic ornamentation, full of details and soft Mediterranean colours that first attract and then seduce. The Casa

Alcón, also opposite the Farola, equally offers modernist details, although it mixes certain gothic touches and a decoration proper to the Viennese school. An eclecticism that produces a really interesting result.



Plaza de la Paz

From Huerto Sogueros we will take the avenue Rey Don Jaime to the right and go down Ruiz Zorrilla street as far as the Puerta del Sol, from where we take Falcó street to find ourselves at the Plaza de la Paz. This pedestrian plaza is a focal point for the city.

The first thing that calls our attention in the plaza is the building of the Teatro Principal. **The theatre was opened in 1894 in the middle of the period of urban development. Its exterior is in the neo-Classical style and inside it still has paintings by Pedro Ferrer and Francisco Pérez Olmos.**

After being restored and opened to the public again in 1999, the Teatro Principal has become the main showcase of the dramatic arts in Castellón with a programme that covers from classical theatre, to the most avant-garde modern works.

Another relevant element and of great aesthetic beauty is the modernist kiosk, from the early 20th century, converted into a hotel establishment which, the same as the kiosk in the plaza Huerto Sogueros, draws the people of Castellón together to enjoy moments of recreation.

La Panderola, the popular name given to the railway that ran from Onda as far as El Grao de Castelló, used to pass through the Plaza de la Paz, for which reason, in the plaza, we find a ceramic mural in memory of it.

Behind the mural, we catch sight of the sculpture of a "llaurador" [rural labourer].

Plaza Fadrell

But, without a doubt, the city's most charismatic statue of the Castellón "llaurador" is found in the Plaza del Fadrell. To reach this plaza from the Plaza de la Paz we have to take Asensi street. It is



The Plaza del Fadrell pays homage to the important orange industry.

said that Castellón is surrounded by two seas, to the east, the Mediterranean and around the other sides, the vast expanse of orange groves. The Plaza del Fadrell is the city's homage to the agricultural industry of the orange. The labourer stands strong and proud holding a hoe in his right hand and, in the left hand, a bundle of orange branches. Since November 2009, on Sundays the Plaza del Fadrell becomes an Orange Market, making it possible for producers and consumers to have direct contact with each other. The plaza contains ceramic tiles with paintings referring to the orange, as well as a variety of benches and plant tubs decorated with mosaics, turning the place into a charming spot, ideal for rest and contemplation.

Plaza Na Violant

Continuing along Guitarrista Tárrega street, just a few steps from the Plaza del Fadrell, we come to the Plaza Na Violant. A bust of the queen and, one again, a great mural of decorated ceramic tiles adorn this plaza from which the church of San Vicente Ferrer emerges vigorously. The figure of the queen Na Violant, wife of Jaume I, has special prestige, both in the city of Castellón de la Plana, and in its province.

On the ceramic mural we find a painted canvas on which is inscribed Castellón's town charter.

The church of San Vicente Ferrer, for its part, dates from 1579, being one of Castellón's oldest religious monuments.

It stands out for a beautiful cloister, which currently forms part of the Music Conservatory.

The church of San Vicente was rebuilt and enlarged with the passing years, so today, in the different restorations undertaken, archaeologists do not cease to discover secrets of great historic and cultural value, which had remained hidden for years.

Plaza María Agustina

Did you know...?

At the Magdalene festivities various young women of the city are chosen to for the Court of Honour of Na Violant.

From Na Violant, taking Gobernador Bermúdez Castro street to the right, and then the left exit at the roundabout, we reach the Plaza María Agustina. Entering this way, no sooner have we come into the plaza than we see a bronze monument on the right, dedicated to music, in which four players are depicted with their respective instruments. The work, called

Musicians, is by the artist Jean Luc Bambara de Burkina Faso. In the middle of the plaza we find a pedestrian esplanade.

Until November 2004, the plaza was one of the few roundabouts in Europe where the traffic went in the opposite direction. This peculiarity meant that it became one of the city's popular landmarks. The Castellón de la Plana Tourism Office stands on one of the corners of the Plaza de la Hierba in Abadía House.

On the esplanade, our attention is caught by an ancient ficus tree in a plant tub with the shields of the province of Castellón's judicial districts, in ceramics, of course. Another notable feature in the plaza is a central fountain topped with a statue and, heading southeast, we will find ourselves at the church of the Purísima Sangre [the Most Pure Blood]. The most outstanding thing about the church is its neo-Baroque interior rebuilt after the Civil War in the Baroque style.

Plaza de las Aulas

Passing along the side of the church of the Purísima Sangre giving onto the Plaza María Agustina, we find ourselves with the Plaza de las Aulas on the left.

In the plaza we can see vestiges of the Torre dels Alçaments. These are the only significant features remaining from the city's mediaeval fortification.

Under the pile of stone there is an underground museum where more remains are exhibited of the fortification discovered during the excavations. The Torre dels Alçaments lecture-hall/museum also receives temporary exhibitions, generally of Castellón artists. Also in the Plaza de las Aulas stands the Provincial Council offices, a building with its rear part adjoining the church of the Purísima Sangre.

Ribalta Park

Nothing is very far away in Castellón, and perhaps that is one of the biggest advantages it offers both locals and visitors. Just a few minutes' walk will take us from the hurly-burly of the most central commercial streets to an urban island of peace and quiet, one of the city's most beautiful and representative spots, the Ribalta park, a green haven right in the city centre, **the perfect place to get away from the stress, the asphalt, and plunge us into the gift of the silent language of trees and the hypnotic scent of plants and damp earth.**

The city's lungs breathing slowly and firmly since the end of the 19th century, when it was designed as a response to the economic and social awakening the capital was starting to experience.

The long awaited railway covered the stretch from Valencia-Sagunto-Castellón for the first time in 1868 and, in the face of the magnitude of such an event, the farming bourgeoisie that ruled the town threw all its efforts into re-creating an idyllic forest scene to welcome the recently arrived visitors.

Due to its proximity to the station, the town council decided to use the place that had been

occupied by the former Calvario cemetery to lay out an open space over it that would bear the name of the painter Ribalta.

The design, entrusted to the engineer Luis Alfonso, was conceived as a romantic English garden, planted within a triangular setting. The layout of walkways and flowerbeds is the same as is conserved today, with a few slight alterations. It contains two concentric circles connected by a straight avenue. A pergola was built on the larger one with a recreational centre and a pond, while the smaller one is adorned with the seated statue of the painter Ribalta, by the sculptor Adsuara.

In 1876, the town council enlarged the park thanks to the lands granted by the Count of Pestagua.

The axis of this new green area is a grand avenue crossing diagonally and midway along it another plaza opens up from which winding pathways radiate, known as maranyetes or philosopher's paths. From this time on the park continued being embellished with successive constructions and refurbishments.

Amongst them is the Obelisk designed by Francisco Tomás Traver in 1898, destroyed in the Spanish Civil War and rebuilt definitively in 1980. The great monument that gives its name to the





This park has more than 400 different types of trees.

avenue recalls the harsh days of July 1837, an episode in the city's resistance to the siege by Carlist troops. Other features elegantly decorating this public space are the large pond, marked out in 1920, and the bandstand erected in 1934, designed by Francesc Maristany.

This latter is a lovely construction standing on twin columns and finished off with a hemispherical cupola decorated by lovely sculptures representing figures in movement and playing instruments. Beside the old railway station, now converted into municipal dependencies, five tons of welded recycled iron form the body of a huge bull five metres long and three metres high.

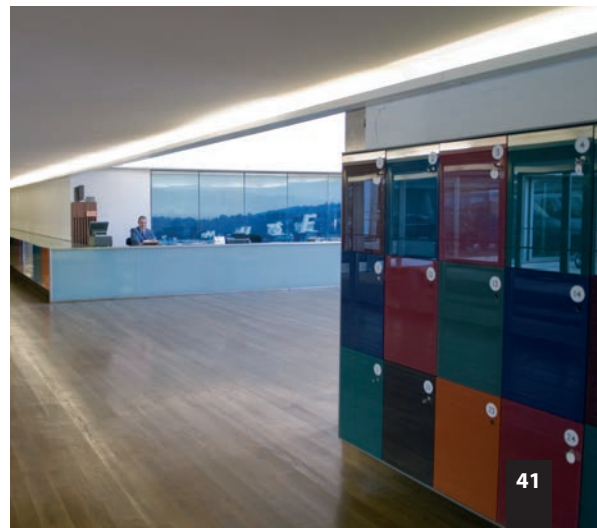
Created by the sculptor Melchor Zapata, this giant beast has become the new guardian of the harmony, silence and magic of the park.

Museum of Fine Arts

Castellón's Museum of Fine Arts is doubly interesting, first for the artistic-cultural heritage within it and second for the building itself which houses this heritage. The museum has existed for over 150 years during which time it has done the rounds of almost the entire city in search of a definitive headquarters. From 2001, the cultural wealth of the museum, which had been itinerant until that time, found a custom built headquarters on the avenue of the Hermanos Bou.

Designed by the architects Emilio Muñón Álvarez and Luis Moreno Mansilla within the Castelló Cultural project of the Generalitat, the modern building of 16,000m² had won prizes in various different architectural competitions. The building is adapted to the needs of the museum.

We find a cloister, around which stand three clearly differentiated buildings opening onto the division into four blocks (public, semi-public, work and storage) of the museum space. In the central building we find the offices (semi-public block). Adjacent to this, a cubic building is where the exhibitions are placed (public). This





building, of avant-garde lines, has five levels crossed by a cascade of double-height rooms allowing a diagonal view across the whole building. On the other side of the cloister we find another lengthwise building in which the restoration and archaeology section is situated (work block) and where the museum is laid out as an open cultural centre promoting both the investigation and knowledge of Castellón's artistic heritage, and making it known to the public. Finally, under the restoration block, we find where the collections are stored (storage block), which in turn connects the three buildings.

The museum has five permanent exhibitions that are fed from the collections that initially formed Castellón's Provincial

Museum of Fine Arts, created in 1845; the artistic collection of Castellón's Provincial Council; various deposits (the Prado National Museum); donations (Justo Bou Álvaro, Rafael Fornas Romas, Hermanos Puig Roda-Alcácer, Juan Bautista Porcar and Juan Bautista Adsuara) and legacies (Francisco Esteve Gálvez).

The content of the museum's exhibitions is arranged by subject. The Archaeology and Ethnology department covers items mostly found in the province from the Palaeolithic period up to the Middle Ages.

The Ceramics collection is the most important in the museum and contains over a million items that mostly come from the factories of Onda, Ribesalbes and l'Alcora, as well as the contributions from Manises and Teruel amongst

others. In the Painting and Sculpture section there are works by Ribera, Ribalta, Romero de Torres, Rodrigo de Osona, Sorolla, Mongrell, Puig Roda and Porcar. Also in the Museum of Fine Arts are the valuable canvases by Zurbarán that come from the Convent of the Castellón Capuchin Nuns. The sculptures of Adsuara, Viciano, Benlliure and Vicent are outstanding.

EACC

The Castellón Contemporary Art Centre (Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló) was set up in 1999, within the Castelló Cultural project, with the aim of being an international reference with regard to avant-garde art. An evaluation of these years takes for granted that the aim has been fulfilled. Throughout this time numerous artists of repute from all over the world have passed through the daring and audacious installations in Prim street.

The first display to be seen was *Jeff Wakll, Pepe Espaliu. Time suspended* and, from then on, under the premise of the intrinsic freedom of art, different projects have found in the EACC the safest setting for risk.

Born from the valiant philosophy of discussing and making known the most recent artistic practices, the EACC is an open door for seeing and participating in the processes of change in the very idea of art and allows people ongoing access to the latest trends in the different artistic disciplines. When visiting the EACC we must take into account that it is made up of

three clearly differentiated spaces. On the one hand we find the Espaididàctic consisting of a hall destined to storage and documentation and another hall dedicated to running workshops open to the public. The second place consists of the Espaidonor, where concerts are held in which any contemporary musical expression has a place. Finally, the Espaicinema, in the projection hall, offers themed series and encounters with filmmakers and video artists. In both the Espaidonor and the Espaicinema, workshops are held to go deeper into the subjects.

Auditorium and Congress Centre

At the northwestern end of the city, we find the Auditorium and Congress Centre, built in 2004. Once again, we are looking at an iconic and recently created building that combines the most novel architectural forms with the most efficient functionality.

Designed by the architect Carlos Ferrater, the gently sloping paving of the plaza invades the auditorium hall through a sequence of spaces that create a gentle transition between exterior and interior. Even with the interrelationship of spaces, we can distinguish in the building each

of the rooms: the hall; the foyer (a large diaphanous space of 260m² which serves as a vestibule to the auditorium); the auditorium; the chamber music hall with a capacity for 1,200 people; the Magic Box with a capacity for 340; meeting room; exhibition hall; press room and other spaces like a VIP room and the protocol room.

The construction is of white concrete, which gives the building solemnity and a deceptive simplicity, since we find ourselves before a complex work of engineering designed with a surprisingly original arrangement of spaces. One of the areas that has become inseparable feature of the Auditorium and Congress Centre is the great park that surrounds it.

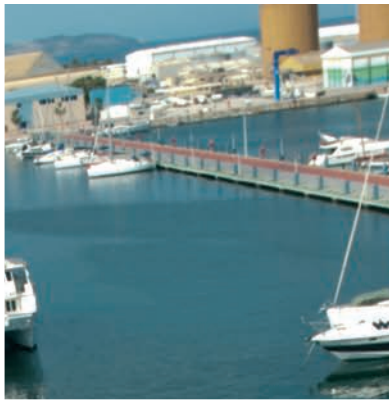
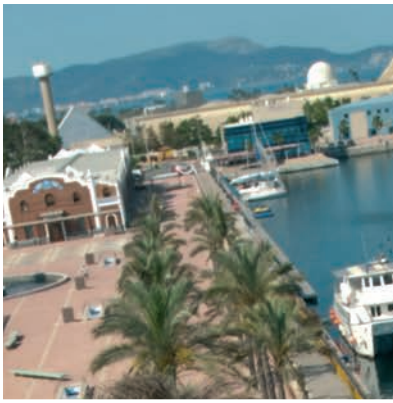
Nearly 90,000m² surround the entire building and form one of the city's most important green lungs.

This space is divided into four areas: the orange garden, the hill, the deciduous woodland and the mulberry wood. A privileged place to enjoy the strong concert programme the Auditorium offers every month.



Did you know...?

In 1997, the Generalitat Valenciana created the state owned Castellón Cultural from which came the Auditorium and Congress Centre, the new building of the Museum of Fine Arts and the EACC, amongst other investments.



Maritime District



Itinerary 3

Facing the sea



- 1** Fishing harbour
- 2** Plaza del Mar
- 3** Nautical Club
- 4** Puerto Azahar

- 5** Gran Casino
- 6** Marina Port
- 7** El Pinar
- 8** Planetarium

El Grao

Castellón's exporting and trading vocation is very noticeable in its maritime district or Grao, which is just four and a half miles from the city centre, from where this seaside neighbourhood can easily be reached along the Avenida del Mar or the Avenida Hermanos Bou, both provided with a cycle track making it possible to make the journey on foot, by bike or tram from De la Mar avenue.

Nowadays El Grao de Castellón de la Plana is much more than a simple marina, fishing or commercial harbour, it is a centre for nautical

and leisure activities of all types for old and young alike, and a privileged place to live, enjoying the calmness of the sea and the conveniences and services of its installations, a very short distance from Castellón's town centre.

Its history and traditions

Thanks to the archaeological remains found at the coast, right at the end of the route known as Camino Viejo del Mar, built by Jaime I after the reconquest, to connect the town with the sea, it has been possible to conjecture that the trading activity was already going on in these parts since the Iberian and Roman eras.

However, the fishing tradition, the most rooted in El Grao de Castellón, dates from 1398, when the first fishermen set up their residences in the area that used to belong to the parish of St Thomas, subsequently known by the fishermen's presence as the Pescadores street and small square.

This tradition is kept alive today, which is quite obvious in the festivity of Sant Pere, patron saint of fishermen, celebrated every year during the week of 29th June.

On these dates the neighbours in El Grao gather at the Penyas and enjoy fun events like the offering or the Torrà de la Sardina, as well as concerts and various different ceremonies.

Amongst its residents, El Grao has a very diverse social and cultural mix, going from descendents of those who, in the '60s, established themselves here to devote themselves to fishing, coming from Peñíscola, Andalucía or the Basque Country, amongst others, and immigrants of other nationalities who came later, without forgetting a wide sector of well-to-do families who find in the new urbanisations a peaceful place to live very close to the city centre.



A huge anchor guards the façade of the Royal Nautical Club of Castellón.

Fishing harbour and marina

Fishing is one of the oldest and best-rooted activities in El Grao de Castellón, whose produce, especially sardines, anchovies and some species from trawling are famous for their great quality. Nevertheless, the peak of other sectors like ceramics has led to the exodus of youngsters to other cities where they can find a more stable and better-paid job. Because of that, for some years now, the immigrants are the ones who are responsible for doing the fishing, turning El Grao into a melting pot of cultures. Another of the typical customs of the fishing community is the daily fish auction that takes place in the “lonja” [fish market], situated alongside the fishing harbour, which may turn out to be a particularly interesting visit.

The sporting activity in El Grao is centred on the Castellón Royal Nautical Club and the Marina Port Castellón, situated at either end of the seafront.

Created in 1930 by a group of swimming enthusiasts, the Royal Nautical Club has some

modern installations that were renovated in the year 2000 and it periodically runs fishing contests and rowing, canoeing and above all sailing competitions. In mid-June, the club holds the Castellón Costa Azahar regatta, a recognised international trial in which it is easy to find oneself in the company of well-known faces in sporting and social life. At the interior dock of the Levante wharf stands the Marina Port Castellón, headquarters of the Castellón Sailing Club, which offers all the usual nautical services as well as a wide variety of leisure and catering services, thanks to its proximity to the Gran Casino de Castellón and the Puerto Azahar leisure centre.



All along the Grao, truly beautiful picturesque scenery may be enjoyed.





During summer the terraces of the port are a meeting point for the people of Castellón.

Plaza del Mar and the Port Castelló leisure complex

El Grao de Castellón offers a variety of leisure, sports and gastronomic alternatives, all very interesting. A simple walk along the seafront, admiring its palm trees, buildings, boats and, of course, the magnificent Mediterranean Sea, already makes it into an unforgettable experience in itself. **At the centre of all this activity is the Plaza del Mar, which has been set up as a meeting place for local inhabitants of the area, Castellón people and tourists.** From there it is easy to reach the Nautical Club, the Planetarium, the Puerto Azahar leisure centre, the Marina Port Castelló and the Gran Casino, as well as a wide range of hotels, restaurants and pubs that El Grao de Castellón offers visitors. **At a privileged place on the seafront is the Puerto Azahar, the largest seaside leisure centre in the province.** Its three buildings house restaurants, shops, pubs, a recreational area and terraces for enjoying the wonderful views of the marina, as well as the Gran Casino de Castellón, the only one in the province. In the foyer of the Gran Casino we can admire a huge sculpture by Juan

Ripollés, the most international of Castellón's contemporary artists. As well as this great golden lady called "la Hechicera" [the enchantress], hanging from the ceiling of the foyer, outside the Casino, built in a refurbished port building, it is easy to come across now and then the colourful works of this original creator in temporary exhibitions. The gastronomic tradition of El Grao de Castellón enables us to savour the delights of the sea and some exquisite rice dishes. All this wide-ranging offer, as well as its ease of access, together with the benign climate in the area, has made El Grao one of the most attractive parts of Castelló de la Plana.

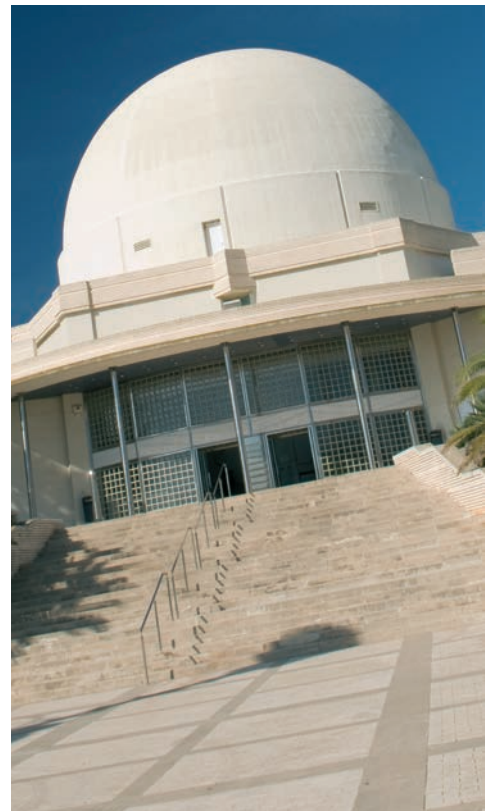




El Pinar del Grao and the Planetarium

To complete this incomparable seaside leisure offer, at El Grao de Castellón we can enjoy the Pinar, a vast open green space of some 370,000m² which has picnic areas, children's attractions, sports facilities, a restaurant and the Costa de Azahar Golf Club, situated just 50 metres from the sea. This nine-hole club has been classified as one of the easiest in the Comunitat Valenciana. **Very close to the Pinar de Castellón, a large white cupola surprises visitors for the purity of its shape and the contrast with the blue of the sea. This is the Castellón Planetarium, built in 1991, which has become an important centre for scientific publicity.** The main access of this building is presided over by another of the sculptures by the artist Juan Ripollés, La Hembra del Mar [the sea woman], made with iron from scrapped fishing and merchant boats. Once inside, the Péndulo de Foucault awaits us, reminding us of the building's scientific nature. In the semi-basement we find exhibition halls and the Planetarium hall, with a special effects system to make the session much more interesting. The centre hosts events like astronomy seminars or observation of eclipses and planetary movements, gathering a large number of keen amateur astronomers.

The Castellón's planetarium is located at the Science Centre, which also has its headquarters in the Management and Information Centre of the Columbretes islands Marine Reserve and Nature Park.



Columbretes islands

Declared a Nature Park in 1988 and reclassified as a Marine Reserve in 1990, Columbretes islands are a tiny group of islands situated 30 nautical miles (some 56km) from Castellón de la Plana. Its four groups of little islands and reefs of volcanic origin are known by the name of the most important of each: l'illa Grossa, la Ferrera, la Foradada and el Carallot, and they constitute one of the most interesting and unique ecosystems of the Mediterranean archipelago. The fragility of the species they are home to means it is only possible to visit the largest of their islands, l'illa Grossa, under the strict control of the Marine Reserve's Management and Information Centre. Of the 19 hectares of visible surface these islands occupy, 14 correspond to l'illa Grossa, which has in turn the highest point of the archipelago, Mt Colibre, rising to 67 metres above sea level. The


archipelago owes its origin to a series of underwater volcanic eruptions that took place during the Quaternary period, of which el Carallot bears witness, with the remains of a central volcanic chimney, and l'illa Grossa, which is made up of a succession of linked up craters de cráteres encadenados.

How to get there

The visitors' centre is at the Castellón Planetarium, from where visits are managed. Given its condition as a Nature Park and the particular fragility of the ecosystems it protects, access to the Columbretes islands are strictly controlled.

The only island that may be visited is l'illa Grossa, which may be reached by arranging a one-day excursion leaving Castellón harbour and on which the wardens or coastguards show the most relevant aspects of the island with a restricted group of people, a maximum number of visitors being allowed per day.

It is also possible for a private boat to access the islands, always requesting a permit in advance at the information centre. The boat is the only place where it will be possible to eat and spend the night, since cooking and camping are totally prohibited on the islands.



Did you know...?

The Columbretes Islands represent the best example of volcanic activity in the Comunitat Valenciana. L'illa Grossa is made up of a chain of various craters and the Carallot is geological evidence of the remains of the central chimney of a volcano.

A legendary story

The first seafarers reached the islands between the 1st century BC and the 2nd AD, finding there such a quantity of snakes that they named the



The blue of the sea and sky create an interesting contrast with the green and brown colour of the Columbretes Islands.

islands Ophiusa or Colubraria ["snake" in Greek and Latin respectively], hence the present day name of Columbretes. The next bibliographic references known for these islands are not until the 16th century and they insist on the abundance of snakes, which would make the islands uninhabitable. In 1856, under the reign of the Spanish queen Isabel II, the lighthouse started being built on l'Illa Grossa, finished in 1860, marking a new period of habitability for the islands. The lighthouse-keepers moved there, many with their families, turning the wild Illa Grossa into a small village. After the lighthouse was automated in 1975, the island went back to being practically uninhabited. The cemetery from that period is still conserved, the coastguards' provisions store, an image of the Virgen del Carmen and remains of vegetable gardens, pulleys and staircases. The history of the Columbretes has been marked by the visits of seamen, scientists, pirates, fishermen, the military and smugglers who used to hide merchandise on the islands.

Species

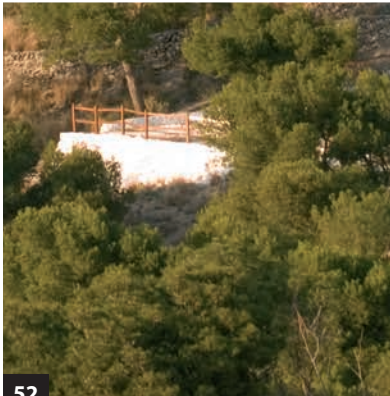
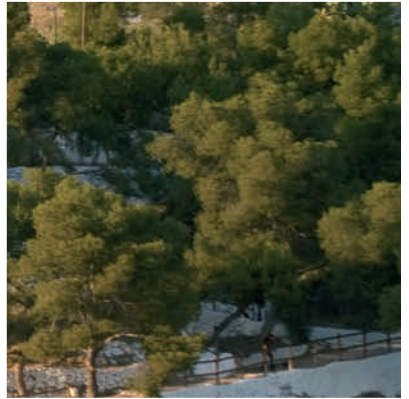
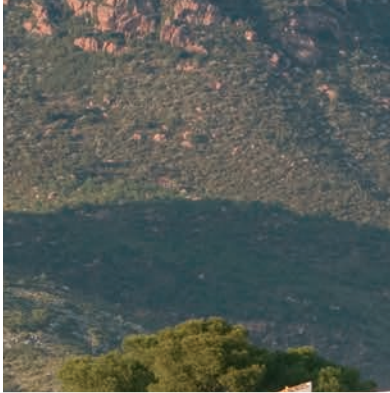
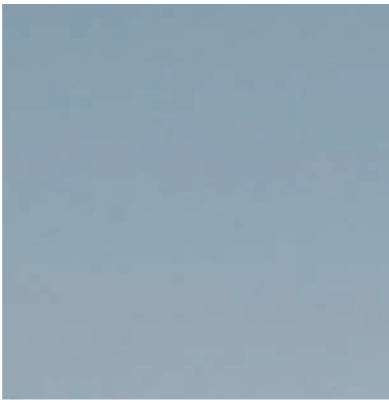
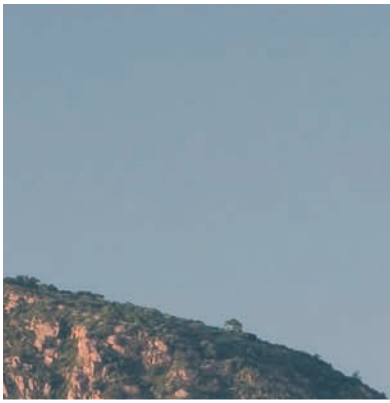
The harsh environmental conditions of the archipelago mean that the survival of species is particularly complicated, so it is a protected ecosystem, which has two micro-reserves of flora on the islands of Ferrera and la Foradada. On the other hand, their isolation from the coast has

favoured the occurrence of new species. Amongst the most characteristic animals of the islands are the Columbretes lizard, the yellow scorpion, the Andouin gull, the European shag, Cory's shearwater and Eleonora's falcon. The Columbretes are also a resting place for numerous migratory birds to take a break there on their long journey. Strangely, the legendary snakes that gave the archipelago its name disappeared over a century ago.

Underwater paradise

The Columbretes islands are a paradise for diving and snorkelling. **Their crystal clear waters, up to 80 metres deep around the islands, are home to a large number of wildlife species that are also protected, since the declaration of 4,400 hectares as a Marine Reserve in 1990. Marina en 1990.**

It is common to observe species like monkfish, sea bass and *carballos*, which do not usually get upset by the presence of humans thanks to the regulation of fishing. In the sea around the islands it is also possible to admire bottlenose dolphins, barracudas, ocean sunfish or common mola and occasionally large whales. Coral, groupers and lobster also inhabit this idyllic spot and the various types of algae that are observed on its seabeds are an unmistakable sign of the great quality of these transparent waters.



**Beyond
the urban area**

Itinerary 4

On the outskirts of the city



Castellón's "Ermitas" [chapels]

1 Universitat Jaume I (UJI)

2 Meridian park

1 El Pinar beach

2 Gurugú beach

3 El Serradal beach

1 El Salvador

2 Virgen del Carmen

3 Sant Jaume del Fadrell

4 San José

5 San Isidro y San Pedro

6 San Nicolás de Bari

7 Basílica de Lledó

8 Sant Roc de Canet

9 Sant Francesc de la Font

10 La Magdalena

Castellón's beaches

Visitors can enjoy three beaches all situated in the seaside district of El Grao.

The quality of their waters, the excellent facilities and their closeness to the capital of Castellón turns them into three paradises within reach of any visitor who decides to enjoy the city.

One of them, perhaps the best known, is Gurugú beach, a name by which the stretch of Castellón seaboard is known between the crossroads of the Camino de la Plana as far as the mouth of the river Seco. Gurugú is a wide and extensive beach and the maritime headquarters of the Círculo Mercantil e Industrial is sited on it, enabling those who go there to stop off at a restaurant built over the sand itself. There are also various premises that extend their activity until dawn during summer, turning it into a place for getting together and for nighttime leisure. Serradal, another of the beaches, is found on the edge of the Benicàssim municipal district. A seafront separates the beach from the highway, which allows visitors safe access to the beach. The most remarkable feature of this space is the

existence of an area of dune protection where the vegetation has grown until it has become a beautiful spot where local birds nest. Care of the environment and of this natural area is perfectly compatible with bathing, since the Serradal beach has a system of signs by which its visitors can follow some well-marked and clearly visible paths that run between the dunes and the plants.

The beach nearest to the Grao area is the Pinar, since it is at the edge of Castellón's port. There are wide avenues and large open spaces all around it, perfect for parking, which makes this stretch of coast extremely accessible. After a recent makeover, Pinar beach has gained space for bathers and green areas have been created in its surroundings.

Moreover, during the summer season, this area is perfect for enjoying a full day on the beach with the whole family, since it has recreational areas and sports facilities. The name of the beach comes from the existence of a pinewood owned by the municipality, which is still conserved and constitutes what is termed the Pinar Park.





Meridian Park

Reference Point

One of the points that confirm the singularity of Castellón city is the Meridian Park. This natural refuge is to remind local people and visitors that both the Greenwich Meridian and the 40th parallel pass through the city of Castellón de la Plana. Hardly anyone is aware that the capital of La Plana has served as a reference for establishing both time zones and the coordinates necessary for pinpointing an exact spot on the globe.

Commemorative Park

In the Meridian Park there is a monolith indicating the exact spot where the Greenwich meridian crosses the 40th parallel. This point was required in the year 1988, when the Town Council along with the Geographic and Land Valuation Institute officially laid down the location of the point where the two lines meet. After the relevant measurements, a park was built around this spot, bringing together the species most representative of the local flora and fauna, and displaying the great scenic beauty that covers the region.

La Marjalería

An ecosystem of its own

The Meridian Park is located in the middle of the Castellón marshes. This is an ecosystem of its own, characterised by being a very damp area due to the large number of irrigation channels that run through the subsoil, which favours the existence of certain species of animals and plants, some in danger of extinction.

The park covers 10,780m², and birds find there a nucleus for survival where they can nest and feed to recuperate their strength before continuing on their way to the north of Africa. Some of the particular wildlife species visitors may spot in this area are the hoopoe, the robin redbreast, the Eurasian crag martin, the kingfisher, the common magpie, shrews and even the occasional Iberian turtle. This natural space has become an ideal setting for establishing direct contact with nature without abandoning the urban nucleus. Moreover, numerous popular fiestas are held in the Meridian Park which tourists can witness while enjoying an incomparable setting. The festivity for San Antonio, in mid-January; the Virgin of August on the 15th of that month, and some sporting events in September and October, make this a powerful venue for gathering crowds.

The “ermitas” (chapels)

These places of worship, chapels, are intimately linked with tradition and Castellón city’s popular festivals. That is why many of these chapels are an obligatory visit since, as well as

Basilica Santa María del Lledó.



the visitor entering into the culture of the provincial capital, they are taken back over the history and customs, both religious and festive. It is worth pointing out that most of these places of worship are located on the Caminàs, an ancient pre-Roman footpath that crosses the whole of the region of La Plana from north to south parallel to the sea.

Lledó Basilica

The history of the church of St Mary of Lledó, patron saint of Castellón de la Plana, goes back to 1375. In that year Berenguer Vicent, representing and in the name of Pietro Corsini, Cardinal Rector of Santa María de Castelló, authorised the High Vicar to say daily mass and adoration to the Virgin of Lledó.

Throughout the centuries of its existence, the church has continuously received pilgrimages made up of the devout making their way, not just from the provincial capital, but even great distances coming from other cities in the province.

Still today, at the religious fiestas of Castellón de la Plana, which take place on the first Sunday in May, processions are made to the basilica, paying their respect to the patron saint, proclaimed as such in 1922 by Pope Pius XI and, on 4th May 1924, the Cardinal of Tarragona, Vidal y Barraquer, crowned her pontifically and canonically in the place where years later the Farola was erected in commemoration. The basilica of St Mary of Lledó is situated at the northwest end of the city and was built over three sanctuaries that had been put up from the 14th century onwards. Inside there is a museum where images of incalculable value are still conserved, from the 16th and 17th centuries. Around it there is a plaza with gardens and some specimens of hackberry, a legendary tree in the city.



Ermita del Salvador

It is also known as Les Casotes for its peculiar origin. Of late Baroque style, the chapel dates from 1781. The beginnings of this building are related to the goodwill of Salvador Catalá, the Merchant, who presented to the king, Charles III, his desire to make use of the surplus water from the Molí d'Ensaloni to irrigate his lands, building in addition a mill and a farmstead, known as Les Casotes. La Ermita del Salvador is found in the district of Benadresa, in the proximities of the Rambla de la Viuda.

Ermita de San Isidro y San Pedro

This sacred building takes its name from the market gardening district in which it stands at present. Situated on the Camino Viejo del Mar, the chapel was transferred to the city's agricultural entities, which restored the building in 1972. Its construction began in the mid-17th century, more precisely in 1631. The High Altar conserves an altarpiece made in 1672 by the Valencian sculptor, Antonio López. During its history, the chapel fulfilled the functions of a hospital when, in 1885, the city suffered a grave epidemic of cholera. After several restorations and enlargements, nowadays it celebrates its festivities in mid-May and from the 4th to 12th October.

Ermita de Sant Jaume del Fadrell

This is one of the oldest in the city given that it was built in the 12th century. Erected over a former farmstead which is presumed to have been inhabited by Romans and Arabs, it was one of the largest built along the Caminàs. After the conquest of the Magdalena castle in 1233, the king, Jaime I, donated the farmstead to the Order of Santiago de Uclés, which built the chapel in honour of St James its patron saint and a cemetery that still remains.

That original chapel, now the Gothic Hall, was presided over by a Gothic painted reredos from 1545, by the painter Pere Petrús, still there in its original position and it is the only one from that era still in existence in the city.



Ermita de Sant Jaume del Fadrell.



Ermita de Sant Roc de Canet.

Ermita de San José

One of the great charms of this chapel is that it was designed according to the characteristics of the old rural buildings of 17th and 18th century Castellón.

Situated in the Censal district alongside the old Caminàs, it is entirely surrounded by market gardens. At present, the guild of carpenters and cabinetmakers are responsible for its maintenance and conservation.

Its construction began in 1685, but it was four years later that its solemn inauguration took place. More than its artistic interest, this chapel's architecture is unusually attractive and its setting gives the building a special charm. Although worship is not habitually held here, the tranquility of the place invites visitors to seek peace and retreat within its installations.

Ermita de San Nicolás de Bari

his is situated right in the centre of the capital (Alloza street). Before becoming a Christian place of worship, this building was a mosque from Castellón's Moorish era. Dating from 1535, the chapel underwent numerous alterations until reaching the present layout, which dates from

the 17th century. Within its walls interesting sacred works of art can be found, like the painting of the patron saint done by José Camarón Bonanat in 1775 and the new wooden reredos for the High Altar, from the beginnings of the 20th century, by the Castellón sculptor Cristóbal Maurat.

A curious fact is that in 1942, the local people cleaned up the chapel, converted in the last years of war into a Masonic lodge.

It is worth pointing out that this urban chapel is especially visited every Monday of the year, continuing with the tradition of Les Caminates de Sant Nicolau. December is the month of this chapel's grand saint's day festivities.

Ermita de Sant Francesc de la Font

We can find this chapel very close to the Molí la Font. Its history is closely linked to the legendary nature of Castellón's land.

As the "costumbrist" writer José Pascual Tirado expressed in his book Tombatossals, it was one St Francis' day when the giant Tombatossals i la seua Congolla, set out from the Molí de la Font to conquer the Columbretes islands. Nevertheless, the official

story says that in 1748, the chapel was already standing, but the exact date of its building is not known.

Sadly, in 1913, the place of worship was classified as abandoned and in ruins. More than half a century later, the Germandat dels Cavallers de la Conquesta [brotherhood of knights of the conquest] applied for the rebuilding of the chapel in 1975 and on 9th October 1976, on the 7th Centenary of the death of king Jaime I, the building was once more opened for worship. The

Did you know...?

Some frescos were discovered within the walls of the Ermita de Sant Francesc de la Font, dating from over 250 years ago. And in 1982 they were restored by Gabriel Cantalapiedra commissioned by the Castelló de la Plana Town Council.

works put an end to the myth of its poverty, since from under the whitewashing and dirt of the walls, an interesting set of fresco paintings appeared, dating from the second half of the 18th century, in the era known as the Illusionist Baroque.



Ermita de Sant Francesc de la Font.



Ermita de San José.

Ermita de Sant Roc de Canet

Devotion to this saint must be sought in the protection attributed to San Roque in times of epidemics and plagues. The Ermita de Sant Roc de Canet (1652) has scant activity, although in modern times it is the last stop on the Romeria de les Canyes, a procession in which the faithful take advantage to have lunch before arriving at the St Mary Magdalene chapel. It was built over a former farmstead and has recently been restored by Castellón's town council.



The meeting place for thousands of university students.

The UJI, Jaume I University, an inexhaustible fount of knowledge

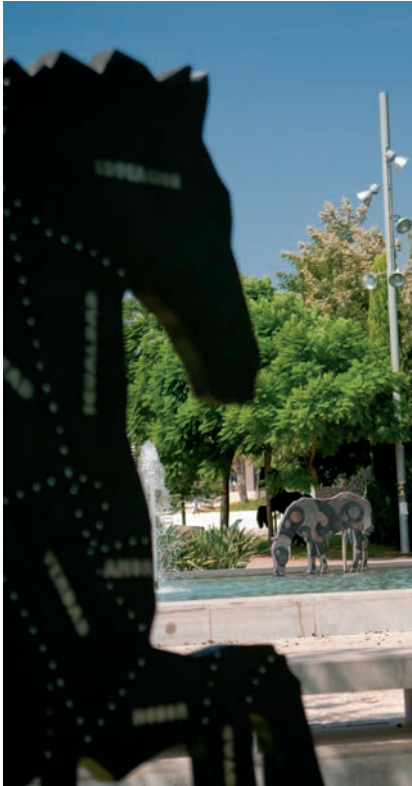
Created in 1991, the Universidad Jaume I (UJI) in Castellón has consolidated itself during its nearly 25 years of existence as an educational and cultural reference, both for the province and for the whole Comunitat Valenciana.

Despite being so young, the extraordinary hard work of those in charge has caused a growth in the number of students until it has reached nearly fifteen thousand at present.

Its educational offer, together with the excellent teaching that it offers, is one of the main claims so that every year a larger number of students enrol from other provinces and even other countries. The installations of the Universidad Jaime I, better known as UJI, are located on a single campus, which facilitates the integration of students into university life and better

attention for each pupil. The campus is extremely well connected with the city of Castellón de la Plana, thanks to the urban transport system and the excellent infrastructure of the area. At present, UJI has three faculties and an upper school, which award the 31 academic qualifications the university offers. One of the defining characteristics of this educational centre is the application of new, flexible and competitive plans of study to help students integrate themselves into the world of work,





On some occasions, the university campus becomes an open space for artistic exhibitions.

thanks to an ambitious programme of placements in companies and institutions. Another aspect that is boosted from UJI is international student exchanges through programmes like Socrates and Erasmus with the aim of a better knowledge of the educational outlook in other countries and the teaching of languages, a very important competence when the time comes to get into the job market. The university offers both its students and the inhabitants of Castellón de la Plana an outstandingly wide range of cultural activities. For these purposes the Paranimf has been opened, an elegant rectangular shaped building

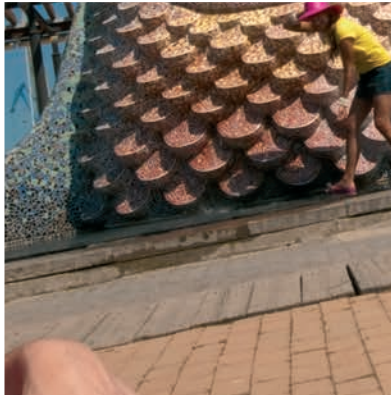
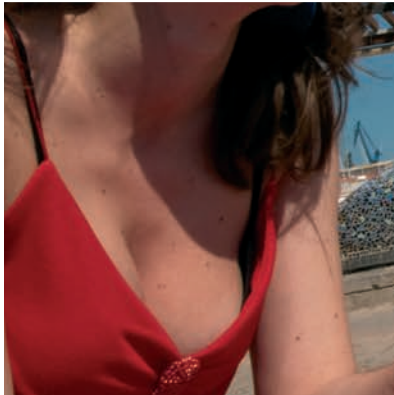
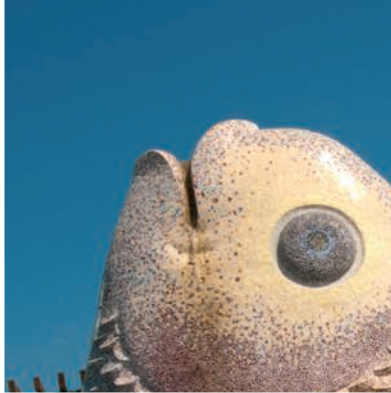
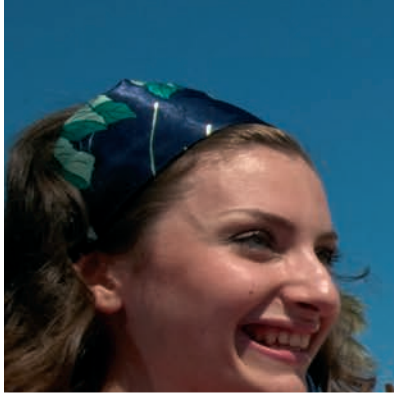
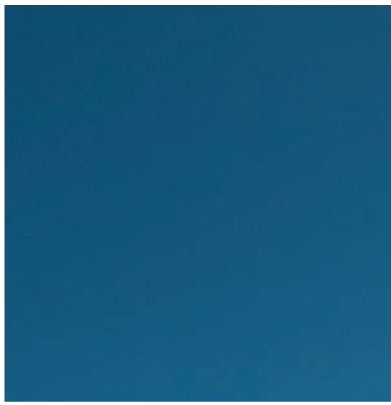
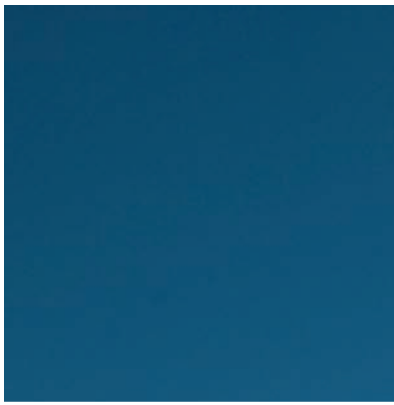


This statue, by Lizandra and named *The Reader*, symbolizes the acquisition of knowledge.

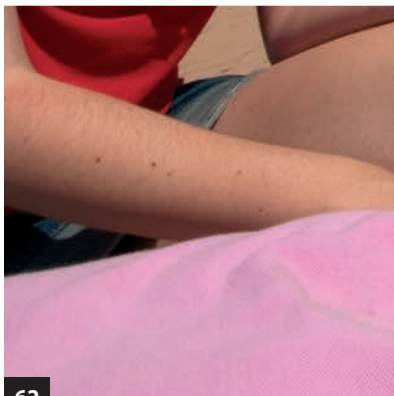
standing next to the Rectoría. It has capacity for 655 people and is an ideal place for holding social and cultural events.

Another of the aspects in which UJI has distinguished itself as a top class centre at the forefront of the use of new information technologies.

In fact, it was the first Spanish institution to have a public web server (www.uji.es) and the country's first university to install IT and audiovisual equipment in its classrooms and lecture halls enabling multimedia teaching. UJI also has an Education and New Technologies Centre (CENT) where work is done on the application of these tools in teaching.



**How to
get to
know the
city**



Itinerary 5

The Ripollés route



- 1** El juego del hechicero [The Sorcerer's Game] (homage to Castelló)
- 2** Les Cordeliers
- 3** Los niños de Castellón [Children of Castellón]
- 4** Transformación [Transformation]
- 5** Edificio del Sol [Building of the Sun] / Puerta del Mar [Gateway to the Sea]
- 6** La hechicera de la suerte [Enchantress of Luck]
- 7** La hembra del mar [Sea Woman]



Sculpture of The Sorcerer's Game.

Castellón de la Plana according to Ripollés

Juan Ripollés is undoubtedly the most international and best known of Castellón artists, a man closely identified with his land and his people and an unmistakable creator whose work is present in many corners of the provincial capital. Castellón is imbued with the particular universe of this singular artist who has filled streets, plazas and avenues with colour, which he admits makes him feel deeply proud. An interesting alternative sightseeing tour to get to know Castellón de la Plana is to look around the places that house works by the “blessed Ripo”, whose importance and links with the city have made him worthy of a street bearing his name.

Getting to know Castellón de la Plana through the eyes of Ripollés means discovering the particular symbiosis between urbanism and contemporary art in the city. On the esplanade giving access to the Provincial Hospital of Castellón de la Plana we find the sculpture The Sorcerer's Game, in which Ripollés dedicates his personal homage to medicine. The character of the sorcerer, who presides over the work and was a constant feature in the artist's early work, in this case represents the concern for health that was held back then before medicine became a science, and the figure of the sorcerer as a person able to cure thanks to his potions and spells. Around this figure, who would be like a doctor from the early times of humanity, two large-sized children run around, representing the unconcerned attitude one ought to have

when faced with sickness, the same as the artist himself adopts, placing himself in the hands of whoever has the skill to treat it. Not very far from there, visitors can find the Homage to Castellón, a mural framed by an iron structure in which Ripó shows the city of his birth, its people, nature, light and festivities.

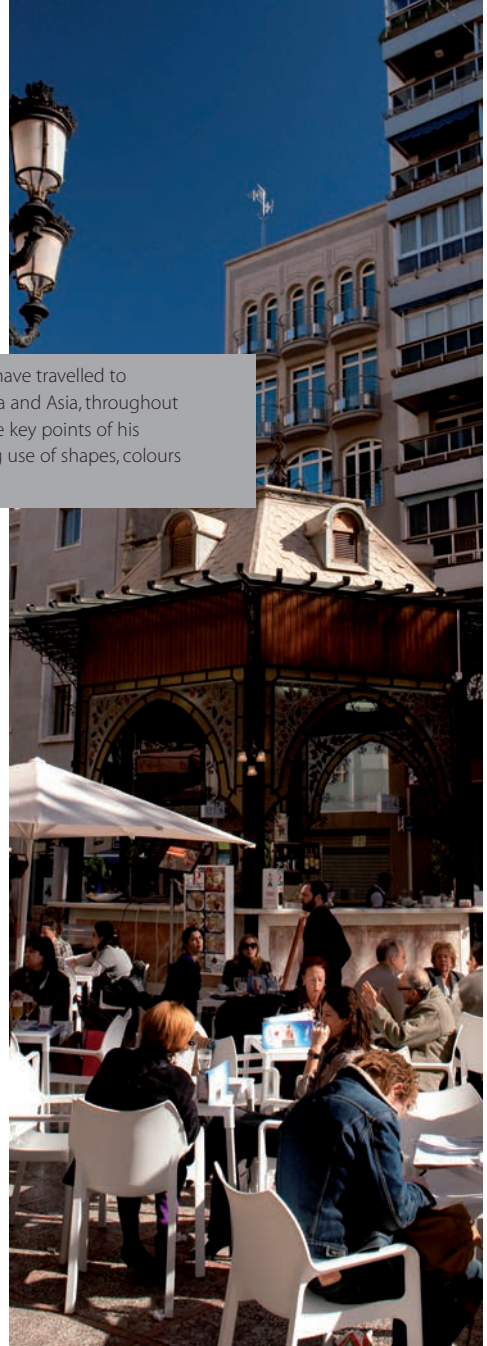
The best known of Ripollés' sculptures that inhabit Castellón de la Plana is that of Les

Did you know...?

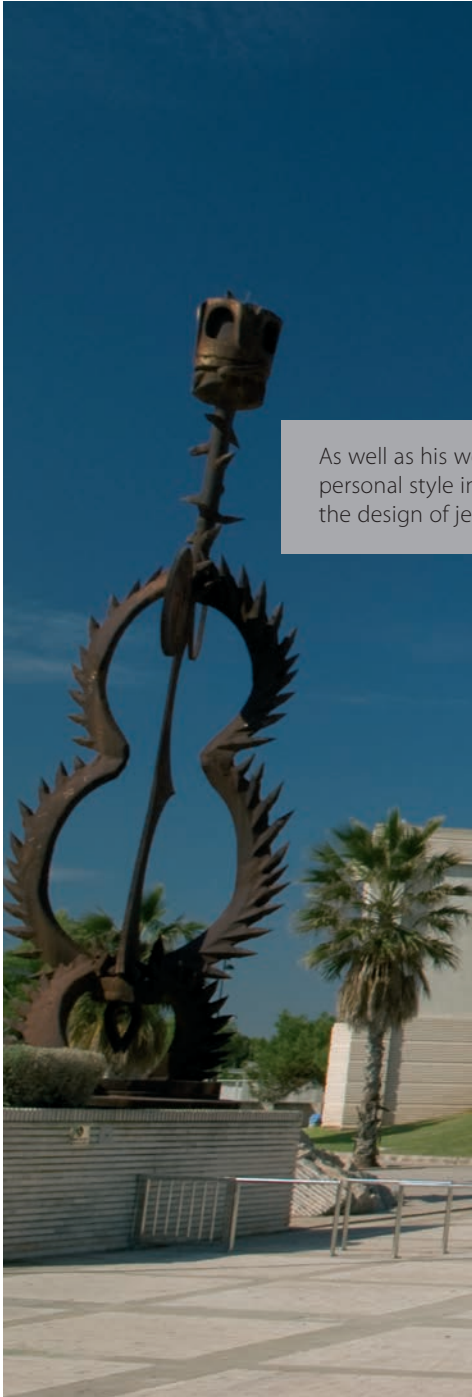
The brilliant works of art by Ripollés have travelled to different countries of Europe, America and Asia, throughout his over fifty years of work. One of the key points of his strength of expression is in his daring use of shapes, colours and materials.

Cordeliers, which is found in the Plaza del Huerto Sogueros, where the hemp rope was made.

In this work Ripollés shows how well he knows his birthplace, its history and its traditions. The sculpture, standing 16 metres high and weighing 12 tons, pays tribute to agriculture through the figure of a tree, whose branches are multicoloured human arms stretching towards the sky. At the base are representations of the figures of the *filaor* and the *menaor*, two traditional occupations that played a big part in the history of this plaza. On either side of the work, two trestles tip water over this original creation. A little way from Les Cordeliers, in the centre of Castellón de la Plana, two murals are found that were painted by the artist in 1983. In Transformation, situated on Mayor street, Ripollés warns about the destruction of the environment and in Los niños de Castellón, which can be admired in the Plaza de la Paz, the creator pays tribute to childhood, an era of his life that deeply marked



The Plaza de la Paz is an ideal place for enjoying a pleasant time.



him and a mood he has decided to remain in permanently. Juan Ripollés is known for his relationship with nature, love for his land and its deep link with the Mediterranean, present in many of his works. Specifically, when we leave the city and set off towards the sea, we find a rotunda crowned by a sculpture Gateway to the Sea, made up of a female bust over an oval and crowned by the helm of a ship. The oval makes reference to the egg that

As well as his well-known facet as a sculptor, Ripollés has forged his own very personal style in painting, engraving and other creations like ceramic murals and the design of jewellery in gold and silver.

Columbus used to get the Crown of Aragon to finance his voyage to the Americas, and the bust of a woman, recalling the artist's passion for women, represents the female gender that mariners attribute to the sea, especially in the Spanish language traditionally speaking of it as "la" rather than "el" mar, and its power of seduction over men. The woman's long hair appearing to be in movement is a representation of the winds so important to navigation, which the artist also shows by means of the helm that crowns the figure. Close to this sculpture we find the Edificio del Sol [building of the sun], a recently built property in which the Castellón creator has for the first time placed his art at the service of architecture. On the façade, a bass relief made with particles of Marano glass shows a sun with seven arms reflecting the variations in light throughout the day, acquiring reddish hues, blues, yellows, golds and greens.

The tour ends beside the sea, at the entrance to the Castellón Planetarium, with one of Ripollés' most personal works, the Sea Woman, in which the artist once more takes up the female aspect of the sea, and goes a step further in his own link with the Mediterranean by making up his sculpture with scrap materials from merchant and fishing vessels. The sharply pointed structure of this work, on the other hand, recalls the spines of a fish and the destructive nature the sea can have, while its gentle shapes refer again to the capacity for seduction of Mare Nostrum. Castellón offers visitors a chance to get to know the city at the hand of one of the most important contemporary Spanish artists. Through his works, which grace public spaces and buildings, it is possible to see the city through the eyes of Ripollés and get to know its ins and outs, its traditions and its people, so as to get to know, love and conceive it as the artist does.

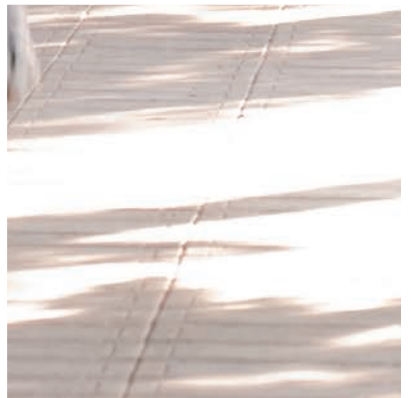
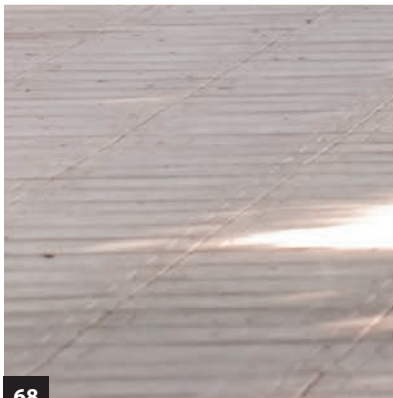


Juan Ripollés, Juan Ripollés, also known as “Ripo” or “the blessed Ripo”, is one of the Spanish artists with most international success. This multifaceted creator born in Castellón de la Plana, started working at the age of twelve as an apprentice in an industrial paints company, while he was studying at the Francisco Ribalta School of Arts and Crafts of his home city. Between 1954 and 1963 he was resident in Paris, where he started exhibiting his own work and had the chance to travel all over Europe. Back in Spain he lived in Seville, Cordoba, Chipiona and Cercedilla taking part in a variety of collective exhibitions in Europe, USA and Japan, until in 1973, he returned to the Borriol borough in Castellón, where he set up his residence and artist's studio. He currently has items in public and private collections worldwide, as well as having produced works of public art and other objets d'art.

In recent years, cities like Venice, Verona, Valencia, Alicante, Madrid and Geneva have held artistic tributes in which the artist has exhibited his latest creations.



Two Wheels



Itinerary 6

Touring by bicycle



- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 Plaza Doctor Marañón | 5 Plaza Mayor |
| 2 Plaza del Fadrell / Na Violant | 6 Puerta del Sol |
| 3 E.A.C.C. | 7 Plaza de Toros |
| 4 Plaza Cardona Vives | 8 Parque Ribalta |



By Bicycle

Town centre and tours on the cycle tracks around the city

One of the charms of the city of Castellón de la Plana is that it can be toured by bicycle and so admire the incredible comings and goings that reign in its streets.

The urban centre has an excellent infrastructure of rentals for this mode of transport, which makes it possible to get to any strategic point in the city on a bike.

The presence of bicycles at all the entrances in Castellón's capital allows visitors to leave the car behind for the tour, making things much easier when it comes to roaming the streets without the need to be dependent on parking.

The cycle track network is very complete, all the places of tourist interest for sightseeing may be visited without having to leave these routes.

An interesting proposal for going sightseeing is to begin at the Plaza Doctor Marañón, in the south of the city, where visitors will find a cycle hire point. Crossing Crevillente and



Did you know...?

All the entrances to the city have a bicycle rental point, so that the urban centre may now be reached on two wheels.

Carcagente streets we reach the Fadrell and Na Violant plazas, where lovely ceramic mosaics may be found, making an interesting visual tour of the history and traditions of Castellón province. Going northwards, we come to one of the city's most important cultural centres, the Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló, EACC. After a visit to the museum, we can cycle down Gobernador street, one of



the liveliest thoroughfares in the old town centre, as far as Plaza Cardona Vives, where there is another cycle hire point.

A stone's throw from there is the Plaza Mayor, where numerous tourist sights are found like the co-cathedral of St Mary, the Fadrí bell-tower, the Town Hall (of great architectural interest) and the Central Market, which is well worth a visit to see the city's life and maybe even buy a few fresh foods.

Going along Enmedio street, situated to the west of the plaza, tourists will reach another of the focal points of the city's life, the Puerta del Sol. Surrounded by numerous buildings with a high level of cultural interest, this plaza is where the main shopping streets meet up and it is situated at the geographical centre of the city.

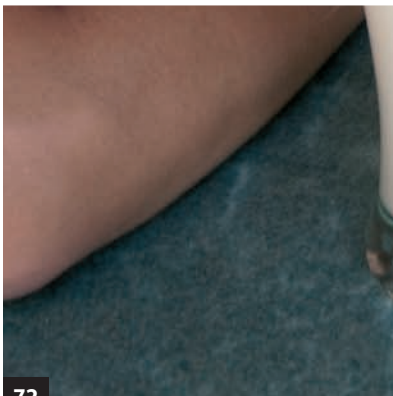
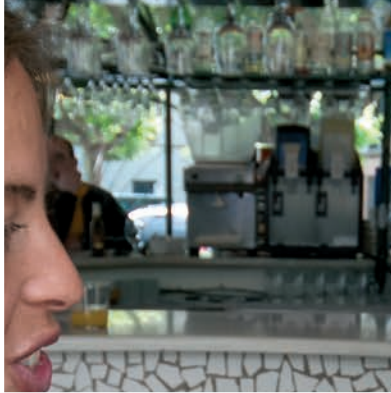
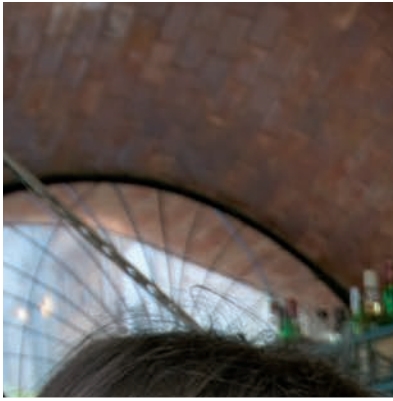
From this plaza it is possible to see the building of the ancient Bank of Casteelón, whose clock gathers crowds of people on New Year's Eve to follow the countdown with its chimes; the Old Casino, with

modernist inspiration; the Cajamar building and the old Saboya cinema. Continuing the route through the urban centre, we head westwards along Ruiz Zorrilla street crossing San Vicente street until we reach the bullring, which boasts over 125 years of history and has welcomed the most important figures of bullfighting.

Right beside the arena is the Ribalta park, one of the most important in the city, where Castellón's inhabitants do not hesitate to enjoy a wander around and the capital's excellent average temperature, 18°C throughout the year.

This is an ideal spot to finish the sightseeing tour of the city, although it is worth pointing out that another particularly attractive itinerary is the one connecting the city centre with the Grao area, some four kilometres away.

Gastronomy, fiestas and leisure



Gastronomy

There is no doubt that Castellón can be regarded as an authentic privilege in gastronomic culture. The delicious contrasts provided by the sea and the mountains surrounding the city, make the cuisine of Castellón a pleasure suitable for all types of people. **As a Mediterranean country, rice and seafood are two fundamental elements in the local diet**, but we must not lose sight of the traditional foods that are supplied by the interior of the region.

Flavours of the Sea

Seafood is one of the flagships of Castellón's cooking. **It must not be forgotten that Castellón has one of the most active harbours of the Comunitat Valenciana and that the fish that may be consumed in the area comes directly through these installations.** Of course, it is impossible to speak of Castellón's gastronomy and miss out the artichokes of Benicarló, the only ones with a denomination of origin, or the Vinaròs lobsters, a real delicacy. Nevertheless, other species of seafood are also indispensable on a visit to the Grao area of the city, like "galeras" [*Squilla Mantis*], clams, baby squid and sardines, much-prized for their intense flavour.



Rices

The traditional *paella* in all its variants (chicken and rabbit or seafood), *fideuà* (made with dry pasta and fish and seafood stock), *rice a banda* [rice cooked in fish stock and served separately or "a banda"] and baked rice, are the greatest exponents of the culinary delights that may be tasted in la Plana. But it is certain that there are innumerable varieties: dry, with plenty of stock, creamy... which may of course be tasted during the visit to Castellón. Any product from the area is an excellent ally of rice. One of the area's star dishes is the *olleta de la Plana*, a delicious and hearty stew based on vegetables requiring long cooking time, which gives it an exquisite flavour, very typical of the traditional cuisine. Other



traditional dishes have a direct relationship with the seasonal availability of the foods, so if your visit coincides with the season, you must not miss a delicious stew of tender braised beans, some winkles in sauce or *tordos fritos* [fried song thrush] with red pine mushrooms.

Sweets and Desserts

For those with a sweet tooth, Castellón de la Plana is the perfect city. The wide variety of homemade pastries that may be found in the city's ovens, will delight big fans of sweet things.



During the Magdalene festivities, traditional music and dancing enliven the city.

Aniseed rolls, *brazo de gitano* [similar to a Swiss roll], “fadrinets”, “coca” and *pastelitos de boniato* [little pasties filled with sweet potato jam] form part of Castellón’s tradition of cakes and pastries.

All this without mentioning the famous *coca malfeta* – a lemon sponge cake prepared with eggs, sugar, milk and lemon.

Of course the temptations do not end here, since one of the city’s gastronomic stars is the *pelotas de fraile*. A fried doughnut filled with cream and tossed in sugar, which may be accompanied by fig buns, very popular for Castellón’s fiestas.



Fiestas

The big fiesta of the city of Castellón de la Plana is undoubtedly that of Mary Magdalene.

It is always celebrated on the third Saturday of Lent, which means it does not have a fixed calendar date.

Regarded as one of the most important Mediterranean fiestas, La Magdalena, is declared a fiesta of international tourist





Did you know...?

In the Magdalene festivity homage is not paid to the city's patron saint but rather it commemorates the move from the mountain down onto the plain where the town is now found.



interest. The Cabalgata del Pregón acts as the starting signal: a horseback parade in which the town crier invites residents and visitors to take part in all the events of the festive week. During the days of celebration, the city is flooded with activities: concerts, the Magdalene bullfight, in which important national bullfighting figures take part, and of course what is regarded as the epicentre of the festivities, the Romeria de les Canyes. During the big day of the fiestas, those taking part in the religious procession brandish canes with a green ribbon attached (the colour of the city as it is on the Castellón flag) and they make their way from the Co-cathedral, in the town centre, as far as the Ermita de la Magdalena. During the nine days the celebration lasts, it is highly recommended to tour the city at night. In this way it is possible to appreciate in better detail each of the 19 illuminated monuments, one for each committee, which take over the streets of the capital.

These compositions of light are called *gaiatas*.

Each of them is made up of hundreds of lights forming beautiful figures and symbolising the little lanterns the folk carried during the removal of the city from the hills down onto the plain in its origins.

On the night of the *encesa*, the moment when all the *gaiatas* are lit up, the city is left lit up by nearly a million watts of light. Like all Mediterranean celebrations, this one is lived and enjoyed out in the street. That is why it is not strange to come across waves of people passing along the city's thoroughfares admiring the liveliness that surges up around the *gaiatas*, and

the *colles* formed by people keen to participate in the festivities and have their own premises on free access, the fun is guaranteed.

During the week of festivities fireworks and firecrackers are set off, at the hands of the most prestigious Valencian fireworks handlers. Less could not be expected, since the Comunitat Valenciana is the land of gunpowder.

To finish off the Magdalene festivities, all the townsfolk and visitors congregate in the main square, where the festival queens are in charge of shouting "Magdalena!" to be answered by the crowd with the celebrated response of "Vitol!" And from then on, to carry on working for the following year.

Another of the festivities that occupy an outstanding place on the calendar, are those celebrated in honour of the city's patron saint, the Virgin of Lledó. These festivities take place on the first weekend of May and in this case they are of a religious nature.

Then with the arrival of summer, on 29th June, in the area of El Grao, various events take place in

honour of St Peter. The maritime procession stands out, and the displays of running the young bulls. A little later on in the year, now into July, the capital of la Plana honours St Christopher, as well as St Vincent and Sant Roc de Vora Séquia.

Leisure

Live Shows

The cultural richness of the Castellón capital covers all kinds of leisure offer. As well as the inevitable route taking in all the city's museums, it is possible to enjoy other shows.

The Teatro Principal is found in the Plaza de la Paz, with a wide-ranging and varied programme for all tastes. It is also possible to listen to live music at the concert halls distributed through the streets of the city and in the outskirts, or enjoy what's on at the cinema, stand-up or café theatre shows at the various leisure venues of the town.



The fact that Castellón de la Plana is a university town, thanks to the prestigious UJI, has generated a very varied and interesting offer for leisure.

Eat out, dine and then...

The town centre of Castellón de la Plana is of a size that makes it very convenient for getting

It is highly advisable to take a stroll along the Paseo Buenavista, running parallel to the coast, to enjoy the beauty surrounding the area, taking advantage of the occasion to visit the Nautical Club and the Marina.



The terraces are an ideal place to have a drink with friends.

about at night having a little wander around, since the most interesting venues are found in a very concentrated area.

Nothing better for making a start than to go “de tapeo” (for *tapas*). To dine, the city centre is the most recommended option. In this case it is worth losing oneself around the Plaza de Santa Clara, Mayor street, Enmedio street and neighbouring ones. On this route, the university students usually gather, because there are numerous bars and restaurants where it is possible to find creative food at very accessible prices.

If what we seek is more traditional fare, then we should aim for El Grao, where a step away from the beach handmade typical dishes may be enjoyed.



Nightbirds have in Castellón de la Plana a great ally for fun, especially in the city centre, where they will find numerous places to have a drink and readily accessible on foot.

There are six well-differentiated areas, but very near to each other, where all the most iconic pubs of the city are. Lagasca, Puerta del Sol, País Valencià, María Agustina, central area and Capuchinos are the focal points that concentrate most of the pubs, offering a variety of music.

On the outskirts of the city centre, on the Castalia and Cipreses industrial areas, those who are more night owls will find numerous discos that stay open until well into the early hours.

Once again, El Grao (some four kilometres from the centre) also brings together some venues definitely worth a visit. Amongst them is the Gran Casino de Castellón Puerto Azahar, which crowds flock to in search of a lucky break. Many visitors enjoying its installations get about on their own boat, which they can moor at the establishment's private quay.



With the summer heat, numerous venues that start their activity at this time of year open up along the Castellón coast offering the latest music and delicious cocktails at the edge of the beach.





Tour around the city's main commercial thoroughfares

The most important fashion firms of national and international scope can be found in Castellón de la Plana. To go shopping, nothing is better than going around the old centre and enjoying the displays in the shop windows.

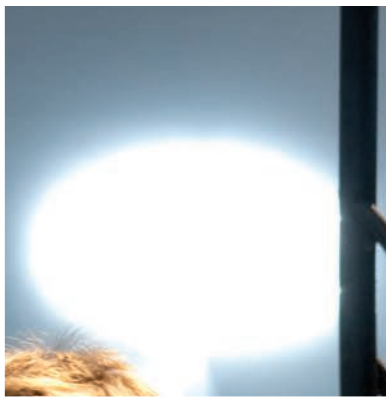
Thursdays on...

Quite an unusual and attractive initiative is the custom the city's shops have of putting their products out onto the street every Thursday of the year.

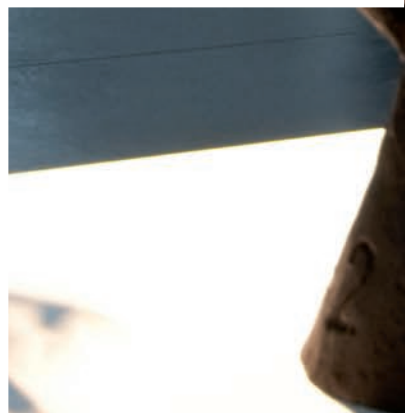
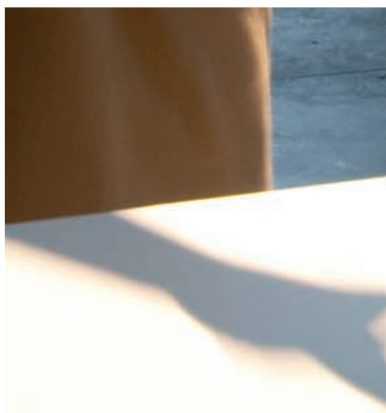
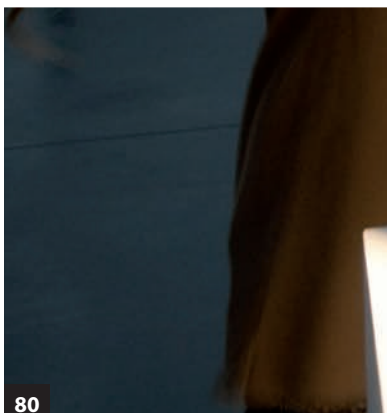
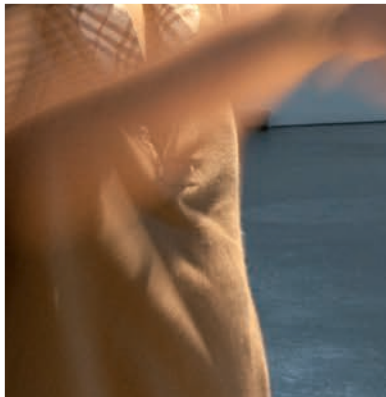
This initiative has been given the name of "Los jueves de..." [Thursdays on...] and continuing with the name of whichever street it is. The idea came from both the traders and the city council, to liven up business and make the merchandise more attractive to the eyes of the customers.

Moreover it is an interesting way of shopping, at the same time as enjoying the excellent climate that prevails throughout most of the year. Going shopping around Castellón de la Plana can be a much more complete activity than it might seem at first. The more commercial avenues are, in turn, those that have most of the places of cultural interest. So combining the two activities may turn out to be the most attractive.

The streets that should not be left unvisited are Enmedio, Alloza and Mayor streets. All have the country's main fashion names on their sidewalks, as well as interesting ceramics stores, very typical of Castellón province and one of the chief driving forces of its economy.



**Museums, monuments
and all that Castellón
offers visitors**



MUSEUMS

MUSEU DE BELLES ARTS (Fine arts Museum)

Av. Hermanos Bou, 28. Tel. 964 727 500
www.culturalcas.com

ESPAI D'ART CONTEMPORANI

C/ Prim, s/n. Tel. 964 723 540
www.eacc.es

OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

GROUP OF PAINTED MURALS

Tel. 964 227 556

CASTELLÓN MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM

Acuartelamiento Tetuán, s/n. Telephone: 964 270 233

Acuartelamiento Tetuán, s/n. Tel. 964 270 233
www.aulamilitar.com

MUSEU D'ETNOLOGIA

C/ Cavallers, 25. Tel. 964 239 878

MUSEU DE LA MAR (Sea Museum)

C/ Eivissa, s/n. Tel. 964 737 433
www.castello.es

COLECCIÓN ARTE BIZANTINO DE MONASTERIO DE LA TRANSFIGURACIÓN DEL SEÑOR

C/ Algemesí, 4. Tel. 902 877 380
www.fmdelapaz.com

MONUMENTS

Civic Buildings

- **Museum of Ethnology/ Museu d'Etnología (Casa Matutano)**

C/ Caballeros, 25. Tel. 964 239 878

- **Castellón Town Hall**

Pl. Mayor, 1. Tel. 964 355 100
www.castello.es

- **Hemp Trading Hall**

C/ Caballeros, 1. Tel. 964 387 980
www.llotja.uji.es

- **Carlist Walls**

Pl. Muralla Liberal, s/n. Tel. 964 355 100

- **Parque Ribalta, Plaza de la Independencia and Plaza Tetuán**

- **El Fadri bell-tower**

Pl. Mayor. Tel. 964 227 556

- **Alçaments tower**

Pl. de las Aulas. Tel. 964 227 556

- **Torreta Alonso**

Camino de la Costa.

Religious Monuments

- **Basilica of St Mary of Lledó**

Av. Virgen del Lledó. Tel. 964 220 482
www.basilicadelledo.es

- **Castell Vell and Ermitorio de la Magdalena**

Cerro de la Magdalena.

- **Co-cathedral of St Mary**

Pl. Mayor, s/n. Tel. 964 223 463
www.concatedral.com

- **Ermita de Sant Josep***

Partida de Cap, s/n.

- **Ermita de Sant Francesc de la Font***

Partida de Cap, s/n.

- **Ermita de Sant Jaume de Fadrell***

Partida de Fadrell, s/n. Tel. 964 220 408

- **Ermita de Sant Roc de Canet***

Camino del Molins, s/n.

- **Ermita de San Isidro***

Camino Viejo del Mar, s/n.

**Arrange visits presenting request at the Town Hall register 1 or 2 days in advance. www.castello.es*

- **Ermita de San Nicolás de Bari**

C/ Alloza, s/n.

- **PBishop's Palace**

C/ Gobernador, 8. Telephone: 964 220 066

THEATRES

Teatro Principal

Plaza de la Paz, s/n. Tel. 964 723 602
www.culturalcas.com

Paranimf de la Universitat Jaume I

Av. Vicent Sos Baynat, s/n. Tel. 964 729 016
www.uji.es

Auditori i Palau de Congressos

Avda. de Lledó, 50. Tel. 964 727 550

Culturarts

Av. Mare de Déu del Lledó, 50. Tel. 964 727 574
www.culturalcas.com

Teatro Raval

C/ Conde Pestagua, 38. Tel. 964 239 196
www.culturalcas.com

PARKS and GARDENS

Jardín de los Naranjos

Av. de Lledó, 50. Tel. 964 355 100

Parque del Meridiano

Camino de la Donación, s/n. Tel. 607 260 756
www.avmeridiano.com

Parque del Pinar

Av. Ferrandis Salvador, s/n. Tel. 964 355 100

Parque Geólogo José Royo (Parque del Lago)

Av. Chatellerault. Tel. 964 355 100

Parque Litoral

Paseo Marítimo. Tel. 964 355 100

Parque Rafalafena

Av. de Lledó. Tel. 964 260515. www.parque-rafalafena.com

Parque Ribalta

Paseo Ribalta. Tel. 964 355 100

Parque Sector 13

Tel. 964 355 100

Parque de los Juegos Tradicionales

Tel. 964 355 100

Jardín de los Sentidos

Campus de Riu Sec. Tel. 964 72 80 00

BEACHES

• El Gurugú

7km from the centre, this is an extensive spacious beach well connected with urban bus services and the coach service that goes to Benicàssim. There is a cycle track and spacious parking area. Blue Flag.

• El Pinar

5km from the centre, well connected by the urban bus services, cycle track and Bicas service. Also Parque Litoral. Blue Flag.

• El Serradal

Area suitable for bathing. 8 km from the centre, the most important distinguishing factor of this beach is the existence of a dune protection area, where vegetation has developed. Well connected by the coach service that goes to Benicàssim. There is a cycle track and spacious parking area.

LEISURE AREAS

• Planetari de Castelló

Paseo Marítimo,1. Telephone: 964 282 968

www.castello.es

• Zona de Ocio Puerto Azahar

Muelle de costa, s/n.

www.puertoazahar.com

• Centro comercial Salera

Carretera N-340 Km.64,5

www.ccsalera.com

SPORTS FACILITIES

Patronat Municipal d'Esports

C/ Columbretes, 22.

Tel. 964 236 512

www.esports.castello.es

Estadio de Fútbol Castalia

C/ Huesca, s/n.

Tel. 964 245 600

www.cdcastellon.com

Complejo Deportivo Castalia

Av. Benicàssim, s/n.

Tel. 964 256 086

Campo de Tiro San Huberto

Camino Serradal, s/n.

Tel. 964 286 968

www.sanhuberto.org

Instalaciones deportivas Gaetà Huguet

Ctra. de Ribesalbes, s/n. Tel. 964 257 584

Pabellón Fernando Úbeda Mir (Grao)

Camí Vell de la Mar, s/n.

Tel. 964 260 963 / 618 883 875

Pablo Herrera (Grao)

C/ Extramuros Poniente, s/n.

Tel. 964 285 441

Pabellón Deportivo Ciutat de Castelló

C/Pascual Asensio, s/n.

Tel. 964 253 104 / 964 253 981

Chencho

Cuadra Colomera, s/n.

Tel. 964 760 919 / 618 883 874

Parque Deportivo Sindical

Partida Bovalar, s/n. Tel. 964 252 040

Rafalafena

C/ Vilavella, s/n.

Tel. 964 766 813 / 618 883 872

Emilio Fabregat

C/ Sebastián Elcano, s/n. Tel. 964 287 265

Piscina de verano del Pinar del Grao

Av. Ferrandis Salvador, s/n. Tel. 686 041 256

Piscina Olímpica

Río Júcar, s/n. Ctra. Ribesalbes.

Tel. 964 240 743

Instalaciones Deportivas Gran Vía

C/ Gran Vía Tárrega-Monte Blanco, s/n.

Piscina Provincial

C/ Rafalafena s/n. Tel. 964 270 370.

www.cdpaugumbau.com

Club de Golf Costa de Azahar

Av. Ferrandis Salvador s/n.

Tel. 964 280 979

www.golfcostadeazahar.com

Sociedad Hípica de Castellón

Camino La Ralla, s/n. Tel. 650 406 117

www.hipicacastellon.com

Real Club Náutico de Castellón

Escollera de poniente s/n.

Tel. 964 282 520

www.rcncastellon.es

Club de Tenis

Camino Donación, s/n.

Tel. 964 223 046

Ponu Clun Ciudad de Castellón

Camino del Caminàs, 49

Tel. 964 766 235

www.poniclubcastello.com

LANGUAGE

The two official languages are Spanish and Valencian.

OPENING HOURS

Shops open from 10a.m to 1:30 or 2p.m and from 4:30 or 5p.m to 8p.m.

Big stores and shopping centres remain open all day, from 10a.m to 10p.m. There are also establishments that remain open until the early hours for buying essential goods and the press.

Restaurants are usually open from 1p.m to 4:30p.m for eating, although the kitchen may close sooner. And from 8:30p.m to 00:30a.m for evening meal.

Drinks bars remain open until 3:30a.m.

Discos remain open until around 7a.m.

POSTAL SERVICES

Oficina Central de Correos y Telégrafos

Pl. Tetuán, 41. Telephone: 964 341 523 / 964 341 527

Opening hours: Mondays to Fridays from 8:30a.m to 8:30p.m. Saturdays from 9:30a.m to 2p.m. Sundays and festive days closed.

www.correos.es

FESTIVE DAYS

1st January (New Year)

6th January (Epiphany)

Magdalene Monday (Magdalene is celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of Lent; so the date is not fixed, varying every year)

19th March (St Joseph)

Good Friday and Easter Monday

1st May (Workers' Day)

29th June (St Peter)

15th August (Assumption of the Virgin)

9th October (Day of the Comunitat Valenciana)

12th October (Day of Hispanity)

1st November (All Saints)

6th December (Day of the Sanish Constitution)

8th December (Immaculate Conception)

25th December (Christmas)

BANKS AND CREDIT CARDS

Banks open from 8:30am to 2p.m. Central offices are concentrated in the streets around Av. Rey Don Jaime.

Debit and credit cards: credit cards accepted (generally) are: American Express, VISA, Mastercard, 4B, Access and Diners Club.

TIPPING

Service charges are included in prices and on bills/invoices, so they are not regarded as obligatory. They are usually left if the service received is very satisfactory (especially in bars and restaurants).

EMERGENCY TEL NUMBERS

Emergencies 112

Local Police 092

Firefighters 080

National Police 091

Generalitat Valenciana (PROP) 963 866 000

012 from Comunitat Valenciana

Castellón Town Hall 964 22 60 10

010 from Castellón de la Plana

TOURIST INFO OFFICES

Tourist Info Castellón

Pl. de la hierba, s/n.

Tel. 964 358 688

castellon@touristinfo.net

Tourist Info Grao de Castellón

Paseo Buenavista, 28

Tel. 964 283 621

graocastellon@touristinfo.net

Tourist Info Castellón-Gurugú (Temporary)

Av. Ferrandis Salvador, s/n. (Playa Gurugú)

CONSULATES

Rumanian Consulate

Av. Valencia, 144, esq. Rambla Viuda
Tel. 964 216 172. Fax 964 257 053
www.madrid.mae.ro
secretariat@consulatcastellon.e.telefonica.net

Italian Vice Consulate

C/ Benarabe, 5
Tel. 964 237 466. Fax 964 237 466
viceconsolatocs@orange.es

Norwegian Vice Consulate

C/ Trinidad, 75
Tel. 964 222 550. Fax 964 238 904
icevega@grupogimeno.com

WEATHER

In winter, the average minimum temperature is around 7 or 8°C and in summer, the average maximum temperature does not exceed 28°C.

Humidity is high but rainy days are scarce, being concentrated in the early weeks of autumn, the last weeks of winter and the first of spring; Castellón has the privilege of having approximately 2,700 hours of sun a year.

HOSPITALS

Hospital General de Castellón

Av. Benicàssim, s/n. Telephone: 964 726 500

Hospital La Magdalena

Cuadra collet Pda. Bovalar. Telephone: 964 356 800

Hospital Provincial

Av. Dr. Clará, 19. Telephone: 964 359 700

Hospital Rey Don Jaime

Rosa María Molás, 25. Telephone: 964 726 000

Centro de especialidades Jaume I

C/ Trullols, 3. Telephone: 964 726 850
www.san.gva.es

HOW TO GET THERE

CASTELLÓ AIRPORT

Ctra. CV-13, km. 2,4
12181 Benlloch (Castellón)
Tel. 964 578 600. www.aena.es

VALENCIA AIRPORT

Ctra. Aeropuerto s/n. 46940 Manises (Valencia)
Tel. 902 404 704. www.aena.es

TRAIN

RENFE

Av. Pintor Oliet, 2
Information and booking telephone: 902 320 320
www.renfe.com

PORT/HARBOUR

Muelle Serrano Lloberas s/n.
Tel. 964 281 140.
www.portcastello.com
apcastello@portcastello.com

HOW TO GET ABOUT

AUTOBUSES

Castellón bus station

Av. Pintor Oliet, 2. Tel. 964 240 778
www.autobusescastellon.com

TRANSPORTE URBANO TUCS

Gran Vía Tárrega Monteblanco, 272
Tel. 964 200 122
www.tucs.es

TAXIS

Su Taxi Castellón

Tel. 964 101 101

Radio Taxi

Tel. 964 237 474.
www.radiotaxicastellon.com
radiotaxicastellon@hotmail.com

BICI-CAS

Sistema de préstamo de bicicletas.
Tel. 010
Teléfonos de incidencias: 677 412 418 / 677 412 475
www.bicicas.es

CAR RENT

AVIS

Pintor Oliet s/n. (Estación de Renfe)
Tel. 964 242 002 / 964 250 430
Central de reservas: 902 180 854
www.avis.es

HERTZ

Av. Castell Vell, 192
Tel. 964 529 773
www.hertz.es

EUROPCAR

Pintor Oliet, 33. (Estación de Renfe)
Tel. 964 251 131 / 964 202 844
Central de reservas: 902 503 010
www.europcar.es

TOTMOVIL

Av. Hermanos Bou, 92-Nave D-E
Tel. 964 227 425 / 608 866 256

MALCO RENT A CAR

Polígono Estadio Nave 8
Tel. 964 538 752
www.malcorentacar.com

ANDACAR 2000

Av. Valencia, chaflán Rambla de la Viuda, 12
Tel. 964 243 300 / 964 242 988
www.andacar.com

NATIONAL ATESA

Pintor Oliet, s/n (Estación Renfe)
Tel. 964 247 841
www.aatesa.es

BUDGET CASTELLÓN

Pintor Oliet, s/n
Tel. 900 828 571
www.budget.com

SPANISH SCHOOLS

There are associate centres of the Cervantes Institute that offer specialised Spanish courses for foreigners. Full information at: www.cervantes.es

Audio Gil-Spanish Institute

Av. Pérez Galdós, 7. Telephone: 964 342 290
www.spanish.audiogil.es

HOTELS

**** EUROHOTEL

C/ Pintor Oliet, 9
www.eurohotelcastello.com . Tel. 964342559
reservas@eurohotelcastellon.com

**** CASTELLÓN CENTER

Ronda Mijares, 86
www.hotelcastelloncenter.com . Tel. 964342777
info@hotelcastelloncenter.com

**** HOTEL LUZ

C/ Pintor Oliet, 3
www.hotelluz.com . Tel. 964201010
info@hotelluz.com

**** INTUR-CASTELLON

C/ Herrero, 20
www.intur.com. Tel. 964225000
castellon@intur.com

**** MINDORO

C/ Moyano, 4
www.nh-hotels.com. Tel. 964222300
nhmindoro@nh-hotels.com

*** N.H.EXPRESS TURCOSA

Av. Treballadors de la Mar, 1
www.nh-hotels.com. Tel. 964283600
nhturcosa@nh-hotels.com

*** HOTEL H2 CASTELLON

C/ Carcagente, 3
www.hoteles2.com/hoteles/castellon. Tel. 964723825
castellon@hoteles2.com

*** HOTEL DEL GOLF PLAYA

Av. Del Golf, 2
www.hoteldelgolfplaya.com. Tel. 964280180
info@hoteldelgolfplaya.com

*** JAIME I

Ronda Mijares, 67
www.civishoteles.com. Tel. 964250300
info@hoteljaime.com

HR *** DOÑA LOLA

C/ Lucena, 3
www.hoteldonalola.com. Tel. 964214011
reservas@hoteldonalola.com

HR ** COSTA AZAHAR HOTELES

Paseo Marítimo, s/n
www.costazaharhoteles.com . Tel. 964288293
hotel@costazaharhoteles.com

HR ** HOTEL PORT AZAHAR

C/ Serrano Lloberas, 1
www.camaracastellon.es/hotelportazahar
Tel. 964286820
portazahar@hotmail.com

HR ** REAL

Pl. del Real, 2
www.hotelresidenciareal.com/. Tel. 964211944
info@hotelresidenciareal.com

HR ** ROSTITS

Av. Alcora, 73
www.hotelrostits.com . Tel. 964341929
reservas@hotelrostits.com

HR ** ZAYMAR

C/ Historiador Viciana, 6
www.hotelzaymar.com . Tel. 964254381
reservas@hotelzaymar.com

* HERREROS

Av. del Puerto, 28
www.hotelherrerros.com. Tel. 964284264
info@hotelherrerros.com

BOARDING HOUSES

DINA. C/ Historiador Viciana, 16. Tel. 964 215 991

LA CORTE. C/ Trinidad, 21. Tel. 964 229 507
www.hostallacorte.es

LA OLA. C/ Mar Adriático, s/n. Tel. 964 284 889
www.rtaola.net

MARTI. Ctra. Grao-Almazora, km. 1,5. Tel. 964 280 193

APARTMENTS

ADAN Y COMPAÑIA. Av. Barcelona, 11-2ª. Tel. 636 820 005

ALDA BOSTON, SL. Av. del Mar, 32-3D
www.azahar-inversiones.com . Tel. 964 395 920

ALTRETUR. Pl. del Real, 10. www.altretur.com .
Tel. 964 255 675

ARRENDAMIENTOS APARICI, SL. C/ Caballeros, 12-1ªA
info@cnpuertadelsol.es . Tel. 964 255 675

DR. CLARA. Av. Doctor Clara, 18
www.aincas.com. Tel. 964 215 855

EFFECTO URBANO S.L. Av. Enrique Gimeno, 279
www.cssuites.com . Tel. 964 326 061

GESTIONHOME. C/ En medio, 67. Tel. 620 375 683

JOAQUIN BOIX FUENTES. Av. Ferrandis Salvador, 73
www.ximboixes . Tel. 964 737 151

MARIA DOLORES GUILLAMON FAJARDO. C/ Lucena, 3
www.hoteldonalola.es . Tel. 964 214 011

RICARDO APARICI MIRALLES. C/ Falco, 12.
Tel. 964 199 638

TURISMO Y VACACIONES S.A. C/ Gobernador 51, Entlo 5-6.
Tel. 964223400

VACACIONES MAR Y ARENA. Gran Vía Tarrega Monteblanco,
73-4º 2
www.vacacionesmaryarena.com. Tel. 633 306 642

ZONAS Y SISTEMAS S.A. C/ Gobernador, 51-Entlo 5-6
Tel. 964 723 441

HOSTELS

ALBERGUE-RESIDENCIA MARE DE DEU DEL LLEDÓ
(verano)

C/ Orfebre Santalina, 2 • Tel. 902 225 552



