

# HISTORY HIDDEN IN LEGEND

## Santo Voto



The great epidemic of bubonic plague that devastated Europe in the fourteenth century, wiping out a third of its population, left only thirteen families - seventy-five inhabitants - in Puertollano. The survivors vowed to celebrate the Holy Vow in perpetuity, a celebration consisting of a common meal in honour of the marriages of the Virgin and Saint Joseph in which they asked for their protection.



Today, after more than six hundred years, it continues to be celebrated. Although one of its fundamental moments is the preparation and distribution of the Santo Voto stew, Puertollano has completed its celebrations with cultural and recreational events such as medieval markets, appointments of knights and ladies of the Santo Voto, among others.



With the arrival of a new epidemic there was a second vote in 1489. The neighbours pointed out the place where they would erect a new hermitage to the Virgin, which caused the mortality to cease. Already in the 18th century, they say that a roll from the Santo Voto stew cured the Duke of Medinaceli's coachman, who had visited the town and eaten with the neighbours, of the plague..



In this party you cannot miss the sacred pot. Twenty-five containers are heated by four tons of firewood to cook the stew for hours. These containers are filled with 1,200 kilos of beef, 1,800 kilos of potatoes, 50 of onions, 5 of paprika and pepper, 200 litres of white wine and another 60 of olive oil, without forgetting the pepper, coriander, bay leaf and tomatoes.



The Santo Voto is a festival of regional tourist interest that is celebrated on Thursday, after the day of the Octave of the Ascension (48 days from Easter Sunday), with distribution of the Santo Voto stew on Fridays.

