

The Albaicín Neighbourhood

In 1570, with the uprising of the Moriscos and their dispersion throughout Spain, Ruy Gómez de Silva, the Prince of Éboli, brought more than 1,000 Moriscos to Pastrana to work in the recently created silk and tapestry industry. The neighbourhood that Ruy created for them owes its name to the fact that most of them came from the Albaicín area in Granada.

It was installed next to the only possible passageway for the entry and exit of merchandise to the village, establishing an efficient link with the market square (currently the Plaza de la Hora) and thus moving the focal point of the village to the new market square. Here the Ducal Palace became the centre of the new urban structure with a clear axis of union with the church square (currently the Plaza del Ayuntamiento). The Albaicín was a neighbourhood designed with a grid layout and a main street called Calle del Pilar. This street was named after the hermitage that the Princess of Éboli ordered to be built there, she being very devoted to Our Lady of the Pilar.

Its importance lies in the fact that it is the only example of urbanised industrial expansion in the 16th century; its purpose as a silk industrial centre is clear, despite also incorporating commercial and residential functions. Their houses were originally made of brick, a material introduced by the Moors themselves, some of those original houses still being preserved.

Under the direction of the master upholsterer Francisco Tons, important textile works and tapestries came out of this neighbourhood. Some are currently displayed in major European museums.