



MARIANA DE PINEDA'S GRANADA

In the first third of the 19th century, Granada was one of the most beautiful and seductive cities in Europe, a genuine focal point for visitors and romantic artists who glared in wonder at its contrasts and picturesque alcoves. Elements of a glorious *Andalusi* past shared centre stage with the new urban landscape, constructions and architectonic styles that came into being in the Christian city from 1492 onwards.

A stroll through the neighbourhoods of the former Islamic *medina* allowed people to shift between sinuous and cramped alleyways, through city walls, archaic gateways and exotic monuments (**E.6**) under the commanding gaze of the Alhambra (**E.2, E.7 and E.3**) and the Albaicín district.

The Darro River traversed through the city leaving in its wake the traditional houses and bridges which then allowed the two riverbanks that made its riverbed to pass through prior to its culverting (**E.13, E.18 and E.17**). The carefree jaunts around the Genil (**E.4**) became one of the preferred places of enjoyment for Granadan society. The panorama was completed with renowned characters and dames decked out in the typical garments of the period (**E.8 and E.9**).

Alongside this city with a nod to eastern fashions, the Granada of the 19th century was also the successor of the Christian city, which, from the 16th century onwards, pursued the Castilian ideal. The regularisation of streets, demolitions and widening projects had as their aim the urban restructuring and creation of new public squares and spaces. At the same time, expansion areas were devised towards the area of the Vega, beyond the former Islamic fort enclosure. Following the influence of the new artistic ethos, significant civil and religious buildings were constructed, namely the Cathedral (**E.14**) and the parochial churches, focal points of urban expansion and nuclei around which the different areas or settings into which the population was divided. The religious fabric would be completed with convents, nunneries, monasteries, hermitages, crosses and chapels.

Against this backdrop, the childhood and early youth of Mariana de Pineda took place in one of the most discerning quarters; the *carrera del Darro*, attached to the parish of Santa Ana next to the flamboyant *Plaza Nueva*, the nerve centre of the Granada socialites of the time.

The creation of *Plaza Nueva* dates back to the 16th century and entailed the first partial covering of the river, along with the construction of a series of elements around the Darro; at the rear end of the square and the Mudejar tower on Santa Ana Church, set between two town houses, before a renaissance era pillar, to the left of the majestic judiciary building of the Royal Chancellery, to the right a former hospital and at the end, the Vela Tower. (**E.16 and E.12**).

Another major hub in the city, also set aside for official acts and celebrations, was the bustling Bibarrambbla Square (**E.5**). Close to the thoroughfares of Zacatín, Mesones and the Alcaicería, it comprised the trading heart of Granada in which the fishmongers', fruit and vegetable market and butchers' were established. In these highly privileged environs, the Mariana's adoptive family managed a trading company located in the now disappeared Cucharas. Archway, which

afforded access from the actual square to Mesones Street and the thriving Santa María Magdalena district.

The neighbourhood was one of the main residential and commercial areas of modern-day Granada, already perfectly established by the end of the 18th century, as can be noted in the map drawn by Francisco Dalmau in 1796 (**E.11**). Characterised by the existence of courtyard houses, along with others of shared or residents' usage, stately homes, attracted wealthy groups, liberal professional, the urban bureaucracy, along with manufacturers and traders of various trades and functions.

It was in this neighbourhood where Mariana would reside along with her family for the last ten years of her life and during her political militancy. Firstly, she lived in the former Recogidas street (**E.10**) then from 1828 onwards, moving into a comfortable courtyard house in Águila Street, close then to the Vega area and the Gracia Square. The exhibition space is located on the ground floor of the dwelling, which currently houses the European Women's Foundation *Mariana de Pineda*.

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