

The city of Badajoz conserves a large number of churches and convents in the Old Town which have been built since the Middle Ages until the present day. There were many more which have now disappeared: the old church of San Andrés and the San Onofre, Los Remedios, and La Trinidad Convents. As for those which remain today, the bombings and attacks Badajoz has suffered in the different wars it has provided the setting for have very much depleted them. However, the proposed route allows you to find out more about the riches they still house.



High Altar of the Cathedral.

HOW TO COVER THE ROUTE OF THE CHURCHES AND CONVENTS OF BADAJOZ

We advise you follow the indicated itinerary, a route through the Old Town of the city which begins and ends at the Tourist Information Office of the Mudejar Houses, from which you can easily reach all the stops on the route. Admission to their interior, given the nature of these buildings, is often limited to the timetable for the masses and is not possible in some cases.

Before starting the tour we advise you to visit either of the **Tourist Information Offices** for further information.



TOURIST OFFICE OF THE MUDEJAR HOUSES

Plaza de San José, 18

Telf: (+34) 924 201 369

e-mail: casasmudejares@aytobadajoz.es

MUNICIPAL TOURIST OFFICE

Telf: (+34) 924 224 981

e-mail: turismo@aytobadajoz.es

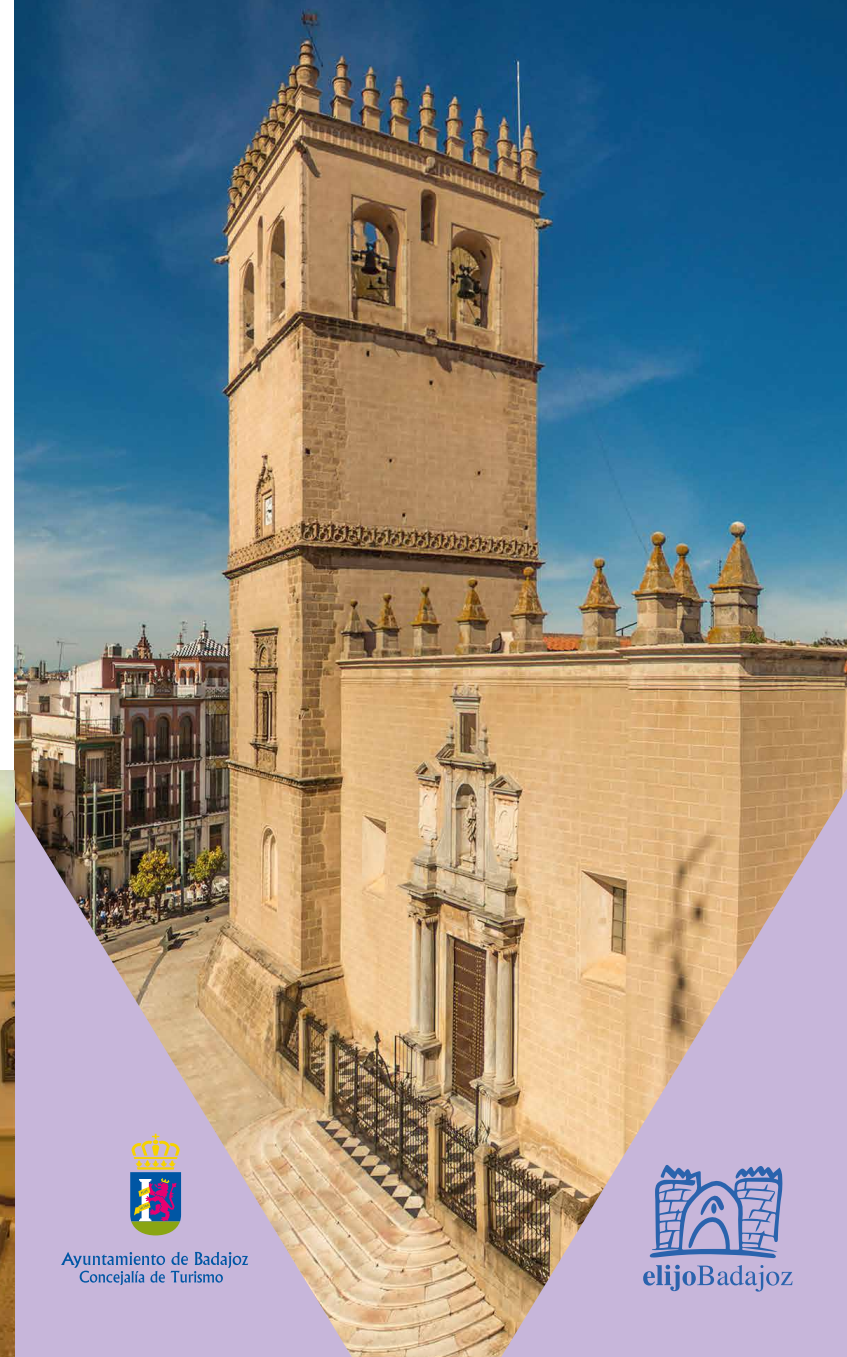
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ROUTE OF THE CHURCHES AND CONVENTS OF BADAJOZ



Ayuntamiento de Badajoz
Concejalía de Turismo



CONVENTS AND CHURCHES: RESIDENCES OF THE FAITH AND WITNESSES OF THE HISTORY OF BADAJOZ



Our Lady of La Soledad.

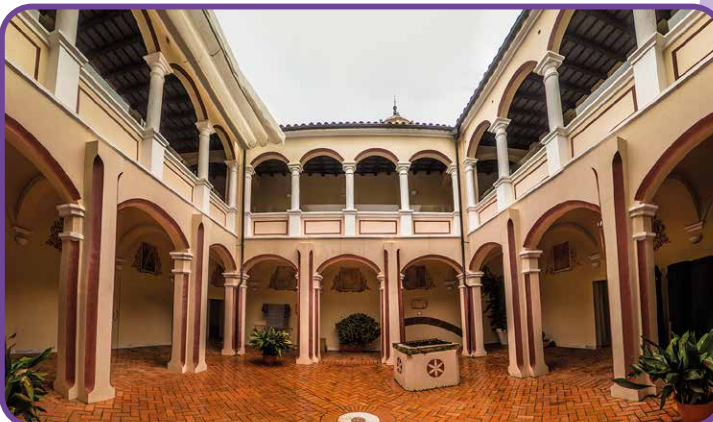
1 CHURCH OF SAN JOSÉ

Church of San José dates back to the Middle Ages. Saint Joseph was the former patron saint of the city and the day of the conquest of Badajoz by Alfonso IX of León is commemorated on 19 March 1230. The original building was badly damaged during the bombing and looting of the Peninsular War. Today the church forms part of the Convent of Madres Adoratrices Esclavas del Santísimo, dedicated to teaching. It was built in the neo-Gothic style between 1915 and 1919 in accordance with the design by the architect Francisco Franco Pineda. Its facade is the work of the Badajoz sculptor Julio Clivillés. Opposite the facade of the church stands a shrine with a wrought iron cross dating from the 17th century. Its interior boasts a beautiful Baroque-style altarpiece.



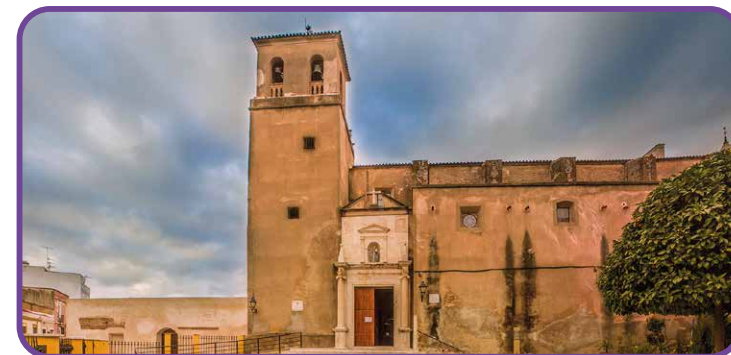
2 FORMER CONVENT OF SANTA CATALINA

It has its origins in the late-mediaeval Convent of Augustinian Nuns of Santa Catalina, which was vacated in 1623. In 1634 the Company of Jesus established a College in the former convent, which remained until 1767, when the Jesuits were expelled from Spain. In 1769 the place of worship went on to house the Church of Santa Maria la Real until 1837, when it was passed on to the church of the former Convent of San Agustín. From then onwards, the church, together with the rest of the premises of the former College of Padres Jesuitas, which were owned by the State, were used for military or municipal purposes or directly transferred to private individuals. They now house the offices of the Department of Culture.



3 CHURCH OF SAN AGUSTÍN

The site occupied by the former Convent of San Agustín is believed to have been that of the Aljama Mosque of Islamic Badajoz, its minaret being re-used for the bell tower of the old Church of San Lorenzo. The Augustinian monks stayed here from 1414 until their secularization in 1820. Shortly afterwards, in 1843, the old church of the Convent of San Agustín became the site of the Church of Santa Maria la Real. It has a classic white marble facade with a statue of Saint Augustine and the coat-of-arms of the Augustinian Bishop Agustín Antolínez. The church contains several burial places of notable families and figures from the city, including the Argüello Carvajal family and the Marquis of Bay, Commander in Chief of Extremadura during the War of Succession. The two cloisters were built in the 17th century and were re-used as barracks, a courthouse and a school during the 19th and 20th centuries.



4 HERMITAGE OF LA SOLEDAD



The image of Our Lady of La Soledad is the work of a Neapolitan workshop and was commissioned in 1664 by the then Commander in Chief of Extremadura, Francisco de Tuttavilla y Tufo. He ordered the building of a chapel to house the image on his land, where La Giralda building stands today. That first building fell into ruins over time and only its facade, attached to the wall of the Parque Infantil (children's park), remains. The new Historicist-style chapel was built in its current location and opened in 1935, when the image was transferred to the chapel on the ground floor, although work on the upper floor, in the neo-Byzantine style, lasted until 1985.

5 CONVENT OF SANTA ANA

The convent was founded in 1518 by Leonor Laso de la Vega y Figueroa, who was the abbess for 40 years. She was the daughter of Lorenzo Suarez de Figueroa y Mendoza from Badajoz, Ambassador of the Catholic Kings in Venice, where he commissioned his tombstone, now conserved in the cloister of the Cathedral. In 1580 the chapel choir was the temporary burial place of Queen Anne of Austria, wife of Philip II, who was staying in the neighbouring palace of the Fonseca family, the patrons of the convent. In 1771 it came under royal protection, with the royal coat-of-arms of the Houses of Austria and Bourbon on its facade. Its high altar has a carving of Our Lady of Las Virtudes and of El Buen Suceso, found during work on the Church of the Jerónimos in Madrid in the early 17th century.



6 CONVENT OF LAS DESCALZAS

The Convent of Our Lady of Las Mercedes of the Clarisas Descalzas (Barefoot Sisters of Saint Clare), has its origins in a religious house of third-order Franciscans founded in the 16th century in buildings donated by Juan de Céspedes and Teresa de Figueroa, located where the Old Hospital of San Sebastián stands today. In 1674 the Convent was moved to its present location, on the land previously occupied by the houses of the Alderman Sebastián Montero de Espinosa, its former site being exchanged to allow the hospital to stand there. The work on the new convent lasted until 1702. Its interior houses an image of Christ de la Espina.



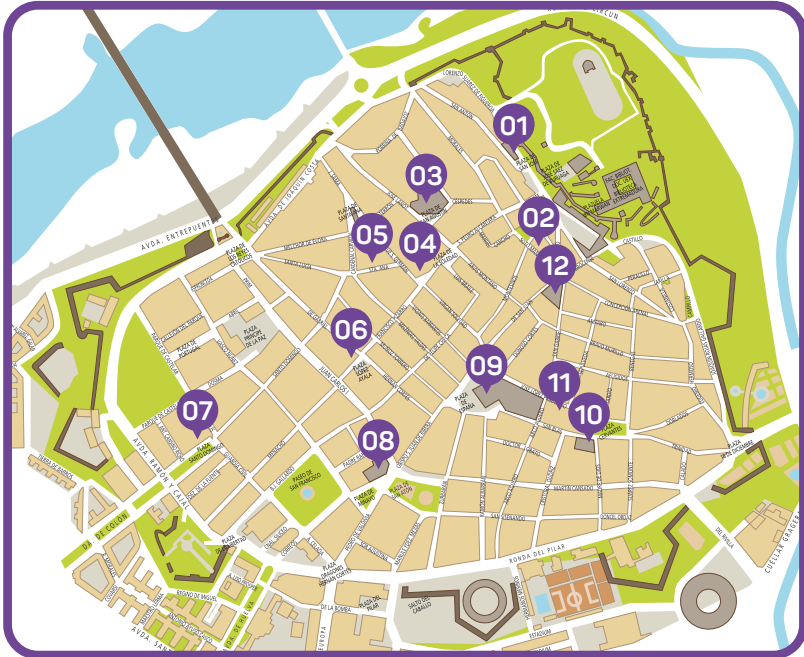
7 CHURCH OF SANTO DOMINGO

The Convent of Santo Domingo was founded by Gómez Fernandez de Solís in the mid-16th century and the Dominicans occupied it until its secularisation in 1822. Worship continued in the church, but the cloister was used first as a prison and, in 1844, the year of its creation, it passed on to the Civil Guard, an institution which maintains its headquarters in the building. The church is very large and its facade bears an image of Saint Dominic, flanked by the coats-of-arms of the families of the founder's parents, Solís and Figueroa.



8 CHURCH OF SAN JUAN BAUTISTA

It has its origins in the chapel of the former convent of San Francisco, founded in the second half of the 13th century. The convent had a large cloister, built in the 16th century. The chapel was rebuilt in 1732 in accordance with the project of Fray Juan Tamayo and funded with contributions from King John V of Portugal, to whom a large chapel was dedicated, the current-day Sanctuary Chapel. The Franciscans abandoned the convent following the secularization in 1835 and the building was transformed into military barracks in 1844. The chapel of the former convent was returned to worship in 1957, Church of San Juan Bautista being established there in 1966.



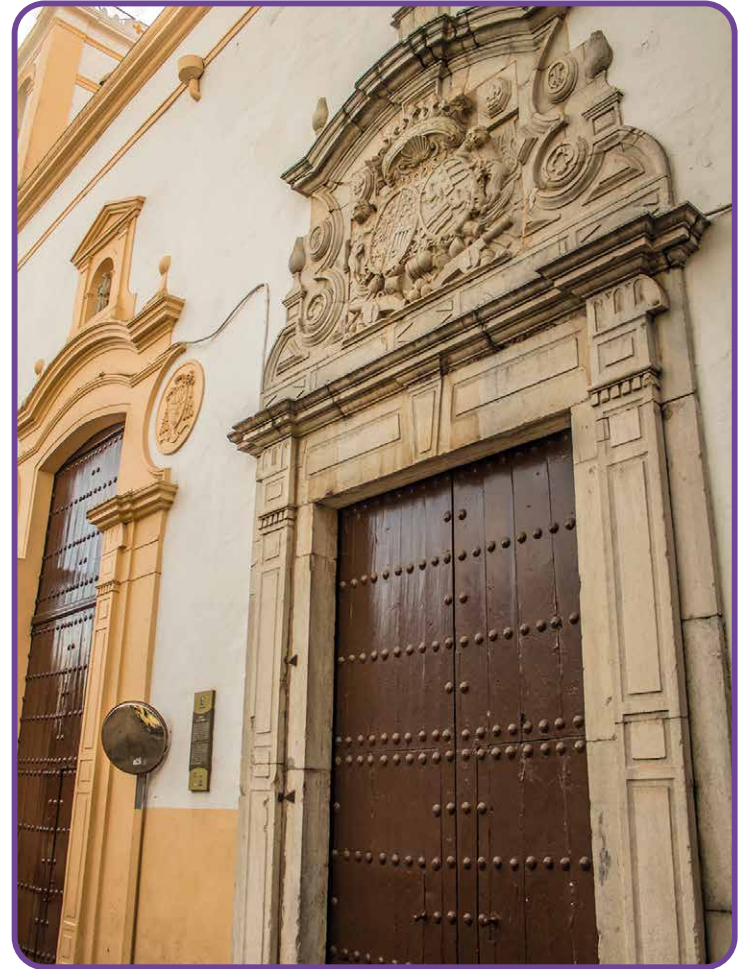
9 CATHEDRAL

Following the conquest of Badajoz in 1230 the palatial mosque situated in the Citadel was transformed into the Church of Santa Maria del Castillo or the Sé, the first cathedral in the city. In the time of Alfonso X work began on the cathedral, dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, and lasted until the 16th century. The upper sections of the tower date back to this century, with windows in the Plateresque style. The ashlar work in the interior can be seen in the choir stalls, organ and high altar. It has a fine museum with sculptures from the Italian Renaissance, paintings by Luis de Morales and a rich collection of tapestries.



10 CHURCH OF SAN ANDRÉS

The original mediaeval Church of San Andrés was located on the site of the current-day Plaza (square) de Cervantes. The church occupies the former chapel of the Convent of the Madre de Dios of Valverde, with an entrance from the same square. The outside of the church has fine facades, one of them bearing the coat-of-arms of the Marquis of Monreal. Its interior conserves an altarpiece from the 16th century, with paintings of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, attributed to the circle of Luis de Morales. A small carving of Saint Judas Thaddeus brings together a large number of devotees on the 28th of each month.



11 CONVENT OF CARMELITE

It was founded by Bishop Amador Merino Malaguilla in 1733, who proposed combining the Constitutions of the Barefoot Carmelite sisters and the nuns who had been in the religious house of Our Lady of Los Angeles for several years. The construction of the chapel was financed by Lieutenant General Alonso de Escobar.



12 CHURCH OF LA CONCEPCIÓN

It was built between 1779 and 1790 and is attributed to the architect Ventura Rodríguez. Its layout with a single central section and several adjoining chapels is crowned with a graceful elliptical-shaped dome. It was the chapel of Convent of San Gabriel, a congregation of barefoot Franciscans which had originally been set up outside the walls. The monastery was suppressed in 1835 and its church was moved to the Church of La Concepción in 1838, the rest of the convent falling into private hands. Its facade has a damaged coat-of-arms of the Prince of la Paz, Manuel Godoy from Badajoz, dating back to the early 19th century.

