

CHATEAUX D'ARACENA

Le sommet du mont du château d'Aracena, où se trouve au coeur l'église Priorat et sa forteresse, fut le noyau original de la population de la localité. Une ville qui durant l'époque médiévale, fut protégée par une épaisse muraille et une forteresse. En plus de l'architecture militaire et religieuse, une population s'est développée depuis l'époque d'al-Andalus au Moyen-âge tardif. Du Xème siècle au XIIIème siècle on y trouvait une population islamique, celle-ci fut conquise par le Portugal par le biais de l'Ordre de l'Hôpital. Postérieurement, elle appartenu au règne de Castilla-Leon. Au fur et à mesure, le peuple s'est étendu sur ses versants et ses vallées pendant que la "villa vieja" était laissée à l'abandon. Pendant les siècles XV et XVI, la Plaza Alta fut l'endroit stratégique, El Cabildo ainsi que l'Eglise paroissiale de l'Asunción y ont été construites. A l'intérieur du mont, on trouve la Gruta de las Maravillas (la Grotte des Merveilles).

Le château d'Aracena (s. XIII) est une des fortifications médiévales qui s'intègrent à la Banda Gallega, un ensemble de châteaux qui défendaient le territoire de Séville, le château est oeuvre du Portugal suite à la conquête de Andalousie. Le château d'Aracena est composé d'une salle d'armes et alcazar, séparés par une muraille et surplombé de la Torre Mayor.

La fouille archéologique au château d'Aracena, montre l'existence du règlement, à l'époque islamique et du Moyen Age au sommet de la montagne surplombant la ville aujourd'hui. Un village islamique a conquis par le Portugal au milieu du XIIIe siècle, qui était protégé par des murs de la ville et un château pendant au Moyen Age. Cette ville s'est intégré au Royaume de Castilla et León par des traités diplomatiques.

Eglise Prioral N^a S^a Mayor Dolor (Siècle XIII-XV):

Ce temple es le plus ancien d'Aracena et un des plus emblématiques, car il renferme l'emblème de la patronne de la localité. De style Gothique-Mudéjar, il a trois vaisseaux de même hauteur, avec des voûtes datant des croisades. La construction a en tête une niche néoclassique qui fut ajoutée à l'abside durant le siècle XVIII, et à ses pieds un choeur et un atrium. On distingue un autre élément qui est le clocher, avec une décoration extérieure du style mudéjar, inspirée de la Giralda de Séville.



MEDIEVAL CASTLE OF ARACENA - CHATEAUX MÉDIÉVAL D'ARACENA

1- PRIORAL CHUCH - L'ÉGLISE PRIORAT
 2- CASTLE - CHATEAUX
 3- COURTYARD - SALLE D'ARMES
 4- FORTRESS - ALCAZAR

5- MAIN TOWER - TORRE MAYOR
 6- CISTERN - RÉSERVOIR D'EAU
 7- ISLAMIC HOUSE - MAISON ISLAMIQUE
 8- MEDIEVAL VILLAGE - VILLAGE MÉDIÉVAL

ISLAMIC HOUSE

1- COURTYARD - COURS
 2- ROOM - CHAMBRE

MAISON ISLAMIQUE

3- LATRINE - LATRINE
 4- CISTERN-RÉSERVOIR D'EAU



CASTLE OF ARACENA

The origin of Aracena sets at the top of the hill where the castle and prioral church are. During medieval time, it was a fortified village, defended by a wall and the fortress. In this emplacement there have been found some archeological remains from X until XIII century, that prove an ANDALUSÍ population related to the Qatrasama settlement quoted by Islamic texts as district of the province of Sevilla. Within the castle, some of ANDALUSÍ homes and the different spaces of the medieval fortress are preserved.

During Al-Ándalus period, there was an Islamic population that was the origin of Present Aracena. This settlement began in the X century, during the caliphate of Cordoba, endures during the Taifa kingdoms (S XI) and remains standing until the almohade period (XII-XIII century). Conquer of Portugal's Islamic village, destroyed after the taking by the Hospitaller order. The border limits between Portugal and Castilla were established in the Badajoz treaties, in 1267, and Alcañices, in 1297, Aracena then started to depend from Castilla as part of the Crown territory, integrated in the Seville council. The castle is part what is known as "Banda Gallega", a group of fortifications that protected Sevillian territory from Portuguese attacks or from other military orders settled in the south of Extremadura.

The castle was built in the middle of XIII century and kept being used until the beginning of XVI century, when it lost its military purpose. It has a parade ground and Alcazar, separated by a wall, where the main tower stands out. The Alcazar takes up the Eastern area, the highest level of the hill. It can be defined as a little fortress within the castle. The towers have squared or rectangular floors, and have terraces with an access from the Rampart or wall walk. To guarantee water supply in case of siege, it had two cisterns, one in the parade ground and the other in the Alcazar. The mane tower is placed in the highest area of the hill, conceived as the last stronghold of defense, able to resist after the fortress had been taken. It has squared floors and some indoor spaces. Its original height is estimated to be 16 meters.

As time went by, the village expanded through the hills and conquered the valley at its feet, while the old settlement was abandoned and forgotten. During XV and XVI centuries, the nerve center of the village was "la Plaza Alta", where CABILDO and the Parish Church are. The urban development continued towards the mudejar hermitages (San Pedro, Santa Lucía, San Roque y Santo Domingo), located on the roads to Huelva, Portugal, Extremadura and Seville.

The prioral church of "Nuestra Señora del Mayor Dolor" is the oldest and most emblematic temple of Aracena. It was built between XIII and XV centuries within the urban walls, beside the castle. It's a gothic-mudejar building, where the outside tower stands out for its style, decorated with "paños de Sebka" and geometrical designs, with a clear influence from "La Giralda de Sevilla".

The church has three naves of the same height, roofed with groin vaults, choir and atrium. Inside, there's a neo-classic niche, built in XVIII century in the apse, that keeps the icon of "la Virgen Del Mayor Dolor", the patron saint of Aracena. In the high altar, there's the tomb of prior Pero Vazquez, in ceramic glaze, by Miguel Florentín (XVI century).

Outside, the "Royal door", with its atrium, and the "Mercedes door", decorated with features of flamenco gothic. Additionally, the altar pieces, icons and paintings that keeps inside should be noted, dated from XVI to XX centuries.



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