

# The Kate Silver's Very Important Blog

## Traveling to Cartagena and Jumilla: Route of Wine in Spain

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My favorite city in Murcia was, hands down, Cartagena. I'd book a vacation to this town any day. It's got a bit of everything: history, modern architecture, food, views, the ocean, Roman ruins and ducks that guard a castle. Yes, ducks that guard a castle.

We started our visit riding 45 meters up a giant, tubular elevator to that very duck castle, where we could look out on the city and, in the process, traipse through time, starting with a Roman city and ending with a modern port.

Cartagena's nautical history dates back more than 2,000 years—it's one of the oldest cities in Spain—first as a military outpost, then as a commercial port and, much more recently (i.e. in the last 12 years), as a cruise port. What struck me most about this city is that rich history coupled with recent discovery—the remains to an enormous, 7,000-seat Roman theater weren't unearthed until about 25 years ago. And the city's archeological park, where remains of homes, Roman baths and even Roman paintings, date back to the first century BC, but weren't excavated until 2008. The interpretation center opened in 2012.

There are also some gorgeous splashes of contemporary design in this coastal town, which is surrounded by five hills, topped with castles. The modernist building, El Batel, is the most striking. Shaped like a boat topped with shipping containers, this conference center/entertainment venue is perched right on the Mediterranean Sea. The auditorium on the lowest level is actually *under* the sea, so visitors can attend a conference or concert under water. At El Batel, we had the other top meal of the trip, eaten while looking out on the Mediterranean.

Let's have a look.



After Cartagena, we hopped on our trusty bus and headed to Jumilla: Route of Wine. There, we tasted wines at Bodega S. Isidro.



That's a lotta grape juice!

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