

THE PORT OF SEVILLE HISTORY

Seville's history is intimately associated with the river Guadalquivir. From the beginning, it has been a river port and bridge between the Atlantic and the Andalusian hinterland. The first references to Tartessus can be found in the Old Testament and evoke its wealth and marked seafaring calling. Archaeological excavations at the Cuesta del Rosario suggest that the human settlement become a permanent feature around the 9th century BC.

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL TIMES

http://portal.apsevilla.com/wps/portal/puerto_es/historiaSevilla_es?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/APS/puertosevilla/elpuertosevilla/historiabreve/historiaBreve

The Phoenicians established the first anchorage ground between what is now the Alcázar and the Church of El Salvador and dealt in precious metals there.



The Romans settled in Hispalis, that is modern-day Seville, in the 2nd century BC, making it into an important river port.

By the 1st century BC Hipalis was a walled city. Its shipyards built longboats to carry wheat. In the 1st century AD the Hispalensis Portus (the city port) was home to entire naval squadrons. From here they would sail to Rome with a wide variety of products: minerals, salt, fish, etc. During **Arab rule** (712/1248), the Moors left deep imprints on the

city: the old fortress-palace, now called the Reales Alcázares after a series of extensions, the Torre del Oro (Tower of Gold), to reinforce the port defences and which already had a stone dock, and also the lesser known Torre de la Plata (Tower of Silver) and Torre of Abd al-Aziz.

After **the city's reconquest in the 13th century**, Ferdinand III expanded the shipyards. From Seville's busy port, grain, oil, wine, wool, leather, cheese, honey, wax, nuts and dried fruit, salted fish, metal, silk, linen and dye were exported throughout Europe.

THE PORT OF AMERICA



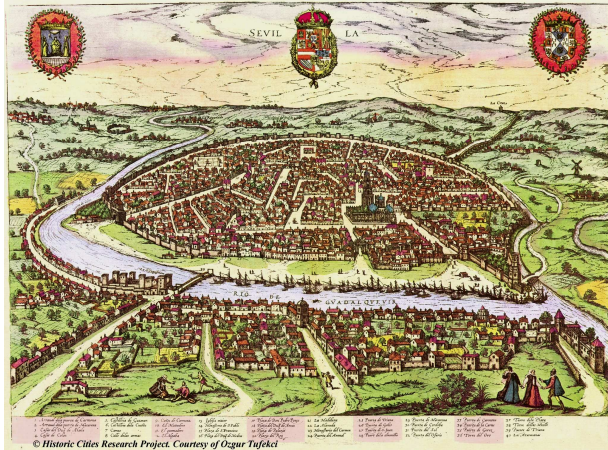
http://portal.apsevilla.com/wps/portal/puerto_es/historiaSevilla_es?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/APS/puertosevilla/elpuertosevilla/historiabreve/puertoamerica/puertoAmerica

In 1503, when the Casa de la Contratación (the House of Trading), the government

monopoly for trade with the Americas, was established, Seville enjoyed a heyday which would last until the middle of the following century. However, the Casa de la Contratación's location in Seville was not an arbitrary decision. In the 13th century the port of Seville had become the centre and base of the emerging Castilian navy.

El Arenal was the sandy extension used as a port and went from the Torre del Oro to the Puerta de Triana gate. The dock was continuously busy with the loading and unloading of ships and repairs.

El Barrio de los Humeros district was next to the Puerta Real gate. The fact that Calle Redes was nearby suggests this was a neighbourhood of fishermen - in Spanish *redes* means nets.



From the mid-17th century, Seville began to suffer a gradual process of degradation that affected all the port-related activities. The decline of the port coincided with the definitive transfer of the Casa de Contratación to Cádiz, which deprived the city of its monopoly with the Americas. This was a heavy blow for both the city and for trade. The port of Seville would not become important again until the mid-18th century.

THE FIRST MODERNISATION

http://portal.apsevilla.com/wps/portal/puerto_es/historiaSevilla_es?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/APS/puertosevilla/elpuertosevilla/historiabreve/historia3sevilla/primerModernizacion

The construction of the artificial canal known as the **Corta de Merlina** in **1794** marked the beginning of the modernisation of the port.

The second half of the 19th century brought about one of the major historical changes in city planning. These changes were not just related to city planning, they also altered the economic and social landscape.

The river and port areas went from being poor areas to being the centre of economic life and the new city that was being created. Outlined below are some of the changes that the city underwent:

- In **1814** the Real Compañía de Navegación del Guadalquivir was created to modernise the port and improve the navigability of the river. Various engineering works were undertaken at that time, one of which was the elimination of the meander in the river at Borrego.
- In **1817** the company launched the first Spanish steamship, the *Real Fernando*. It was built at the shipyards at Los Remedios in Triana.
- In **1852** the Puente de Isabell II bridge, traditionally known as the Puente de Triana, was opened and replaced the traditional pontoon



bridge. Being the first fixed link between Seville and Triana, it would have important repercussions on future urban development.

- Around **1860** several shipping companies were operating at the port of Seville. The famous company Ybarra was established in 1860 to build the steamship

Itálica, which established the route from Seville to Bonanza at the river's estuary on the Atlantic.

- In **1872** the Junta de Obras del Puerto was founded to supervise works at the port.

In the early 20th century the port was a hive of activity. The ships, surroundings and people's attire had changed. There were limited facilities for the growing commercial traffic, a fact that triggered a large number of works, many of which survive today.

In 1905 **the Muelle de Nueva York** (the New York Dock), named because of the lines departing to the USA, was built.

To avoid the constant flooding, works began in 1918 on excavating the **Alfonso XIII canal**. The construction works saw steam shovels working alongside manual cranes and beasts of burden.

The **Muelle de Tablada** dock was built on the left side of the Alfonso XIII canal. After it became operational, port activity at the docks of the Torre del Oro declined dramatically which meant that the area could be developed.

The **Puente de San Telmo** bridge, built between 1925 and 1931, connected Seville and La Huerta de los Remedios. Built as a movable bridge, it allowed ships to pass through to the docks until the 1960s when it became a fixed bridge. This resulted in port activities finally moving to the south.

The **Muelle de las Delicias** dock would become a new waterfront, flanked by the railway line linking the new canal with the port area in the Ibero-American Exhibition area which was undergoing urban expansion.



In 1948 the river's course was drastically altered following the construction of the **Chapina levees**. The

dykes completing the work transformed the river into an artificial dock, which made manoeuvring easier. The change led to the railway bridge and the aqueduct crossing the Guadalquivir being redundant, an error that was corrected in 1990 when the river was restored to its original form.

Urban growth associated with the port continued in 1968 when **the Nuevo Puente** bridge was opened, connecting the district of Los Remedios with the Parque de María Luisa but blocked the passage of ships further up from the Puente de Delicias bridge. The recent movable Puente de las Delicias allows the passage of trains and ships.

The Second Half of the 20th Century

http://portal.apsevilla.com/wps/portal/puerto_es/historiaSevilla_es?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/APS/puertosevilla/elpuertosevilla/historiabreve/segundamitadsigloxx/segundaMitadSXXIn 1948 the river course was drastically altered following the construction of the Chapina levees. The dykes completing the work transformed the river into an artificial dock, which made manoeuvring easier. The change led to the railway bridge and the aqueduct crossing the Guadalquivir being redundant, an error that was corrected in 1990 when the river was restored to its original form.

Urban growth associated with the port continued in 1968 when the Nuevo Puente bridge was opened, connecting the district of Los Remedios with the Parque de María Luisa but blocked the passage of ships further up from the Puente de Delicias bridge. The recent movable Puente de las Delicias bridge allows the passage of trains and ships.

- Works for Expo '92

The 1992 World Exhibition in Seville attracted millions of visitors from all over the world and led to the port area being restructured and upgraded with numerous infrastructure works.

- **Artificial river channels**

- Development of the river course

On 1 January 1993 the Port Authority of Seville was set up to take over from the Junta del Puerto, as provided for in the law regulating ports and the merchant navy, although it had greater



autonomy and management capacity than its predecessor.

Aware of the importance of seafaring for the country, the Spanish government created a public body with overall responsibility for the whole port system. The body acted as a holding company for the port

authorities.

For organisational purposes, a Board of Directors was created, made up of representatives from different bodies and public and private organisations with an interest in port activities.