



THE "BUEY NEGRO" CASTLE

An impregnable fortress

“When the troops of Jaume I threatened the town, the useful men from all over the region took refuge in Buey Negro. Once the fortress was besieged, attempts at force were useful until, on a dark night, more than a thousand mountain goats were rounded up and stuffed with oakum and resin, forcing them to go in a certain direction. The refugees who saw so many lights climbing up the cuts and verticals believed themselves lost; some sought a heroic death, while others fell through the cuts.”



**Ayuntamiento
de Argelita**

C/ Honorato Ros, 9 Tel. 964 61
21 39

Correo electrónico:
info@argelita.es



/ayuntamientodeargelita

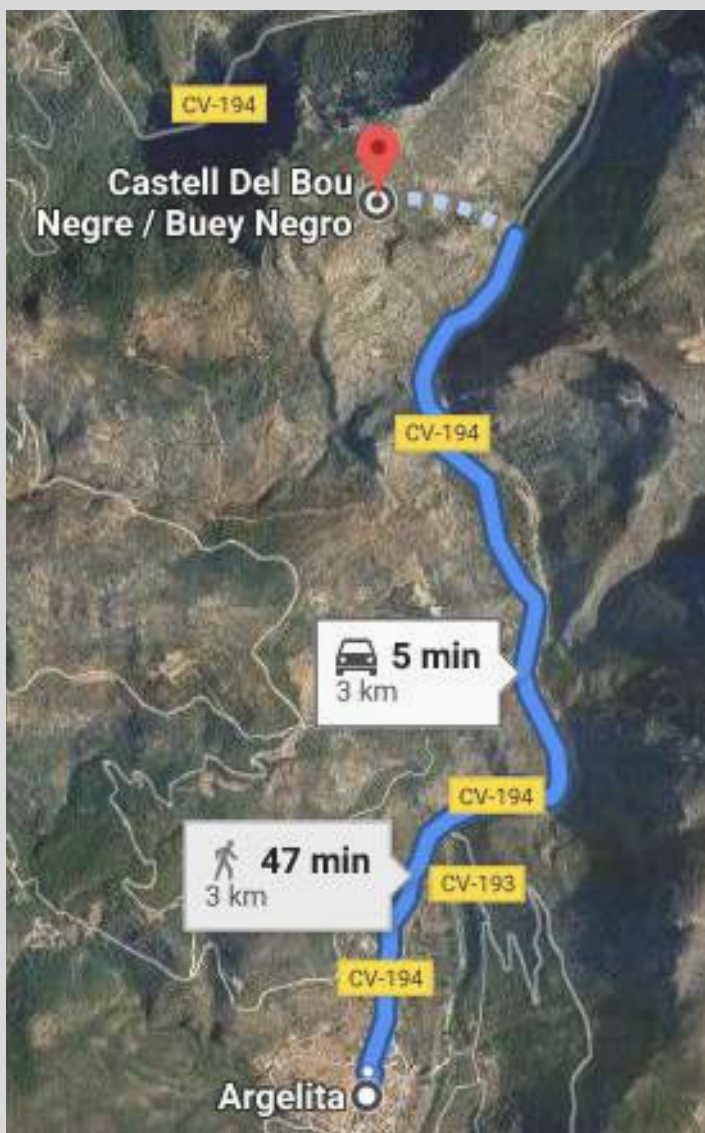


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Location

This fortification is located on a high mountain on the border of the municipalities of Argelita and Ludiente, on the rocky parapet that overhangs the strait formed by the Villahermosa River before reaching the town, at an altitude of 748 metres.



Historical Background

The Buey Negro Castle (Black Ox Castle) was the dominant castle over a large area of territory, which included numerous villages. However, it is not possible to specify the date of its construction, although it is true that there is already mention of its existence in documents from the 12th century.

It had a clear relationship with the andalusian centre of Argelita in the Islamic period, and, throughout the years after the reconquest, the castle of Bounegre appears in documentary references.

However, it soon ceased to be used, with some mention of it at the end of the 13th century, such as that of Zeit Abu Zeit (former Arab governor of Valencia) in his will in October 1262.

In the 19th century, the area was transformed as a result of the reoccupation of the site, with the construction of farmhouses and farmyards, as well as the remodelling of land for agricultural use.

The Castle

Within the heritage of the town of Argelita, we can find, as an Asset of Cultural Interest, the Castle of Buey Negro.

The enclosure of this mediaeval work, enclosed by defensive structures, is one of the largest in the province. Along with these structures, large escarpments made the site an impassable fortress.

Within its construction, we can find a tower in the highest part. This slightly rectangular fortification was built with large stones. The walls, dating from the Muslim period and made of mortar formwork, defended an area of 15 hectares. It can be seen that some of the points that make them up had battlements on their crowns and a series of towers with small, flared arrow slits. Lastly, the fact that there were cisterns and wells inside the enclosure suggests that it was a place with clear strategic value for defending against enemy attacks.

