

## Medieval Town of Granadilla

The medieval town of Granadilla is an abandoned town on the edge of history and on the banks of the Gabriel y Galán reservoir, whose construction displaced all its inhabitants around 1955. The expropriation of land and the eviction of its inhabitants created profound pain until 1964, when the last to leave finally went. "Not even a chair must remain" was the phrase that the Civil Guard pronounced to the last ones to leave. The town was never flooded, but the fertile lands that were the population's way of life disappeared.

Granadilla's recovery began in 1980 when it was declared a Historic Artistic Complex. First, the castle was restored, since it had unfortunately deteriorated. Then the walls were restored. Granadilla was chosen, along with Bubal (Huesca) and Umbralejo (Guadalajara) to form part of a cutting-edge Abandoned Towns Reconstruction Pro-

gramme. It is thanks to this that its uninhabited streets now fill with joy with the presence of hundreds of young people from all over Spain. Every week they spend time with professors and educators to learn life-long trades, reconstructing the present of one of the most visited historical places in northern Extremadura from the memory written on its stones.

The city was founded in 1170 by Fernando II of León and initially named Granada for its original perimeter and the order of the streets that reproduced the form of the pomegranate fruit. After the conquest of Granada in 1492 by the Catholic Monarchs, it came to be called Granadilla to avoid any confusion. Its early inhabitants were Muslims. Its military origin is evident, since it is nestled on a hill and protected by beautiful and very well preserved Almohad walls, given the fact that the city was an obligatory passage for all who were travelling to the *Vía de la Plata*.



### Visiting

**Location:** Ctra. de Granadilla s/n. Zarza de Granadilla, Cáceres.

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**Opening hours:**

**Winter:** 10.00 a.m. to 1.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. to 18.00 p.m.

**Summer:** 10.00 a.m. to 1.30 a.m. and 2.00 to 8.00 p.m.

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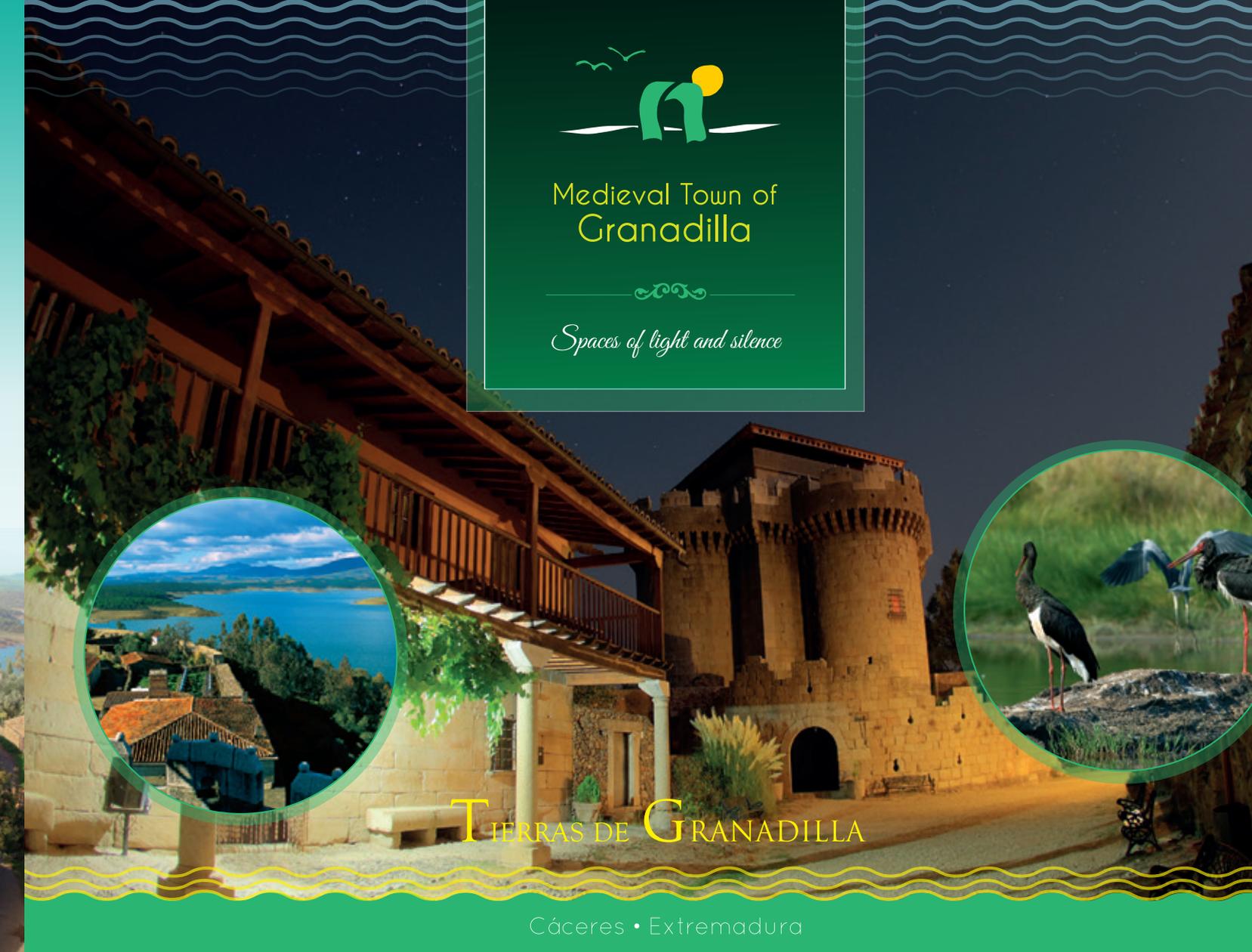
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*Spaces of light and silence*



TIERRAS DE GRANADILLA

Cáceres • Extremadura



## The Castle

Its guardian is a beautiful, well preserved castle-palace with an air of the Torre de Señoría that was built between 1473 and 1478 by Juan Carrera on the foundations of a citadel to prevent the advance of Muslims, who already dominated the entire south of the León y Castilla Transierras.

The castle is made up of a central body and four semi-cylindrical bodies that join at each side, giving it originality and a special beauty that shines brightly deep inside these endless skies. From its privileged height that enables the savouring of the sky, you can gaze at the silent beauty of the reservoir

that snoozes nearby, serene, like an extensive freshwater sea that invites you to sail it and at sunset bathes in the pure gold of the sun that, as everyone knows, sleeps in the west. In the background, the snow-capped mountains are this Granada's natural fortress.

## Memory

Strolling through this small version of Granada is to savour a lost rurality, with its Parish Church of the Assumption built in the 16th century that now sits, resigned to waiting. Its long and narrow strips of land, orchards or gardens, situated within the walls, were essential



Foto: Ángel Bravo Sánchez

resources during blockades, even if it was the water from the reservoir that defeated the town in a definitive battle. It is a city that also displays the beautiful wrinkles from its era of splendour, written on the façades of its 16th century mansions, the town hall, the magistrate's court and the Civil Guard barracks, whose solid porches protected them from the intense sun that is a blessing. People gather round the large Plaza Mayor square, as they have always done, to watch the comings and goings of students and locals who are gradually restoring the town's buildings.

Granadilla has invented for itself a resilient way of inhabiting towns, as culture, as a live heritage that educates on the values of a world that we cannot allow to be lost. A world, the rural world, made of landscape and beauty that is woven with the effort of everyday tasks, and cooked on a low heat from a silence of a privileged nature that amazes its visitors' souls.



## The Lynx

Granadilla's surroundings are home to a pine grove of over 9,884 acres of good environmental quality, despite it being an allochthonous natural system with great biological diversity. It is one of the district's main ecological treasures due to the diverse flora and fauna of the landscape, where hunting for wild boar, deer and rabbits is abundant. Thanks to the size of these almost impenetrable conifer woods, there is a small population of Iberian lynxes that can roam over 1,112 acres allocated to saving this beautiful endangered species with the careful supervision of the Captive Breeding Centre located in Zarza de Granadilla. They share territory with badgers, martens, foxes and ichneumons. There are also pastures, Mediterranean scrubland and some areas covered in olive groves and other dry crops.

