

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Virgen de Luna (Virgin of the Moon) Pilgrimage Andalussia Tourist Interest Declared since 2008



It is celebrated the Sixteenth Sunday, which usually is by the middle of February. The days of celebration dedicated to the Virgin of the Moon are when the Virgin comes to Pozoblanco and the other when the Virgin is taken to the Chapel in the countryside.

According to the tradition, by the times under Muslim rule, the Virgin appeared to a young shepherd in the hollow of an oak, in a meadow called *Navarredonda*. The Virgin said to him that a chapel were built on that place. Likewise, a brotherhood of

fervent Christians needed to be founded so that the people go to the sanctuary in pilgrimage, and that the image of the Virgin is moved in procession to the village.



The brotherhood is founded in the XVth century, but there are still no references of it till the Modern Age. Its statutes are written in the XIXth century, approved by the Cordoba bishop. They established that none can belong to the brotherhood without obey the pascal precept. Members of the Brotherhood have the privilege of remaining covered in the presence of the image of the Virgin. The actual uniform is very strict: severe black suit, red silk laces fall through the back in a bow. They

carry a sword, shotgun and horn for the gunpowder.



During the days that precede the pilgrimage, the drum that announces the holidays and celebration, covers the streets of Pozoblanco, accompanied by the children. At the door of the houses where the brothers live, the children play a kind of traditional dance. The day before, a cart with food goes to the sanctuary in the country, this is called "the cart of the band". This cart remains in charge of the sergeant of the brotherhood, who goes with the drummer. Early the next morning, the sergeant and the drummer wake up every brother in their houses, shouting "Ave Maria Purísima", (the Hail Mary). Then, they all meet at the Captain's where they take attendance, and they are given the several services. Later on they go to the second

lieutenant's to pick up the flag. Then they take the way to the Church where they ask for permission to the Ecclesiastical Authority to start the way to the Sanctuary. In the Chapel of the Rockrose, it takes place a mass followed by the new brothers who swear allegiance to the flag, and to the Virgen de Luna. In 1990, matching up with the 50th anniversary of the refoundation of the Brotherhood, the Town Hall of Pozoblanco gave the golden medal of Pozoblanco to the Virgin of the Moon. The brotherhood celebrates a meal in their house in the country meanwhile the people have lunch in the surroundings of the Sanctuary.



In the afternoon. The Virgin, in the shoulders of the devotees, is moved to Pozoblanco. When the Cortège arrives to the "Deep Stream", it is received by the authorities and the keys of the town are given to the Image of the Virgin. People sing the "Salve" and the children offer the traditional "hornazo" (the typical sweet of these celebrations). At the same time, the brothers make the discharge with their shotguns and the flag is fluttered around. After that, at the doors of the Town Hall, it is given to the Virgin the staff of command of majoresa, and the discharge is repeated. The following day, it is bank holiday in Pozoblanco, and the Virgin goes in procession around Pozoblanco. After this, one brother invites to the rest of the

brotherhood to a great meal.

The pilgrimage when the Virgin goes out of Pozoblanco is much more simple and austere and it takes place four months later, usually in June.

Feria de Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes (Funfair)



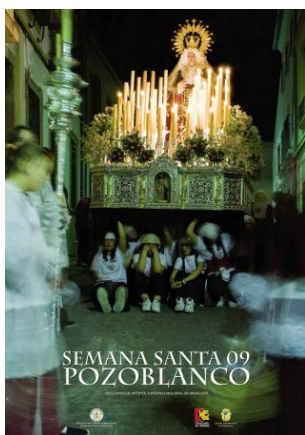
It is celebrated from the previous Thursday before to the last Sunday of September

It is the biggest funfair in the North area of the Córdoba province, and all the people from the Pedroches region take place in this celebration. Also they come many visitors from all over Spain.

The Pozoblanco showground it becomes full of lights and Chinese lanterns to take in this crowded celebration. During a whole week are celebrated various bullfights, where the best

matadors come, in such a way that Pozoblanco Bull Festival is a concerning event to all the bullfighting fans.

Holy Week



The Pozoblanco Holy Week houses one of the more singular Andalusia Passion representations.

The people from Pozoblanco with respect and seriousness, knew how to maintain beautiful ancient traditions such as the Passion Songs, which are celebrated the Sundays in the Lent, whose lyrics reflect the Gospel corresponding to every Lent Sunday.

Since the Palm Sunday to the Easter Sunday, each day of the Holy Week has a particularity in Pozoblanco. The joy of the children with their olive branches and the palms going with the Jesús in the donkey. Those ladies with their singular habits falling back with penitents, the Roman soldiers riding their horses with Jesús Rescatado (the rescued Jesús), the seriousness and humility of the Nazarenos (those who take part in the procession), who pray the Via Crucis going with the Charity Christ, or the joyment of the bells in the Easter Sunday. However, it is needed to be

stressed the daybreak of the Good Friday, when the act of the capture of the Jesús takes place. Judas surrenders Jesús to the Roman Soldiers, called here "Sayones", and Poncio Pilato sentences him to death.

Another singular event is the burn of Judas the Easter Saturday after the Resurrection Vigil. The Pozoblanco people burn in the streets hanging dolls made of straw or old clothes and wool, celebrating the Jesús Resurrection.

Brotherhoods of Penitents

Nowadays there exist in Pozoblanco ten brotherhoods of penitents. All of them form the Union Association of Brotherhood of Penitents in Pozoblanco, an institution legally constituted in 1985. The role played by this institution is essential for the development of the Passion Week in Pozoblanco. It depends on this association the acts and events coordination as well as the sacramental and lent worship, the finding of economical resources and infrastructures, and to boost the Holy Week in the town, that is to give an own character

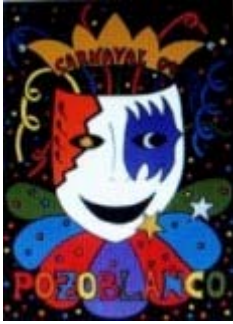
San Gregorio Festivity



This festivity is organized by the San Gregorio Nacienceno Brotherhood. This festivity is what is known as the "Little Fair" in Pozoblanco, and it takes place in the San Gregorio Chapel Square as well as in the Pozoblanco Fair Showground. The activities include sport events, the traditional burn of the cork at the chapel doors, and the San Gregorio procession through the streets of the neighbourhood, decorated with flowers.

This festivity is celebrated the closest Monday to May the 9th, which is the Patron Saint day.

Carnival



Carnival is held just before Lent, in the second fortnight of February. Pozoblanco people celebrate Carnival with numerous activities including a costumes competition, the traditional parade round the streets of Pozoblanco. This is a main event for the carnival associations and groups of singers which are called "Chirigotas".

San Isidro Festivity



It is held the 15th June. The day before the bells ring out and the drums roll. The brotherhood get together in the Santa Catalina Church, where they pray for the memory of the dead brothers.

At night, dolls representing different events are burned in the streets, and it starts a festival and party in the street. Such dolls are handcrafted by the ladies of Pozoblanco honoring San Isidro, the Farmworker. This is a very traditional and typical celebration in

Pozoblanco, maybe the only one and unique in this region.

Another festivities and popular celebrations

Many neighborhoods in Pozoblanco celebrate popular festivities in which neighborhoods and visitors take part. That is why the spring nights in this town become so picturesque, full of colour and music.

In May, we celebrate the Crosses Festivity, the San Gregorio Celebrations, the San Isidro Dolls, and María Auxiliadora Festivity. They come together with the beautiful landscape of this time of the year, as well as the nice weather. All this makes the best time of the year to come and visit Pozoblanco.

Throughout the whole summer, they are celebrated the traditional San Antonio Celebrations, 12 and 13rd June. San Juan, the 24th June, San Cristóbal, the 10th July, the Old Well (Pozo Viejo) festival and party in its typical square, this in August, which is one of the most traditional and typical celebrations, or the San Bartolomé evening, the 24th August-.