



Consolidation works of the defensive wall and the attached rooms

In the history of the Tossal de la Cala, two official excavation campaigns and an unknown number of clandestine ones are known. Father Belda was responsible of the first one in 1943. That year, a total of 27 rooms attached to the defensive wall were dug. In July 1956, part of the site was destroyed by the construction of the access road to the uphill lookout. As a result, in September of the same year, Miquel Tarradell and Alejandro Ramos carried out an emergency intervention excavating the rooms located above those discovered in 1943 with which they communicated by stairs. Those are the set of rooms currently visible. Although the site was included among the most important sites of the Iberian Contestania, with the passage of time it was consigned to oblivion.

Since 2010, this site has returned to the foreground in the framework of the I+D projects developed by a group of professors from the Archaeology Department of the University of Alicante. The research started from the hypothesis that it could be part of a coastal network of forts in the context of the first Roman civil wars. Since 2013, the study of archaeological objects is complemented by field works dedicated to documenting and interpreting the constructions discovered in the 40s and 50s. Thanks to this works, is confirmed that it is, indeed, a fort or castellum that housed at least two centuries (100 men) of roman soldiers. The Town Hall of Benidorm has set itself the goal of converting the Tossal de la Cala into an archaeological park. What you contemplate now is the set of rooms excavated in 1943 and 1956, consolidated according to the European norms of restoration of historical heritage by specialized operators, a work prior to the final musealization of the site.

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## THE ROMAN CASTELLUM TOSSAL DE LA CALA BENIDORM







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In the 1st century BC Hispania was the scene of the first Roman civil wars (82-72 BC). Quintus Sertorius, from the populares faction, built a fort chain along the coast of Alicante to monitor the traffic of ships. Adapting to the terrain, he built a very appropriate fort in the Tossal de la Cala with a one-meter wide stone wall and an elevation of rammed earth. The perpendicular walls form box-shaped spaces or casemates, conforming a defensive perimeter up to five meters thick.

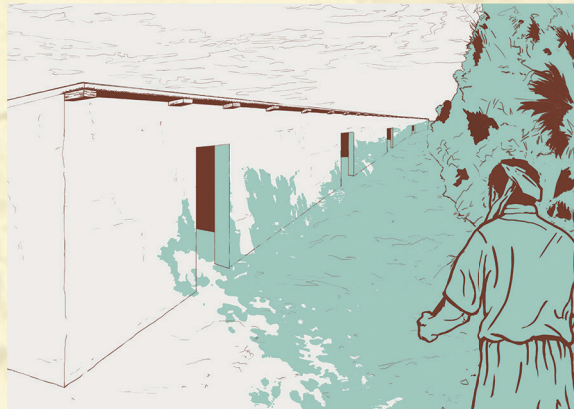
Although of small size, its location on top of a hill by an inlet gave it an absolute control of the bay. It shows a central street urbanism. The buildings opening to this central street have two floors connected by stairs. Its end can be associated to the campaign of Pompey the Great around the 72 BC.

From these buildings, the top rooms (in the box) have disappeared and only remain the ones by the wall. The thresholds communicate different rooms defining independent buildings that can be distinguished by the alternation of white and green gravel. This were the soldiers' and officers' barracks, the warehouses, workshops, etc.

Recreation of the *castellum* at the top of the hill on image 1943. F. Sanchez, Alicante Municipal Archive.



Consolidation process of the remains of a Roman pavement



Recreation of the fort's central street in an east-west direction

Wall Street

