



Alcazar

Its silhouette appears as an imaginary ship over the confluence of the rivers Eresma and Clamores, laced by the scenario of ochre and blue colours of the plain and the mountains. Before entering, you will find a beautiful garden, housing the monument for the Heroes of the Spanish Independence War, Daoiz and Velarde, made by the segovian sculptor Aniceto Marinas. On the left, you can come in the Casa de la Quimica (House of Chemistry), built in the Era of Enlightenment, and used as investigation centre by the chemist Louis Proust.

A deep moat with a drawbridge gives us entrance to a fortress situated in a privileged place, which was possibly inhabited from the Celtic era. The castle, built over the remains of a Roman fortress, was successively transformed from Alfonso VI (11th century) to Felipe II (16th century). It became an Alcazar – Royal residence – in the 13th century; it obtains its final gothic appearance in Juan II and Enrique IV ages. It worked as State Prison in the 18th century, and became Royal College of Artillery in 1764. Its restoration has been continuous after the serious fire that took place in 1862, that almost destroyed the castle completely. Nevertheless, in 1882 and being Alfonso XII the king, the reconstruction works started, lasting until the present time by the Patronato del Alcazar, which has restored coffered ceilings, friezes, altarpieces and walls. Almost the entire building can be visited, including the rooms devoted to the History of Artillery, General Military Archives of Spain.

In the northern angle we can see the small tower of Alfonso X 'the wise', where the king studied the firmament, and the Tower of Juan II, 80 meters high, decorated with beautiful esgrafiados and twelve turrets. The visitor can climb to the top of the tower to enjoy the magnificent views of

the city and the Pinarillo (wood that contains the Jewish cemetery), the church of Vera Cruz, the medieval neighbourhoods of San Marcos and Zamarramala, and the quarry from where most of the limestone used in building the Cathedral was taken.

Inside the monument and around the Patio de Armas - where periodically chamber music concerts are housed - and the Patio del Reloj, we can find the rooms. Particularly notable for their beauty, we must pay attention to the Ajimeces Room; the Galera Room – which coffered ceiling has been recently rebuilt – the Throne Room – with an outstanding mudejar ceiling; the Chimney Room; the Cord Room; the Pineapples Room; the Royal Chamber; the Queen's Dressing Room and the Chapel. Above everyone, the Kings Chamber stands out, containing an extraordinary coffered ceiling made of golden hexagons and rhomboids, and a curious frieze displaying 52 sitting images, polychromed, of the Kings and Queens of Asturias, Leon and Castilla from Don Pelayo to the Queen Juana I.

Plaza de la Reina Victoria Eugenia s/n  
40003 Segovia

Tel. (+34) 921 460 759 - (+34) 921 460 452  
Fax. (+34) 921 460 755

[www.alcazardesegovia.com](http://www.alcazardesegovia.com)  
[patronato@alcazardesegovia.com](mailto:patronato@alcazardesegovia.com)  
[reservas@alcazardesegovia.com](mailto:reservas@alcazardesegovia.com)

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