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DISCOVER INCA



a cultural trip
through the evolution
of the city



**GUIDED TOURS
TO INCA'S HERITAGE**



Ajuntament d'Inca



#5



Santa Magdalena

Speakers: Miquel Pieras Villalonga i Guillem Alexandre Reus i Planells, historians.

The natural and human environment

Puig de Santa Magdalena is located about 6 kilometres east of the town of Inca, in the Raiguer district, between the Serra de Tramuntana mountains and the flatland of El Pla, and between the bay of Alcúdia and Palma. The puig, or mount, has an altitude of 287 m and the Puig de la Minyó is 307 m high. Two torrents surround the mount; to the south, the torrent of Cantabou and to the north, the torrent of Massanella. The vegetation on the mountain is typical of Mallorcan woodland, and among it we find holm-oaks, pine trees, shrubs, reeds and cistus. From descriptions from the late 19th and early 20th century, we know that there was a mount with few trees there back then, and by contrast in the present day, the west face does have a very populated wood.

The mount has an elongated north-to-south shape. It is the largest wooded area of the municipality of Inca, and has been catalogued as an Area of Special Natural Interest (ANEI) since 1991, with an extension of 537 ha., which also includes the woodlands located around the mount itself (Son Seriol and Son Gual).

The area around the chapel has been owned by the Mallorcan church since 1900, when Inca Council ceded ownership to it. The recreational area located at the foot of the shrine is owned by the Consell de Mallorca. The rest of the mountain is owned by the possessions, or rural estates, that surround the mountain. But the municipal council was engaged in a dispute regarding ownership of the mount with these estates until the mid-19th century, as it considered it to be part of a municipal borough. Many of Inca's great possessions are located around the mountain: Son Frare, Solat, Son

Vivot, Binisetí, Son Sastre, Son Bosc, Son Catlar, Son Gual and Son Catiu. After the Spanish Civil War, a military barracks was built on the lower part of the mountain. Currently the area of the chapel is the focal point of the "pancaritat" festival that is held on the Sunday after Easter ("Diumenge de l'Àngel") and a recreational place for residents of Inca.

The past

Close to the summit of Puig de la Minyó the remains of a Talayotic wall are conserved, proving the antiquity of human presence on the mountain. At the end of the 13th century, construction began on the sanctuary. The work continued in the 14th century, and a path was built, and we know that there were hermits. At the beginning of the 15th century, nuns lived there. From 1491 to 1526 a community of Poor Clare nuns resided here, and built a monastery, but they moved to the convent in s'Esgleieta (Esporles) due to problems with the water supply, and eventually settled in Palma. In 1530 the Hieronymite nuns established a community on the mount, but they too left in 1534 to move to Inca. A few years later, probably around 1540, the local authorities created a grammar school on the mount. The first teacher was the priest Bartomeu Far. This school remained open for three centuries, until 1779. According to the historian Binimelis, in the 16th century in this school youngsters from all over Mallorca were prepared and studied here who went on to attain important civil and ecclesiastical positions. The festival of Santa Magdalena, of 22nd July, was so important for the local population during the Middle Ages that in 1434, the local government asked the bishop to declare the day a holiday in Inca.

From the end of the 18th and during the 19th century, the shrine was in a considerable state of neglect. To prevent it from deteriorating further, the local council began restoration work in 1893, under the direction of Bartomeu Ferrà. In 1901 a monumental cross was set up on Puig de la Minyó. In the year 1946, new cells were built as well as different installations on the north side of the chapel. It was renovated again around 20 years ago.

The church of Santa Magdalena on Puig d'Inca³⁵

Nowadays, the church of Santa Magdalena on Puig d'Inca is the only totally Gothic building conserved in Inca. In spite of this, one cannot deny that it has been subject to several renovations, transformations and extensions over the centuries. Very probably the oratory was built in the years after



the Catalan conquest of Mallorca, as it is first documented in a will from 1284. Currently, the church has a rectangular floor plan with a single nave divided into four sections by pointed diaphragm arches that support wooden coffering. It has no side chapels, in spite of the fact that another - blind - lancet arch stands in the third section on the right. The most remarkable feature of the outside is the façade, which has a smooth surface and a round arch doorway with a rose window above it, crowned by a bell gable with a round arch, where the bell is located.

The present-day building follows the architectural model of the re-population, similar to others that are still conserved today (Sant Pere de Escorca, Sant Miquel de Campanet or Nostra Senyora de la Pau de Castellitx, among others).

L'EDITA:



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