

# Guide to the Old Quarter and sites of historical interest



propuesta del mar

In **Oropesa del Mar**, on the Mediterranean coast, you can find historical remains from the cultures that have lived in the town over the course of history.

From **Oropesa la Vella**, the first human settlement from the time of the Iberians, to the **Old Quarter**, there's a whole range of monuments and museums. Take a journey through time from one era to another, and search for the idiosyncrasies of a town that has always looked at the sea as its source of richness, but also as a cause for concern.

Its Muslim **Castle**, the **Museo de Oropesa del Mar** (Oropesa del Mar Museum), the **Museo del Naípe** (Museum of the Playing Card), the **Chapel of the Virgen de la Piedad**, the **King's Tower** by the **lighthouse** and the **watchtowers** will give you a good sample of its civil, military and religious architecture.





  
**La Casa Encesa**  
Restaurant & Espai d'Art





# Old Quarter

When you enter Oropesa del Mar's old town you take a step back in time.

The different monuments, museums and activities related to antiques (street markets, auctions, etc.), along with the narrow, winding streets that date back to the origins of this Muslim enclave, give you the chance to transport yourself to past times of lattice windows and cobbled streets.

Unwind at the rooftop cafés, offering magnificent views from extraordinary buildings, forget about the traffic and look out over the sea, and take time to appreciate this truly unique place.

From the Oropesa del Mar Museum you can take a guided tour of the Old Quarter and the rest of the town, offering you a historical-artistic overview that winds its way through our local heritage.

Guided tours in July and August.  
Visits can be arranged during the rest of the year by  
phoning +34 964 31 01 00-Ext: 1621  
or at [info@museodeoropesadelmar.es](mailto:info@museodeoropesadelmar.es)



# Oropesa del Mar Castle

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The Castle at Oropesa del Mar was initially built by the Muslims, who retreated from Orpesa la Vella for strategic and security reasons. You'll see why from the commanding view of the horizon in every direction. Owing to its military significance, it was later conquered by historical figures such as El Cid (1090) and Jaime I de Aragón (James I of Aragon, 1233).





Several noble families are associated with Oropesa del Mar, but three in particular have played a major role: the Jaffero family, who were granted the privilege of having a free port, the Thous family, during whose rule the King's Tower was built, and the Cervellón family, who obtained a Town Charter for Oropesa del Mar (3 April 1589). Today, the Castle at Oropesa del Mar is a historical landmark, steeped in the

political and diplomatic intrigue of the Middle Ages. A stroll around the Castle brings to mind a feeling of grandeur, leading men to believe that all they see is their own.

Self-guided tours on your smartphone  
(on audio and sign language available).  
Download at [www.audioguiasoropesadelmar.com](http://www.audioguiasoropesadelmar.com).  
For more information contact the Tourist Information Office  
(Tel: +34 964 313 320).



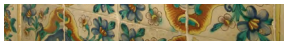


# The Chapel of the Virgen de la Paciencia

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Inside the chapel you'll find samples of Alcora tiling from the 18th century and you can admire the image of the Virgin of Patience, dating back to the 16th century. It was originally known as the Virgin of the Rosary, and was patiently restored at the expense of the Count of Cervellón after pirate attacks on 25 September 1619 (the patron saint's day), which practically destroyed the statue.

After the long and painstaking restoration work, the image took on the current name of Virgen de la Paciencia.









# Museo del Naípe

(Museum of the Playing Card)

The Museo del Naípe is the Mecca of playing cards, the undisputed international champion of tabletop games.

The Museo del Naípe at Oropesa del Mar has more than five thousand decks, each one unique, including the largest decks in the world. Take an unusual journey through the curious evolution of the art of decorating and printing cards over the ages.

info@museodelnaípe.com  
Tel.: +34 964 312 020 - 626 564 749  
www.museodelnaípe.com



# Oropesa del Mar Museum

Located in the heart of **Oropesa del Mar's old quarter**, the museum was created as a window into the town's historical heritage, in a dynamic place that invites enlightenment and reflection.

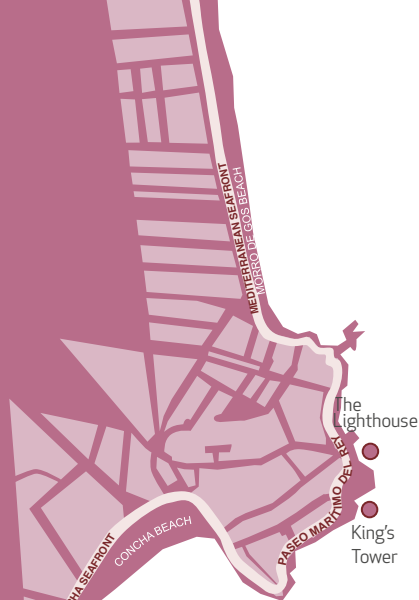
Oropesa del Mar has a strategic location between the old trade road and the Mediterranean Sea, a fact which has shaped its history and architecture: watchtowers, a castle fortifications, etc. These buildings, which once formed part of an extensive network of great historical value, now stand as witness to the many attacks the town has suffered over the centuries. Some of these attacks came at the hands of very well-known historical figures such as Barbarossa, a pirate who was greatly feared in the Middle Ages, and Marshal Suchet, an official in the Napoleonic Wars of the 19th century.

With the help of models, audiovisual materials and archaeological remains, visitors can learn about the history of Oropesa del Mar and connect with its identity, its history and its roots.

[info@museodeoropesadelmar.es](mailto:info@museodeoropesadelmar.es) +34 964 31 01 00-Ext: 1621







## Other attractions

● Orpesa la Vella

● Rope Tower

● Colomera Tower



# The King's Tower

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Fernando de Antequera (Ferdinand I of Antequera), King of Aragon, started to build the Torre del Rey in 1413 to defend the area from the not uncommon Saracen or Berber pirate attacks, which in the king's own words had converted the coast at Oropesa del Mar into a coast that "was inhabited by panthers in place of men, where vultures and crows circled in place of domestic birds". Oddly enough it was built with donations from specially-installed collection boxes at the churches, and with private donations from noblemen from the realms of the crown of Aragon, chiefly from the Kingdom of Valencia.

Of all the extensions and improvements made, perhaps the most important was that carried out by Juan de Cervellón in 1534, building the

walls up to a width of 4 metres. In 1564 the tower was bought by Felipe II (Philip II) for 10,000 ducats, and became known as the King's Tower.

If you take a look at this practically unique construction, you can understand the sensation of security that it transmitted to the inhabitants of Oropesa del Mar, and which undoubtedly contributed to the repopulating and flourishing of the town.

Its presence alone almost certainly dissuaded many pirate attacks, which continued to be common in those times. And today it offers you the possibility of admiring a military building that is unrivalled in the rest of the world.

Guided tours of King's Tower  
In summer: see opening hours.  
The rest of the year: open Fridays.  
Free booking at the Tourist Information Office (+34 964 312 320)



# The Lighthouse

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This was built alongside the King's Tower four centuries later, and its proximity is even more striking when we consider the obvious difference between the two buildings.

The Lighthouse opened in 1859 and immediately became a key feature for marine traffic in the area, with its implications for development of trade in Oropesa del Mar. The town became a true bastion of economic and social progress, without a doubt launching Oropesa del Mar into the 20th century in unsurpassable conditions.





Guided tours of Rope Tower  
In summer: see opening hours.  
The rest of the year: open Fridays.  
Free booking at the Tourist Information Office  
(+34 964 31 23 20).



# Rope and Colomera Towers

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If you observe the coastline to the north of Oropesa del Mar you'll find a gentle, uniform shore that is easy on the eye. The same is not true if you direct your gaze to the south, towards La Renegá, an area of small coves with a craggy landscape behind.

The watchtowers or torres colomeras were built to complement the King's Tower in the task of keeping a close eye on the coast.

Today, devoid of strategic value, they still provide one of the finest viewpoints, where you can experience contrasting sensations of the breeze and the sea, a perfect soundtrack by which to observe nature's architecture covered with natural vegetation in incredible forms.





# Orpesa la Vella

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The first human settlement at Orpesa la Vella dates back to the Stone Age. Since then Iberians, Romans and Muslims all chose to live here, converting it into a key enclave for commerce in the area.

This can still be seen today in the names of some of the streets, such as the “camí dels traginers” commemorating the muleteers, or the “camí de la fusta” revealing vestiges of the timber trade.

At one time it even had its own dockyard, and was abandoned forever by the Arabs with the building of the Castle.

We can more or less say that Orpesa la Vella has witnessed the everyday story of Western Europe. An unwritten story that nonetheless has forged the spirit of a town by the sea - that invaluable ally that affords both prosperity and an invasion route.

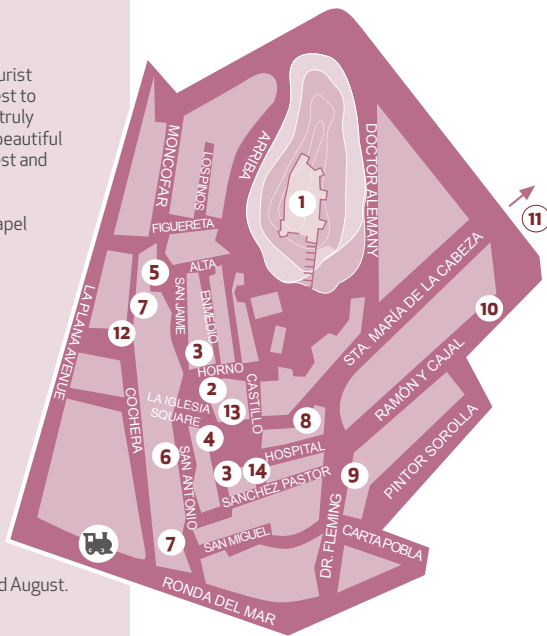
### A stroll through the old town,

starring yourself... We suggest a few tourist and cultural attractions and leave the rest to you. Discover the magic and charm of a truly unique place, steeped in history, full of beautiful stopping points where you can take a rest and enjoy...

- 1 Castle
- 2 Church - Virgen de la Piedad Chapel
- 3 Bakery (2 locations)
- 4 Old Town Hall
- 5 Ravalet Well
- 6 Jail
- 7 City walls
- 8 Hospital
- 9 Art Deco Façade
- 10 Casa Arizo
- 11 Casa Gran
- 12 Mill
- 13 Oropesa del Mar Museum
- 14 Museum of the Playing Card

### Activities in the Old Quarter:

- Poetry tour: July and August.
- Old Quarter shows & festivals: July and August.
- "Nits de Música" Festival: July.
- Antiques, collectables and handicrafts market: July, August and September.
- Antiques auctions (curios): July, August and September.
- Art exhibitions. • Oropesa del Mar International Music Festival (ORFIM): August.
- Popular Festivals in honour of the Patron Saint James (25th July)
- Popular Festivals in honour of Our Lady of All Patience (October)



### How to get to the Old Quarter:



City Bus (stops: La Plana Avenue, José Rivera Forner Street)



Tourist Train (stop: Rondamar Street)



Taxi





# Culinary culture

Cultural events in the town of Oropesa del Mar are brought to life through its cuisine, where traditional, everyday recipes take centre stage.

## ARROZ A BANDA (RICE COOKED IN FISH STOCK)

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 spicy red pepper
- 1/2 onion
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 garlic cloves • Parsley
- 75 ml oil (approx. a ladleful)
- 2 tablespoons of puréed tomatoes
- 2 litres of fish stock
- Salt
- 1 pinch of pepper
- 1 teaspoon of saffron
- 1 tablespoon of paprika
- 1 medium cuttlefish, chopped
- 400 g rice

### PREPARATION:

Chop the spicy red pepper, half an onion, bay leaf and two garlic cloves and mix them together. Separately, chop the other two garlic cloves and parsley, then blend them together with a little water. Prepare a good fish stock using a large variety of fish (rock fish, monkfish, mantis shrimp, the heads and shells of crayfish or prawns, crabs, etc. and some potato. You can also add other garden vegetables if you wish). Fry the cuttlefish in the oil with a little salt. Add two or three tablespoons of chopped spicy red pepper, a tablespoon of the garlic mixture and puréed tomatoes and continue to fry. Add the pepper and saffron, then mix in the rice. Gently fry the mixture. Add the paprika, stirring into the mixture, and then add the fish stock. Bring to a boil and simmer on a high heat for approximately 15 minutes. After it has simmered for a few minutes, adjust the salt to taste. Lower the heat and wait until the stock has been absorbed. Once absorbed, turn off the heat. Serve the rice on a plate, and serve the flaked fish on another plate with a little of the stock and cooked potato. The rice can be served accompanied by 'allioli' (garlic and oil dressing).

## LAMB "TOMBET"

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 kg lamb or goat meat
- 4 bay leaves
- 2 onions
- 2 kg potatoes
- 1 head of garlic
- 1 small glass of cognac
- 1 heaped tablespoon of sweet paprika
- 2 tomatoes
- Olive oil
- Salt
- Thyme
- Parsley
- 12 almonds
- 1 slice of fried bread

### PREPARATION:

Soften the onion, cut into quarters, in a clay pot. Then, add half the head of garlic, tomatoes and sweet paprika, followed by the diced meat, bay leaf and thyme. Stir it a few times and, after a while, add a sufficient amount of water to cover the meat and then add the cognac. Cover the pot and leave it to cook over a low heat for an hour. Then add the diced potatoes and continue to cook until everything is tender. Ten minutes before serving, crush together the remaining garlic cloves, almonds, fried bread and parsley to form a paste and add it to the stew.

## PUMPKIN FLOWERS

### INGREDIENTS (21 flowers):

- 1 egg
- Olive oil (half an eggshell's worth)
- Water (2 half eggshell's worth)
- Flour (as much as necessary)
- Honey

### PREPARATION:

Mix together the egg, oil and water and continue to add flour until you achieve a fairly firm dough that can be kneaded. Then, form it into the shape of a long sausage so it can be divided up into small balls. Flatten each little ball using a rolling pin until they are really thin. Then, using a wooden spoon, fry them and reduce them by a half. When they form the shape of a flower, keep turning them over until golden in colour. Finally, warm the honey and drizzle on top. **ADVICE:** if the rolling pin is covered in oil, the dough will not stick to it.



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