



MONUMENTS AND MUSEUMS IN MADRIDEJOS (TOLEDO)

Charity Park

The town was founded in 1238, although before it was one of the fourteen towns that depended of Consuegra. After the Muslim invasion, they created a village that was destroyed and rebuilt in many occasions. It is during this period that the germ of our current town began. The population started to grow around a mosque that was converted by the parish of Santa Maria. This mosque used to be near the main square together with some of the main important buildings such as the Town Hall, the old House of the Municipal Council, the public granary and the prison.

The buildings that remain nowadays are:

- **Watchtower:** remain of an Arab tower from the XI century. It had defensive purposes and was built next to the chapel so the bell was rung in case of danger. There are no remains of Arab origins on the front of the building; it is formed by walls of ashlar with a row of brick and masonry with brick plinth at the corners. A part of the wall was broken in order to build the steeple.
- **The Charity Chapel:** it is the oldest building in Madridejos. It was build during the XIII century so deceased people from poor families could receive the last prayer. The construction of this chapel is very simple; it has three altars and another chapel on the side. It was remodelled during the XVIII century highlighting its coffered ceiling. At the beginning of the XIX century it served as a parish during some time. The shield that can be seen in the altar is one of the first ones that have been kept without any change until today. There are two different doors, although the main one points to the West.
- **Garcilaso de La Vega Building:** It was built in 1931, on the remains of an old public granary and served as high school. In the middle of August of 1928, the Council of Ministers of Alfonso XIII approved the location of this center in Madridejos. This fact was mainly thanks to the Register of Deeds -Jesús Requejo San Roman- and the Town Clerk -Jose Maria Vassals-. Nowadays, classes take place in the Public School with the same name.





Chapels of Saint Sebastian and Humilladero Christ

The first chapel was built during the XVIII century, although the current one is totally new surrounded by gardens. It was built as a prayer stop near the Royal Way to Andalusia. At the beginning, the chapel was a square closed by four sandstone columns. Some of these columns had octagonal shape with capitels adorned with circle objects. It had an engraved door preceded by another one that was hold by two stone columns. The corners of the chapel are highlighted by stone pilasters. The chapel has wooden eaves hold by cantilevers.

The sculpture of a crucified Christ is one of the most interesting things to admire within the chapel. It was a venerated Christ with an enormous brotherhood and its feast takes place the 30th May.



Rollo Jurisdiccional

It is located in the Main Square and was built after the 12th May Uprising by Royal decree. It was built to show that this village has its own legal competence and was able to judge in the first instance. This Rollo is a tall column made of Corinthian stretching shaft stone with a flat engraved capital with four shields. In the capital we can find a temple with balustrade columns. At the height of its base, there is a metal cross of St. John. In 1970, it was restored and moved to its current location.



Divine Savior Church

The construction of this church was due to the demographic growth Madridejos was undergoing during the XVI century. Together with St. Maria, it was another parish. The



construction style is a mixture between late decadent Gothic and Renaissance. The vaults and edges are supported by granite pillars with Ionic capitals. It has a tower of brick with sort of granite belts covered with a slate spire that was restored in 1997. In 1915, a storm destroyed part of the cross and the vane that lead into a three feet descent of the tower. The baptismal font, dated from 1688, is made of granite and decorated with three crosses belonging to the Order of St. John. The stained glass windows have been recently restored and within the sacristy we can find different objects related to the Eucharistic ritual.



Church and Convent of St. Francis

It was built in 1612 by Juan Bautista Monegro. Its construction ended in 1619 and the convent was inhabited by Franciscan friars. In 1769, the Chapel of the Third Order was built thanks to Mrs. Úrsula Mayorga Cervantes, whose shield is still above the door. In 1833, after the disappearance of the Franciscan Order, the convent became the judicial district headquarter and housed offices and a prison. The chapel served as a school, prison, warehouse, etc. until 1970's, when a group of volunteers started the restoration of the building to use it as a cultural center. The church homes the sculpture of the patron saint, the Virgin of Valdehierro. Moreover, currently, inside the convent we can find the Saffron and Ethnologic Museum and the Tourist Office.





St. Anne Convent

This is a cloistered convent inhabited by Franciscan Poor Clares. The foundation of this convent was in 1619, although it was not official until 1656; its founders, Mr. Francisco Díaz Gallego and Mrs. María Asunción Vázquez de Neira, were buried under the altar and whose shields are above the door. The convent was built in stone and brick and has the shape of a Latin cross. During the Spanish Civil War, the convent was sacked and it was officially recovered in Cuenca. Once the War ended, the nuns could come back and began the restoration. In 1940, there was an elementary and needlework school within the convent. In 1984, the nuns were authorized to go out the convent in order to sear for founds to restore the school. Nowadays, we can find a guest quarters and a house dedicated to Spiritual Exercises.



Holy Christ of El Prado Chapel

At the beginning it was a sanctuary where shepherds used to come. However, in the XVIII century, one of the shepherds witnessed a miracle and began the construction of the current chapel. Its construction is simple; we can highlight the interior decoration –mainly the paintings located on the dome and the XVIII century bars. Inside the chapel we can see the sculpture of the Holy Christ of El Prado, a venerated Christ with a feast in his honor that takes places on September.





Large House or the House of Chains

This mansion was built during the XVII century and with the passing of time, it has had a lot of different uses; roadhouse, store, to provide shelter for French troops, and during the XX century as warehouse for wheat. We do not know who promoted the construction of this building; it is believed it was a priest belonging to the Pacheco family. Due to the fact that the Royal Way to Andalusia crossed the village, this mansion served as a lodge and store, since in front of it there was a roadhouse.

The next owner we know about was Mr. Juan Mateo del Pando during the late XVIII century. At that time, Madridejos was undergoing an economic boom since it was in the middle of at a crossroads to the Court in Murcia, Toledo and Andalusia. The visit of the king Charles IV was a reflex of the enormous power this village had. After the Napoleonic invasion, the Counts of La Cañada owned this mansion. However, after 1860, the local government took charge of it; it sold some parts where different houses were built and the rest served as a public granary. During some years it was abandoned until it was restored and currently serves as Medical Center, Palace of Culture, Library, Information Point and House of Music.



Christ Fountain

The first fountain was built in the XVIII century, under King Charles III due to the diversion of the Royal Way to Andalusia. This fountain has a triangle on its top where the oldest shield of the town can be admired.

THE SHIELD: it was created in 1557 under the King Philip II, when Madridejos was proclaimed as Loyal Town. The shield is divided into two different parts; one the left part we can see a medieval watchtower, and on the right part; we can observe a white mulberry tree over a blue background that symbolizes the fertility of these lands and the richness of the terrain. These two parts are joined under a Maltese Cross above a purple background that represents the medieval origins of this town. There is also an inscription that reads: *Prima ab Origine Nostra*.



Town Hall

After Madoz's expropriation in 1860, the Town Hall was moved to the ancient convent of St. Hyacinth that was founded by Brother Melchor Cano y Priego, and whose garden was prepared as a public square. During 1950's there were various fires that lead into its destruction. Currently, the building houses the offices of Local Police. Moreover, within this Main Square, we can also find the Rollo Jurisdiccional that was built in the city entrance from where it was moved in 1970.



Ancient Bullring

Its construction started in 1871 thanks to the collaboration of seven local residents and it was opened in 1879. It has an oval shape, the north grandstands were dug, and the sand coming from the excavation was employed to build the buttress where the southern grandstands rise. The structure is similar to the one of a Roman amphitheater. This bullring was built with whitewashed rammed earth –typical construction of this area- it also had brick reinforcements. This bullring is the only one in Spain with these characteristics, therefore, on February 15th, 2001, it was considered as a Property of Cultural Interest.



Ethnographic and Saffron Museum

It was opened in 2008 and it is located within the former Convent of St. Francis. The Museum, together with the Silos, is one of the village's most important cultural attractions. In this museum, we can see the process of saffron; from the preparation of the land, the peeling of the bulbs, sowing, harvest, the peeling of the saffron rose, its browning, cutting, division and selling. Moreover, the different uses of saffron such as the medicinal and culinary ones are also explained. Everything is illustrated with informative panels, images and videos. In the ethnographic museum, we can learn about a traditional in Spain –the pig slaughter-, visit a mid-XX century elementary school and a typical XVIII high class house and admire the ancient arts of pottery and needlework.



Silos

Silos are not only a reflex of a low purchase power, but of an excellent adaptation to a climate with sharp oscillations. Silos enjoy of a warm temperature during winter and cold in summer. We can access to the entrance descending through a stone pavement ramp, next to the entrance we can find the kitchen and bedrooms. The walls of these houses are completely whitewashed; the floor is made of clay tiles. There is also a well and a drainage system in order to prevent floods. Silos were the home of the most humble and hardworking families; when a



couple made their engagement official, they used to buy “a site” –a plot around 470m2- in order to build their new silo.

The couple began digging the silo with their hands and they did not stop until the excavation had space enough to build the kitchen, the bedrooms, a dining room, a stable, a straw loft and a hen hut. The final result was a house without roof, beams, columns or partition walls.

The walls, ceiling and floor were covered with lime what allowed the sun to enter with strength inside the house in order to light the entire house up. In the bedrooms there were external windows that served to air the house. Since, silos are subterranean houses; they enjoy a constant temperature during the whole year.



Uncle Genaro’s Mill

This mill is one of the oldest ones in La Mancha. It was built during the XVII century and it is considered as a Property of Cultural Interest since 2001. This mill is one of the few that preserve its machinery and original structure in good condition. Next to the mill, an arcade gallery was built; it encompasses all the typical characteristics of a tiny manchego patio. In this gallery there is an ethnographic museum and the owner organizes dramatized tours for tourists.

