

Palacio Ducal

Monument open to the public.

The palace belonged to the princes of Éboli, the I Dukes of Pastrana. However, it was Doña Ana de la Cerda, grandmother of the Princess of Éboli, who in 1542 commissioned the great architect of the time, Alonso de Covarrubias, to construct the palace. He designed a palace with a square floor plan, four corner towers, a central courtyard, side and rear gardens and a large parade ground in front of the building.

From the first moment Doña Ana had problems with the council and the pastraneros and for this reason not all the palatial complex was built in the 16th century. Finally, it was the University of Alcalá, the current owner, who in its 1999 restoration, headed by the architects Antonio Fernández Alba and Carlos Clemente, finished the project using modern materials; a prime example is the central courtyard whose modern style contrasts with the rest of the Renaissance palace.

In the sober façade the great main doorway stands out. It takes the form of a semicircular arch below two stone busts, probably Doña Ana de la Cerda and her husband. On the entablature above is still visible the phrase 'DE MENDOÇA I DE LA CERDA', crowned by the coat of arms of the Mendoza family. Looking at the eastern tower, the latticed balcony reminds us that the princess of Éboli was held prisoner there until her death in 1592.

Spectacular plateresque-style coffered ceilings designed by Covarrubias as well as Mudejar-style tiles from Toledo adorn the interior of the main rooms of the palace.