

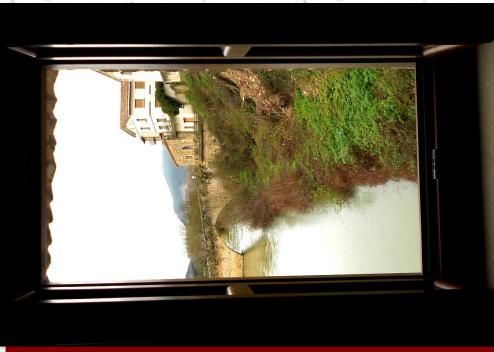
Exhibition hall "The Old Mill"

Temporary exhibition "Arganzón: Camino a la Batalla"



The Gallery where this exhibition is held is in one of the old water mills that existed in La Puebla de Arganzón and there are records going back to 16th century. The mill was restored to its present condition in the 1990's with a grant from the Diputación Foral de Álava. In itself, this building is of interest because it represents a good example of rural Basque architecture. There are good views from upstairs of the Medieval bridge over the Zadorra where the allied troops crossed towards "Bocuete de Arganzón", and the castle can be seen high up in the background. The castle at present is the site of an archaeological dig.

In this exhibition we hope you will be able to experience seeing the wonderful models, portraying the occupation and activities of the troops through the "Paso de Arganzón".



Contact: For information and to book guided tours

Town Hall La Puebla de Arganzón

• Telephone: 945 373006

• Fax: 945 373557

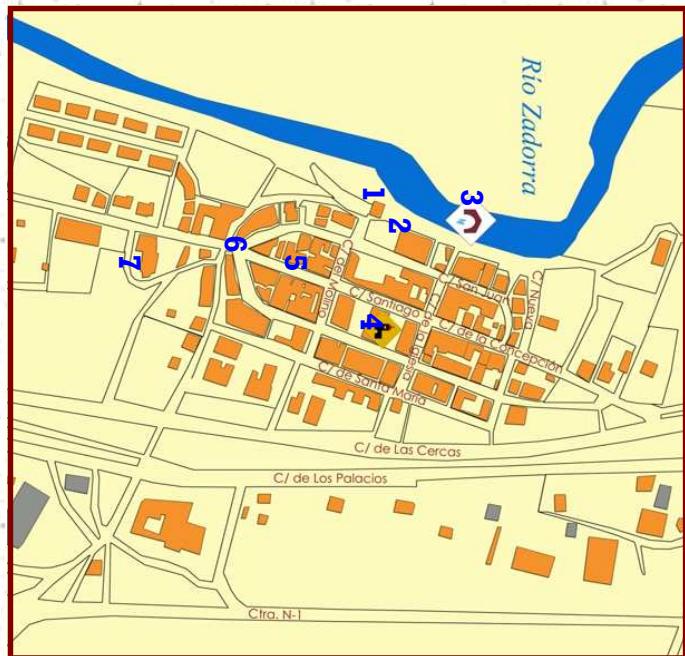
• E-mail: ayuntamiento@lapuebladearganzon.es

• www.lapuebladearganzon.es

Opening hours:

Saturday and Sunday

Morning: 11:30-13:30 Afternoon: 18:00-20:00



Organizes:



Ayuntamiento de
La Puebla de Arganzón

Vital

kutxabank

Collaborates:



Arganzón: The Route to the Battle

Bicentenary of the Battle of Vitoria.



Arganzón: The Route to the Battle

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Arganzón: The Route to the Battle

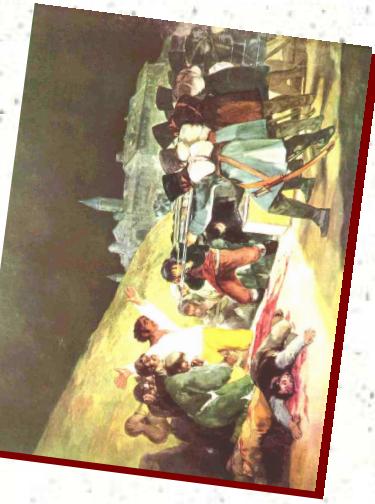
Bicentenary of the Battle of Vitoria.

Battle of Vitoria 200th anniversary. 200ème anniversaire de la Bataille de Vitoria. Gasteizko Batuila 200 urteurrenaga

Napoleón and the Independence War

In his eagerness to conquer territories, Napoleón asked the Spanish King, Carlos IV, for help to invade Portugal. But the real objective of the French was to invade Spain as well and put his brother Joseph Bonaparte on the Iberian throne. After conquering Portugal, Napoleón sent an army of 100,000 men who remained for a further six years. On realizing the intentions of the French, the Spaniards started to fight back and thus began the Spanish War of Independence. Spain was helped by France's eternal rival, England, and by the invaded country Portugal. These three countries formed an allied army which had the support of many citizens who "took to the hills" and who were the origin of the "guerrilla" or, as the French called them, "los brigantes".

Joseph Bonaparte was put on the Spanish throne by his brother Napoleón with the sole intention of manipulating him. It is believed that his like of drinking gained him the nickname of "Pepe Botella" (Joe Bottle) but some authors say he was abstemious and independent from his brother. Nonetheless he was disliked by the Spaniards who regarded him as a thief and by the French for defending the interests of the Spanish.



Francisco de Goya reflected in his works the cruelty of the war on both sides. An example is "Eusilamientos del 3 de Mayo" with executions of the rebels by the French army.



Evidence remains of the French and of the allied troops stay in La Puebla de Arganzón. From looking at the records of death certificates in the church, graffiti of the camping French soldiers, some cannon bullets.... In the old hospital we can see images of the French Imperial Eagle and the date of 1812 inscribed on the walls.

Events in La Puebla de Arganzón

Realising the advance of the allied troops, Napoleon decided to withdraw his soldiers from the Iberian Peninsula. Following this plan his brother Joseph I arrived with 50,000 soldiers to Miranda de Ebro (10 miles from La Puebla de Arganzón) where he established his barracks on 16th June 1813, carrying with him an impressive convoy with the booty of many lootings. Meanwhile the allies tried to stop him from retreating through Vitoria.

Passing La Puebla de Arganzón was the only route to escape to France and that is why it was here that the troops met and began to fight on 21st June 1813. The allied troops arrived in La Puebla from Pobes (3 miles to the west) crossing the Zadorra river by the Medieval bridge. After ejecting the French soldiers they took positions in the mountains that surround "Boquete de La Puebla" controlling the Camino Real on the way to the Alavesa Plain. This was the start of the Battle of Vitoria.



Beethoven compuso en 1813 la obra orquestal La Victoria de Wellington o La Batalla de Vitoria, opus 91 para conmemorar la victoria del ejército aliado sobre los franceses el 21 de Junio de ese mismo año en los alrededores de la ciudad de Vitoria. Aunque fue una obra considerada mediocre por su compositor, tuvo gran éxito en la época y hoy en día se reconocien fácilmente algunos de sus fragmentos.



Monument of the Battle of Vitoria located in Virgen Blanca square (Vitoria-Gasteiz), work of Gonzalo Borras and inaugurated in 1917. In memory of this Battle, 38 english regiments wear in their flag the word: VITORIA.

The Battle of Vitoria

Francisco Tomás de Anchía Longa y Urquiza was born on 10th April 1783 in a caserío in Bolívar (Vizcaya) and was a fighter who ended up being a General. From a very young age he lived in La Puebla de Arganzón and worked in the forge as a blacksmith having contact with the French troops that travelled from Paris to Madrid. He used these contacts to his advantage in his army life against Napoleón. In the Street Santiago where the forge was located there is a plaque in his memory.



Benito Pérez Galdós in the book "The luggage of King Joseph" narrates the adventures of Monsalud, born in La Puebla de Arganzón during the Battle of Vitoria.



Wellington and the General Alava wasted little time in taking control of the city and of the French troops that were camping in the surrounding areas. The poor conditions of the route hindered the escape and forced the French to abandon their artillery and the fruits of their many lootings by royal order. Bonaparte's intention was to distract the allied soldiers with the booty so that they could make a safe escape. And he succeeded. From then on, the Imperial Army wasn't the same and other European countries knowing of the news of the battle, confronted Napoleón. This was the start of the decline of his empire. King Fernando VII returned to Spain to find a country destroyed by the war (in the Vitoria Battle alone there were 12,800 casualties) impoverished and divided by the partisans of one or another party.

The Battle of Vitoria covered some 25 Km and lasted 12 hours. The protagonist of the allied troops was the Duke of Wellington who as a reward for winning the battle was promoted to Field Marshal. Taking advantage of the French weakness of not having protected the bridges, he took positions along the whole of the Zadorra river, surrounded the enemy and blocked their escape to France. The King Joseph Bonaparte who was lodging in the Palace Montehermoso in Vitoria, fled abandoning his 2,000 carriages that carried his belongings.