

## HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

We know from the "Ora Marítima", a description of a nautical journey written by the Roman Rufo Festo Avieno in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century B.C., that the city of Cartagena was founded in 227 B.C. by the Carthaginian general Asdrúbal, who changed the original name from Mastia to Quart Hadast. The city remained under Carthaginian control until 209 B.C., when the Roman Cornelio Escipion conquered it during the Second Punic War.

Cartagena was to live its period of greatest splendour under Roman rule between the end of the 3rd Century B.C. and the beginnings of the 2nd Century A.C. In 44 B.C., it was to receive the title of Colony under the denomination Colonia Urbs Iulia Nova Carthago. The city's importance rested, together with its mining richness, on its privileged position and the uniqueness of its topography, surrounded by hills and with a lake, or inland sea (El Almarjal), to the north, which enabled the city to be easily defended.

With the end of the Roman Empire, the city entered a period of decadence of which we have little information. We do know that the Vandals passed through the city and that it was dominated by the Visigoths until 555 A.D., the year in which the Byzantine troops of Justinian took the city and converted it into the capital of the province of Spania, which covered south-easterly part of the peninsula from Malaga to Cartagena itself. The city was re-taken by the Visigoths around 621 A.D., and remained under their control until the Arab conquest in 734 A.D.

In 1245 A.D., Alfonso X The Wise – who at that time was still a Prince – conquered the city. The following Low Medieval centuries were a period of decadence, which drew to its end in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century as the country experienced a general economic and political resurgence. However, the widespread epidemics that assailed the country during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century brought this phase to a halt.

Cartagena recovered its former importance during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. As a result of its naming in 1728 as the capital of the Mediterranean Maritime Department, the construction of the city's Arsenal, castles and the barracks covered by the city's fortification plan, a great constructive and merchant activity was responsible for attracting large numbers of new inhabitants that quickly led the population to grow from 10,000 to 50,000.

Following a new period of crisis during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the city was to enjoy a new upsurge as a result of its mining activities, which in turn served as stimulation for the industrial and economic activities. It was following the destruction caused by the Cantonal Revolution in 1873 that Cartagena was to acquire its current appearance, with the construction of numerous public and private buildings that reflect the most significant eclectic and modernist tendencies of the age.

Cartagena faced the Second Spanish Republic and the Spanish Civil War immersed in a new economic crisis, which was the result of the mining crisis produced towards the end of the 1920's. During the Civil War, the city became one of the most important strongholds of the Republican Government and was the last city in Spain to surrender to the troops of General Franco. During the 1950's, Cartagena experienced the beginning of a new prosperity through the implantation of numerous industrial companies in the area known as Valle de Escombreras, a situation that was to last until the industrial crisis at the beginning of the 1990's. Since recovering from this



Héroes de Cavite Place



Augusteum

new downturn, Cartagena has looked to its past as one of its main attractions. Thus, the city entered the 21<sup>st</sup> Century immersed in a recovery programme and with a new perception of its rich historical, artistic and archaeological heritage.

### ARCHAEOLOGIAL SIGHTS

#### 1. Municipal Archaeological Museum

This is the base of all archeological activity in the city and its district. Opened in 1982, the museum is built over the late 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman necropolis of San Antón; it contains one of the most important collections of inscriptions in the country.

#### 2. National Museum of Maritime Archeology

The museum was opened with the National Centre for Underwater Archeological Research in 1982. Its contents are ideal material for those researching into the maritime traffic routes of ancient times. Of special note are the amphoras, dating from the Phoenician to the Roman periods, the remains of several wrecks and, from standpoint of naval architecture, a full-sized cross-section of a Roman merchant vessel.

#### 3. Punic Rampart

The rampart was discovered in 1989, on the south side of the hill of San José, or Aletes, as it was known in Roman times. The construction dates back to 227 B.C., with the founding of the Punic city and the conversion of Cartagena (then called Qart-Hadast) into the capital of the Carthaginians the territory of Hispania. The fortifications are in the Hellenist style, with two parallel walls, with an 18-foot gap between them, linked by other walls. The rampart enclosed the Punic city, and this particular stretch covered the isthmus, the only entrance to the city.

#### 4. The House of Fortune

On either side of a stretch of Roman road lie the remains of two dwellings dating from the first century BC. On the sides you can see the pavements, the walls with the entrance threshold and the Opus signinum decorated flooring, but the most impressive feature is the fresco painted decoration of the dining-room walls of the Casa de la Fortuna, the house which gets its name from the inscription that can be read on the flooring of the courtyard.

#### 5. Augusteum

This is one of the best archaeological sites kept in the city, and it is composed of the rests of two public buildings from the Roman times in the Cartagonova area dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.C. It could be one of the first seats used for religious purposes. Identified as a meeting place for the priest of the cult of the Emperor Augustus. It has an interesting exposition hall dedicated to Roman forum.

#### 6. The Hill of Molinete

The hill of Molinete, one of the five that are mentioned by the historian Polibio in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century B.C. as the seat of the Palace of Asdrubal, constitutes one of the great archaeological reserves of ancient Carthago-Nova. Among the archaeological discoveries worth mention are the remains of a «castellum aquae» in the upper part of the hill, the relics of the Forum and the Podium, possibly of the Capitoline Temple of the city, dating towards the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century B.C., and the adjacent public buildings.

#### 7. Roman Colonnade

Discovered in 1957 the site is another of the major Roman thoroughfares. You still can see the remains of a road which, via the present days Puertas de Murcia, must have linked up with a former entrance to the city. The foundations supported a pedestrian arcade.

#### 8. Decumano

Excavated in 1968, the square is the site of a paved Roman road, the main thoroughfare through the city, linking the port to the forum and a series of thermal baths stretching along Honda street as far as Molinete hill. The site still preserves the foundation of a former arcade.

#### 9. Byzantine Rampart

The recent discovery of the Roman theatre a few yards from the rampart is the key to the date of construction of these solid walls, which include materials from the Byzantine period. In the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century A.C. Byzantine rule revitalized the city and produced upon redevelopment. Part of the foundations of the arcade built around the access grounds to the theatre, were reused for the ramparts of the Byzantine city. This curious superimposed construction with its outstanding Roman mosaics, now lies beneath the Municipal Exhibition Hall.

#### 10. Roman Theatre

The theatre was discovered, quite by chance, in 1987. The rows of seats were built into the northern side of the «Concepción» hill. The commemorative inscriptions indicate that it was built in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., the period of maximum urban development in the Roman colony.

#### 11. Santa Mª La Vieja Cathedral

As a site of Christian worship, the cathedral dates from the end of the 13th century. The building has undergone several alterations of architectural interest. Many of the walls were raised with blocks from the old Roman theatre. The cathedral's cript preserves the decorative paving of a 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. Roman dwelling. The damage inflicted during the Civil War spellt its irreversible destruction.

#### 12. Castle of Concepción and Torres Park

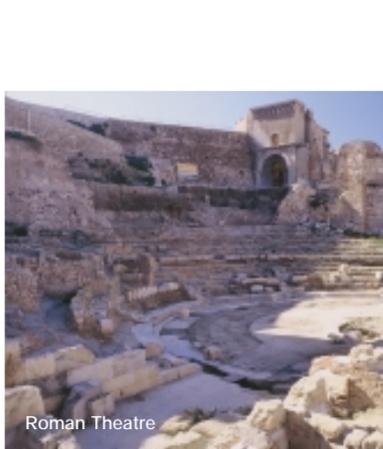
The castle is built on the top of the Concepcion hill at the time of Henry III (1390-1406). It appears to have been built utilizing blocks from the Roman amphitheatre. The hill affords a wonderful view of the city and port.

#### 13. Amphitheatre

The amphiteatre is situated beneath the present bullring, erected in 1854. One of the eldest monuments of its kind in Hispania, it was built in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., on the model of Italic precursors. Some of its buttresses that extend beyond the bullring have been excavated and can be seen.

#### 14. Torre Ciega (Blind Tower)

A Roman funeral structure dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.C., the Torre Ciega or «Blind Tower» is called so because it has no windows. Once it was part of a necropolis situated next to the entrance to Carthago-Nova. It was restored in 1960, it is one of the most representative archeological sites of the city.



Roman Theatre



Cervantes House

### BAROQUE AND NECLASSICAL BUILDINGS

#### 15. Muralla del Mar Campus

The ancient military hospital designed by the military engineer Sebastián Feringán was constructed between the years 1749 and 1762. This solid and spacious neo-classic building was one of the first works undertaken after the city had been adopted as the principal Spanish naval base in the Mediterranean. Subsequent reforms have scarcely affected the exterior appearance of the building, which has two wings with corresponding courtyards.

#### 16. Post Mortem Block

This building was constructed in 1768, a few years after the completion of the Royal Hospital of Antígones, later to become the Navy Hospital. Anatomy classes were given here and research was done in the hope of alleviating the constant epidemics that devastated Cartagena in 1785. The renovation of the building, in disuse since 1961, means that the remains of the Roman amphitheatre nearby can be visited along with the Antígones Barracks, which after its restoration will become part of the campus.

#### 17. Carlos III Rampart

A cornerstone in the defence of the Arsenal and Fortress of Cartagena, the rampart was built by Charles III. It contained three main gateways. Nowadays all that remains is the stretch of wall between the former quay and San José Gates and the Arsenal defences. In 1891 it lost its protective capacity.

#### 18. Midshipman's School

Planned in 1785 as a naval academy and barracks, the building currently houses naval offices. With the exception of the top floor, few modifications have been made since its construction.

#### 19. Dockyard gate

The sole remaining entrance to the ramparts of Cartagena built in the 18th century. In 1865 a clock tower was built over the gateway, highlighting the importance of the area to which it gives access.

#### 20. Santo Domingo Church

The church was once part of the Dominican convent of San Isidoro. The highlight is the Marraja brotherhood chapel. Built in 1695 and recently restored, with a baroque altarpiece of multi-coloured wood featuring a variety of images of Holy Week.

#### 21. Santa Mª de Gracia Church

Built during the 18th century and altered in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Its façade is still unfinished. The original plan was to build a church of cathedral proportions, the natural successor to Santa María la Vieja. The most valuable architectural details are found in the chapels. The most notable sculptures inside are the medieval image of the Virgin of the Rosell and the figures of the Four Saints, the work of Salzillo. The Holy Week processions have come out from this building ever since its construction in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 22. Molina House

This building constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, has a Neo-classical style and it is noticed its austerity, the stone and brick combination of the façade and the iron work together with the forge balconies. Located at the back part of "Casa Palacio Vluda de

Molina". The main exhibits are typical crafts from the area around Cartagena and Murcia Region.

#### 23. Naval Headquarters

The «capitanía» was built in 1740 over part of the space occupied by the King's house. The façade was reconstructed in the 19th century and altered in the 20<sup>th</sup>. The interior is richly decorated, enhancing its imperial scale.

#### 24. Carmen Church

The church was once part of the former convent of San Joaquín, the home of the order of the barefoot Carmelites. The façade combines elements of classical and popular architecture, and the interior has a single nave with side chapels.

#### 25. Artillery Headquarters

The building, which was virtually destroyed by an explosion towards the end of the canton uprising in 1874, was not reconstructed till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The side walls are those which best retain the original building's appearance.

### MODERNIST AND ECLECTIC BUILDINGS

#### 26. Railway Station

The modernist decorative details are specially noticed, such as the ironwork on doors and columns, the cantilever roof and the thermal window on the façade. The interior was also decorated along modernist lines, though all that remains today of the design are the ticket counter, the doorframes, the ceiling and the lamp.

#### 27. Aguirre House

The highlight in this building is the tower topped by a shiny dome. Under the tower are two profusely decorated façades, covered in rococo ceramic motifs. The bees on the tower are a symbol of industry.

#### 28. Caridad Church

Once the church of the Caridad hospital, in its present form it has a neo-classical style and a metal structure. The interior is dominated by the dome, a typical feature of many neo-classical buildings, whose model was the Roman pantheon of Agrippa. The church is the home of the city's patron, the Virgin of Sorrow, an 18th century image sculpted in Naples. There are several sculptures by Salzillo and his school, including the Crucifixion, the Rococo altarpiece in the comunion chapel and the canvases painted by Manuel Wssell de Guimbarada in 1893.

#### 29. Maestre House

The façade is the only reminder of the house original design, inspired by the Casa Calvet by Gaudi, and with a few baroque details. The rococo decorations around the main door, the belvedere and windows in the central section are specially noticed.

#### 30. Clares House

The building was designed by the architect of Cartagena Mario Spottorno. The façade on the Aire street has a cornice, stained glass windows, floral decorations and groundfloor capitals, which are typical of the modernist period.

#### 31. City Hall

A triangular-shaped building with three different façades.The official nature of the edifice is underli-



Aguirre House



Municipal Archeological Museum

ned by the eclectic. Inside, the modernist style is evident in the paintings and decorative details in the grand entrance-hall and on the second floor.

#### 32. Cervantes House

Victor Beltri's opera prima, this enormous house dominates the other buildings in the street. The façade contains the white belvederes so typical of Cartagena. There are dozens of symbols relating to commerce, industry and mining.

#### 33. Casino

The 18<sup>th</sup> century doorway is the only reminder left of the building's origins as the house for the Marquis of Casatilly, which was finally remodelled by Víctor Beltri around 1897. Inside, the highlight is the patio ringed by a second floor gallery. Decorations and furnishing are modernist.

#### 34. Lagostera House

The façade of this building, constructed in 1916, was designed to support ceramic decoration. The structure is in the Cartagena style, with balconies at the front and belvederes on the sides. The ceramic work by Gaspar Polo reproduces the allegorical figures of Minerva and Mercury and the coats of arms of Barcelona, Murcia, Cartagena and Manlleu.

#### 35. Grand Hotel

Built in the style of the Viennese and French modernist school, the hotel has two façades joined by a rotunda crowned with a spectacular dome. The monotony of the hotel's six floors is broken by the use of alternating colours and decorative details, such as the ironwork on doors and marquee.

#### 36. Pedreño House

The house is reminiscent of Renaissance palaces. The central section of the façade is full of decorative details, including the head of Mercury, the crowned head on the second floor pediment, the enormous balcony on the third and the lantern on the roof. The ground floor and entresol form an independent unit, linked to the higher floors by a series of decorative elements.

#### 37. Dorda House

The façade, with curved mouldings and floral decorations, is inspired by the Baroque style. Inside, the most striking element is the Arab-style central courtyard.

#### 38. Zapata House

The house was built in the Gothic-inspired modernist style typical of Catalonia, the architect birthplace. Outside one can see the columned doorway and crenelated tower, as well as the Viennese-style mouldings on the walls; inside, is an Arab-style glass-covered patio.

#### 39. Expansion Company Hotel

Planned as an office and dwelling building, it was used as a centre to promote the quarter of the city then being developed. In its construction and decorative details the building is eclectic in style.

### CONTEMPORARY ROUTE

#### 40. Shelter-Museum of Spanish Civil War

These galleries, excavated out of the Cerro de la

Concepción to serve as air-raid shelters, were still to be completed at the end of the Spanish Civil War. They were part of the works carried out to construct shelters with a capacity to hold 5,500 people during the considerable bombing that Cartagena was subjected to, as it was the naval base for a great part of the Republican fleet.

#### 41. Lift-Gangway

The street Calle Gispert, built across the Cartagena hill, was opened in 1878, thereby connecting Cartagena to the sea. A lift now carries passengers up the 45m fall, replacing the natural route which was swallowed up with the excavation work.

#### 42. Peral Submarine

The original of the first submarine, invented by the Cartagena-born Isaac Peral from a design conceived in 1884. The submarine was built in Cádiz and launched in 1888.

#### 43. Héroes de Cavite Monument

Erected to the memory of the Spanish sailors killed at Cavite and Santiago de Cuba, in battle with the American fleet, the monument was inaugurated in 1923 by Alfonso XIII the King.

#### 44. Naval Museum

Specially devoted to naval subjects, the museum occupies part of a modernist building constructed in 1926. Of special interest are the collections of model ships and maps, and the room dedicated to Isaac Peral.

#### 45. Regional Assembly

Rebuilt in 1987 for its present use, the building has a façade which displays a number of influences: the Venetian Renaissance and a certain modernist air, typical Levant architecture. Inside, the most impressive sights are the Patio de los Ayuntamientos (Court of Town Halls) and the Patio de las Comarcas (Court of the Districts).

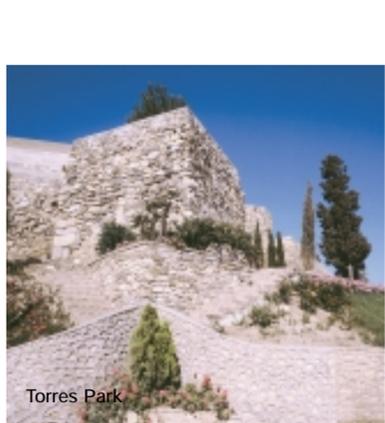
#### 46. Carmen Conde/ Antonio Oliver Museum

Donated to the city of Cartagena by Carmen Conde. The place, has been kept with the same atmosphere, where the local poet wrote most of her important work. It is placed at the Culture Centre Ramon Alonso Luzzy.

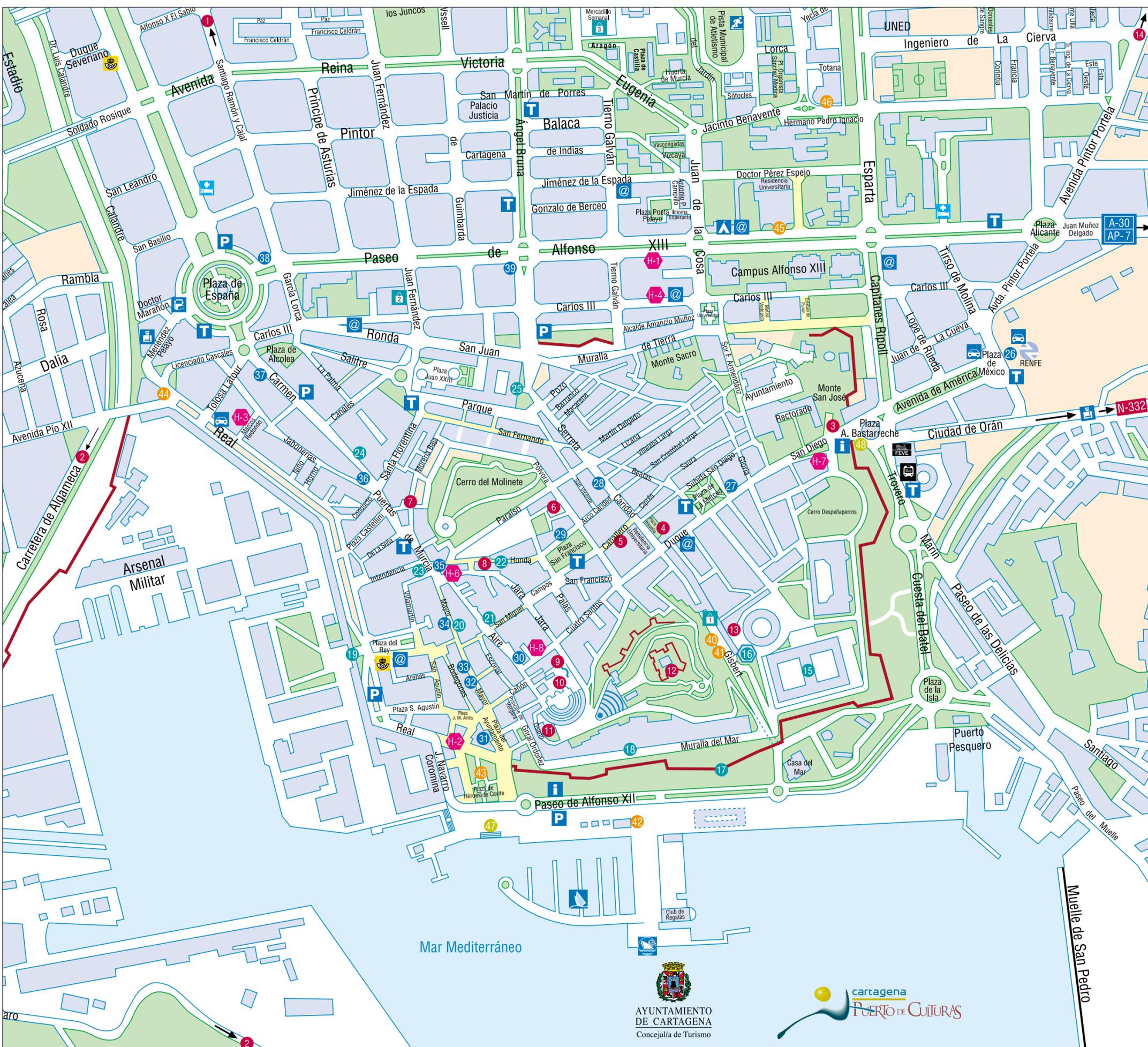
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Muralla de Carlos III.  
Phone: 34 968 506 483.  
www.ayto-cartagena.es  
infoturismo@ayto-cartagena.es

It is situated at the old San José Gate, one of the main gates into the city through the ramparts of Charles III. After the demolition of the gate in 1916, only two out of five vaults have survived. They were used by corps of guards. Nowadays they have been restored to offer to residents and tourists a full choice of maps and information. This is the beginning of the recuperation of the old walls of the city and transform the ramparts into a broad promenade from Bastarreche square to the Cityhall.

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Torres Park



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- 3. Punic Rampart
- 4. The House of Fortune
- 5. Augusteum
- 6. The Hill of Molinete
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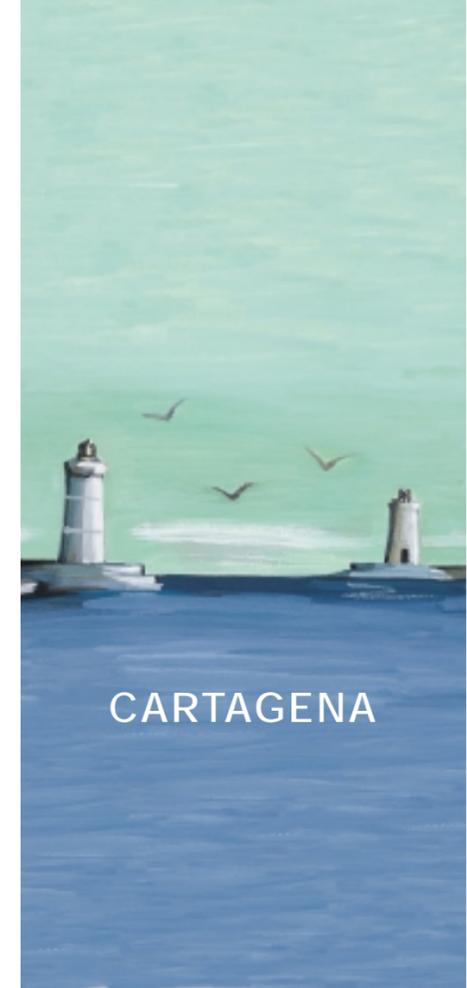
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**TOURIST TRANSPORT**

- 47. Tourist Catamarán
- 48. Tourist Bus

**HOTELS**

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- H 2 Cartagena \*\*\*\*
- H 3 Cartagena \*\*\*\*
- H 4 Carlos III \*\*\*
- H 5 Manolo \*\*\*
- H 6 Cartagena \*\*
- H 7 Los Habaneros \*\*
- H 8 Peninsular \*



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