



TOSSA DE MAR

MONUMENTS AND INTERESTING SIGHTS

Tossa de Mar is one of the most emblematic towns on the Costa Brava and a real open-air museum. There is evidence of human presence in our area since prehistory. The remains of this period overlap with Roman Túrissa, medieval Tursa and today's Tossa, one-time retreat for artists and intellectuals and now host town for tourists and visitors. This cultural heritage is an eloquent testimony to all those people who made this beloved land their own. Now it is yours. Welcome to Tossa de Mar.

1



Av. del Pelegrí, 5 - 13

Bone and ivory styluses, ceramics, coins and brooches (*fibulae*) on display in Tossa Municipal Museum bear witness to the daily life of the villa. This type of Roman villa combined farming (Els Ametllers estate covered a large part of present-day Tossa municipal area) with the comfortable, luxurious lifestyle of its proprietors. Most of the structures that can be seen today date from the Augustan period (late 1st c. BC – early 1st c. AD).

ELS AMETLLERS ROMAN VILLA

Els Ametllers (1st c. BC - 6th c. AD), discovered in 1914 by Dr Ignasi Melé, is one of the most important villas remaining from the ancient Roman province of Tarraco. This is a classic example of a Roman Mediterranean farming establishment, where vineyards were tended and large quantities of wine were exported. Architecturally speaking, the sea-facing location of the villa, on the eastern slopes of Can Magí hill overlooking the bay, determined its two-tier structure of *pars urbana* and *pars fructuaria*.

The noble dwelling area (*pars urbana*), on the upper level of the site, reflects the overall magnificence of this villa, especially in the 2nd century AD. Its exceptional splendour can be seen in the fine thermal baths, the mosaics and stuccos, the unusual winter dining room, the fountain (*nymphaeum*) and the bathing pool with its impressive Carrara marble sculptures (now kept in Tossa Municipal Museum).

The functional area (*pars fructuaria*), on the lower level, had grain houses and other rooms used for processing the villa's agricultural produce, e.g. wine, oil and salted goods.

2



CULTURAL CENTRE (Former Hospital of Sant Miquel)

The Hospital of Sant Miquel was founded in 1773 at Tomàs Vidal Rei's last will. This man was an outstanding local figure considered to be the precursor of the *indianos*, i.e. Spaniards who returned from the Americas after making their fortune. Tomàs Vidal had travelled to both Puerto Rico and Guatemala long before King Charles III liberalized trade in 1765 by opening up Spanish ports to American ships. On his return to Tossa, Vidal donated much of his American fortune to the construction of a charity hospital for the local poor.

The large, rectangular 2-storey hospital is built around a cloister, with a side chapel dedicated to St Michael, patron saint of 18th century hospitals in Catalonia. The simple baroque image of St Michael on the main altar, fashioned in nearby Cas Fuster workshop, is of particular interest.

3



C/ La Guàrdia, 56

MAS RABASSA FARMHOUSE (CAN MAGÍ)

This 14th-century fortified farmhouse was probably one of the first farmhouses built outside the town walls. It has a 16th-century two-storey quadrangular lookout tower with a barbican, and a 17th-century corner sentry box on the first floor.

4



C/ Tarull

CAN MAGÍ TOWER (OR MOORS' TOWER)

The Moors' Tower is a prime example of the watch towers constructed by King Philip II along the Spanish Mediterranean coast in the 16th century to protect the populace from incursions and raids by North African pirates. These towers were strategically situated along the coast and linked by day with smoke signals and by night with light signals. Watchmen were permanently posted to warn townspeople of imminent Moorish attack, thus enabling them to seek protection within the city walls. The Moors' Tower was a classic two-storey building with a wooden floor, loopholes and barbican.

It was linked up with Pólvara Tower, Agulla de Pola Watchtower and probably also with the tower of the Vila Vella former castle.

5



Plaça de l'Església

PARISH CHURCH OF SANT VICENÇ

The neo-classical parish church of Sant Vicenç was built between 1755 and 1776 at a time when the former church in the Vila Vella had become too small for the congregation. The 16th-century expansion of Tossa beyond its walls meant that the old church was also too far away.

The large volume of the central nave contrasts with the plainness of the rest of the building. The church was originally decorated with simple baroque altarpieces and images, often from nearby Cas Fuster workshop. Unfortunately, however, this valuable heritage disappeared during the Spanish Civil War, with the exception of an altar of the Immaculate Conception. Recent renovation of the interior paintwork has brought back the church's former beauty and luminosity.

6



C/ Codolar, 4

CAN GANGA

Can Ganga, in the fishermen's district of sa Roqueta, was one of the first farmhouses built outside the town walls at the time of the 16th-century population increase. The isolated seafront farmhouse was fortified to protect it from the frequent pirate attacks of the time. The magnificent rounded entrance door is guarded by a machicolation to deter Moorish raiders. The Gothic windows with their beautiful sculpted putti are outstanding. Inside the building there is a perfectly conserved food safe carved out of the rock.

7



C/ Portal

BOUNDARY CROSS

Boundary crosses were monumental decorated stone crosses placed to mark the boundary of the municipal area. The 14th-15th century boundary stone at Tossa is a simple Gothic-style cross with fleur-de-lis finials on the arms, an image of the Mother of God on the front and an image of the crucified Christ on the back. The capital under the cross depicts St Peter, patron saint of fishermen, and St Benedict, founder of the Benedictine order, due to the fact that the Vila Vella of Tossa was at the time under the jurisdiction of the Benedictine monastery of Ripoll.

8



C/ Portal

VILA VELLA RAMPARTS

The emblematic walled Vila Vella or Old Town of Tossa is the sole remaining fortified medieval town on the Catalan coast and was listed as an artistic-historic monument in 1931. The original structure dates from the beginning of the 13th century. The perimeter walls and battlements are largely conserved, with four large towers and three machicolated cylindrical towers. The best-known towers are Joanàs Tower overlooking the bay; Clock Tower at the entrance to the parade ground, thus named because it was the only public clock in the town; and Codolar Tower (or Keep), overlooking Codolar beach. A superb voussuroised entrance gate gives access to the Vila Vella via the former parade ground.

The rectangular castle with a watchtower at the top of the Vila Vella was replaced by the present-day lighthouse.

The Vila Vella itself is a charming place with narrow cobbled streets. In the 15th-century age of splendour, the town boasted eighty houses, most of which were built up against the ramparts.

Inside the Vila Vella there are the remains of the late-Gothic 15th-century church of Sant Vicenç, constructed over a recently-discovered 11th to 12th-century Romanesque chapel. The church had a single nave and a 3-sided polygonal chevet; the west arm of the transept was made up of the sacristy and a side chapel; the east arm probably opened out into a row of three more chapels. Today, the only remaining covered parts are the apse and the sacristy. The pointed arch of the chevet is sustained by six ribs meeting at a keystone decorated with an image of St Vincent.

In the 16th century, however, the town started to expand beyond the walls, with the first extra-mural houses built in Sa Roqueta district and along the highroad.

9



MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

The Municipal Museum, in the former Governor's House, opened on 1st September 1935 to become the first contemporary art gallery in Spain. Artists had always been drawn to Tossa, and the beauty of its landscape had inspired many late 19th-century works. In the first half of the nineteen-thirties, however, the town began to attract artists of all descriptions and backgrounds and became for a while an avant-garde centre. Catalan artists Rafael Benet and Pere Creixams, who already spent periods in Tossa, were joined by well-known artists from abroad such as Marc Chagall, André Masson and Georges Kars, who came to live and work in the town. Some of these artists stayed on right up to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, which effectively brought this particularly fruitful period to a close. Before the onset of this grim period of our history, however, a group of art loving intellectuals founded the Municipal Museum in order to preserve the creative output of the moment, as well as the archaeological heritage from the Els Ametllers Roman villa. Today the museum houses a major art collection and many archaeological findings from the villa.

Plaça Roig i Soler, 1 (Vila Vella) – Tel. 972 340 709.

10

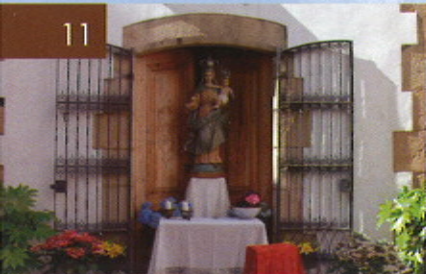


TOSSA'S LIGHTHOUSE

Built in 1917 at the top of Tossa's Cape, the Lighthouse is today The Mediterranean Lighthouse Interpretation Centre. The innovative layout of this new audiovisual centre makes it a reference for those interested in gaining a deeper insight into the world of maritime signals, the history and technology of lighthouses as well as the life of the former lighthouse keepers. The museum area displays a collection of objects recalling this aspect of our maritime heritage.

Passeig de Vila Vella - Tel. 972 343 359

11



CHAPEL OF MARE DE DÉU DEL SOCORS

The 16th-century chapel was apparently commissioned by a sailor called Antoni Caixa as a votive offering to Our Lady of Bon Secours for her intervention in saving him from a shipwreck. Today's building, however, is the result of reforms carried out in the 18th century. The chapel was constructed on the original site of the boundary cross, next to the highroad to Girona and the path to Lloret. Popular devotion by sailors and wayfarers alike soon made the chapel into a major religious centre.

C/ Socors

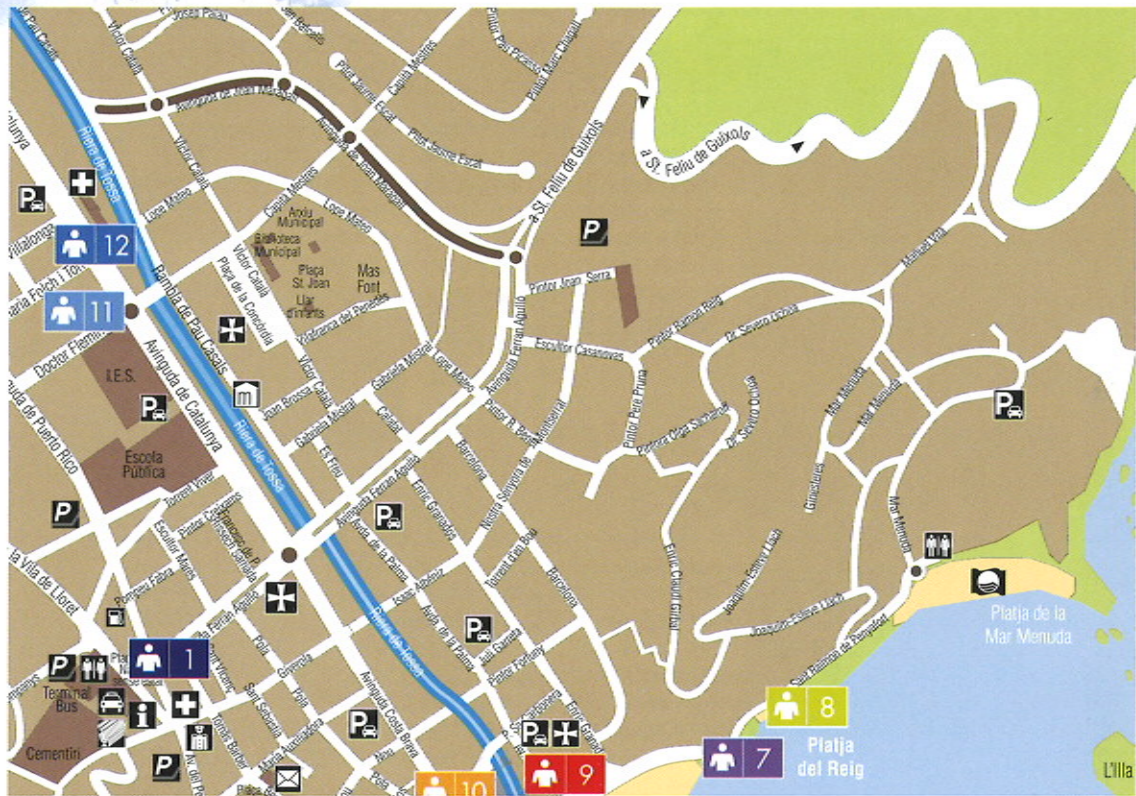


CASA SANS

Casa Sans is a unique eclectic-style house, commissioned in 1906 by Joan Sans to Antoni de Falguera. The building has an unusual sea-facing façade, with Modernist gargoyles representing the four seasons, trencadis mosaics made from glazed ceramic shards, and wrought iron similar to that found in Gaudí's Casa Vicens in Barcelona. The façade was originally decorated with vegetal motifs and adorned with two female figures that have since disappeared. Most of Antoni de Falguera's original interior decoration is still preserved. The magnificent stained glass windows with their vegetal patterns and the spectacular fireplace are absolutely characteristic of the Catalan Modernist style.

The marble staircase and the fountain with its Frederic Marès sculpture of Diana the Huntress both belong to a later period, after Casa Sans was acquired by the Vilallonga family in 1930.

Plaça d'Espanya, 6 / Passeig de Mar, 41





MONUMENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Els Ametllers Roman Villa | 7 Boundary Cross |
| 2 Cultural Centre (Former Hospital of Sant Miquel) | 8 Vila Vella Ramparts |
| 3 Mas Rabassa Farmhouse (Can Magí) | 9 Municipal Museum |
| 4 Can Magí Tower (or Moors' Tower) | 10 Tossa's Lighthouse |
| 5 Parish Church of Sant Vicenç | 11 Chapel of Mare de Déu del Socors |
| 6 Can Garga | 12 Casa Sans |

OUTDOOR SCULPTURES

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Welcome to the visitor (Antonió Aranda) | 7 Minerva Goddess (Frederic Marès) |
| 2 Memory throughout time (Bonaventura Ansóñ) | 8 The seagull (Lluís Carbonell) |
| 3 To the fisherman's wife (Bonaventura Ansóñ) | 9 Women mending the fishing nets (Josep Puig) |
| 4 Ave Gardner (Ció Abellí) | 10 Poseidon and the nymph Tossa (Bonaventura Ansóñ) |
| 5 Mermaid (Emília Yargay) | 11 Med-Max (Joan Crispinera) |
| 6 Testimony (Bonaventura Ansóñ) | 12 Memorial to the blood donors (Rosa Serra) |



TOSSA DE MAR

OFICINA MUNICIPAL DE TURISME

Avinguda del Pelegrí, 25 · Edifici La Nau · 17320 Tossa de Mar · Costa Brava · Girona · Spain
Tel. +34 972 340 108 · email: info@infotossa.com

www.infotossa.com

