

**Medieval
Wall
Itinerary**
English
MUCC

Self-guided itinerary

Characteristics

- Free entrance.
- Walking tour.
- Duration of the tour: 1 h.
- Explanatory elements: an initial introductory panel and 9 points of interest: 7 indicated with numbered plates on the ground and 2 explanatory panels.

Instructions

The itinerary can be done using an audioguide or a printed guide.

- The audioguide and the digital map can be downloaded on a mobile device from the web: www.mucc.es/muralla
- Access online to the audioguide and map of the route on: <https://audioviator.com/en/audioguia/the-medieval-wall-of-castell>
- The printed guide must be requested at the Tourist Info office.

Sant Pere Tower opening hours (Las Aulas Square):

From Tuesday to Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

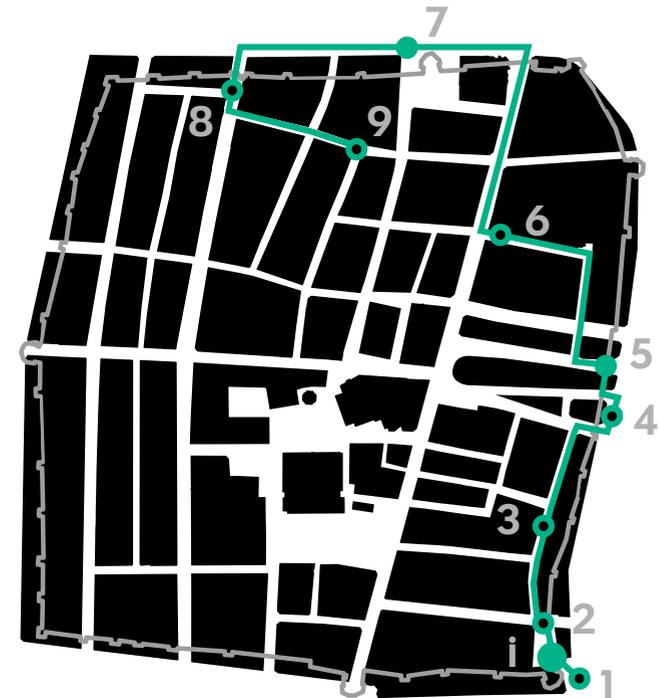
Accessible by stairs/elevator

For guided tours, please contact info@mucc.es

The medieval wall of Castelló

Itinerary map

The part of the wall (13th-18th century) that we will visit stretches from Hernán Cortés Square to San Luis Street. Built using a mud wall technique, the wall has a pebble concrete, sand and lime foundation. Sant Pere or Alçaments Tower, located in Las Aulas Square, is one of the best-kept remains.

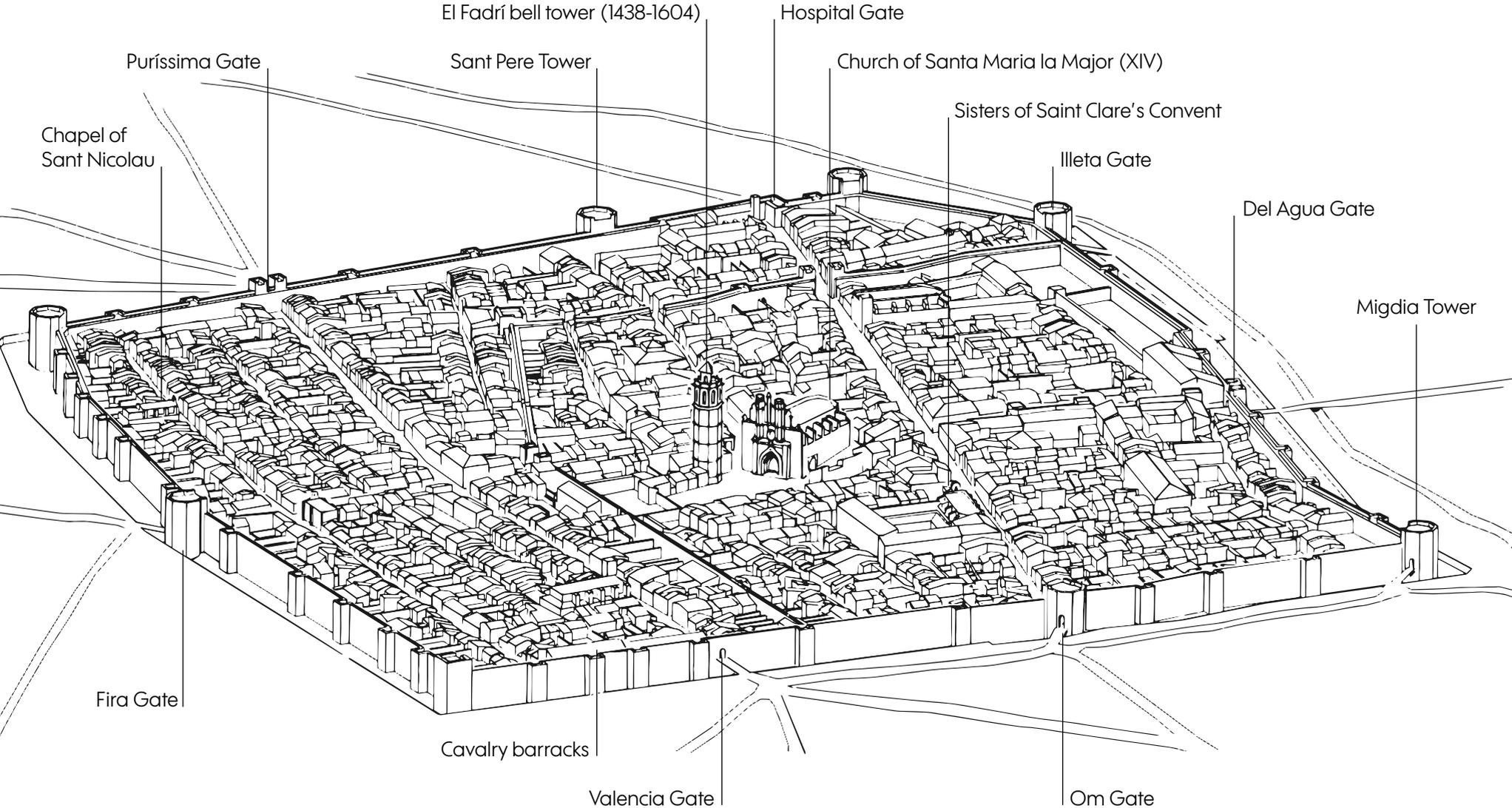


i Initial panel (outer Hernán Cortés Square)

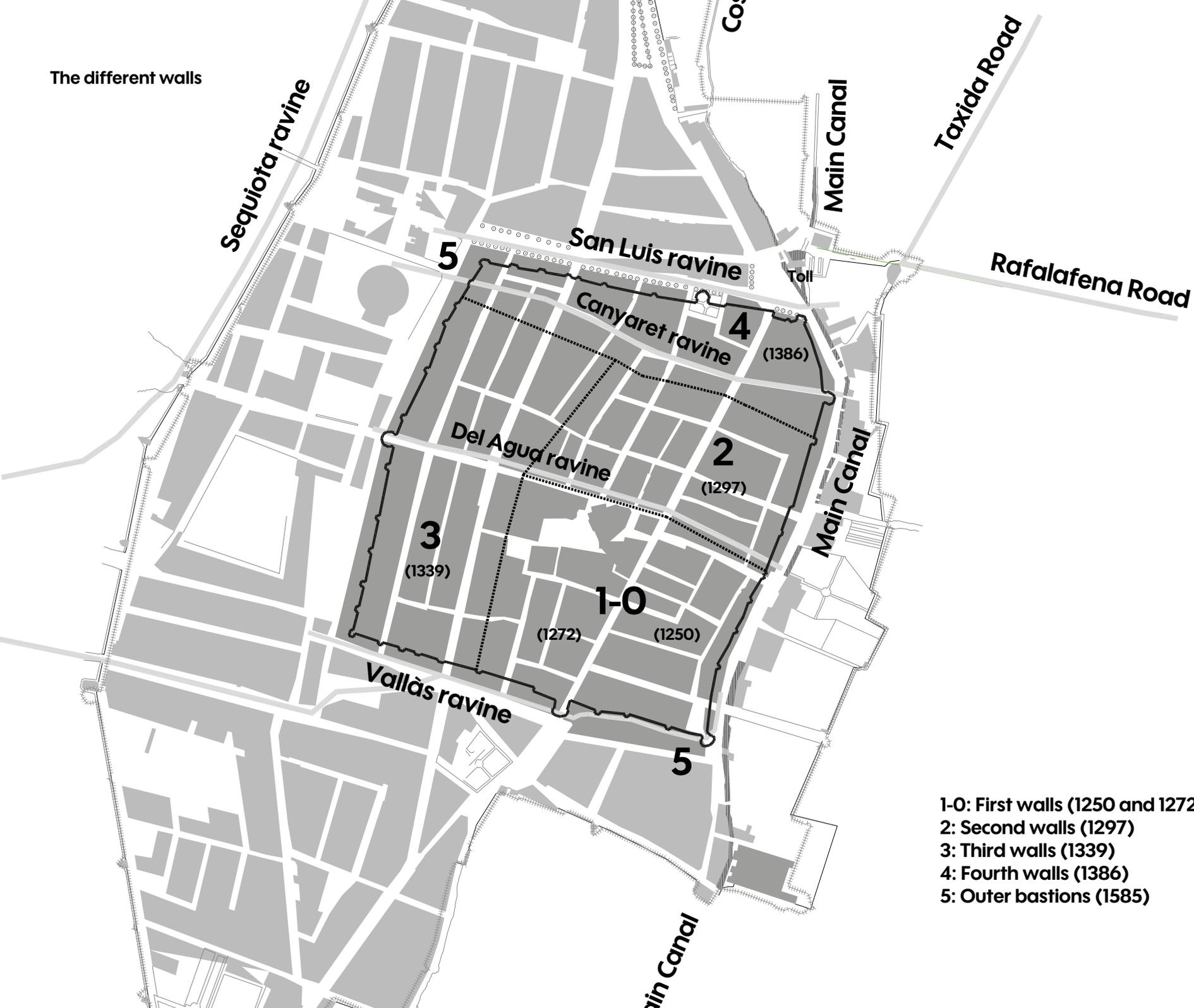
● Ground plates: 1. Outer Hernán Cortés Square / 2. Hernán Cortés Square / 3. Pescadores Street / 4. Del Agua Street / 6. Gracia Street - Mayor Street / 8. 152, Enmedio Street (casa Portolés) / 9. 31, Antoni Maura Street - Mealla Street. End of itinerary

● Explanatory panels: 5. Cardona Vives Square / 7. Las Aulas Square

Hypothetical reconstruction of the entire town



The different walls



- 1-0: First walls (1250 and 1272)
- 2: Second walls (1297)
- 3: Third walls (1339)
- 4: Fourth walls (1386)
- 5: Outer bastions (1585)

The medieval wall of Castelló

Introduction

The itinerary suggested follows the route of the old medieval city wall, built between the 13th and the 18th centuries. This route runs from outer Hernán Cortés Square, where we find an illustrative miniature of the city (the Midgia Tower is buried and its layout is drawn on the pavement), all the way to Antoni Maura Street, old Canyaret ravine, where it is still possible to see a section of the 18th century curtain wall. A section of the wall remains and one of the towers, Sant Pere's in Las Aulas Square, can be seen here.

The wall includes four extensions, two of which were added in the 13th century and the other two in the 14th century, always limited by the ravines that were used as trenches or moats. During these works there were specific renovations and many repairs, using the rammed earth construction technique (compressed earth rendered with a lime mortar) with foundations –or masonry walls– made of pebble concrete, sand and lime.

Along the tour there are other remarkable buildings that coexisted with the wall, although they were not built at the same time.

i - “How it all began”

Outer Hernán Cortés Square

The medieval town of Castelló was built between the 13th and 16th centuries. The initial location was a raised space between the Vallàs ravine to the south and Del Agua ravine to the north. Its extension, although small, must have probably taken over the previous location of the Binarabe Hispanic-Muslim hamlet.

The town expanded rapidly and, at the end of the 13th century, the walled enclosure was extended northwards until it reached the Canyaret ravine and perhaps it also incorporated another hamlet that used to be there.

A little less than a century later, between 1374 and 1386, the walled enclosure was extended to the west, to what would later become the Pla de la Fira, and north towards the Toll ravine.

When observing the orientation or structure of the plots occupied by the houses, it becomes apparent that the medieval town had two clearly demarcated areas. Mayor Street is the main road around which the town was built and served as a focal point when designing and distributing the streets, arranged differently from one side to the other.

To the east of Mayor Street, towards the sea, access to the houses is through the north or the south; the plots are long and arranged in this position (the oldest part of the town). On the other hand, to the west of Mayor Street, towards the west, the houses change their layout and are accessed through the east or the west. This different positioning may be possibly related to that of a former Hispanic-Muslim hamlet, in this case the Binarabe.

The outline is seen again in the extension of the walled enclosure to the north and always with Mayor Street as the axis that shows the two types of plots. Convents and large public buildings, as well as the creation of large squares in the eastern area, have modified much of this singular urban grid.



1 - Migdia Tower. "The miniature and the archaeological remains speak to us"

Stop 1: Outer Hernán Cortés Square

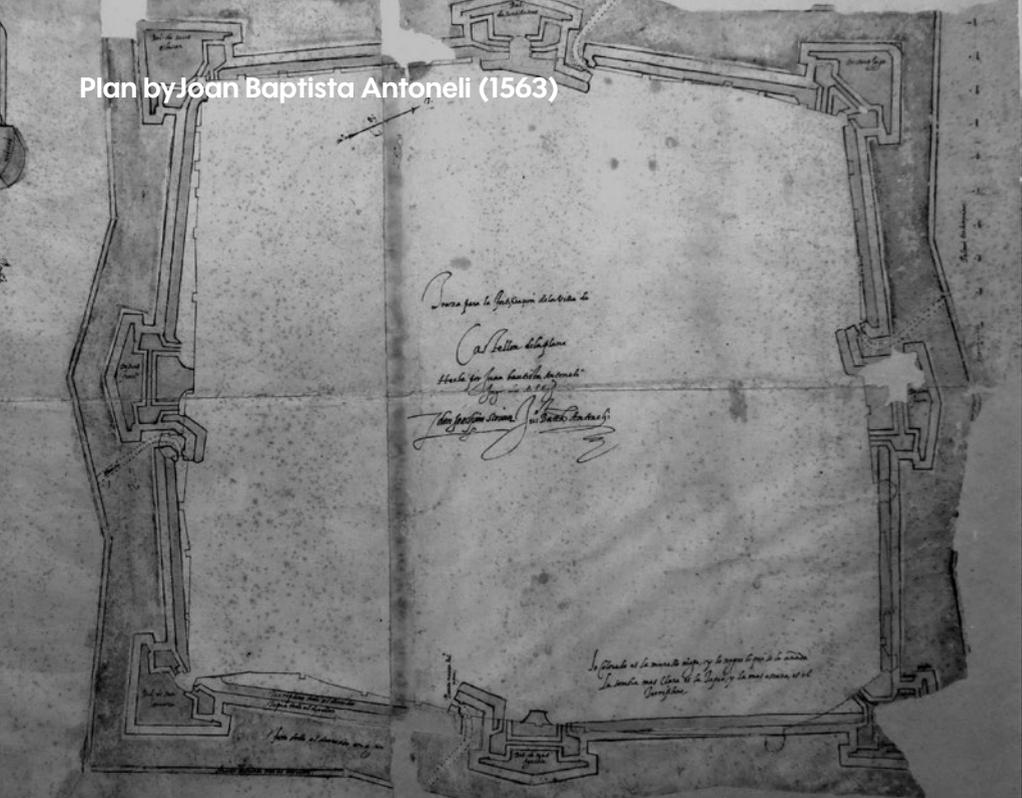
We are now in front of a miniature of the town where it is possible to see the set of buildings that stood alongside the wall around the time between the 13th and the 18th century. In addition to the inside of the walled town, important elements for the development of the city, such as the water from the Main Canal, and the moats and ravines that surrounded the town, should be noted.

Buildings such as the Fadri, the new City Hall, the main church, the churches of Sant Miquel, De la Sang and Sant Nicolau, the convents of the sisters of Saint Clare, the Augustinians, the Capuchin nuns, the Cavalry barracks, the Lonja and so on, stand out within the walled area. The attached map shows the wall route that will be visited later and also how the wall, the towers and the gates of the fortified area of the town must have been in the past, following the description of the design made by the engineer Joan Baptista Antoneli in 1563.

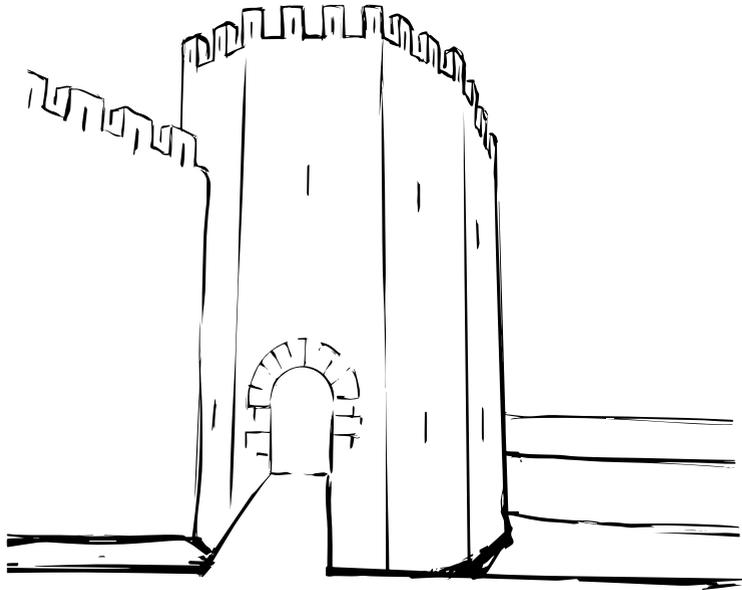
Archaeological remains of the medieval town's defensive system appeared in the undersoil of this site and the ground plan of the Migdia Tower, discovered during the excavations carried out in 2013, is printed on the floor of the square.

Here it is possible to see the thickness of the wall and the polygonal ground plan of the tower. There are two more elements: a pillar with a sterling shape in the middle of the moat and another wall at the southern end that may have been another pillar or buttress of a drawbridge. Perhaps, it could be the remains of a tower without protection of the Migdia Gate, always used to bridge the gap between the access to the town and the moat that surrounded it, as this was more than three metres deep compared to the ground level of the town. Undoubtedly, together with the remains of the Sant Pere Tower that we will see later on, this was one of the biggest and most significant finds to see in Castelló relating to the medieval wall.

Plan by Joan Baptista Antoneli (1563)



Hypothetical reconstruction of the Migdia Tower



Excavated foundations of the Migdia Tower



1 - Migdia Tower. "The miniature and the archaeological remains speak to us"

Stop 1: Outer Hernán Cortés Square

The archaeological remains of the tower allow questioning the historical, urban, architectural and landscape character around the town and its immediate surroundings.

We can move into the defensive system of the town, the accesses shape and types of doors, the importance of the small square at that time, or the urban planning of the area, developed from the access roads to the town from Borriana or from the sea (the road called Camino Viejo del Mar to access the Grau pier) seeing how they are joined with the Main Canal that crosses the area. The type of construction can be seen in the materials used to build the wall, the tower and the drawbridge. The visual panorama and the landscape that must be recovered in this place is the link between the tower, the gate, the road that surrounded the wall, mills like the Roder or other types of oil mills that are located on the side slope of the canal, as well as the roads and the irrigation canals that go towards the orchards, with the cattle trough and the bridge that crossed the Main Canal right there.

The moat that surrounded the town wall is a special element that was dug up in the southeast section where we are, and covered with a stone dome in the 18th century. Now it has been fossilised among the houses of Escultor Viciano Street and Campoamor Street and it runs underground by Hernán Cortés Square and Gobernador Street.

So, a broad perspective of the town's history without hardly having moved. Now we start approaching Ballestería Square (now Hernán Cortés Square), converted into a large terrace.

Remains of the medieval wall



2 - Ballestería. "A very busy square"

Stop 2: Hernán Cortés Square

Ballestería Square (Hernán Cortés Square) was once an important space in the daily life of the town of Castelló for many centuries. The urban grid has been fossilised and seems the only part of the town that has hardly changed since the 13th century. Pescadores Square was here; back then, it became Ballestería Square, whose name comes from its use as training space for the crossbow (*ballesta* in Spanish), but it was also the place where the town brothel or the public baths were.

At the junction of the square and Campoamor Street, on both sides of the street, there are visible remains of the medieval wall. To the north, between Pescadores Street and the canal, only foundations of the wall and a drain remain. Whereas to the south, a piece of wall is part of the dividing wall between the houses in the square and Gobernador Street. Now, the layout of the wall before the Roser door was opened (1602), later forming the Roser Gate (1605), has been drawn on the floor of the street. In the plots of land on Campoamor Street the remains of the foundations and part of a small tower wall have been found.



3 - Pescadores Street. "Straight as a die? Not really"

Stop 3: Pescadores Street

Pescadores Street has this name because here once lived most of the people who worked in the fishing trade, and it has a very irregular layout, but it runs parallel to the route of the Main Canal. The wall has been reused as a dividing wall between the houses of Pescadores Street to the west and the houses of Gobernador Street to the east.

The archaeological excavations are slowly unearthing remains from this defence system, found inside buildings no. 46, 54... in Pescadores Street and also in Gobernador Street. The area underwent many changes of use after the existing houses were destroyed in the 15th century and the space became an area of orchards and farmyards near the wall.

Although it seems that we are very close to the original location of the Bin-rabe hamlet, unfortunately, we do not have any archaeological findings that would allow us to accurately locate this Spanish-Muslim settlement. At least, it can be pointed out that the layout of the wall is not straight, as would have been typical of a modern town. In fact, Pescadores Street is, by far, the most curved street in the town centre.

Now, however, we will follow it straight on until we reach Del Agua Gate and the street with the same name, located a little further north.

A black and white photograph showing an archaeological excavation of stone foundations. The foundations are made of large, roughly-hewn stones and are arranged in a series of steps or a wall structure. Two long, thin measuring rods are placed horizontally across the stone blocks to provide scale. The ground around the foundations is uneven and appears to be a mix of soil and rock. In the upper left corner, there is a small concrete block and some metal rods.

Excavated foundations of Del Agua Gate

4 - Del Agua Gate and Del Agua Street. "All near the Main Canal"

Stop 4: Del Agua Street

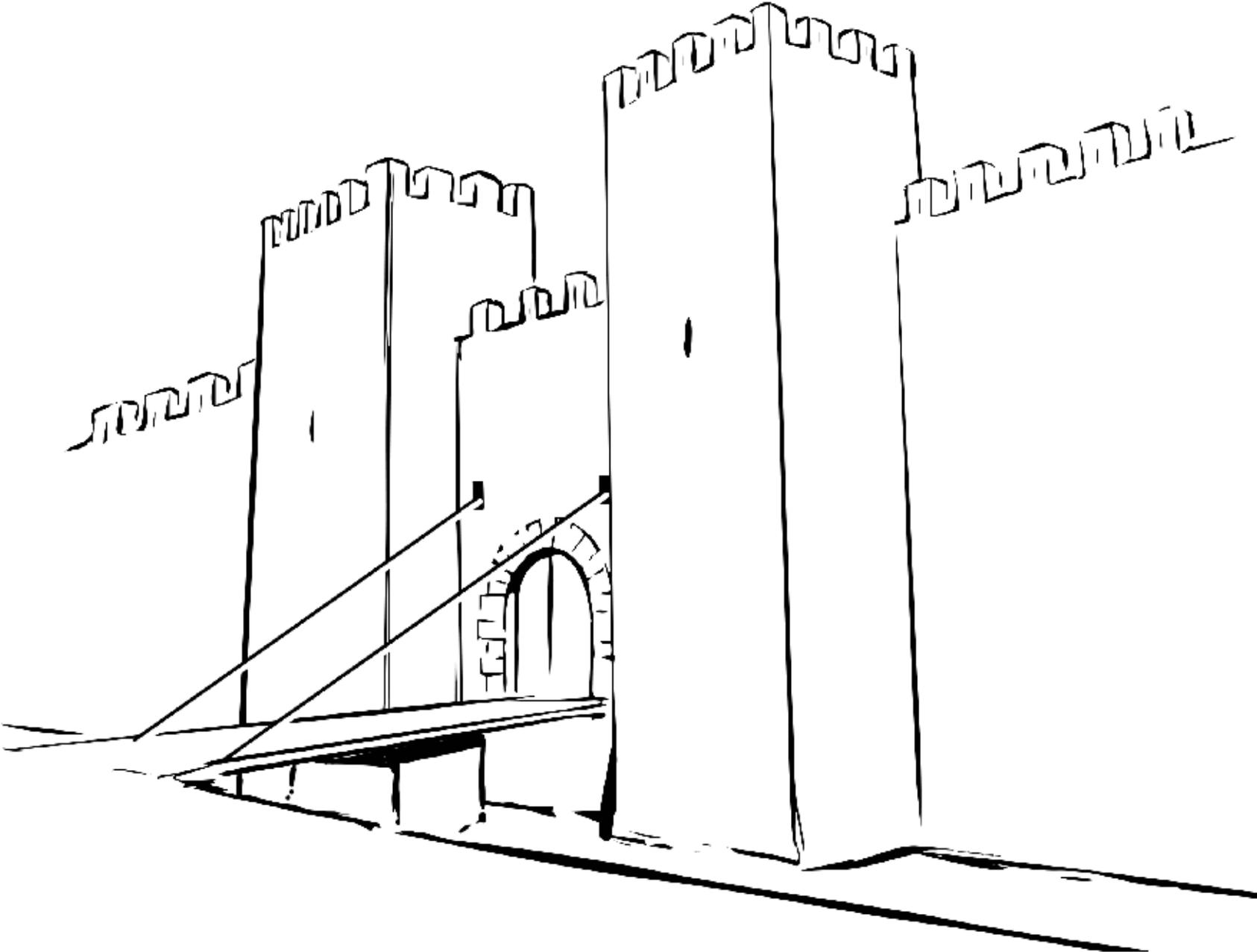
Our present location is where Del Agua Gate and Del Agua Street used to be. They received this name because it was the town entrance point that opened to the orchard and the Main Canal. Additionally, there was an access to go down to the canal bed and take water for domestic use. But it was also a place where the water left behind inside the town by the rain could be drained and where the last water overflows from Sequiol Canal ended, after supplying the construction of the main church and filling some house cisterns.

The remains of the gate have also been added to the route and, thanks to the archaeological excavations that were made, now the findings have been recreated above ground and its layout has been outlined on the current street floor. If you take a look, on the ground you will be able to make out the layout of the medieval wall.

In 1368, a wooden drawbridge was described at this gate to cross the moat and access the town; a construction like that seen and explained in the Migdia Tower.

The first convent of the Augustinians was built outside the walls, in front of this gate and, perhaps, where the old and abandoned nursing home of the city is now (Residencia Hogar Virgen de Lledó). Sometime later, before the 16th century, the convent moved a little further north, within the walls, to its final location in Mayor Street.

Hypothetical reconstruction of Del Agua Gate and the wall



Wall used for pelota games, 1960



5 - Wall remains

Stop 5: Cardona Vives Square

Archaeological remains of the foundations of the wall have been found in Cardona Vives Square, which is a space completely connected to Del Agua Street and Gate. The slabs of stone that we can see on the floor draw the old layout of the city wall and protect the remains. This part of the wall belonged originally to the *almudín*, the building where wheat and other grains were stored until they were sold and distributed in the town. Later, it was part of the *trapig del canyamel*, a mill where the *canyamel*, which is the Valencian name for sugarcane, was turned into sugar. After that, it was part of the building used as a fire station, and finally, as trinquete wall for pelota games.

Let's go across Cardona Vives Square and continue through Asarau and Gracia Streets to get to the church of the Augustinians, where we will observe its walls.



Mortar facade in the church of the Augustinians

6 - The convent church of the Augustinians. "The wall of mortar: a unique factory"

Stop 6: Gracia Street and Mayor Street

The convent church of the Augustinians, on the corner of Mayor Street and Gracia Street, is a building that got completed in the 16th century and stands out for its construction system. The walls were built with a mortar technique; they are walls made of compacted earth with a kind of reinforcements of solid brick (half bricks) covered by an outer layer of lime mortar that gives them the resistance and adequate waterproofing. This technique tells us what the available materials were in the area (earth and lime), since there was no stone to make blocks. The city wall was built with this technique.

Here it can be seen very clearly how this wall was made (dimensions of the boards, type of brick used, how a wall was placed on top of the other or next to it ...) and how it required an insulating base of the undersoil dampness. At present the only mortar wall that can be seen in the town is in this place, although there are other remains very deteriorated in dividing walls.

We will now follow Mayor Street to the north and reach the walled limit of the town. The original location of the wall is drawn on the floor of Las Aulas Square, from the building of Palacio de la Diputación to the house of Aulas de Gramática. Then, we will go down to visit the remains of Sant Pere Tower.



7 - Sant Pere Tower. "The ravines pass through the town"

Stop 7: Las Aulas Square

Sant Pere Tower opening hours: from Tuesday to Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Stairs/elevator

This tower, standing out from the wall, is part of the last extension of the Castelló medieval walled enclosure dating back to 1386. This part of the wall was the last one to be finished, as there was once a hospital, Trullol's Hospital, where Palacio de la Diputación stands now. Before continuing with the wall works, it was necessary to decide on the renovation to be done on the porch of the hospital. The tower boundary was the Vallàs de San Luis, a ravine that carried the waters from the western part of the town to the so-called Toll (present-day María Agustina Square), where the Main Canal split into the Coscollosa Canal and created a dike that kept the water in. The ravine depth can be clearly seen on this site, since there are between 3 and 4 metres of height difference from the level of the current square to the bottom of the ravine, base of the tower that we are now stepping on.

The construction technique used to erect the tower, or at least its base, can be seen. Lime mortars and river pebbles formed a mixture that one may call concrete. The wall creates a polygon with perfectly square sides; it has a tapering on the outside, that had to be exposed; and an irregular inner side that was covered by the floor within the town.

We can jump in time if we observe "modern" reinforced concrete elements at the end of the wall. There are remains of a Civil War shelter (1936-1939) built to protect people from the bombing of the Francoist rebel troops (with aviation from the air and ships from the sea).

Through San Luis Street -where remains of the wall have surfaced inside a building on the corner of Isabel Ferrer Street- we will head westward until we reach Enmedio Street. There, we will go back inside the walled enclosure of the town.



8 - Puríssima Gate. "The limits of the wall"

Stop 8: 152, Enmedio Street

At the beginning of Enmedio Street, just above no. 152 (casa Portolés), we can see a plaque-tile saying: "Here was the Gate titled de la Puríssima, which was demolished in June 1794", a symbolic date of the demolition of the town medieval wall. In 1563, Antoneli drew a gate protected by two small towers, the Jews' cemetery was located outside, just in front, until 1493 and, on the inside, the Moors' cemetery. The chapel of Sant Nicolau stands over the old mosque. The two religious suburbs, the Jewish quarter and the Moorish quarter, were enclosed into the last extension of the medieval wall while they existed (between 1339 and 1606).

The wall went through among the houses that still remain in San Luis Street and Antoni Maura Street to the east, and Descargador (Clavé Square) and Morería Street to the west. This is a line of fossilised dividing walls that clearly indicates the wall layout, almost heading straight from Sant Pere Tower to the corner tower, remains of which can be found in the basement of Bar Urbano, very similar to those of Sant Pere Tower.

Until that time all the streets in town inside the wall had -and still have- a very irregular orthogonality, except in the western part of Enmedio Street, which corresponds to the penultimate extension of the wall in 1339. This is the only area with an almost orthogonal street layout.



Wall remains at Bar Urbano

Curtain wall in Mealla Street



9 - Antoni Maura Street. "With bakery and mill"

Stop 9: 31, Antoni Maura Street / Mealla Street

This street was the old Canyaret ravine, formerly the moat of the existing wall towards the end of the 13th century, before the last extension was made up to San Luis Street in 1339. Remains of the second wall of the town can be seen in the eastern corner courtyard with Mealla Street. The wall at the bottom of the property bears all the signs of a wall because of its finish, the material used in the crusted mortar, the height and the battlements that are perceived further above. In addition, this dividing wall fits with the line that runs from the Alçamora Tower, in the Territorial School of Architects of Castelló located at 4, Enseñanza Street, but it is not visible because it is covered.

At the point where we are now, we can see the remains of the 13th century wall and also the Canyaret Bakery (31, Antoni Maura Street) of Gothic construction, which still keeps the pointed arches, the oven and the warming chamber above (upper chamber inside which paste is put to set, wood to dry...). Until the first years of the 21st century, it worked continuously as a bakery since the 14th century, almost 700 years feeding the town.

Canyaret Bakery



The rest of the wall. "The wall to be discovered"

The layout of the medieval wall to the west and to the south is more difficult to describe due to the urban context of the surroundings (Rey don Jaime Square, Ruiz Zorrilla Street and Puerta del Sol), although some documents help to locate it (Castelló Municipal Archive, former Cavalry barracks...) and the latest archaeological excavations in Enmedio Street and Mayor Street provide evidence to connect the layout with the Migdia Tower. They all follow the layout of the wall that Joan Baptista Antoneli once made in 1563 and which has guided us in this visit of the medieval wall of Castelló.

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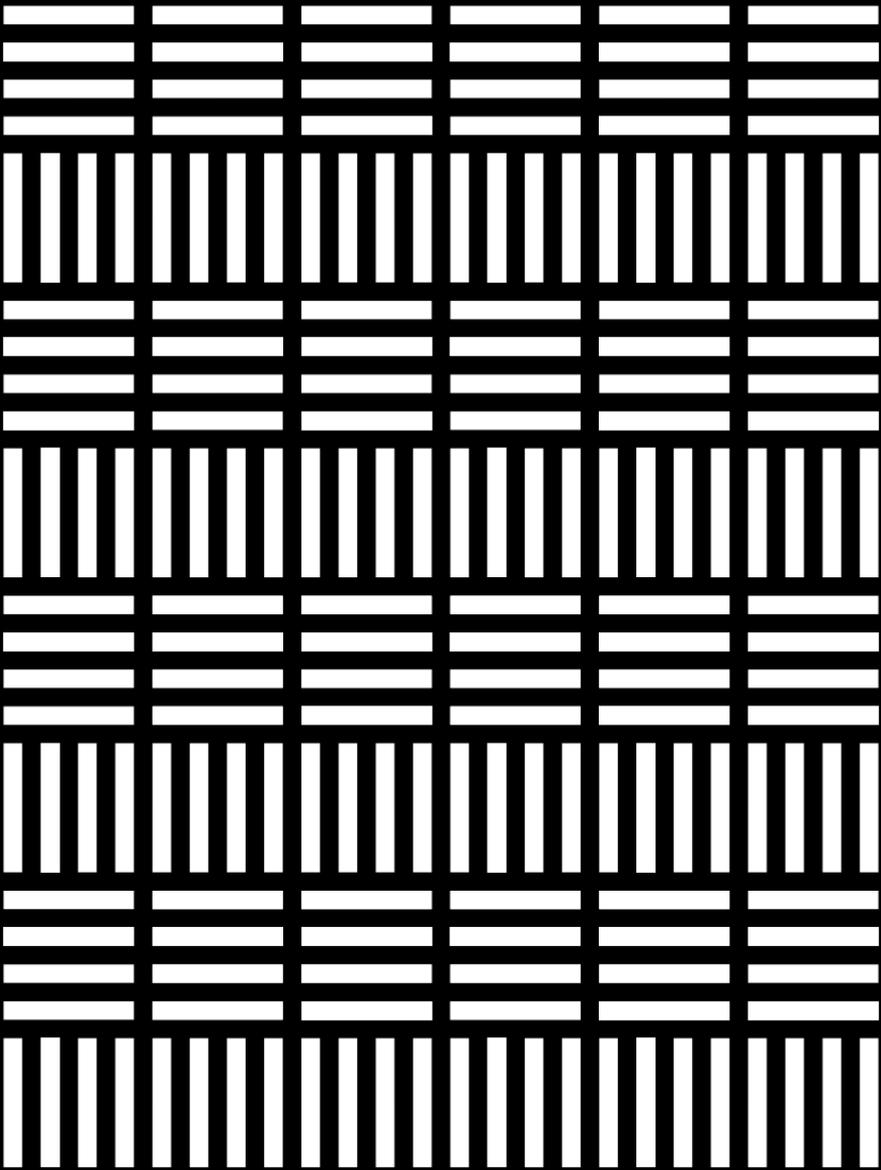
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