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## Castillo de Bellver

The beautiful view was probably the reason why the castle got its name. The name comes from the Catalan language and means **beautiful view**.

The castle was built between 1300 and 1311 on the direct orders of King James II of Mallorca. It is located about 3 km from the city centre, on a hill 112 meters high. The complex consists of a Gothic-style building with a perfectly circular floor plan, arranged around a circular courtyard with four large towers facing the four cardinal points.

Bellver Castle was built of marble. Much of the stone comes from the caves located under the castle, from Portas Vells of Santanyi. Bellver Castle was originally conceived as a **fortress palace**, where the ruling authorities took refuge in times of danger.



From the top of the hill, it provided control over external dangers that could come from the sea. In addition, **Bellver could oversee the city, the natural harbour of Portopí** and a large area of southwest Mallorca.

**King James II** He was the first king to move his court to Bellver, and spent several periods there. Bellver Castle also housed the island's main authorities for many years and occasionally served as a **prison**. After the War of the Spanish succession, the castle became one of the **main prisons on the island**. During the Spanish Civil War, the castle experienced the darkest and most bitter moment of its history, when over **800 Republican prisoners were imprisoned**.

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