

carranque

archaeological park

*roman
mosaics and
natural beauty*



Castilla-La Mancha
Descubre y siente



Castilla-La Mancha



parques arqueológicos
de Castilla-La Mancha



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Visiting the Archaeological Park of Carranque is like taking a step back in time. A stroll around the site prompts us to take a closer look at our history and compare the lifestyle of our ancestors with our life today.

The spectacular collection of mosaics in the "Villa Materno" is perhaps one of the main attractions of the site, as is the building known as the "basilica" which contains exceptional marble columns, four metres high and carved in Imperial quarries in Turkey and Greece.

There are also many other reasons to visit the Park, which is the only known site in Spain whose buildings are directly related to the emperor Theodosius the Great.

AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING
NATURAL BEAUTY

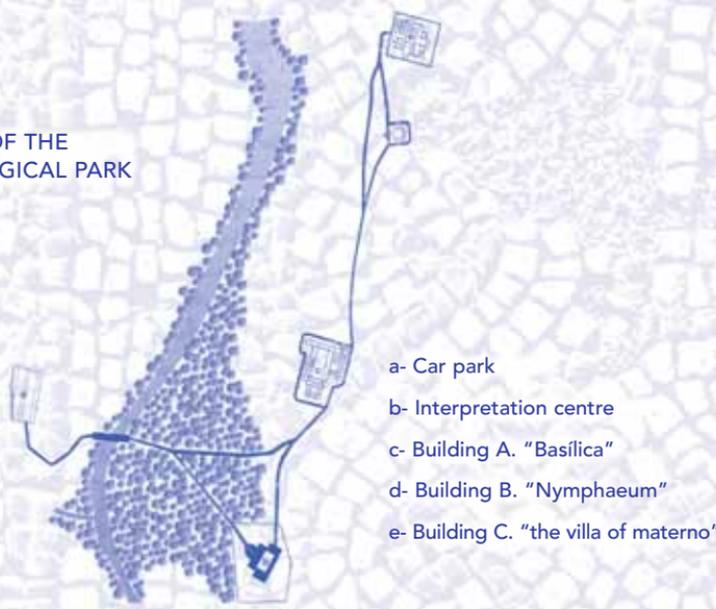


As well as its rich history, the Park also offers an opportunity to enjoy an area of outstanding natural beauty. The site is home to hares and partridges and is surrounded by pine trees and poplars. The Guadarrama River flows through the Park, providing habitats for diverse vegetation and fauna along its banks.

The Archaeological Park of Carranque is situated close to the village of Carranque in the province of Toledo. The region is called the Alta Sagra and is about 45km from both Madrid and Toledo. Access to the Park is via the N-42 motorway, exit Illescas. From there, take the CM-4008 road to Carranque.

In 1983 the accidental discovery of a mosaic triggered a series of excavations, resulting in the discovery and restoration of one of the most important monumental groups of Roman Hispania, formed by the "Villa Materno" with its mosaics, and the buildings known as the "basilica" and the "nymphaeum". All the buildings, which date from around the end of the fourth century, are significant not only for their splendour, but also for their relation to the Emperor Theodosius the Great.

PLAN OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK



- a- Car park
- b- Interpretation centre
- c- Building A. "Basílica"
- d- Building B. "Nymphaeum"
- e- Building C. "the villa of Materno"



The "basilica" in its present state and a virtual reconstruction.

BUILDING A: THE "BASILICA"

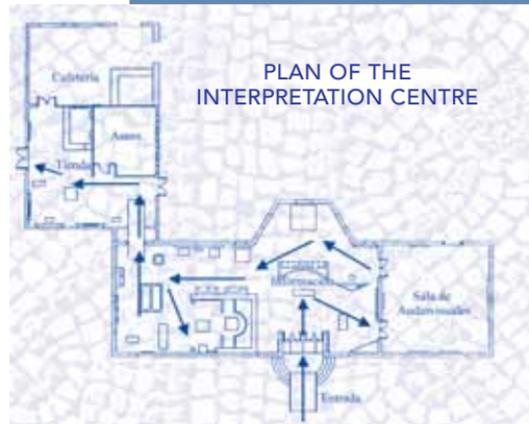
This building was initially constructed for a civil purpose, however it seems that it soon came to be used as a cult and burial place, as demonstrated by many remains discovered here such as crucifixes, baptismal fonts and sarcophagi. Throughout its history, the building was reused by the various settlers of the region, as Visigoth remains (sarcophagi) and Moorish remains (an inscription on one of the columns) have also been found. The marble columns of this building are particularly outstanding. They are each made from one single piece of marble and were expressly brought from the Imperial quarries in the Near East, as were many of the other decorative elements revealed by the excavations, such as ivory carved with mythological scenes, mother of pearl etc.

The building, of which one section is still standing, had an entrance via a courtyard. The central nave would have been covered by a large dome decorated with mosaics, part of which can be seen on the floor. One curious accidental detail remains; in one of the walls the footprints of a dog and a Roman sandal can be seen, made during the building's construction.

THE INTERPRETATION CENTRE



The Interpretation Centre attempts to make history come alive for the visitor to the Archaeological Park. Here, the historical evolution of the site is explained, as are different aspects of religion, funeral rituals and everyday life towards the end of the fourth century. Scale models, drawings and objects found during the excavation are on display, and we can see how many of the artefacts and building materials used by our ancestors are comparable with those used today. There is also a video documentary about the site.





BUILDING B: THE "NYMPHAEUM"

The exact function of this building which is situated between the villa and the "basilica" is more difficult to interpret. It has been suggested that it could be a monumental water cistern, or alternatively a mausoleum. It is a small structure on a podium with a granite plinth and covered by a vault. Its interior was paved with mosaics of which only small fragments remain.



BUILDING C: THE VILLA OF MATERNO

The living quarters of this Roman villa have been completely excavated and restored, and the building is primarily worthy of notice for its superior collection of mosaics. Twenty rooms paved with mosaic floors survive almost intact, and from the colour and quality of these mosaics we can begin to imagine how the villa would have been in its original splendour. The building is arranged on a square plan with a peristyled central courtyard

OTHER REMAINS

Over the last few years, surveys and excavations have revealed other archaeological remains on the far bank of the river, amongst which are two watermills, water pipes and part of a Roman villa.



Print of a roman sandal discovered in the archaeological park.



Virtual reconstruction of the villa of Materno.

from which the various rooms are accessed. The most outstanding mosaics are those found in the main bedrooms of the villa, with scenes depicting heroes and gods. The mosaic in the "cubiculum" or bedroom of Materno represents several deities (Diana, Hercules and Minerva) and four mythological scenes (Pyramus and Thisbe, Hylas and the nymphs, Diana bathing, and Amynone and Neptune). This mosaic is also significant for the inscription of the names of the owners (MATERNO), the workshop responsible for the mosaics and the artist of the scenes (HIRINIO) in the entrance to the bedroom. The mosaic in the "oecus" or main reception room features a large central scene representing the death of Adonis, with Venus and Mars surrounded by dogs, hares and partridges. Finally, the mosaics which pave the "triclinium" or dining room and its entrance show one of the finest depictions of the god Oceanus, accompanied by Achilles and Briseis.

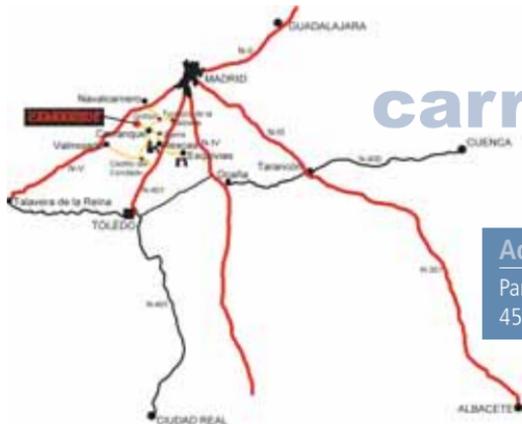


Depiction of the god Oceanus in the villa of Materno.



Interior of the villa of Materno.

As well as these magnificent figurative scenes, the series of vividly colourful and high quality geometric designs are also notable as a demonstration of the extraordinary mosaic art of the era. Also visible in the villa are traces of murals and fascinating reminders of everyday Roman life such as cleaning systems and water pipes.



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useful information

Address:

Parque Arqueológico de Carranque.
45216 - Carranque (Toledo)

Opening times:

1st APRIL – 30th SEPTEMBER
10am to 9pm

1st OCTOBER – 31st MARCH
10am to 6pm

Closed to the public on Mondays, except holidays.

Closed to the public on 1st January, 6th January, 25th December and 31st December

Entrance is free on the following dates:

- 18th May (International Museum Day)
- 31st May (Castilla La Mancha Community Day)
- 12th October (Hispanic Day)
- 6th December (Constitution Day)
- First weekend in October (European Heritage Days)

Contact:

TELEPHONE: 925 59 20 14 Archaeological Park of Carranque
925 54 42 40 Regional Tourist Information Office

WEBSITES: www.jccm.es www.turismocarranque.es

EMAIL: pacarranque@jccm.es

Other information:

Activities: Mosaic workshops, archaeological workshops.

The Park has a cafeteria, shop and picnic area.

Full disabled access to the site and to all facilities.

Where to stay:

RURAL HOUSES:

El Sidrillo (4 pax). C/ Serranillos, 12. Tel. 925 544 862. Móvil: 696 703 482

La Veguilla (6 pax). C/ Serranillos, 12. Tel. 925 544 862. Móvil: 696 703 482

Las Candelas (6 pax). C/ Dr. Jerónimo Salcedo, 19. Tel. 925 544 029. Móvil: 618 270 669

HOTELS:

Hotel Comendador. C/ Serranillos, 32. Tel: 902 555 365

Where to eat:

Restaurante Carranque. C/ Serranillos, 29. Tel. 925 544 812

Restaurante Changuito. C/ Aguas, 5. Tel. 925 529 023

Restaurante Los Hornos. Ctra. Carranque – Griñón km. 2. Tel. 91 814 10 46

Restaurante El Zagal. Plaza de los Silvos, s/n. Tel. 925 544 194

Bar Kísoko de la Plaza. Plaza de las Eras s/n. Tel. 605 248 737

Bar Cervecería AD CVCVMAS. C/ Viento, 4. Tel. 925 544 969

Restaurante El Figón de Carranque. Avda. de la Industria, 1. Tel. 925 529 393

Bar – Restaurante El Chiringuito de Gema. C/ Metal, 2. Tel. 925 529 159