



5. RIURAU AND MAS DEL FONDO

TOURIST ROUTE THROUGH NORTHERN VILLAGES - MASSARROJOS

 **TURISMO DE BARRIOS**

GENERAL MAP OF THE ROUTE



LOCATION OF THE TOURIST ATTRACTION



AJUNTAMENT DE VALÈNCIA

HISTORY

The Mas del Fondo (**photos 3, 4, 5, and 6**) is an old farmhouse with annexed constructions typical of rain-fed agricultural operations, later transformed into irrigated farming. Among these facilities, the notable feature is the large "riurau," a traditional Valencian structure used as a large-scale raisin dryer, including grape drying yards and typical facilities for this type of cultivation.

The riurau (**photos 1 and 2**) consists of an open, porticoed structure with a gabled roof and arches of a specific width. Existing cartography shows that in 1886, only a two-span riurau existed, while by 1915, the drying sheds and courtyard were already installed. Its primary use was for drying grapes to produce raisins, a process known as "escaldà de la pansa."

Such buildings are characteristic of the regions of La Safor and La Marina, with this being the only known example in l'Horta Nord. In addition to its architectural value, it also holds historical and ethnographic significance. Another exceptional characteristic is its enormous size, making it the largest riurau in the world.

These installations illustrate the importance of grape cultivation in Massarrojos, initially mandated by the Order of the Temple in 1251 to ensure a wine supply to its central houses, which led to infrastructure enabling Valencian raisins to be exported worldwide.

Miguel del Rey notes, *"The farmhouse, or masía, was possibly built in the late 18th century, located in an area called 'del Tòs Pelat,' an isolated and dangerous place during the turbulent times of the 19th century, hence its enclosed condition protected by turrets and arrow slits. From this late 18th-century period, we have references to wine production in the area, though not raisins, as Cavanilles only mentions notable production in Vilamarxant, citing 2100 cahices of raisins (Cavanilles, p.151-T1). Therefore, we understand that the dedication to grape cultivation for raisins at Mas del Fondo started around the mid-19th century, as shown by the 1886 map indicating extensive vineyard areas, coinciding with the construction of the riurau and grape processing facilities. Perhaps its origin lies partly in its current condition as an agricultural space lacking the lived-in quality and phenomenological conditions that rural architecture provides when inhabited in the territory, which is challenging to find in cultivated spaces viewed from a distance."*

The riurau and Mas del Fondo were declared a Local Heritage Site in 2015 under the "Catalogue of Protected Goods and Spaces" of the Urban Development General Plan of the city of Valencia.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address: Mas del Fondo.

ACCESSIBILITY

Parking: There is no parking available near the point of interest.

Access: Access is via a rural road; there are no sidewalks.

Terra i xufa, a company of producers and marketers of organic fruits and vegetables from the historic orchard of Valencia, organizes visits to the farmhouse and riurau (<https://terraixufa.com/>).





PHOTO 1 and 2. Riurau del Fondo (photo: <https://arquitecturaruralvalenciana.blogspot.com/>)



PHOTO 3 and 4. Mas del Fondo (photo: <https://arquitecturauralvalenciana.blogspot.com/>)





PHOTO 5. Entrance door to Mas del Fondo (photo: <https://arquitecturaruralvalenciana.blogspot.com/>)



PHOTO 6. Aerial photograph of Mas del Fondo and riurau (photo: <https://cultural.valencia.es/>).