

A historical round trip between Barcino and Barcelona (BCN), between the Roman colony and contemporary Barcelona, which allows us to place both the traces left by the Roman city in the history of Barcelona and the impact of converting some of its remains into monuments.

BARCINO/BCN

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A journey through the monumental present of Barcelona that allows us to find out how and why the last century and a half the testimonies to Barcino have been recovered, turned into monuments and incorporated into the urban fabric of the city, like a kind of monumental "Neo-Barcino".

BARCELONA

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A journey through the Roman past of Barcelona, allowing us to discover the *Julia Augusta Faventia Paterna Barcino* colony through the material testimonies to it: the roadways to and entrances into the city, the water-supply system, the centres of political and religious power, the main streets, the areas of production, the systems of defence, etc.

BARCINO



ROMAN SEPULCHRAL WAY

THE ROADWAYS AND ORGANISATION OF THE TERRITORY IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

The Via Augusta was the main axis of the roadway network of Hispania, linking Rome to Gades (present-day Cadiz) following the western Mediterranean arc.

A coastal branch of the Via Augusta connected Blandae (Blanes), Illuro (Mataró), Baetulo (Badalona) and Barcino with the rest of the territory. The plain of Barcelona was further connected by a whole network of paths and secondary roads.

A SECONDARY ROAD

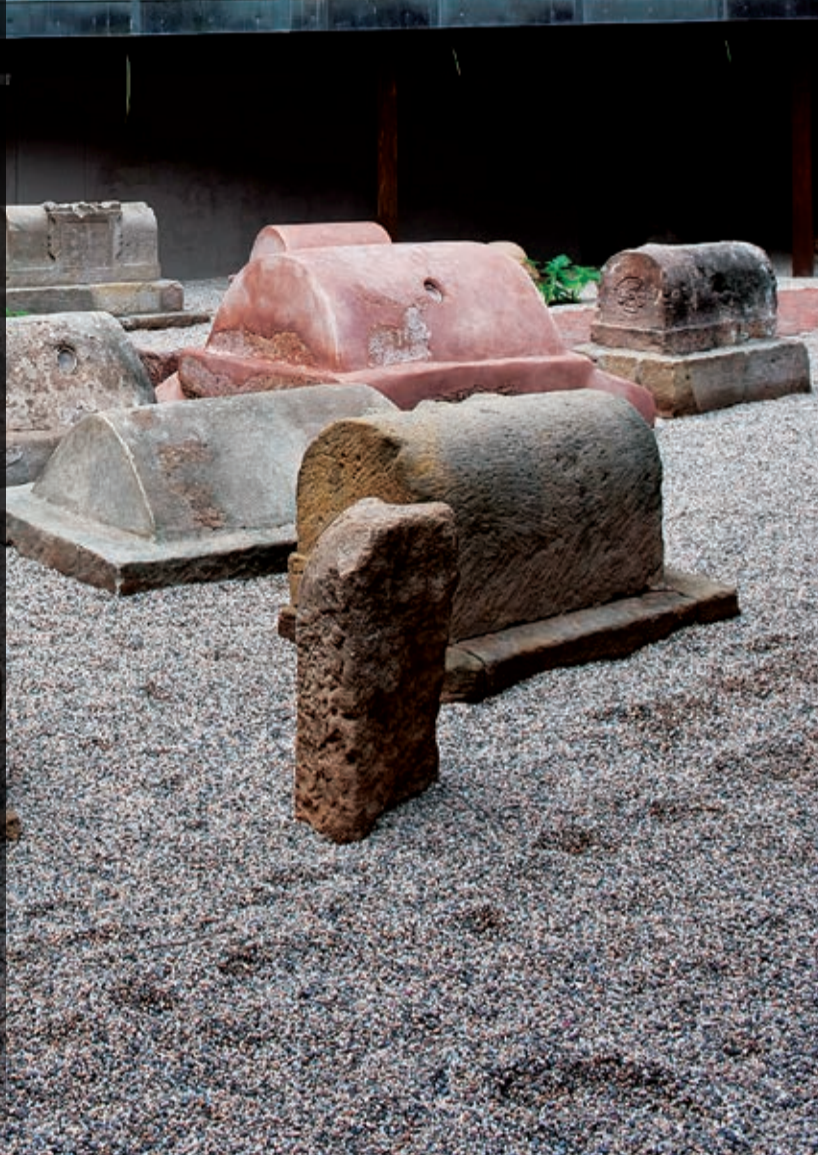
The secondary road found at the Plaça de la Vila de Madrid ran on to the Via Augusta (along the section now travelled by Carrer de la Boqueria), traversing the city from one side to the other and forming the *cardo maximus*, one of the two main streets in the built-up Barcino of the time.

THE NECROPOLIS

On both sides of the road were a large number of sepulchres and various funerary monuments that formed a necropolis, used between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD by the working classes of Barcino. Roman law forbade burial of the dead within the cities, so the necropolises were placed outside it, near the entrance roads.

SEPULCHRES AND RITUALS

Various kinds of tombs were used, notable among which were the *cupae*, funerary monuments that crowned the sepulchres and were shaped like wooden barrels. Placed within the sepulchres, various objects accompanied the deceased on their journey into the beyond. An inscription was usually left in memory of the person buried. Inhumation and incineration existed alongside each other in this necropolis over the first two centuries, though in the third century inhumation became entirely dominant.



TEMPLE AND FORUM

THE TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS

Rising up on a three-metre podium and built along the longitudinal axis of the Barcino forum, the temple dedicated to Augustus and to the deified emperors was one of the most important buildings constructed at the time of founding of the city, at the end of the 1st century BC. Only four columns now remain of the temple, standing nine metres high, each with a striated shaft and a Corinthian-style capital, as well as part of the architrave and the podium.

THE FORUM

The forum was the city's central square, open at the point where the two main streets that run through it, the *cardo maximus* and the *decumanus maximus*, crossed perpendicularly. It housed the most important public buildings (the basilica, the curia or senate house, the temple, the market, shops, etc.) and was therefore the nerve-centre of Barcino.

THE HONORARY INSCRIPTIONS

The forum also contained pedestals upon which were mounted honorary statues and commemorative monuments in praise of the emperor and the city's local worthies and important families, or to commemorate an important event. The beginning of the 5th century marked the start of the forum's decline as the epicentre of citizen life, as evidenced by the fact that many of the honorary monuments that had decorated the former square were dismantled and used as construction materials for new buildings.

THE PEDESTAL IN HONOUR OF QUINTUS CALPURNIUS FLAVIUS

This pedestal bearing an inscription was located in the foundations of the Gothic church of Santa Maria del Pi, having been reused as a building material. It had originally formed part of a monument in honour of the city councillor Quintus Calpurnius, which had probably been set up in the forum at the end of the 1st century AD.

DOMUS AND TABERNAE

THE SANT HONORAT DOMUS

This domus was built in the 4th century beside the *decumanus minor* (present-day Carrer de Sant Honorat), one of the city's main axes, right beside the forum. The domus, the residences of well-to-do families, were organised around a garden (*viridarium*) surrounded by a portico (*peristilium*), around which the private rooms (*cubicula*) were arranged. Its privileged location at the nerve-centre of citizens' lives and its large size indicate that the dwelling was owned by a member of the Barcino elite.

THE MOSAICS AND PAINTINGS

The social importance of the inhabitants of the domus is also plain from the residence's impressive decorations. Right in the middle of the central garden the vestiges of a *lacus* and an ornamental fountain have been found, and both the portico and the rooms house the remains of elaborate floor paving of polychromatic mosaics with geometrical and plant motifs, as well as fresco paintings on the walls in imitation of marble plinths.

THE TABERNAE

The three documented shops or *tabernae* backed onto the domus and opened out towards the street. The choice, busy, very central location of these shops in the 4th century must have boosted the profitability of the businesses that set up there. More than two hundred Roman coins found at the site bear witness to that activity.

The *tabernae* were buildings of simple structure, made up of a back-shop to the rear, often used as a dwelling, and by the shop itself, opening onto the public thoroughfare, where relations and commercial transactions took place.



WORKSHOPS AND FACTORIES

WORKSHOPS AND FACTORIES

From the 2nd century Barcino had a district with workshops and factories devoted to craft and processing activities, located close to the *cardo maximus*, to the north of the forum, where the Plaça del Rei lies today. The archaeological circuit that runs under the square, with its entrance from the Barcelona History Museum, allows the vestiges of some of those installations to be visited.

WASH-HOUSE (*FULLONICA*) AND DYE WORKSHOP (*TINCTORIA*)

The remains are conserved of what was a clothes wash-house and dyeing workshop. We can make out the tanks or washbasins in which the clothes were washed and rinsed and various basins used for dyeing them.

SALTING AND *GARUM* (*CETARIA*) FACTORY

In the 3rd century it operated as a fish-salting factory and for making *garum*, a sauce made from macerated fish entrails mixed with other products such as oil and vinegar. Of it there remain various rooms and some tanks in which the fish was washed, cut up and stored. It seemed that Barcino *garum* managed to achieve a certain prestige.

WINEMAKING FACILITIES

A substantial winemaking facility remains beside the *garum* factory, dating from the 3rd and 4th centuries. Various *dolia*, large earthenware receptacles, would have been capable of storing some ten thousand litres of wine.

The identified remains of fleshy fruits, yeasts, honey and cinnamon furnish examples of some of the additives put into the wine to make it taste stronger and lend its bouquet more power.



FORTIFIED WALL

THE FOUNDING WALL, FROM THE END OF THE 1ST CENTURY BC

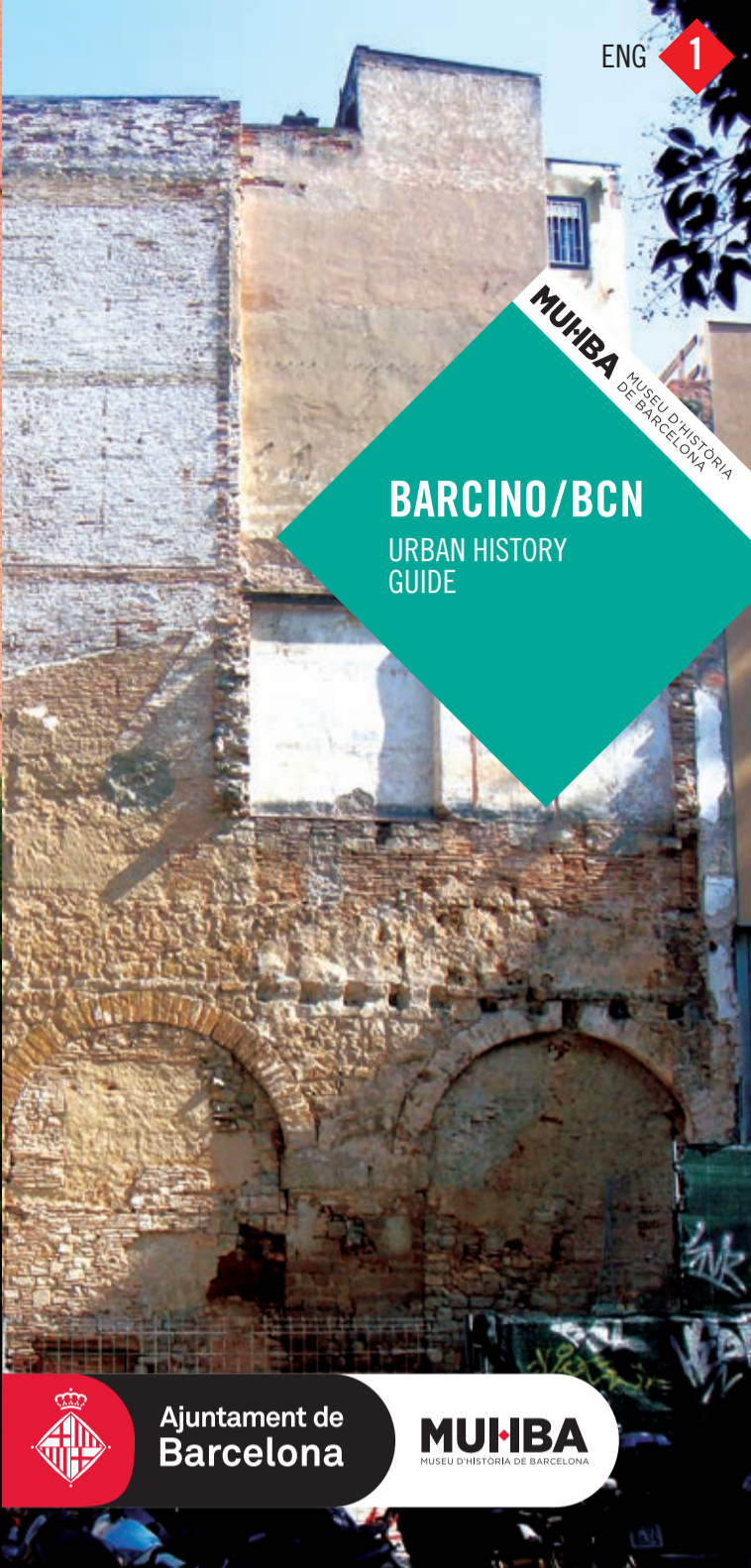
Ancient Barcino was surrounded by a fortifying wall, with four gateways that coincided with the ends of the *cardo maximus* and the *decumanus maximus*, the main streets that ran through the city from one side to the other. The founding wall had defensive ditches and some towers, and was made from uniformly shaped, smallish stone blocks.

THE SECOND WALL OF BARCINO FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 4TH CENTURY

Barcino was fortified again in the first half of the 4th century. The second wall, with 76 towers, was erected in front of the existing wall, forming a sort of exterior shell for the defensive face. Its lower part was built from large blocks of stone, while the upper parts of the towers used small slabs. All kinds of materials and pieces of stone were used to build it, even sculpted items from buildings that had been removed from their original locations.

THE ROMAN WALLS IN CONTEMPORARY BARCELONA

Having been appropriately rebuilt and reinforced, the last Roman wall defended the city down to the late Middle Ages. Contemporary Barcelona still has various towers and sections of that fortification, some visible from the street, while others are concealed by the houses built up against them over the course of the centuries. The wall is currently incorporated into the public spaces of Avinguda de la Catedral, Carrer de la Tapineria, Plaça de Ramon Berenguer el Gran, Carrer del Sotstinent Navaro, Plaça dels Traginers, Carrer del Correu Vell, Carrer del Regomir and Carrer de la Palla.



BARCINO/BCN

URBAN HISTORY GUIDE



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Plan view of the Roman city: hypothesis created by Julia Beltrán de Heredia

BARCINO / BCN

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PLAÇA DE LA VILA DE MADRID
ROMAN SEPULCHRAL WAY



The Plaça de la Vila de Madrid was designed by Adolf Florensa in the 1950s, following the idea of the group of architects called GATOPAC (Grup d'Arquitectes i Tècnics Catalans per al Progrés de l'Arquitectura Contemporània) to open out the Ciutat Vella (Old City) district. Surrounded by classicist buildings, it incorporated the archaeological remains of the Sepulchral Way.



From the end of the 16th century the area was occupied by the convent of the discaled Carmelite nuns, demolished after the Civil War (1936-1939) along with other buildings damaged in the bombardments. Work began in the mid-1950s on the archaeological excavation of the Roman way, which had been discovered by chance.



The secondary Roman way, which arrived at the city of Barcino via the southern gateway of the *cardo maximus*, had on either side of it the burial sites of the working classes from the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD. By the 4th century it had fallen into disuse and became covered over by the sediments from flash floods, thereby assisting its conservation.

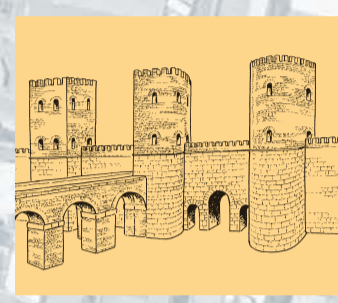
PLAÇA NOVA
NORTH-WEST GATEWAY



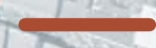




In the 1990s, when Avinguda de la Catedral was remodelled, the planners sought to emphasise in terms of monuments the Roman origins of Barcelona and the wall gateway by including the "Barcino" ideogram with letters designed by Joan Brossa.



From the late Middle Ages down to the 20th century, the towers of the gateway in the wall at Plaça Nova, which formed part of the Palau del Bisbe (episcopal palace) and the Casa de l'Ardiaca (chief dean's house), were the main visible features of old Barcino from the public space.



In the 4th century the north-west gateway of the city had three openings — a central passageway for vehicles and two side entrances for people on foot. Flanked by two semicircular towers, one of them constructed making use of the last arches of the aqueducts, the city opened out from the *decumanus maximus* onto the crops on the plain.

-  ROADS
-  AQUEDUCTS
-  BATHS
-  DOMUS
-  MOSAICS

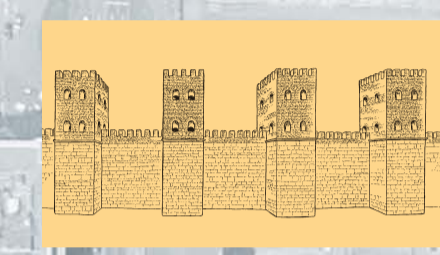
PLAÇA DE RAMON BERENGUER EL GRAN
NORTH-EAST WALL



Plaça de Ramon Berenguer constitutes one of the most notable historical cityscapes created in the 20th century. The first outline for it, dating from 1911, was by Josep Puig i Cadafalch. The count's statue lends symmetry to the panorama formed by the wall, the royal chapel, the reconstructed Casa Padellàs and the Neo-Gothic anteroom of Tinell. This is an entire heritage summary of the "broad history" of Barcelona oriented towards the Via Laietana.



Carrer de la Tapineria was a commercial street made up of houses backing onto the wall and built from the late Middle Ages through to the 20th century. The steady demolition of those houses was part of a monumentalisation project that was carried on down to the 1960s, with the aim of freeing up the wall and leaving it all visible from the outside.



The second Roman wall made the city into a stronghold difficult to take, like a great castle with 76 towers. That aspect was to have a decisive effect on the future of the city, which had much better defences than any other Catalan town or city inherited from the Roman period.

CARRER DE DURAN I BAS AND PLAÇA NOVA
AQUEDUCTS



Standing on Carrer de Duran i Bas, the arches of one of the Roman aqueducts are integrated into the party wall of a building dating from the 19th century. From 1958, Plaça Nova was also the scene of reconstruction of one of the arches of the aqueduct, carried out at the proposal of the archaeologist Josep Serra-Ràfols.



The Roman aqueduct emerged in 1988 at Carrer de Duran i Bas, when a building was demolished. In 2009, as the photograph shows, an archaeological study was made of it. Earlier, in the planning work carried out from 1957 on Avinguda de la Catedral, the foundations of the two aqueducts had already been discovered, right at the entrance to Barcino.



The water supply in Barcino was ensured by means of wells, tanks and two aqueducts that carried the water from the River Besòs and from the Collserola mountains, coming together at the north-east gateway in the wall.

BARCINO / BCN

3RD/4TH CENTURIES

SCHEMATIC PLAN VIEW BASED ON
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

CARRER DE LA FRUITA AND CARRER SANT HONORAT
ROMAN DOMUS



The archaeological remains that can be visited in the subsoil were discovered in 1999 during the refurbishment of Casa Morell, today occupied by offices of the Government of Catalonia (the *Generalitat*). The building was constructed in 1851 according to a plan drawn up by the architect Josep Oriol Mestres, making use of some of the original windows of the mediaeval mansion.



The archaeological excavation of the Sant Honorat domus revealed the superimposition of structures from very different epochs, quite usual in the zones of the city that had been occupied from early times. The site open to the public allows that amalgam to be viewed, with the Roman vestiges of the domus sharing space with various grain stores of a mediaeval mansion.



The Roman remains in Carrer de la Fruita and Carrer Sant Honorat are those of a 4th century domus or lordly residence richly decorated, with central courtyard, portico and rooms of substantial dimensions. The complex is completed by the vestiges of three commercial establishments (*tabernae*) backing onto the house and opening onto one of the Roman city's most important streets.

CARRER DEL PARADÍS
TEMPLE AND FORUM



From 1905, the remains of the Roman temple can be seen inside the headquarters of the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya, as a result of the project undertaken by the architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner. The work was carried out while a discussion was under way about whether the columns should remain free-standing, in the middle of a square, or left inside the mediaeval building.



Right from the 15th century, the columns and capitals set into the buildings on Carrer del Paradís had been a strong focus of attention, giving rise to many different interpretations. It was only in the middle of the 19th century that it finally became clear that they formed part of a Roman temple.



The Temple, devoted to the cult of the emperor Augustus, was located at the highest point of the city, presiding over the forum. Barcino's central square in which political, social, religious and economic life was conducted. Throughout the course of history and down to today, the epicentre of political power has remained close to the former Roman forum.

CARRER DEL REGOMIR
DOOR OF THE SEA



Regomir corner forms an architectural complex that is difficult to decipher. But it is also a good place to reflect on the relationships between history (what happened) and historical heritage (the testimony that has come down to us), between documents or vestiges of the past and modern criteria of monumentalisation, between Barcino and Barcelona.



In the reconversion of Casa Gualbes into public facilities from 1984 (Pati d'en Llimona), the architect Ignasi de Solà-Morales worked on the Roman wall, testing out approaches in terms of shapes and materials different from those used formerly, finally leaving the remains of the sea gateway exposed in the subsoil.

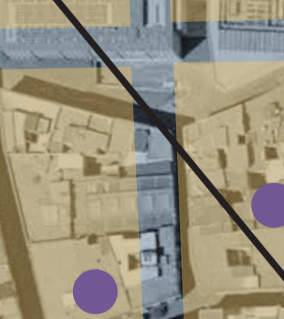


The main entrance into Barcino was the one that looked out over the sea, its gateway flanked by doors for people on foot and an intense traffic from the beach and the port. This gateway has to be seen as a basic organising focus of the Roman-epoch urban space connected with trading and transportation of goods.

CARRER DE FERRAN



PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME



CARRER DE JAUME I



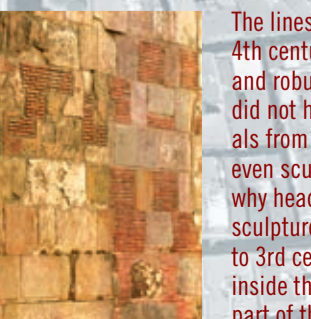
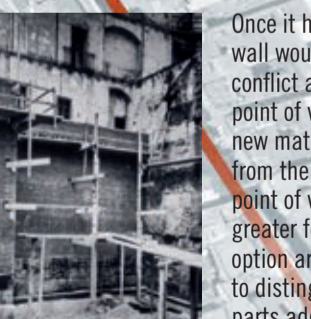
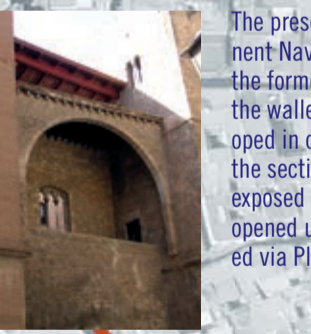
CARRER DEL SOTSTINENT NAVARRO
SOUTH-EAST WALL



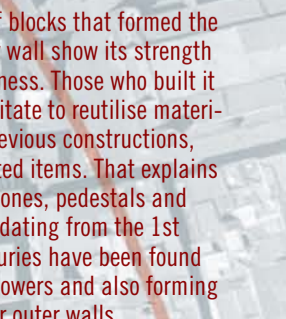
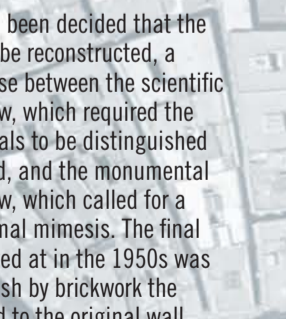
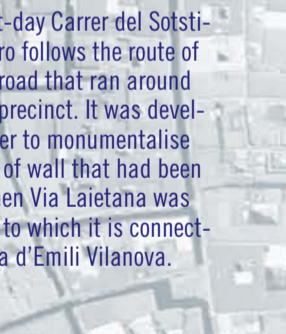
PLAÇA DEL REI
WORKSHOPS AND FACTORIES



CARRER DE LA PRINCESA



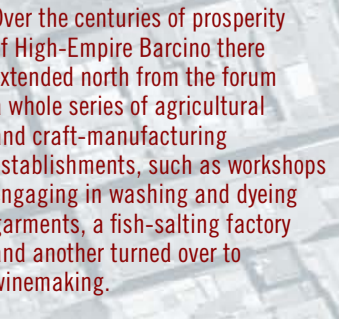
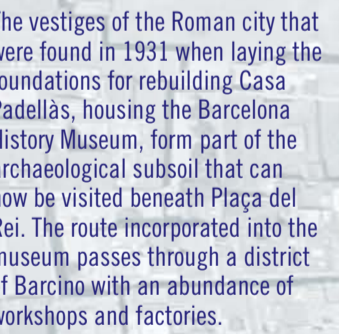
CARRER DEL SOTSTINENT NAVARRO
SOUTH-EAST WALL



PLAÇA DEL REI
WORKSHOPS AND FACTORIES



CARRER DE LA PRINCESA



The vestiges of the Roman city that were found in 1931 when laying the foundations for rebuilding Casa Padellàs, housing the Barcelona History Museum, form part of the archaeological subsoil that can now be visited beneath Plaça del Rei. The route incorporated into the museum passes through a district of Barcino with an abundance of workshops and factories.

When Via Laietana was opened, the aim was to enhance the mediaeval appearance of the area around the cathedral, making it into a "Gothic quarter". The importance of the discoveries about Barcino made during the excavations at Plaça del Rei under the direction of Agustí Duran i Sanpere led to an increasing incorporation of Roman features into the process of monumentalisation.

Over the centuries of prosperity of High-Empire Barcino there extended north from the forum a whole series of agricultural and craft-manufacturing establishments, such as workshops engaging in washing and dyeing garments, a fish-salting factory and another turned over to winemaking.