



Exhibition room. (Roman Madrid)

Coinciding with the refurbishment works, the exhibition narrative has been improved to make it clearer and more attractive, and periods of Madrid's prehistory and history that previously received little attention have been expanded. Meanwhile, the addition of sites excavated in recent years has refreshed and shed new light on the archaeology of Madrid. The different contents are displayed through a variety of devices, including some that harness the latest technologies to facilitate a much better understanding of the exhibits, while the large display cases ensure perfect conservation of the collections and help to show them off to visitors. The overall design is integrated with the building architecture, most notably the three parabolic arches, which serve as a vast container for the different sections. In short, the museum has been modernised to cater to visitors' needs and adapt to the future.

Other interesting spaces housed in the museum are the Archaeobotanical Garden, with plants documented in medieval Madrid, and the Storeroom where a vast array of pieces dating from the Tertiary period to the 20th century are displayed, providing visitors with the opportunity to see a larger number of objects from the rich collections on the city and surrounding area. The museum also has a room for temporary exhibitions and an assembly hall on the first floor.



Renaissance patio 16th century

Museo de San Isidro. The Origins of Madrid.

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MUSEO DE SAN ISIDRO

The Origins of Madrid





Zacarías González Velázquez. Funerary allegory of San Isidro (detail), 1789

Inaugurated in 2000, the museum is housed in the former palace of the Counts of Paredes, more popularly known as the “House of Saint Isidore” since according to legend it is the place where the saint lived and died. The new building contains elements of the original structure: a Renaissance courtyard from the 16th century, a 17th-century chapel, decorated in 1789 with tempera paintings by Zacarías González Velázquez, and the “miracle well” where Saint Isidore is believed to have saved his son from drowning by making the water rise miraculously to the mouth of the well.

The paintings in the museum deal with the theme of the remote origins of the area and the foundation and subsequent development of the city of Madrid until the year 1561, when it became the seat of the royal court.



Hernán Pérez de Albiz. Cenotaph of Francisco Ramírez, the gunner, (detail) around 1530



Urn with lid. Iron Age



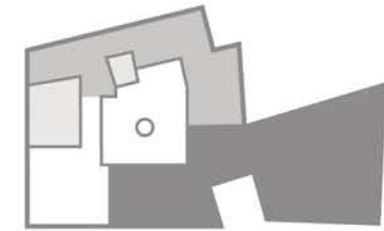
Exhibition room. (Recent Prehistory)



Bronze fibula. Iron Age

Woolly Rhinoceros skull

The museum boasts various collections of archaeological and palaeontological artefacts from the excavations and prospections carried out in the late 19th century and during most of the 20th century. These are joined by unique pieces like the funerary monuments of Francisco Ramírez de Madrid, the “gunner”, and Beatriz Galindo, nicknamed “La Latina” for her skill in Latin. Like other *objets d’art* from the Late Middle Ages to the present day, these exhibits transcend the realm of archaeology and focus instead on the concept of **city museum**.



■ ANTES DE MADRID ■ MAYRIT : MADRID ■ SAN ISIDRO

The permanent exhibition located on the entrance level and ground floor is organised around three themes. *Before Madrid* houses a magnificent collection of remains of elephants, rhinoceroses, mammoths and other now-extinct species that once shared our river valleys with the first hunter-gatherers. Displayed alongside are the stone tools that these early dwellers used, while the next exhibit examines the lifestyle of the first producing societies, the changes ushered in by new techniques like metalworking, the dawn of the historical age, the arrival of the Romans and, lastly, the Visigothic period. *Mayrit: Madrid* deals with the history of the city from its foundation by the Muslims, tracing its subsequent annexation to the Kingdom of Castile and its expansion to become the seat of the royal court under Philip II. The whole of the last section, *Saint Isidore*, is dedicated to the patron saint of Madrid and his wife, Saint María de la Cabeza. The major renovation recently undertaken affects the first two sections.