

Nasrid Palace



From the centre of the Patio de los Surtidores you can access the palace from the Nasrid period, arranged around two courtyards. The current access is a product of the restoration, since originally it must have had a bent entrance. However, since its location was not detected on the floors found during the excavations, it was decided to make an access that would facilitate the public's visit.

The area of the Nasrid Palace appeared with very weak remains. The layout of the palace was found, with its doorways and pools, but the walls were barely 50 centimetres high. This matter motivated many discussions and speculation among the restoring architects and the authorities about whether it would be appropriate to recreate the whole space in a historicist way, in order to give it a museum use, or to consolidate the ruins and leave it as a garden. In the end they decided to go with the first option, and they based their work on the floor plans of the Granada palaces, with roofs and ceilings in some cases reused from other parts of the monument, recreating decorative elements from the fragments that had been preserved, but allowing freedom in terms of their placement. In the known historical plans, this space appeared only as a garden, and later it was occupied by streets and houses, without there being any trace left of the walls of its former structures.

The distribution was clear, with two courtyards with pavilions facing each other at the shorter ends (north-south), with porticoes with three arches, but it could not be ascertained whether they were supported by columns or pillars, what the arrangement of the alcove was, what the total height of the rooms was or what type of roof it had. It was equipped with doors and taqas in the style of the Taifa Palace.

The Patio de los Naranjos (Courtyard of Orange Trees) is set around two small pools, based on the traces of the originals discovered. The pavilions covered with domical vaults were painted by Hermenegildo Lanz, and the columns recreate those of the Nasrid palaces of Granada.

The second courtyard, the Patio de la Alberca (Courtyard of the Pool) or Patio del Arrayán (Myrtle Courtyard), is set around a large central pool whose waters mirror the architecture, surrounded on both sides by a myrtle hedge. At the northern end of the pavilion, a lookout tower was erected, after discovering remains and the base of the stairs. The room of the southern portico is covered by a wooden roof that was brought from the monument itself, from one of the rooms of the military pavilions demolished in the Tunnel area. The north wall of this Palace, currently occupied by exhibition halls, presents (in the last of these halls) an incredible example of the original walls, at this point bordering with the Barrio de Viviendas, which date back to both the 11th and 13th centuries. Original paving has also been preserved in the north room, as well as a complete room paved with large stone blocks in the north pavilion of this courtyard.