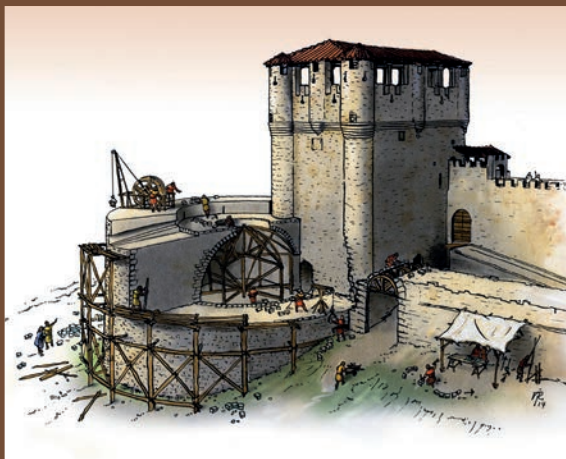


castle and would provide the building with more effective defences against artillery fire. In order to achieve this, they had to demolish the old medieval parts of the castle. The most experienced master builders of the Kingdom of Castile were taken on, such as Master Lope de Isturizaga who had worked on the fortifications on the French border. After their death, the new Marquis of Berlanga, Juan de Tovar, decided to stop the works. This allowed the old medieval castle to be preserved although it was now surrounded by the unfinished fortress.

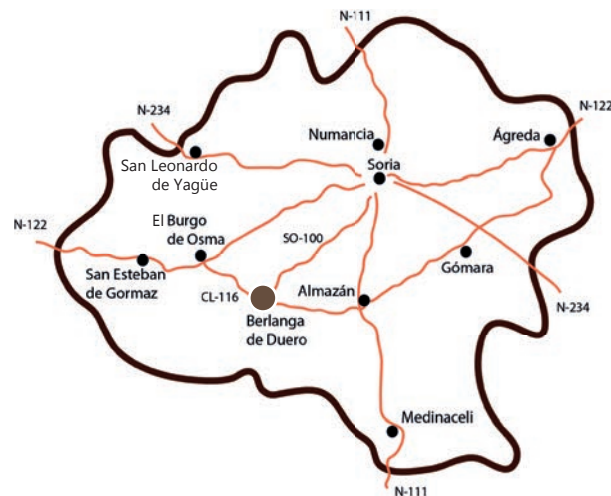


Hypothetical representation of the construction of one of the turrets

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the castle ceased to be a military fort and become a prison, an archive and an arsenal. The decline of the castle began at the end of the 17th century. This was due to structures being dismantled by the marquis himself and continuous thieving by the townspeople. The decline accelerated after a fire on 20th April 1660 caused by a gun salute when King Felipe IV was visiting the castle. By the end of the 18th century only the walls remained.

At the beginning of the 21st century the town council of Berlanga de Duero purchased the castle and its walls together with the palace and the gardens to preserve and restore them.

Tourist information



Berlanga de Duero town council

Plaza Mayor, 1
Tel.: 975 34 30 11
info@berlangadeduero.es

Visitor information centre

Plaza del Mercado, 7 (Tower of the Palace)
Tel.: 975 34 34 33
turismo@berlangadeduero.es
Opening hours: 10:00-14:00 / 16:00-20:00

More information

Berlanga de Duero Castle
www.castillodeberlanga.com

Berlanga de Duero town council
www.berlangadeduero.es



CASTLE

-Berlanga de Duero-



THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE (15TH C.)

The medieval castle has a rectangular plan divided in two: a parade ground and a courtyard. It was surrounded by four turrets, each one having a different shape. The two turrets at the back, of which barely anything remains, were rectangular and within the line of the walls and therefore relatively inconspicuous. On the other hand, the front turrets are more imposing. One of them is located in the south corner whereas the other, the keep, is in the west corner projects beyond the wall.

The entrance to the castle is up a slope beside the keep. The parade ground, entered by a fortified gateway at the top of the slope, lies to the west and leads to a galleried courtyard intended as the residence of the lord of the castle. The remains of some of the gothic columns, of the paved floor and of the drain that leads to the castle's well, can still be seen in this court ground.

THE FORTRESS (16TH C.)

The fortress was built surrounding the old medieval castle. It has trapezoidal plan with four turrets on the corners which perfectly fit into the landscape. In fact, it is so well situated that the rear turrets project outwards above the gully enabling a better defence of the front turrets. The stone walls are 5 meters and are topped with a curved parapet that screened the castle from the enemy fire.

The front turrets have a casemate on the lower level allowing cannon smoke to escape. The upper level was covered with a wooden roof with drains to allow the cooling of the cannons. On the other hand, the rear turrets, instead of having a vault, were divided into three levels made of timber and covered with a roof. All of them, however, had embrasures of different shapes in order to protect the flanks of the castle.

- HISTORY -

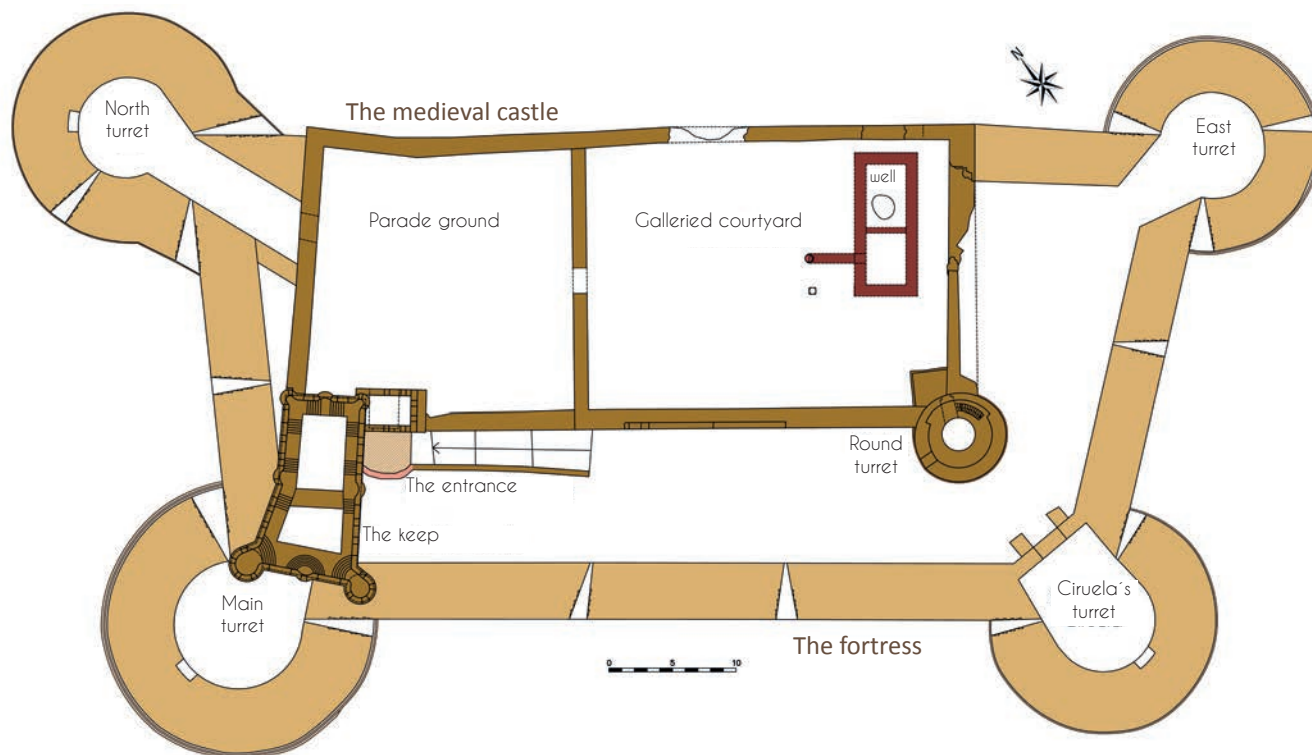
Although the origins of Berlanga Castle remain unclear, the most recent archaeological excavations allow us to date it around the 10th or 11th century as an Islamic fortress with no visible remains. It played a major role in the Islamic front line against the Christian Kingdoms.

In 1059 Fernando I of Castilla, in a quick campaign in the Alto Duero area, conquered Gormaz. Then he headed for Vadorrey, Aguilera and finally to Berlanga where the Muslims, before fleeing, destroyed the wall in several places. And this was the first part of the castle to be restored.

Once the Castilian conquest was over, Berlanga began to grow, both in size and in importance, until it became "Comunidad de Villa y Tierra" including 33 small villages in the surrounding area.

In 1370 Berlanga, which had been a royal borough, became part of the Tovar family estate. Juan Fernández de Tovar, the first Lord of Berlanga of his family line and "Admiral of Castile", commissioned the castle's refurbishment. However what exactly was done remains unknown. In the middle of the 15th century, Luis de Tovar along with his wife, Isabel de Guzmán, financed the last great refurbishment of the castle affecting mainly the parade ground, courtyard and the keep, where the eight coats of arms of their ancestors were situated.

After the death of Luis de Tovar, his only child, María de Tovar, became the heiress of the estate. She was responsible for the major changes in the town and for the way the castle looks today. Around 1521, she and her husband Íñigo Fernández de Velasco, Condestable of Castile, started to build a new fortress which would surround the old medieval



Hypothetical reconstruction of the castle at the time of Luis de Tovar