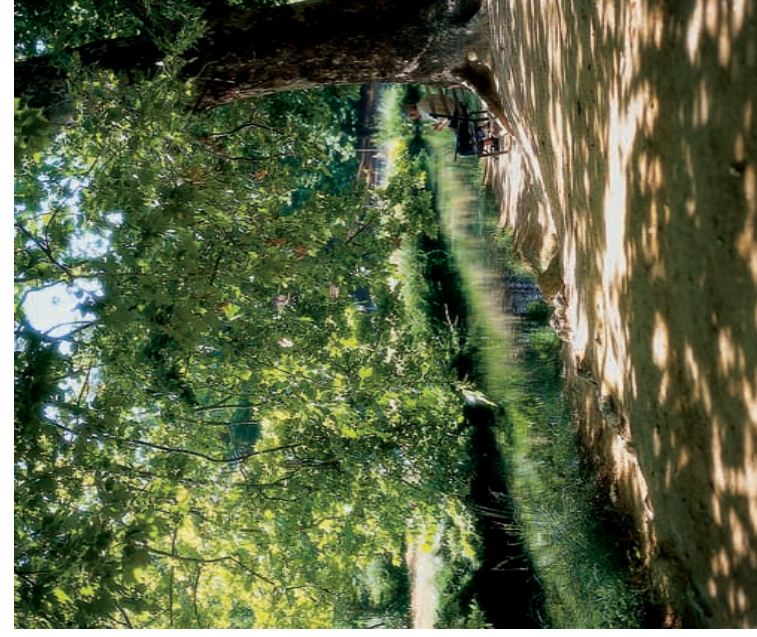
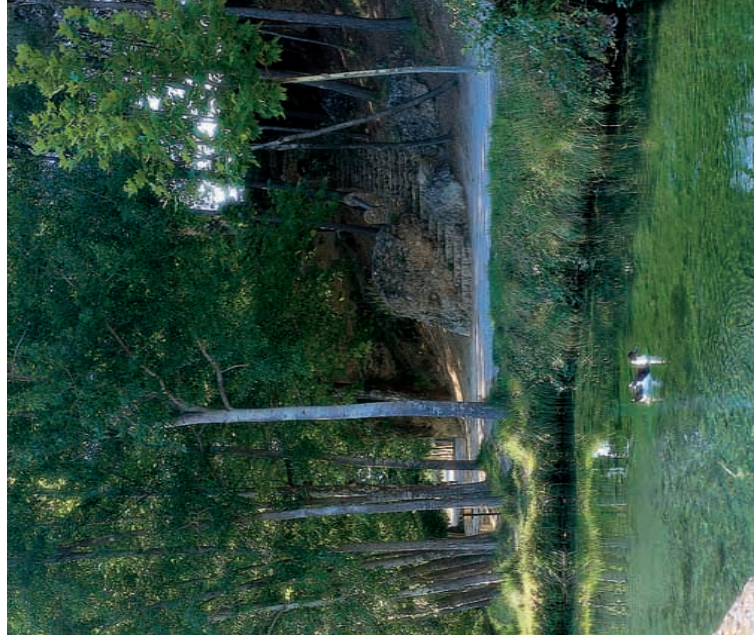


“Las Fuentes del Marqués”

“Las Fuentes del Marqués” is a fabulous tourist attraction located in Caravaca de la Cruz municipality, amidst others such as the fiestas, monuments and traditions.

This beauty spot is a natural park on the outskirts of the town, just 2 kilometres away. You can reach this landscape either using la Avenida de Los Andenes (by car) and then taking el Camino de Las Fuentes or you can take the trekking path called el Camino de Huer-to (on foot). Both ways meet in “El Molinico” and from this point onwards there is a single route to the springs “Las Fuentes”.



The springs

The water and its distribution by means of canals have embellished this place with a green and pleasant landscape.

Although the area and the springs were under private ownership since the Middle Ages till 1989, the year in which it was acquired by the Town Hall, the use of water has always been communal for all the inhabitants of the place.

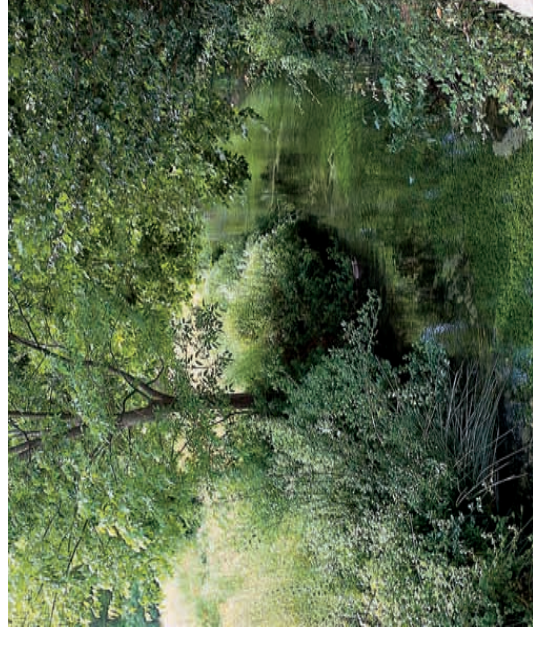
These springs used to provide water to the town of Caravaca and waterpower was used for looms and mills. There are four important springs, two of which are in the shape of pans and whose origins are in the aquifers existing in the limestone massifs of the major sierra of Caravaca. The average water flow is 320 l/s and it is considered to be the most important in the Region of Murcia.

The waterways and channelling have gone through different uses over the years; nonetheless these have been mainly for agricultural use.



Ecosystem

The reasons for the present ecological structure and composition of the area of Las Fuentes must be attributed to two groups of factors. On the one hand, we must consider the physical structure of the environment (the presence of water, soil and land characteristics, slopes, etc.) and, on the other hand, the human intervention as a determining factor throughout history with respect to the agricultural use. Some of the ecological factors bear a great relevance and therefore we would like to highlight three macro environments:



El Copo

The woods on the slopes next to the waterway (El Cerro de Las Fuentes and the area of el Copo). In these woods, you find Carrasco pine trees together with Holm oaks, especially in the area of el Copo, and numerous animal species such as squirrels, woodpeckers, sparrowhawks, foxes, etc.

The waters that run along the waterway get tangled in the grass, bushes and magnificent trees located on the banks creating joyful sceneries to contemplate.

The irrigation land, generally olive groves, fruit trees and arable crops, covers nearly all the area. Its ecological importance is in the formation of shrub hedges that are a source of vital resources for owls, rabbits and hoopoes, etc.

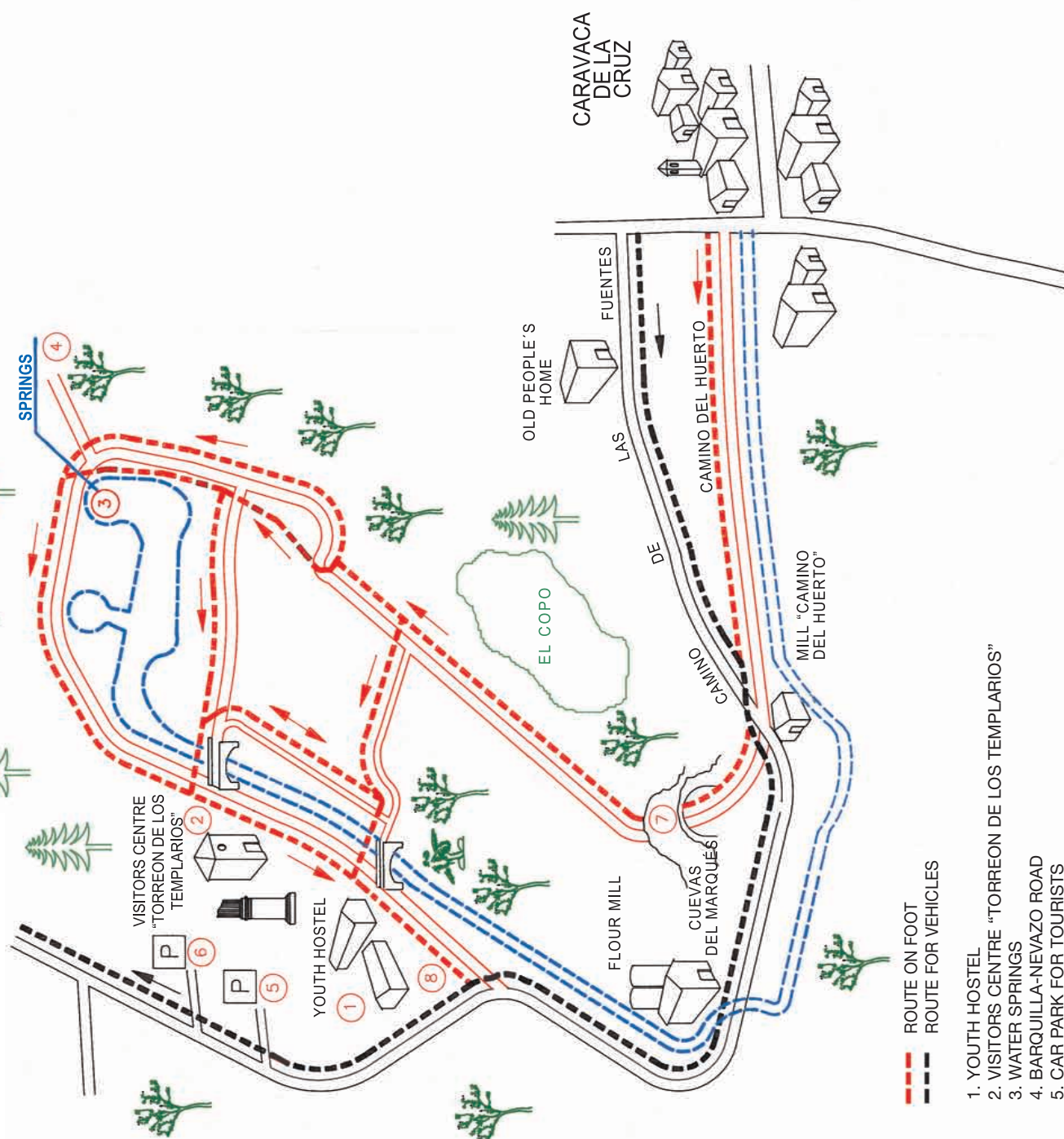


Las Cuevas del Marqués

The caves are situated on a hill overlooking the Springs. At present, these are under study and, from the materials found, we can date them back to the XI century. This may have been a place of stay for agricultural purposes, with no military attachment.



“LAS FUENTES DEL MARQUÉS” ROUTE



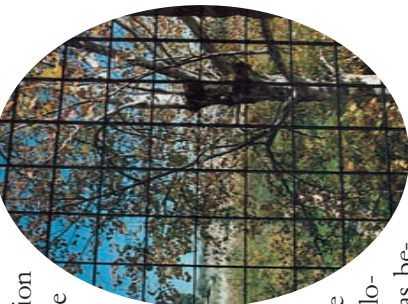
- 1. YOUTH HOSTEL
- 2. VISITORS CENTRE "TORREON DE LOS TEMPLARIOS"
- 3. WATER SPRINGS
- 4. BARQUILLA-NEVAZO ROAD
- 5. CAR PARK FOR TOURISTS
- 6. BUS PARKING
- 7. CUEVAS DEL MARQUÉS
- 8. GENERAL INFORMATION PANEL "LAS FUENTES DEL MARQUÉS COMPLEX"

Youth bostel

THE visitor can find a 2-storey rural building, dating back to the XIX century, built in the traditional style in this beauty spot, next to the river waterway and in perfect harmony with nature. So taking advantage of this building's ideal location, we have set up a youth hostel with a capacity for 36 guests. As this hostel is near the town centre of Caravaca de la Cruz, the visitor can carry out an array of activities such as enjoying the mouth-watering gastronomy, visiting monuments, landscapes and trekking, activities related to the natural environment (located next to the Nature Interpretation Centre), conferences, exhibitions, etc., therefore we have a fabulous complex that provides excellent services amidst a breathtaking landscape.



The Nature Interpretation Centre. Visitors Centre



THE Nature Interpretation Centre is situated in the "Torreón de los Templarios", a Historic-Artistic Monument located at the entrance of the main path of "Las Fuentes del Marqués". This monument has always been a place of numerous legends for the popular imagination of the locals. The Visitors Centre has become a unique, natural and attractive educational place of study like no other in the northeast of the Region of Murcia. In this Centre, we highlight the didactics and interpretation of the perfect conditions of the landscape through different studies and completed projects, besides which we promote the information and environmental education for the user and visitor of Las Fuentes, as a result promoting the education, leisure and culture of Caravaca, as well as extending the tourist offer in the area of Nature Tourism.



Caravaca de la Cruz (Murcia)



"Las Fuentes del Marqués"

*Encounter
history, natural landscapes,
religious and
monumental heritage*



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