

HISTORICAL ROUTE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COLONY

San
Pedro
·Alcántara·



San Pedro Alcántara

Location Map



San Pedro Alcántara is a first-class tourist destination. Known for its privileged climate, it is a place where you can enjoy expansive beaches, impressive natural surroundings, as well as a wide choice of gastronomy and leisure activities.

Moreover, San Pedro possesses a different historical context from the rest of the Costa del Sol a story that certainly deserves to be told. *San Pedro Alcántara* is a young town whose origins date back to the creation of an agricultural colony in the mid-nineteenth century.

The present 'Historical Route of the Colony' reflects an effort to divulge its history in a direct, personal way, by walking through its streets and avenues. Maps, illustrations and photographs are intended to facilitate the journey through the town's past and present, while the accompanying texts provide a deeper understanding of its origins.

Although the colony's history is the guiding thread of the publication, other local elements of interest have also been added to this guide.

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INTRODUCTION

An approach to the agricultural colony of *San Pedro Alcántara*

They were the most fertile lands of the region. Watered by numerous water ways which ran through them, from the mountains to the Mediterranean Sea. The colourful mountains of the *Sierra Bermeja* and *Sierra Blanca* protected the crops from the cold which came in from the north. A land of mild winters and warm summers, suitable for tropical crops, such as sugarcane.

What lacked was the person who could see the possibilities this exceptional physical environment offered. All it took was for *Manuel Gutiérrez de la Concha*, military man, prestigious politician and first Marquis of *Duero* to undertake this business venture during the 1850s.

The agricultural colony of *San Pedro Alcántara* was formed with the gathering of numerous farms which brought together more than 3,000 hectares in the municipalities of *Estepona*, *Benahavís* and *Marbella*. In the latter, the Marquis built a new village, which he inaugurated in 1860, to welcome new arrivals.

The new project revolved around the cultivation and milling of sugarcane. Although the founder's financial difficulties caused him to give up the agro-industrial exploitation in 1873 to *Luis de Cuadra* and *Joaquín de la Gándara*. They formed a company, the *Colonia de San Pedro Alcántara Society*, which, at the beginning of the 20th century, would be integrated into the *Sociedad General Azucarera de España* (General Sugar Society of Spain).



View of San Pedro from the sea, circa 1959



But what characterised the colony was its advancement in agrarian innovation

The colony's economy didn't just revolve around sugar cane, it also focused on cereals, starting with wheat, which was a staple food for the population and deficient in regional production. Similarly, livestock farming was a necessary complement, as animals were needed for labour and food.

But what characterised the colony most was its advancement in agrarian innovation. The Marquis of *Duero* experimented with new plants and fertilisers. He planned a dense network of lanes and an extensive irrigation system. He also projected for a model farm or foreman school to be built. He acquired the most modern machinery of the time. All this earned him awards in the national and international exhibitions where he presented his products.

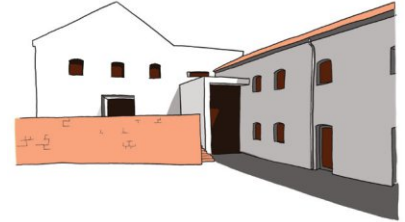
At other stages of *San Pedro Alcántara's* history, the irrigation was modernised, with the expansion of the irrigation network and the construction of reservoirs. New crops such as sugar beet, cotton and tobacco were introduced. The colony continued with the acquisition of machines, such as locomotives, which were applied to different tasks in the field. In addition to hiring qualified personnel, including agricultural or industrial engineers.

In short, the colony of *San Pedro Alcántara* stood out among the hundreds of those created in Spain under the laws to promote the rural areas in the second half of the nineteenth century.



1. The *Trapiche*

de Guadaiza (Pre-industrial Mill)



Before the colony of *San Pedro Alcántara* was established, there was a pre-industrial mill, the *Trapiche de Guadaiza*, whose gears moved with the force of the water of the nearby river which gave it its name. The pulp was then cooked and dried in ceramic pots until the sugar crystals formed. The mill was in operation approximately between 1823 and 1830, by initiative of the French *Juan Bautista Lesseps*. Aside from the two naves, several of the aqueduct's arches survive to this day.

During the time of the Marquis of *Duero*, these buildings were refurbished to found, around 1863, a Model Farm or School for Agricultural Foremen; the school would train young people in the modernising techniques which were trying to be introduced in the property. Its director was the agricultural expert *Eugenio Tallefer*, also of French nationality, who coordinated a group of teachers who came to the farm, as well as experimenting with machinery for agricultural work. However, the lack of apprentices frustrated the project, since there were no institutions which would grant them scholarships.

At present, after its renovation which ended in 2015, it is dedicated to cultural activities, where classes of various subjects are taught, in addition to having ample space for lectures and plays.

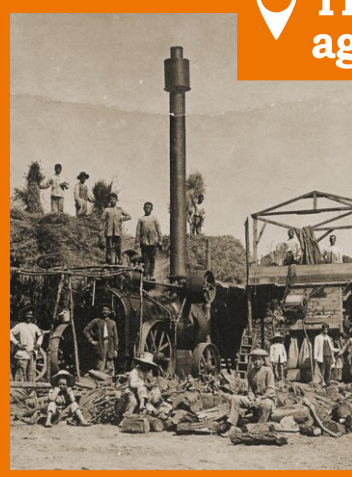


A Sugarcane, the origin of a agricultural colony

The sugarcane plant comes from the East, it was introduced by Muslims on the Mediterranean coast and reached the American continent around the fifteenth century. It only grows in warm climates, so it developed well on the coasts of *Málaga*, *Granada* and *Almería*, the only place in Europe where it was cultivated. It also needs a lot of water, for this reason the rivers which crossed the property of the colony of *San Pedro Alcántara* constituted a complementary and indispensable resource.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the old mills or presses, which grinded the cane to obtain sugar with hydraulic or animal power, were replaced with factories whose mills worked thanks to steam engines. The golden age of the Andalusian sugarcane industry had begun, and lasted until the end of the century, when it was replaced by the highly productive beet. In *El Trapiche de Guadaíza*, the visitor will be able to find some specimens of the colony's emblematic culture.

The most Innovative agricultural machinery



One of the most important aspects of the colony was the use of innovative agricultural machinery. Thus, the Marquis of *Duero* did not hesitate to go personally to fairs in Paris or London to buy ploughs and threshing and winnowing machines.

In later stages, the use of the most modern technology available continued, among which stood out the locomotive, a portable steam engine which could have several uses, as a pump to extract water from wells or as a motor for a large threshing machine.



2. The square with its church



Church of *San Pedro Alcántara* at the beginning of the 20th century

In the square we can find the two most important buildings of *San Pedro*. One is a civil building, the *Villa de San Luis*, and the other is a religious one, the parish church, which is dedicated to *San Pedro de Alcántara*, patron saint of the village of the same name. In this case, the Saint stands out by having the preposition “*de*” in his name so as to not confuse it with the village’s name.

The temple, which was inaugurated in August 1869, is an example of colonial architecture. In 1943 it was opened again for worship, after the fires it had suffered at the beginning of the Civil War. Its entrance façade stands out, consisting of three arches and a graceful prismatic-shaped portico tower with a hipped roof and arches which allow the bells to be seen.

The interior is accessed through a wide staircase. The floor plan is distributed into three naves, the central one is covered by a half barrel vault, while the two lateral ones are covered with groin vaults. The main chapel possesses an apse that faces a choir which rises on the upper floor.

B The Patron Saint: *San Pedro de Alcántara*

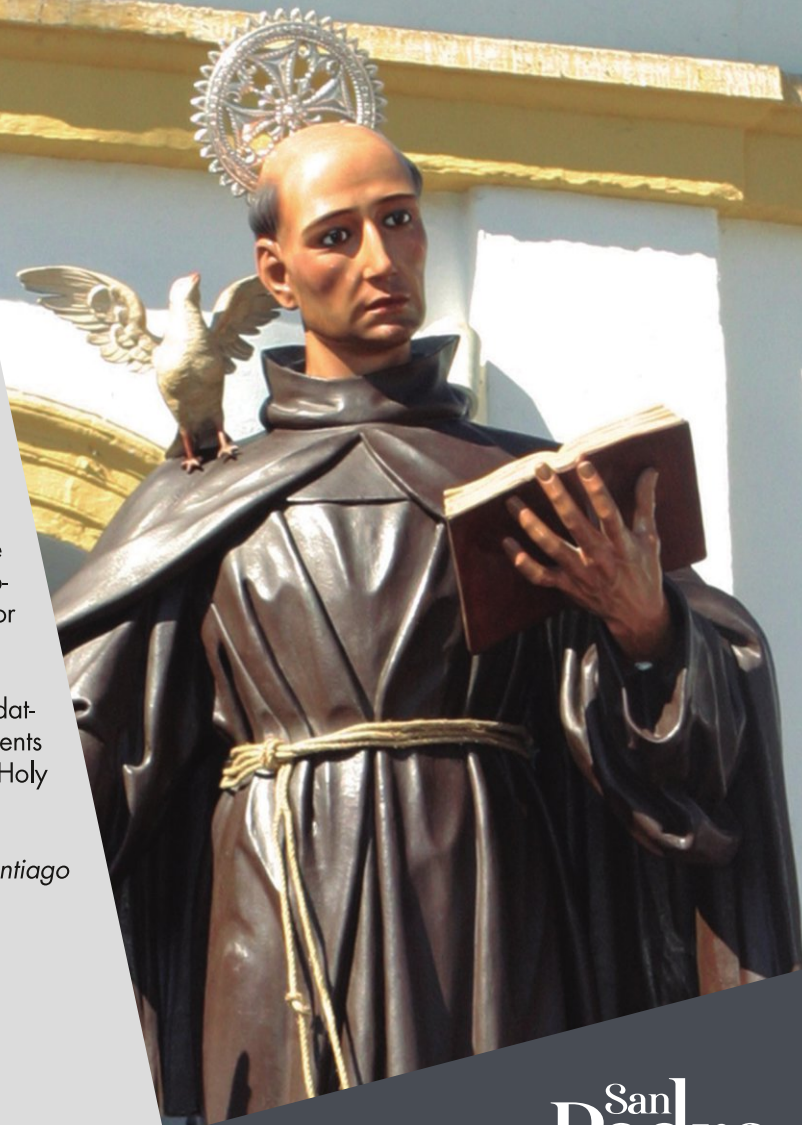
October 19th is the day of the patron saint, *San Pedro de Alcántara*. The image, which is kept inside the church, leaves in procession that very day and goes through the streets of the town centre during its fair.

Juan de Sanabria was born in *Alcántara (Cáceres)* in 1499. When he took the cloth in 1515, he changed his name to *Pedro de Alcántara*. He was a great reformer of the Franciscan order as well as a paragon of austerity. He wrote the *Treatise on Prayer and Meditation*, and met Saint *Teresa of Jesus*, to whom he gave good advice.

He died in 1562 in *Arenas*, in the province of *Ávila*, which would later be called *Arenas de San Pedro*. He was canonised in 1669. And in 1752, a sculpture was placed inside the basilica of St. Peter in Rome, a distinction reserved for great founders and reformers of religious orders.

The current carving came to the town in 1939, since the original one, which dated back to the time of the colony, was destroyed during the Civil War. It represents the saint as a writer, with a book in one hand and a quill in the other, while the Holy Spirit, placed on his shoulder, is a symbol of divine inspiration.

By the church entrance, he is represented in another bronze sculpture by *Santiago de Santiago* which was erected in 1998.



3. The Villa of San Luis



In the Church square stands the so-called *Villa de San Luis*, built in the late 1880s by the family who owned the colony after the Marquis of Duero. *Luis de Cuadra*, second marquis of *Guadalmina*, lived there and later played an important role in the transfer of the estate to the *Sociedad General Azucarera de España* in 1910.

As its owners used to live in Spain's neighbouring country, the three floored building was constructed in the French style. Its façade features a cantilevered balcony on the first floor which is supported by cast iron columns, from it you can see the entire old town and an attractive landscape which extends to the sea. For this reason, the house was also known as *Linda Vista*. The second floor is a loft, which receives natural lighting through the three skylights, each of which have small gabled roof each.

In the 1930s the parcelling of the large estate began in order to sell it off more easily. During this process, *Marbella* City Council municipalised the basic services, which until then had depended on the colony itself. Thus, in 1946, the *Villa de San Luis* was acquired by the city council and was turned into schools, a telephone switchboard and a municipal office. With the passage of time, it has become the administrative headquarters of the *San Pedro Alcántara* district.





House of Administration or of Robledano, 1962

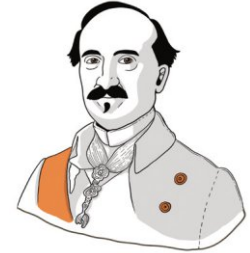


Villa of San Luis, 1968

The Administration House, together with the church, was one of the first constructions of the Marquis of *Duero's* great urban project. Also known as the *Casa de Robledano*, as *Juan Robledano* was the last administrator of the colony in the first third of the 20th century. It was demolished in the 1990s, losing an important vestige of the beginnings of *San Pedro Alcántara*.

4. The founder:

Marquis of Duero

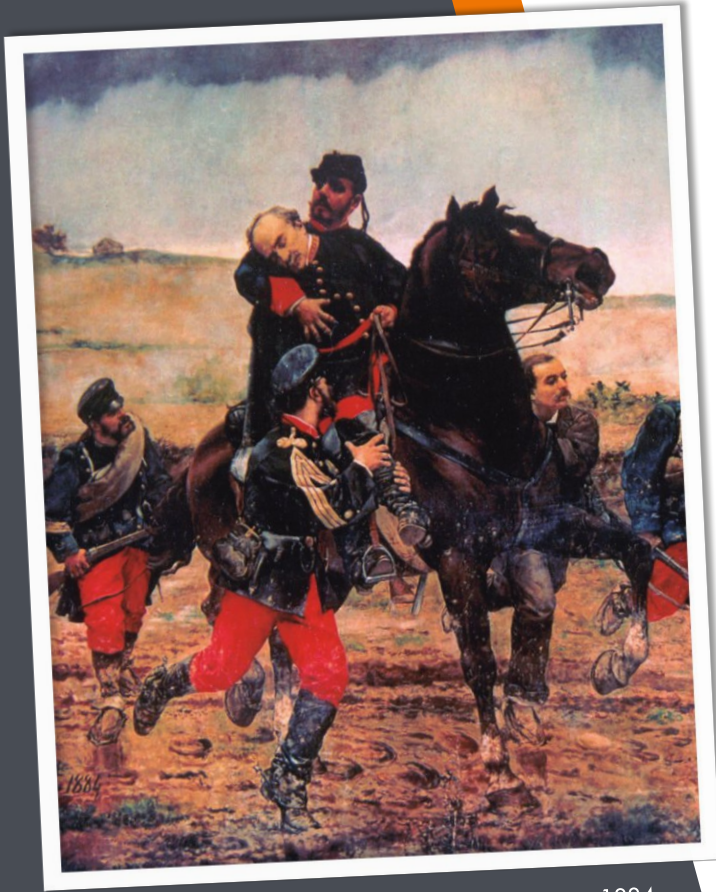


Manuel Gutiérrez de la Concha e Irigoyen was born in 1808, in the the Viceroyalty of *La Plata*, now *Argentina*, in the city of *Córdoba de Tucumán*. His father, *Juan Gutiérrez de la Concha*, governor of the province, was shot in 1810 during that country's independence.

His mother, *Petra or Petrona Irigoyen*, managed to bring *Manuel* and his three siblings to Spain and give them a good education. Her eldest son, *Juan*, became a diplomat, *José* became captain general and president of the nation's government and *Carmen* married a Senior Official.

As for *Manuel*, he undertook a military career at a very young age. He soon distinguished himself in the First Carlist War for his bravery. In 1841 he married *Francisca de Paula Tovar y Gasca*, Marchioness of *Revilla*, Countess of *Cancelada* and *Lences*. He only had his soldier's salary, but she owned many estates, which her husband would sell to form two large estates. *San Pedro Alcántara* would be one of them, it received its name from the Marquis' only daughter, *Petra de Alcántara*, who in turn was named after her paternal grandmother.

In 1847 he was appointed General in Chief of the expeditionary corps that entered Portugal to support Queen *Maria Gloria* on the throne. His successes, more diplomatic than military, culminated in his victorious entry into Porto; for this, the Spanish monarch, *Isabel the Second*, gave him the title of Marquis of *Duero*.

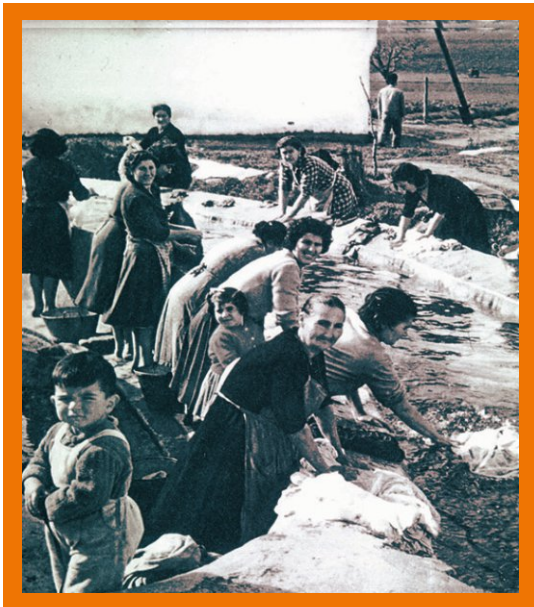


Death of the *Marques del Duero*. *Joaquín Agrasot*, 1884

In September of the same year, at the head of the General Captaincy of Catalonia, he achieved the victory over the traditionalists in the Second Carlist War or the Matiners. For that reason, he was appointed Captain General of the army at only 41 years of age.

He was the author of the *Three Weapons Tactics Project* and the *Cavalry Weapon Tactics Project*, which were applied in military teaching. On the political side, he held the presidency of the Senate for six consecutive terms, between 1858 and 1863, as a prominent member of the Liberal Union, during the so-called Long Government of O'Donnell.

Despite being over sixty years old, he fought the Carlists again, as head of the Northern Army. He achieved important victories in the Basque Country and was about to give the definitive battle in Navarre, when he was mortally wounded in the afternoon of June 27, 1874 in Monte Muru, in the municipality of Abárzuza. He was driven to the ancestral home of the Munárriz family, where he had his headquarters, he died shortly afterwards. As the founder of *San Pedro Alcántara*, every June 27, he is honoured in an act which takes place around the sculpture erected in the town he created.



© *La lavandera (The Washerwoman) a tribute to the women of San Pedro Alcántara*

Behind the church, the Marquis of Duero observes from his pedestal another image, like his bronze one. Placed in June 2018, it is the work of the artist *Ana María Castillo García*.

The sculpture is reminiscent of the women who did the laundry in the colony. This lasted until the early 1960s, when the supply of drinking water reached every house in the village. Close by a wide canal ran with a good flow of water, which was the ideal place to do one's laundry, although it could get very crowded according to photographs of the time.

It was not only a place for cleaning clothes, but also for social interactions. An exclusively female meeting point in a world of men.

5. The Commissary



The property is located on the corner of the streets of *Revilla* and *Lagasca*, opposite the side of the church. The modesty of the windows and doors of its façade does not stop it from being considered a valuable component of the oldest period of *San Pedro Alcántara*, built prior to the temple itself and the *Villa de San Luis*.

It possesses a very well-defined ground floor and upper floor; it is therefore of greater size than the general model of housing that could be found distributed along the colony's three streets.

Its large scale, with a surface area of around one hundred square metres, allowed it to be used for religious services, until the church was opened for worship in 1869. In times of the Marquis of *Duero*, it was also the headquarters of the Agricultural Court, which settled conflicts that had to do with lands and livestock. It should be remembered that, at the time, the settler's employment relationship with the property was through a lease or by sharecropping. Although later, with the new company, they became day labourers.

It was known as the *Casa de los Escribientes* (Home of the Writers), because for some time, those employees who attended the farm's office work resided in it. There is also evidence of such professionals as doctors or engineers living there, due to the fact that another one of the colony's characteristics was the high level of its human capital.

However, its most well-known building, which still stands today, is the Commissary, as during the transition from the 19th Century to the 20th, the administrators promoted this establishment's creation. It had everything necessary to cover the worker's needs, from food to clothing at fair prices.





Aerial view of *San Pedro Alcántara* towards 1950

San
Pedro
Alcántara

San Pedro Alcántara

Points of interest

- 1 ***El Trapiche de Guadaiza (pre-industrial Mill)***
 - 2 ***The square its church***
 - 3 ***The Villa of San Luis***
 - 4 ***The founder Marquis of Duero***
 - 5 ***The commissary***
 - 6 ***La Calle de En Medio and two more streets***
- A** ***Sugarcane, the origin of a agricultural colony***
- B** ***The patron Saint: San Pedro de Alcántara***
- C** ***La Lavandera (the washerwoman)
a tribute to the women of San Pedro Alcántara***
- D** ***The sculptures of Espona***
- E** ***The coat of arms of the Gutiérrez de la Concha***



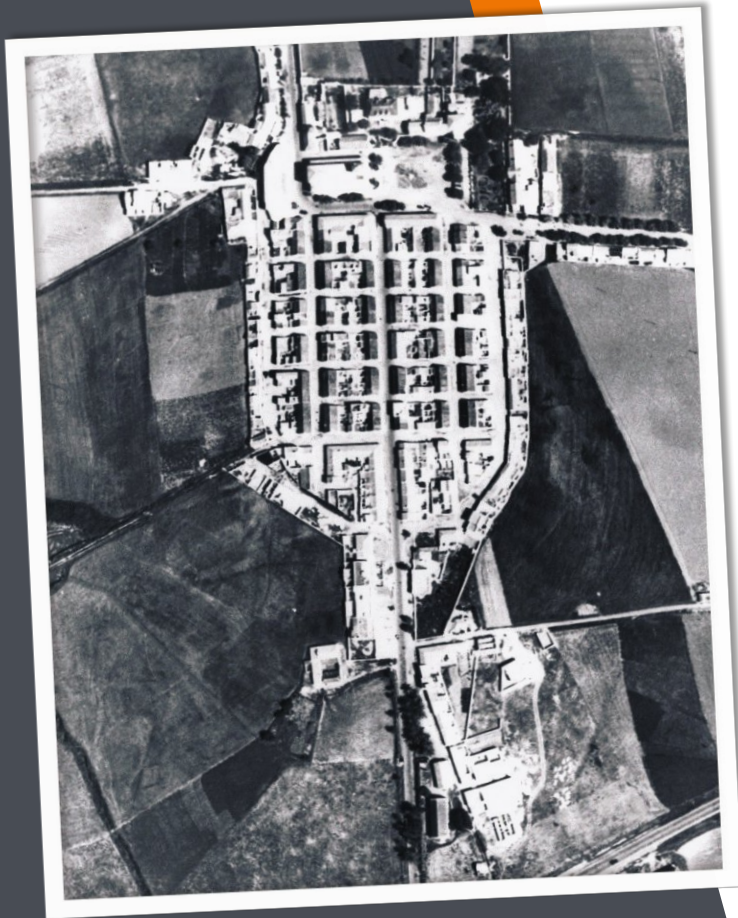


- 7** The Sugar Mill
- 8** La Alcoholera and its tower
- F** Door with 18th century coat of arms
- G** Vega del Mar Paleochristian Basilica
- H** Roman Baths of Las Bóvedas
- I** Almenara Tower of Las Bóvedas
- J** The Boulevard

6. La Calle de En Medio



and two more streets



The “new village” of *San Pedro Alcántara*, as defined by the documents of the time, had a population of around 1,000 inhabitants for a century. Until in the 1950s, when the tourism, which arrived at the *Costa del Sol* gradually, turned it into a small town surrounded by housing estates and hotels.

Nevertheless, the town centre continues to be a quiet and pleasant walking area. There you can enjoy views of the sea, through wide avenue garden, fields previously populated by reedbeds, which reached the very shores of the beach.

The main street, named after the Marquis of *Duero*, the founder of the colony, is popularly known as *Calle de En Medio* or the Street in the Middle. On the sides, the streets *Pizarro* and *Lagasca*, which recalls the illustrious surnames of his wife, the Marchioness of *Revilla* and Countess of *Cancelada* and *Lences*.

These three streets, which head south from the square, along with several crossings, retain their reticulated pattern. Some of their houses evoke the memory of the original ones, one mainfloor plus a room above for the storage of provisions, although many times it was used as a bedroom.

The first settlers of *San Pedro Alcántara* came from places where the crops which were going to be planted in the colony were cultivated. Thus, workers specialised in sugarcane arrived from the coasts of *Granada* or *Almería*, as well as gardeners from *Murcia* or *Valencia*. However, over time, they were replaced with people from nearby towns, such as *Istán* or *Marbella*.

The sculptures of *Espona*

They were made by the artist *Vicente de Espona* (1918-1995), who was born in *Valencia* and who later settled in *Marbella*. Several public sculptures of his can be found in *San Pedro Alcántara*, most of them are located around the central roundabout of the Boulevard. The *Regreso del olivar* (Return of the olive grove) represents a family returning from fieldwork, the sculpture is made with fiberglass, a material common to the sculptor's work; *La mujer pájaro o Metamorfosis* (The woman bird or Metamorphosis), cast in bronze, consists of the body of a woman but also of that of a bird with a branch in its beak; also sculptures of his which possess stylised lines are *La danza* (The dance); *La araña* (The spider) and *La maternidad* (The maternity).

At another roundabout, at the crossroads with the *Ronda* road, stands, 12 metres high, the monumental *Síntesis de San Pedro Alcántara* (Synthesis of San Pedro Alcántara), which is dedicated to the patron saint of the village. The statue, with a hand pointing to the sky, overflows with spirituality, in memory of the Franciscan friar.

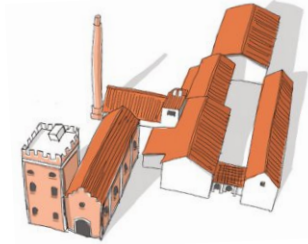
The coat of arms of the *Gutiérrez de la Concha*



On the *Paseo de las Palmeras* there is a coat of arms relating to *Manuel Gutiérrez de la Concha e Irigoyen* (1808-1874), the first Marquis of *Duero* and founder of *San Pedro Alcántara*. It was carved by the craftsman *Juan Galiano Muñoz*, using *Casares* stone. The coat of arms was also used by his brother *José* (1809- 1895), Marquis of *Havana*. Both had brilliant careers in the military and in politics, they both reached the rank of captain general and presided over the Senate. The upper part of the shield displays a helmet with a marquis' crown, while the mantle symbolises the Greatness of Spain. The family surnames are represented in the four central sections, the upper right section being the most relevant, with an image of five shells, not in vain were both men known as the *Concha* brothers (Shell brothers).



7. The Sugar Mill

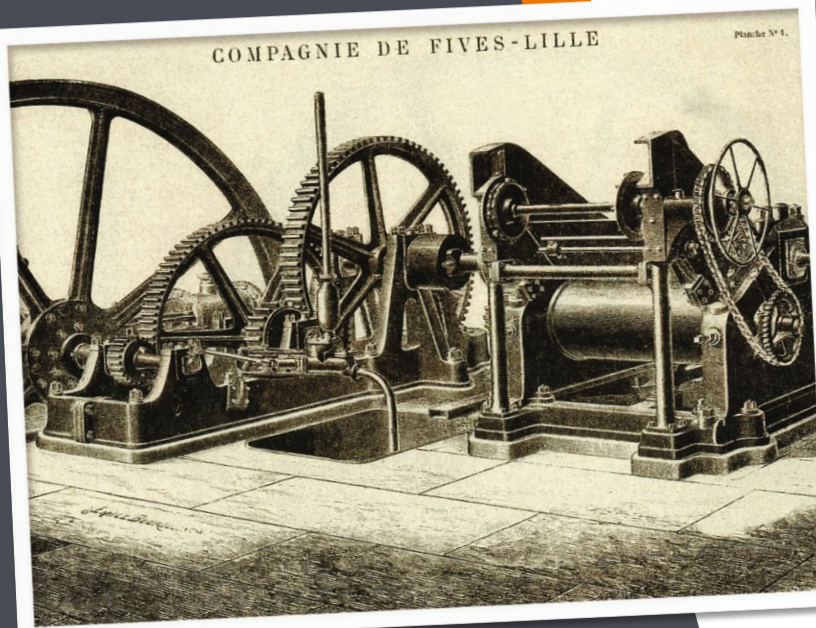


The Marquis of Duero's agro-industrial project culminated with the construction of a factory which would grind the estate's sugarcane. The idea was to achieve greater profits, since until then the plant was sent to *Málaga* for grinding.

Construction began in September 1870 and was completed in May of the following year, after the assembly of machinery from Liverpool. The harvesting could finally be completed in the new village. In the industrial complex, as they did in the countryside, men, women and children shared the work.

Manuel de la Concha would be celebrating from *Madrid*, as he was always busy with military and political duties. However, his joy would be short-lived, as the high-capital, high-interest loans obtained to build the sugar factory brought on the company's financial imbalance.

The *Sociedad Colonia de San Pedro Alcántara*, which acquired the colony from the daughter and heiress of the Marquises of the *Duero*, sold the industrial complex to a French company in 1891. It began sowing sugar beet and introduced the appropriate machinery to grind it, but this crop failed and in 1899 cane was re-cultivated.



Mill to grind sugar canes. Fives - Lille Company Catalogue (1880)

In 1903, the industrial facilities were acquired by the *Sociedad General Azucarera de España*, created with the aim of monopolising sugar production in Spain. However, in 1915 it would close the factory, as beet, cultivated with higher productivity in many regions of our country, was winning the game to the semitropical sugarcane crop.

The industrial district of *San Pedro Alcántara* is now known as *El Ingenio*, a name that recalls the ingenious machinery, which crushed the sugar cane. A repopulated enclave with the arrival of workers since the early 1960s, motivated by the tourist boom.

Even today, you can still distinguish the outline of the industrial complex in *José Echegaray* and *Julio Romero de Torres* Streets. Then closed by walls, it included the houses of the director and other employees, as well as more modest houses for the workers, a school, a shop and a bakery.

Around the central open space, where the plant was unloaded, several buildings are preserved, some of them of considerable height. Workshops, warehouses and cellars were converted for commercial use, as well as the alcohol distillery, which is the best-preserved building and is currently used for cultural activities.



Door with 18th century coat of arms

The emblazoned door arrived from *Málaga* in the 1970s to adorn the entrance to the newly constructed *Goya Building* in *El Ingenio*. It came from a convent which had been demolished, that of the *Recoleta Bernardas Nuns*.

The coat of arms corresponds to the *Málaga* priest *Miguel de Aguiar Padilla*, bishop of *Ceuta* between 1738 and 1743. In the blazon, apart from the heraldry of the family surnames, it presents the episcopal *capelo* or hat with six tassels on each side, and a six-pointed star in the upper part, Solomon's emblem or star of wisdom.

8. La Alcoholera and its tower



Distilleries are indispensable complements of the sugar factories, since the molasses, the liquid surplus after the obtaining of the sugar, can be turned into alcohol to obtain several products: Neutral alcohol, denatured alcohol, cane spirit and even liquid which was a substitute for petrol. It operated at least until 1934, beyond the closure of the sugar factory in 1915.

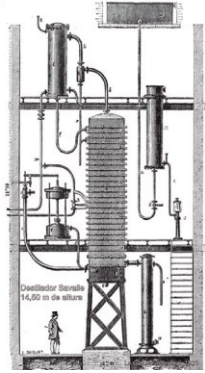
Of the buildings conserved in *El Ingenio*, *La Alcoholera* stands out. The building possesses 680 square meters of surface and consists of a tower and a rectangular building.

The building was dedicated to the fermentation process, it possesses a framework of wooden trusses with metal straps which support the gable roof made of tiles from Alicante. There was also a steam engine room and a room for direct selling.

Its exterior walls, which were painted in grey, are reminiscent of the original colour with Portland cement rendering, a big step forward for the time. While the casements stand out for the red colour of the jambs' bricks, completed with white paint, as are the corners of the building.

The main façade, and the upper part of the tower, show a frieze of tiles with geometric motifs in blue and white. Above the door, a circular window, also framed with red bricks. Above it, arranged on a diamond superimposed on a square brick, appears the SPA logo.





The distillation and rectification equipment were placed in the 15-meter-tall tower, in addition to the tanks and the scales used for the molasses. The building consists of three separate levels, with a riveted metallic structure. As for the rooftop, it possesses a crenelated balustrade. From it you can see, in addition to the old *Sampedreño* hamlet, the Penibaetic mountains and the Mediterranean Sea; you could see the ships which arrived with coal or other goods and those which sailed away with sacks of sugar, which were transported from the factory to the beach on wagons. The central building, which was restored in 2019, houses a performing arts centre. In the meantime, exhibition rooms have been set up in the tower.



📍 SPA, registered trademark



The company, which owns the colony, adopted the initials SPA, *San Pedro Alcántara*, as a specially designed brand or logo for the company. It was printed on the letterheads of envelopes and writing paper as well as on the labels of bottles. It can also be seen on several elements around the town. We encourage the visitor to find the SPA logo on the façade of the old alcohol factory.

📍 Exhibition hall in *La Alcoholera*



In the tower of *La Alcoholera* there are two rooms with exhibitions related to the history of *San Pedro Alcántara*. On the 2nd floor, with the name "The fertile land. Two thousand years of history's, is an exhibition of panels, models and reproductions of earthenware belonging to the Carthaginian, Roman, Visigoth and Byzantine cultures which had inhabited the land prior to the colony. On the 3rd floor, "Sugar and alcohol". *San Pedro Alcántara's* mill, where photographs, engravings, books and other objects are on display, for a closer look as to what the agro-industrial exploitation was.

Taming the waters

Water was essential for the crops on which the Marquis of *Duero's* project revolved. In response to this need, several dams and many kilometres of irrigation ditches were built to store and distribute the precious liquid.

However, it would not be until the next stage, when the society that ran the colony built the reservoir of *Las Medranas* near it in 1884. The dam wall, which is 12.75 meters high, is capable of storing 329,000 cubic meters of water. They continued to build the *Cancelada* reservoir in 1886 in *Estepona* and the *La Leche* reservoir in 1903 in *Benahavís*. These, along with two others from the neighbouring colony of *El Angel*, make up the most significant set of Spanish hydraulic heritage dedicated to agricultural work, precursors of the great irrigation work, which the State would begin to build at the beginning of the 20th century.

At present, these and other components of the irrigation network of the former colony share their function between residual agriculture and golf course irrigation. They include the *Capitán* aqueduct and two small reservoirs in the neighbourhood of *El Salto del Agua*, where the old electricity factory, which was already in operation in 1898 and which continued being so until the mid-20th century, is also located.



San Pedro Alcántara

Before the agricultural colony



Vega del Mar Paleochristian Basilica

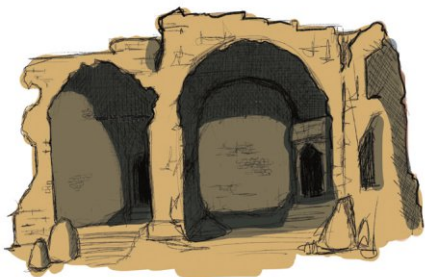
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Alcántara

Vega del Mar Paleochristian Basilica



The preserved remains of this church, which belonged to the first Christians of the Peninsula, allow us to glimpse at the temple's original floorplan consisting of three naves and two opposing apses. Next to the western one, there is a 1.10 metres deep pool in the shape of a lobed cross, for baptisms by immersion. The date of occupation is estimated between the 5th and 7th centuries, with Hispano-Roman inhabitants and Visigoth and Byzantine influences. Almost 200 graves have been excavated inside and outside the site, where, in addition to the skeletons, various objects were found, such as ritual jars, belt brooches or rings, as well as a funerary inscription dedicated to the *Firmana* girl, all of which are kept in the *Málaga* Museum and the National Archaeological Museum.

Roman Baths of Las Bóvedas (The Vaults)



The building of the Roman baths, dating from the 2nd century, consists of an octagonal central enclosure with a diameter of 9.75 metres, into which seven rooms, also octagonal in shape, flow, with hot, warm and cold water. Its roof is vaulted, hence its name.

In spite of being a 2,000-year-old construction, it is maintained in good condition, thanks to the very hard concrete with which it was constructed. It is located on the beach of the Guadalmina urbanisation, on the right bank of the *Chopo* stream. Along with the basilica of *Vega del Mar*, and other scattered remains located on the left bank, they could have been part of the town of *Cilniana*.



Roman Baths of Las Bóvedas

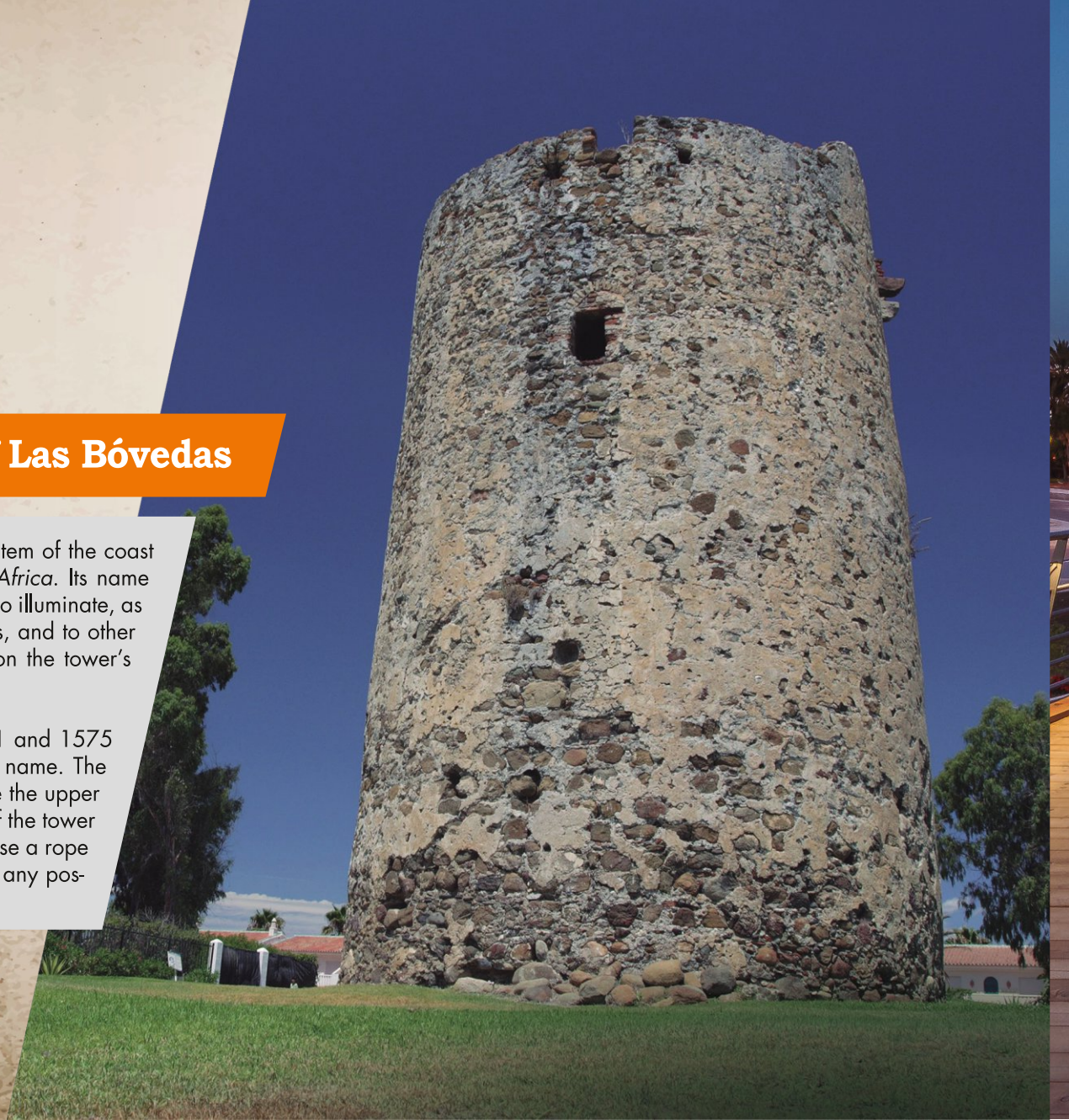
San
Pedro
·Alcántara·



Almenara Tower of Las Bóvedas

It was part of the extensive defensive system of the coast of *Málaga* against incursions from North Africa. Its name comes from the Arabic *almenara*, meaning to illuminate, as they would sound the alarm to other towers, and to other cities' detachments, by lighting a bonfire on the tower's terrace.

The watchtower was built between 1571 and 1575 near Las Bóvedas thermal baths, hence its name. The lower half of the tower is solidly built, while the upper half consists of a room where the keepers of the tower were; to reach this upper level they would use a rope ladder which they would then raise to stop any possible attackers.



San Pedro Alcántara open to the 21st century

The Boulevard

If there is a public space which represents the modern-day *San Pedro Alcántara* the most, it's the Boulevard. Inaugurated in 2014, it meant the burial of the old national road, and the construction in the upper part of a 55,000 square metre promenade. The Boulevard brings together the population from east to west, and most importantly, from north to south, connecting the historic centre with the beach.

The complex has a wide promenade with gardens, fountains and children's playgrounds, as well as an open-air theatre, where frequent recreational activities are carried out. Its most singular element is a spectacular pedestrian walkway, an unbeatable viewpoint to contemplate the urban landscape, as well as the nearby sea and the far away mountains.

San Pedro Alcántara open to the 21st century

In the 1930s, the company that owned the colony began to parcel out the large estate and sell them off to different owners.

To the west of the old hamlet of *San Pedro Alcántara*, one of the largest estates, the Hacienda Guadalmina, was founded by *Norberto Goizueta* on the banks of the river and bordering the sea; it possessed 300 hectares dedicated to agricultural and livestock use. By the end of the 1950s, faced with the expectations generated by the new phenomenon of tourism, it was converted into one of the most prestigious urbanisations in the area, with hotels, apartments, villas and the first golf course on the west coast of *Malaga*.

A little earlier, *Ricardo Soriano* had built the *Hotel El Rodeo*, between the road and the beach, with bungalows built which respected the landscape, this idea would later be imitated by his nephew *Alfonso Hohenlohe* at the *Marbella Club*.

These pioneering experiences in the region, which was already called *Costa del Sol*, paved the way to new urbanisations, hotel complexes and golf courses in the surroundings of *San Pedro Alcántara*.

The need for workers for the construction works, catering and other activities, brought the arrival of men and women, especially from the province of *Malaga*. Similarly, many foreigners arrived for work or residence purposes. Thus, the number of inhabitants grew exponentially, reaching the current 40,000, which have a nearby administration, dependent on the City of *Marbella*, in the form of a municipal district, which enjoys great management autonomy, led by a Deputy Mayor.

At the dawn of the 21st century, *San Pedro Alcántara* has become a great town, a small city, a peaceful place, ideal for living in. It has all kinds of restaurants, shops and services within walking distance, you can reach the Boulevard in just a few minutes from the historic centre, and from there to the beach along a large tree-lined avenue.

Its climate, with mild temperatures all year round, invites you to live outdoors. Its landscape, between the Mediterranean and the mountains, can be appreciated from one of the most valued promenades in the province, with views of the North African coast and the Strait of *Gibraltar*.

For all this and more, ***Enjoy San Pedro Alcántara!***

Details of interest

Roman Baths of *Las Bóvedas*

A7, Km. 170 - Urb. Guadalmina Baja C/3

Opening hours:

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays (except Christmas) from 10:00 to 11:00. Free access / Guided tours by appointment: (+34) 952 76 87 67

Vega del Mar Paleochristian Basilica

A7, Km. 171 - Urb. Linda Vista Playa, C/ Eucaliptos

Opening hours: Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays from 11:15 to 14:00 Free access / Guided tours by appointment: (+34) 952 76 87 67

Trapiche de Guadaiza Cultural Centre

Avda. Oriental, 23

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 09:00 to 21:00. Free access

Phone: (+34) 952 76 87 04

Exhibition Hall in *La Alcoholera*

C/ La Morena, 6 - El Ingenio

Opening hours: Consult the San Pedro Alcántara Culture Delegation

Phone: (+34) 952 76 87 67

Note: Schedules shown are subject to change.

For updated information, consult the San Pedro Alcántara Culture Delegation



Año 2019

Acknowledgement

To *José Luis Casado Bellagarza*, president of the *San Pedro Alcántara 1860 Cultural Association*, for the contribution of the texts and most of the images for this guide, as well as valuable advice.

More information on the history of San Pedro Alcántara can be found at:

www.rosaverde.com



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