

Beat: Travel

## Laurel, a Street of legend

### The main tourist Street in La Rioja

Logrono, Spain, 01.04.2018, 10:09 Time

**USPA NEWS** - There is a Street in Spain whose name, according to legend, is it because prostitution. But what is now there is not young ladies of cheerful life but bars and the parties that are organized there not have to do with what the legend say but with wine and food. The Laurel Street in Logrono, capital of the wine region of Rioja, in Northern Spain, is one of the most tourist and best know worldwide.

It is not know for sure when was born the Laurel Street in Logrono, but it is know that always had that name. The first written references to the Laurel Street go back to the XV Century and extended along the Wall surrounding and protecting the city for his inner side. In that area of the city, explained to USPA News Federico Soldevilla, historian, president of the Association of Friends of La Rioja and one of the live most expert in the history of Logrono, "is documented the existence of houses in which they lived craftsmen and workers of medieval trades, but no prostitutes."<sup>[1]</sup> Later in the XVII Century in the area was built a Palace, the current Museum of La Rioja, where, 200 years later, after his marriage with Jacinta Martinez of Sicily, lived Espartero, Regent of Spain during the reign of Elizabeth II. The family built the Palace had also land nearby, just where is Laurel Street. "It's very unlikely that these land is settle prostitutes,"<sup>[2]</sup> says Federico Soldevilla.

Where do out then the legend of the Laurel Street? A legend that says that the Street name comes from the branches of Laurel allegedly by the prostitutes of the Street put on their windows to indicate that were available. According Federico Soldevilla, the legend is work by the bars, a product marketing to attract customers. In the XVI Century, pointing the historian, prostitution was regulated and in Logrono is exercised in "the seven streets"<sup>[3]</sup>, an area away from the Laurel Street half mile.

The legend has given fruits and today, the Laurel Street in Logrono is the main claim for tourists of weekend in Northern Spain. Forty bars and six restaurants expect to visitors with a huge wine list and spiked. Today tourists tread on this Street leave their footprint in a Street for centuries trod by the inhabitants of Logrono. No one remember today the legend on the Street and no one imagine in windows as the current the prostitutes offer their services, but the legend has increased the romantic halo surrounding this Street, before heritage of inhabitants of Logrono and today intended to tourists. A Street where for 500 years walk people.

Where de legend was looking for women, today the tourists are looking wine of Rioja and something to eat. Laurel Street, almost deserted on Monday, are encouraged from Wednesday and weekends is a hive of people who tries to move forward and find site bars. On the other side and there is no field but streets built the pace of the land development of the city. A theater covers the back of Laurel Street. A bit further is a park home to the equestrian statue of Espartero, always looking to North and the river Ebro where they came the enemy troops in decades late XIX Century. Today, the house of Espartero is the Museum of La Rioja and land where extended its domain stands today the library of La Rioja. Logrono has changed. Today is a modern city but its inhabitants them still liking more the legend speaking of women, to report that were available, hung branches of laurel in their windows.

#### Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-13013/laurel-a-street-of-legend.html>

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V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jose A. Martin

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