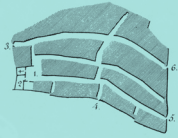


# A walk in the history of Old Vilanova

## Self-guided touristic route



We propose you a self-guided route in the streets of the old district of Vilanova, to uncover you its history and allow you to enjoy of its rich heritage. **The route lasts approximately one hour**, starting from de les Neus square and ending in Sant Josep street, **visiting 12 hallmarks of the district** in the journey.



Old Vilanova,  
Year 1370



Old Vilanova,  
Year 1500

## ORIGIN OF THE OLD DISTRICT OF VILANOVA

According to the legend, a *vila nova* ("vilanova" means new city in Catalan) arose as a consequence of the arrival of inhabitants of the neighbour city of Geltrú, who escaped from the feudal impositions of their lord. The written document reminding the founding of Vilanova is the 1274 *Carta Poble* of the king James the 1st, reproduced in the façade of the Town Council located in Plaça de la Vila.

### PLAÇA DE LES NEUS (NEUS SQUARE)

At the higher end of the *Rambla*, in **Neus square**, we find the modernist façade of the **Parish Church of Sant Antoni Abat (1)**. In the façade, the image of Our Lady *de les Neus* stands out, flanked by Saint John the Baptist and Saint Anthony Abbot, together with the stained glass windows made by the modernist architect Josep Maria Pujol. Under the square, there is one of the air-raid shelters built by the locals during the Civil War.



### PLAÇA DE SANT ANTONI (SANT ANTONI SQUARE)

In **Sant Antoni square**, it's worth paying attention to the main façade of the temple of Saint Anthony Abbot (1734-1879), with the monumental effigy of the holder thereof. Close to it, you will find the **bell tower (1670-1706) (2)**, a masterpiece of the baroque architecture and the sole item that was preserved from the old gothic church, which was demolished in 1790. The building was topped by the monumental effigy of an angel, melted down to make cannon bullets during the Civil War. In 1996, a copy of the statue was put again in place.



### PLAÇA DE MIRÓ I SOLER (MIRÓ I SOLER SQUARE)

The first cemetery of the town was located in **del Fossar Vell street**. The streets ends in the **Miró i Soler square**, where we can visit the **cast iron fountain (3)**, made by architect Josep Font i Gumà (1895), and funded by the local Elies Miró i Soler, who wished to have a fountain in front of his house. The nowadays called **dels Estudis street** was before called Hospital street because the first hospital in the town was located here.



### CARRER MAJOR (MAJOR STREET)

**Major street** was, probably, the first street built in Vilanova, since it is located in the way between Barcelona and Tarragona. The Association of Popular Dances, an entity the purpose of which is the recovery and spread of the popular dances of Vilanova i la Geltrú, has its headquarters here. In the crossroad with **Antoni Marquès street**, old protections done for the carriages' turns, called "roderes", are still in place. The neoclassical style house of the Marquises of Samà (number 54-56), presents an extraordinary wrought iron work in balconies and grilles. Through **Campanar Street** we reach **Arxiprest Llorenç Garriga Street**.

### CARRER DE L'ESGLÉSIA (ESGLÉSIA STREET)

In **Església street**, you will find the building of the **Orfeó Vilanoví (4)**, where the chorus founded in 1905 is located, a society devoted to popularized songs in Catalan language, which is still working nowadays. The building was constructed in 1910 by the modernist architect Gaietà Miret i Raventós and the works were funded by the businessmen and music lover, Josep Ferrer-Vidal i Soler. The façade has silkscreen printings of the entity's name, flower patterns and the town's coat of arms.



### PLAÇA PAU CASALS (PAU CASALS SQUARE)

**Plaça Pau Casals** was called, from 1374 to 1867, Main Square, since here is where the first Town **Council of Vilanova (5)** was placed, located in the corner of the square with the current Saint Anthony Street. A panel made of ceramic tiles gives information about it. **At Lluna Street**, the house of the Marquises of Vilanova i la Geltrú was located (nº 1), with its remarkable coat of arms located over the entrance door.



### CARRER DE SANT PERE (SANT PERE STREET)

In **Comerç street**, which was previously called *Sea Road* -since it conduced to the Fishermen's quarter-, remains of the old Sea Gate (at number 23 of the street) are preserved, which was the entry gate to the walled town of Vilanova in the fourteenth century. **Sant Pere street (6)** has a remarkable commercial character, with some of the oldest shops in the city, i.e. *l'Espiga d'Or* (1888), *l'Adrogueria Ferret* (1880) or *Cal Grífols*, which was also established in the end of the nineteenth century.



## PLAÇA LLARGA (LLARGA SQUARE)

From **Llarga square**, we can see the only remains from the first walled town of Vilanova, the **Pont del Negrell or Pont del Nin (7)**. **Sant Antoni street** presents a rich heritage, a sample of the rich past and of the progress brought to the city by the commerce with the colonies. The *Banco de Villanueva* (1881-1924), was the first financial entity in the town, and it was located in this street, at number nº 6-8. Close to it is *Casa Nin* (s. XV), headquarters of the *Diari de Vilanova*, the oldest newspaper in the state.

## PLAÇA DEL POU (POU SQUARE)

Through **Palmerar street**, we reach **Pou square**. The square leads to the Geltrú district through a bridge to jump over the torrent (nowadays Unió Street). You can see here **the stone fountain devoted to the local Archbishop Francesc Armanyà (8)**, made by architect Francisco de Paula del Villar. The fountain was raised to celebrate the arrival of current water to town, in 1861.

## PLAÇA DE LES CASERNES (CASERNES SQUARE)

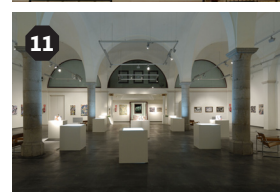
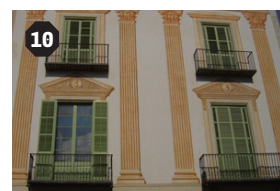
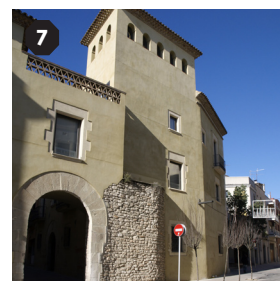
At **Casernes square**, **the military building of the barracks (9)**, was built between 1751-1771, to finish with the obligation of most of the locals to host at their homes the soldiers staying in town. Today, it is the Municipality School of Art and Design. **Casernes street**, where the *Colla dels Castellans dels Bordegassos de Vilanova* has its headquarters, leads to **Escorxador street**. The building of the Municipal Slaughter House was built in 1883 and today it houses the Municipal School and Conservatory of Music Mestre Montserrat.

## PLAÇA DE LA DIPUTACIÓ (DIPUTACIÓ SQUARE)

If we cross the square and we follow the **Premses street** up to the **Diputació square**, we will find the neoclassical façade of the *Casa Papiol* (Papiol House), home to the **Romantic Museum "Can Papiol" (10)**. The building was built at the end of the eighteenth century by Francesc de Papiol i de Padró; its a lordly house which gives an idea of the way of life of nobles during the Romantic period.

## CARRER DE SANT JOSEP (SAINT JOSEP STREET)

At **Sant Josep street**, we find the **Contemporaneous Art Centre of "La Sala" (11)**, which was the first theatre in town, built in 1804 and recovered in 2007 as an exhibition room. At number 5 in this street, we find the *Casa Mir* (Mir House), home to the painter Joaquim Mir i Trinxet, who was the cultural engine of the town. At the high end of the street, we find the building of the **Hospital Sant Antoni Abat**, and the old **chapel of the Convent of the Discalced Carmelites (12)**, built in the eighteenth century. Expelled from the convent in 1835, the Hospital located in Estudis street was transferred to the building in 1853. An olive tree in front of the disappeared house where Francesc Macià i Llussà was born was planted to pay homage to the president of the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Catalonian Government) during the Second Spanish Republic.



## Guidemap Old Vilanova



### Route hallmarks

1. Church of Sant Antoni Abat
2. Bell Tower of Sant Antoni
3. Elies Miró i Soler Fountain (Iron Fountain)
4. Orfeó Vilanoví
5. Old Town Council of Vilanova
6. Sant Pere street
7. Pont del Nin
8. Fountain of the Archbishop Armanyà
9. Building of Les Casernes
10. Papiol Museum
11. La Sala
12. Church of the Josepets