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COSTURERO DE LA REINA

Paseo de las Delicias, 9

Tel: (+34)610 70 43 21

visitasevilla@sevillacityoffice.es

www.visitasevilla.es

The legend of the Costurero de la Reina

The **Costurero de la Reina** (Queen's Sewing Room) is a small building located in Seville with the shape of a castle. It is situated next to the María Luisa Park and related to a popular love story.

In the XIX century **Antonio de Orleans, duke of Montpensier** and his wife, **the Infanta Luisa Fernanda de Borbón**, moved to the **Palacio de San Telmo** in Seville (the current government headquarter of the Junta of Andalusia). The enormous gardens were adapted to the romantic tastes. In 1893 a small pavilion was built in the garden area which was close to the Guadalquivir River and it served as a Corp of Guards being its architect Juan Talavera y de la Vega. It is the first neomudejar building of Seville and the Arab-style can be observed in its large windows.

In 1890 the duke of Montpensier passed away and in 1893 his wife, Luisa Fernanda de Borbón, ceded the gardens of the Palace to the city of Seville which became the **María Luisa Park**. Later, the Park was transformed as we can see it nowadays due to the **Ibero-American Exhibition of 1929**.

In 1878 the Duke of Montpensier's daughter, **María de las Mercedes de Orleans**, when she was just 17 years old, got married to the **King Alfonso XII**, both were cousins and madly in love, and she became queen consort of Spain.

The name of the Costurero de la Reina is part of the **Sevillian legend**, according to it, the queen María de las Mercedes, due to her frail health, spent long times in this castle sunbathing while she was sewing with her ladies. During those times, she was visited by Alfonso XII, who went on a horse ride from the Alcázar of Seville after addressing State affairs. However, this would be impossible because the building was built in 1893 and the queen passed away in 1878.

The death of María de las Mercedes, just five months after her wedding and being 18 years old, had a great social impact and her love story became a myth. This tragic love story inspired the famous **Romance de la Reina Mercedes (Romance of the Queen Mercedes)**, composed by Quintero, León and Quiroga and sung by big performers of copla such as Concha Piquer, Marifé de Triana or Paquita Rico, amongst others.

The real affair was in the cinema in two occasions with the films: **¿Dónde vas, Alfonso XII? (Where Are You Going, Alfonso XII?)** and **¿Dónde vas, triste de ti? (Where Are You Going, Sad Man?)**.

