

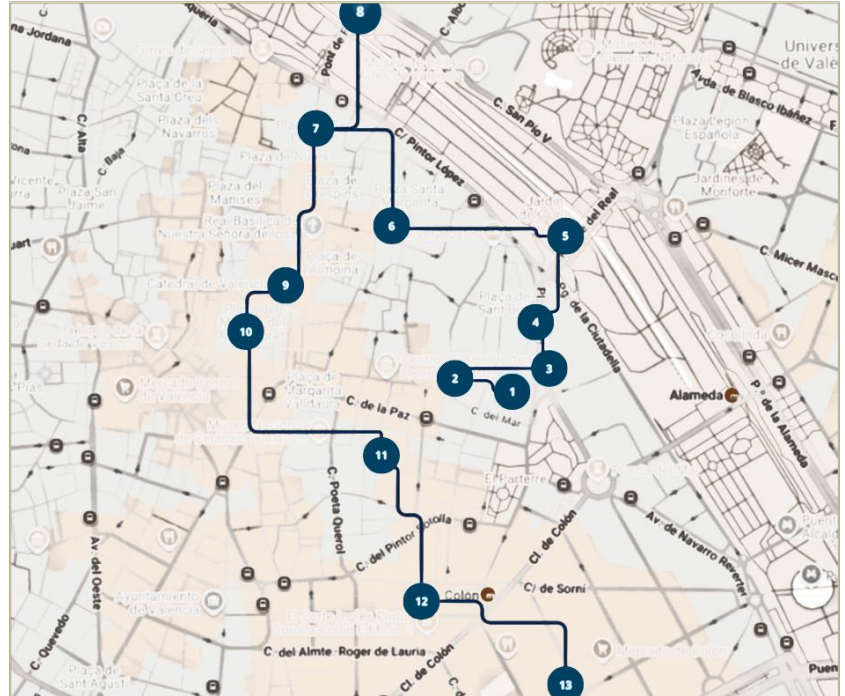
# 12. COLEGIO IMPERIAL OF NIÑOS HUÉRFANOS



## SAINT VINCENT FERRER ROUTE

### GENERAL ROUTE PLAN

1. Birthplace El *pouet*
2. Ceramic Altarpiece La Mar Street
3. Convent of Preachers
4. Statue of Saint Vincent Ferrer in Tetuan Square
5. Statue of Saint Vincent Ferrer on Pont del Real
6. Parish Church of Sant Esteve
7. Dormitories
8. Santa Mònica Square
9. Cathedral, chapel and throne
10. Miracle del Mocadoret Square
11. Church of Corpus Christi
12. Colegio Imperial Niños Huérfanos
13. Basilica of Saint Vincent Ferrer



This space, currently home to the El Corte Inglés building and the ABC Park cinema, was historically the site of the ‘Casa del Emperador’ (Emperor’s Home) and the Colegio Imperial Niños Huérfanos de San Vicente Ferrer school for orphans between 1624 and 1968. In València’s historic city centre, between the streets of Pérez Baier, Colón (old city wall) and Roger de Lloria (since the 19th century), in the urban area linked to the memory of Saint Vincent, this stately building had formerly been a school for Moors converted to Christianity (since 1545) until it fell into disuse in the early 17th century (1609) and was donated by royal decree in 1620 (Phillip III), enforced in 1624 (Phillip IV) to the Colegio de los Niños Huérfanos de San Vicente Ferrer, becoming the institution’s stable headquarters for over three centuries, until its unfortunate collapse in 1968 (see J. CASTILLO PEIRÓ, *El milagro de San Vicente Ferrer: su colegio de niños huérfanos*, València 2004).

The school worked intensively to provide education, care and culture from this base, becoming a unique reference point in the city. Its beneficiaries were orphaned children, often known as ‘*xiquets de sant Vicent*’ (children of Saint Vincent). There they received the most Christian and human education possible, actively taking part in the religious and festive life of València and learning trades to face life’s difficulties (see H. TROPÉ, *La formación de los niños huérfanos*



*en València (siglos XV al XVII). El caso del Colegio Imperial San Vicente Ferrer de València.* València, 2007).

The school was a true cultural focal point throughout the 20th century. Proof of this was it hosting the city's first international fair in 1919 (along with the Estación del Norte train station). The theatrical representations of the miracles of Saint Vincent —a living tradition since modern times and especially during the festivities of patron saint Vincent Ferrer— gained special relevance, as well as other biblical and religious themed representations, the Saint Vincent cinema, art gallery, skating rink and various other initiatives open to the public, which reinforced it as a popular space for education and culture, deeply rooted in collective Valencian memory (see *Anales de la RACV, núm. 95*, València 2020).

The school had previously been based at the 'Casa del Beguins' or the '*Hospital del Xiquet Perdut*' (Lost Child Hospital, close to Sant Agustí Square), where it was founded in 1410 when Saint Vincent Ferrer was in the city (Teixidor, J., *Antigüedades de València*), at the same time the Hospital General (of the Forsaken) was founded following the preachings of Fray Juan Gilabert Jofre, who had been a companion of Saint Vincent. This first headquarters reinforces the direct link between the saint's charitable work and his evangelising action (see V. CASTELL MAIQUES, *Estudios sobre san Vicente Ferrer*, València, 2005).

Numerous intangible and intangible traces of this unique story can still be seen in València today: statues, streets and squares, festive traditions, altars dedicated to Vincent and, significantly, the collective memory of the orphan children who were an active part of city life.

The Colegio Imperial represents a venerable 600-year-old Valencian institution, considered to be the oldest educational charity institution in the world, an essential pillar of Valencian identity. Its history is a living testament to its 616-year mission, which began and was sustained under the saint's protection and has continued uninterrupted to this day with a decisive contribution to education, social assistance and popular culture of the València we know today. It is located in San Antonio de Benagéber since 1970, adapting to modern circumstances while maintaining its original identity and mission. You can follow everyday life there on its website and social media, a living continuity of a history deeply rooted in València and its patron saint, Vincent Ferrer.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Address:** Dels Xiquets de Sant Vicent Square.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

**Access:** accessible, wide pavements with no obstacles.



**Parking:** parking space for people with reduced mobility at 2 Isabel la Católica Street.

## PHOTOS



Photo of the statue of Saint Vincent Ferrer on Pérez Baier Street





Colegio Imperial façade in its original location



Façade of San Vicente cinema