



 **Diputació
de Castelló**



IN THE
FOOTSTEPS OF
ZEIT ABU ZEIT

"He was a very well-bred and restrained man, humane, fair, tall in body, royal in appearance, with very beautiful eyes, a vulnerable face and full of majesty; he had long hair and wore a silk bonnet on his head, he was always dressed in scarlet and was accompanied by many servants and his children"

Words of Ferdinand III of Castile describing Zeit Abu Zeit



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ARGELITA

The Village and Zeit Abu Zeit

Argelita is located in the Alto Mijares region of the province of Castellón. It was an important centre at the time of the Christian conquest during the 13th century.

Argelita was one of the territories in the hands of one of the most important figures of this period, Zeit Abu Zeit, dethroned as king of Valencia by Zayyan Ibn Mardanix.

Zeit Abu Zeit converted to Christianity, was an ally of King James I and took part in the conquest against his own people. Despite this, most of his domains were inhabited by Muslims, as in the case of the town of Argelita, where Zeit Abu Zeit's main palace was located, and which remained there until his death in 1269.

After his death, his sons received an important inheritance as they were directly related to the Aragonese nobility. Thus, his son Fernando Pérez became the owner of the properties of Argelita.



The remains of the palace-fortress

Today, two towers remain of the original castle-palace (a Site of Cultural Interest) and walled enclosure of the town. The first is rectangular in shape, with four storeys and a crenellated top. It is a masonry tower, with corners reinforced with ashlar. There are rectangular windows with stone lintels and another with a segmental arch. This tower has a round floor plan, also made of masonry. Access to the first floor is through an ashlar doorway with a semicircular arch. It has rectangular windows and a crenellated top. This tower is higher than the previous one and was connected to the palace by a drawbridge at the level of the first floor. It has an Arabic inscription commemorating the year 1252.

The palace was demolished in 1942, for the subsequent use of its timber for the parish church of Sant Pere del Grao de Castelló, demolishing all its walls, leaving these two towers standing, between which we can currently find a garden.

The "Buey Negro" Castle

Within the heritage of the town of Argelita we can find, as Site of Cultural Interest, the Castle of "Buey Negro". This fortress had a clear relationship with the Andalusian centre of Argelita in the Islamic period and throughout the years following the reconquest. The enclosure of this medieval work, delimited by defensive structures, is one of the largest in the province.

It is known to have been mentioned in the will of Zeit Abu Zeit at the end of the 13th century, more precisely in October 1262.



The legacy of Zeit Abu Zeit

The ancient Argelita of Zeit Abu Zeit, has left us the mark of an Andalusian town in the Islamic period, with vestiges such as the structure of its streets, which conserve the urban aspect of the old Muslim streets (narrow, concentric streets and whitewashed walls), as well as the canal systems for the irrigation of crops.

