

Recreo de Castilla o Huerta de las Infantas



The so-called Recreo de Castilla is a garden located on the edge of the wall of the Adarve, just below the Castle of Priego and whose existence is documented at least since the mid-sixteenth century.

The first written reference to this place dates exactly from 1550 and appears in a letter of sale, with the name of Huerta de las Infantas, located under the adarve of the old door of this town.

Towards 1857 said orchard is acquired by D. Antonio Castilla who builds a house there. In the following decades, this gentleman and his heirs (Castilla Abril and Castilla Bermúdez Cañete) turn the enclosure into a romantic garden based on vegetation and water games. The garden and the pond, fed by the waters from the King's Fountain that once moved the 5 mills located in the area, served as entertainment for the many members of the family and on summer nights organized parties and private parties.

In 1948 a group of prieguenses organize some concerts in imitation of those who celebrated in the gardens of the Alhambra the Music Festival of Granada. Looking for a worthy place for this celebration, they asked the then D. Álvaro Castilla Abril to give them the garden. The first concert took place on the night of September 1, 1948 and was the origin of the current

in the posters and programs of the Festival in those years the place appeared with the name

Huerto de las Infantas.

In the last fifty years it has been called Recreo de Castilla, by the surname of its owners, although the original place name Huerto de Huerta de las Infantas has also been maintained.

From 1970 on, it entered a process of abandonment until it became a real ruin.

In 2003, an international ideas competition was organized to recover the site and turn it into a garden or public park. In 1996 the geographer Ángel Luis Vera Aranda wrote about this place:

The legends around secret passages and hidden treasures intermingle with what is the reality of what could be many spaces of Priego (the Jewel or the Adarve without going any further) if the relationship between the travertine, the water was correctly used and the vegetation, recipe until the present very forgotten by those who have in their hands the possibility of making the subbetic city a frame even more incomparable than it is today.

