

DELIGHTFUL DÉNIA. A HISTORY

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1st Version in the series:
2nd Дивная Дения in Russian
3rd Dénia Divina in Spanish
4th Dein Dénia in German



Las Rotas & Marineta Casiana, a shallow sandy beach (p. 90).

DELIGHTFUL DÉNIA. A HISTORY

*Dénia, hermoso lugar,
Donde puedes vivir junto al mar.
La temperatura y el paisaje son genial.
Aquí se vive fenomenal.*
Dénia is a beautiful place,
It's right by the sea-side.
Temperatures and landscape are delightful.
It's a great place to live!
(A school song).

Dear reader!
If you've opened this book, you're in luck.
Not because the book is wonderful, but because you are probably in Dénia!

Dénia is a small town on the Costa Blanca. It is most conveniently located between two beautiful cities with airports, Valencia and Alicante. From here, ferries head to the Balearic Islands. This was the final stretch of the ancient marine highway from Italy via the Balearic Islands to the shores of Spanish Levante - The East.
The town is protected by the majestic Montgó mountain. Because of this, Dénia is much greener than many neighbouring towns. Dénians even installed a monument to their climate!
And yet, the first impression you might have is of an ordinary Spanish seaside town. Dénia is hardly that!



Dénia is beautiful when seen from the Castle Hill!

SO, WHY THE INTEREST?

So, why does tiny Dénia with its 44 thousand population grow fourfold during the summer months? Why would the capital dwellers, the madrileños, with their sophisticated tastes, form the majority of Dénia's visitors?

The purpose of this book is to introduce you to the ancient, young, beautiful, delightful Dénia. To the town with more than a 2,500 years-long history. To the town, whose white-and-beige houses are scattered across the green hills and the sands, between the sea and the mountains. We will write about its past history, and its present delights.

Occasionally you will see text moved to the right side of a page. This will be about points of interest that are not part of the main narrative. In these paragraphs we describe the BIGGER PICTURE around Dénia. Feel free to skip over these parts, or to come back to them later.

At the end of the book you will find some practical tips. What to see, where to eat, and so on.

HERE YOU COME!

Of course, dear reader, it may be that you are NOT yet in Dénia. Perhaps a friend gave you this book... So how do you get to our Delightful Town?

Well, from overseas, take a plane to either Valencia or Alicante Airports. Then, hire a car, or take a bus (alsa.com), taxi, bla-bla-car (as these shared arrangements are known). And head for the highway / autopista AP7.

After some eight km from exit 62 from the highway AP7, or from the N332, you will pass a fountain with the town's name. After it, stores and warehouses begin. Don't be put off! Eventually, the residential buildings appear.

At the fifth roundabout turn into Abu-Zeyan and then Miguel Hernández Avenue. Soon on the right you will see the magnificent castle high above on a hill. Straight ahead is the sea embankment. The rocks look picturesque in the distance. Little houses run up the slopes of the enormous elephant-shaped Montgó.

THE NAME. WHAT'S IN IT?

Do you sense any romance in the name Dénia? That's right, it smells of Antiquity. It derives from the Roman goddess Diana.

And before that, the Greeks called this place Hemeroscopium, or Hēmeroskopeion. (Of that, more later. And thank goodness for the Romans!)

The names have the fragrance of millennia!

We will often use different variants of names, Castilian / Spanish - and Valencian. Denia is the Castilian spelling of the name. Dénia - the local, Valencian, which is now the official name. A subtle difference, isn't it?

VALENCIANA and MARINA ALTA

Spain consists of 17 Autonomous regions. Dénia belongs to the third largest, the Comunidad Valenciana. We prefer to call it simply Valenciana. It has three provinces: Valencia proper, Alicante and Castellon. Our town is in Alicante. Provinces are divided into comarcas, or counties. Dénia is the capital of comarca Marina Alta - meaning "Upper Marine." The comarca sits on the Greenwich Meridian. London is straight above us!

Welcome to Dénia!
We love her – and hope that you will, too!



Plaça Benidorm & Carrer Bellavista (p. 92).

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Man came to the *Levante* shores some 10,000 years ago. The first two sites, which archaeologists have found in our region, were at El Collao in Oliva and Cova Fosca in Vall d'Ebo. They are some 30-40 km from today's Dénia. Around 5,000 BC man started to live in Cova Ampla del Montgó near Javea. It is now called The Eye of Montgó, visible from afar. Nearby, the cave of the Barranc of Migdia was recently discovered. La Catxupa with its pre-historic art was inhabited from around 3,000 BC.

All three were “on the other side of Montgó”. Does it mean that prehistoric man avoided “our side”?

Not as such. Most historians think that at the time of these settlements, (namely, 10,000-3000 BC), these tribes did not know how to navigate the seas. If they did, it would most likely to have been in log boats. If you look at the map of Spain, you will see that Dénia is “right on the nose” of Eastern Spain. The “nose” is a promontory formed by two capes, Cape St. Anthony and Cape Nao. This could have made a voyage by log boat very dangerous, if not impossible.

So why *would* anyone settle here, in this place surrounded by marshes and located far away from other settlements?

MONTGÓ, OUR PROTECTOR FROM THE HEAT
Mount Montgó (named Kaón in ancient times) protects Dénia from the southern winds. After all, it towers up to 753 meters above sea level. It is the reason why Dénia's climate is so mild and blessed. But the prehistoric settlements that have been excavated seem to indicate that in those eras, humans preferred to live on the southern side of Montgó, facing Javea or Gata de Gorgos. There was more sunshine on that side.

NAMES

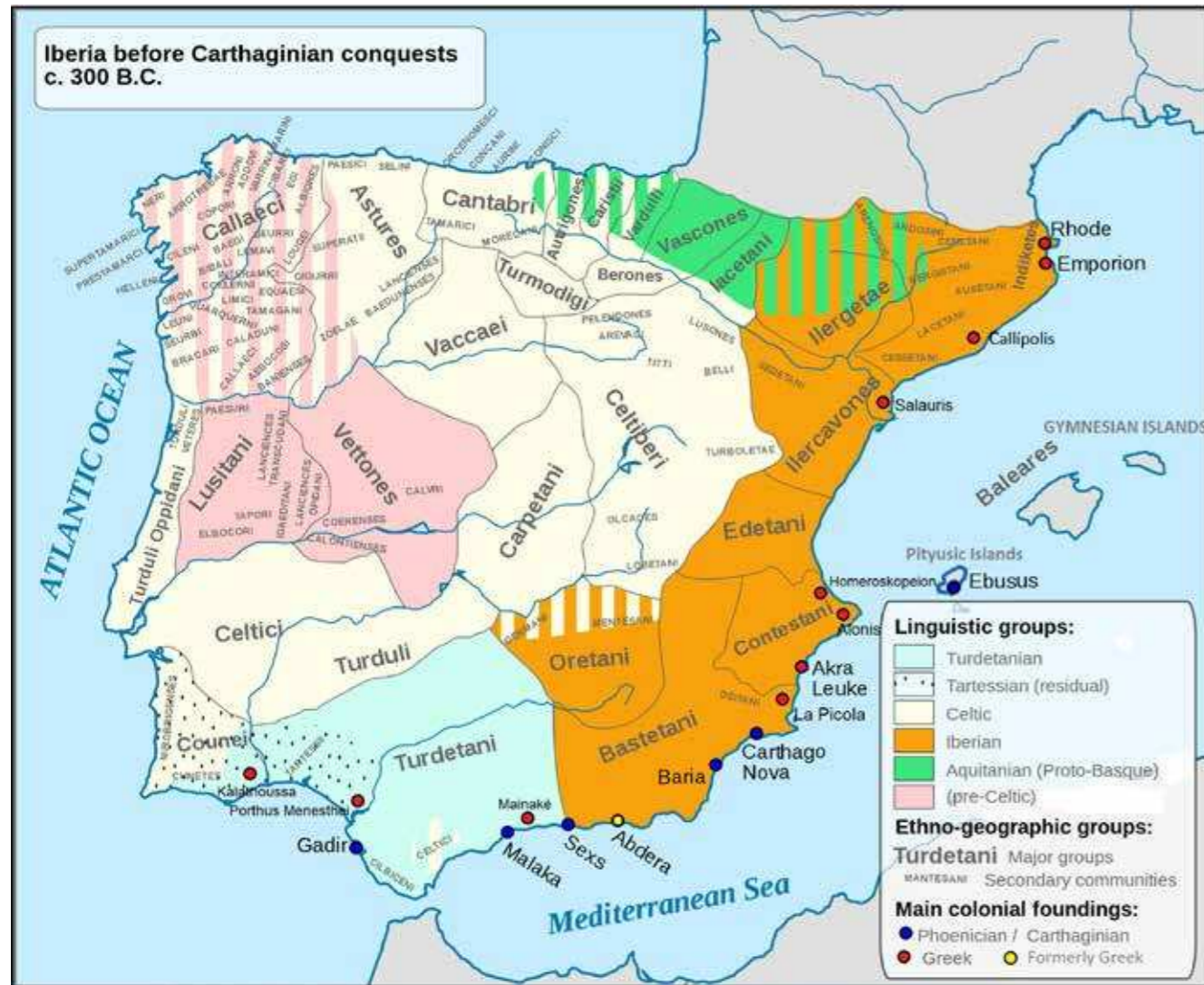
Before we continue, we need firstly to clarify certain names.

The country that we now know as “Spain” (or *España*) was once known by two different titles:

- For the Greeks and others, she was “Iberia”.
- The Romans referred to Spain as “Hispania”. The origins of this name are shrouded in mystery. It is thought to derive from a Carthaginian/Phoenician word meaning “Island of the Rock Hyrax” (a mammal of a rabbit's size). Or from a Hebrew name indicating “the Northern land”.



Denia's Centre and the Elephant-shaped Montgó (p. 4).



Iberia, Contestani, Homeroskopeion (!), 300 BC (pp. 12-13).

So, when this history uses either name, it is referring to SPAIN... although in pre-historic times both Iberia and Hispania included modern Spain and modern Portugal!

Also, you should be warned that in leaving “pre-history” behind and approaching the borders of recorded history, the story becomes more complicated because of the increase in historical data. I will try to keep it as simple as possible!

EARLY SETTLERS

During the bronze age, in the eleventh to the seventh centuries BC, Iberia became more densely populated with Proto-Iberians and Celto-Iberians. Proto-Iberians arrived around 5,000 BC. In the 5th century BC they mixed with the newly arrived Celts. The resultant Celto-Iberians spread around the central and northern parts of the country. The Iberians remained along the coast of the Mediterranean.

IBERIANS / CONTESTANI

The Iberians were divided into many tribes, including the Contestani and the Edetani. The Contestani founded a walled settlement in the 6th century BC – Alto de Benimaquia on the southern side of Montgo. One of Spain’s earliest wine-making facilities was found there. Later, La Peña de l’Àguila existed until the 1st c. BC on OUR side of Montgo! The main Contestani settlements were their capital Lucentum / Alicante, as well as Elche / Illici, and Xàtiva / Sait.

All subsequent waves of newcomers: Romans, Berbers, Arabs, did not dilute the Iberian blood. Present-day Dénians are mostly descendants of the Contestani Iberians.

THE EDETANI AND SUCRO

The Edetani, another tribe of Iberians, lived around the area of the future Valencia. The approximate border of Contestani and Edetani lands was the Jucar / Sucro river, not far from Cullera / Sucronem. The Gulf of Valencia in the 19th c. was still named *Golfo Sucronense*.

The most famous archaeological remnant of Iberian culture is La Dama de Elche (The Lady of Elche) from the 4th c. BC. Hundreds of copies of that extraordinary sculpture may be seen all over Spain.

DINIU, an Iberian settlement?

In the 19th century our great historian Roque Chabás argued that the Iberian settlement Diniu, allegedly located where Dénia stands now, was nothing but a myth.

12 MARITIME TRADERS:
PHOENICIANS, CARTHAGINIANS, GREEKS.

Meanwhile, great maritime nations were beginning to emerge: the Phoenicians, followed by their descendants the Carthaginians. And the well-travelled Greeks.

Why did these traders need Iberia? In the southern part of Spain, there was an ancient semi-mythical state named TARTESSOS. It had existed since 1200 BC. Some hotheads think that it was *THE* fabled lost city of Atlantis. Tartessos is thought to have been in the region where Seville and Cordoba are now. It traded in tin, silver, lead from Britain, and other important goods.

The Phoenicians founded Europe's oldest town, Cadiz, just to be close to Tartessos. Later they were replaced by the Carthaginians.

In the 7th century the Greeks appeared on our shores. Whilst they first came from Phocaea in Asia Minor, they had founded a trading place that became the oldest town in France – namely Marseilles or *Massalia* (from which they became known in Iberia as *Massaliots*). From there, the Greeks moved southwards and founded *Emporion* (meaning 'market'). And further on, to our places.

The *Massaliots* agreed with the Carthaginians that the lands to the north of a Partition Line were theirs. To the South, the lands belonged to the Carthaginians. The Partition Line ran through the Cape of Nao, 30 km South from Dénia. This made places around modern Dénia a frontier territory.

DID HĒMEROSKOPEION EXIST?

STRABO (64-24 BC) is one of the Fathers of Geography. His book has 17 volumes! In one of them he described A PLACE, roughly where Dénia is now, which:

- (A) stood next to a high mountain,
- (B) had a good harbour,
- (C) contained a temple of Artemis,
- (D) possessed iron deposits, and
- (E) had a "Lookout tower".

It was called HĒMEROSKOPEION – Ἡμεροσκοπεῖον. It means 'the Daily Guardian,' or the 'Day-time Watch Tower.' Strabo said it was a small frontier point where a few Greeks and a handful of locals lived.

Modern historians are divided on the matter. Half of them say: Hēmeroskopeion IS Dénia (see map at p. 10). That's what my daughter was taught at her school. The other half says that no evidence of its existence has ever been found.

But there is the circumstantial evidence. Let's analyse Strabo.

(A) The Mountain of Montgó is still there.

(B) The Port of Dénia has been considered the best harbour in the Gulf of Valencia.

(C) The Romans built a temple of Diana here. Artemis is her Greek name. Chabás wrote that the Greeks called this place Artemision.

(D) The ancients called the St Anthony promontory "Ferraria", the iron one.

(E) As to the "Guardian" tower, what was it used to watch for in those peaceful years? We think, to look for THE FISH.

THE SUPER-FISH

Not just for any fish. For THE Super-Fish. Tuna. Hunting (not even "fishing") for tuna is the oldest occupation in the Mediterranean. Its distribution: from Gibraltar, tuna moved northwards along the coasts of Iberia. All the way to Dénia. Immediately after Dénia the shoals turned into the open seas towards the Balearic Islands. Tuna is still being caught in Dénian waters, nearer to Ibiza. Whales and dolphins also come here.

There is a tower in the suburbs of Dénia, the Almadraba Tower. But that was the name for a method of tuna hunting, *Almadraba*! So why wouldn't the Massaliots place their own Observation tower here? It would be on the border with the Carthaginians, and to watch for the Fish... A double benefit.

We believe that HĒMEROSKOPEION / Artemision WAS the ancestor of Dénia, founded in 570-560 BC. Later, Tartessos was destroyed by the Carthaginians in 535 BC. And Hēmeroskopeion went into oblivion for some good four centuries.

WAS IT A STATE OF MIND....

There is an interesting explanation of the word Hemeroscopium in the Internet:

Quote: "For the Greeks, Hemeroscopium is the place where the sun sets. An allusion to a place that exists only in our mind, in our senses, that is ever-changing and mutable, but is nonetheless real..."

But Dénia today is a *real* place, not just in your mind... Even though it lingers in your mind for a long time.



Almadraba Tower, Las Marinas, Dénia (pp. 13, 73).

We do not have much information about the Proto-Iberians and Celto-Iberians because their languages disappeared in the 1st century BC, when the Romans came (bringing Latin with them, probably, in their suitcases). Latin was mixed with the Iberian local languages, then transformed during the Muslim conquest, to become Spanish / Castilian / Castellano. Other languages appeared: Valencian, Catalan, Galician.... All of them have their origins in Latin.

How did Iberia come to be Rome's FIRST foreign colony?

Because of Carthage and Hannibal. In the 3rd c. BC Rome was becoming stronger and it soon realised that the Mediterranean was not big enough for TWO empires. Carthage would have to go. Rome began to claim the role of the main power of the WESTERN Mediterranean.

PUNIC WARS

The first Punic war (264-241 BC) was for dominance over Sicily. The second (218-202), to control Iberia.

In 220 BC Carthaginian strongholds in Iberia were: Cartago Nova / Cartagena. And the town of many names, Alicante - Akra Leuka / the "White rock" / Castrum Album / Lucentum for Romans / the "Place of Light". Both were in our part of Iberia.

There was another powerful town with a Castle on a rock named Saguntum / Morvedre / Sagunto. It concluded a Treaty of Alliance with the Romans. Was it because Saguntum was inhabited by Edetani, hostile to Contestani (Author's theory)?

In 221 BC the young general Hannibal (247-181 BC), the commander of the Carthaginian troops in Iberia, needed a pretext for war with Rome. His siege of Saguntum started the war which made Hannibal world-famous.

THE SECOND PUNIC WAR in short

Hannibal besieged Saguntum – Rome stood up for its ally – the Italian Celts / Boii



The Roman Dianium / Dénia. Miquel Ortola. Museo Arqueológico de Dénia.

invited Hannibal to protect them – Hannibal, after passing Xàtiva, crossed the Alps with his elephants and defeated the Romans four times, including at Cannae – the Romans moved the war to Iberia – in 202 BC Scipio Africanus defeated the Carthaginians at Zama – the war ended, with the overall defeat of Carthage.

Rome DID become the strongest power in the Western Mediterranean. Our region, Sagunto and Xàtiva, unwittingly contributed to this.

HISPANIA. THE STORY OF DIANIUM BEGINS

Having won, Rome started to conquer *Hispania*. The conquest took nearly two centuries. One of the Romans' main bases was the port town of Dianium, first mentioned in Roman writings in the



Water Cave / Cova de l'Aigua, Montgó (pp. 17, 91).

1st century BC. It had a temple of Diana, the Roman equivalent of the Greek Artemis.

HOW OLD IS DÉNIA?

Is Dénia / Dianium “only” 2,100 years old? (If it was founded by the Romans). Or 2,600 years old? (If it WAS the Greek Hēmeroskopeion). I’m afraid that there is no exact answer to this question.

DIANIUM

The Roman Dianium was a proper town. It had a forum, streets, warehouses, cemeteries, all located to the north of the Castle Hill. If you are in Dénia today, look for Miguel Hernández Avenue.

You will see a large area of waste ground called Hort de Morand. It is under the Castle Hill, near Mercadona store. This is where the Roman town was (p.15).

The Roman town of Dianium, or Dianio, started from the modest status of a *civitas stipendaria* / *Ciudad estipendiaria*. It means “tributary state/community,” the lowest rank under Roman rule. Dianium was later upgraded to a *Municipia*, a fully-fledged Roman town, whose residents held Roman citizenship. Its heyday was in the 1st century BC.

PHYSICAL REMAINS OF ROMAN DIANIUM.

- a) Tombstones. There are hundreds of them. Two are near our Town Hall / Ayuntamiento (pp. 18, 77). Epitaphs present Roman Dénians to us. *Quintus Sulpicius Cratus*, 2nd c. AD, an important person, the controller of weights and measures. *Pompeia Maxima*, the beloved wife of *Nonius Victor*. REAL people.
- b) Remains of a Roman Villa in Els Poblets / Almadraba area / Yacimiento Romano de la Almadraba. It had a pottery / alfarería, its own dock and outbuildings.
- c) The Water Cave in Montgó / Cova de l'Aigua, reached by a simple ascent from the Hermitage of Pare Pere. Just below the entrance to the cave, a stone with an inscription stands. It was left in 238 AD by soldiers of the Roman Legion VII Gemina, who guarded the coast and the road. The water is *purissima*, filtered by the entire Mountain (pp. 16, 91).
- d) The new Museum of the Sea in the Esplanade of Cervantes, near the fishing port in Dénia (p. 20). The main exhibits are amphorae from Roman times.

The Museum explains the TRILOGIA DEL COMERCIO MEDITERRÁNEO. The “triangle” of Maritime trade in the Roman era: Olive oil from Betica / Southern Spain – *Garum*, the highly prized fish sauce from Cadiz – wines from North Africa and Italy. The port of Dianium formed an important part of the Triangle. Wine was brought here from Egypt and the Greek Islands. Dianium also exported wines and amphorae.

One of the favourite places of the Romans was our neighbour, Javea / Xabia. Don’t worry if you mispronounce the name, there are at least three variants of how to say it. The History Museum in Javea is well-structured and very informative. Remains of Roman villas are scattered throughout the valley of the river Gorgos. In the beautiful sandy beach Arenal you will find the Roman “Queen’s Baths” / “els Banys de la Reina”.



Roman Tombs at Ayuntamiento.

VALENCIA / VALENTIA EDETANORUM

The original name of our capital contained a tribute to the Iberians / Edetani. The town was founded by the Romans in 138 BC. Brave / *Valiente* Roman veterans were allocated an island on the river Turia, near its mouth. It reached its peak in the 2nd century AD.

ROMAN ROADS

The Roads, besides the languages, are the most tangible traces of the Roman civilization.

There were four main Roman highways in Spain.

They formed a nearly correct square.

I Vía Augusta. This still runs from the North-East, from the present border with France. It goes via Tarraco / Tarragona, the main town of the Roman Spain. Then onto Valentia, Lucentum / Alicante, and west towards Hispalis / Seville. The road's original name was Vía Heraclea / the Path of Hercules. It bypassed Dénia.

II Vía de la Plata. This one runs northwards from Seville via the important Emerita Augusta / Merida, to Salamantica / Salamanca and to the modern Galicia, Asturica Augusta / Astorga.

III Vía del Norte. This goes from Galicia eastwards, to the important Caesaraugusta / Zaragoza, and on to Tarraco. Back to square one!

IV Vía Caesaraugusta. The “diagonal”, from Zaragoza to Merida via Toletum / Toledo.

You haven't noticed Dianium in the list? No wonder. The Via Augusta, now the A7, ran behind the mountains. It went directly from Valentia to Lucentum. The strategic point on it was Saetabi / Xàtiva.

But there *was* a “dead end” road, The Via Dianium! The Romans found it necessary to connect Valencia and Xàtiva with our town, the main port of the region.

A UNIQUE SAFE HARBOR

One can't stress enough that from the ancient times almost the entire coast of the Gulf of Valencia was unsafe for navigation. Yes, sandy beaches were everywhere, but many treacherous rocks were hidden beneath the calm waters...

But an incredible coincidence existed only in front of Dénia. The North-and South-easterly winds prevailed here. In other parts of the Gulf they pushed ships onto rocks.

But, outside Dénia a skilful mariner, after making a lengthy detour, could take advantage of the south-east wind, xaloc, find the entrance channel and lead his ship to the safe harbour, the *darsena*.

QUINTO SERTORIO, THE FIRST SEPARATIST IN HISTORY

Quintus Sertorius / Sertorio (122-72 BC) is the national hero of Spain and Portugal. He pursued a policy of peaceful assimilation of the local population into Roman life. The Iberians loved him. He wanted Hispania to secede from Rome. In the 80s BC Sertorio started a civil war against the Roman dictator Sila / Sulla.

Sertorio's main ports were Tarraco / Tarragona and Dianium. His troops' last stronghold was La Peña de l'Àguila above Dénia. A street in our town bears his name.



The New Maritime Museum in the Old Fish Market (pp. 17, 21).

Sertorio was defeated in 74-72 BC by the troops of Cneo / Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus. “Pompey,” as he’s known in Shakespeare’s “Anthony and Cleopatra”, the same Pompey who, after his victory over Sertorius, moved to Italy and defeated the Spartacus revolt in 71 BC. Interestingly, the symbol of Sertorio was a white roe deer / *una corza blanca*. An animal associated with... Diana!

DECLINE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.
VISIGOTHS AND OTHERS COME AND GO

A poetic paragraph in the Maritime Museum says about Dianium of the 6-7th centuries AD: “*desaparece su pulso como un dibujo sobre la arena de la playa*” / “its pulse disappears like a drawing on the sand of a beach”.

The 5th century brought about the decline of the Western Roman Empire. The departing Romans were replaced by Suebi, Alans, and Vandals. The Romans called on the Visigoths to restore order in Hispania. The Visigoths shifted to the Peninsula. Around 580, Toledo was chosen as their capital. In the 550s most of the South-East of the Peninsula, from Cadiz to Valencia, formed a part of Byzantine / the Eastern Roman Empire. However, in the 620s the Byzantines were driven out by the Visigoths. The Visigoth Kingdom existed in Spain from the middle of the 6th century until 711. Dénia was the seat of Visigoth bishops from the 630s to the 690s.

Did anything remain from that period? Only a little.
There are several burials in Pego. Recently, necropolises were excavated in Gaià and Castelló.

IBERO-ROMANS
By the beginning of the 7th century AD, about 5 million people inhabited the Iberian Peninsula. The majority of the local population were *Íbero-romanos*. At the beginning of the next century, the historical destiny of the Peninsula changed dramatically. For nearly eight centuries.

Here comes a romantic story. Count Julian, the ruler of the Byzantine Ceuta (which is actually in North Africa), called on the Muslims for help. He asked them to avenge the honour of his daughter Florinda La Cava (not the drink), who had been seduced by the Visigoth king Roderick / Rodrigo. (Sir Walter Scott wrote a huge poem – “The Vision of Don Roderick” – on the subject. It was not one of his successes... but if you want the story details...).

The Berber and Arab troops crossed to Gibraltar and launched an attack on Visigoth Spain in April 711. Their leader was Tariq Ibn Ziyad. His name is on the map even today: “Gibraltar” derives from *Jeb al Tariq*, the “mount of Tariq”. By 714, almost the whole of Iberia had been conquered by the Muslims. The majority of the conquerors were members of Berber tribes from Morocco in Africa. In Spain, they are still referred to as Moros – the “Brown ones”.

THE SUPER-STATE

Cordoba became the capital of Al-Andalus, as the newcomers renamed the Peninsula. Abd al-Rahman III (891-961) was the most powerful Muslim ruler of Al-Andalus. In 929, he created the Caliphate of Cordoba. During his time, Cordoba became the largest town in Europe, the most famous for learning, and the most beautiful. If you visit that city, please do not miss its Mezquita-Catedral / Mosque-Cathedral. Your eyes will be dazzled by the view of the “forest” of thousands of columns.

The Caliphate was a centralized state. Neither Dénia nor Valencia received much attention. They became to be known as Daniya / Al-Dàniyya and Balansiya. *Daniya* means *Kind-hearted* in Arab. A fitting description for our town! However, to both the Visigoths and the Muslims, the port and the shipyard in Daniya were important.



The Gates to the Old Town / Vila Vella, one of the oldest parts of the Castle, ca. 1200, the Muslim period (pp. 69, 74-75).

COLLAPSE OF THE CALIPHATE

Almanzor / Al-Mansur, the “Victorious” (938-1002), was the Muslims’ strongest military and civilian leader. But his children could not agree about the sharing of power with the Caliphs of Al-Andalus, and a Civil war (the *fitna*) broke out. In 1010, the centralised state began to disintegrate. By 1031, dozens of independent Muslim principalities had appeared. They were called *Taifas*.

SLAVS in DÉNIA?

During the period of Muslim rule, the term *Saqaliba*, or *excaliba*, appeared. This is what the Muslims called slaves of European, sometimes, of Slavic origin. In Cordoba, *Saqaliba* could reach high ranks in the political system. They became advisors to Emirs and Viziers. And one of them – Muyaheed – raised a revolt in Dénia. The town and the region seceded from the crumbling Caliphate. The *Taifa* of Dénia was created.

THE LINGUIST KING and THE *TAIFA* of DÉNIA

The name Muyaheed al-Amiri al Muwaffaq (990-1045) does not roll easily off the tongue... “Al-Muwaffaq” means “the Triumphant One”. A military leader, a *caballero*, he was also an expert in Arabic philology. He established an independent *Taifa* in Dénia and founded the Amirid Dynasty, named after Almanzor. A Learned Linguist created the first and the only independent Kingdom on our territory!

MUYAHID’S ACHIEVEMENTS: He -

- created a powerful fleet in Dénia, conquered the Balearics, which remained under the rule of Dénia until the 1050s (but, his attempt to conquer Sardinia ended disastrously),
- surrounded himself with philosophers and poets,
- became the first *Taifa* ruler to mint his own coins,
- laid the foundations for the prosperity of Dénia for 60 years.

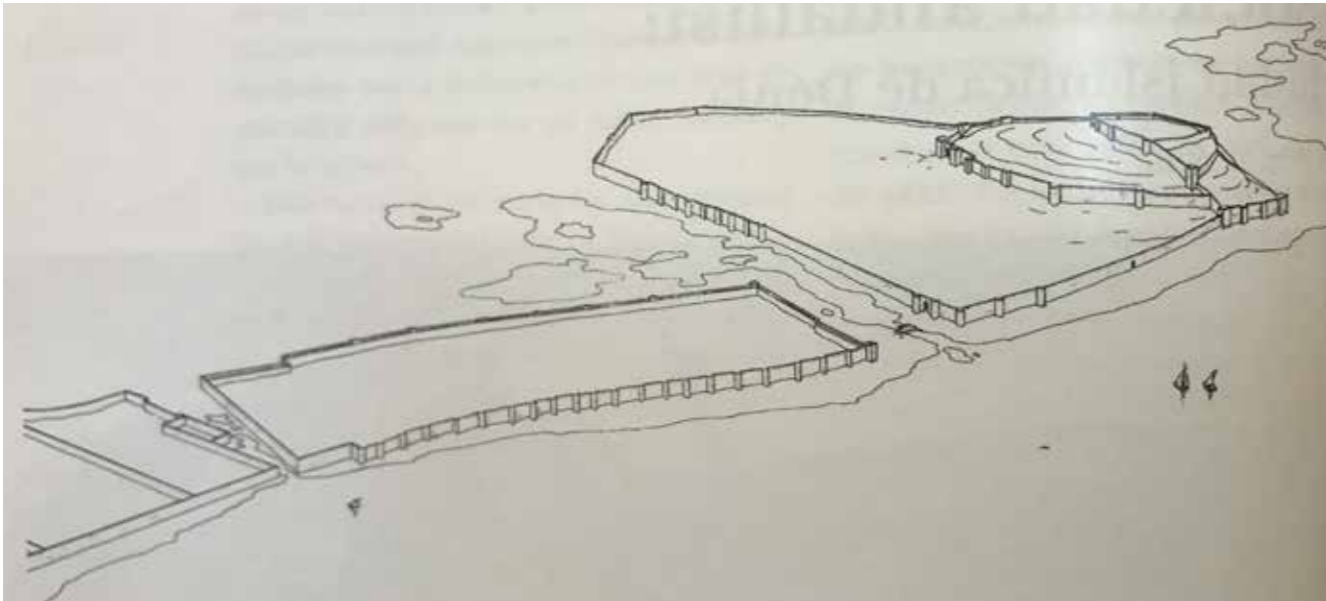
So rich was our *Taifa* that in 1055, Ali Iqbal ad-Daula, its second King, sent a ship with grain to starving Egypt. Its ruler reciprocated with thank-you gifts, including a supposedly genuine Holy Grail...

THE HOLY GRAIL?

Modern history, legend and fiction knows of several versions of The Holy Grail (supposedly, the cup which Christ used at The Last Supper, to inaugurate Holy Communion). Perhaps Indiana Jones would tell its story better... The most famous Chalice is kept in the Cathedral of Valencia, and is named EL SANTO CÁLIZ. Its history dates back to the 5th century. Each of its movements during the last 1500 years has been well documented.



The Holy Grail Cup in Leon?
From Dénia?



5 parts of Muslim Dāniya as per S-r Josep A. Gisbert Santonja (Archaeological Museum of Dénia, pp. 27, 31, 65, 67, 84).

There are at least 10 contenders for the title of the Cup. In León, the Basilica of San Isidoro houses the *Cáliz de doña Urraca*. In spite of its name, this Chalice, the “Egyptian” one, was presented to Ferdinand I, the powerful ruler of León, by nobody else but the Ruler of Dénia, Ali Iqbal ad-Daula, aka Ali ben-Muyahid.

STREET WITH AN OLD NAME

A brilliant galaxy of philosophers, scientists, poets lived at the courts of the two Amirids. Abu S-Salt is the name of a street in Dénia, named after the most prominent native of our town during the Independent *Taifa* period. Abu-i-Salt ibn Umayya al Dani (1067-1134) was born in Dénia and became known far beyond the borders of the Muslim world as a polymath who wrote about pharmacology, geometry, Aristotelian physics, astronomy... and was also a poet and musician... In Medieval times his name was Latinised *as Albuzale*.

THE SIZE OF DÉNIA AS A MUSLIM TOWN

Under the Muslims, the Town was large and fortified. According to modern researchers, Gisbert and Ivars, the Muslim town consisted of 5 parts. They are shown on p. 26, starting from the right: (1+2) The Castle – 4 hectares, including (1) The Upper part of the Castle which was a mighty Citadel, the *Alcazaba*. (2) Its lower part was the economic cradle of the Castle, a refuge in case of danger, the *Albacara*. Both the Arab and the modern walls of the Castle surrounded these two parts. (3) *The Medina*, at the foot of the Castle hill, was a walled Muslim town. 24 hectares. Twice the size of the Christian town in the 13-15th centuries. (4) The big suburb (*arrabal*) called Fortí. Its walls are still visible opposite the Royal yacht club. 13 hectares. It was separated from Medina by a brook running under the present-day *Saladar* boulevard. (5) The Shipyard or *atarazana*. Total territory, at least 41 hectares. There was also the 6th part: the Maritime suburb, Raval de la Mar, presently *Baix la Mar* (pp. 83-4, 87).

BEAUTY and POWER:

description of DÉNIA UNDER MUSLIM RULE

This text was written by the Arab traveller Al Idrisi in the 12th c., long before the Reconquista: “Denia is a town located on the edge of the sea, very populated and beautiful. It has a large suburb (*arrabal*) and powerful walls that in the East were built straight in the sea, with great skill and wisdom. The Castle (*alcazaba*) of the town cannot be taken by assault. The Castle dominates agricultural lands, fully cultivated and planted, primarily, with figs and grapes” (R. Chabás, p. 190).

Unfortunately, in the centuries following Muslim rule Dénia never reached similar heights. For us, the years 1010-1076 will always remain as the period of the highest fame of our town. A thousand years ago!

As mentioned, the Chalice from Egypt was presented to Fernando / Ferdinand I, the powerful ruler of León (1015-1065). He was one of the main heroes of the Reconquista, the reconquest of Spanish lands from the Moors. He also became the founder of the Royal dynasty of Castile. The Reconquista lasted 774 years, from 718 to 1492. Nearly eight centuries! Of course, the wars were not continuous, there were periods of pacification.

JAIME I, THE HERO OF THE RECONQUISTA

The future Kingdom of Valencia was “reconquered” after 16 years, between 1229 and 1245, by Jaime I / James the First, King of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, and a host of other places. He is the principal hero of Valenciana and is entitled *El Conquistador* / The Conqueror. You can see monuments to him in every town of the *Comunidad*. He was born in Montpellier, France in 1208, and died in Alzira, near Valencia, in 1276.

THE LONG RECONQUISTA

The process of re-christianization of Valenciana was designated as a Crusade. In the early 1230s, the troops of Jaime I occupied the present province of Castellón in the North of Valenciana. In the late 1230s, they conquered today’s province of Valencia. Dénia and Alicante followed in mid-1240s.

MEMORABLE DATES

The 9th of October is the main public holiday in Valenciana. On this day in 1238, the troops of Jaime I entered the capital of the future Kingdom. It took place without a struggle, following an agreement. Dénia fell to the Christians on the 11th May 1244, surrendering to troops commanded by one Captain Carros.



Jaime I, The Conqueror King (1208-1276).



Moors & Christians festivities in Dénia in August (pp. 30, 94).

SAINT ROC and the AUGUST HOLIDAYS

Sant Roch / Saint Roc (1295-1327) is the patron Saint of dogs and bachelors. The original Church in the lower town of Dénia was named after St. Roc. When the church of the Ascension / Asunción in the Upper (Old) Town was destroyed, the main church of the Lower Town was also named Asunción. It stands next to Ayuntamiento and has a chapel of St. Roch (pp. 31. 59. 67).

MOORS and CHRISTIANS / MOROS y CRISTIANOS

On the 15th of August all Mediterranean countries celebrate the day of Assumption, or the Ascension of the Virgin / Asunción de la Virgen. But August the 16th, the Feast of St. Roc, is just about

as popular in our region. So, Dénia has two public holidays, the 15th and 16th. The climax of the colourful holiday of Moors and Christians.

This *fiesta* is celebrated to commemorate the victory over the Moors in the 13th century, and many times after that. It is one of the THREE main holidays of Dénia. Eight Christian and eight Moorish *filas* / regiments dressed in colourful uniforms, with drums and pipes, parade through the town. The celebration continues for several days in several stages. The landing of the Moors on the Dénian coast, a mock battle and a Truce. There are parades, and a celebration of Saint Roc with a solemn procession. There are concerts and dances, and lots of activities for children. Music in the streets. This must be seen! And heard!

DÉNIA BEFORE and AFTER the RECONQUEST

Unfortunately, we cannot say that the 13th-century Reconquista brought the same festive mood to the Dénian / Valencian lands. Many of the Muslims (who had spent nearly five centuries here) left their homes.

Dénia was depopulated. In 1308, another flamboyant king of Valenciana, Jaime II, ordered the remaining inhabitants to move from Medina and Forti to Albacara, under the protection of the Castle walls. The settlement was later called the Old Town / La Vila Vela.

10 TIMES SMALLER

The inhabited territory of Dénia under the Muslims was 41 hectares.

64 years after the Reconquista, it shrank to 4 hectares.

Please compare maps and paintings at pp. 26, 45, 50, 65, 67 and 84.

Dénia would need some 650 years to grow back to the size it was in the 12th century.



Church of Ascension / Asunción seen from the Old Town (pp. 30, 66).

In 1238 Jaime I founded the Kingdom of Valencia. He gave it its own laws (*Fueros*), and a semi-independent Parliament, *Cortes*.

In the next two centuries, Aragon / Valencia were often at war with Castile, and almost constantly fighting the Muslims in the south. Meanwhile, Valencia was growing stronger. The importance of Dénia, the largest port in the Kingdom, also increased.

THE SYMBOLS OF VALENCIA

Not without reason the King of Aragon and Valencia Pedro IV (1319-1387) was called the Ceremonious / El Ceremonioso. He attached great importance to insignia. From him, Valencia received its Banner and the Coat of Arms. They have Aragonese stripes, red and yellow. The banner, called La Real Señera, has a blue stripe with royal crowns. The coat of Arms has two letters L, for Leal Lealissima, i.e. Extremely Loyal (to the Aragonese kings). And a bat.

THE LEGEND of the BAT

Muslims domesticated bats to combat mosquitos. In the autumn of 1238, a bat flew to the Christian camp in Ruzafa. It warned the Christians about the impending Muslim attack. Jaime had it placed on his coat of arms. From there it flew to the coat of arms of Valencia.

DRAGON-ARAGON

As for the Dragon, it probably originated from the consonance “Dragon-Aragon”. The Dragon sits on the coat of arms of the Province and the Autonomy. The creature is sometimes called the crest / la cimera del Rey de Aragón.

13-15th CENTURIES: THE WEALTH OF VALENCIA
At that time, Valencia was called “the final point of the Great Silk Road”. Trade brought wealth. Dénia, with its two anchorages, was the prime port in Valencia. The ancient Roman road connected it with the capital of the Kingdom.

THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM

The two cities became rich simultaneously. It was said in the 15th century: “Dénia is the key to the Kingdom, And Valencia is the mother and the head of the Kingdom” (Chabás, p. 288).

THE JEWEL

“The jewel of the Royal crown of Aragon was the Radiant Dénia,” our historian Palau wrote in the 18th century. In 1323, Jaime II gave this “pearl” as a gift to his son, the *Infante* Pedro. Later, Dénia passed to the Infante Alfonso of Aragon, the Old (1332-1412).

FIRST TITLE in THE KINGDOM OF VALENCIA

Don Alfonso was a famous man, whose services were much appreciated; in 1355, he was given the title of Count of Dénia / El Conde de Dénia. The County of Dénia / el Condado appeared on the map. Later, Don Alfonso rose even higher: he became the Marqués of Villena and the Constable of Castile. And still later, the Duke of Gandia.

The title of Count of Dénia was the FIRST title awarded in the Kingdom of Valencia! Such was the importance of Dénia. And of Don Alfonso.



Coat of arms of Valencia with the famous bat and LL for Leal Lealísima.



Don Alfonso of Aragon visiting the Monastery near Cape San Antonio (pp. 33-35).

CHAPTER 6. THE 15TH CENTURY. THE GOLDEN AGE OF VALENCIAN LITERATURE.

It was at the brilliant court of don Alfonso the Old in Gandia, that the foundation was laid for the flourishing of Valencian literature. The first document with a prototype of the Valencian language dates back to 1253. From the 1340s, the language was called “Valencian”. They started writing laws in it, and, since the end of the 14th century, producing works of literature.

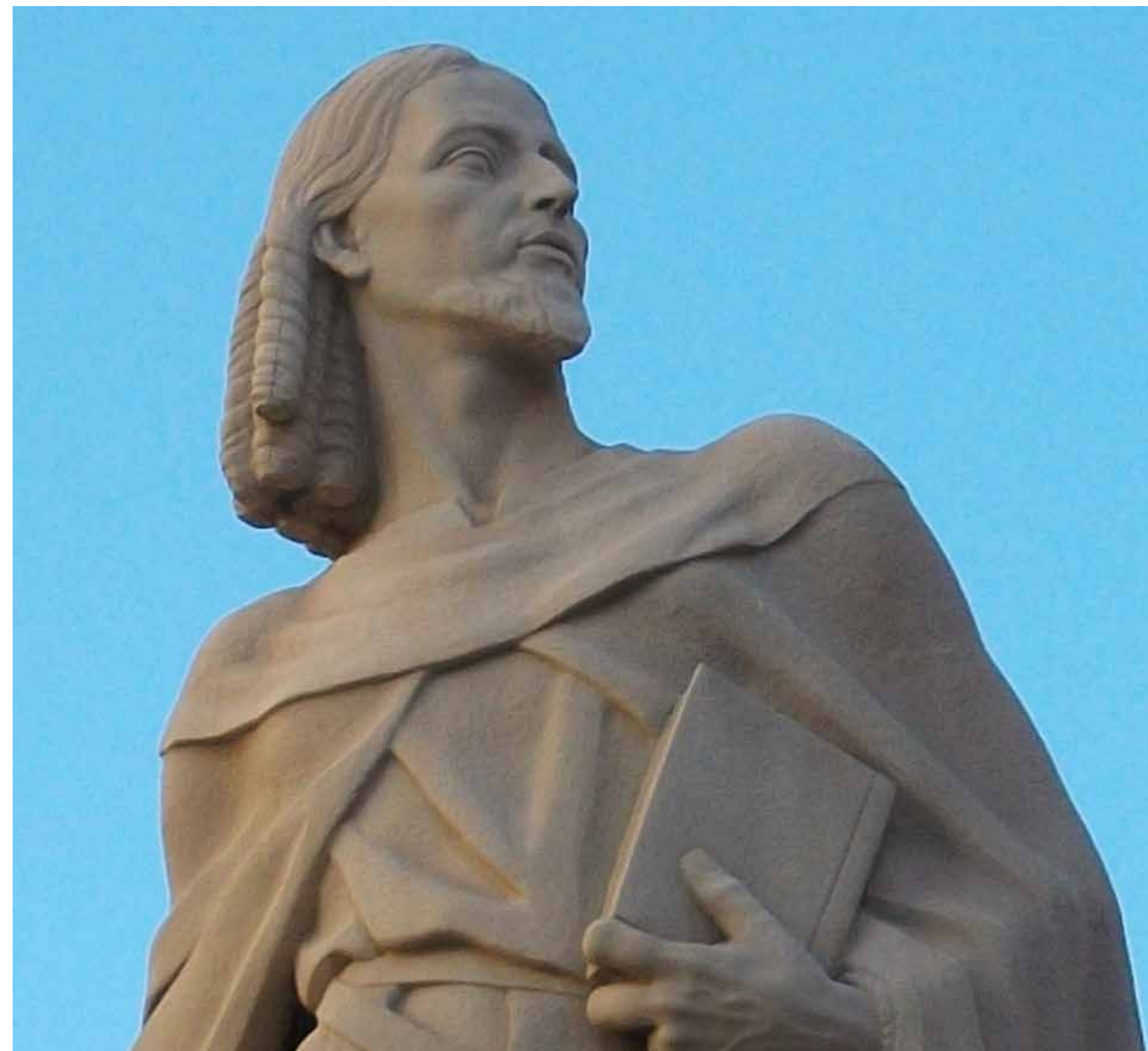
TWO STARS:

AUSIÀS MARCH (1399-1459)

The most famous Valencian poet was born in Gandia at the court of Don Alfonso the Old. Ausiàs March worked in Gandia, in Valencia, and in Cotalba, a monastery not far from Gandia. Here is an example of his poetry translated into English AND the modern Catalan (which is not identical to the 15th century Valencian):

*Si com lo taur se'n va fuit pel desert
quan és sobrat per son semblant qui el força,
ne torna mai fins ha cobrada força
per destruir aquell qui l'ha desert,
tot enaixí em convé llunyar de vós,
car vostre gest mon esforç ha confús;
no tornaré fins del tot haja fus
la gran paor qui em tol ser delitós.*

Like the bull which takes flight into the wilderness
when overcome by another which forces him,
and does not return until he musters the strength



Ausiàs March, the Classic of Valencian poetry. Gandia.

to destroy the one which banished him,
so must I also go away from you,
for your gesture has confused my effort;
I shall not return until I have completely banished
the great fear which prevents my happiness.

TWO STARS: JOANOT MARTORELL

THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST NOVEL WITH A HERO

Joanot was born and died in Valencia (1410-1465). His “Tirant lo Blanch” / “Tyrant the White” is the FIRST NOVEL known in Europe. Cervantes and his Don Quixote exclaimed: this is “a treasure trove of pleasures and a deposit of joys”, “the best book in the world.” Tyrant is the name of a knight. Many streets in our towns are named after him. A beautiful monument to Tyrant greets you in Gandia’s main library.

SANDOVAL and ROJAS

1431: the title *Count of Dénia* was granted to one of the prominent Spanish / Castilian grandees, don Diego Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas. He was a shining representative of families known since the 11th century. Dénia ceased to be a property of the Royal family and passed into private hands for 373 years. It obtained its coat of Arms from don Diego, the third count of Dénia (p. 38). The fifth Count of Dénia was promoted to the rank of Marqués in 1487. Dénian lands became a Marquisate / el Marquesado.

COAT OF ARMS OF DÉNIA

The coat of arms of our town has a crown on the top. Underneath it, a shield with two fields. The black stripe on the left side came from the ancient Sandoval family. The five stars on the right, from the Rojas. In recent times, a Valencian tower was added to the lower part of the coat of arms.

15th CENTURY- PREREQUISITES FOR THE UNIFICATION OF SPAIN

The 15th century was very important for Spanish history. At the beginning, Spain had the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon. The kings in both kingdoms came from the same dynasty, the *Trastámara*. In 1469, the historical marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile took place. They would be called the Catholic Kings / Los Reyes Catolicos.



Tirant lo Blanch, by Joanot Martorell. Gandia’s library.



Coat of Arms of Dénia. The stripe and the stars are from Sandoval and Rojas families, respectively (p. 36).

THE WORKS OF THE CATHOLIC KINGS
1492 is the year for which Isabella and Ferdinand are still famous. They initiated three important events during that fateful year:

- The Reconquest of Granada in January. All of Spain became Christian.
- The Expulsion of Jews from Spain, starting in March. The inquisition was established, headed by Tomás de Torquemada.
- Isabella financed the voyage of Christopher Columbus / Cristóbal Colón.

On October 12, 1492, Columbus discovered an island, part of a new continent. This day is now celebrated as the day of Spain. Of Everything Spanish / Fiesta de Hispanidad.

The New World was considered to have been conquered by Castile, not by Spain as a whole. The Andalusian Seville became the port of departure for all Conquistadors. This, and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, predetermined a gradual decline in the geo-economic weight of Aragon and Valencia.



Ermita de Santa Lucia, now an Orthodox Church, 14th c. (pp. 65?, 72, 91).



Borja / Borgia family. Two Popes, One Saint, and... Sinners (?). From Canals, Xàtiva and Gandía.

NEARLY A ROYAL FAMILY: the BORJA

However, in the 15th century Aragon and Valencia were still very rich. This made possible the ascension of two Borja / Borgia popes to the papal throne. The family rose to eminence from Xàtiva. Later, they became the owners of Gandia.

In 1455, Calixto III, the first representative of the Borjas in Rome, was elected Pope. Then in 1492, the most famous Spanish Pope, Alexander VI, ascended the papal throne. His reputation was painted in the darkest tones much later. During his reign, the Valencian Pope became famous for dividing the world between Spain and Portugal under the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494. He also promoted our monarchs to the status of Catholic kings in 1496.



Ermita de San Joan, Gothic / Renaissance, 13-16th c. (pp. 65?, 72).

CHAPTER 7.
16TH and 17TH CENTURIES – THE BIGGER PICTURE. CHARLES THE FIRST / THE FIFTH

The 16th century brought new achievements. Spain became *de facto* united under the grandson of Catholic Kings, Charles / Carlos the First of Spain, aka Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Fifth (1500-1558). He was the first representative of the Austrian-Burgundian-Flemish Habsburg dynasty, which stayed on the Spanish throne until 1700. The Empire of Charles the First, stretching from America to Italy, was the first one over which “the sun never set.”

REVOLTS of COMUNEROS and GERMANDADAS
The process of raising Charles I into power was not smooth. In 1520-1523, two of the largest revolts in the history of Spain took place. In the North, the uprising of the *Comuneros*. The first Communists? No, representatives of towns and communities. In the South, Valencia and Majorca, the Revolt of the Brotherhoods / *Germanias* exploded. Artisans and minor nobles rose against the rich and the top nobility, and “for the good king.”

THE SIEGE OF DÉNIA
In July of 1521 the *Germandades* besieged Dénia. Its Castle was so powerful that the Viceroy of Valencia took refuge there. The defence was led by a Dénian, Antonio Palau. And led with courage. Dénia did not surrender. Later, it received a letter of thanks from Charles I. But the Lower town, *Medina*, was burned down.

TWO HISTORIANS of DÉNIA
Marco Antonio Palau (1543-1645), a great-nephew of the Heroic Governor, was the first historian of Dénia with his book “*Diana desenterrada*”.



Emperor Charles V at Mühlberg, 1548, Tiziano Vecellio, Prado.



Cervantes, in the Esplanada Cervantes.

Roque Chabás (1844-1912) is the author of the most complete history of Dénia, published in 1874. We admire the style and completeness of his book to this day.

PORT OF DÉNIA. A MODEST PASSENGER

Gradually, Dénia was rebuilt after the Uprising. The port was still more convenient for navigation than the one in Valencia. Many prominent people stepped on shore in Dénia, including Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. On October 27, 1580, the future author of the *Ingenious Hidalgo* (Don Quixote) landed in Dénia having spent 5 years in an Algerian prison. Today, the sea-side Esplanade



First known drawing of Dénia, 1585.

bears his name. There is a bust of Cervantes in front of a stela that resembles either a nib or a bow of a ship.

HABSBURG SPAIN, THE FIRST EMPIRE OF THE WORLD

The 15th-16th centuries were the heyday of the Spanish Empire. “The great Habsburgs”, Charles I and Philip II ruled from 1516 to 1598. “The lesser Habsburgs” period was from 1598 till 1700. They were Philip III, Philip IV, and Charles II.

The “great Habsburgs” ruled by themselves. Philip II was called “the Bureaucrat on the throne.” He annexed Portugal, created a system for transporting the American riches, and made Madrid the capital.

VALIDOS

The “Lesser Habsburgs” passed all decision-making to the *Validos*, or *Privados*. You may call them Favourites or even Prime-Ministers.
Philip III had “our” Duke of Lerma (1553-1625). He was labelled as “The greatest thief in Christendom.” Probably falsely.
Philip IV used the services of Count-Duke of Olivares (1587-1645).

THE DUKE OF LERMA, AN AMBIGUOUS CHARACTER

We do not agree with the denigration of “our” Duke. During Lerma’s times, Dénia experienced a rise that it would never see again. King Philip III and his courtiers, including the playwright Lope de Vega, visited our town three times in 1598-1604 (p. 53). Since then, no monarch has honoured us with such attention.

The fifth Marqués of Dénia was called Francisco Gómez de Sandoval-Rojas y Borja. He came from Valenciana’s two greatest families. In 1599, the Marqués, a friend and mentor of the young king Philip III, was promoted to the rank of a Duke (Lerma was the ancestral estate of the Sandoval y Rojas). The main good point of his reign was that it brought peace to Spain. His was a time of flourishing culture. Cervantes, José de Ribera, Sebastián de Covarrubias shone during his rule.

DÉNIA and the DUKE

Lerma looked on Dénia as his “little capital”. He started rebuilding the town. He had the Castle strengthened and built a Palace at the top of the Castle Hill. Only two parts remain from the Palace, the recently restored luxurious staircase (p. 49) and one wing, now housing the Archaeological Museum. The Duke founded two monasteries, in Loreto street and in the modern-day square of Convent (pp. 53, 62).
The lower suburb, the Muslim *Medina*, was raised to the rank of a Town in 1612.

But the violent, brutal expulsion of Muslims in 1609-1610 and the subsequent economic problems of the entire region also took place under him... In the whole of Spain, it was Dénia which served as the main port of Expulsion. The earliest painting of Dénia shows the Expulsion as a happy event, which it wasn’t (p. 50). The brutal suppression of the Muslim peasants’ revolt took place in our area, in the Vale of Laguar.



Equestrian Portrait of the Duke of Lerma, 1603, Peter Paul Rubens, Prado

17th CENTURY, THE DECLINE

The seventeenth century was a hard one. For many decades, the consequences of expelling hard-working Muslims were felt. The grandchildren of the Duke of Lerma quickly squandered his huge fortune. Dénia began to fall into desolation, the Castle to collapse. Dénia was passed over to another illustrious family, the Dukes of Medinaceli. It remained with them until the beginning of the 19th century.

PARE PERE

There are several Hermitages in Dénia, called *ermitas*. Monks lived in them in seclusion from the 14th c. The one to visit is Ermita de Pare Pere. Located on the slopes of Montgó, it is associated with the most famous native of Dénia in the 17th c. We call him Pare Pere, Father Peter. The undecayed remains of the Father rest in the Church of the Ascension, next to the town hall. The process of his beatification has already taken nearly a century.

A STONE HUT

The future Father Peter, Pedro Esteve i Puig was born on October 19, 1582. At the age of 18, he dedicated himself to the service of the Lord. He became a Franciscan monk and lived and worked in the Ermita from the 1630s.

Please visit the place, if only, to be struck by the strength of his spirit. The stone hut behind the church is called La Caseta del Pare Pere / “Father Peter’s little house” (p. 51). It has a cut-out cave with a stone bench. Pare Pere lived there for almost thirty years. It gets really cold out there in the shadow of Mount Montgó, during four winter months.

MAIN HOLIDAY in DÉNIA:

LA SANTÍSSIMA SANGRE

The feast of the Holy Blood is the most important holiday in the Dénian summer calendar. In 1633, during the plague, Pare Pere walked to his native town, praying for its salvation. He blessed the bread and led a procession through the streets of the town, at the head of which was the image of Christ. According to legend, the disease left the town!

BULLS into THE SEA!

Nowadays, the *fiesta* is named Fiestas Patronales de Dénia, the Celebrations of the patron Saint of Dénia. A solemn procession in honour of the Holy Blood passes through the centre. Before and after, people have fun, with dance shows, concerts, and competitions (see p. 52).



Staircase of Duke of Lerma’s Palace, Dénia. Restored in 2018 (p. 46).



Expulsion of the Moriscos at the port of Dénia, 1613, Vicente Mostre (p. 46).
In the upper part of the painting we see the Castle with its two parts. During the Muslim times they were called la Alcazaba, the proper Castle, and el Albacar, the lower precinct, which contained the Old Town / La Vila Vella, see pp. 26-27, 67, 84. To the left the walls of the lower suburb stand (la Medina), which obtained the status of a Town in 1612. To the right, the now demolished Tower of Raset, after which a beach is named. To the left from the Tower one can see three houses, including the Customs / la Aduana, one of the few medieval buildings which survived to our days (pp. 66, 69). In the foreground the walls of Fortí suburb are shown with the Tower of Carrós (the Commander of the Christian troops during the 1244 Reconquista). The festive and peaceful spirit of the painting does not correlate with the real course of events.



Caseta / the Stone Hut of Pare Pere, Montgó (pp. 48, 65?).



Bulls into the Sea! / Bous a Mar fiesta in Dénia in July.

(From p. 48) The most famous and interesting event is called “Bulls into the Sea!”, Bous a la Mar. Volunteers come within a fenced area. They try to get close to a bull or a cow and then to escape their charge, gracefully. Sometimes, an animal falls into the sea. Don’t worry, if they do, they are promptly brought back to the shore. But animals are quite smart, and it’s mostly the daredevils who jump into the water to escape. Why not cool off on a hot day? Laughter, bravado, colours and noises, what a fiesta!



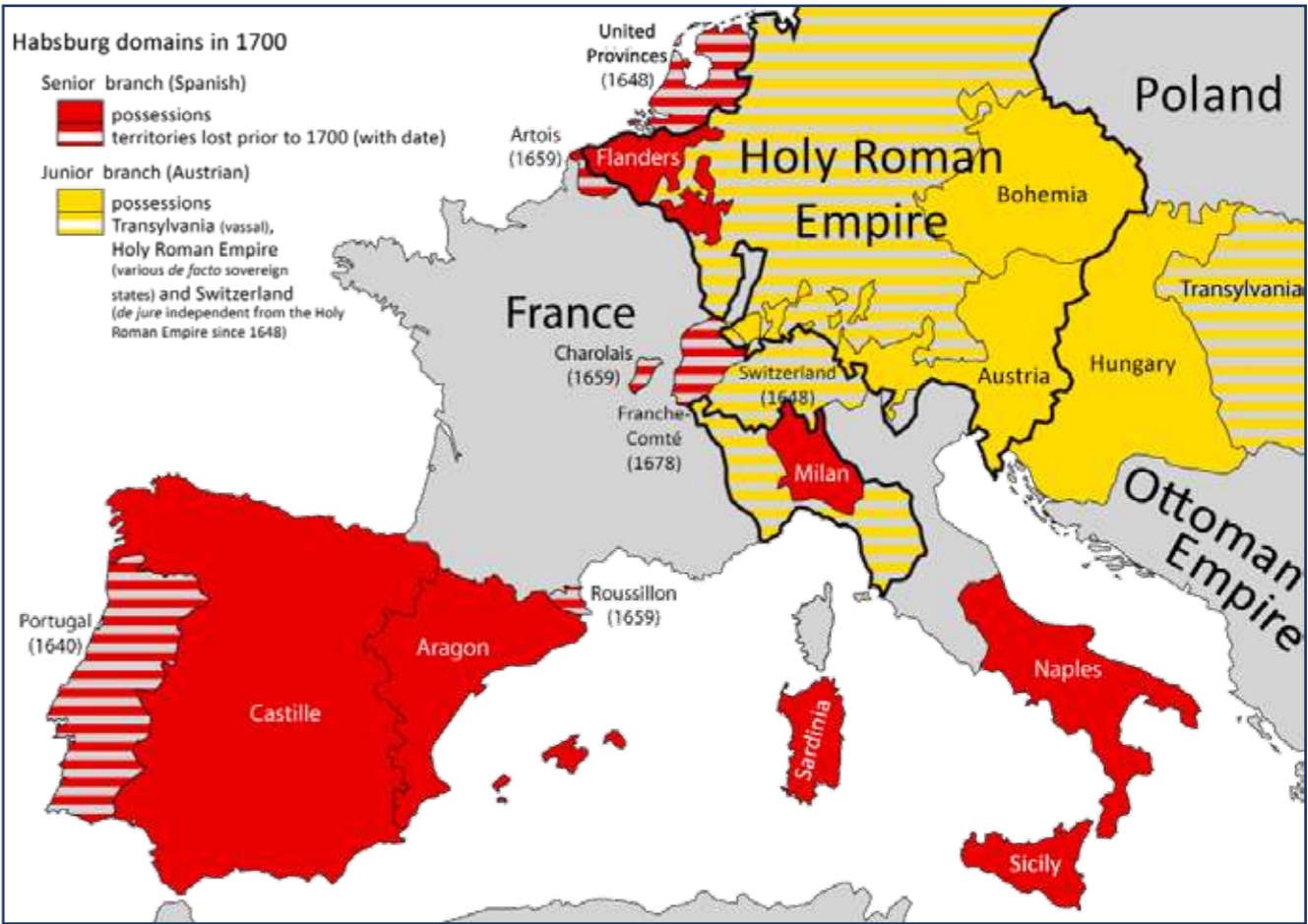
Nuestra Señora de Loreto Monastery (the Agustiniians). Please note the plaque commemorating Royal Weddings and visit of Lope de Vega in 1599 (pp. 46, 65).

The new century brought a severe test to Dénia and all of Valenciana. In 1700, the last Habsburg of Spain, Charles II, died childless. The throne could go to the indirect heirs from the Habsburg House, the “Austrians”. Or to the Bourbons, the French.

Louis XIV of France, the “Sun King”, had created the strongest state in Europe. He was married to the daughter of Philip IV of Spain. That was how he managed to place his grandson on the Spanish throne. Philip V became the first Bourbon in Spain. The Bourbon dynasty still nominally rules the country today.

A WORLD WAR
But the “placing” did not go smoothly. The war of the Spanish Succession (1700-1714) became the first Pan-European war. We may even call it “the very First World war”. By its end, France was strengthened. England became a world power and was named Great Britain. Gibraltar was one of the War’s spoils. Austria took over the huge Spanish holdings in Italy. Savoy rose to the rank of a Kingdom, the one of Sicily and later, of Sardinia. The Netherlands lost their economic superiority. As for Spain, it had to give up most of its European possessions.

“AUSTRIANS” vs. “BOURBONS”
Archduke Charles was the Austrian / Habsburg pretender for the Spanish throne. A large square in Dénia bears his name, Plaza Archiduque Carlos. Not far away, in Loreto street, you may see a picture painted on tiles (p. 56). Three riders in the middle of the town square. One of them holds the Flag of Aragon with red and yellow stripes. On the right, dressed in a blue frock with a lace collar, is our Hero.



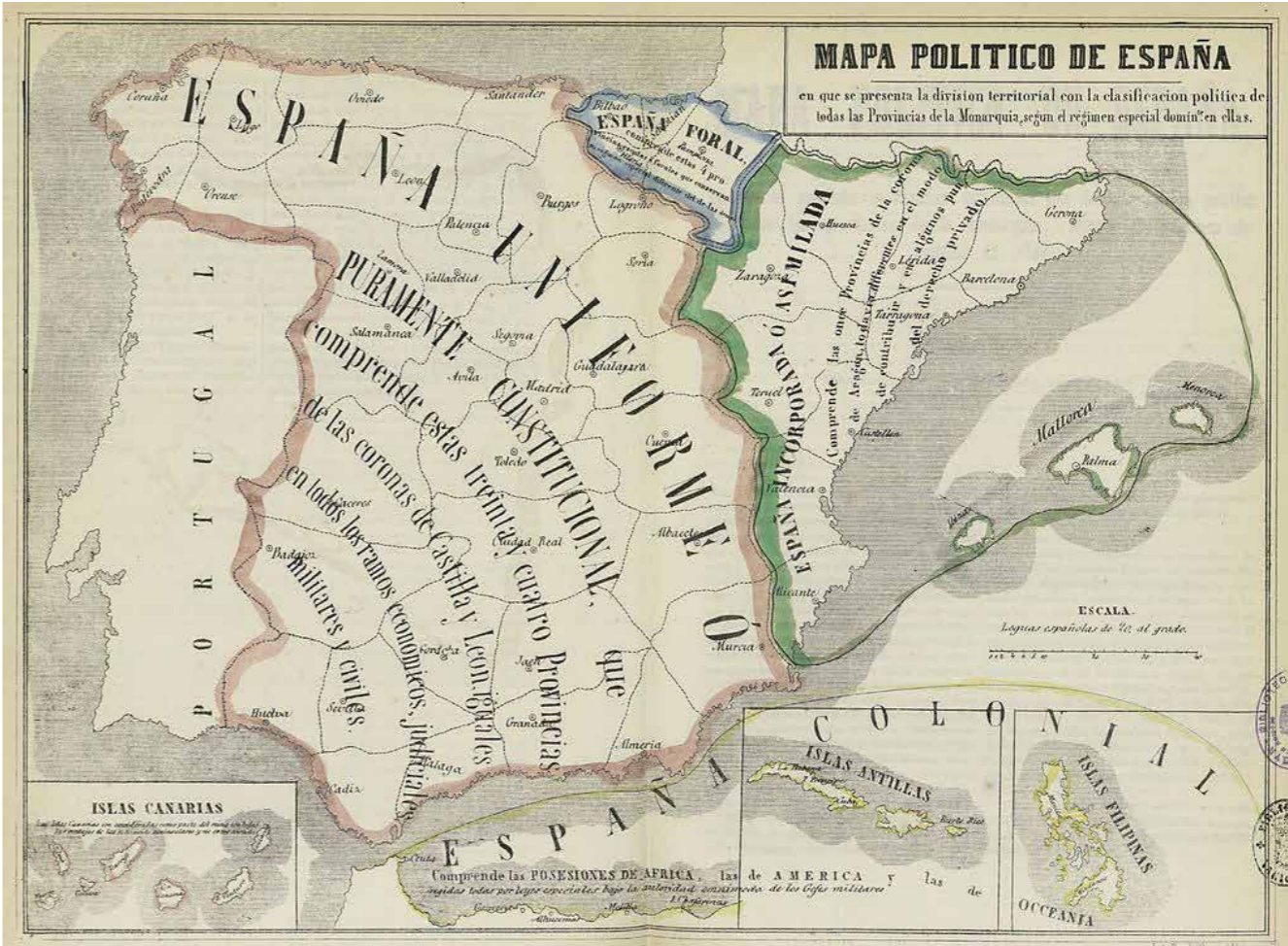
Habsburg domains in 1700.



Joan Baptista Basset declaring Charles, the Habsburg pretender, the King of Valencia. 1705.

JUAN BAUTISTA BASSET y RAMOS

“Juan Bautista Basset. Valencian hero of the war of the Spanish Succession (1705-1714). The Maulets Leader of the struggle for the freedom of the people. In Dénia, he proclaimed Archduke Charles of Austria as King of Valencia. Tercentenary anniversary. Dénia 1705/2005”. Yes, it was in our Dénia that Charles the Habsburg pretender was proclaimed the King on August 18, 1705. Our Hero Basset was a general crowned with glory in battles and a native of our Kingdom. “One of the most brilliant revolutionaries who ever lived”.



Political map of Spain with three different legal regimes, 1852. Es.wikipedia.org.

THE DIVIDED COUNTRY

Please take a look at the map of Spain above. Since the middle of the 11th century, it had two centres of power. By the 15th century, they grew into the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon. And here’s the interesting bit. Five hundred years on, sometimes the ancient division is still felt. Aragon fought for the Habsburgs in the War of Succession. Castile, for the Bourbons.



The Opening-in-the-Wall street, a trace of 1707-8 sieges.

Castile mostly speaks Spanish / Castilian, except for Galicia and the Basque Countries. Meanwhile, the entire East of the country, the *Levante*, uses Catalan or Valencian. Before the War of Succession, Castile had one Parliament, in Madrid. Aragon, three: in Zaragoza, Barcelona and Valencia. There was a separate legal system with local laws, *Fueros* / *Furs*. This semi-independence was abolished during the War. In Valencia and Aragon in 1707. In Barcelona, in 1714.

RUIN and REBIRTH of DÉNIA

Dénia was “for” the Austrians, hence proclaiming Archduke Charles here as the King of Valencia. Following this, our town saw three fierce sieges between 1705 and 1708. November 17, 1708 was a

black day in the history of Dénia. The Castle was surrendered. Only thirty-six residents were left in the town, the old and the poor.

FOUR DÉNIAS

Roque Chabás exclaimed: so many times, over the centuries, Dénia “died and was born again”! He identified FOUR periods in the history of Dénia.

- I. Ancient Dénia – Iberians, Greeks, Romans, Visigoths.
- II. Arab Dénia, from 713.
- III. Foral Dénia, from 1244.
- IV. Modern Dénia, from 1708.

Shall we introduce a fifth period? “Dénia of our days”? But, what year should it begin in? The Republican period, 1931 or 1936? Franco’s death in 1975?

CHARLES III, THE ENLIGHTENED RULER

The second half of the 18th century benefited Dénia and Valencia. This was the Age of Enlightenment, of the creation of Academies. The age of flourishing trade and industry, especially silk production. Most of these changes occurred during the reign of the enlightened monarch Charles III / Carlos III (1716-1788). Madrid the modern, imperial, the city with squares and boulevards like Prado, is the mark of his reign.



Church of Ascension / Asunción rebuilt after the War of Succession (pp. 31, 65, 66).

CHAPTER 9.
THE 19TH CENTURY. TROUBLES, AGAIN

As soon as Dénia and Valencia were rebuilt, the troubles came back. First, there were two weak kings of Spain. Charles / Carlos IV (1748-1819) and Ferdinand / Ferdinand VII (1784-1833). Then, a series of Napoleonic wars. 1799-1815. The Spanish rulers supported France. The people did not, starting with the Second of May Uprising in 1808.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE *GUADALUPE*
1799. English warships are chasing a Spanish frigate, the *Guadalupe*, along the coast of Valenciana. The port of Dénia is not well-tended, its depths not charted. The storm is strong.... The *Guadalupe* breaks up on the rocks opposite the Dénian district of Las Rotas. A third of the crew perishes, 107 out of 327.

THE FEUDAL PERIOD ENDED.
THE PORT IS BAD. THE TOWN – TO THE KINGS!
After the tragedy of the *Guadalupe*, an investigation began. Why hadn’t the Duchess of Medinaceli, the owner of the town, fulfilled her obligations to maintain the port? By 1804, the King decided to “incorporate Dénia into the Crown”, after nearly four centuries in the private hands of the Infantes / Sandovals y Rojas / Medinaceli. However, this did not affect the port’s poor condition for the next 80 years.

The people celebrated: “The old bonds have fallen” (Chabás, p. 446). The Feudal period of Dénia’s history had ended. Capitalism came, in all its glory.

THE NAPOLEONIC WARS
From the beginning of the 18th century, Spain coordinated its policy with France, then the most powerful power in Europe. In 1807 the weak Spanish rulers agreed with Napoleon on the partition of Portugal. But, on their way west, the French troops got stuck in Spain, causing the uprising in Madrid on May 2nd, 1808, which ignited the...



Las Rotas, Dénia, 1800s, by Rafael Monleón. Lamarinaplaza.com



Part of the Franciscan Monastery of San Antonio, rebuilt after the War of Independence (pp. 46, 65).

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

In Britain, it is called the Peninsular war. In Spain, the War of Independence / La Guerra de la Independencia española. Napoleon would later write: “this cursed Spanish war was the main cause of all the miseries of France.”

DÉNIA in the WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Valencia resisted the French for three and a half years. On January 9, 1812, the city capitulated. 10 days later the French occupied Dénia, which had nearly no garrison. The British troops and Spanish volunteers made three attempts to re-capture Dénia. The final siege began on August 9, 1813. The besiegers had 6,000 troops and 6 batteries. 35,000 artillery discharges were fired at the castle(!). Only on December 6, 1813, did the garrison surrender. Dénia was devastated by the war, again.

The CONSTITUTION and the “DESIRED / TRAITOR KING”

The War of Independence entered its decisive stage in 1812. In Cadiz, the patriotic stronghold, the first Spanish Constitution was adopted on March 19 (St. Joseph’s Day, so it was called la Pepa). In it, a limited monarchy, freedom of the press, and universal suffrage for men were introduced. It was one of the most progressive in Europe. But the Spanish majority stood for the return of the King. Ferdinand VII came back, rescinded the Constitution and was nicknamed “the Traitor King”.

The QUEEN and CARLISM

On the King’s death in 1830 his daughter, Isabella, became the new Queen, contrary to the ancient laws which prohibited Spain from having a female ruler. Isabel II (1830-1904), the “Queen of Sad Fate”, ascended the throne at the age of three. She abdicated in 1868. The opposition supported the candidacy of her uncle, Carlo María Isidro. Spain was plunged into the depths of the Carlist wars, three of them between 1833 and 1878. Carlism with its symbol, the red beret, still exists today. Its ideology is traditional: opposition to liberalism and to atheism.

INDUSTRIALIZATION and DEMOCRATIZATION

Despite political turmoil and civil wars, the 19th century became the age of industrialization, of laying the railway network, of the growth of trade, democratization, and the requisition of Church properties in 1835 (300 years after Henry VIII did that in England).



Gates of the Muslim period in the Bastion of the 18th c. The Castle of Dénia (pp. 70, 74).

THE CASTLE OF DÉNIA: NO LONGER A MILITARY STRONGHOLD

There were many changes in Dénia, too. For instance, the marine suburb, Baix la Mar, became a separate town in 1837. In 1845, the Castle was declared a “third-class fortified post”. In 1859 it was demilitarized, and in 1869 sold into private hands.



“Vista meridional de la Ciudad de Denia”.
In “Atlante español, ó Descripcion general geográfica...”, v. 9, p. 182, estampa 9. 1786, Madrid. Biblioteca Digital Hispánica, bdh-rd.bne.es. [With Author’s comments].

Dénia in 18th c.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 - the Castle | 2 - the Town (former Medina) |
| 3 - the Parish Church, Asuncion | 4 - the Convent of Agustinas (Loreto) |
| 5 - the General Hospital (?) | 6 - the Franciscan Convent |
| 7 - the Customs House | 8 - the Bastion (el Raset?) |
| 9 - the Moll | 10 - the Port |

11- an Ermitage, San Joan or Santa Lucia or Pare Pere?

12 - the Mediterranean Sea

Please note that the coat of arms only bears the stars of the Rojas.

There is no Baix-la-Mar, or the Fishing village / the Marine suburb.

When you walk around our town, you will see only a few really old buildings. You are now aware of the reason: numerous wars have destroyed the rest. The Germanias revolt in 1521. Three Bourbon sieges in 1705-8. The siege and bombardment in 1813.

THE OLDEST BUILDINGS IN THE TOWN OUTSIDE THE CASTLE

Les Drassanes / Aduana. Customs / warehouse. Built in the 16th century, under the Marquisate. Rebuilt in the 18th. Presently the hotel *La Posada del Mar* (p. 69, No. 10 in p. 67).

Ayuntamiento / La Sala Nova / the Town Hall. Built under the Duke of Lerma at the beginning of the 17th century. The clock is a later addition (p. 77, No. 4 in p. 67).

Church of the Ascension / *Asunción*, next to the Town Hall. Built on the site of the ancient chapel of Sant Roch after the war of Succession, in the 18th century. The Portal was redecorated in 1936 (pp. 31, 59, No. 3 in p. 67).

The monastery of *Nuestra Senyora del Loreto*, the Agustinian. The oldest surviving church of the town, founded by the Duke in 1604. The current building is from 1683-1691. Look for the memorial plaque commemorating the stay of Lope de Vega in Dénia in 1599 (p. 53, No. 1 in p. 67).

The Franciscan Monastery of *St. Anthony of Padua* in the Convent square. Only the church remains, heavily rebuilt after numerous wars (p. 62, No. 9 in p. 67).

Las Caballerizas reales, the Royal Mews, a part of Els Magazinos (p. 91).

Only these 6 buildings remain in the town centre from ancient and medieval times. This is an indication of the arduous history of our town. It will take you no more than 20 minutes to walk from the Monastery in Loreto, past the Town Hall and the Ascension church, the Church of St. Anthony, finishing your walk at the former Customs Office and Els Magazinos round the corner from it.

THE OLDEST STRUCTURE IS THE CASTLE

In many periods of the history of Dénia, the Castle and the Town lived different lives. Actually, since 1304



Map of the main historic places in Dénia. By Josep A. Gisbert Santonia. The Royal Stables are near No. 10.

the term “Town” was applied only to the Old Town (the *Albacara*, or *La Villa*, *Vila Vella*, No. 5 at p. 67), located in the lower part of the Castle. In 1612, the Lower Suburb, the *Medina*, became the Town of Dénia.

OUR HISTORIANS

When writing the second volume of our two-volume book *Dénia Divina / Valencia*

Valiosa / España Esplendida, we decided to summarise the history of the Castle. We based our research on the works of Dénia’s best historians.

IN SPANISH:

Marco Antonio Palau (1543-1645). *Diana Desenterrada*, the first book on the history of our town.

Roque Chabás. *Historia de la ciudad de Denia*, 1886. The most fundamental among the works dedicated to our town.

20-21st centuries:

María Jesús Rubiera Mata. *La Taifa de Dénia*, 1985.

Emilio Oliver Sanz de Bremond. *Historia de Dénia*, 1997 + a book on the history of the Civil War in Dénia.

Josep A. Gisbert Santonja. *Castell de Dénia*, 2008-13 + a number of other books and works.

Rosa Seser Pérez, ed. “La Guerra Civil a Dénia”, 2019.

IN VALENCIAN:

Josep Ivars Pérez. *Dénia. La Ciutat i El Castell*, 2015. *Arquitectura militar baluardada (segles XVI-XIX)*.

María Ibars, the main Dénian poetess. *Contalles a l’ombra del Montgó* + other books.

Andrés Jaén. *Història il·lustrada de Dénia*, 2008 (in the comic book genre).

Vicent Balaguer i Bisquert, poet and historian, with two books: “*Dénia a la Postguerra*” and “*Dénia: Personatges Populars*”.

OUR GIFT TO DÉNIA, THE COLOURED MAP OF THE CASTLE

Having studied the available sources, we realized that the magnificent history of the Castle could not be explained only in words. And we made a breakthrough in its understanding. We took the plan of the Castle from Ivars Pérez. We carefully read his book and Gisbert’s work on the Castle. And decided to paint the Castle map. In four colours.

Please look at the map to appreciate our idea (pp. 74-75).

The buildings of the Muslim period are painted in yellow (not much of it). 10-12th centuries. The Town gate, the Gate in the Bastion / Baluard, the tower of the Mig. Numbers 10-...



Posada del Mar Hotel, ex Customs House, 16th c. (p. 66). Please note the monument to Bous a la Mar on the left.

Red colour – 15-16th centuries, the Transition period. Square buildings: the Tower of the Council, the Powder and the Red Towers. 14-...

Green – 16th century, the pre-Bastion period. Round structures – Oval tower, Laundry = Vergeret tower, a part of the Gallinera tower. 15 -...

And finally, Blue. The Bastion period, from the 17th to the 19th century. Pointed structures. Forts, Bastions, including the Point of the Diamond and the Bastion itself. The Rebuilt North Tower. 16-...



Dénia Castle, all four Periods seen from Mercadona / Av. Miguel Hernández (p. 72).

DIFFERENT ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Only two structures remain from the Muslim period. The gates to the Castle and the archways of the Bastion. How artistic the Muslims were when working with bricks!

During the Christian period, the architecture of towers and walls was influenced by the development of artillery. In the 15-16th centuries, the towers were built in a Square shape. Ivars Pérez calls this period “Transitional”. In the 16th century, in the “pre-Bastion” era, Round towers appeared,



Walls of the medieval suburb, 16th c. (pp. 70, 72)

built so that the guns would not split tower corners. And finally, in the 17th century, an innovation came from France, from Master Vauban. The Bastion, with pointed structures.

ALL PERIODS “IN ONE BOTTLE”

The only place from where you can see all four periods is besides the Mercadona, the one “behind the Castle”, in Miguel Hernández avenue, next to the Garden which used to be the centre of the Roman Town. Do have a look at the Castle on the edge of the hill (p. 70). You can see:

- a square tower nearly in the centre. The Gunpowder / de la Pólvora, of the 15th century, the Transitional period;
- at the right end of the wall, the Oval tower, the 16th century, the pre-Bastion;
- now look to the left of the Gunpowder. First, “the Ledge”. There was an Arab gate to the lower suburbs. The earliest structure on this section of the wall dates back to the 12th century;
- further to the left, on another ledge, a round tower and reinforced walls with sharp-angled ends. The Northern Tower and Battery, 18th century.

Thank you for studying our Map, which shows the authorship of Ivars Pérez, Gisbert and Grishin (pp. 74-75). We presented it to the Town in August 2018, on behalf of ourselves and the Russian House. Our Russian House / *Casa Rusia de Levante* is an Association dedicated to spreading the cultural heritage of Spain and Russia. We have been working since 2013.

FIVE HERMITAGES

Let’s not forget about Hermitages / the *Ermitas*! Outside the Castle, they are the oldest witnesses of Dénia’s history.

Three Hermitages were constructed during the Reconquista era. The earliest is La Ermita de Sant Joan (p. 41). Gothic style of the end of the 13th century. A Renaissance-style portico, late 16th century, added under the Duke of Lerma. Its inside can only be seen during the feast of St. John, from 20 to 24 June. Open on Sunday mornings, La Ermita de Santa Lucia / Llúcia was built in the late 14th - early 15th centuries, with later alterations (p. 39). Presently it houses the Orthodox Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius. La Ermita de Santa Paula date to the same period. The Saint’s day is January 26th.

There are two later structures. La Ermita del Pare Pere with a permanently open Church with interesting tiles. Behind it, the “shelter” / La Caseta of Father Peter (p. 51). It is the most visited object outside the town limits. The second is La Ermita de Corazón de Maria, which is located in the Las Rotas area.

THE WALLS

Walking along the Ronda de les Muralles, you will see the walls of the ancient Suburb. The towers are round, of the pre-Bastion period, the 16th century (p. 71).

Another Arab suburb, the *Fortí*, was located opposite today’s yacht club and the Marina of Dénia. There are some stands with interesting historic information. You will see the foundations of Dénia’s oldest houses, of the 12th century.

THE TOWERS

In the vicinity of the town, on the coast, you will find the “lookout” towers. The Jug Tower / Torre del Gerro is at the very end of the Las Rotas (see cover page). A beautiful sea-side walk leads to it from the Town centre. The tower was designed to warn of pirate incursions. Built in the middle of the 16th century, it bears the Habsburg coat of arms. The views from up there are amazing!

On the opposite edge of Dénia’s coastline stands Torre de la Almadraba (p. 13). It was used during tuna fishing season.

There were at least four other towers outside the Castle, including El Raset in the port and the Carros Tower opposite the Yacht Club. They did not survive to our day.



Port and town centre of Dénia. Las Rotas with Torre del Gerro are at the back, only 30 min. walk from the centre!

CASTELL DE DÉNIA / DÉNIA's CASTLE
COPYRIGHT IVARS / GISBERT / GRISHINS

PERIODO ÁRABE (X-XII) / **ARAB PERIOD**

10-1 PORTAL (PRT) DE LA VILA 1200 / 10-2 PRT NORTE DEL ACCESO AL ALBACAR XII / 10-3 PRT DEL BALUARD (BLRD) XI / 10-4 MURALLA X / 10-5 TORRE (TR) DEL MIG XI / 10-6 PRT DELS SOCORS O DELS REIS / 10-7 TR DE LES PUCES

L'ARQUITECTURA DE TRASICIÓ (XV-XVI) / **THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, SQUARE**

14-1 TR DEL CONSELL 1500 / 14-2 TR DEL PORTAL DE LA MAR / 14-3 TR DE LA GRAMÀTICA / COS DE GUARDIA / 14-4 TR ROJA XVI / 14-5 TR DE L'ALJUB / **14-6 TR DE LA PÓLVORA XV**

L'ARQUITECTURA PREBALUARDADA (XVI) / **THE PRE-BASTION PERIOD, ROUND**

15-1 BATERIA (BTR) DEL PORTAL DE LA MAR / 15-2 BTR DE TERRA / 15-3 FORT DE LA REDONDELA / **15-4 TR OVAL XVI** / **15-5 EL RECINTE DEL RAVAL** / **15-6 TR DEL VERGERET / DEL LLAVADOR / DE LA SENIETA 1539** / **15-7 TR DEL GALLINERA (DOS PERIODOS)** / 15-8 TR DEL PRT DELS SOCORS / 15-9 TR DEL TRINQUET / 15-10 BLRD DE BASSET / TR DE LES ANIMES / 15-11 EL MAGATZEM ANGLÉS / QUARTER DELS INFANTS / 15-12 TR DEL PALAU / **15-13 ESCALERA DEL PALAU XVI-XXI** / 15-14 GALERIA ORIENTAL DEL PALAU 1600 / 15-15 BLRD DEL VERGERET XVI / 15-16 TR DELS SANDOVALS

L'ARQUITECTURA BALUARDADA (XVII-XIX) / **THE BASTION PERIOD, POINTED**

16-1 FORT DEL VERGERET / **LA BTR DE LA MAR** / 16-2 BTR SUD / 16-3 BTR DEL TRINQUET / BLRD DEL TRINQUET / 16-4 MURALLA QUE UNE AMBOS RECINTOS / 16-5 L'AVANÇADA DEL CASTELL = **PUNTA DEL DIAMANT XVII** / **16-6 EL BALUARD = THE BASTION XVIII** / 16-7 BTR DE TERRA / BTR OEST / 16-8 TR NORD XVIII / 16-9 BTR NORD / 16-10 BTR DEL PALAU / 16-11 LES BARRERES FUSELLERS / 16-12 BTR SUD

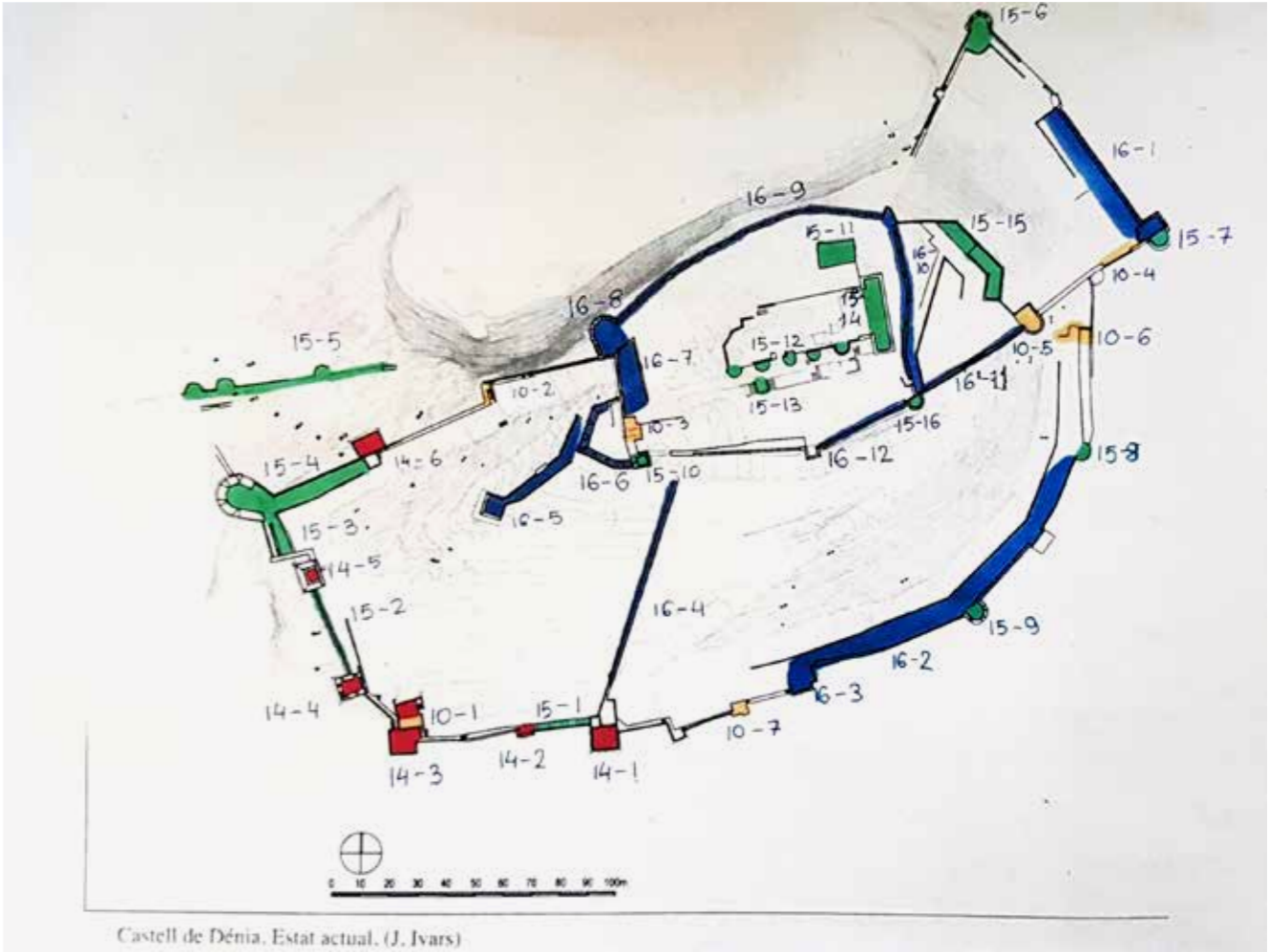
PERIODISACIÓN EN COLOR / **THE IDEA OF COLOURING PERIODS:**

George Grishin

FUENTES / SOURCES: JOSEP IVARS PÉREZ. Dénia. La Ciutat I el Castell + Castell de Dénia. JOSEP A. GISBERT SANTONJA.

OBRA / WORK by: Paulina and Katherina Grishina.

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THE MAP OF THE CASTLE IN COLOURS

- Notes: - The most interesting objects of each period **are indicated like this.**
- Most structures of the Transitional period are square, of the Pre-Bastion, round, of the Bastion, pointed / angled.
 - 15-7, La Torre del Gallinera, is unique as it represents two periods.
 - Our references 10-, 14-, 15-, 16- refer to the century, in which the earliest surviving structures of that period were built.

CHAPTER 11.
THE 19th CENTURY IN DÉNIA: RAPID GROWTH

We have studied the ancient buildings of our town dating back to the 10-18th centuries. Now please “fast forward” to our recent history. The 19th century brought an economic and demographic explosion to Dénia:

1787 – only 2,117 residents,

1900 – 12,431!

2020 – 44,188.

The population grew SIX-fold in the 19th century!

THE TOWN CHANGED HANDS

After the transfer to the Crown, at the end of the Independence War, several families stood out in Dénia. They were rich and engaged in agriculture, trade, construction, finance. They helped the town grow. One of the leading clans of the town that influences it to this day are the Morand / Carbonel / Merle / Bordehore families. At least three names are now visible on the map of the town. After all, they did a lot for Dénia.

FOUR DEVELOPMENT MOTIVATORS

In the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries we can identify four factors of Dénia’s prosperity:

(1) The production and export of raisins.

(2) The construction of the railway in 1884 under the care of Marqués de Campo (p. 81).

(3) The construction of a modern port, partially completed in 1904.

(4) Gasification of the town.



Town’s Ayuntamiento, or Mayor’s office, 17th c. (pp. 18, 66).

RAISINS, a MAGIC PRODUCT

Grapes dried in a special way are called pasa / pansa (Val.). “Raisin” in English. This dried fruit has been known since time immemorial. It is the healthiest among all dried fruit, preserving 70-80 % of vitamins and 100 % of micro-elements.

EXPORTS

The victorious march of capitalism is reflected in raisins exports from Dénia. The fruit was mea-

sured in quintals (100 pounds, or 46 kg). In 1812, only 100 quintals of raisins were produced (grown and dried) in Dénia and the surrounding area. The following years witnessed an explosion (in quintals, showing export destinations from Dénia). *(Source: Ethnological Museum of Dénia):*

Year	Great Britain	USA and Canada	France, Germany, Baltic States	TOTAL
1850	188,450	3,305	-	191,764
1870	201,171	56,621	2,205	247,531
1880	232,616	160,320	15,815	408,751
1890	347,183	372,751	147,072	867,006
1900	380,917	76,409	130,486	587,803
1910	225,175	78,477	74,771	378,423
1920	141,597	64,197	11,239	217,033
1925	145,519	25,965	72,921	244,405

PART OF THE ANGLO-SAXON WORLD
1820s, post-war Dénia. The British were admired as War heroes. But they were also merchants. The demand for raisins in Britain was huge. Dénia started to develop an export-oriented industry. What do the dry figures for the dried fruit exports show? The Anglo-American superiority among importers of this Dénian delicacy. Britain accounted for the great majority of exports, and the town in return absorbed English culture.

ENGLISH CEMETERY
“HOW BEAUTIFUL to DIE in DÉNIA” ...
Protestantism was still a far cry from Catholicism. But there were so many visitors and residents that an English cemetery was founded in Las Rotas, a step away from Marineta Casiana beach. To-day, only one tombstone is left. It bears a poem by John Dos Passos written in 1922, in the book “*A Pushcart at the Curb*”:

WINTER IN CASTILE 49 - XVIII
How fine to die in Dénia
young in the ardent strength of sun
calm in the burning blue of the sea
in the stable clasp of the iron hills;
Dénia where the earth is red
as rust and hills grey like ash.



Calle Marqués de Campo, the main street of the New Town / Ensanche, beg. of 20th c. (pp. 82, 84).

Oh to rot into the ruddy soil
to melt into the omnipotent fire
of the young white god, the flame god the sun.
To find swift resurrection
in the warm grapes born of earth and sun
that are crushed to must under the feet
of girls and lads,
to flow for new generations of men
a wine full of earth
of sun.

The theme is sad. But the poet’s thoughts are optimistic!



Toy Museum, former Railway Terminal in La Via (p. 82).

DÉNIA, A TRADE CENTRE

From a town destroyed by the war, in three quarters of a century Dénia grew into an international trade centre, *THE* premier exporter of raisins. “*Nunca un fruto tan diminuto hizo tanto por una ciudad / Never has such a tiny fruit done so much for the town*”. *Farmers ploughed virgin lands to plant vines. The countryside was decorated with beautiful villas. The population grew six-fold. The renewed cosmopolitan metropolis, with a new bourgeoisie, decorated its historical centre.*” (Javier Calvo Puig, 2003).

THREE DISTRICTS

Historians divide the town into three districts / three social strata.

(1) The agricultural lands / *campo*. This is where the grapes were grown. The “field” flourishes, using the immigrants (sounds familiar, doesn’t it?). *Riu-raus* are erected, beautiful structures with

arches, under whose roofs raisins were dried. You can drive along the Ruta dels Riuraus in Dénia’s surroundings.

(2) The Town Proper / *casco urbano*. Quite different people came here, those who were engaged in trading or who worked in service industries.

(3) Port, or rather “the sea area” / *el barrio marinero*. Baix la Mar. There was almost no population growth here. Although the port would not be renovated until the end of the 19th century, it managed to process an increased volume of exports. Therefore, at the end of the 19th century, 80 % of the port area’s population was still indigenous, *población autóctona*.

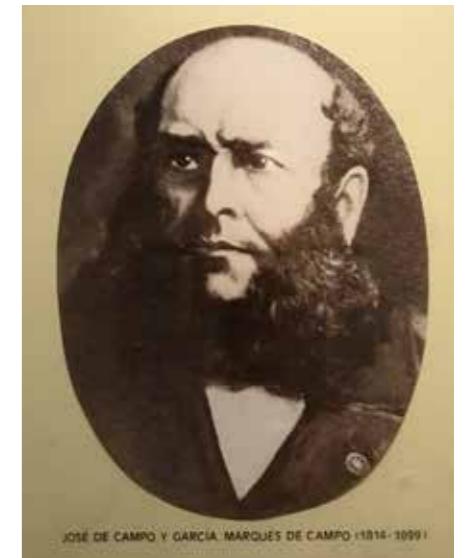
RAILWAY

What about the connection to Valencia and other important cities? The 19th century was the age of Railways, after all. For Dénia, the railway problem is still on the agenda. The very first Spanish railway started running in Cuba on November 19, 1837. Only in 1848 was the first section of railway opened in “continental” Spain: Mataro-Barcelona.

MARQUÉS DE CAMPO / José Campo Pérez

Is it correct to tie the history of a town to one person? Well, the monument to him stood for a long time in the main square of Valencia (Ayuntamiento)! The list of the 150 most famous Valencians says: “He changed Valencia and opened it to the world.” An entrepreneur, financier, shipowner, newspaperman. The builder of railways and ports.

Jose Campo Perez was born in Valencia on May 22, 1814 to the family of a prosperous native of Aragon. Already at the young age of 29, Jose was elected mayor of Valencia / *alcalde de la ciudad*. Later, as a private entrepreneur, Campo helped transform Valencia. He built a water supply, a gas system, rebuilt the port, founded a newspaper, *Las Provincias*. In 1874, he helped restore the Bourbons to the throne. One of the first acts of the young king Alfonso XII was to grant Campo the title of Marqués.



Marqués de Campo, José Campo Pérez (1814-1889, pp.81-82).

RAILWAY to DÉNIA

In 1851, when there were only 4 railroads on the Peninsula, Campo proposed to build one to Dénia. He could not get a concession. Only on March 30, 1884, was the railway section from Gandia to our town put into operation. It took the Marqués 33 years to realize his dream! It was then that the municipality of Dénia decided to name one of town's main streets after the Marqués.

MUSEO ETNOLÓGICO DE DÉNIA / ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM

The Museum tells you about the 19th century in Dénia. Raisins, railway, gasification. It is easy to find: not far from the Town Hall, in Carrer dels Cavallers, 1. Open from Tuesday to Saturday, and on Sundays mornings.

There you can read the telegram from the Marqués: *“I gratefully accept the unexpected happy news: I was named the adopted son of the town and an honorary citizen. Moreover, my humble name will appear on one of the streets of the new town. I completely agree, and I thank everyone.... Campos».*

A NEW TOWN OF DÉNIA

It was during this period, that the New Town of Dénia appeared. This is the *ensanche*, a continuation of the existing town blocks.

Imagine Dénia at the beginning of the 19th century (p. 84). The collapsing Castle on the hill. Sea suburb and the port. The town itself was rather small. Its walls ran from the current Council square / Plaça de Consell along the Diana street. They then turned to the right, along the street of the Marquisate. A couple of more turns, and then the walls came back to the Castle. There were two main gates. Gate of “Earth” / de la Terra in the West. “Marine gates” / de la Mar, in the East, where the square del Consell is now.

On the site of the current main street of the town, the Marqués de Campo, you would see only gardens and warehouses. The street would stretch to the sea only at the beginning of the 20th century. Where the beautiful Saladar Boulevard is now, a little stream / la *ramblita* used to run.

RAILWAY STATION

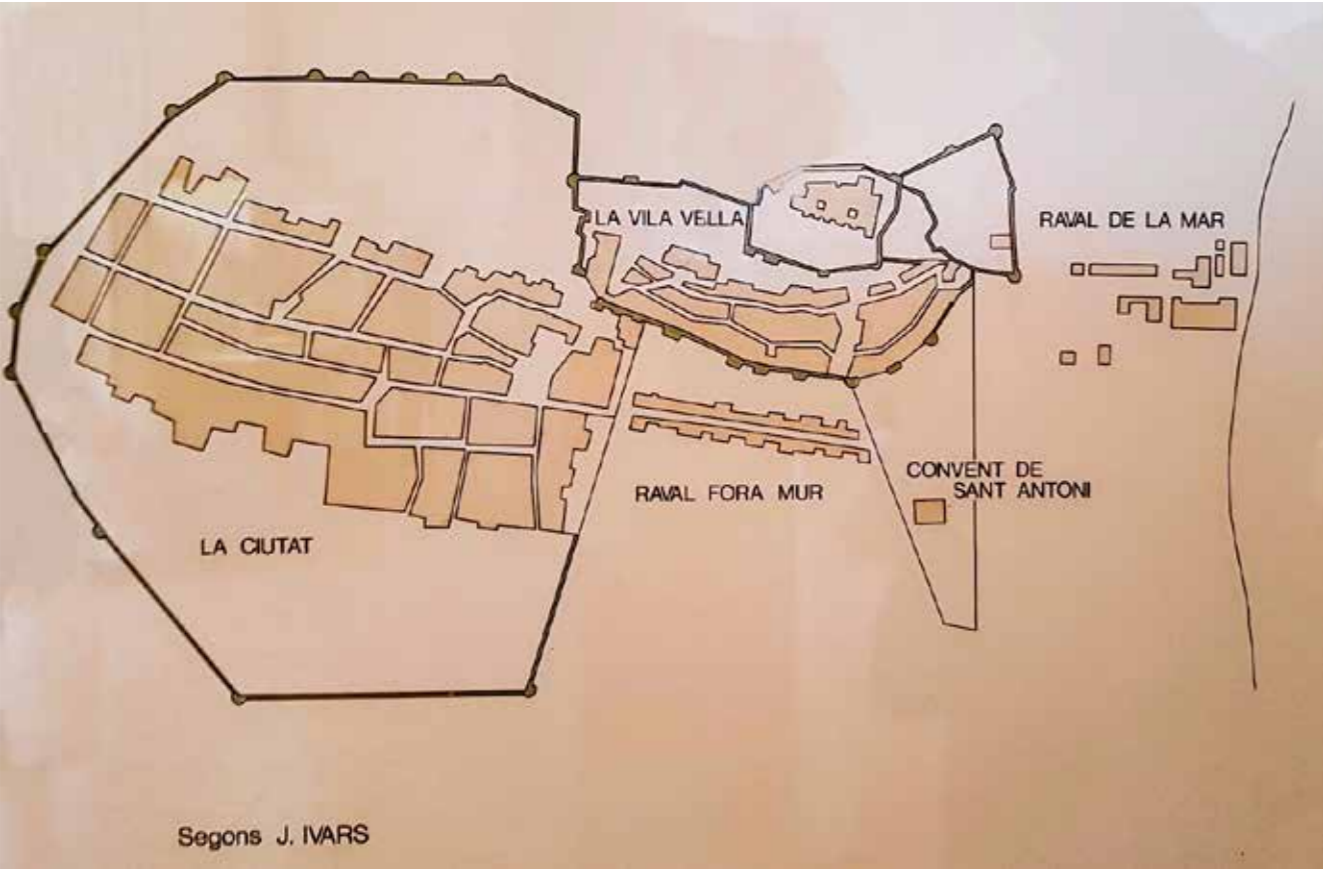
Where was the train station? Outside the then town, on the wide La Via. For exactly 90 years, it was used as the Station. Its building now houses the Toy Museum / Museu de les Juguines de Dénia. In 1974, the railway was dismantled. Since then, the town and the mayor's office have been fighting to restore it. We need a new de Campo!



The port of Dénia in 1960s.

PORT

The canal and harbour had to be regularly deepened, and protected from waves that constantly brought sand with them. A relative of Marqués de Campo headed the company, supported by rich families of Dénia. Gradually, by 1904, two moles / *escolleras*, the northern and southern, were laid out. The port improvement work was completed only at the beginning of the 21st century, more than two centuries after the tragedy of the *Guadalupe*. Protecting our beaches from waves is still an unresolved issue.



Dénia pre-19th c. per Josep Ivars.
See the original parts of the Muslim town, from left:
La Ciutat / La Medina, the New Town;
La Vila Vella / la Albacara, the Old Town;
la Alcazaba / the Castle;
Raval del Mar / el Arrabal / Baix-la-Mar.
The former Raval fora mur is the present day Calle de la Mar.
Still no buildings in the Ensanche. The Marqués de Campo street is not yet there.
Please see also pp. 26-27, 65, 67, 82.

THE SPLENDOUR OF a TRADE CENTRE
“For some Dénians of those times, the owners of entire fleets, it was easier to get on their ship to, say, have their teeth seen to in Liverpool, than to go to Valencia or Madrid,” says the town’s chief Archaeologist Mr A. Gisbert. For several decades, the star of Dénia shone again. Beautiful villas were built around the town. In Dénia, a theatre, casino and movie theatres appeared. Luxurious hotels invited visitors from Madrid and London. Gasification was carried out earlier than elsewhere in Spain. Now, only the ruins of the gas tank near the tram line in Avenida Joan Fuster remind us of this.

THE BUG and PROHIBITION
Alas, all that prosperity was put to an end by a small bug. The phylloxera disease arrived from America in the late 19th century and gradually destroyed our vines. Prohibition in the United States dealt the last blow: raisins could be used for making strong alcoholic beverages. Meanwhile, competition from elsewhere became stronger.

THE 20th CENTURY. ORANGES and TOYS
But Dénians did not give up. Oranges and mandarins, now an integral product of Dénian gardens, appeared in that period. Another industry boomed, the production of toys, wooden and metal. At the beginning of the 20th century, Dénia was one of the leaders in this industry.

CIVIL WAR
The Civil War of 1936-39 struck a blow to Valenciana and Dénia. There is a good book about the war in Dénia by Emilio Oliver Sanz de Bremond. Then just a boy, the author tells of his impressions: the shooting of priests, the construction of fortifications on the beaches of Dénia, the game of trinket with the Republican military, the bombing of the town by Italian fascists. The tunnel under the Castle was dug then, and used as an air shelter.

POST-WAR CINEMA
Until the end of the 1960s, Dénia’s appearance did not differ much from 50 years before. Therefore, in the 1950s and 60s, Dénia attracted the attention of filmmakers. The streets of the sea suburb of that time could easily be passed off as landing sites for pirates of the 18th century. There is a cute Lego pirate on the square of the Cross / de la Creu. It is a reminder of Dénia, the town of cinema.

CONSTRUCTION

But, already in 1973 it was hard to shoot “the Three Musketeers” in Dénia. New buildings became visible. From the beginning of the 70s, Spain opened up to the world and began to attract crowds of tourists. And to build.

The last *alcalde* of the Franco era, José Sastre, banned the construction of skyscrapers in the town centre, similar to Benidorm’s. From the North pier, from the Balearia station, you can still see the Castle and the cheerful colourful houses of the former Fishing / Sea suburb, Baix-la-Mar. The construction boom of the 1970s – 2000s stopped only after the 2008 crisis.



A view of Dénia from Cova de l'Aigua. In the centre are the Montgó area and the Port with Balearia ferries.



The monument to Dénia, the city of cinema.
By José Luis Saldaña, in Baix-la-Mar.

Merry Dénia is thriving. The main attractions of the present-day Dénia are tourism and gastronomy. Yes, of course, there are also history, sports, and shopping. But beaches, mountains, and restaurants are more important to lots of people.

UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES

The best confirmation of the high status of Dénian gastronomy: on December 11, 2015, UNESCO awarded Dénia the status of a Creative Town. There are 180 such cities in the world, but only 7 in Spain. Status is assigned in 7 categories, from design to music. There are only two creative cities for gastronomy in Spain: Dénia and Burgos.

TOURISM

We plan to write a separate brochure on tourism, as this topic is too big. However, there are several points that we want to discuss here.

ORIENTATION

The town consists of four parts.

(1) Casco urbano / town centre. Low-rise buildings mainly of the 19-20th centuries. The central street is the Marqués de Campo. It is a wonderful Boulevard with plane trees and a heap of restaurants and shops. The Town hall square has the Ayuntamiento and an 18th century church. The Loreto street adjoins it, a favourite place to drink a glass of wine, G&T or vermouth or to have a snack. The Castle Hill dominates the centre. It is a striking reminder of the ancient origin of our town.

(2) Sandy beaches stretch along the seashore to the “left”, to the North from the centre. They are nearly 15 km long! Located along them are a few hotels, restaurants, urbanizations and villas. This part is called Las Marinas.



Views in the Montgó part of Dénia.

(3) To the “right” from the centre, beyond the yacht club and the small sandy beach of Marineta Casiana, Las Rotas begin. The best parts are picturesque rocky bays. Here you can dive with a snorkel to watch the sea life. This is where the marine reserve is, a favourite place for the visits of whales and dolphins.

(4) Above the town and Las Rotas we have the Foot of Montgó / *las faldas del Montgó*. An exciting feature of this part of the town: you come and visit your friend’s house, where the view is wonderful! It seems that it can’t be more beautiful! A visit to another house – again, this is more of the beauty of this world! In the evenings, we have surreal sunset shows.

WHERE TO LIVE?

There are not many hotels in our town. Let’s just say there are four big ones. No more than ten smaller hotels. Tourists mostly stay in apartments and villas. When booking, don’t forget a pool, your children and grandchildren will thank you. AirBnB

or booking.com – and there you go!

WHAT TO DO?

Your main sources of information, besides this book, are the websites Dénia.com, Dénia.es, Dénia.net, lamarinaplaza.com. There are lots of pages in English in Facebook. You can pick up free maps and newspapers in most shops. Tourist Info is located at the “port end” of Patricio Ferrándiz and in Plaça del Consell. A good bookstore, Publics is also in Ferrándiz, near Archiduque Carlos.

So, how can you spend your prime time in Dénia?

(a) Beaches: lying in the sun or swimming in the sea with a snorkel. The sandy beaches of Las Marinas are some 15 km long. The rocky shores with a beautiful promenade along the sea are in Las Rotas, some 5 km long.

(b) Walking and climbing. There are a lot of routes around Dénia, be it over flat terrain or in the surrounding hills. This type of tourism is called *senderismo* from *senda*, a path. Search for *senderismo*



Las Rotas, the best walk by the sea.



The Loreto Street, a gourmet's choice.



The Royal Mews, in Les Magazinos, 16-17 c.



Water Cave/ Cova de l'Aigua is worth a walk from Ermita Pare Pere.

en Dénia, and there you go!

Another source is Wikiloc. The ascent to Montgó, even if only to the Water Cave, is your option number one.

(c) Seeing the Town sights. We have listed them in this book. Castle / Town centre / Hermitages / Towers.

(d) Exploring Museums. Archaeological and Historical in the Castle. Ethnological near the Town Hall. Marine / Historical in the Fishing Port. Toys Museum in the former Train Station.

(e) Dénia is a town of Culture. Concerts, cinema, variety shows, live music in La Mar bars, festivals of jazz in August, of folk dance in September. Flamenco in restaurants within and outside of Dénia.

(f) Enjoy our great fiestas. The most important are *Las Fallas* in March 15-20. “*Bulls into the sea*” in mid-July. “*Moors and Christians*” in the middle of August.

(g) Plunge into a variety of sports. From scuba diving and yachting to cycling and yoga. Most of the sports offices are located near the glass terminal of Balearia opposite the Fishing village.

(h) “Normal” shopping. We have good shops in Dénia and in Ondara, in the *Portal de la Marina*.
 (i) Street shopping. For groceries, the town market and the Friday market in the centre. Antique markets in Dénia, Jesús Pobre and Jalon. Wines, in Jalon. Markets take place all over the *comarca* on different days of the week. Please look for timetables in newspapers and on the internet.

(j) Drive around Valenciana. You will find thousands of options.

(i) The suburbs of Dénia. Shopping, eating, viewing, studying history and agriculture. Jesús Pobre. Gata de Gorgos with straw products and ceramics. Javea / Xàbia with an excellent Museum, churches, beaches and restaurants. A bit further are Oliva and Gandia, Alcalalí and Jalón.

(ii) Kids entertainment in the Benidorm-Alicante area. *Terra Mitica* is a Disneyland with no queues. Water parks. Safari parks. Swimming above the Algar waterfalls.

(iii) Trips to mountains, valleys, natural parks. The views are stunning. Don’t miss the Albufera of Valencia. Two Caves, Rull and Calaveres. Marjal de Pego-Oliva and the warm *Font salá*, the Salt Spring nearby.

(iv) Cultural and historical aspects. The top of the list is beautiful Valencia, ancient and ultra-modern. Xàtiva, Gandia, Guadalest, Alicante, Alcoy, Elche. Routes of Monasteries, of Classical writers, of wines ...

(k) Go on a sea trip. *Balearia* ferries tourists to the Balearic Islands from Dénia. Ships run to Formentera, Ibiza, Majorca. Our recommendation: a day trip without a car to the former two Islands. They are smaller. Eight hours, if you have a rented car, are enough to make a general impression of the island, to swim in beautiful bays and enjoy the views. Stay on, if the night clubs of Ibiza lure you...

(l) and don’t forget about our delicious cuisine....

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK?

There are hundreds of restaurants and bars in Dénia. The tastes and colours vary a lot.... We’ll list the main restaurant areas:

(a) Marqués de Campo and Convent square.

(b) Along the sea on the Carrer Bellavista and inside the Fishing quarter / Baix la Mar. San Antonio square for cocktail lovers.

(c) New restaurants and chill-out bars next to the Balearia terminal.

(d) On the South pier, in Marina de Dénia.

(e) We think that the top cuisine places are in Loreto street in the Old Town.

(f) Restaurants and bars in Las Marinas.



Las Fallas, Dénia’s most favourite fiesta in March.

mountains. It is the museum-restaurant Mazerof. Great kitchen and fantastic shows.

Restaurants outside the town are usually inexpensive, with good cuisine. Find them on the map in the areas of La Xara, Els Poblets, Ondara, Alcalali.

WHAT TO TASTE?

Tapas, the famous small and not-so-small snacks. There are dozens of them, sometimes very sophisticated. Both meat and seafood. *Cocas* are Dénian dry pancakes with delicious fillings. *Sepia* / cuttlefish is very tasty, as well as octopus / *pulpo*. Dénian shrimp / *La gamba roja* de Dénia is world-famous, but quite costly. Green pepper, *pimiento de padrón*. *Espencat* / *esgarrat* is my favourite stewed vegetables salad. Black pudding, such as *bull amb ceba*. Pumpkin pies / *calabaza* for dessert.

RUTA DE TAPAS

Plan a trip to Dénia outside of the season. In the second half of October / early November or in February. Then we have the *Ruta de Tapas*, a month-long event covering 40 restaurants. They offer most delicious and designer-made tapas, the real works of culinary art. Each, with a drink, at the time of writing, costs only 3.00 euros!

(g) Places along the sea in Las Rotas.

(h) Night clubs, or rather, bars with live music in La Mar street. Also, near Balearia and in the Marina.

(i) In Summer, *chiringuitos* appear on the beaches. They are small cafes. Probably, a bit more expensive than in the town, but they are right next to the sea!

The most famous and expensive Dénian restaurant? Quique Dacosta, without any doubt. In Las Marinas. It is included in the top 100 restaurants in the world. But you need to book months in advance.

Another good surprise waits in the

After tapas, sometimes you don't want to order the main course. But the *paella* created near Valencia is still worth trying. *Arroz a banda* is a great rice dish. A typical Dénian dish is *llandeta*, potatoes with a variety of seafood.

OTHER, NON-DÉNIAN CUISINES?

The Galician is the meat one. Italian – we see more and more restaurants appearing. The German. The Indian. Chinese, Wok until you are stuffed. Thai. English with Sunday roasts.

WHAT TO DRINK?

Water is of course the healthiest drink. Fresh orange juice in cafes or in stores. Beer, including local crafts and IPAs. Valencian or Catalan cavas. Wines of Dénia and Alicante, slightly sweet: mistelas, Marina Alta, Bahia de Dénia. The reds are very good: our regional variety from Requena, or famous wines from La Rioja or Ribera del Duero. Strong spirits, which we do not recommend. But gin and tonic offers dozens of variations. They like G&T all over the country and in Dénia, especially.

WHEN TO ARRIVE?

July-August is the high season. Lots of people. But there are enough places on the beaches and in the restaurants for everyone, as well as parking spaces outside the town centre. The heat is up to 40, but with air conditioning it's surprisingly bearable. Don't forget the two jolly *fiestas*, the "Bulls" and the "Moors"!

The "Velvet season" - June, September, October. You can swim, there is less heat. But in September rains are possible. In October, the *Ruta de Tapas* begins. For us the first half of October is the best season in Dénia.

The "transition" period. April-May, November. No swimming, but it's still warm most of the time. Then there are December – March... in March we have the *Fallas*. This is the most famous *fiesta* in Dénia and Valencia. Competing teams built fantastic structures in comic style. Write satirical poems. Wear beautiful clothes. The structures are burnt on the night of March 19th, the St Joseph's Day.

During the day-time in winter, the sun often heats the air to the 20s. But it's quite cool out of the sun. Make sure that your home has a good heating system!

And please remember that Dénia is a seaside town. Rains, storms, strong winds may arrive unexpectedly at any time of the year. But they are rather rare in July-August.



A guided tour at the Old City Gates in the Castle.

DÉNIA DIVINA / VALENCIA VALIOSA / ESPAÑA ESPLENDIDA

Part of this book is a summary of two volumes of very extensive historical research by George Grishin. It covers four periods, from 1230 to 1788, from Reconquista to Carlos III. The book is in Russian, with a large number of illustrations. Please write to grishintravel@hotmail.co.uk for a copy.

You can also subscribe to the YouTube channel of George Grishin. Lectures in English and in Russian cover separate chapters of this book.

All the touristic and practical aspects above need a separate book. We promise to write it!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN OUR BEAUTIFUL DÉNIA!
LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU HERE!**

The Author and This Book

George Grishin is the Author of the book. Whilst being engaged for several years in a successful insurance broking career, he and his wife Katya first came to Dénia in 2003. In 2012, they moved there, partly to escape the notorious British climate. Since then, they have fallen in love with the town, and have received much joy and fulfilment from the place and its people.

This book is a labour of love, an attempt to give back something to Dénia, not in repayment, because no payment is asked. Together George and Katya have looked deeply into the history and culture of the region.

And so, as the reader cannot help noticing, the writing within these covers is flavoured throughout with deep affection for 'our Dénia.' Not because George and Katya *own* Dénia, or even are citizens of it – but because they love it dearly and want to tell the world about its delights.

Hence *'Delightful Dénia.'*

Should you have the good fortune actually to meet the Author and his wife, you might also realise why many Dénians have taken them to their hearts...

Len van der Put

Author

"The Hermit and the Warrior", "Crimean Diary",

"In and Out of Odessa",

The nice gentleman with his lovely wife

on the right in Oakeshott's team photo above.



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