



12. La Reina Street

A new dock was built in the port of València between 1821 and 1833, shifting the coastline. In 1840, José Serrano designed La Reina Street in this space gained from the sea in honour of Isabella II; it was one of the main urban expansion areas created in El Cabanyal-El Canyameler-Cap de França.

According to a map preserved in the Kingdom of València Archive, the street was 84 Valencian palms wide, equivalent to approximately 19 m, the largest in the neighbourhood. The street was made up of 124 plots distributed in six islands or linear blocks, on each side of the road, continuing the existing roads in El Canyameler. Plots were awarded in a perpetual assignment document by paying an annual fee to General Bailiff.

Construction on these plots was subject to conditions regarding volume, ornamentation and duration of the work, which had to be completed within one year so as not to lose the right to the concession. In 1850, 44 plots remained undeveloped due to these demands.

A new lot of 20 blocks was created in 1852 following the path of the street in a straight line, with similar features to the first phase. Islands 1 and 7 disappeared between 1948 and 1975:

San Rafael Street in El Cabanyal and Alameda Street in Cap de França. The section in El Canyameler was named Libertad (Freedom) during the Republic. The three sections were united as La Reina Street in 1909, although it was signposted as Almirante Mercer in 1940 until it recovered its previous name in 1973.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the bourgeoisie looked to the sea as a summer residence, turning the seaside neighbourhoods into a unique place to settle. The largest number of new residential buildings were constructed in La Reina Street in the decade between 1920 and 1930 due to high tourist demand (Pastor Villa, R. 2012). The area also featured buildings designed for leisure, such as Las Delicias Theatre—which reopened its doors as La Marina Theatre in 1867 following a fire in 1859—the artisan casino, and Teatro, Royalty, Mayeta, Fusilot and Polp cafés.

Some examples of residential architecture from that time have survived the brutal urban development of the 1960s and beyond.