

introduction



) General view of the square of the forum

...Baelo is a port from which one generally sails to Tingis (Tangier), in Mauritania. It is also an emporium with salting factories... (Strabo, 18 AD)

The city of Baelo Claudia, located on the north shore of the Strait of Gibraltar, is in the western part of the cove of Bolonia. The Sierra de la Plata and Sierra de San Bartolomé mountain ranges form an arc that confine it between the mountains, so that the sea was its best means of communication and it is to the sea that it owed its wealth and reputation. The fishing industry, especially tuna, was its main source of income.

Excavations have uncovered the most complete Roman urban complex in the entire Iberian Peninsula, with monuments of extraordinary importance such as the basilica, the theatre, the market and the Temple of Isis. Nowhere else in the Peninsula is it possible to have such a comprehensive view of Roman urban development than in Baelo Claudia. This is its main claim to importance, as well as its spectacular scenic location in the Strait of Gibraltar Natural Park.

Institutional Headquarters

The institutional headquarters of the Baelo Claudia Archaeological Ensemble were opened in December 2007 and were designed by the architect Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra.

The building, as well as serving as a reception area and administrative centre, hosts a space for exhibitions, museum, restoration workshop and storage for the many immovable assets recovered from the various excavations conducted in this archaeological site since the beginning of the last century. It also has a themed library that specializes in the Roman world, a conference hall and scientific archive comprising the wealth of documentation produced by the studies carried out in Baelo Claudia.

The exhibition space consists of two permanent exhibition halls and one used for temporary exhibitions. The permanent exhibition halls are enclosed in a space with two levels, with natural light from a patio that runs along the south-facing side of the hall, where we can take in a sweeping view of the cove of Bolonia.

After visiting these halls, the visitor will move on to the temporary exhibition hall, a more dynamic space that links up with the access to the Roman city.



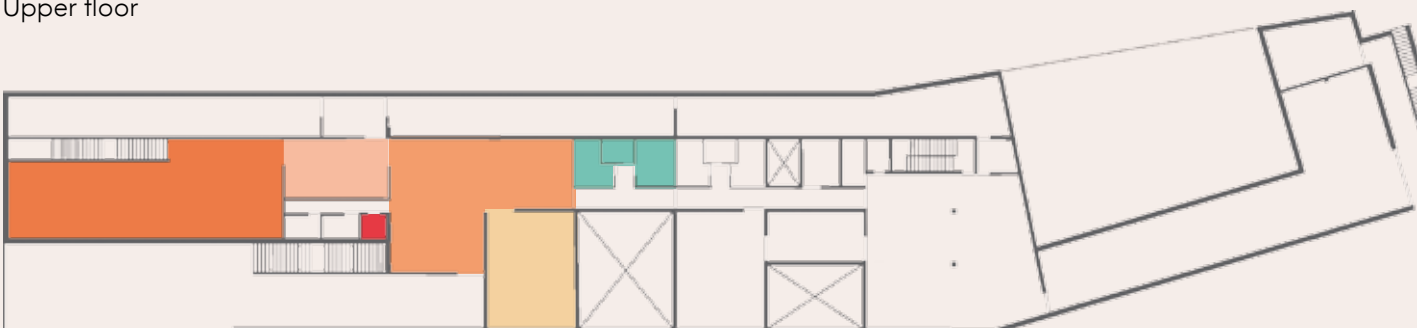
) Late Roman necropolis, with the institutional headquarters at the back



) Aerial view of the Roman city

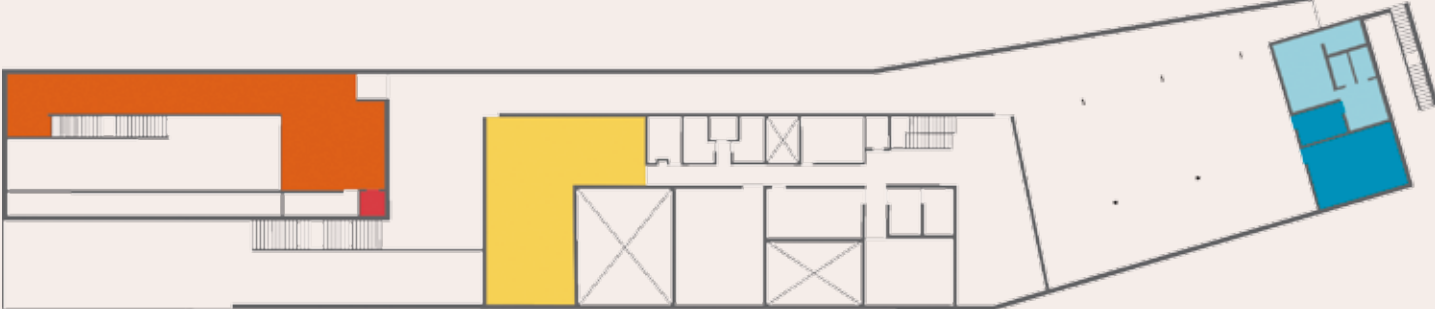
distribution

Upper floor



- Museum. Main room
- Museum. Thermal baths
- Temporary exhibition room
- Toilets
- Conference room
- Lift

Lower floor



- Museum. Geographical framework
- Library
- Shop
- Reception
- Lift

Museum. Permanent exhibition



) Salt curing amphora. 2nd-3rd centuries AD

Upper floor

The upper floor of the museum is dedicated to providing a general framework of the city.

A model of Baelo Claudia situates the city in its geographical context. This is supplemented by a display that explains the legal and administrative organization, the main cities and communication routes of Hispania, as well as the evolution of the city of Baelo Claudia.

Completing this first sector of the building, and as a threshold for the museum, next to the entrance there is a display -continually renewed- of the many treasures that Baelo Claudia can hold.



) Female sculpture located in the necropolis beside the Carteia gate

Lower floor

The lower floor is a large space dedicated to Baelo Claudia as a Hispano-Roman city. This space enables the interrelation of the themed modules that inform the visitor of the various perspectives from which the Roman city can be observed.

The first room, which is larger and more spacious, encompasses the part of the exhibition dedicated to religion, urban development and the economy. Religion and funerary rites are represented at the end of the room, with a varied display of grave goods and funerary elements, among which the votive plaques dedicated to Isis are outstanding.

In the central part of this room are displayed artefacts related to the decorative arts, in such a way that the arts, sculpture and architecture become the protagonists of this exhibition space dedicated to urban development, where the outstanding feature is the monumental presence of a column from the city's basilica.

As the visitor enters the room, the economy of ancient Baelo Claudia is represented by amphorae and fishing tackle, the basis of the city's thriving economy.

After this room, the second exhibition space on the ground floor is dedicated to the city's thermae, featuring a Roman copy of the Doryphoros recently discovered in the seawater thermal baths of Baelo.

Next, one moves on to the temporary exhibition hall, the most dynamic space in the centre.



) Roman sculpture, copy of the Doryphoros by Polykleitos. 2nd century AD. Marble

City of Baelo Claudia

The city of Baelo Claudia was founded in the 2nd century BC in the highly strategic area of the Strait of Gibraltar. Its origin and subsequent evolution are closely linked to the development of the salting industry and trade with North Africa, as the connecting port with what is today Tangier.

Around the change of the era, a process of urban development began that would culminate in the first half of the 2nd century AD. Throughout this process a large number of buildings were built, together with buildings for leisure and a significant salt curing complex, the real driver of the city's economy. It was in this period that Baelo received the name of Claudia, promoting its status to that of a Roman municipality and thereby enjoying the most important period of prosperity of its history.

In the middle of the 2nd century AD, Baelo Claudia went into a decline process, no doubt hastened by the earthquake that devastated the city in the 3rd century AD and that after a gradual regression culminated in the abandonment of the city by the population around the 7th century AD.



) View of the basilica at dusk

Baelo Claudia is a key site for understanding Roman urban development and life in a city during the Roman Empire, because here can be found all of the characteristic elements that constitute the essence of a Roman city: the forum, the market, the theatre, the thermae, the industrial quarter, aqueducts, the complete city wall, etc.



) View of the area of the Baelo Claudia arena



) Decumanus maximus of the city



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itinerary

Our recommended route through the Roman city starts with a walk outside the city walls where we have the opportunity to see, first of all, the east aqueduct (1), which helped to supply the city with drinking water.

Continuing our walk parallel to the city wall, we can observe its architectonic configuration flanked by numerous towers (2). Following the direction of the wall, before getting inside the city, we can take a look at the area of the late period necropolis (24), partially excavated in recent years.

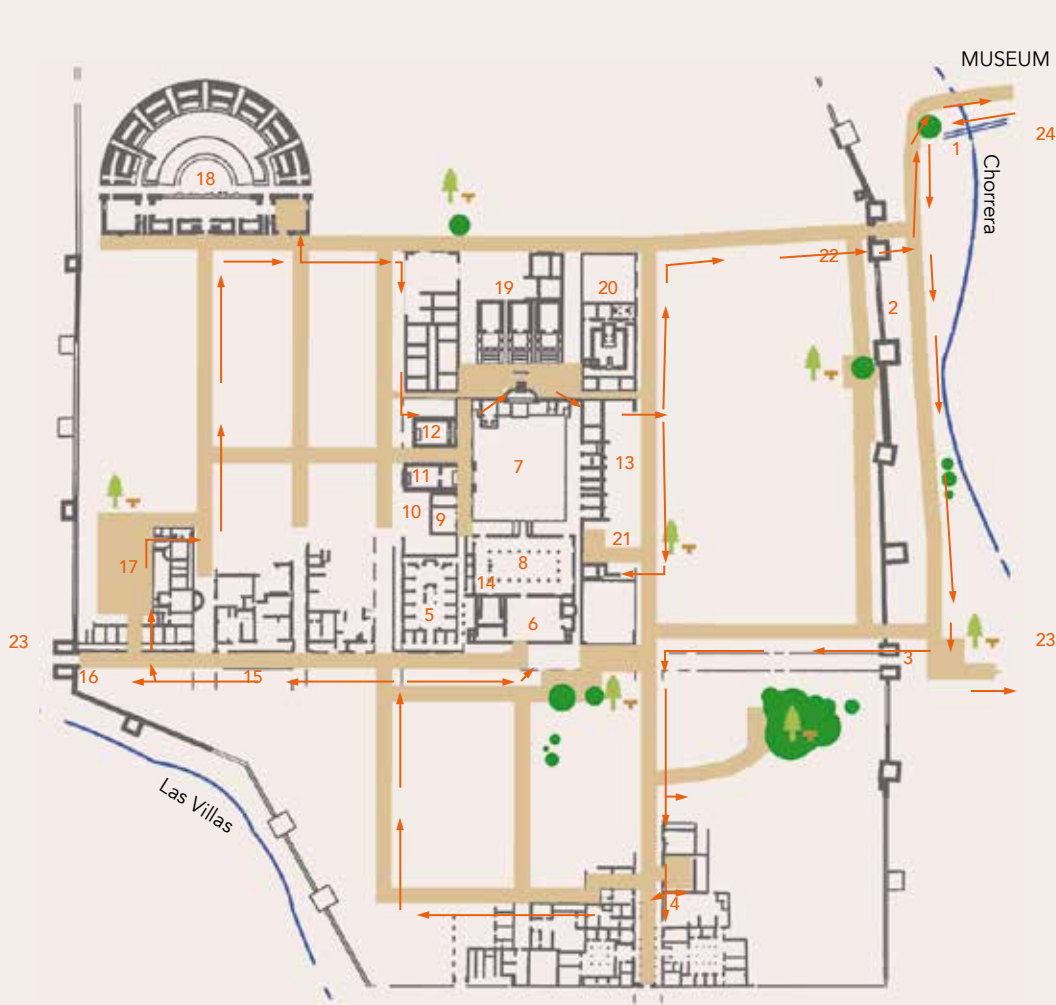
We enter the city through one of its main gates, the Carteia gate (3), which marks the axis of the *decumanus maximus*. Following its route, we head towards the intersection with the *cardus maximus*, which we take heading south to go to the salting factories, a large industrial complex that is one of the largest sites excavated on the Iberian Peninsula (4).

Continuing our route, we return to the *decumanus maximus*, walking on its original flagstones, where we come to the *macellum* or market (5), which was built to shift the trading activities from the forum during the High Empire. We then enter the southern square (6), where we approach for the first time the monumental and civic centre of the city.

The monumental centre, where the administrative, cultural and religious activities were carried out, is situated at the junction of the two main streets: the *decumanus* and the *cardo maximus*, laid out around the porticoed square of the forum (7). This forum is typical of the end of the Republic and beginnings of the 1st century AD. Around it are the various public buildings, with the basilica (8) – a two-storey building used as a courthouse – standing out in the foreground and to the south. On the north side, a tribune for public speeches was built and behind this, the monumental fountain that is the centrepiece of this square. In the portico on the west side, running south to north, are the following buildings: the municipal archive or *tabularium* (9), the ballot house (10), the *curia* or seat of local government (11), a street and a building that could be a *schola* (12). In the east portico, we can see the shops or *tabernae* (13). Before leaving the southern square, we can see to the west a small public building adjacent to the basilica, with lateral staircases, which some researchers have identified as the *curia* (14). Continuing along the *decumanus maximus* (15) we arrive to another of the city's main gates, the Gades gate (16).

From this point, we access the thermal baths building (17), then head along the *cardo* 1 towards the theatre (18), a building that takes advantage of the half-slope of the hill side to accommodate its grandstand.

Finally, we visit the religious area, which clearly dominates the city's monumental and civic centre on a higher terrace. It comprises three symmetrical temples (19) dedicated to the Capitoline Triad of the gods Juno, Jupiter and Minerva. In addition, as a result of the rise



- Stream
- Recommended itinerary
- Trees
- Rest zone

- 1. East aqueduct
- 2. Eastern wall
- 3. Carteia Gate
- 4. Salting factories
- 5. Market
- 6. Southern square
- 7. Square of the forum
- 8. Basilica
- 9. Municipal archive
- 10. Ballot house
- 11. Curia
- 12. Schola
- 13. Shops
- 14. Public building
- 15. *Decumanus maximus*
- 16. Gades gate
- 17. Thermal baths
- 18. Theatre
- 19. Temples of Juno, Jupiter and Minerva
- 20. Temple of Isis
- 21. Lookout point
- 22. Secondary gate
- 23. Necropolis
- 24. Late period necropolis

of the eastern religions, another temple was added dedicated to the Egyptian goddess Isis (20). From here we descend to the lookout point (21), from which we can view the Forum as a whole with all of the administrative buildings.

Going up again towards the Temple of Isis, we head towards the eastern exit, towards a secondary city gate (22) next to which are the remains of a house and small kiln. From there we return to the museum.



View of the salt curing neighbourhood

Unique features of the Ensemble. Necropolis

The High Empire city had two cemeteries or necropolises: one situated along the axis of the road that marked the exit from the city through the Carteia gate, to the east; and the other situated along the opposite axis, after exiting through the Gades gate (23). These funerary areas were located outside the city, on either side of the roads leading to Baelo.

There is another important necropolis that dates from the period of Baelo's decline and is located next to the east wall of the city, on either side of the stream that runs alongside it (24).

Aqueducts

Three aqueducts supplied the city with water. The main one was the east aqueduct, which started eight kilometres from Baelo, at Punta Paloma. It owes its importance not only to the flow of water it could supply but also to the fact that it was the one that started furthest away.

The second one is the west aqueduct, which took its water from the aquifers of the Sierra de la Plata mountains to supply the city's baths. The last of the known aqueducts began at the spring of El Realillo, entering the city on its northern side, crossing the walled perimeter

and then depositing its water in a large tank or cistern that is still there today in the upper part of the city enclosure.

These aqueducts guaranteed a constant and reliable supply of water for the city during at least the entire High Empire period.



View of the Punta Paloma aqueduct

welcome

For years, the Ministry of Culture of the Regional Government of Andalusia has endeavoured to modernise the Andalusian museums in order to make them centres capable of tackling new cultural and social challenges, with the aim of achieving the best and maximum access of citizens to the collections.



The museums of Andalusia managed by the Ministry of Culture form a network composed of 24 institutions, very different to each other. The Museum of Almería, Monumental Ensemble of the Alcazaba of Almería, Museum of Cádiz, Archaeological Ensemble of Baelo Claudia, Archaeological Museum of Córdoba, Fine Arts Museum of Córdoba, Madinat al-Zahra Archaeological Ensemble, Archaeological and Ethnological Museum of Granada, Casa de los Tiros Museum, Fine Arts Museum of Granada, Museum of Huelva,

Museum of Jaén, Archaeological Museum of Úbeda, Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions of High Guadalquivir, Archaeological Ensemble of Cástulo, Iberian Museum, Museum of Málaga, Archaeological Ensemble of Antequera Dolmens, Archaeological Museum of Seville, Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions of Seville, Fine Arts Museum of Seville, Andalusian Centre of Contemporary Art, Archaeological Ensemble of Carmona and Archaeological Ensemble of Itálica.

At these museums, anyone is welcome who wishes to learn more about our region and our heritage with their resources and the activities that are carried out there. This artistic, archaeological and ethnographic heritage reflects what we were like and how we have come to be what we are now. The institutions, through their exhibitions and activities, show what we long to be in the future.

We want to welcome you to this museum, hoping that you enjoy your visit. We encourage you to visit all the museums in Andalusia and we thank you for the tie that you have created, from now on permanently, with Andalusian heritage.

Ministry of Culture

visit us

How to get there?

How to get to Baelo Claudia Take the N-340 highway, when you reach the kilometric point 70.2 take the local Bolonia road, the CA-P-8202 as far as the cove of Bolonia, where Baelo is located.

For information about opening hours, group tours and prices, visit www.museosdeandalucia.es

Remember

For the proper use of these facilities and for the enjoyment of all, it is necessary to comply with the rules established by the centre and to adhere to the instructions of the security staff.



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archaeological **BAELO CLAUDIA** ensemble

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