



TORRE DE SANT VICENT INTERPRETATION CENTER

OVER FOUR CENTURIES PROTECTING OUR COASTS.

The Torre de Sant Vicent has witnessed Benicàssim's evolution over centuries and has itself been transformed over time into the monument we see today.

In 1850, after the dissolution of the Coastal Watchtower Corps, the tower was transferred to the Corps of Carabineros and, later in 1939, to the Spanish Civil Guard. Finally, in 2004, it was acquired by the Benicàssim Town Council. After periods of abandonment, the tower was fully restored in 2017.

Today, the Torre de Sant Vicent is one of the best-preserved coastal watchtowers in the Valencian Community, maintaining the imposing appearance it had when first built. In 2001, it was declared a Cultural Heritage Site under the Spanish Historical Heritage Law.

Following its restoration, this fort became the central piece of the so-called Torre de Sant Vicent Interpretation Center, an exhibition and interactive space dedicated to the historical context surrounding the towers of Sant Vicent and Sant Julià, showing various aspects related to piracy and the coastal defense system of the Kingdom of Valencia between the 16th and 19th centuries.

Outside the tower, visitors will find general information panels, brochures and a tactile model with Braille text.

INSIDE, THE GUIDED VISIT IS DIVIDED INTO THREE DIFFERENTIATED AREAS:

ROOM 1. INTERACTIVE TABLES

Learn how the Valencian coast was protected against piracy through defensive towers such as Sant Julià and Sant Vicent towers via interactive touchscreens.

ROOM 2. VIRTUAL JOURNEY

Immerse yourself in the evolution of the Torre de Sant Vicent with a 3D video and then explore it through virtual reality goggles, traveling from the 16th to the 18th century.

ROOFTOP

Discover a replica of an 18th-century 6-pound cannon while enjoying stunning panoramic views of the Benicàssim coastline.



Room 1



Rooftop



Room 2



Benicàssim



Tourist Info Benicàssim
turismo.benicassim.es

Audio guides of Benicàssim
turismo.benicassim.es/audioguias

Tickets for tourist activities
turismo.benicassim.es/tienda



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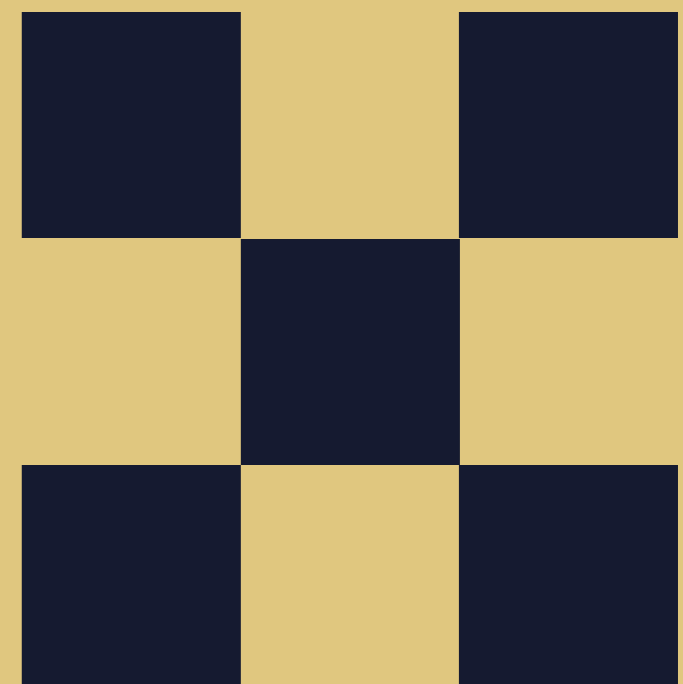


Benicàssim

Torre de Sant Vicent Interpretation Center

A journey through history

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ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Four openings or gun ports positioned to direct artillery fire in defense of the tower.



Gargoyles or drainage outlets, designed with a sloped upper surface to prevent attackers from anchoring ropes and climbing the tower.



Loopholed machicolation for vertical defense of the tower's door, featuring a sliding wooden floor to open or close it.



18th-century covered storehouse for storing cannon's weaponry and related gear.

Two circular turrets with loopholes facing the sea, roofed in the 18th century.



Walls 1.80 meters thick, designed to withstand artillery impacts.



Chimney for cooking, topped with a large lowered stone arch, located next to the stairwell. Spiral staircase at one end of the tower to minimize structural weakening of the walls.



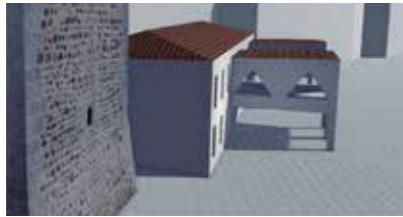
Structural reinforcement walls added in the early 17th century to support the weight of the cannon installed on the rooftop. The semicircular vault bears the marks of the reeds used in its construction.

Five loopholes for firearms through which soldiers defended the tower from within.



Main entrance door, over two meters tall, allowing access to the interior via a ladder.

Former site of the Civil Guard barracks, originally built by the Carabineros.



Massive solid base, filled with stone and mortar to prevent attackers from demolishing its walls. Moreover, it is a sloped structure, meaning its walls are arranged in a ramp-like way to make climbing difficult.



16th-century stables, later roofed in the 17th century; the first Carabineros barracks was built on top.



HISTORY OF TORRE DE SANT VICENT

In the 16th century, the Mediterranean Sea was a true battleground between great powers for economic and political control. This constant conflict, combined with the unhealthy conditions of the coastal plains - due to marshes and stagnant waters -, severely affected the local population.

To counter this danger, the Torre de Sant Vicent was built between 1597 and 1599, with the aim of reinforcing the defense of La Olla de Benicàssim, a particularly vulnerable coastal area often used as a landing point and refuge by corsairs and Barbary pirates.

The construction of the fort prevented the complete abandonment of the area, which in turn helped Violant de Casalduch, baroness heir of the barony, to secure the Charter of Population in 1603, consolidating the repopulation of the territory.

Together with the Torre de Sant Julià to the northeast, the Torre de Sant Vicent was part of a coastal surveillance system composed of 18 towers distributed along the Castellón coastline. These watch-towers, positioned at the frontline, were designed to detect possible dangers and alert other inland defensive structures, such as rural towers (for example, the Torre Baró), fortified farmhouses and castles (like the Castle of Centinela or the Castle of Montornés). These sites offered shelter to peasants and livestock while waiting for the local militias to intervene.

The tower, already documented as "Sanct Vicente" at least since 1607, housed a garrison of five men: a governor, two soldiers, and two sentinels. It was equipped with firearms and an artillery piece, which reinforced its defensive capacity.



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

At an architectural level, the Torre de Sant Vicent represents a remarkable example of 16th-century Renaissance fortifications. It features an outer slope, gun ports, embrasures, turrets and a machicolation above an elevated doorway. However, since its original construction, the watchtower has undergone several renovations to suit the needs of the each era, in both its interior layout and exterior structure.

The tower has a square floor plan and an almost cubic volume, measuring approximately 11.5 meters in width- equivalent to 54 Valencian palms, the standard unit of the 16th century. Its height is 13.5 meters.

The lower section is a solid base designed to prevent attackers from dismantling the ashlar blocks and breaching the structure. Its exterior walls are made of rubble masonry with stone bound by lime mortar, sand and gravel. The corners are capped with gray limestone ashlar, a resistant material that ensures the stability of the building against shocks and movement. In contrast, the main walls are mostly made of rodeno, a local reddish sandstone. In some areas, larger stones are used as structural reinforcements to improve cohesion and resistance.

THE OTHER TOWER: HISTORY OF THE TORRE DE SANT JULIÀ.

The Torre de Sant Julià was located at the boundary of Benicàssim, next to the current Green Way of the Sea and about 2 km northeast of the Torre de Sant Vicent. Like its elder sister, it was intended to protect La Olla de Benicàssim and maintain visual communication with the Torre de la Colomera (in Orpesa del Mar).

Its construction is already mentioned in the Cortes of Monzón in 1547 and is also referenced in Antonelli's Discourse of 1563. Though its exact construction date is unknown, it likely dates from between 1553 and 1558. However, in 1850 it was recorded as ruined and it completely disappeared by the mid-20th century.

