

Provincial Forum Praetorium

English

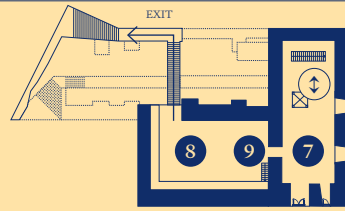
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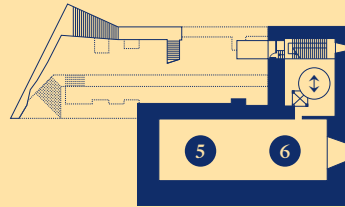
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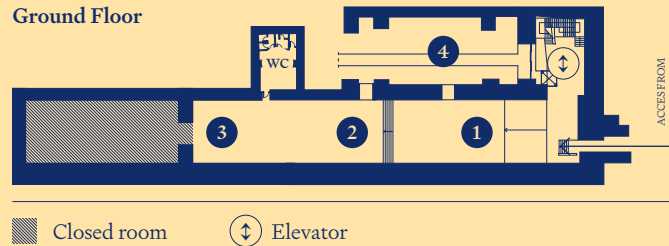
Second Floor



First Floor



Ground Floor



■ Closed room ⬆️⬆️ Elevator

1. Provincial Forum lower vault
2. Pedestals with inscriptions about important people of Tarraco
3. La Tecleta (roman sculpture)
4. Patio
5. Provincial Forum vault
6. Hippolytus tomb (first half of the 3rd century)
7. Gothic Room (14th century)
8. Terrace
9. Terrace

From the seventies of the 1st century AD, during the time of Vespasian emperor, a complex of public buildings was constructed on the highest hill of Tarraco. This complex consisted of two large porticoed squares with a rectangular plan. One square was dedicated to the imperial cult (located in the area of the cathedral), and the other was linked to the administration of the Hispania citerior province. Later, the construction of the circus completed this official building complex.

This complex is known as the Provincial Forum, which served for the provincial Law Courts headquarters and as a meeting place for the council of notables of the Hispania citerior. Once a year, the *Concilium provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*, representing the cities of the province, would gather in Tarraco to perform public rituals related to the cult of the emperor. The building that today is called Praetorium, of which some parts of the vaults have been preserved, was just one of the corners of this enormous Provincial Forum. In the past, there were stairs that provided access to different floors of the building.

In 1129, the Norman nobleman Robert Bordet, also known as Robert d'Aguiló or of Colei, received the city from the Archbishop Oleguer to repopulate it. He used the remains of this part of the Provincial Forum to build his castle. Then passed on to the courts-kings, called King's castle. Over time, the castle underwent during the medieval era, such as the addition of battlements to its walls, some remains of the arches and the patio.

In the 17th century it became a military warehouse and later troops quarters. On the night of August 19, 1813, the Imperial French army left Tarragona, setting off large explosions that seriously damaged to the castle. Reconstructions efforts were undertaken around 1822 to convert it into a prison and was used as such until 1953. It was popularly known as the Pilate prison.

