

Roman Segovia

The presence of Rome in Segovia dates back to the second century B.C., at which time the province was structured around three towns: Duratón, Coca and Segovia. The indigenous population became Romanised as, little by little, it began speaking and writing in Latin and adopting the Roman lifestyle.

The construction of the Aqueduct can be seen as the alignment of the indigenous population with the Roman world. It is a source of prestige for the civil engineers who built it and the city alike and, at its highest point, there would have been noble houses and, at the very least, some Roman baths.

The main purpose of the construction was to carry water from the mountains to the town, although it also served as political propaganda (public works were often subsidised by government or local political figures).

Vestiges of the Roman city of Segovia can be seen at the Museo de Segovia [Museum of Segovia], where materials found in excavations in the city and the province are displayed.

The Aqueduct

Segovia's Aqueduct measures in total around 15km and water is collected from near the present-day Revenga Reservoir and it ends at the Alcázar [Fortress] -where the military settlement responsible for guarding the city would have been-.

The Aqueduct can be divided into three stretches:

a) From where the water is collected to the elevated channel. It is not known whether the

channel was above or below ground level.

b) The second stretch is the elevated channel, masonry and arches which reach a maximum height of 28m. In this part, the sand trap is located, which is a small covered deposit in which the flow of incoming water slows to allow solid particles to sink to the bottom.

c) The final stretch continues beneath the streets of the historic quarter.

The granite blocks used in the construction of the monument were sourced from a number of different quarries. These were finished on site and placed without the use of mortar. They were raised using ropes and pulleys and adjusted with iron levers.

Between the two rows of arches on Plaza del Azoguejo [Azoguejo Square] is a space where the names of the emperor and local magistrates, to whom we owe the monument, are displayed.

The style of the Aqueduct –to which we can also add associated archaeological discoveries on display at the Museum of Segovia- allows the construction to be dated to the very end of the first or beginning of the second century A.D.

Among the modifications and repairs which have been carried out, those authorised by the Catholic Monarchs are noteworthy, in particular the substitution of the old channels with granite ones which can still be seen today.

The conservation of the arches and pillars in Azoguejo Square allows one to appreciate the grandeur of one of the most impressive works of Roman engineering, listed by Royal Order on 11th October, 1884.