

AQUEDUCT INTERPRETATION CENTRE

Coins were created first at the old Royal Mint, and then at the mint built by Philip II in 1583 with a specific hallmark for this mint. This mark became a symbol. It was the Segovia's Aqueduct.

To make sure this centenary tradition is honoured, the new complex of the Royal Mint now houses the Aqueduct Interpretation Centre, a multimedia and interactive space.

Water, the fusing element that connects the buildings throughout the entire Royal Mint, will guide you along some 15 kilometres of the best kept Roman aqueduct in the world. Enjoy the nearly 2000 years of history when walking around this monument, declared the World's Heritage by UNESCO in 1985.



More information

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THE COINING HOUSE THE ROYAL MINT



VIAJES ILUMINA EL CIELO



The Royal Mint, Segovia. Laurent, 1870

The Royal Mint was an innovative coining factory that Philip II ordered to be built.

The king knew of a new rolling and coining system that involved the use of devices and machinery moved by hydraulic wheels that was already operative in several cities in Europe. The king managed to get the necessary equipment from his cousin, the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol. Thus, with this advanced system established in our country, a high degree of quality in the coining process was achieved.

As from 1582, a team of experts travelling to Spain from the Austrian region of Tyrol started to search for the best possible location in which to construct a suitable building that would store this machinery. In 1583 a mill was finally chosen. This property (on the banks of river Eresma), owned by Antonio de San Millán, was used to grind cereal and to manufacture paper.

The mill had its own waterwheel which was actioned by means of water coming from the river's flow.

The king commissioned Juan de Herrera, one of the most important architects of the time, to carry out this assignment. He and the Tyrolean team sent by the archduke, designed the first draft construction plan which no longer exists. It was an industrial building, specifically designed to take undertake entire coining process, controlling everything from the arrival of the raw metal to the final minting of the coins.

Monumental façade, by Juan Jose Alzaga (1829)



In June 1585 a convoy from the city of Hall, in the heart of Tyrol, arrived in Segovia with the various, essential pieces to pull together the Royal Mint. The team of experts arrived at the same time. These skilled coin makers started to put the mint together even before the building was completed. By the beginning of July, an experimental coining had already taken place. The work was supervised by the Bishop of Segovia.

The new factory was a model of internal organization and the pioneering process of serial manufacturing established here, two hundred years before these production methods of industrial activity were to be applied in the Industrial Revolution.

One of the most important characteristics of the whole process was that it was highly mechanized. Making use of the hydraulic energy from the river Eresma meant that the various machines could be manoeuvred by hydraulic wheels.

Almost two centuries later, between 1770 and 1772, when Charles III was king of Spain, the architect Francisco Sabatini introduced substantial changes to the mint. The coining system manoeuvred by hydraulic wheels was replaced by flywheel presses and only those wheels needed for laminating were retained. The granite canal -a most technological example of the Illustration period- is the only remnant of that great reform.



Underside of coin minted in Segovia in 1636



Obverse of a coin: an aqueduct, the hallmark of Segovia's Mint. (Museum of Segovia)

Courtyard of channels and hydraulic wheels



In 1865, during the reign of Isabella II, automatic presses similar to the Thonnelier type that were actioned by a turbine, were installed in the area by a French company. However, in 1861, the new Royal Mint in Madrid -inaugurated in 1861- decided to centralize all production of coins hence forcing the closure of all other mints in the peninsula, which was put into effect in 1869 in Segovia.

The building was sold in 1878 and in 1879, a new phase begun. Nowadays, years after the building's industrial life finished, a series of flour factories make it possible for the cereal to be ground again, thus returning to develop a similar type of activity to that carried out in its origins.

The last of these factories closed down completely in 1967 and its Francis type of turbine is currently exhibited in the Patio Canales as a witness of the industrial revolution.

Currently, the Royal Mint is considered one of the oldest and paramount examples of our industrial heritage. It is located in an attractive setting, in the outskirts of the city and close to the Monastery of S. Maria del Parral, enjoying magnificent views of the city fortress, the Alcazar.

Between 2007 and 2011, The Royal Mint's refurbishing works, taken on jointly by the city council, Castile and Leon Government and the Ministry of Public Works, have allowed for the opening of a renovated space that includes a museum (since 2012) and different areas for leisure activities such as a restaurant, a cafeteria or a shop.

This unique museum shows machinery, ingenious devices and hydraulic wheels that allow us to get to know how these coins were produced by applying different minting systems.



Forge, rolling and coining room



THE KING'S GARDEN

This area, inside the premises of the Royal Mint, represents one of King Philip II's favourite spots.

Its renaissance style is still manifest nowadays. The cobblestone flooring, the pergolas in the conservatory and the fishing pavillion with murals painted on the occasion of queen Isabella II's visit in the middle of 19th century, are all original. Three fountains decorate the garden: the fountain of the three spouts, the sunshade fountain and the small sink.



SPACE AVAILABLE FOR RENT FOR CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

The Royal Mint also houses conference halls. The halls are suitably equipped to hold conferences or alternatively, concerts or other types of events such as wedding receptions.

