

«Adiós», dije a la humilde choza mía;  
«adiós, Madrid; adiós tu Prado y  
fuentes, que manan néctar, llueven  
ambrosía; adiós, conversaciones  
suficientes a entretener un pecho  
cuidadoso y a dos mil desvalidos  
pretendientes; adiós, sitio agradable  
y mentiroso, do fueron dos gigantes  
abrasados con el rayo de Júpiter  
fugoso; adiós, teatros públicos,  
honrados por la ignorancia que  
ensalzada veo en cien mil disparates  
recitados; adiós, de San Felipe el gran  
paseo, donde si baja o sube el turco  
galgo, como en gaceta de Venecia  
leo; adiós, hambre sutil de algún  
hidalgo, que por no verme ante tus  
puertas muerto, hoy de mi patria y  
de mí mismo salgo».

Con esto, poco a poco llegué al  
puerto a quien los de Cartago  
dieron nombre, cerrado a todos  
vientos y encubierto a cuyo claro y  
singular renombre se postran  
cuantos puertos el mar baña,  
descubre el sol y ha navegado el  
hombre.

Arrojóse mi vista a la campaña rasa  
del mar, que trajo a mi memoria del  
heroico don Juan la heroica hazaña  
donde con alta de soldados gloria,  
y con propio valor y airado pecho  
tuve, aunque humilde, parte en la  
vitoria. Allí, con rabia y con mortal  
despecho, el otomano orgullo vio  
su brío hollado y reducido a pobre  
estrecho.

Miguel de Cervantes





# CARTAGENA

We know from the «Ora Maritima», a description of a nautical journey written by the Roman Rufo Festo Avieno in the 4th Century B.C., that the city of Cartagena was founded in 227 B.C. by the Carthaginian general Asdrubal, who changed the original name from Mastia to Quart Hadast. The city remained under Carthaginian control until 209 B.C., when the Roman Cornelio Escipion conquered it during the Second Punic War.

Cartagena was to live its period of greatest splendour under Roman rule between the end of the 3rd Century B.C. and the beginnings of the 2nd Century A.D. In 44 B.C., it was to receive the title of Colony under the denomination Colonia Urbs Iulia Nova Carthago.

The city's importance rested, together with its mining riches, on its privileged position and the uniqueness of its topography, surrounded by hills and with a lake or inland sea (El

Almarjal), to the north, which enabled the city to be easily defended.

With the end of the Roman Empire, the city entered a period of decadence about which we have little information. We do know that the Vandals passed through the city and that it was dominated by the Visigoths until 555 A.D., the year in which the Byzantine troops of Justinian took the city and converted it into the capital of the province of Spania, which covered the southeasterly part of the peninsula from Málaga to Cartagena itself. The city was retaken by the Visigoths around 621 A.D., and remained under their control until the Arab conquest in 734 A.D.

In 1245 A.D., Alfonso X The Wise -who at that time was still a prince- conquered the city. The following Low Medieval centuries were a period of decadence, which drew to its end in the 16th Century as the country experienced a general economic and political resurgence.



However, the widespread epidemics that assailed the country during the 17th Century brought this phase to a halt.

Cartagena recovered its former importance during the 18th Century. As a result of its naming in 1728 as the capital of the Mediterranean Maritime Department and the construction of the city's Arsenal, castles and the barracks covered by the city's fortification plan, significant building and merchant activity was responsible for attracting large numbers of new inhabitants that quickly led the population to grow from 10,000 to 50,000. Following a new period of crisis during the first half of the 19th Century, the city was to enjoy a new upsurge as a result of its mining activities, which in turn served as stimulation for industrial and economic activities.

It was following the destruction caused by the Cantonal Revolution in 1873 that Cartagena acquired its current appearance, with the construction of numerous public and private buildings that reflect the most significant eclectic and modernist tendencies of the age.

Cartagena faced the Second Spanish Republic and the Spanish Civil War immersed in a new economic crisis, which was the result of the mining crisis produced towards the end of the 1920's. During the Civil War, the city became one of the most important strongholds of the Republican Government and was the last city in Spain to surrender to the troops of General Franco.

During the 1950's, Cartagena experienced the beginning of a new prosperity through the establishment of numerous industrial companies in the area known as Valle de Escombreras, a situation that was to last until the industrial crisis at the beginning of the 1990's. Since recovering from this new downturn, Cartagena has looked to its past as one of its main attractions. Thus, the city entered the 21st Century immersed in a recovery programme and with a new perception of its rich historical, artistic and archaeological heritage.







## CARTAGENA archaeology

Today it is possible to follow a route that can give us an idea of the possible appearance of Qart Hadast, Nea Karchedon, Cartago Nova o Cartago Spartaria, or -one and the same thing- Cartagena in ancient times. The preservation of numerous remains in basements which are open to visitors, the presence of monumental remains integrated into the context of the modern-day city, or the section of the ancient pavements that come to light from time to time, all encourage visitors to embark upon a tour of a more archaeological nature.

### **Municipal Archaeological Museum**

This is the base of all archaeological activity in the city and its district. Opened in 1982, the museum is built over the late 4th century A.D Roman necropolis of San Antón; it contains one of the most important collections of inscriptions in the country.



### **Centre of Interpretation of the Punic Rampart**

The rampart was discovered in 1989, on the south side of the hill of San José, or Aletes, as it was known in Roman times. The construction dates back to 227 B.C., with the founding of the Punic city and the conversion of Cartagena (then called Qart-Hadast) into the capital of the Carthaginians the territory of Hispania. The fortifications are in the Hellenist style, with two parallel walls spaced 18 feet apart that are, in turn, linked together by other walls. The rampart enclosed the Punic city, and this particular stretch covered the isthmus, the only entrance to the city.



### The House of Fortune

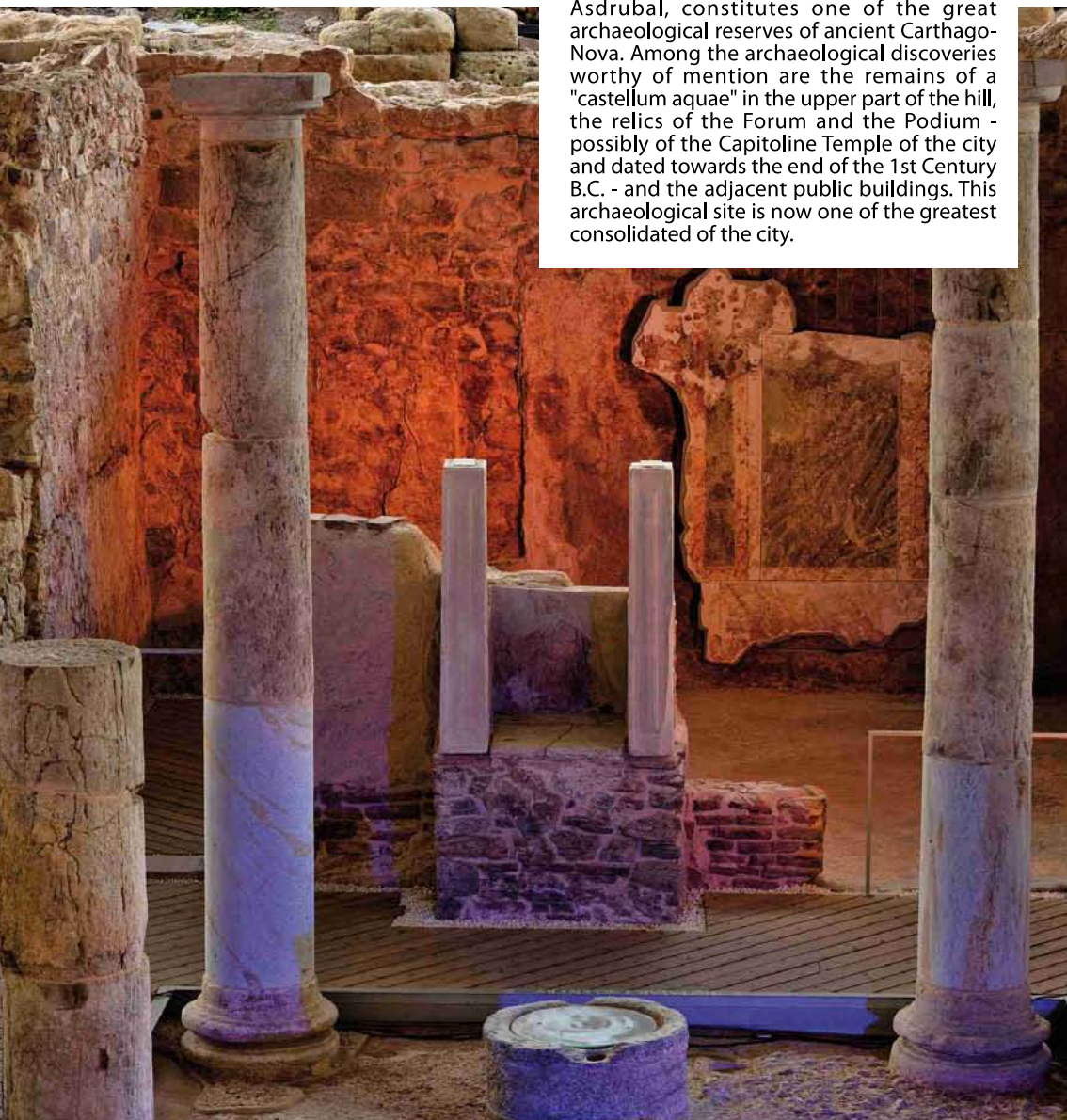
On either side of a stretch of Roman road lie the remains of two dwellings dating from the first century B.C. On the sides you can see the pavements, the walls with the entrance threshold and the opus signinum decorated flooring, but the most impressive feature is the fresco painted decoration of the dining room walls of the Casa de la Fortuna, the house which gets its name from the inscription that can be read on the flooring in the courtyard.

### Augusteum

This is one of the best-kept archaeological sites in the city, and it is composed of the remains of two public buildings from Roman times in the Cartago-Nova.

### Roman Forum District

The hill of Molinete, one of the five that are mentioned by historian Polibio in the 2nd Century B.C. As the seat of the Palace of Asdrubal, constitutes one of the great archaeological reserves of ancient Carthago-Nova. Among the archaeological discoveries worthy of mention are the remains of a "castellum aquae" in the upper part of the hill, the relics of the Forum and the Podium - possibly of the Capitoline Temple of the city and dated towards the end of the 1st Century B.C. - and the adjacent public buildings. This archaeological site is now one of the greatest consolidated of the city.





### Roman Remains

They are the three main axes in roman periode. The roman coloned, discovered in 1957, next to Puerta de Murcia Street, is another of the major Roman thoroughfares. These remains must have connected with a former entrance to the city through the current adjacent street. The foundations supported a pedestrian arcade. The road remains found in 2015 in Plaza de la Merced, correspond to the Decumano Máximo and those located on José Hierro Boulevard, correspond to the Salvius Cardo found in 2001.

### Byzantine Rampart

The recent discovery of the Roman theatre a few yards from the rampart is the key to the construction date of these solid walls, which include materials from the Byzantine period. In the mid 6th century A.D., Byzantine rule revitalised the city and brought about urban renewal. Part of the foundations of the arcade built around the access grounds to the theatre were reused for the ramparts of the Byzantine city. This curious superimposed construction with its outstanding Roman mosaics now lies beneath the Municipal Exhibition Hall.

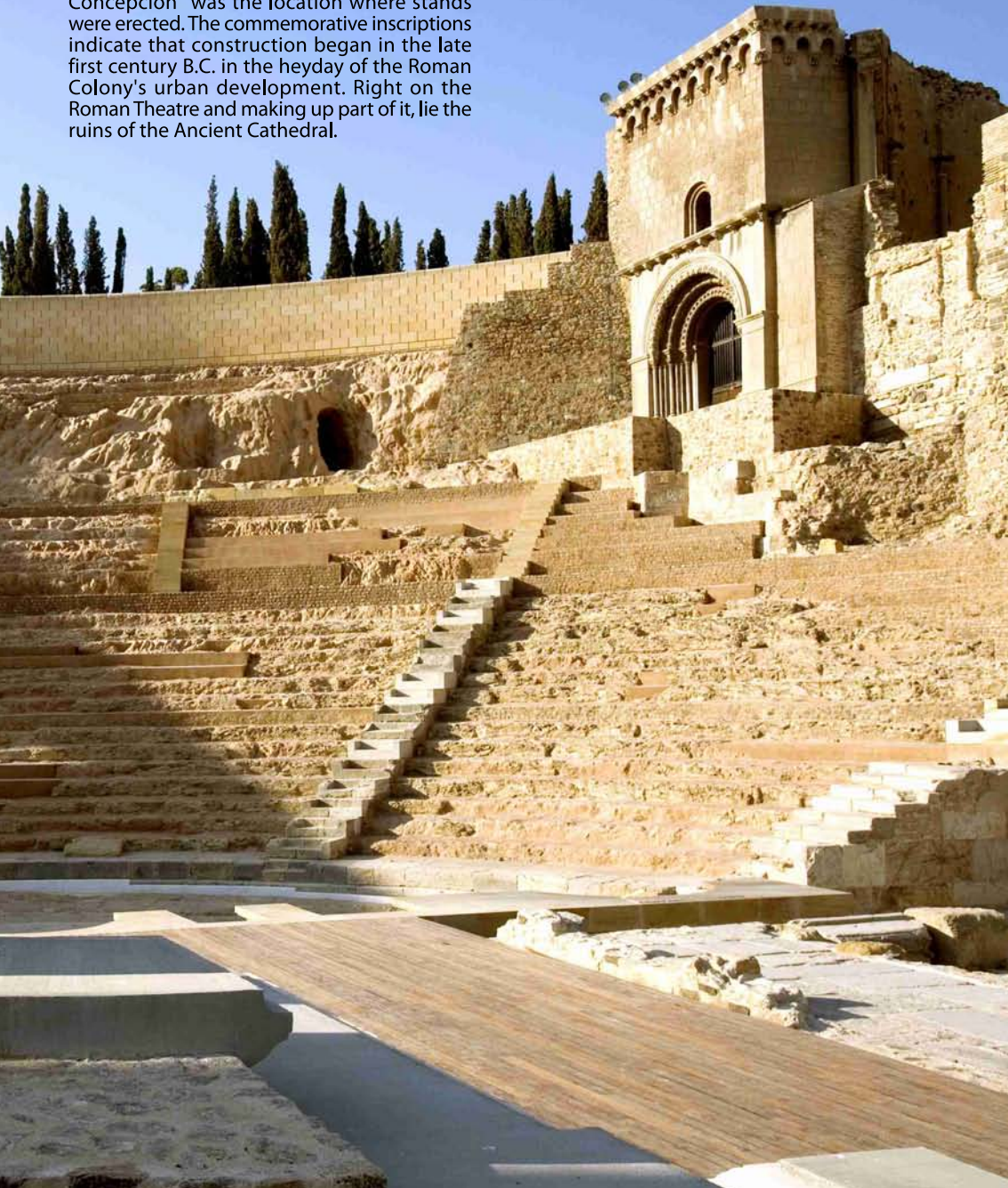




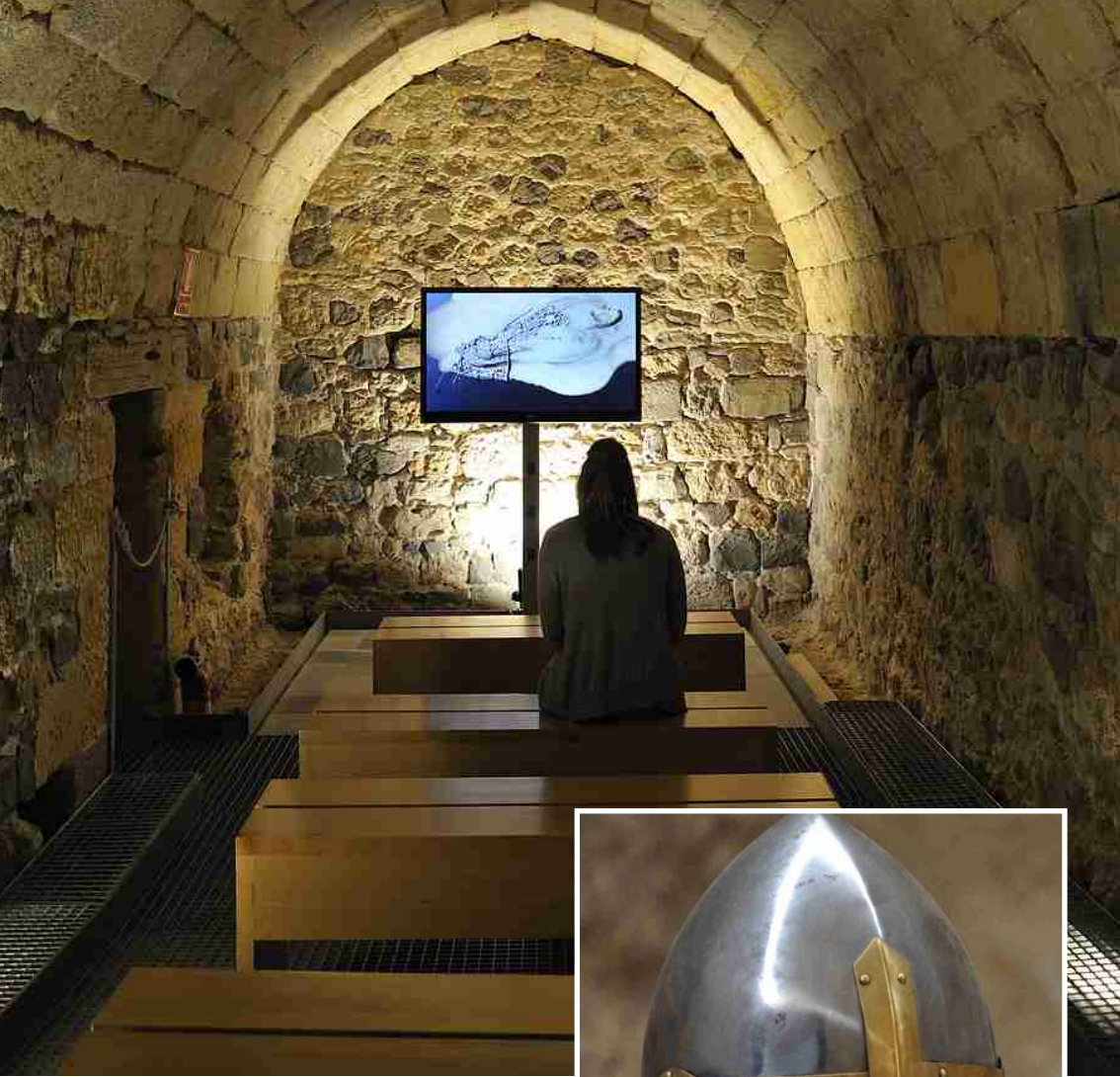
### **Museum of the Roman Theatre**

The space of this museum has been built by incorporating the monumental remains into the urban environment. The theatre was discovered by pure chance.

The northern side of the hill known as "la Concepción" was the location where stands were erected. The commemorative inscriptions indicate that construction began in the late first century B.C. in the heyday of the Roman Colony's urban development. Right on the Roman Theatre and making up part of it, lie the ruins of the Ancient Cathedral.







### **Centre of Interpretation of the History of Cartagena**

It is situated at the top of the medieval castle (Conception Hill). Most of the materials used to build the castle were taken from structures built when the city was a Roman colony. Further rebuilding was undertaken in the 14th century, during which the large ashlars of the Roman Amphitheatre were reused. The latest renovation works carried out in 1994 permitted the recovery of the historical accesses to the Homage Tower.



### Amphitheatre

The amphitheatre is situated beneath the present bullring, built in 1854. One of the oldest monuments of its kind in Hispania, it was built in the 1st century B.C., following the model of earlier Italic buildings. Some of its buttresses that extend beyond the bullring have been excavated and can be seen.

### National Museum of Underwater Archaeology

Its collections have been found in the coastal setting of the region of Murcia. Two sets of items from the Phoenician era stand out: the tusks of an elephant and the remains of boats from Mazarrón, as well as the set of items found in the Roman shipwrecks of the Isla de Escombreras.

### Torre ciega

A Roman funeral structure dating from the 1st century A.D., the Torre Ciega -or Blind Tower- is called this because it has no windows. It was once part of a necropolis located next to the entrance to Carthago-Nova. Restored in 1960, it is one of the most representative archaeological sites of the city.







The verses of Cervantes, emblazoned on a large tile mosaic opposite the monument dedicated to the Heroes of Cavite, provide us with an introduction and point of departure for a tour of Cartagena's harbour, the authentic *raison d'être* of the city throughout its long history. If we go to the quayside, in front of the monument to the Heroes of Cavite, we can get a glimpse of the enclosed circle that the bay of Cartagena offers, opening only via the narrow strait between the mounts of Galeras and San Julián, looming up like two protective colossi.

The exceptional natural distribution of this harbour has been noted since early antiquity. We stand, therefore, before a historic landscape, of which Cervantes, Polybius and all those who have approached the port of Cartagena have noted the great shelter that it offers to ships and its natural fortification, further enhanced by the efforts of man.



## CARTAGENA baroque and neoclassic

### Campus Muralla del Mar

The old military hospital and the Antígonos Barracks -both Neoclassical buildings that constructed in the 18th Century when Cartagena had become the principal Spanish naval base of the Mediterranean- have been renovated and adapted for university use. The characteristic military architectural features of the outside of these buildings remain intact. Part of the Hospital is the Autopsy Building, where classes on anatomy were held.

### Carlos III Rampart

A cornerstone in the defence plan for the Arsenal and Plaza of Cartagena, the rampart was built by Charles III. It contained three main gateways. Nowadays, all that remains is the stretch of wall between the former quay and San José Gates, and the Arsenal defences. In 1891, it lost its defensive capacity.



### Midshipmen's Barracks

Planned in 1785 as a naval academy and barracks, the building currently houses naval offices. With the exception of the top floor, few modifications have been made since its construction.

### Arsenal Gate

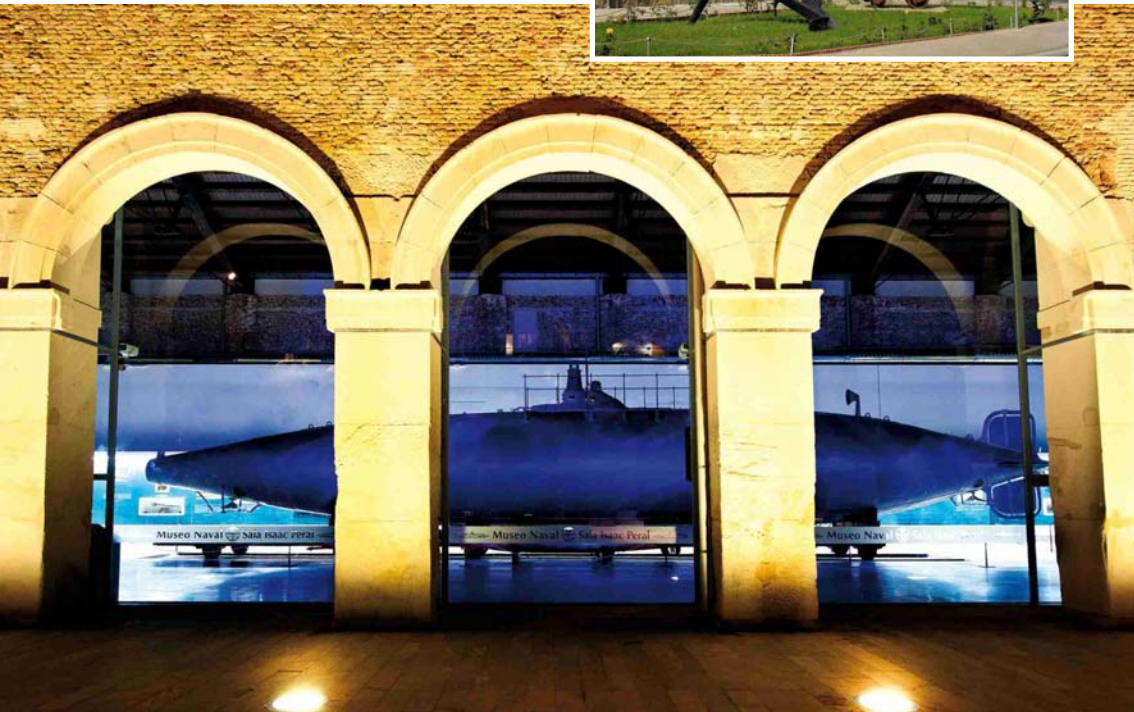
The sole remaining entrance to the ramparts of Cartagena built in the 18th century, in 1865 a clock tower was built over the gateway, highlighting the importance of the area to which it gives access.

### Naval Museum

The old headquarter for prisoners and moors built in the 15th century, was the Headquarter of seamanship in instruction and nowadays the place where the university and the naval museum coexist. Among the museums' subject areas include those dedicated to Isaac Peral and submarines. The original submarine was invented by Isaac Peral, born in Cartagena. The craft, designed in 1884 and built in Cadiz was launched in 1888 and now is exposed in the former boiler room of the Arsenal.

### Church of Santo Domingo

Once part of the Dominican Convent of San Isidoro, the Church's highlight is the Marraja brotherhood chapel. Built in 1695 and recently restored, it houses a baroque altarpiece of multi-coloured wood featuring a variety of Holy Week images.









### Church of Santa María de Gracia

Built during the 18th century and renovated in the 19th and 20th centuries, its façade remains unfinished to this day. The original plan was to build a church of cathedral proportions, the natural successor to Santa María la Vieja. The most architecturally-significant sculptures inside are the medieval image of the Virgin of the Rosell (former patron saint of the city) and the figures of the Four Saints, the work of Salzillo. The Holy Week processions have begun from this building ever since its construction in the 18th century.



### Molina House

This building -constructed in the 18th century- has a Neoclassical style. Its austerity, the stone and brick combination of the façade and the iron work together with the cast iron balconies are outstanding features.

The most representative examples of rural handicrafts from Cartagena and the region are on display in the Handicrafts Centre on Honda Street at the back of the building.

### Naval Headquarters Palace

The "Capitanía" was built in 1740 over part of the space occupied by the King's House. The façade was reconstructed in the 19th century and renovated in the 20th. The interior is richly decorated, with its imperial staircase being especially notable.

### Church of El Carmen

The church was once part of the former Convent of San Joaquín, the home of the Barefoot Carmelite Order. The façade combines elements of classical and popular architecture, and the interior has a single nave with side chapels.

### Artillery Headquarters Military Historical Museum

Its architecture is typical of the 18th-century military constructions so widely represented in the city. The building, which was virtually destroyed by an explosion towards the end of the canton uprising in 1874, was not rebuilt until the beginning of the 20th century. The side walls best retain the original building's appearance. It is currently the headquarters of the Municipal Historical Archives and the Military Museum which, through its maps, models and documents, illustrates the history of this military arm and its links with the city since 1508)

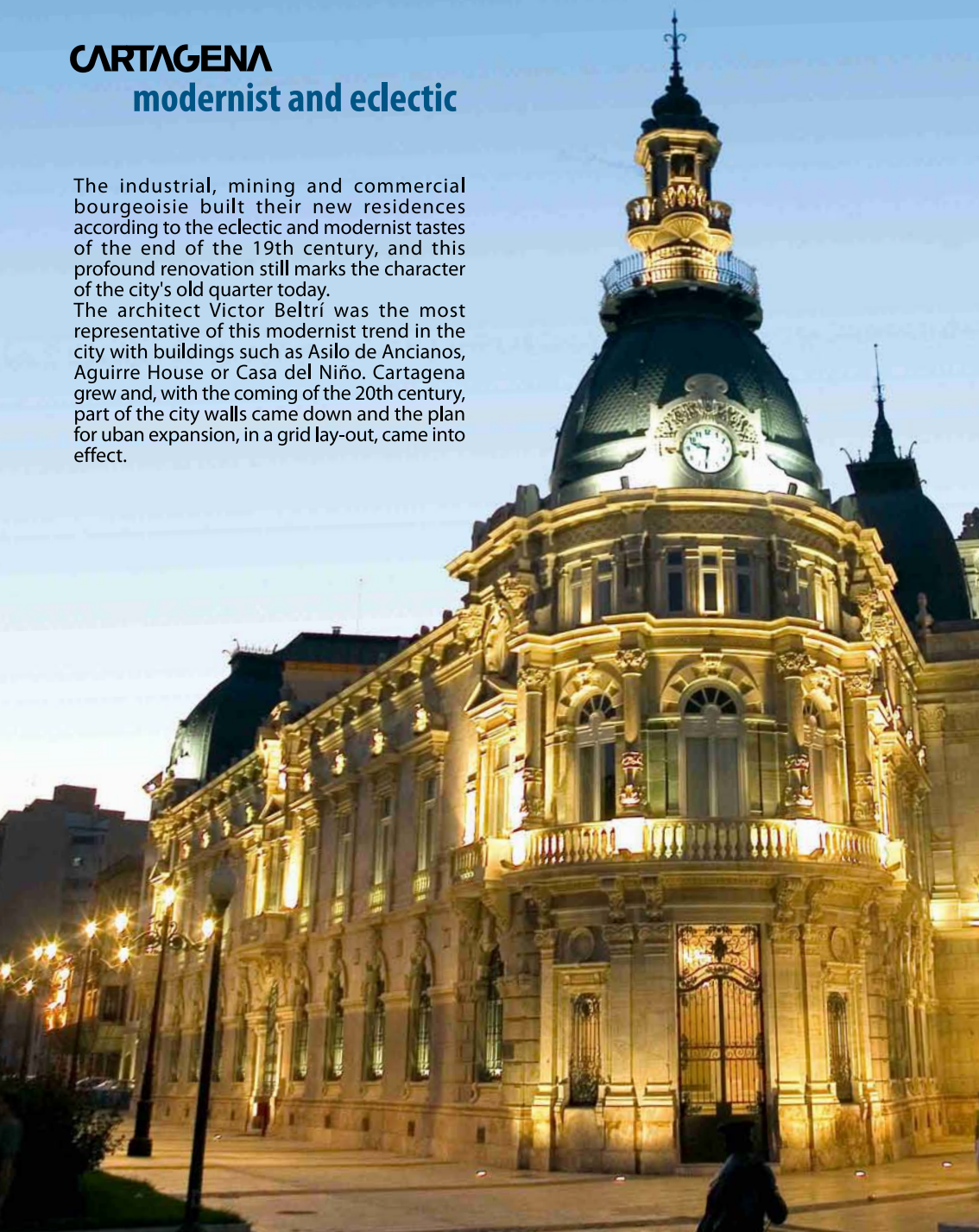


# CARTAGENA

## modernist and eclectic

The industrial, mining and commercial bourgeoisie built their new residences according to the eclectic and modernist tastes of the end of the 19th century, and this profound renovation still marks the character of the city's old quarter today.

The architect Victor Beltrí was the most representative of this modernist trend in the city with buildings such as Asilo de Ancianos, Aguirre House or Casa del Niño. Cartagena grew and, with the coming of the 20th century, part of the city walls came down and the plan for urban expansion, in a grid lay-out, came into effect.







### **Defensive Architecture Interpretation Centre. Fort Christmas.**

The fort-built during the 1860s to defend the interior of the harbour, the city and the Arsenal from attack by enemy fleets- is located at one of the points on the coast flanking the harbour entrance. The building, of neoclassical style, has materials explaining the importance of Cartagena along the Mediterranean axis throughout the centuries resulting from its geographically strategic relevance.

### **Railway Station**

The modernist decorative details -such as the ironwork on doors and columns, the cantilever roof and the Roman thermae-style window on the façade- are of special interest. The interior was also decorated along modernist lines, though all that remains today of the design are the ticket counter, the doorframes, the ceiling and the lamp.

### **Maestre House**

The façade is the only reminder of the house's original design it, was inspired by the Casa Calvet by Gaudí with a few touches of Baroque. The Rococo decorations around the main door, the belvedere and windows in the central section are especially notable.



### **Aguirre House - Regional Museum of Modern Art. MURAM**

The highlight of this building is the tower topped by a shiny dome. Under the tower are two profusely decorated façades, covered in rococo ceramic motifs. The bees on the tower are a symbol of industry. On the inside, the main floor constitutes the focus of the visit. The Regional Museum of Modern Art (MURAM) occupies part of this building and an annex, thus linking the concept of modernity in the continent and in the content. The exhibitions are focused on artistic manifestations produced from approximately 1870 to 1960.

### **Caridad Basilica**

Once the church of the Caridad Hospital, in its present form it has a Neoclassical style and a metal structure. The interior is dominated by the dome, a typical feature of many Neoclassical buildings, whose model was Agrippa's Pantheon in Rome. The church is the home of the city's patron saint, the Virgin of Sorrow, an 18th century image sculpted in Naples. There are several sculptures by Salzillo and his school, including the Crucifixion, the Rococo altarpiece in the Comunión Chapel and the canvases painted by Manuel Wssell de Guimbarde in 1893.



### **Grand Hotel**

Built in the style of the Viennese and French modernist schools, the hotel has two façades joined by a rotunda crowned with a spectacular dome. The monotony of the hotel's six floors is broken by the use of alternating colours and decorative details, such as the ironwork on doors and marquees.



### Clares House

The building was designed by the Cartagena-born architect Mario Spottorno. The façade facing Aire Street has a cornice, stained glass windows, floral decorations and ground floor capitals, which are typical of the modernist period.

### City Hall

A triangular-shaped building with three different façades, the official nature of the edifice is underscored by its eclectic construction. Inside, the modernist style is evident in the paintings and decorative details in the grand entrance hall and on the 1st floor.

### Cervantes House

Victor Beltrí's opera prima, this enormous house dominates the other buildings on the street. The façade contains the white belvederes so typical of Cartagena. There are dozens of symbols relating to commerce, industry and mining.

### Casino

The 18th century doorway is the only reminder left of the building's origins as the house for the Marquis of Casatilly, which was finally remodelled by Víctor Beltrí around 1897. Inside, the highlight is the patio ringed by a second floor gallery. Decorations and furnishings are modernist.

### Llagostera House

The façade of this building constructed in 1916 was designed to support ceramic decoration. The structure is in the Cartagena style, with balconies at the front and belvederes on the sides. The ceramic work by Gaspar Polo reproduces the allegorical figures of Minerva and Mercury and the coats of arms of Barcelona, Murcia, Cartagena and Manlleu. Currently in rehabilitation.

### Pedreño House

The house is reminiscent of Renaissance palaces. The central section of the façade is full of decorative details, including the head of Mercury, the crowned head on the second floor pediment, the enormous balcony on the third, and the lantern on the roof. The ground floor and entresol form an independent unit, linked to the higher floors by a series of decorative elements.



### Dorda House

The façade, with curved mouldings and floral decorations, is inspired by the Baroque style. Inside, the most striking element is the Arab-style central courtyard.

### Zapata House

The house was built in the Gothic-inspired modernist style typical of Catalonia, the birthplace of architect Víctor Beltrí. Outside, one can see the columned doorway and crenellated tower, as well as the Viennese-style mouldings on the walls. There is an Arab-style glass-covered patio inside.

### Urban Expansion Company House

Planned as an office and residential building, it was used as a centre to promote the area of the city then being developed. In its construction and decorative details, the building is eclectic in style.

# CARTAGENA contemporary

Now past the years of industrial conversion at the end of the 20th century, Cartagena looks to the future as a city which whilst maintaining its renewed industrial activity, is at the same time an important commercial hub with a clear focus on culture and tourism. The construction of cutting-edge buildings and the restoration of others that we have already mentioned, give a new air to the city.

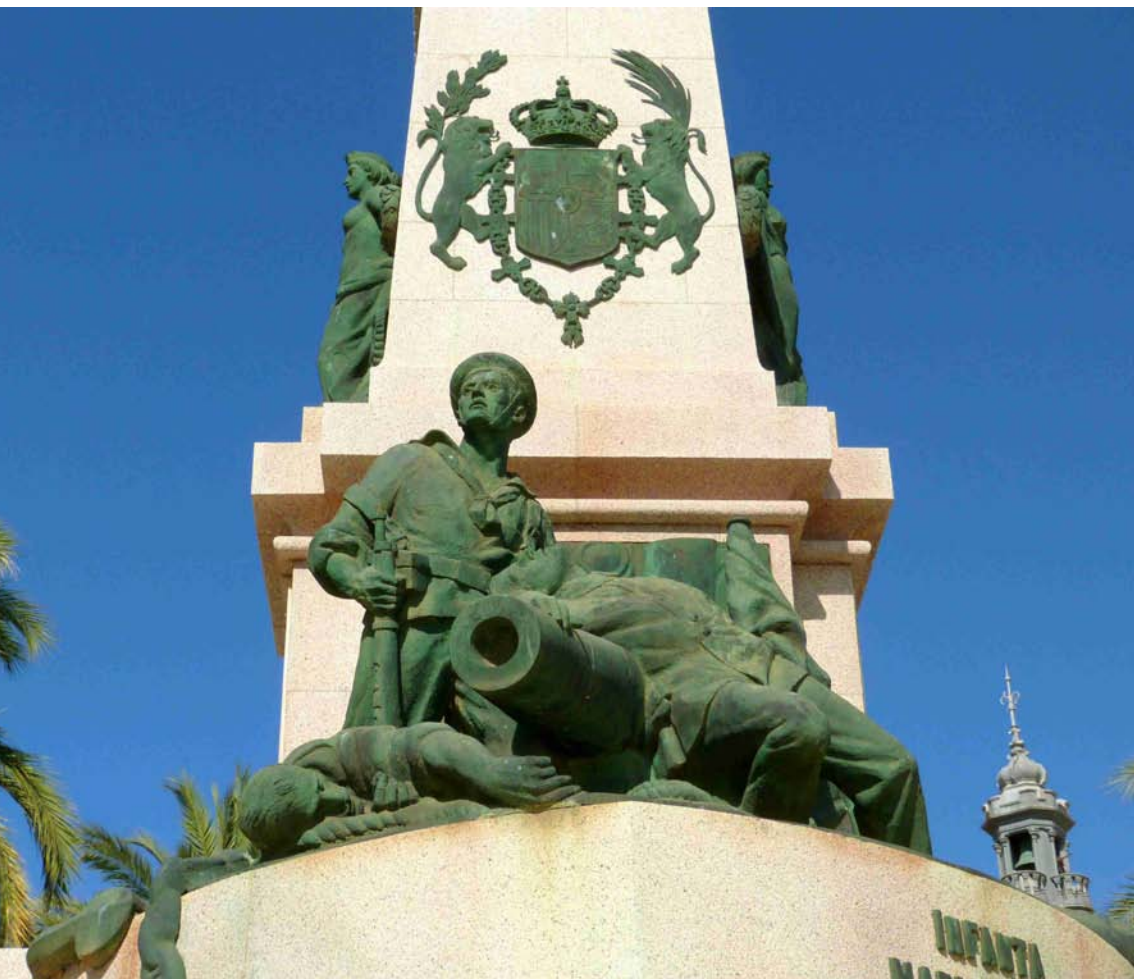
## Civil War Shelter-Museum

These galleries, excavated out of the Cerro de la Concepción to serve as air-raid shelters, were still to be completed at the end of the Spanish Civil War.

They were part of the works carried out to construct shelters able to hold 5,500 people during the heavy bombing that Cartagena was subjected to, as it was the naval base for a great part of the Republican fleet.

## Lift-Gangway

Gisbert Street, built across the Cartagena hill, was opened in 1878, thereby connecting Cartagena to the sea. A lift now carries passengers up the 45m elevation, replacing the natural route which was swallowed up with the excavation work.





### **Auditorio and Congress Centre el Batel**

Next to the coastal shelf as one more piece included in the port landscape of commercial containers, links the fisherman area of Santa Lucía to the city centre.

### **Tourist Catamaran**

A trip around the port so that you can see and appreciate the defence system and the wharf activity.



### **Héroes de Santiago de Cuba and Cavite Monument**

Erected to honour the memory of the Spanish sailors killed at Cavite and Santiago de Cuba while battling against the American fleet. The monument was inaugurated in 1923 by King Alfonso XIII.

### **Regional Assembly**

Built in 1987 for its present use, the building has a façade which displays a number of influences: the Venetian Renaissance and a certain modernist air linking it to the typical Levantine architecture. Inside, the most impressive sights are the Patio de los Ayuntamientos (Court of Town Halls) and the Patio de las Comarcas (Court of the Districts).

### **Carmen Conde & Antonio Oliver Museum**

Donated to the city of Cartagena by Carmen Conde. The place has been kept with the same atmosphere, where the local poet wrote most of her important work. It is placed at the Culture Centre Ramon Alfonso Luzzy.



### **Tourist Bus**

A panoramic route which, in addition, takes passengers to the key sites of their tourist trip.



## CARTAGENA and surroundings

### The bay of Cartagena

The natural port of Cartagena is bounded by the island of Escombreras on the east and the hill of La Torrosa on the west. Its entrance is guarded by a series of castles and coastal batteries dating from the 18th and 19th centuries that, in their day, made the city virtually impregnable. Castles like the 18th century Galeras or Atalaya castles and the 19th century San Julian castle, as well as batteries like those of San Leandro, San Isidoro, Santa Florentina, Santa Ana, Trincabotijas, Navidad, Podadera and San Fulgencio. Facilities that today, as a result of the advance of military technology, have fallen into disuse.

Currently, the Port of Cartagena has two wharfs: one is in the inner harbour of Escombreras where different industries are situated and the other is the main wharf for the city itself. Between them both is the nearest of our beaches, Cala Cortina, which has all of the required facilities.



### La Manga del Mar Menor

La Manga is a sandy formation - like a barrier reef - 22 kilometres long and between 90 and 900 metres wide. This spit of land, by means of canals connecting with the Mediterranean (the so-called «golas», or gullets) gave rise to a coastal lagoon, the Mar Menor, with a surface area of 170 square kilometres and a maximum depth of 8 metres. The water of the Mar Menor maintains an annual average temperature of 18° which, together with its generally calm state, make an exceptionally favourable location for all types of water sports. The islands of the Mar Menor -Sujeto, Barón, Ciervo, Redondela and Perdiguera- form a protected natural area.



La Manga del Mar Menor starts from the Cabo de Palos, a geographical accident that has nowadays become a fishing and tourist town where -apart from its innumerable and welcoming coves- there is the lighthouse, built in 1864 and prominently sited, rising to a height of more than 50 metres and having a range of 23 nautical miles. The depths of the water surrounding the nearby Hormiga and the Hormigón Islands offer an ecological treasure much appreciated by lovers of underwater exploration, which fully justifies its status as an Integral Marine Reserve.

In Cabo de Palos one can find the Centro de Documentación y Exposición de Recursos Turísticos (Documentation Centre and Tourist Resource Exhibition), with document archives and a projection room with views of the nature reserves of the Region.

The Natural Park of Calblanque, Monte de las Cenizas y Peña del Águila is located in the vicinity of Cabo de Palos. It is an exceptional landscape consisting of a succession of sandy strips, arid hills, cliffs and salt flats where there is a great wealth of different species, both plant (palm trees, carob trees, pine trees, etc.), and animal (storks, flamingos, egrets, peregrine falcons, owls, eagles, foxes and rabbits). Access to this Regional Park is by way of the

road from Cartagena to La Manga. Continuing more towards the interior, we find a spacious tourist complex, with several golf courses.

Continuing along the road that goes to Portmán it is possible to climb to Cenizas Fortress, strategically situated in Cabo Negrete, were built to fend off the naval bombardment of Cartagena, with the assistance of crossfire from the gun battery at Cabo Tiñoso.





On this same road linking Cartagena and La Manga, and on the north slope of Monte Miral, is the Monastery of San Ginés de la Jara, a place of worship that -even though the present building dates from the 16th century- retains traces of its origin, possibly from the Visigothic period. The Zamar Carriage Museum -easily seen from the road- displays pieces of great historical value that range from the 17th century to the present, including a wide variety of carriages and horse tack.

Continuing along the interior coastal line of the Mar Menor are the various estate developments of Punta Brava, Los Urrutias, Los Nietos, Islas Menores, Mar de Cristal, Playa Honda and Playa Paraíso all of which belong to the Municipality of Cartagena

### La Sierra Minera

The environment of the nearby mining mountain range of Cartagena has been defined at times as a "lunar landscape" because of the extensive opencast mining and the corresponding mountains of earth with a remarkable variety of colours (ochres, reds, greys, greens, blues and purples) that have changed the appearance of the area. To all of this are added the remains of the sundry constructions required for mining operations, among which, most notably, are the singular and most unusual "castilletes" (towers).

Restorations have been made to some of the facilities in a mine of great historical interest located within the landscape of exhausted mines around "El Llano del Beal", and these have been turned into a Mining Interpretation Centre. To the origin of the "Las Matildes" mine dates back to 1871, and this mine was originally devoted to the extraction of lead.

Later on, after the construction of a new engine room and modernist-shaped metal tower in the early years of the 20th century, the mine evolved into a pumping system to drain the mining basin underground.

The environmental restoration of this area allows to visit the Agrupa Vicenta's Mine, in the municipal district in La Unión, goes into the bowels of the Earth, 80 metres of depth, going through the galleries with monumental pillars that support the majestic mineral vaults, under which underground lagoons with unreal colours are reflected.

Cartagena has a many great hidden corners in which it is still possible to find natural, almost untouched areas. Places where it is possible to hike in areas that are, or are soon to become, protected natural zones. The city currently offers seven routes (mining routes from the last century, traditional fishermen's routes, livestock herding routes and the Atamaria roman road) of less than 50 km.



### The Campo de Cartagena

The Campo de Cartagena is a natural area that extends from the hilly ranges of Mazarrón and Carrascoy to the coasts of the Mar Menor and the Mediterranean.

Comprising an area of 169,800 hectares (1 hectare = 2.471 acres), and blessed with an exceptionally mild climate, the region has become an ideal location for the cultivation of dry-farming crops, outstanding among which are cereals such as wheat, barley and the like, and fruit-bearing trees like almonds, carobs, olives and figs. The further benefit of water diverted from the Tajo-Segura transfer for irrigation has transformed this area into a most productive site for planting typical market garden products, for example citrus and other fruit trees, and vegetables.

The necessity for milling the products of the Campo de Cartagena and for extracting water from its subsoil, together with the existence of



steady and strong winds, led to the appearance of windmills, one of the most typical sights in our fields. Windmills that are characterised -as

normal in a coastal area- by their triangular sails instead of the traditional classically shaped versions. At present, more than a hundred of these mills survive whose restoration is being undertaken in order to bring back one of the most characteristic features of the Carthaginian landscape.

Jobs and customs that had been lost with the passing of time are also being recovered. In La Palma, at the Regional Museum of Bobbin Lace, there is a wide selection of this handicraft. Very near this is the Casa del Folklore. Located in a mansion dating from the beginning of the 20th century, it offers an exhibition of dresses and other clothing, photographs of the windmills, and is the headquarters of the folklore school that brings together the Folklore Group of the city of Cartagena, created with the aim of recovering and spreading the valuable ethnic cultural heritage of the area. Five kilometres from here, in Pozo Estrecho, are several wine makers that produce wine of recognised prestige in this part of the region.

### The west area

In Canteras, a district that has taken the name of the local quarries, there is a mine for a kind of sandstone known as "tabaire" by the Carthaginians. The first evidence of the use of this material in local buildings dates back to the Punic period, when the walls of the city were built from this stone. It was used intensively during the Roman era, as well as in the 18th and 19th centuries until its use was abandoned at the beginning of the 20th century. Continuing towards the west, although still within the outskirts of Cartagena, lies the «Sierra de la Muela, Cabo Tiñoso y Roldán», a mountainous formation that reaches a maximum height of 551 metres and hosts a rich variety of vegetation and fauna. Here one





can contemplate -among others- examples of mastic trees, pines and cistus, as well as royal eagles, foxes, wild boar and genets. Located 11 kilometres from the city, Portús Beach, located between cliffs and at the foot of the Sierra de la Muela, includes among its attractions the only nudist camping site of the municipality.

The neighbouring zone of Cabo Tiñoso offers the wildest and most solitary aspect of all Cartagena's coast. It can be approached on foot by using the promenades -the principal one of which is the Bolete- that wander through the area and, at the end, there are a coastal battery and a powerful automatic lighthouse with a range of 24 miles. At present, due to the biological wealth of the nearby marine depths -where a population of mullet dolphins can be found- the Marine Reserve of Fishing Interest has been declared under the designation of Marine Reserve of Fishing Interest of Cabo Tiñoso, that with the Marine Reserva of Cabo de Palos-Islas Hormigas, both of them have become in a reference for scuba-diving. Guaranteed diving is something that can only be found on the Cartagena coast. Its unique east to west orientation with Cartagena at the centre means that it is possible to go diving at any of these locations, even if the weather conditions at other locations prevent you from doing so.

At the point of Cabo Tiñoso -and at a height of 250 metres- the site of the coastal battery of Castillitos can be found, to be reached from the highway from Cartagena to Isla Plana, branching off at the crossroads that lead to the Campillo de Adentro.

Construction of this battery took place in 1929

as part of a Plan for the Defence of Naval Bases in Spain. Its architecture imitates that of medieval constructions; at present, it is out of service although in it two colossal Vickers cannons have been preserved.

The beach of La Azohía, together with a well equipped tourist infrastructure, supports a traditional fishing hamlet. There they continue to use -from March to July- the "almadraba", a fishing technique of Moorish origin used to catch tuna. One of its points of greatest interest is the so-called Torre de Santa Elena; hexagonal in shape with two wings, its construction dates back to at least the final years of the 16th century, under the reign of Felipe II, and it was built with the object of providing protection to the fishermen of La Azohía and to serve as a watchtower to guard against the presence of pirates on their coasts.

Between La Azohía and the neighbouring town of Mazarrón lies Isla Plana, another town dedicated to summer tourism. Here, the main characteristic is a beach surrounded by low cliffs, with an island -from which the name of the place is derived- and a mound, known as "El Mojón" that separate the municipal limits of Cartagena and Mazarrón. On Isla Plana, there still are some ancient thermal baths of great historical interest. The use of their spring waters with curative properties since the beginning of the XVIII century is well documented.



# CARTAGENA

## festivities and shopping

### Festivities

In Cartagena's festival calendar, three dates stand out in particular. Carnival, Cartaginese y Romanos and, above all, Semana Santa. Carnival, a celebration that was very deep-rooted in Cartagena up until the Spanish Civil War, came back into its own following the return of democracy. This carnival combines parades

of spectacular costumes and dancers, where feathers and sequins rule with the biting critiques of the chirigotas, satirical song routines, in which the more sarcastic and raunchy facet of the Cartagena character is given free rein. Dances, fancy dress and mass participation take over the city.

The day after carnival ends, Ash Wednesday, the definitive announcement of Semana Santa takes place with the traditional act of the *llamada*, the call. Without a doubt, Semana Santa is the tradition which is most deeply rooted in the people of Cartagena, they commemorate it with some very special processions, unlike any others that take place in the rest of Spain. These processions are unique for the spectacular nature of their enormous thrones, of a genuine Cartagena style - authentic architectural structures of lights and flowers - the artistic value of their imagery, the richness of their gold borders and the harmonious march of their penitents, all in perfect order and absolute silence, who follow the rhythm beaten out by the drum and the traditional procession marches.

The rivalry between the two biggest *cofradías*, or brotherhoods, of *marrajos* and *californios*, has long marked these Passion Processions. Alongside these two great rival brotherhoods is the *Cofradía del Resucitado* and the *Cofradía del Cristo del Socorro*, which is in charge of leading the procession that opens Spain's Semana Santa onto the street. Early in the





morning of Viernes de Dolores, the fiesta of the Patrona de Cartagena, with the celebration of the Stations of the Cross sets out from the romantic setting of the ruins of the Old Cathedral and the Cofradía del Resucitado that marches on Easter Sunday.

During Semana Santa, all of Cartagena takes to the streets. The city's unique take on the procession offers up some impressive sights, which are best viewed from some of the more elevated spots, such as the Cuesta de la Baronesa or the typical bay windows that really come into their own during Semana Santa. Every moment is special but perhaps worthy of a special mention, if only for its unusual character, is the exit of the throne of San Pedro from The Arsenal on the night of Martes Santo (Easter Tuesday), or the image of Jesús Nazareno departing from the sea shore, at the Pescadería, on the morning of Viernes Santo (Good Friday) on its way to the meeting with the Virgen Dolorosa which takes place in Plaza de la Merced, in front of the Palacio Aguirre. Equally impressive is the silence and the order of the capirotos, or hooded penitents, or the mass chanting of the Salve Popular accompanying the collection of the images of the Virgin.

The end of summer is marked by the fiesta of Cartagineses y Romanos. In the second half of September the historical events that marked the Second Punic War, in which Cartagena played an important role are brought to life. Once again, festival-goers are split into two sides: The Carthaginians, grouped around the central figure of Hannibal, who marched with his powerful army and his elephants out of Cartagena on the way to his conquest of Rome, and the Romans, rallied around Scipio, who conquered Cartagena for Rome, thus deciding the course of the war.

Parades of troops, divine oracles, shows from the ancient Roman Circus, sessions of the senate in which space is given over to humorous critiques of local and national news, and even battles (albeit bloodless ones) all take place during the ten days of the fiesta. The celebrations of each day spill on over into the night at the festival campsite, a sort of fair ground where each group of troops and legions sets up their tent and carry on the party, with tapas and dancing, all in a setting in keeping with the 3rd century BC.



## Festivals and contests

Throughout the year, Cartagena hosts many different festivals, that turn the city into a meeting place for lovers of music, dance, cinema or theatre.

The rich heritage of the ancient world makes Cartagena the ideal location for the spring celebration of the Festival de Teatro Grecolatino, aimed at young students.

In July, Cartagena becomes La Mar de Músicas - the sea of music - which is a festival dedicated to world music, and a member of the European forum of Worldwide Music. Each edition of the annual festival is organised around a specially invited country, and during the evenings in July concerts take place in various unusual settings. The auditorium of the Parque Torres is the festival's principal stage, and is where the concerts with the biggest audiences are held and the name of la mar de músicas acquires its full meaning.

A new stage has been added to this Festival, it is the courtyard of the antique Seamanship

Cartagena Barrack, nowadays it belongs to the Politécnica de Cartagena University's buildings. Here you can enjoy the concert, and dance if you feel the urge, whilst watching a submarine tear through the black reflective surface of the water in the harbour entrance, underneath the silver silhouette of the gulls flying overhead. But La Mar de Músicas, offers much more than its night-time concerts. Throughout the month of July, diverse workshops, courses and exhibitions related to the festival's theme take place.

The section La Mar de Letras, (the sea of letters), takes care of the literary aspects, whilst the street performances held throughout the day turn Cartagena in July into a cosmopolitan fiesta with music at its heart. This event offers unforgettable experiences such as enjoying a drink in the fresh night air, or contemplating the view of the harbour swept by the lighthouses, the boats and the illuminated castles from the hanging gardens of Parque Torres and all whilst taking in the very best live music.





Another deep-rooted tradition is the International Improvised Poetry Festival “Trovalia” which takes place over different evenings throughout the summer in August.

Once again, music takes centre stage with the now traditional International Jaz Festival held each November, which has welcomed some of the biggest names in the genre.

### **Shopping and leisure**

The secular, commercial tradition of Cartagena is reflected today in a modern and comprehensive selection of shops found mainly in two large areas.

Firstly, the Centro Comercial Abierto, in the old quarter (casco antiguo) of the city, with its multitude of specialist establishments where the pleasure of shopping is enhanced by the attractive streets steeped in the history of traditional Cartagena.

Charming little squares greet us around every corner and provide the ideal spot to rest and recharge your batteries in one of the specialist restaurants.

The streets of the Centro Comercial Abierto offer meeting places in which diverse cultural or leisure activities often take place, such as Plaza de Juan XXIII, Puerta de Murcia, Ayuntamiento Square or San Francisco Square, as well as a wide offer of bars for tapeo that give to this area in Cartagena an unique nature of leisure and gastronomy.

The sea front is another of the more popular areas for relaxing, among both locals and visitors to Cartagena, with lively terraces and restaurants.

The other thriving shopping area can be found in the north of the city, with department stores and other establishments including shops, restaurants and bars, located between the grand Avenues of Alameda de San Antón, Reina Victoria Avenue and Paseo Alfonso XIII.



## Gastronomy

Cartagena cookery links the sea and the country. Each one in its own place and circumstances, without renouncing mixing. What is definitely true is that the moment and the place determine certain tastes. Thus, the surroundings of the fishing port of Santa Lucía are the place for fried fish as popular as Aladroque (anchovy) which has come to be a synonymous of Cartagena.

One of the greatest gastronomy pleasures could be some of the fish dishes in a quiet atmosphere on the seafront, dishes such as salted gilthead, fillet of sea bass, rice with lobster, and particularly the Caldero of the mar menor.

It comes from what the fishermen made on the beach using what they had from fishing ground and some rice. This kind of sea stew is similar to the popular cocido from Madrid, in the sense that once the ingredients (fish, oil, chili peppers,

tomato) are cooked, they are served apart from the rice prepared in the same juice of fish and it is seasoned with alioli (garlic mayonnaise) Michirones can be the highlighted among the dishes from the country. It is made of dried beans cooked with a bone of ham, bacon, spicy sausage, a potato and hot peppers. It is a heavy dish, the main reason for it being tasted in small tapas in several bars of the city.

Pork cold meats are traditionally presented at roadside restaurants of the Campo de Cartagena: longaniza (red and white spicy pork sausage), salchicha (sausage), morcilla (black pudding), blanco and morcón. A salad is a good idea to avoid fats, specially those made of smoked fish: grey mullet eggs, dried salted tuna and bonito. The flank of the tuna are the best part of it, accompanied by sliced tomato and tápenas, washed down with olive oil.





Roast kid and rabbit with potatoes in garlic sauce are always present at the roadside restaurants in the area of the Sierra. It is a must, then, to have Campo de Cartagena wines, specially the traditional golden wine from El Plan.

In baking, we have to talk about cordiales, made of sugar, eggs, almonds on a wafer base, mainly at Christmas time, the suspiros, sugar and spongy almonds or exploradores, sweet meat pasty.

And, of course, the typical coffee, the asiático. It is a blend of coffee, condensed milk, brandy and cinnamon. The most elaborated ones have some drops of Licor 43 (whisky) and a piece of lemon peeling, all this, served in an exclusive glass made for this purpose.





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