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**i** Oficina Municipal de Turismo  
**B** Baños Árabes  
**C** Casa del Gigante  
**M** Museo. Palacio Mondragón  
**P** Puente Nuevo



**NEW BRIDGE**



**ARAB BATHS**



**GIANT'S HOUSE**



**MUSEUM OF RONDA**  
Mondragon Palace



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## BUILDING

The Mondragón Palace, also known as the Palace of the Marqués de Villasierra, is a juxtaposition of three architectural styles, each represented by a sector of the palace articulated around a patio. Thus, the Mudéjar Patio of the palace refers to the part of it that was a Moorish house with more than probable Andalusian origin, which was entered through a wall walk; the Castilian Patio, represents the addition of a volume built in the 17th century and defined by a porticoed patio with wooden beams, and finally the Entrance Patio, from the same period as the previous one, with its characteristic red arches, the result of a reform from the 18th century, at which time its main façade was also executed. Above the wide hall, with a flat coffered ceiling, is the Noble Hall, presided over by a magnificent Mudejar armor. Its location on the edge of the pit, where its gardens are located, gives this building panoramic views of great landscape value, which in itself is an added attraction to the architecture and museography.



## THE EXHIBITION

The museum is installed in different rooms spread over these three "houses", which has served to support a diachronic discourse. It is a museum of a historical-archaeological nature born at the beginning of the 1990s to publicize the collection of archaeological pieces existing in the municipal collection, and disseminate historical knowledge based on different archaeological research projects focused on the Serranía de Ronda. , mainly in the area of the Ronda natural depression. Over time, pieces from private collections have been added by donation, making this museum the best guarantor for its protection and for the transmission of archaeological knowledge of the region to future generations. With this objective, a didactic museography is conceived in which the object is presented as a support to understand the historical context (social, economic, political) in which it makes sense.

### HUNTER-GATHERER BANDS

The geographical area of the Serranía de Ronda, geologically composed of Tertiary terrains in which limestone predominates, is very prone to the formation of cavities in which primitive man, organized in bands or small groups, found the necessary shelter and protection. . The museum room dedicated to these groups has the Serranía caves in mind, where it has been possible to investigate the oldest archaeological sequences. Of these, the well-known Cueva de la Pileta stands out, whose rock art representations are among the best on the peninsula, or sites such as Piedras Negras, a workshop for the manufacture of lithic pieces dated to around 500,000-300,000 years B.P.

### FIRST PEASANT COMMUNITIES

The second room of the museum represents one of the most transcendental changes in the history of humanity. From the V and IV millennia B.C. In the western Mediterranean, phenomena are taking place that will radically change the way man lives. Agriculture and livestock foster sedentarization, the most visible result of which will be the town.



Technical innovations such as ceramics, polished stone and, later (III millennium BC) the use of metals (first copper and then bronze), will mean a great step forward in man's ability to influence the environment that surrounds him. surrounds, but also on other men. In the Serranía de Ronda, the towns settle in ideal places for agriculture and livestock, and when possible we also surround areas rich in other resources from which to extract raw materials. Very close to the villages we find megalithic necropolises, essentially represented by corridor dolmens: made with large blocks of stones called megaliths used as collective burials by the community. The museum represents one of the corridor dolmens that have been located in the region, as well as, belonging to the world of the living, a circular cabin like those investigated in the best-known prehistoric town of the depression: the site of Ronda la Vieja, later known as the Ibero-Roman city of Acinipo.

### COMPLEX AND HIERARCHICAL SOCIETIES

The end of Prehistory was characterized by some significant phenomena: the definition of social classes and slavery, the state and private property, the army and the war of conquest, large-scale trade... and as a place where everything This sums up a new invention: the city.

### METALWORKING BOOM

The discovery of metallurgy has been so important for humanity as to give names to the historical stages that go from the Neolithic to Antiquity: Copper Age (III millennium BC), Bronze Age (II millennium BC). ) and Iron Age (Ist millennium BC). Access to mining-metallurgical resources will therefore be a factor of power, and metal (objects made of copper, bronze or iron) the most important symbol of the social rank held, which will be exhibited in ceremonies and rituals of the community, and finally also buried as trousseau along with their owners. In our area, metallurgy began around the 2nd millennium BC. C., demonstrated by the remains of furnace-vessels used to reduce copper minerals in Acinipo and Ronda, and by a small smelting furnace found in the latter town. In Protohistory (I millennium) the exploitation of mining resources for the use of different metals is already evident, both by transformation remains, and by the generation of mines, such as Las Alcaurías (Montecorto). A proliferation of the use of metal that has its best exponent in the star piece of the museum: a mold for the manufacture of bronze swords of the Ronda-Sa'Idda type dating from the 7th century BC. c.



### THE FIRST MILLENNIUM

But the I millennium is much more than technology associated with metal. It represents a true turning point between the end of Prehistory and the beginning of Antiquity. A stage in which the Phoenicians entered the scene in Mediterranean Europe, establishing coastal colonies and inaugurating new forms of social and economic relations hitherto unknown, to which must be added, of course, cultural and technological exchange. In the 9th century B.C. C. we find Phoenician settlements on the coasts of the south of the peninsula: Malaka (Málaga), Abdera (Adra) or Sexi (Almuñécar) are among the most representative.

From them, contacts will be established with the native populations, initiating a transfer of knowledge and products that attract attention, especially those of a technological nature. The use of the fast pottery wheel, writing, currency or urban planning are some of the inventions that these populations will take from the Phoenicians, to whom they will provide raw materials and elaborated products with which to be able to trade or simply to be able to consume them, since that the Phoenicians

are not producers, but merchants. This transfer will be carried out along routes established since ancient times, and in the case of the Serranía de Ronda (Ronda plateau), specifically the one that should have connected the Tartessian area with the Mediterranean coast, with a stop and forced passage through our area. Hence, the samples of this exchange in settlements such as Ronda or Acinipo are varied, and therefore also the importance

that both settlements will acquire, although with a clear predominance of the latter due to its better position in relation to the Guadalquivir valley.

### TO THE FIRST STATES. THE IBEROS

Under the term Ibero hides a group of autochthonous peoples, of different ethnic origin and unequal social and cultural development. Whose common features depend almost exclusively on external cultural loans (Greeks, Phoenicians, etc.). The Iberian peoples based their economy on resources linked to the territory, such as agriculture and livestock, fishing or mining. The new social relations have their spatial expression in various elements that articulate in political and ideological territory: oppida, agricultural villages, watchtowers, necropolis, sanctuaries... The Ronda area is populated in the s. I SAW C. by the Cilbician ethnic group, which formed a state organization centered on the "Silla del Moro" site. Towards the s. Goes. C. this relevance will be represented by the nearby Acinipo (3 km in a straight line), on which less important but already existing oppida such as Ronda (Arunda), or other newly created ones such as Lacilbula (Grazalema) or Caño will depend. Santo (Alcalá del Valle), or watchtowers like the one on Cerro de las Salinas (Ronda).



### THE SHIRE UNDER ROME

The Serranía de Ronda was part of the Baetica province in Roman times. A time that is possibly the one that has left us the greatest number of archaeological sites, which shows the scope and repercussion that Roman rule had. The oppida already present in the area are consolidated, romanizing more or less quickly and to a degree depending on their territorial importance. Thus, Acinipo will continue



to enjoy the greatest role, while Arunda and Lacilbula, as well as other small towns in the region (Vesci, Saepo, Ocurri) will play a secondary role. In the room dedicated to this stage, you can appreciate the socioeconomic and cultural aspects that made Rome the greatest empire of Antiquity; from trade, to the organization of territories around cities, passing, of course, through culture and his vision of the afterlife. Urban planning and engineering are particularly important, since they are the fields from which the most remains have come down to us; such as the water supply and distribution system located in Arunda (Fuente de la Arena Aqueduct), or the magnificent theater preserved in Acinipo.

### LATE ANTIQUITY. BETWEEN ROME AND ISLAM

Between the end of Rome and the irruption of Islam on the peninsula, a stage begins that increasingly takes on its own importance. The collapse of the Roman system based on a mercantile economy based on agriculture, and supported by rural settlement, will end up causing in each of the territories of the empire and, within them, also in each of its regions, different situations. In the Ronda area, this fact is manifested in a special way through what is related to the ideological aspect of this new stage, in which Christianity seems to have an apparent exclusivity. Proof of this is the collection of ceramic plates decorated with the anagram of Christ (chrismon), and other religious manifestations, associated with the presence in Ronda of cult buildings. This new reality will also be noticeable in a new way in how people organized themselves. Settlements will arise in places that until then were not part of the old territories, as well as elements in the landscape that also transmit new forms of social relations, such as towers.