



(Vicente Barberá Masip. Archivo Histórico Ajuntament de València. Playa de Les Arenes, 1923)

22. Les Arenes Spa

The Les Arenes Spa is a historical landmark in the city of València, the most iconic seafront building. Antonio Zarranz Beltrán developed the initial project in 1888, which envisaged simple facilities for bathing. Its growth was immediate to respond to the needs of bourgeoisie society in València.

Two buildings inspired by classic temples were built in 1917, housing recreational rooms and spaces for hot seawater bathing. One was destroyed in 1938 by the bombings that devastated Poblats Marítims during the civil war; it was later reproduced.

The floating pavilion designed by architect Cortina was inaugurated in 1922. It comprised a cross-shaped wooden structure that could be dismantled, with a central dome featuring several staircases for direct access to the sea. The building was destroyed in a bombing.

Two rationalist pools were inaugurated in 1934, designed by Luis Guitérrez Soto and with Cayetano Borso as site manager. The imposing diving board was represented in a poster designed by Josep Renau for the inauguration. They are included in the DOCOMOMO International Register.

Projects aiming to create a coastal hub that would consolidate the traditional bourgeoisie presence were proposed during this period of economic boom. However, the development of communications, primarily railways, diverted tourism to other coastal areas, especially to the north, leading to the progressive environmental and urban deterioration of the area.

A new hotel with neoclassical lines was built between 2002 and 2005, nothing to do with the iconic image of the old spa. A temple, the pools and perimeter wall are all that remain of the original site.