

## TRIANA: HISTORY AND FESTIVALS

Triana is a neighbourhood and administrative district on the west bank of the Guadalquivir River in the city of Seville, Spain. Like other neighborhoods that were historically separated from the main city, it was known as an arrabal. Triana is located on an almost-island between two branches of the Guadalquivir, narrowly linked to the mainland in the north. Two other districts are also usually included in this area, Los Remedios to the south and La Cartuja to the north.

Residents of Triana have traditionally been called trianeros; they identify strongly with the neighborhood and consider it different in character from the rest of Seville] Triana has a traditional pottery and tile industry, a vibrant flamenco culture, and its own festivals; it has played an important role in the development of Sevillian culture and tradition.

The first settlements in the Triana area are dated from the Roman period. During Muslim rule the neighborhood developed around a castle built in the 10th century. Triana was the last defence of Seville from the west before the city-walls. It was strategically important because of its position between Seville proper and both the coast and the Aljarafe region of grainfields, vineyards, and olive orchards. The construction of a pontoon bridge (puente de barcas, literally, boat-bridge) joining Triana and Seville in 1171 during the reign of Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf greatly facilitated the development of the neighborhood. Because of Triana's strategic role in the defence of city, Ferdinand III of Castile destroyed the citadel (Castillo de Triana) and the bridge before taking Seville in 1248.

During Castile's rule, the castle of Triana became the first Christian church of the neighbourhood when it was made the seat of a fraternal society, the Order of Saint George, which changed its name to Castillo de San Jorge (Castle of Saint George). Later, in 1481, under the rule of the Catholic Monarchs, it was made the seat of the Spanish Inquisition until 1785. The current bridge, the Puente de Isabel II, a representative symbol of Triana, was built in 1854.

Since Triana is close to the Guadalquivir River, the neighbourhood was frequently devastated by flooding, as it had no levees to hold back the rising waters. During these periodic floods, the inhabitants had to take refuge at the Castillo de San Jorge and the Church of Santa Ana. The historically worst floods occurred in 1435, 1440, 1545, and 1554. The reconstruction of the Guadalquivir channel system during the second half of the 20th century finally eliminated this hazard.

Triana was traditionally populated by sailors and potters, construction workers and artisans, with many bull-fighters and Flamenco singers and dancers living in the neighbourhood as well. Triana was also home to a large population of Romani people, concentrated in the street called the Cava de los Gitanos (now the Pagés del Corro), but they were displaced during the redevelopment projects of the 1970s.

### FESTIVALS

The Holy Week religious processions in Triana have a distinct character compared to those in downtown Seville. Two of the most popular are La Esperanza de Triana (Our Lady of Hope of Triana) and El Cachorro (literally, "The Puppy"). The latter reflects the popular name

of a sculpture of the dying Christ. Tradition says the sculptor Francisco Antonio Ruiz Gijón, looking for a source of inspiration, saw the gypsy nicknamed Cachorro as he was dying after being stabbed. Ruiz Gijón made the sculpture so similar to him that people realized the similarity and started to call the Christ by the gypsy's nickname, El Cachorro.

Between 21 and 26 July, the Velá Santana (literally, "Saint Anne's evenings", because Saint Anne's day on the liturgical calendar is the 26 July) is celebrated on Betis Street. It is the city's second most important festival after the Feria de abril de Sevilla, although it is much older, dating from the 13th century. Here people drink sherry wine and dance the sevillanas, a type of folk dance; eating roasted sardines is also a popular activity. The cucaña is a popular competition during this celebration: people try to take a prize from the top of a greasy pole over the river.