



4. DEL REAL GARDENS

HOLY GRAIL URBAN ROUTE

GENERAL ROUTE PLAN

1. The clock-keeper's house
2. Royal Monastery of the Holy Trinity
3. Museum of fine arts of València
- 4. Del Real Gardens**
5. Convent of Saint Dominic
6. Royal College-Corpus Christi Seminary
7. Silk Exchange
8. Serranos Towers
9. Palau dels Borja
10. The Basilica of Our Lady of the Forsaken
11. L'Arquebisbe Square
12. Cathedral



Del Real gardens (Viveros): echoes of a long-lost palace

Nowadays, the peaceful walkways of the Del Real gardens (Viveros) hide a story linked to the city's power and memory. The long-lost Royal Palace of València used to stand on this same spot, residence for the monarchs of the Crown of Aragón and home to the Holy Grail following its arrival in the city.

The palace was originally a former Moorish farmhouse transformed into a royal residence after James I conquered the city. Its heyday came in the 15th century under King Alfonso V the Magnanimous, who consolidated València as the political and cultural capital of the Crown of Aragón, setting up his permanent base here.

Queen Maria of Castile, a key figure in the history of the kingdom, also spent long periods here. As regent she was behind fundamental decisions that would mark the future of the Crown and strengthen the city's role as a hub of power.

However, the destiny of the palace changed radically in 1810 when the Military Defence Board ordered that it be demolished to prevent it being used by the French army during their siege of the city. Only archaeological remains of that stunning building still stand. They were discovered in 1986 and a bronze model recreating how it looked in the early 19th century can

be found next to them.

Home of the Holy Grail in València

Inside the palace, next to the queen's chambers, stood the chapel of Saint Catherine, home to the Royal Reliquary of the House of Aragón. The Holy Grail was kept there, making this space its first custodian in the city.

Chronicles of the time tell of the great devotion aroused by the relic. Each time the reliquary was put on display, the palace received so many visitors that continuous repairs were necessary due to the wear and tear caused by the crowds.

When Alfonso V the Magnanimous set off for Naples in March 1437, the Holy Grail and reliquary were transferred to the sacristy at València Cathedral by his brother, John of Aragón. A move that was no coincidence: the reliquary was deposited as security for the substantial loans to finance the king's Italian campaign.

When strolling around the Del Real gardens today, visitors are walking over a space that was the stage of political decisions, religious fervour and key episodes in the history of the Holy Grail. A place where the past follows the present, even if the palace has disappeared.

