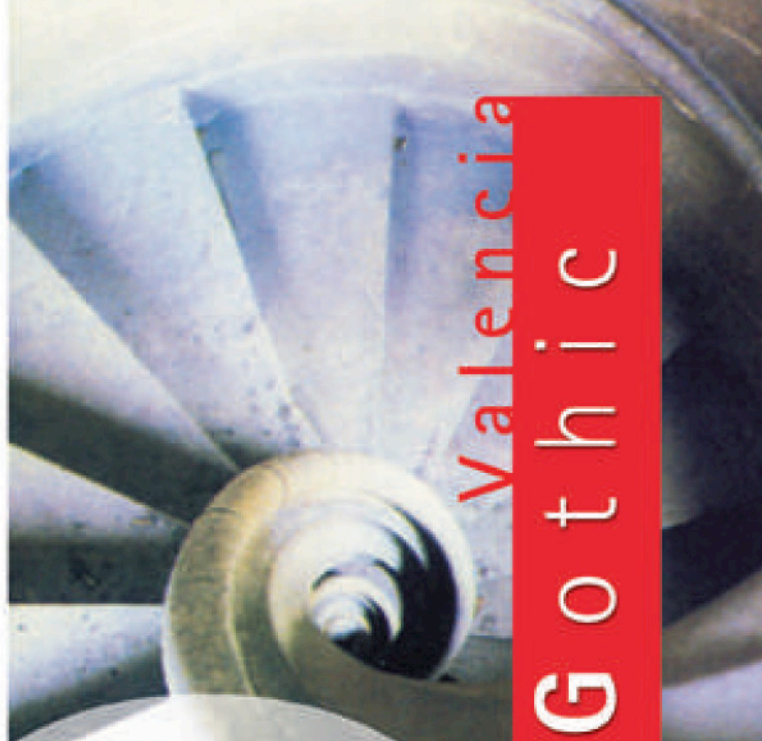
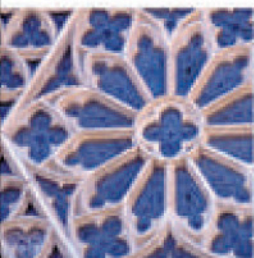




AJUNTAMENT DE VALENCIA
DELEGACIÓ DE TURISME

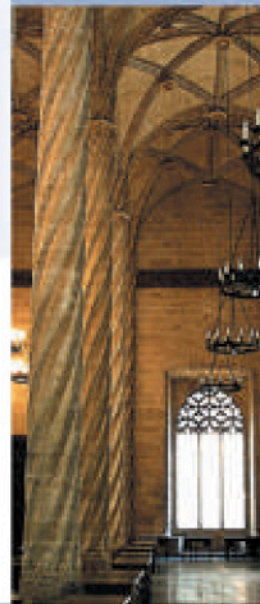
Valencia Gothic



VLC  **VALENCIA**
TOURISM
& CONVENTION BUREAU

Av. Cortes Valencianas, 41 | 46015 Valencia (Spain)
Tel. +34 963 390 390 | Fx. +34 963 606 430
e-mail: turisvalencia@turisvalencia.es

VLC  **VALENCIA**





Gothic Valencia





Gothic Valencia

The conquest of the city of Valencia in 1238 by King Jaime I the Conqueror, and the subsequent founding of the Kingdom of Valencia occurred at a time when the Gothic style had attained its height in Europe and the rest of Spain. The development of this style was spearheaded by architecture, which fulfilled the mission of demonstrating its religious connotations in opposition to erstwhile Moorish customs. This explains why the first buildings were in fact churches built over former Islamic mosques, and convents for both military and non-military orders, and particularly the unique Valencia Cathedral.

A simple stroll through the city streets will introduce us to interesting buildings of the epoch: the church of St John of the Hospital, the Convent of the Dominicans and the early Cathedral, started at the head and continued to the Almoina doorway, where we can still discern Late Romanesque shapes as often used in Aragon, including sculptures on the capitals and very rich ornamental archivolts reminiscent of the abstract geometrics of Islamic traditions.

Throughout the 14th century, history was propitious to this city, as it was unaffected by political problems in Aragon and Catalonia, and it consequently became a major commercial power in the Mediterranean. Moreover, the urban middle classes began their rise to power thanks to skilled craftsmanship, and agriculture benefited from Moorish traditions and the use of an obedient working class. This was the time when new parishes around the cathedral were built, using new spatial designs as exemplified by the nearby Santa Catalina Church.

Again, thanks to Valencia's role as the court for the Aragonese monarchs, there was a need to add to the defences of the city against Castilian pretensions, and this left magnificent military works such as the Serranos and Quart towers.

In this commercial and urban context, an edifice such as the Silk Exchange (La Lonja) was thoroughly justified, erected as it was to house commercial and banking transactions extending throughout the known world at the time. As another means of consolidating the new kingdom, it was given a "meeting house" where juridical, representative and economic actions pertaining to the kingdom could be undertaken: today's Palace of the Generalidad.

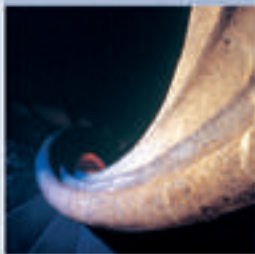
Throughout the 15th century these circumstances evolved favourably thanks to influential personalities intent on strengthening art, such as the case of King Alfonso V the Magnanimous, patron of painters such as Jacomart, or the family of Rodrigo de Borja, later named Pope Alexander VI, who, in addition to bringing about the extension of Cathedral, introduced artists familiar with the new style of the Renaissance, giving way to Valencia's own school of Renaissance painters.

The most visible example of the economic and cultural strength of Valencia in the 15th century can be seen in the magnificent collection of altarpieces made for convents, parochial churches and rural temples, forming part of a peculiar vision of the development of European artistic currents, from the decline of Byzantinism down to Gothic naturalism, as well as all the refinements of the "international" style. These make up a collection of works now preserved at the San Pio V Museum of Fine Arts of Valencia called the collection of the "Primitives", according to the idea of valuing Renaissance trends as the highest expression and all former trends as merely incipient or initial. Nevertheless this definition is still being revised, and today we preferably use the denomination "Gothic painting", an artistic heritage of incalculable artistic value for the Valencian people.

Architecture



Gothic Valencia



Spiral staircase located in the interior of the Lonja building's tower. It is called an eyeless or newel-less staircase, as the steps jut out from the cylindrical wall to leave the central part hollow. This is an exceptional example of the complex stereotomies, or stone cutting works, used by 14th- and 15th-century Valencian stonemasons.



Lonja de los Mercaderes. Outside view of the Merchants' building or Silk Exchange (1482-1498), constructed by the architect Pere Compte, the most important civic building in the Valencian Gothic style, today listed as a World Heritage building. It contains the rectangular-shaped columned trading hall and three naves with cross rib vaulting set on 16 shafts decorated with rope-like funicular edge-rolls. The tower, with an exceptional staircase, serves as the central point from which to access the annex built in 1238 to contain the courtroom known as the Consulate of the Sea, and the exchange and deposits bank founded in 1408. Both wings are enclosed by a garden that completes the complex to form a perfect rectangle.



Detail of one of the windows.

Location: Plaza del Mercado



Torres de Serranos. Serranos Towers. So named because they faced the "sierras", or re-populated outlying mountain areas, in the 14th century. Characterised by two polygonal towers, modelled on the 13th-century towers of the French city of Carcassonne, with adaptations based on the Cistercian monastery of Poblet (Tarragona). They are joined by a stretch of wall decorated with fine tracery work to which the current arms of the city have been added, showing supporting angels and the seal of the kingdom. The fortress-like aspect, however, is not apparent from the interior, as this side was left open to prevent enemy military forces from using the tower against the city should it be taken at any time. The open stairway reinforces its function as a "triumphal arch" for festive, social and solemn events of the kingdom.

Rear view of the towers.





Torres de Quart. Quart Towers. One of the gateways through the walls constructed round the city by Pedro IV the Ceremonious in the mid-14th century. The work was done by Pere Bonfill and other master stonemasons who used a structure similar to the scheme of the castle of Castelnuovo in Naples.

The outside walls of the towers still show the effects of the French attack on the city during the Spanish War of Independence. On the inside there are ribless vaults covering the defensive rooms.

The towers were used as a prison in the 19th-century, and today contain a Locksmiths' Museum and spaces for special monographic exhibits.

Detail of a door to the towers.



Location: Calle Guillén de Castro



Rear view of the towers.



Gothic Valencia

Cathedral Dome.



Puerta de los Apóstoles.

Apostles' Door. This doorway leads out of the northern cross aisle of the cathedral and receives its name from the Apostles shown on the doorcase, over which three archivolts decorated with figures of angels, saints and prophets can be seen. On the tympanum, there is a graceful image of the Virgin with Child, set amongst angels playing music. Until the 16th century this was placed in the mullion, now eliminated. The famous oral Water Court is held in front of this door every Thursday at noon.

Location: Plaza de la Virgen



Cathedral Dome. Constructed as a lantern or skylight over the transept, the cathedral dome rises up majestically in the form of a two-bodied octagonal tower on pendentives, with wide windows kept in place by a varied combination of open tracery work, and closed off with diaphanous alabaster plaques, true "stones of light" that filter out the powerful Valencian sun.

It was decorated in the 15th century by the master architect Llobet. The pendentives are decorated with the figures of the four Evangelists, the work of the Valencian sculptor Ignacio Vergara, put in place in the 18th century.

Crowning the Apostles' Door is some fine tracery work with figures (restored in 1960) above which is the beautiful rose window known by the name of Solomon's window because of its Star of David - two interlinked equilateral triangles framing diverse traceries perforated by polychrome stained glass windows, a modern imitation of the originals.

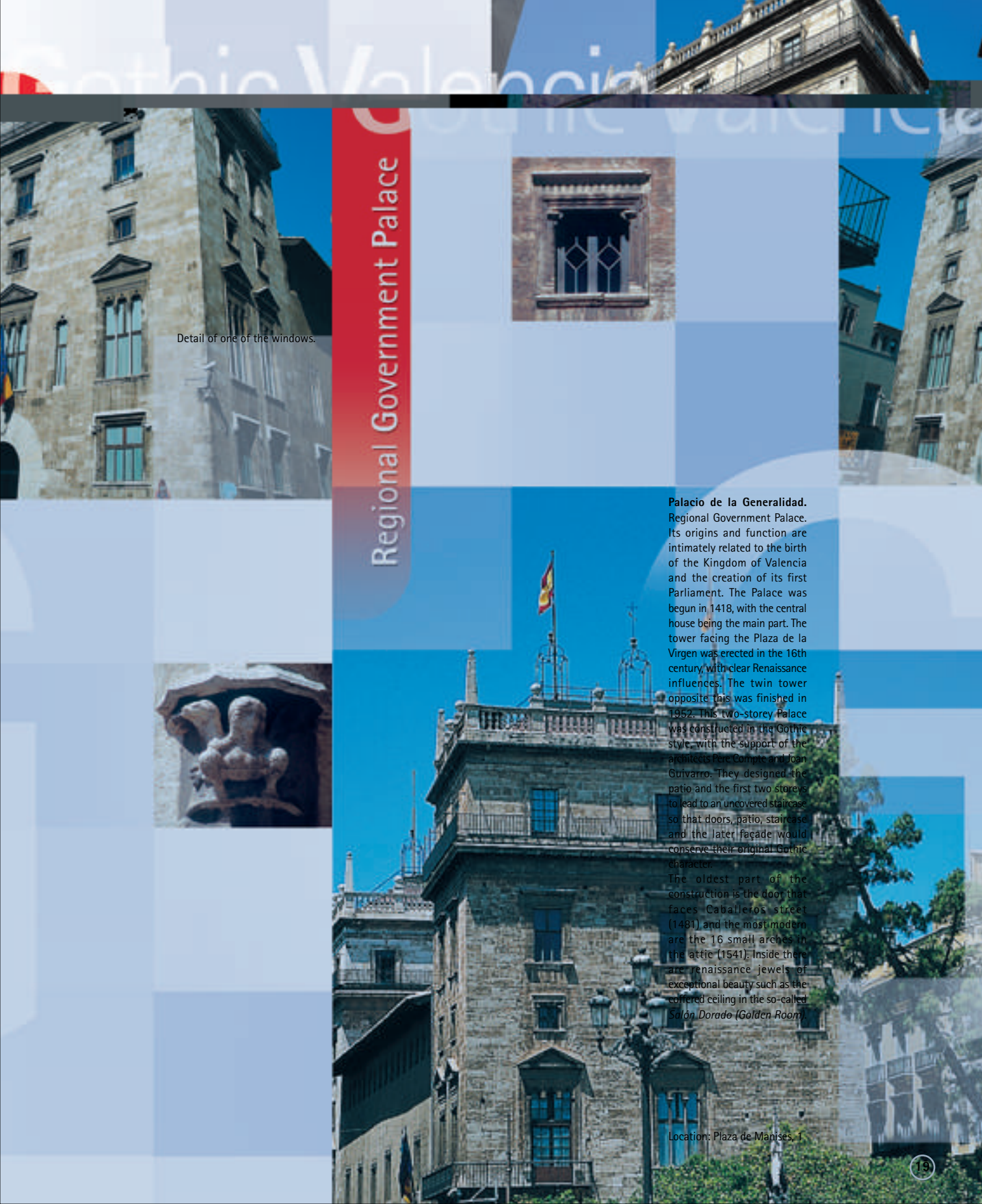


Detail of a cross vault.

El Miguelete, or the Miguelete belltower attached to the cathedral, receives its name from the oldest bell it contains, the so-called "Miguel" bell (1532). The tower was erected at the end of the 14th century from designs by Andrés Julia, being finished in the 15th century by Pere Balaguer. It has an octagonal shape and stands 50.8 metres high, presenting a stark external decoration, barely marking its various sections by the use of moulded beadings, whereas the upper bell section is crowned by openings with gables including fine trefoiled tracery work. The top was never covered. The present bell gable is an addition that was made between 1660 and 1736.

Location: Plaza de la Reina





Regional Government Palace

Detail of one of the windows.



Palacio de la Generalidad.

Regional Government Palace. Its origins and function are intimately related to the birth of the Kingdom of Valencia and the creation of its first Parliament. The Palace was begun in 1418, with the central house being the main part. The tower facing the Plaza de la Virgen was erected in the 16th century, with clear Renaissance influences. The twin tower opposite this was finished in 1952. This two-storey Palace was constructed in the Gothic style, with the support of the architects Pere Compte and Joan Guivarró. They designed the patio and the first two storeys to lead to an uncovered staircase so that doors, patio, staircase and the later façade would conserve their original Gothic character.

The oldest part of the construction is the door that faces Caballeros street (1481) and the most modern are the 16 small arches in the attic (1541). Inside there are Renaissance jewels of exceptional beauty such as the coffered ceiling in the so-called *Salón Dorado (Golden Room)*.

Location: Plaza de Manises, 1

Gothic Valencia

Palace of the Admirals of Aragon



Detail of the patio of the Palace of the Admirals of Aragon.

The **Palacio de los Almirantes de Aragón** is today the seat of the Valencia regional government Department of the Treasury. It is one of the most pure examples of a Valencia Gothic mansion home. Its distribution around the patio is reminiscent of the Roman "domus" with four sides opening out through the archways to collect the warmth and light of the sun, with a semi-covered lateral staircase on the western side leading to a gallery preserving a magnificent coffered ceiling. This house owes its name to the 15th-century Cardona family, who were named the Admirals of Aragon in perpetuum following the reconquest of the city.



Location: Calle del Palau. 1

Gothic Valencia

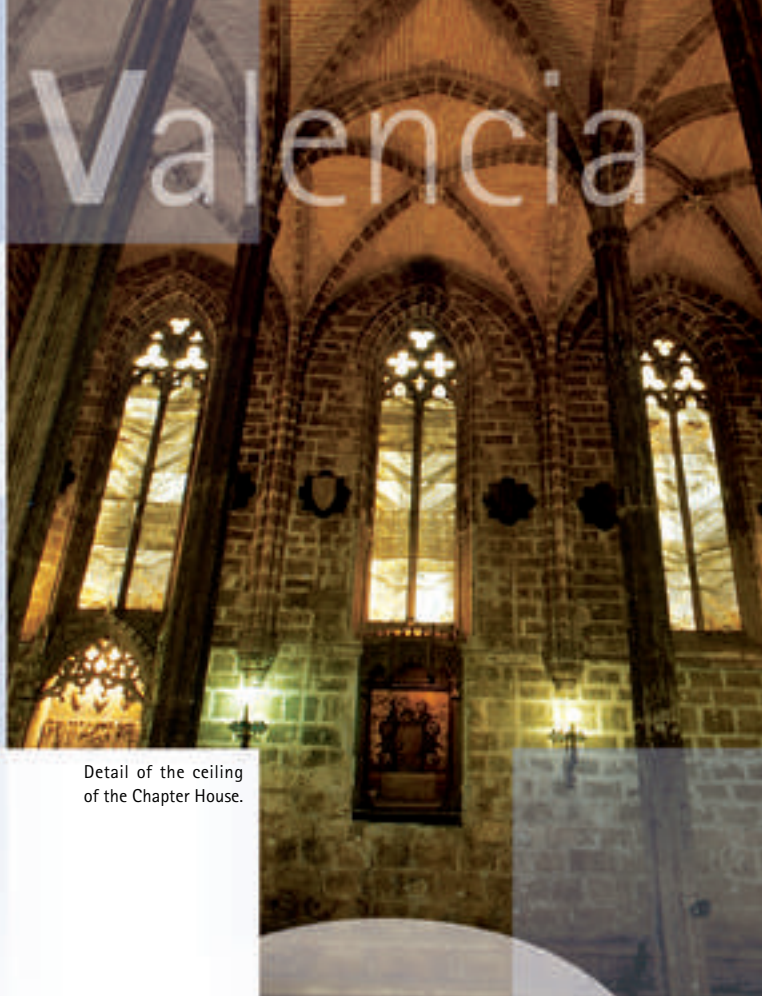
Cloister of St Dominic.



Iglesia y Convento de Santo Domingo. Church and Convent of St Dominic. Immediately following the conquest of the city, King Jaime I gave the Dominicans the land bordering the river, on which they built one of the most unrivalled monuments in the Valencia Gothic style. Although an initial building was erected, this has now disappeared. The present edifice contains a rectangular cloister originating in the 14th century, with cross rib vaults and fine tracery work opening out to the garden. The main enclosure is the Chapter Room with funicular columns and vaulting probably preceding the work of the Silk Exchange.

Also integrally preserved from its original is the *King's Chapel*, so called because construction was initiated under King Alfonso V the Magnanimous in 1431, although finished by his brother and successor, Juan II in 1463. It is exceptional for its ribless three-section vaults, the first two of which are oblong, and the third, over the hexagonal apsidal presbytery, an unprecedented work by an anonymous artist with whom only the more familiar names of Francisco de Baldomar, Miguel Navarro and other contemporaries can be related.

Detail of the ceiling of the Chapter House.



Location: Plaza de Tetuán



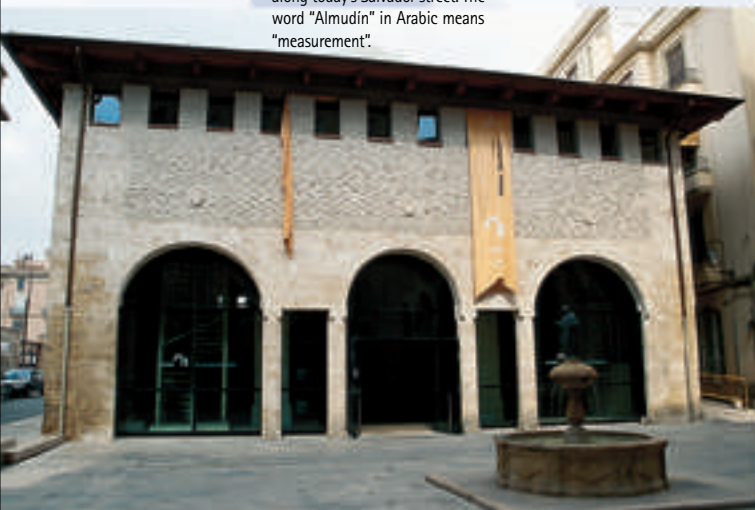
Gothic Valencia

Almudín Granary



Almudín. Trade was of paramount importance in the medieval Valencian economy. This city became the mercantile capital of the Mediterranean, the port of Castile, maintaining ongoing relationships with French, Italian and North African port cities. Valencian money was strong, and the city soon became rich, bringing about its cultural and artistic development.

The order to construct this ancient granary was given by the municipal council on 1 November 1307. The **Almudín** of Valencia was the first Gothic building, a place for business and a storehouse for wheat. It is believed it was originally an Arab fortress, helping to defend the city at its most vulnerable point, along today's Salvador street. The word "Almudín" in Arabic means "measurement".



Location: Calle Almudín, 3



Dating from the 13th century, it has a basilican ground plan, with three naves, interior porticos and crenelated perimeter eaves that the later roof partially hides. The door is on one side, containing tracery work, with large, typically Aragonese vousoirs.

It was first restored in 1517 and again recently in 1996. Today it holds an exhibition room pertaining to the city council of Valencia.

Listed as an historic-artistic monument since 1969





Las Reales Atarazanas del Grao, Valencia. The Royal Shipyards of the Port district. Constructed in 1338 by the city council, and attributed to the "stonemason" Francés Toma, dating from the second half of Valencia's reconquest Gothic. It comprises a short, rectangular-shaped nave, originally based on a basilican ground plan, covered by a double roof on beams supported by a series of pointed diaphragm arches, primitive prototypes.

This type of construction originated from replicas of Roman "shipyards" and is in some ways similar to the paleo-Christian architecture of the Near East.



Location: Plaza Juan Antonio Benlliure - Calle José Aguirre



El Convento de la Trinidad, or Convent of the Trinity, has one single nave with arches and buttresses, originating from the late Romanesque style.



Gothic Valencia

Location: Calle Trinidad
Calle Alboraya



Bridges

This collection of historic bridges in the city of Valencia includes the so-called **Serranos, Trinidad, and Real bridges**.

In their day, they were located outside the city walls, as shown in early engravings, for example those of Guesdon. An attempt was made to incorporate the river bank area between these bridges for use by local citizens, as shown by an early interest in landscaping the river banks in the 14th century, with the construction of a series of moles, embankments and parapets. At other parts of the city, such constructions had been finished by 1598, with remaining areas being terminated in the 17th century.



Punte de la Trinidad. Local bridges and parapets were decorated with turrets containing images of saints. This was especially the case of the Gothic Trinity Bridge, with images of the saints from the town of Alcira, Bernardo and María de Gracia (converted Moors). These images were destroyed in 1823 during the Carlist Wars. Since the 1940s, exaggeratedly baroque statues from the 18th century by Ponzanelli, were inserted, representing San Luis Beltrán and Santo Tomás de Villanueva.

This bridge was the second to be constructed, following the Serranos Tower bridge. It was built by Pedro Viñes in 1356, over the remains of a wooden Arab bridge called Al-Warraq, destroyed by various floods. The Christian bridge was restored in 1402, to occupy its present position.

It is made up of 10 slightly pointed arches with buttresses and cutwaters, and 10 vaults in ashlar work.





The **Puente del Real**, Royal Bridge, was built between 1595 and 1598, according to city chroniclers. It coincided with the celebration of the wedding of King Felipe III with Queen Margarita. According to the commission, "the bridge will be finished come wedding day". It is believed the bridge was built using materials from the nearby cemetery of the Convent of St Dominic, and that even gravestones with inscriptions were included.

It is made up of 9 slightly pointed arches with vaults in ashlar work. Horizontal span.

It has two turrets containing sculptures of St Vicente Mártir and St Vicente Ferrer, which were seriously damaged during the Spanish Civil War and later restored, together with other parts of the parapet, only to be replaced by sculptures belonging to Carmelo Vicet and Ignacio Pinazo.

The bridge was severely damaged in the flood of 1957, and in 1964 it was widened to increase its capacity twofold, maintaining its style but losing its human scale to a certain degree.



Gothic Valencia

Location: Paseo Ciudadela - Plaza Llano del Real



The **Puente de Serranos**, or Serranos Bridge, is located in front of the towers of the same name and is one of the oldest bridges in the city.

It was originally called al-Qantara, "the bridge", and was erected by the grandson of Almanzor, Adb al-Aziz, in 1244.

There is documentary proof of donations received for its repair in 1254 and 1262, as well as an order dated 12 May 1349 in which the city council decided that it should be reconstructed "all in stone". Nevertheless, new floods in 1427 destroyed four of the arches. The definitive bridge standing today dates from 1517.

It has nine segmental ashlar arches. It is slightly longer than its neighbour, the Trinity bridge, and has a horizontal span.



Location: Calle Blanquerías – Plaza Santa Mónica

Painting





Retablo de Bonifacio Ferrer. (Altarpiece of Fray Bonifacio Ferrer). This is a magnificent example of so-called "International Gothic" or Manneristic style, in which Italian, or more properly Siennese, novelties now appear, a refined tendency of French origin giving this painting its markedly aristocratic stamp. Done by an unknown artist and dated 1400, this altarpiece is known by the name of its donor, brother to St Vicent Ferrer and Prior of the Carthusian monastery of Portaceli, from whence it came.



Artist: **BONIFACIO FERRER**
San Pío V Museum of Fine Arts



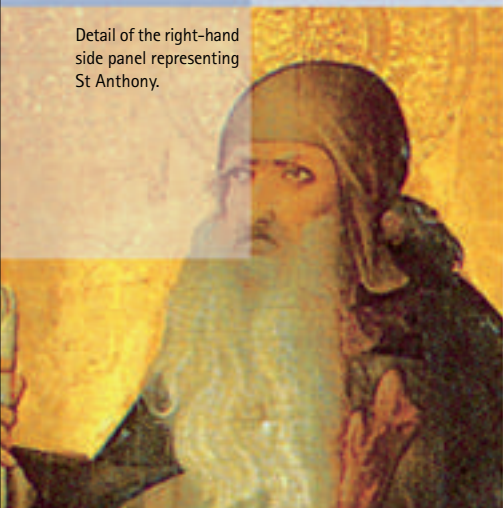
Detail of the right-hand panel representing the baptism of Christ.





Retablo de San Martín, Santa Úrsula y San Antón. (Detail of the Altarpiece of St Martin, St Ursula and St Anthony). A work by the painter Gonzalo Pérez (or Peris), this altarpiece represents the "fine, almost exquisite" phase of the international Gothic style, assimilated by numerous painters working in Valencia during the 15th century. Of note are the sinuous lines, the fine adornments on the garments and the "realistic" look of the foreshortening of St Martin's horse.

Detail of the right-hand side panel representing St Anthony.



Detail of central panel representing St Martin.

Gothic Valencia

Tabla de San Jaime y San Gil Abad. (Panel of St James and St Gil the Abbot). Attributed to Jaime Baço, known as Jacomart, with an approximate date of 1450. Jacomart, of French origin, was the privileged artist of Alfonso the Magnanimous and his son Juan II and introduced his own characters in a Flemish tendency that replaced the subtle international Gothic throughout Europe, ie, providing more detailing in the garments, the appearance of the ceramic tiled floors and the serene portraits of the characters.

Artist: JAIME BAÇO "JACOMART"



Detail of the panel representing San Gil the Abbot.



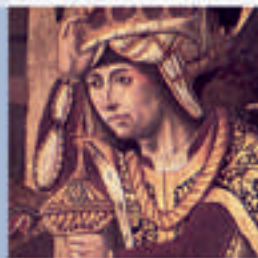


Artist: Maestro Perea



Detail of the Altarpiece of the Three Kings.

Retablo de los tres Reyes. (Central panel of the Altarpiece of the Three Kings). An exemplary oeuvre by the Master Perea, representing Gothicism in its Hispano-Flemish variant, in which characters are abundant. The composition is complex, with magnificent treatment of the brocades of the gowns, converting this into an exceptionally regal painting, incorporating renaissance novelties imported from Italy, propitiated by the protagonism of the Valencia-born archbishop Rodrigo de Borja, later elected Pope Alexander VI.



Detail of the Altarpiece of the Three Kings.

Santa Catalina, c. 1450. This painting possibly belonged to a fragment of an altarpiece dedicated to St Catherine.

Here, she appears in contemporary dress: her gown looks cardboard-like but reflects sensitivity, and she is shown holding the attributes of a wheel and sword. At her foot is the head of the Emperor Maxentius, which also maintains the golden colour of the floor and background, characteristic of the epoch.



Gothic Valencia

Artist: **MAESTRO DE ALTURA**
San Pio V Museum of Fine Arts



Gothic Valencia

Artist: JOAN REIXACH · San Pío V Museum of Fine Arts

Virgin



Dormición de Maria. The Reconquest interrupted Islamic rule and its strong, ongoing development at all levels. Its influence on painting can be seen in this work in the form of the garments worn by the characters, jellabas, and in the books they are holding, containing Kufic characters.

This detail pertains to the panel called "Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary" by the Catalan painter Joan Reixach.

San Lucas recibiendo a la Verónica. (St Luke Receiving Veronica). This pertains to the St Luke altarpiece from the chapel of the Carpenter's Guild of the Church of St John the Evangelist and St John the Baptist of Valencia.

The use of gold for the background and the macrocephalic characters make this work similar to that of Lorenzo Zaragoza, with marked Catalan influences.

It is believed, in the theory of the art scholar A. José y Pitarch, that Villahermosa was a pseudonym for the painter Lorenzo Zaragoza.



Artist: MAESTRO DE VILLAHERMOSA
San Pío V Museum of Fine Arts

Sculpture





Details of gargoyles and sculptures on the Silk Exchange (Lonja de los Mercaderes).



Gothic Valencia



Gothic Valencia

COAT OF ARMS OF PEDRO IV THE CEREMONIOUS 14th C.

San Pío V Museum of Fine Arts

This coat of arms pertaining to Pedro IV the Ceremonious that decorated the door of the gateway to the Xerea quarter, dates from 1375. Both the door and the wall were torn down in 1865.

The crowned helm and headpiece with a winged dragon was the emblem of all the Aragonese kings down to Fernando the Catholic.



THE VIRGIN OF THE MIRACLE

Cathedral Museum of Valencia.

With features like those of the Virgin or Our Lady sculptures found in Morella (Castellón province), showing facial features and details of tracery work on her garments.

It is believed that this image crowned the doorway to the Hospital of the Poor Priests constructed in the city in 1394.

The standing Virgin, with the Child sitting on Her arm holding a spray of flowers. The form is subtly curved with an oval-shaped face and slanting eyes.

ST MICHAEL

Historic Archive of the City of Valencia.

The quattrocento sculpture of the Archangel St Michael preserved at Valencia City Hall is an example of the syncretism that characterised the late 15th century.

In this work we can see a combination of Flemish, Gorgonese and Italian influences, as well as others from the same epoch, specially those of the sculptor Damián Formet.



PENNANT OF THE RECONQUEST · Historic Archive of the City of Valencia.

On 28 September 1238, Jaime I and the Moor Zayyan signed a treaty under which the City of Valencia was handed over to the Christians, under the promise to allow the Moorish citizens to leave the city unharmed with all their appurtenances.

On the same date the Christians entered the city and this pennant was flown from the top of the Ali Bufat tower over the Bab al-Sakhar gateway, demolished in 1865, close to the Church of the Temple.



Gothic Valencia





Gothic Valencia