



Saint Francis Convent

Monument not open to the public.

This convent was founded by a community of Franciscans led by Fray Juan de Peñalver who, seeking a return to the primitive order (retreat, mental prayer, poverty, austerity), settled in 1437 in a nearby area called Valdemorales. The place chosen was insalubrious and uncomfortable and in 1460 they moved to this location, outside the medieval wall of Pastrana.

The convent was renovated and enlarged in the 17th and 18th centuries. It built up an extensive library since it was the Study House of the Observant Franciscans of Castile and had two professorships; Latin and Grammar.

The foundation played an important role in the reformist movements that took place in the 15th and 16th centuries, giving rise to a heretical deviation, the so-called 'illuminated'. It was occupied without interruption until the confiscation of Mendizábal in 1836. From then on it had different civil and administrative functions until it was assigned to public use in 1846.

One part was acquired by the local council in order to install the Civil Guard barracks – since October 1845 there has been a Civil Guard in Pastrana – while the other part was purchased by local villages to set up the prison. The convent's orchard was used as a cemetery and the area known as 'the School' was occupied by a hospital, which was set up to face the great cholera epidemic that devastated the area in 1855.

The restoration of the church of the convent began in 2019 and was completed in 2020, when it was opened as a centre for cultural activities and tourism.