

Valencia City of Silk





Route

1. Merchants' Exchange / Silk Exchange.
C/ Lonja, 2
2. Central Market
Pl. de la Ciutat de Bruges, s/n
3. Tamarit Papalce.
C/ Roger de Flor, 13
4. Silk Museum
C/ de l'Hospital, 7
5. Arts and Crafts Center of the
Region of València
C/ de l'Hospital, 7

Museums

6. Municipal History Museum.
Pl. Ayuntamiento, 1
7. Patriarch Museum. C/ de la Nau, 1
8. González Martí National Museum of Ceramics and
Sumpuatory Arts. C/ Poeta Querol, 2
9. Valencia Cathedral Museum
Pl. de la Reina, s/n
10. L'Iber. Museum of lead Soldiers
C/ Caballeros, 20-22

11. Valencian Museum of Ethnology. C/ Corona, 36
12. San Pío V Fine Arts Museum. C/ San Pío V, 9
13. Museum of maritime Holy Week
C/ del Rosario, 1
14. Museum of the History of the City
C/ Valencia, 42 (Mislata)
15. Old Garin Factory.
C/ Ramón Villaroya, 15 (Moncada)

Place of Interest

16. Pl. del Pilar - Velluters' Muriny
17. Pl. de la Botxa - Velluters Mural
18. Workshop house. C/ Guillem Sorolla, 9
19. C/ Adressadors
20. San Agustín Church
21. House of Vicent Peris (Velluter' Guild).
Old C/ Gracia, now Oeste avenue.
22. House of Lazzaro Negro. C/ de las Barcas
23. Mulberry trees in de las Barcas street
24. House of Inés Pomares. Pl. Conde de Carlet, 19

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RUTA DE LA SEDA

COMUNITAT VALENCIANA

Silk is a fibre of animal origin produced by the *Bombyx mori* larva, popularly known as silkworm, and is the textile raw material of choice for high-quality cloth manufacture, due to its shine, softness, fineness, resistance, length and special adaptability to dye.

Silk cloth has, since ancient times, been a product associated with luxury, richness, trade exchange and contact between cultures. In fact, it was one of the first goods to acquire an international character, and the Silk Road attested to that.

Valencia's history is inextricably linked to silk, from the mulberry trees in the orchard for raising the silkworm that produces this long, thin thread to the craft workshops that produce textiles from it, not forgetting the College of High Silk Art, which has been renovated and transformed into the Silk Museum, and the Lonja (Silk Exchange), a unique building in the city that has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. As well as these two emblematic buildings relating to silk, manufacture of which was one of Valencia's main economic activities from the 15th to the 18th centuries, we find numerous references to silk, from clothes on display in the city's museums, paintings in which the characters are depicted wearing luxurious silk garments, to old silkworm rearers preserved in a few restored farmhouses.

This important legacy is still alive in the rich clothing worn for the traditional Falles festival, an emblem of Valencian tradition, the survival of which continues to highlight the importance of silk throughout Valencia's history. Past, present and future come together because of one common element: silk.

The beginnings of international trade: the Silk Road

The meeting of East and West through trade. Silk originated in China and began to be cultivated in the third millennium BC.

In the West it was introduced gradually by the continental Silk Road from China and Central Asia via the Persian Plateau, Mesopotamia and the area of Euphrates, Aleppo and Antakya. Beginning around the 1st century BC in the era of Alexander the Great, the Silk Road became the main connection between East and West, linking China to Europe. In the early years, it joined Xi'an, China's imperial capital, with Rome, capital of the Roman Empire. The shipping route was made from China via the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea to Alexandria. Merchants, using large processions of camels, exchanged Mediterranean products for Eastern manufactured goods, among which was silk cloth. Thanks to this international trade, as well as goods, knowledge, ideas, religions and culture were also exchanged.

The silkworm began to be reared in Byzantium in the 6th century, and from then silk manufacture spread through the Western world. It was a luxury product which had until then only been accessible to the upper echelons of society: it was very expensive because it was imported, as the secret of how to obtain it was unknown.

DID YOU KNOW...?

An eastern tradition recounts that one day in 2698 BC, Princess Xi-Ling-Shi was drinking tea in the shade of a mulberry tree when a cocoon fell from a branch into her cup of tea. As they got wet, the threads began to come apart. The princess pulled and pulled on this extremely fine fibre, discovering silk thread in the process. She then had the idea of weaving it, and this is how her husband, Emperor Huang Di, began teaching the Court how to rear silkworms.

On pain of death for anyone who revealed the secret, the mystery of silk remained just that – a mystery – for the next 2,000 years. China exported silk to other countries without ever revealing the secret behind how it was made.



The Silk Road in Antiquity. Land and sea routes.

The origin of the silk industry in Valencia

Muslims bring silk to the Iberian Peninsula

After Persia was conquered by the Muslims in the mid-7th century, they gained control of the Silk Road and, after expanding their control to Northern Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, they spread this technical know-how to the western Mediterranean. Al-Andalus was the first region on the European continent where silkworms began to be reared en masse, and it was gradually spread to the rest of the Iberian Peninsula.

This is how silk arrived in Valencia via the Muslims. Subsequently, in Christian times, it was the Jewish and converts mostly who produced silk, re-enacting the old Muslim tradition.

The arrival of the Genoese

The silk industry was improved in the 15th century thanks to the arrival of a large number of Genoese craftsmen specialising in velvet making. These vellutieri (an Italianism) imported an innovative technology for looms, lathes and types of textiles, which enabled them to perform all stages in silk production and high-quality textile production.

In the last third of the 15th century this manufacture really took off, especially from 1465 onwards, when ordinances were implemented to regulate the craft of weaving silk veils, and fourteen years later the velvet craft.



Transformations in the countryside

Sericulture: mulberry cultivation and silkworm rearing

The silk industry was built on the existence of considerable expanses of fields given over to cultivation of the mulberry, whose leaves were used as food for the silkworm.

From the 15th century to the second half of the 19th century, the mulberry was a defining feature of the Valencian orchard. This tree was cultivated in whole parcels or alongside the banks of roads and canals, the water from which was used to irrigate them.

The silkworm feeds on the leaves of the black mulberry (*Morus Nigra*) and white mulberry (*Morus Alba*), trees that come from Asia. The black mulberry was a tree used in the area of the Alpujarras and Granada, as it adapts better to the coldest areas and requires less care than the white mulberry, but the latter was finally promoted because it grows faster and its leaves, which are soft and juicy, can be picked more easily.

The mulberry was planted in Murcia and the Kingdom of Valencia from the south of Italy by Italian merchants in the late 14th century and its cultivation rapidly spread from the following century onwards, defining the landscapes of the surrounding territory of towns and villages of the Valencian orchards that had specialised in silkworm rearing. Thus, although the silk trade in Valencia initially imported fibre from Granada, it soon boasted wide areas of indigenous supply in its rural environs. Cultivation spread even among the orchards and courtyards of the city of Valencia. With the passage of time, the mulberry tree helped transform the agricultural landscape of irrigation areas and whole regions like the Horta of Valencia, Safor and the Ribera del Júcar.

The top floors of orchard farmhouses had attics or shelf-lined rooms with timber and wattle where they reared silkworms on mulberry leaves, whose silk cocoons or spun silk were sold to be marketed. This architectural feature, with wattle inside and windows on the outside to ventilate, still survives in

some farmhouses such as Félix, Marxalenes Park, Solache, the Benicalap neighbourhood or Serra in Benimaçlet.

The great expansion of mulberry cultivation, which intensified in the 18th century, transformed the territory into the main silk-producing area in Spain. However, the epidemic of pébrine in 1854, a disease that kills silkworms, made silkworm rearing less profitable, and the activity disappeared almost entirely in only a matter of decades. Therefore, during the second half of the 19th century, mulberry cultivation was replaced with orange tree cultivation, leading to the Valencian farming landscape we see today.



Mulberry leaves.



Exterior of Solache farmhouse, where you can see the shelf-lined room.

Silkworm rearing

The aim of rearing the Bombyx Mori larva, the most common species of larva, is to obtain its prized silk. The larvae go through various stages:

1. Rearing and selecting silkworms. Larvae were placed on large quantities of mulberry leaves to feed, laid on wooden planks forming shelves which supported several levels of wattle on which the larvae lived in their early stages, until they grew to their maximum height, stopped eating and were ready to transform into a chrysalis.

2. Producing and gathering silk cocoons before the chrysalis cycle is over. The larva builds a cocoon around its body where it stays enclosed until it becomes a chrysalis, which is made of a continuous, long silk fibre. At this stage the cocoons are gathered, sparing a few silk moths to be able to continue the species and enable more silk production.

3. Drying silk cocoons, selection and storage. To be able to be stored, the silk cocoon is exposed to high temperatures to eliminate up to 60% of the water, because if the cycle were to continue and the butterfly emerged, the cocoon would be rendered useless.

Félix farmhouse. Environmental interpretation centre.

Marxalenes Park.
Old silkworm rearers.

Open Monday - Saturday.
9:30 - 14:00
and **16:00 - 19:00.**

Information: 96 327 40 83
ojuventud@valencia.es



Wooden and wattle structures for silkworm rearing, preserved in the shelf-lined room at Félix Farmhouse



The mulberry leaves were assembled on the wattle to feed the silkworm.

Transformations in the urban landscape

The Velluters neighbourhood and the silk industry

The Velluters neighbourhood, now El Pilar, has been defined since it was formed in the Middle Ages by the fact that most of its residents were involved in the silk trade, to such a degree that the very name of the neighbourhood comes from vellut (velvet) weaving, an activity that had predominated in this urban area for four centuries. In the Middle Ages it was common for workers of the same trade to group together in the same area.

In a neighbourhood made up of small, modest, traditional buildings, with the workshop and living quarters in the same house, with five-metre-wide façade, and somewhat greater in depth. The Medieval Valencian houses of craftsmen usually had two floors: on the ground floor was the workroom or the shop – or both – and on the upper floor were the family's living quarters. The workshop was the most spacious area and was home to the looms for textile work.

Silk trade activity was conducted in these small workshops inside houses on the ground floor, and in more recent centuries also on the top floor, when buildings grew taller, placed in the room under the roof with the wooden beam eaves, which could be seen from outside through straight or curved windows, which can still be seen to this day in some of the few buildings that were not demolished or reformed in the 19th century for



Old workshop house for textile activity. Calle Guillém Sorolla n° 9

residential use. These attics housed the looms and also the wood and wattle shelves where the silkworm was reared. Some of the few remaining craftsmen's dwellings are found at Calle Guillem Sorolla n° 9 and Calle Horno del Hospital n° 11, 18th-century buildings reformed from previous constructions, with a ground floor and three further floors, balconies, wooden eaves and the traditional "porxe de velluter" (velvet crafter's porch) finishing off the building.

From the middle of the century the industry that drove the neighbourhood's development began weakening, thus kick-starting an intense process of urban transformation in which almost all architectural traces of the medieval city were removed, giving rise to the neighbourhood as we know it today. The bourgeoisie rebuilt the traditional buildings, seeking financial profitability, thus replacing the typical workshop houses with residential buildings.

In this neighbourhood, a centre of silk trade activity, there are important reminders of this centuries-old industry, such as Tamarit Palace, an old family house of silk craftsmen and businesspeople from the 18th century, the College of High Silk Art, home to the Velluters' (Velvet Makers') Guild, and even more recently, the mural at Plaza de la Botxa, which represents the neighbourhood's silk trade past.



Calle Carniceros, in the Velluters neighbourhood.



The origin of the Velluters' Guild

From the Middle Ages, those working in a profession were organised into guilds or trades to regulate how they worked. The large majority of Valencian trades were organised into guilds over the 15th century, co-existing with confraternities which, having been formed some time before, had aid and religious objectives.

The project of creating the velvet makers' guild took place in 1477, when a group of Valencian and Genoese master velvet makers met at the home of Genoese man Lazzaro Negro on Calle de las Barcas, and signed before a notary the founding charter of the "Cofradía de l' Ofici dels Velluters" (Confraternity of the Trade of Velvet Makers), with Saint Jerome as its patron saint.

Two years later, the first founding ordinances of the trade were approved by the Municipal Council and ratified by King Fernando the Catholic, giving rise to the Velluters' Guild. These regulations came about with the aim of regulating and professionalising the trade and doing away with the lack of control in silk cloth manufacture at the time.

Once the regulations that would make Valencian silk famous and prestigious had been approved, the guild became the most important in the city in terms of the number of members and the financial significance of its activity.

The guild regulated the labour and technical aspects of the trade, stipulated the duration of apprenticeship and the examination, and most importantly monitored product quality by regulating the kinds of fibres that could be used to make textiles and which were prohibited as they were considered impure.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The patron saint of the Velluters is Saint Jerome because he was the first cardinal who included silk in his daily attire.

The increased importance of the trade over the centuries and its significance to the economy led King Charles II to award it the important title of College of High Silk Art in 1686, elevating the rank of the Velluters' Guild to Professional Association (or 'College', after the Spanish Colegio), and silk work to High Art.

College of High Silk Art

Over time, guilds that could afford it purchased premises where they could meet to discuss all common matters relating to the trade. The velvet makers' trade also purchased its headquarters. In 1494 it purchased a house in what is now the Calle del Hospital, the future headquarters of the College of High Silk Art, in an area where numerous workshops were emerging, very near the San Agustín Convent church, where the early confraternity celebrated mass. Thus, the area established itself from the late 15th century as a meeting point.

The Velluters' Guild headquarters was originally a gothic building, and there are still some traces of this in its interior, such as the spiral staircase attributed to the school of master craftsman Pere Compte. Throughout its history, the College has undergone several renovations, the most considerable being in the mid-18th century, which transformed it into the baroque building we see today.

Particularly notable is its exterior, comprising a lintelled stone façade, finished off at the top with a "Cardinal's hat" and a high relief depicting Saint Jerome, attributed to Ignacio Vergara.



Gothic spiral staircase

On the inside, the hall stands out with its main staircase, as well as the function hall, whose magnificent ceramic flooring from the 18th century depicts the scene of Fame, and the chapel for worshipping the patron saint, a room which, just like the meeting room for the master craftsmen who directed the trade, was never lacking in a guild house.

The College of High Silk Art, after undergoing considerable renovation funded by the Hortensia Herrero Foundation for a number of years, opened its doors to the public in June 2016 under the new guise of the Silk Museum. It is the best place to discover silk art, thanks to the large amount of heritage preserved, sketches, cardboard articles, silk stuff and silk cloth, as well as ceramic panels and murals of great artistic worth. A silk worker with his own looms and tools recreates the working method of the 18th century.



Exterior of the College of High Silk Art.

Museum of the College of High Silk Art

Calle Hospital, 7 - www.museodelasedavalencia.com

Summer:

(from 15 July to 15 September)

Tuesday - Friday

10:00 - 19:00

Saturday 10:00 - 20:30

Sunday 10:00 - 15:00 / 18:00 a 20:00

Winter:

Tuesday - Friday

10:00 - 14:00 / 16:00 - 19:00

Saturday 10:00 - 19:30

Sunday 10:00 - 15:00



Video:



Book a guided tour for groups advance by e-mailing:

reservas@museodelasedavalencia.com



The Valencian silk industry from the 16th to the 18th centuries

From the last third of the 15th century and early 16th century, more and more people worked in Valencia in the textiles industry, where the majority of looms were concentrated. Around the year 1520, there were about 400 silk master craftsmen and more than 1,200 looms in the city. In this period, there were already more people working in the silk trade than workers in any other trade, to the point that in the Revolt of the Brotherhoods, in which craftsmen rebelled against the nobility and the municipal oligarchy, the most numerous guild in the city was the velvet makers', in which velluter (velvet maker) Vicente Peris played an important role.

After this crisis of the Brotherhoods, the silk industry and trade were consolidated even further, especially in the first half of the 16th century, during the reign of Charles I. This period saw great dynamism occur in the sector, increasing the number of silk dealers and the volume of production and exportation, although fiscal policy and contraband to some extent ballasted silk activity in the second half of the century.

Most silk cloth was dyed black, because from the end of the 15th century this colour became very fashionable all over Europe among the upper classes, the monarchy and the Church, as it symbolised morality, mourning and luxury, and it became a marker of social distinction.

In the 18th century Valencia became the main centre of silk in Spain, especially after silk production in Toledo declined. This taking off of the local silk industry was aided hugely by the commercial policies of protection and development of national textile production under the reign of Charles II, who in 1686 awarded the privilege that enabled the Velluters' Guild to rise to the category of College.

This commercial policy became accentuated after the War of the Spanish Succession by the Bourbon monarchy, from the reign of Philip V. From 1710 to 1730 a series of measures were implemented that drove the development of the luxury textiles industry, such as the ceasing of the "tall del drap" (cloth cutting) tax, the removal of customs duty between peninsular kingdoms,



Outfit representing Joaquín Manuel Fos.
Valencia History Museum.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Velvet maker Peris led the Revolt of the Brotherhoods from 1520 to 1522. Captain General of the brotherhoods' army, he was eventually hanged by royal troops in his own house, in the area of the now Avenida del Barón de Cárcer, together with his most direct supporters, after the harsh combat that took place in the city of Valencia on the night of 18 February 1522.

the prohibition of importing Asian silk and any cotton, and the strengthening of trade with America, bringing customs duty advantages to exports.

Additionally, textile manufacturing production was increasingly concentrated in the city of Valencia, where approximately 90% of looms across the Valencian territory were located in the second half of the century. Thus, while mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing and the process of spinning were carried out fundamentally in rural hubs, the winding, folding, twisting, dyeing and garment making stages were carried out in the workshops in Valencia city, where more than 3,000 looms came into operation.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Valencian Joaquín Manuel Fos was an affluent textile technician and industry worker who studied in Lyon the secrets of silk manufacture and improvement of moiré, a type of shiny, luxurious fabric, discovering how to treat textiles with water. In 1756 Charles III awarded him a licence to manufacture moiré and, from then on, he became an important person in the Valencian silk industry and was appointed chair of the Valencia Trade Board and general inspector of Valencia silk factories. He had expertise in silk production and marketing, manufacturing excellent silk in large quantities and exporting it to several countries.



Silk production. Inside the College of High Silk Art.

Operating a silk workroom

The craft workshops of any trade were organised in a hierarchy: the masters, who were the owners of the workshops and means of production, and the journeymen and apprentices, workers under their supervision. The masters, like small business owners, would run their own workroom, which operated as a family workshop. The ordinances of the Velluters' Guild limited the maximum number of looms to five per workshop, which was made up of several journeymen, one or two apprentices, as well as the master, his wife and children.

A craftsman started as an apprentice, a training period that lasted around nine or ten years. He was employed by a master to learn the trade. The master trained and maintained him but was not obliged to pay him a salary, as the ordinances did not require this, although on occasions they did receive one. When the apprenticeship was over, the apprentice progressed to journeyman and began to receive a salary. He was normally required to be a journeyman for at least six years to be able to present himself for the title of master and be able to open a workshop after passing the master's exam.

Women working in silk

Women's work was fundamental for silk production, even though they were excluded from the guild organisations. Normally, young girls started working as apprentices in textile craft workshops, and when they reached adulthood, the majority went on to work in their husband's workshops as well as looking after the children and completing housework.

Women and children played an important role in the initial phase of the production process: silkworm rearing, boiling cocoons and extracting thread for twisting, dyeing and garment making. It was a domestic task carried out in the shelf-lined rooms at the top of houses. They also made textiles to sell later at market, and even carried out other additional tasks to increase takings.

DID YOU KNOW...?

María Inés Pomares is representative of the case of a female silk worker in her time. She lived at number 19, Plaza del Conde de Carlet, was married to the important hosiery producer Francisco Molina, and in the year 1792 devised a new method of spinning: instead of spreading the hemp over the spinning wheel, it was tied to the waist and, as this left both hands free to take the threads, the yarn could be distributed better over the needle of the lathe, helping the lathe spin without stopping. The invention of the new hemp spinning wheel meant all kinds of threads could be spun.





The silk cloth manufacture process

Manufacturing silk cloth is a very complex technical process that goes through various stages or procedures:

1. **Gathering cocoons and boiling them.** They are put in a copper pot on the fire and in boiling water the continuous thread gradually loosens. The craftswoman pulls at them, taking them to a manual lathe, on which they eventually become skeins.
2. **Winding.** The lengths are cleaned and tied to obtain a continuous thread on the reel, where they are gradually made to thicknesses determined by touch.
3. **Twisting.** This consists of turning two spindles by hand, which have several threads and hang vertically from each of the hooks fixed to the ceiling.
4. **Washing.** When the silk has been twisted, it is moved to a smaller lathe, where skeins are made and boiled with water and soap to remove roughness.
5. **Dyeing.** The skeins are dyed with natural dyes.
6. In the form of skeins, they are moved to cannons (reed tools where they are wound) to make the warp on a wall warper.
7. **Weaving.** The resulting braid is then fixed (stretched) definitively in the loom where, after the threads have been fully annealed, they begin to weave. In the loom there are two sets of threads: one across the entire loom, called a warp, and the other perpendicular to this, called a weave. The process consists of interweaving threads from the weave with those from the warp. The way in which this is done (number of threads from the warp and how they are interwoven) produces the various types of designs and textures, and as such the various types of silk cloth.
8. **Marketing** of the textiles, once made, would put the finishing touches to the various stages of silk production.

Marketing silk: the Merchants' Exchange

La Lonja de los Mercaderes (Merchants' Exchange) or de la Seda (Silk Exchange) represents better than any other building the splendour of trade and the silk industry in Valencia from the 15th century. It gained its name because behind its walls the main commercial transactions between merchants and traders were settled. From the 18th century it had already gained the name Silk Exchange, at the time of the golden age of Valencian silk.

It is nestled in the historic neighbourhood of the Mercat and its construction was entrusted by the Jury of the City Council to the two best master masons of the time, Pere Compte and Johan Ivarra, with the aim of erecting a new Exchange, "very beautiful, magnificent and sumptuous, to be the honour and ornament of this distinguished city" and would be home to the markets of the various trades and guilds that lined the streets of Valencia. It would eventually come to replace the Old or l'Oli Exchange in the current Plaza del Doctor Collado.

Some of the funding for its construction was provided by the Velluters' Guild, whose merchants were present from when it was opened, writing its contracts and displaying small samples of textiles, threads, skeins and raw material on the wooden tables these traders used.

Construction began in 1483, and the Hall of Columns was completed separately by the master Pere Compte in 1498, after Johan Ivarra's death a few short years after construction began. When Pere Compte died in 1506, other masters continued the work on the Pavilion of the Consulate, which was completed in 1548.

DID YOU KNOW...?

False silk fabrics or those which did not comply with the quality required by guild ordinances were burned in front of the Silk Exchange in the Plaza del Mercado. The overseers of the trade or the masters appointed by the guild monitored the quality of silk cloth produced and sold.

The building includes a Contract Hall or Hall of Columns, which occupies an area of approximately 2,000 metres squared and stands out for its characteristic spiral columns in the shape of palms; a Tower which housed the old chapel and the prison for merchants; the Pavilion of the Consulate, which received the first commercial and maritime court in Spain, the Consulate of the Sea, originating in 1283, and the Orange Garden.

Lonja de la Seda (Silk Exchange)

Plaza del Mercado s/n (Visitors' entrance on Calle de la Lonja, 2)

www.museosymonumentosvalencia.com

Opening hours:

Monday - Saturday

9:30 - 19.00

Sundays and public holidays

9:30 - 15.00



Front of the Silk Exchange.

Silk business. Affluent master craftsmen.

When the silk trade took off in the second half of the 15th century, many master craftsmen became affluent businessmen, giving rise to a bourgeoisie founded on the silk trade.

The Tamarit family, whose palace is preserved in the Velluters neighbourhood, is a good example of the opportunities offered by the Valencian silk trade of the 18th century to make money and climb the social ladder. Through this trade, the family rose from the humblest social ranks to nobility.

At the beginning of the century, Lorenzo Tamarit, who belonged to a family of peasants and fishermen from the Ruzafa orchard, entered a silk workshop to work as an apprentice and, after moving on to journeyman, he eventually became a master in 1730, rising to the top of the craftsmen hierarchy. Instead of limiting himself to directing his workshop, he very quickly began to carry out business activities, which enabled him to amass a great fortune and invest in purchasing agricultural and urban properties.

His son, Vicente Tamarit, spearheaded the family's social mobility when he entered into nobility after acquiring noble privileges in 1788. He focused on trade activity, exporting silk cloth to the colonial market via Cádiz. This dynasty of silk business owners' process of becoming affluent and rising the social ranks culminated with the marriage of one of their sons with the daughter of the highest silk businessman of the time, Félix Pastor.

The Tamarits' family home was in the now Calle Roger de Flor, an 18th-century palace that was also a velvet manufacturer, the history of which is very intertwined with that of the neighbourhood.

The building has been reconstructed from its original interior structure, which was profoundly transformed during the work, so its architectural merits are mostly on the exterior. It has a ground floor, mezzanine, main floor and upper floor, and is made of exposed brick. Noteworthy are the large windows and balconies with forged lattices typical of the 18th century, as well as the round corners to help carriages circulate and turn.

On the lintel of the entrance you can still see the Tamarit, Genovés, Llivería and Ruiz coats of arms in stone, the distinctive symbols assigned to the family as part of their noble titles. In one of the quarters you can see the figure of a spinning wheel or silk loom, a detail that shows that the noble family affirms their silk trade origins.

Today, the building is home to various foundations and offices. In the exhibition hall you can find a number of maps and materials relating to the Silk Road.



Coat of arms in stone for the Tamarit family, on which you can see an element alluding to silk work

Tamarit Palace

Opening hours:

Monday - Friday
de 9:00 - 14:30h.

Exhibitions and events hall as
programmed.



Exterior of the Tamarit Palace.





The decline of the silk industry in the 19th century

At the beginning of the 19th century, silk activity began to decline. In an era of profound economic, social and technical changes, marked by a shift from craft activity to industry, silk manufacture did not manage to adapt to the times. In general, it was behind technologically and unable to innovate in machinery, although there was some attempt to mechanise the sector by creating factories in the modern sense of the word, such as Vinalesa or Patraix.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The Vinalesa silk factory, founded by Josep Lapayesse, was the first factory in Valencia to use water as a driving force, in this case from the Royal Canal of Moncada.



Silk machinery. Inside the College of High Silk Art.



The Valencian silk industry was scarcely competitive against other markets. Cotton came slowly to dominate and the market was reduced when the American colonies were lost and French and Asian textiles were imported. Many looms then stopped working. Furthermore, in 1854 the pébrine epidemic was the final blow for a sector that was already very weak. This disease, which spread across the Mediterranean affecting silkworms, made silkworm rearing much less profitable.

The Velluters' Mutiny

Only two years after the pébrine crisis, the velvet makers' mutiny took place. On 21 January 1856 silk workers rioted opposite the College of High Silk Art asking for work, labour improvements and higher salaries, as a consequence of the severe economic crisis in the sector. The fact that the public call to mutiny was made with wall posters implied some labour organisation, for which reason it is considered the first protest in the city's class war.

DID YOU KNOW...?

In 1836, Santiago Lluís Depuy de Lôme, owner of the old Batifora de Patraix factory, was the first to use the steam engine in the silk industry.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The neighbourhood's associations organise a theatrical rendering to recall these events. Musicians and actors parade the streets of the neighbourhood from the College of High Silk Art, where they put placards on the windows, to the Plaza del Pilar, where they set alight the traditional bonfire.

Silk today

Despite the crisis, the silk industry underwent from the 19th century, this activity survived due to the demand of the Church and traditional Valencian female dress; therefore, some factories managed to continue this manufacture, such as the old Garín factory in the municipality of Moncada, which is still active today.

The Old Garín Factory in Moncada

The old Garín factory, an industrial building with two work sites and a house, has been producing uninterrupted for 290 years. The collection comprises over 7,000 inventoried pieces, among which there are eleven functioning 19th-century Jacquard looms, as well as industrial machinery from the same period. The treasures include more than 3,000 pieces of cloth with embroidered velvet, silk stuff, reliefs, embroidery, as well as approximately 1,000 point cards, around 1,000 sketches, and documents preserved from the 18th century.

Currently, these treasures are on the way to being declared a museum collection. Through the tour, in which you can see the machine in operation and the looms weaving just as they did in the 19th century, the aim is not only to get to know the magnitude of the collection, but also to bring value back to the almost extinct profession of weaver, as well as raising awareness about an ethnological and industrial heritage that marked the economy and development of the province of Valencia.



18th-century Valencian garments.

Garín silk factory in Moncada

Visiting the Garín silk factory in Moncada.

Only for groups of five or more, by e-mail appointment: museudelaseda@moncada.es

Tlf. + 34 610470810

Video:



Silk bobbins at the Old Garín Factory in Moncada.



Silk bobbins at the Old Garín Factory in Moncada.

The survival of silk in Valencian attire

The silk tradition remains alive in traditional Valencian female dress. This clothing began as female farm worker attire and reached its maximum splendour in the 18th century, the period in which the silk industry was most important. Subsequently, it was gradually transformed into dresses that were used on special occasions and on which the influence of French fashion became evident.

Textiles have passed through generations of masters keeping a tradition alive thanks to the Las Fallas festival. These expensive outfits are hand-sewn by the latest silk master craftspeople in a small few workshops. Without doubt, the richness of Las Fallas attire, a symbol of our customs and traditions, continues to emphasise the importance silk has had in Valencia and which is still to this day present in the hearts of Valencians.

Visiting March workshop and house

Only for groups by e-mail appointment sufficiently in advance:

pepelmarch@hotmail.com

A loom maintained at the house and workshop of the March family of craftspeople

Video:



After the silk sector crisis and closing of the workshops, the city's looms gradually started disappearing, such that today there are only a few left in museums.

Fortunately, at the family home and workshop of the March family of craftspeople in the Carmen neighbourhood, there is still a Jacquard silk loom in its original place and several tools of the silk trade, such as textile samples.

Video:



In this house and workshop, where several generations of the same family lived and worked for the large part of the 19th century to this day, the female line continued the silk tradition despite the industry's crisis, producing clerical clothing such as chasubles, stoles and dalmatics, as well as the robes to dress images in Holy Week processions. In addition to silk, in the same space various craft trades have been practised, such as forging, pottery, sculpture, and work with precious metals and jewellery.

Hand-painted silk fans

To this day, there are activities related to silk, such as the production of handcrafted silk fans. In the video you can watch an example of this activity.

Popular songs and proverbs

“As fine as silk” or “finer than silk”.

“To go like silk”: used when something develops with no difficulties.

“Have you sold the silk?”: Asked to someone who spends more than he/she usually does or boasts of having more money than he/she actually has.

“He who has worms should peel leaves”: this proverb is used to excuse oneself from getting involved in problems that do not directly affect one.

“Between a silkworm cocoon and silk, this is what i have”: said of an activity that has not been profitable or worthwhile.

“He who is dressed in silk is either very poor or very rich”: means that one should not make judgments based on appearances.

Sweat in january, silk in february”: means that if in january it is not cold, it will be very cold in february.





TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS:

Airport / Terminal aeropuerto de Valencia (Manises)
961530229 - 961598451
infoturistica-aeropuerto@visitvalencia.com

City Hall / Plaza del Ayuntamiento, 1
963524908
infoturistica-ayuntamiento@visitvalencia.com

Joaquín Sorolla Station / Estación Joaquín Sorolla (AVE)
963803623 infoturistica-js@visitvalencia.com

Marina de Valencia / Muelle de la Aduana s/n
(junto al Edificio del Reloj)
961207745 - 961207746 - 961207749
valenciamarinareal@touristinfo.net

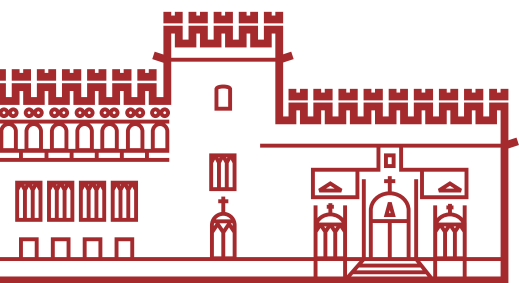
Paz / Calle de la Paz, 48
963986422 - 963986421 infoturistica@visitvalencia.com

Beach / Paseo de Neptuno (junto al Hotel Balneario
Las Arenas) - Abierto en verano
628789837 infoturistica-playa@visitvalencia.com

Port / Muelle de Poniente s/n
Horario sujeto a llegadas de cruceros
963674606 infoturistica-puerto@visitvalencia.com



Silk in Valencia's museums





Valencia Municipal History Museum

www.museosymonumentosvalencia/museos

The Museo Histórico Municipal (Municipal History Museum) is inside the City Hall, occupying some of the rooms that in their day were part of the Royal House of Teaching.

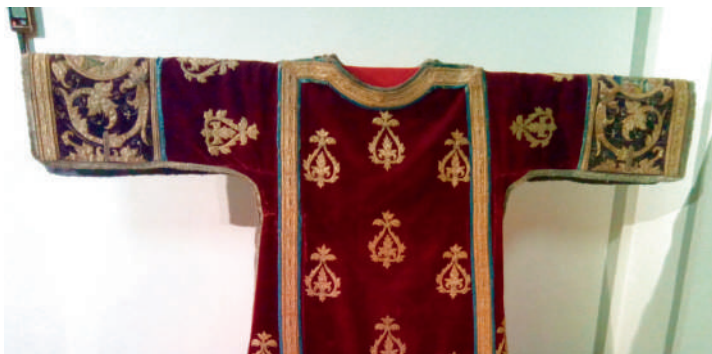
Founded in 1927 to safeguard municipal artistic and cultural history, in its four rooms it houses a wide range of pieces that demonstrate the richness of the Valencian silk industry.

In the first room, we can see the plans of Antonio Mancelli (1608) and Tomás Vicente Tosca (1704), where you can see in detail the urban framework for the Velluters neighbourhood, with the College of High Silk Art, the Tamarit Palace and the streets and workroom-houses linked to the silk industry.

In the second room, dedicated to views of Valencia from historical prints, you can admire a rich and varied collection of silk straight cut velvet chasubles from the 16th and 17th centuries.

In the fourth room, at the top of the old Santa Rosa de Lima Church, you can find silk straight cut velvet dalmatics from the 16th and 17th centuries, the Real Senyera (Valencian flag) facsimile from 1927 and the flags of the Shoemakers' Guild, Tailors' Guild and Tanners' Guild, all made with silk.

In this room you can see silk art depicted in pictures on the fragments of the mural decoration of the old jurors' chapel, a work by Miquel Esteve and Miguel del Prado (1519); the canvas "Immaculate Conception and the City Jurors" by Jerónimo Jacinto de Espinosa; and the Final Judgment altarpiece by Van Der Stock (1495), among other artists.



Dalmatic (16th-17th centuries) Municipal History Museum.



Crystal Hall.



Plaza del Ayuntamiento, 1

Opening hours:
Monday - Friday
9:00 - 15:00h

Cathedral Museum

www.catedraldevalencia.es

The museum in Valencia Cathedral, recently renovated and expanded, is home to valuable specimens of religious dress made with silk, with 15th- and 16th-century brocades, chasubles and dalmatics, as well as paintings in which the characters depicted wear luxurious silk cloth.

In terms of depiction of silk in paintings, you can admire the altarpiece of Saint Dionysius on the cathedra, a work by Rodrigo de Osona, in which the saint appears dressed like a 15th-century prelate, with a cope and mitre, both made of silk, and painter Jacomart's altarpiece of Saint Ildefonso, who also appears wearing luxurious silk attire.

The Monstrance, considered the largest in the world, with 600 kilos of silver and 8 of gold, has veils made of silk.

Additionally, on the dome ceiling of the Cathedral's Main Chapel, silk is depicted pictorially in the mural paintings of the angel musicians (1472 - 1481), a work by the Italians Paolo Da San Leocadio and Francesco Pagano, richly adorned in silk apparel, dress which, together with the blue colour of the background and the fine gold, help to highlight the decorative luxury of the whole, as a sign of the ostentation and financial wealth of the cathedral chapter.



Chasuble at the Cathedral.



Renaissance angel musicians on the dome ceiling of the main chapel of Valencia Cathedral.



Plaza de la Almoina, s/n

June - September

October - May

Sundays from November - March

Monday - Saturday:

10:00 - 18:30

Sundays and public holidays:

14:00 - 18:30

Monday - Saturday:

10:00 - 17:30

Sundays and public holidays:

14:00 - 17:30

Closed.

L'iber Museum of Lead Soldiers

www.museoliber.org

The largest museum of historical miniatures in the world is located in an old gothic-style palace, originally the residence of the Marquis of Malferit, and is one of the best-preserved buildings of the era.

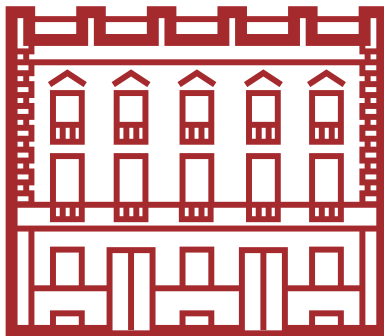
Driven by Valencia being declared City of Silk 2016, the lead soldiers museum has opened a room dedicated to the Silk Road, exhibiting miniature figures representing scenes from some of the countries and cities that are part of this legendary trade route, such as China, Japan, Turkey and Italy. In the display cabinets you can see various scenes such as a trade caravan arriving in Peking and the entrance to the city, a crowded market in Delhi, representations of daily life and even scenes relating to Valencia.



Gothic courtyard at L'iber Museum. Malferit Palace.



Trade caravan arriving in Peking. Silk Road. Lead Soldiers Museum.



Calle Caballeros 20, 22

Opening hours:

Wednesday - Sunday

11:00 - 14:00

16:00 - 19:00

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Summer hours

(July and August)

Monday - Sunday

10:00 - 14:00

15:00 - 20:00

Valencian Museum of Ethnology

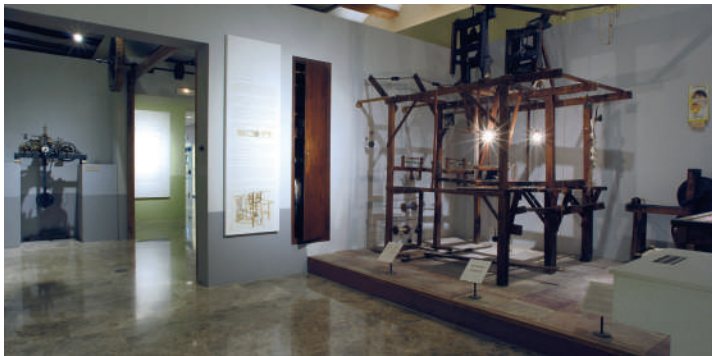
www.museuvalenciaetnologia.es

The Valencian Museum of Ethnology is inside the old Casa de Beneficencia (Welfare House), built in 1841 on the remains of the old La Corona Convent.

The museum, created in 1982 by the Valencia Provincial Government, is the ultimate point of reference for traditional Valencian culture and society.

Among its various rooms it has a unique, remarkable space where a passementerie workshop has been recreated. Passementerie is one of the so-called Minor Arts belonging to the Rope and Lace Makers' Guild, a trade that was part of the College of High Silk Art.

In this room you can see a pair of handlooms with Jacquard machinery from the last quarter of the 19th century, which were used to make tassels, braids, fringes and lace by braiding silk with materials such as gold and silver thread and the working space characteristic of a passementerie workshop.



Jacquard loom exhibited at the Valencian Museum of Ethnology. 19th century.



Inner courtyard of the Valencian Museum of Ethnology.



Valencian Museum of Ethnology.



Calle Corona, 36

Opening hours:
Tuesday - Sunday
10:00 - 20:00

González Martí National Museum of Ceramics and Sumptuary Arts

www.mecd.gob.es/mnceramica

The González Martí National Museum of Ceramics and Sumptuary Arts is located in the Marqués de Dos Aguas Palace, founded in 1947 from a donation to the State from Manuel González Martí's ceramics collection.

In the courtyard to enter the museum you can distinguish, above the bays, high terracotta reliefs from 1867 with allegorical figures depicting the economic foundations of the Marquisate de Dos Aguas, particularly a female figure working on harvesting silk cocoons and means of production for garment making.

In the Hall of Carriages are two magnificent 18th-century carriages. On the Marquis de Llanera's carriage you will find silk on the hangings, and on the Nymphs' Carriage you can see velvet covering parts of its interior, although it is not all original, as in restorations modern fabric has been placed on top.

Every year, from the beginning of December to the beginning of February, in a small room of this old courtyard of carriages, the Neapolitan nativity scene is exhibited, so called because the sculpted figures can be attributed to various 18th-century Neapolitan sculptors. Some of the figures, such as Saint Joseph, the Virgin Mary and the three Wise Men, are dressed in silk cloth.

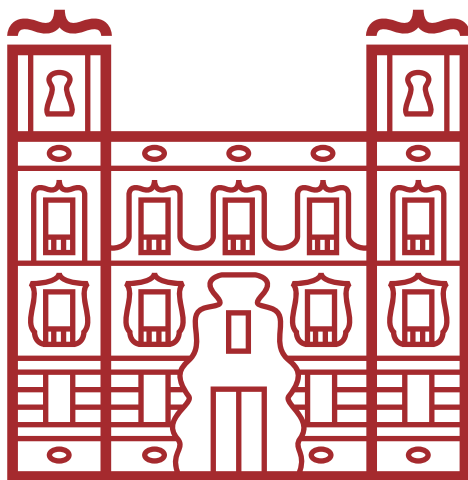
The museum exhibits some ceramic pieces inspired by textile. During the 15th century it was normal to take Valencian silk clothing as a model for the decorative motifs of ceramic items. This relationship between ceramics and silk remains evident on a ceramic fire bowl from Manises, in the centre of which is the coat of arms of the Cabanilles. It is also evident on two plates, golden and blue pottery, also 15th-century ceramic from Manises.



Marquis de Llanera's carriage. González Martí National Museum of Ceramics and Sumptuary Arts.



Front of the museum..



Poeta Querol, 2

Opening hours:

Tuesday - Saturday

10:00 - 14:00

16:00 - 20:00

Sundays and public holidays

10:00 - 14:00

Valencia Fine Arts Museum

www.museobellasartesvalencia.gva.es

In 1778, on the order of King Charles III, the Hall of “Flowers, Decorations and other suitable designs for Textiles” was created in the San Carlos Royal Academy of Fine Arts. The purpose of this Hall, converted six years later into a School, was to train designers capable of creating original models to supply to silk cloth manufacturers and end Valencia’s dependence on foreign silk being imported primarily from Lyon.

In this way, through these studies that the King equated in rank and dignity with other academic teaching, the aim was to train professionals specialising in painting flowers who knew how to adapt their pictures to textiles, loom operation and thus update textile designs.

These teachings in flower painting applied to textiles, which influenced Valencian silk designs in the last third of the 18th century and in the 19th century, brought to life a large number of high-quality flower painters. However, they drew pictures that were too complicated to take to the loom, which met with some resistance among disciples, so in reality the School of Flowers’ influence on textile activity was, in fact, limited.

The School was directed for over 30 years by Benito Espinós. Notable artists included José Ferrer, Miguel Parra and José Romá, among others – painters whose works and models are preserved at the Fine Arts Museum.

The museum also exhibits important religious and historical paintings and portraits of characters dressed in luxurious silk cloth.





San Pío V, 9

Opening hours:
Tuesday - Sunday
de 10:00 a 20:00h
Closed on Monday

Patriarch Museum

www.patriarcavalencia.es

The Patriarch Museum is in the Royal Seminary College of Corpus Christi, better known as the College of the Patriarch, founded by Saint Juan de Ribera to train priests according to the spirit and provisions of the Council of Trent.

The museum was created in 1959 to exhibit to the public an important part of the rich art collection accumulated by the College over centuries, from paintings to books, documents, sculptures and gold and silver items.

At the museum you can find silk art depicted pictorially in a large number of paintings, on both royal and religious figures wearing silk attire of various kinds and a highly varied range of colours, such as the painting by Vicente Requena that depicts Saints Claudius and Nicholas.

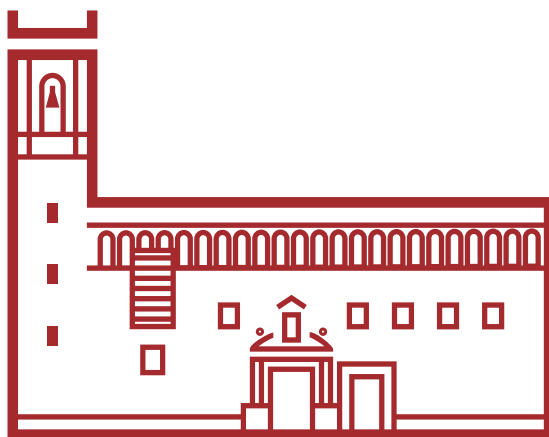
The inner rooms of the College preserve high-quality liturgical textiles from various periods.



Saints Claudius and Nicholas, Vicente Requena. Patriarch Museum



Queen Margaret of Austria, Antonio Ricci, 1592.



Calle de la Nave, 1

Tours with prior reservation:
info@valenciatour.org
Tlf. + 34 692 49 17 69

Museum of Semana Santa at the maritime quarter

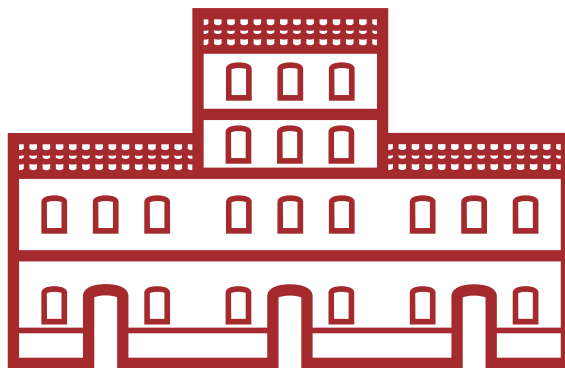
www.semanasantamarinera.org

Situated in an old rice mill, this museum brings together many of the custom and traditions of the Easter celebrations of the maritime community of Valencia.

During tour you can see tunics, capes, gloves, sandals and banners that are part of the rich and colorful textile heritage of the 30 collectives of Brotherhoods, Brotherhoods and Corporations that make up the Semana Santa Marinera From Valencia.



Museum of Maritime Holy Week.



Calle del Rosario, 1

Opening hours:

Tuesday - Saturday

10:00 - 14:00

16:30 - 20:30

Sunday

10:00 - 15:00

Valencia History Museum

www.valencia.es/mhv/

At the Valencia History Museum, opened in May 2003, you can see five videos related to Valencian silk in the 18th and 19th centuries. From farmhouses to silk; from silk to the bobbin; from the bobbin to fabrics; through to the figure of Valencian Joaquín Manuel Fos, the moiré technique and the College of High Silk Art.

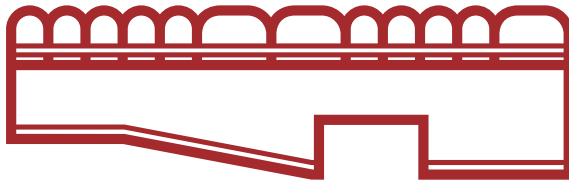
Also exhibited among its pieces are a silk Mudejar chasuble, Valencian outfits from the 18th and 19th centuries, a coat of arms with the image of King James I embroidered in silk, weaver's shuttles, cards from the Jacquard machine with pictures to weave silk stuff, etc.



Valencia History Museum (15th - 16th centuries).



Female dress (18th century) Valencia History Museum.



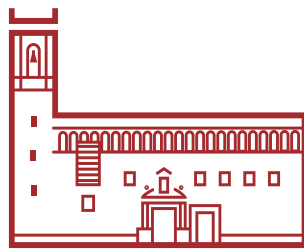
Calle Valencia, 42
Mislata (Valencia)

Opening hours:
Tuesday - Saturday
9:30 - 19:00

Sundays and public holidays
9:30 - 15:00



5. Municipal History Museum



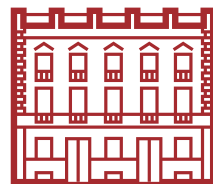
6. Museum of the Patriarch



7. González Martí Museum of Ceramics and Sumptuary Arts



8. Valencia Cathedral Museum



9. L'iber Museum of Lead Soldiers



10. Valencian Museum of Ethnology



11. San Pio V Fine Arts Museum



12. Museum of Maritime Holy Week



13. Museum of the History of the City



Guide Map

Valencia: City of Silk

www.comunitatvalenciana.com

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instagram.com/comunitat_valenciana

