

CASTELLFORT

Perched on a plateau
between natural stone walls



**ELS
PORTS**
és Autèntic



HISTORY

Castellfort, of Roman origin, was fortified by the Arabs and was given the name Galintort. It was the last bastion in the region to be conquered by the Christians; on 1st August 1237, Blasco de Alagón achieved its surrender by blockade after a few days of siege. It was then that the conqueror granted the inhabitants of Galintort the Town Charter, a document setting out the rights and obligations they would have. From 1264 onwards, the town was linked to Morella Castle. In 1316, Galintort was restored and fortified by Pedro IV The Ceremonious. In 1410 and after the death of King Martin the Humane, a civil war broke out in Maestrazgo, all the towns sought independence from Morella, and in this war Castellfort played a very important role due to its orographic characteristics and its five well-protected portals. Castellfort, like the rest of the villages, would still have to wait almost three centuries, and it was in 1961 when Castellfort, like the rest of the villages, achieved the longed-for independence from Morella.



THE VILLAGE

Situated at 1,180 m. above sea level, it is perched on a plateau between natural stone walls to the north, east and west. Within the town centre we can highlight the Town Hall Square where we find the Parish Church with a baroque façade and neo-renaissance interior. It is of large dimensions and was built on the primitive gothic church of smaller size.. LThe Brotherhood of Sant Antoni Abad was founded by King Jaume I and we can date it to the middle of the 16th century. The porches (17th-18th century), which formerly served as a commercial market, contain the “finestra del mirador” from which we can contemplate an impressive landscape. Finally, the Town Hall, whose original Council House had its entrance in the lower part of the building, next to the “la presó” (the prison), was remodelled at the beginning of the 18th century, modifying the entrance from the square. The old façade is the most important at an artistic level. It was originally an open porch, which served as a market, as in the majority of town halls in the area. Within the municipality we can point out other buildings such as the House of the Marquises of Castellfort, the Monserrat family, whose coat of arms is represented on the entrance door.

MUNICIPALITY

It borders Cinctorres to the north, Portell to the west, Villafranca del Cid and Ares del Maestre to the south and Morella to the east. The terrain is rugged, there are no steep mountains but there are no plains either. The ravines have carved out real gullies. The most important heights are: Tossal de Folch (1,301 m), Lloma de Sant Pere (1,275 m) and Roca del Corb (1,153 m). The municipality is at an altitude of 1,180 m.

The flora is represented by the dominant vegetation in the Meso-Mediterranean range; holm oak, Pyrenean oak, laricio pine, etc.

The fauna includes rabbits, hares, wild boar, Spanish goats, moles and foxes. Birds include the raven, partridge, vulture, hawk, owl, etc.



ROUTES

Within the extensive municipality there are numerous points of interest; wild landscapes such as the Roca Parda, others of great ecological value such as “El Bruseral”, the “Serrà dels Matxos”, where the old ice well is located and where the horses, bulls and donkeys of the village still graze as in the past, the Natural Park of the Rambla Celumbres where we can admire the old “Pont de la Rambla”, the hills of Sant Pere and del Carme, where we can enjoy the dry stone constructions. The extensive forests of black pine such as the Sierra Simona and Bovalar or other smaller ones such as the Mare de Deu de la Font. The numerous wayside crosses and alcoves scattered throughout the area, the old abandoned farmhouses...





Points of interest

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Church | 6 Rural House | 11 Pediment |
| 2 Guild | 7 Museum “El Forn” | 12 College |
| 3 City Hall | 8 Playground | 13 Motorhome Area |
| 4 Medical practice | 9 Self-service | 14 Pharmacy |
| 5 Aparthotel | 10 Pool | 15 Sant Roc Fountain |
| | | 16 Bakery |

SANTA LLUCIA

HERMITAGE

It is part of a small nucleus of farmhouses, known as the Torre d'en Blasco. Originally built in the 15th century, it was badly destroyed in 1936, but has now been completely restored. One of the most remarkable elements is the stone paving with its labyrinthine drawings, which tests the patience of those who want to decipher it. The devotees of Castellfort and Villafranca make a joint pilgrimage on the second Sunday after Sant Vicente Ferrer.

MARE DE DÉU DE LA FONT

En el siglo XV ya existía una pequeña capilla con una pequeña imagen de la Virgen. El aspecto actual del santuario corresponde a la mitad del siglo XVII. El ermitorio de la Mare de Deu de La Font está formado por un conjunto de edificaciones que se agrupan entorno a una plaza, antaño cerrada, son la Iglesia, la hospedería, las caballerizas y la Sala Pintada. Declara Bien de Interés Cultural en la categoría Monumento Histórico-Artístico en 2007, la Sala Pintada conserva unas valiosísimas pinturas murales en blanco y negro, referentes a la vida de Jesús y la Virgen, realizadas en 1.597. El conjunto del Ermitorio fue declarado monumento Histórico-Artístico el 16/7/1979. Actualmente se destina a turismo rural, con 3 apartamentos, un albergue y un bar.

SANT PERE

HERMITAGE

A large church located at an altitude of 1,282 metres above sea level, with transitional Romanesque and Gothic architecture, dating from the 12th-13th centuries, it is one of the oldest in the province of Castellón. Due to its artistic qualities, it was declared an Asset of Cultural Interest in the Historic-Artistic Monument category in 2007. It has a semicircular voussoired doorway with an elongated Romanesque window above it. The façade is crowned by a belfry with a voluminous bell. On the right-hand side, there is an artistic Romanesque doorway with wide voussoirs, which leads to the hermit's house. The floor is paved with small pebbles, forming whimsical patterns. The image of Sant Pere Apóstol occupies the central niche of the main altar, and is the destination of several pilgrimages, such as the Catinencs and the Peregrins de Portell pilgrimages.

PEDRA EN SEC

The “pedra en sec” (dry stone) constructions form one of the characteristic landscapes of the northern regions of Castellón. Formed by man for his own survival, their function was to provide terraces, to make use of fertile land, to shelter tools and people, and other needs linked to agriculture and livestock farming. Over the centuries, man has been shaping this landscape, formed by kilometres and kilometres of walls, shepherd’s huts, wells, ponds, “porteres”, “gateres”, etc, becoming, nowadays, a real open-air museum..



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IBERIAN SETTLEMENT

Discovered in 2006, the “Castell de Castellfort”, consisting of several sections of a rampart corresponding to the defensive perimeter of the settlement; this system comes complete with the discovery of a tower, ramparts and exterior ramparts. This discovery makes it an exceptional monument with a high archaeological value, placing us in the Iberian period; however, earlier phases attributed to the Bronze Age–Ancient Iron Age are not ruled out. Located 3 km from the municipality, it is easily accessible.



THE ICE WELL

The Castellfort ice well was built in 1703 as “the first medicine for the sick”. The well is circular, with a diameter of 6.5 m and a depth of 8 m. In the past it was covered with stone walls and a wooden roof. The snow was used to treat the sick, stop haemorrhages, provide anaesthesia and in times of plague to reduce fever, but also to preserve foodstuffs and cool drinks. When it snowed, the “Consell de la Vila” (Town Council) called the neighbours together to fill the ice wells for a day’s wages, i.e. free of charge.



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WAYSIDE CROSSES AND ALVOCES

Wayside crosses are religious monuments that served as points of adoration to Saints such as the Virgen del Pilar, San Pedro Mártir, Virgen del Carmen and Virgen de la Fuente. del Pilar, San Pedro Mártir, Virgen del Carmen and Virgen de la Fuente. A very characteristic feature of the streets of Castellfort is the large number of alcoves containing ceramic panels with religious iconography. These “capelletes” (alcoves) show different dedications, sizes and artistic and artistic merit, coming from factories in Castellfort and dating from the first half of the 18th century to the present day.





FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS

SANT ANTONI ABAD

It is held in January. On the same day, the “mayorales” (head shepherds) and volunteers build the barraca. In the evening, the blessing of all kinds of animals takes place, followed by the distribution of “pastissets” (pastries), brandy and muscatel, and finally the barraca is burnt.



SECOND SATURDAY OF LENT

The procession takes place to the Mare de Déu de la Font, and once there, mass is celebrated, lunch is eaten in the hermitage and the return to the village takes place at mid-afternoon.



ELS CATINENCS

It is held on the first Saturday in May. This pilgrimage was already celebrated in the year 1424, the pilgrims pray to the Saint to offer them the much-needed rain. The pilgrims leave Cati, the most important stops are at the Font de l'Avellà de Cati and at the Llacua. On arrival at Sant Pere, a large crowd of people awaits them, along with beans and rice. The next day they return to Cati passing by the hermitage of Mare de Deu de la Font.



SANTA LLUCIA

It is celebrated in May. The festival consists of going (usually in a vehicle) to the Hermitage, where a mass is celebrated and afterwards the roll bought by each year's head shepherd is blessed and distributed.



SANTA QUITERIA

It is celebrated in May. The festival consists of the elaboration of a typical cake made and drawn by the women of the village. The following day, these cakes are blessed and distributed at the Mare de Deu de la Font.



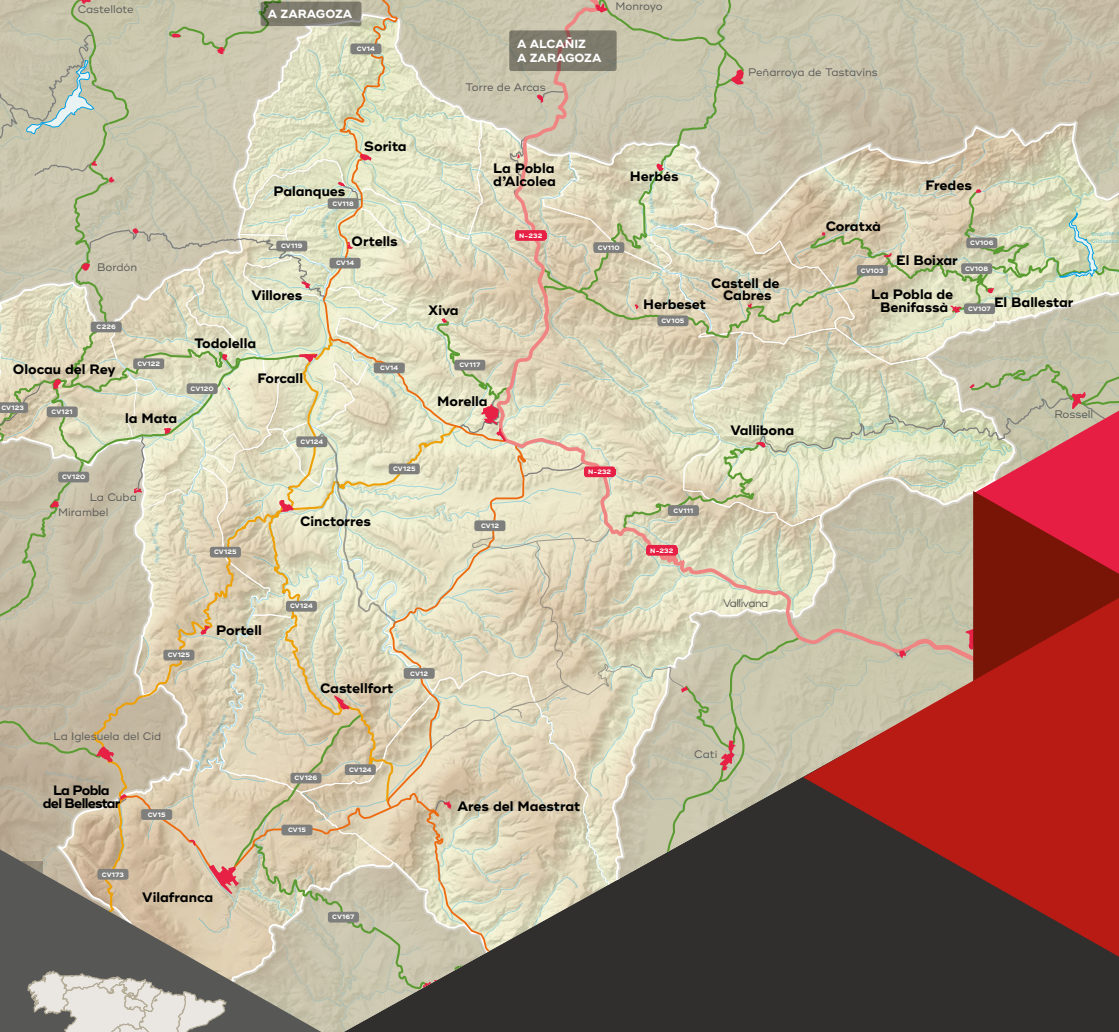
PATRON SAINT'S FEASTS

They are held in honour of Sant Roc and Mare de Deu de la Font, at the end of August. The events include bullfighting festivities, musical performances, festivities for adults, festivities for children, games and several brotherhood meals.



RAIMET FEAST

Dentro de las fiestas se celebra la Fiesta del Raimet, en ella los cofrades (solamente hombres), se reúnen en la cofradía para comer pan y uva bendecidos y protegerse así del peligro de los rayos. El libro registro de Cofrades y en él puede inscribirse cualquier varón nacido.



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