



### Plaza Merced – Our Lady of Mercy Square

According to excavations this appears long ago to have been the site of a Roman amphitheatre.


From the time of a Royal Decree in 1489 this area, just outside the former city walls, was home to a tax free market.

In due course there emerged around the square three convents. Immediately opposite from where you are standing was the **Convent La Paz** (1519 – mid 19<sup>th</sup> century); to the far left was the **Convent La Merced** (demolished in 1899); and on the right was the **Convent Santa Ana** (demolished in the early years of last century to make way for the **Victoria Eugenia cinema** – designed by Strachan, and dating from 1913). The side of the square on which you have joined Plaza Merced follows the line of the northern edge of the walls of the old Muslim city.

For much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the square was known as ‘**Plaza Riego**’ (after a liberal revolutionary, who led a military uprising in Cadiz in 1820).

The square was landscaped in pretty much its present form in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and most of the present buildings emerged in the mid/late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The iron for the railings within and around the square came from the Heredia factory, named after one of Malaga’s leading industrialists and benefactors (whose statue we saw earlier on this walk).

In the centre is the **Torrijos obelisk** – of which, more later.

 We shall return to this Plaza shortly, but for the moment turn left and walk along the south side of the square, exiting along Calle Alamos.

A few yards along on the left – at number 32 – is the **Doll’s House Museum**.

Watch out for the rather charming sign projecting – just above Spanish head height – over the pavement.

### Doll’s House Museum – Museo de Munecas

Open Tues – Sun  
11–13.00

This museum is housed in a restored 18<sup>th</sup> century baroque building. The collection has over 50 hand-made items dating back to 1850. Opening hours are not generous – but exhibits can sometimes be seen through the windows even when closed.

Exit the Doll’s House Museum and turn to the left.


A block or two along, on the right at number 7, will be found the recently opened **Museo de Reales Oficios** – in the late 18th century **Palacio de los Marqueses de Cropani**.



### Palacio de los Marqueses de Cropani: Textiles Museum

Open 11–14 hrs.

This is a ‘must’ to visit if only in order to enjoy the beautifully restored interior of this building.

 Exit and turn left, retracing your steps along Calle Alamos.

Quite soon turn left into Calle Carcer.

Walk up to the **Teatro Cervantes**.



### Teatro Cervantes

This dates from 1870 and was built by Ramos Marin to a design by Jeronimo Cuervo.


It stands on the site of part of the former **Convent La Merced**, and replaced an earlier theatre which was destroyed by fire. Indeed, this replacement also suffered a fire not long before its opening.

Following a period during which

the building suffered neglect, the city council acquired the property in 1984 and financed the works to renovate the building.

The renovated theatre, with a capacity of 1,171 seats – and excellent air-conditioning – was opened by Her Majesty Queen Sofia on 6th April 1987.

The ornately painted ceiling of the auditorium is by Bernardo Ferrandiz and Munoz Degrain. It depicts scenes typical of life in Malaga.

 Pass the Teatro Cervantes on its right hand side and visit the market – the **Mercado La Merced**.

Enter via the Supersol supermarket. Go down the steps into Supersol and take the exit immediately to the right into the market.

Explore the market and exit through its the bustling market café.

Go down the steps immediately outside the market café and cross the pedestrian crossing.

Immediately ahead, on the corner, is the **Picasso Birthplace Museum**.

### Picasso Birthplace Museum

Open every day: 9.30–20 hrs

This building, on the site of the former convent de Santa Maria de la Paz dates from 1861 and was designed by Diego Clavero. It forms part of a block which runs along the north side of the Plaza Merced. This is collectively known as the Casas de Campos (completed in 1874) Its developer was Antonio Campos Galin, the Marques de Iznate; and its architect was Jeronimo Cuervas.

**Picasso** was born here on 25<sup>th</sup>