



## TOWER OF HERCULES

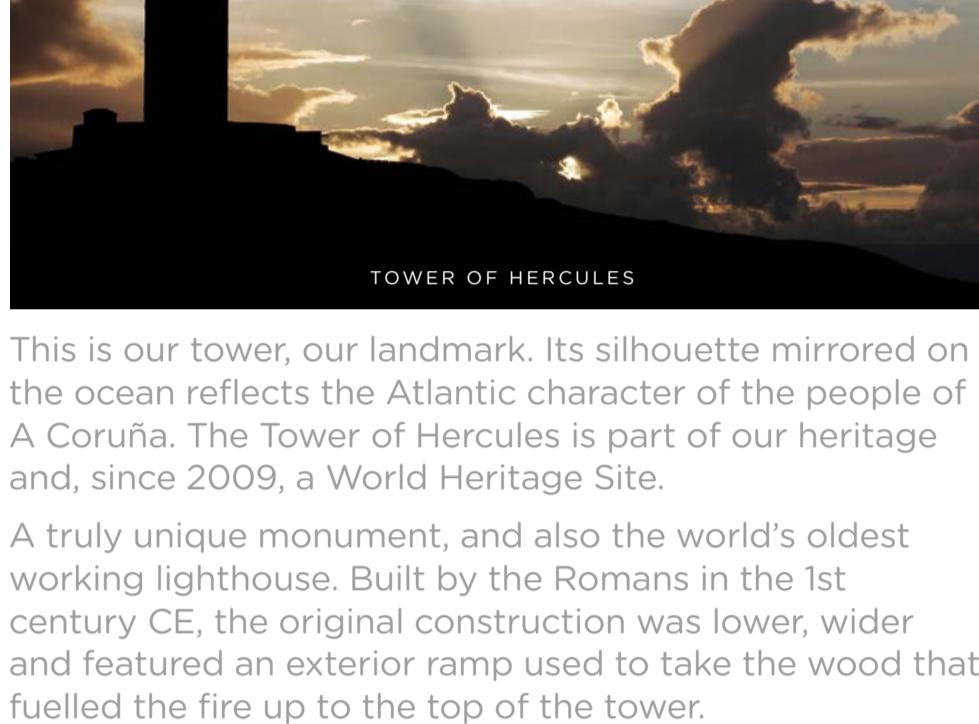
WORLD HERITAGE  
and its legends



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Tower of Hercules  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 2009

## Picasso's Candy Tower\*



TOWER OF HERCULES

This is our tower, our landmark. Its silhouette mirrored on the ocean reflects the Atlantic character of the people of A Coruña. The Tower of Hercules is part of our heritage and, since 2009, a World Heritage Site.

A truly unique monument, and also the world's oldest working lighthouse. Built by the Romans in the 1st century CE, the original construction was lower, wider and featured an exterior ramp used to take the wood that fuelled the fire up to the top of the tower.

In 1788, Eustaquio Giannini, aided by city alderman José Cornide, embarked on an ambitious plan to renovate the tower. He clad the original Roman building with a Neoclassical facade, decorated with a band as a reminder of the original lamp. Later additions included the upper section that houses the lamp, the aedicule containing the Latin inscription and the platform at the base.

Giannini's design is the Tower that stands out against the magnificent early evening skies of A Coruña. It is a truly unforgettable sight, and despite travelling far and wide, you will find it hard to discover other square-shaped lighthouses with a Roman soul.

## \*Picasso

Pablo Picasso spent part of his childhood in A Coruña, drawing and painting the Tower on several occasions. The young artist affectionately called it the Candy Tower.

## ...profiles:

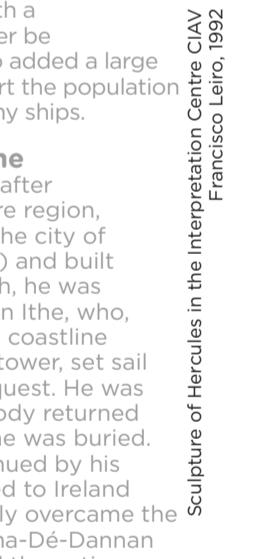
**Gaio Sevio Lupo.** The Tower of Hercules is the only Roman lighthouse that can be definitely attributed to a specific architect. The architect himself took it upon himself to immortalise his name by including it on a votive inscription dedicated to the god Mars Augustus that can be seen at the base of the tower.

**Eustaquio Giannini.** A military engineer commissioned in the late 18th century to carry out the most radical alteration work to the Tower. Giannini also left an inscription in stone, attesting to his restoration project that would turn the tower into a modern lighthouse in keeping with the demands of the day.

**Reina Isabel II.** In 1858, and on the occasion of the Queen's visit to the city, the decision was made to 'beautify' the interior of the Tower of Hercules. The inner walls were concealed with Georgian bar false walls covered with wallpaper and textile hangings, and false ceilings were constructed to cover the vaults.

**José Cornide.** A city-born scholar who in 1792 published a work entitled 'Investigaciones sobre la fundación y fábrica de la Torre llamada de Hércules' ('A Study of the Founding and Construction of the Tower Called Hercules'), which continues to be essential reading for anyone wishing to study the lighthouse and its history.

## Legends



### The Legend of Hercules

Legend tells us of a giant named Geryon, who ruled over the lands between the rivers Tagus and Douro, terrorising the entire population. Hercules defeated the giant after a battle that lasted for three days and three nights, buried his head and ordered a tower to be built on the site. He then founded a city close to the tower that he called Crunia, in memory of the first woman to live there and whom he fell deeply in love with. Following Hercules' departure, Hispan installed a lamp in the tower with a flame that could never be extinguished. He also added a large mirror in order to alert the population of approaching enemy ships.

### Breoghan and Ithe

The story goes that after conquering the entire region, Breoghan founded the city of Brigantia (A Coruña) and built a tower. On his death, he was succeeded by his son Ithe, who, on spotting the Irish coastline from the top of the tower, set sail on a voyage of conquest. He was murdered and his body returned to Brigantia where he was buried. His quest was continued by his son Mil, who travelled to Ireland where he successfully overcame the mythological Thuatha-Dé-Dannan tribe and conquered the entire country.

### The Tale of Trezenzono

According to this tale, Trezenzono travelled to the uninhabited land of Galicia, where he discovered a magnificent construction rising up on the coast, the Farum Brecantium. After climbing up to the top of the tower, he spotted an island, sailed to it and entered a state of blessedness that would last for seven years. He was then visited by an angel, who ordered him to return, but he refused. He was struck blind as punishment for his disobedience and his body was covered in wounds. He begged divine forgiveness and returned to Galicia by boat, yet on reaching the Farum Brecantium he discovered that it was practically in ruins and that the city had been repopulated.

## Visiting the Tower

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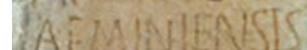
### The Visitor Centre CIAV

The Interpretation and Visitor Centre (CIAV in its Spanish initials) is located close to the Tower of Hercules. In addition to the Reception area, where the members of staff deal with visitor enquiries, the Interpretation and Visitor Centre also has an exhibition area providing an insight into the history and evolution of the Tower, its use as a lighthouse and its strategic importance during the days of the Roman Empire.



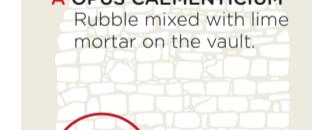
### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

The remains of the original foundations and constructions that were annexed to the lighthouse can be seen at the entrance to the Tower.



### LATIN INSCRIPTION

The Roman inscription, including the name of the architect is located at the base of the tower, protected by a 19th century aedicule.



### CHAMBERS

The inner Roman core of the building is divided into three floors, each with four chambers featuring barrel vaulted ceilings. All the chambers conserve typical features of Roman architecture.



### A OPUS CAEMENTICUM

Rubble mixed with lime mortar on the vault.



### B OPUS VITTATUM

Four-cornered masonry laid in rows to form the walls.



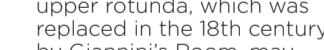
### C OPUS QUADRATUM

Large blocks of stone for doors and windows.



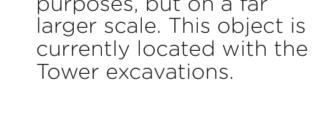
### ROTUNDA

Designed by Eustaquio Giannini, it replaced the original Roman rotunda and is covered by a cupola, conserving much of the Roman floor.



### THE LIGHTHOUSE LAMP

The bell jar housing the lighthouse lamp dates back to 1804. The lamp emits a group of 4 flashes every 20 seconds.



### THE FORMER LAMP

The Tower of Hercules' upper rotunda, which was replaced in the 18th century by Giannini's Room, may have housed the lighting system of the Roman lighthouse. Recent research has indicated that the Tower of Hercules was illuminated by an oil lamp similar to those used for domestic purposes, but on a far larger scale. This object is currently located with the Tower excavations.

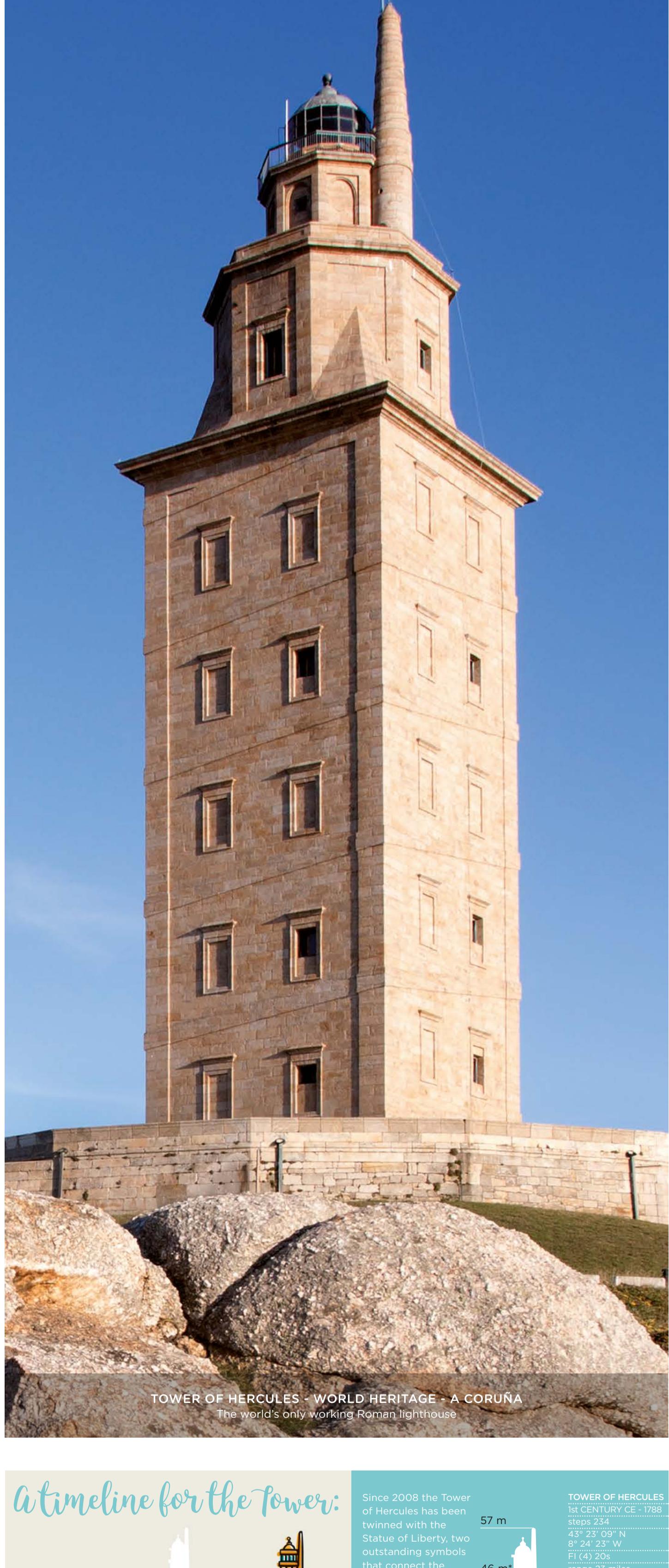
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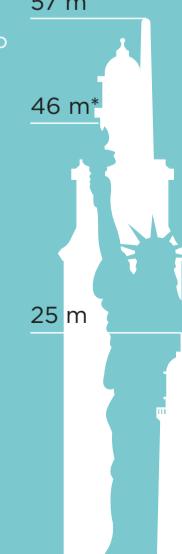




## A timeline for the Tower:



Since 2008 the Tower of Hercules has been twinned with the Statue of Liberty, two outstanding symbols that connect the Old and New Worlds across the Atlantic. The Tower is also twinned with Morro Castle Lighthouse in Havana, the oldest lighthouse on the American continent.



**TOWER OF HERCULES**  
1st CENTURY CE - 1788  
steps 234  
43° 23' 09" N  
8° 24' 23" W  
F1 (4) 20s  
range 23 miles

**STATUE OF LIBERTY**  
1886  
steps 156\*  
40° 41' 21" N  
74° 02' 40" W  
\*excluding the base

**MORRO LIGHTHOUSE**  
1845  
steps 170  
23° 09' 01" N  
82° 21' 24" W  
F1 (2) W 15s  
range 18 miles