

Remembrance Tour

# TOULOUSE

the capital of Spanish Republican Exile

English Version

MAIRIE DE  TOULOUSE

[www.toulouse.fr](http://www.toulouse.fr)



One can stroll around a city like Toulouse simply to take in the sights and enjoy its monuments and architecture. But behind the monuments, in the pell-mell of streets, the city tells another story.

So this guide is about the story of tens of thousands of Spanish republicans who were welcomed by the city in 1939 and whose past is retraced in over twenty different places throughout Toulouse. The Spanish republicans settled here to live and to carry on their political struggle, making Toulouse the capital of political opposition to Franco's dictatorship.

The Spanish republicans took part in the life of the city by bringing their creativity and talent in areas like as music, painting, sculpture, photography, dance, etc. They put down roots in Toulouse and thus the city has become both a little more Spanish and a little more republican.

This itinerary offers visitors from all over Spain the chance to retrace the steps of their parents and grand parents, to revisit a part of their past, which has also become a part of ours. And for others, we are opening a few pages of the past of the city of Toulouse, the capital of Spanish republican exile.

**Pierre Cohen**  
Toulouse Deputy Mayor

## Political and Unionist organisations

in order of appearance in text

PSUC Partido Socialista Unificado de Cataluña

PSOE Partido Socialista Obrero Español

UGT Unión General de Trabajadores

CNT Confederación Nacional del Trabajo

MSC Moviment Socialista de Catalunya

EDE Solidaridad Democrática Española

PCE Partido Comunista Español

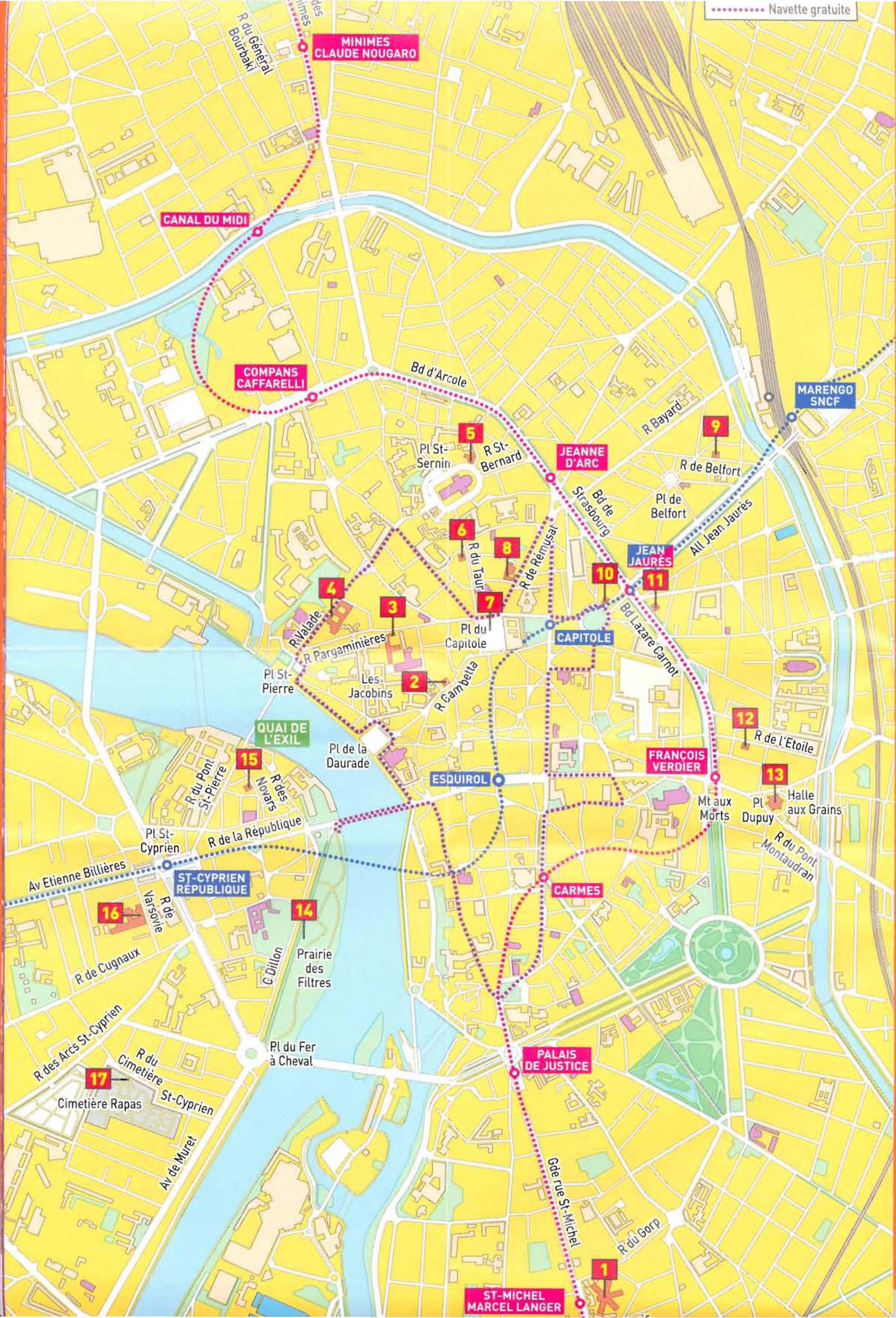
JSF Juventudes Socialistas de España

MLE Movimiento Libertario Español

FILJ Federación Ibérica de Juventudes Libertarias

SIA Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista



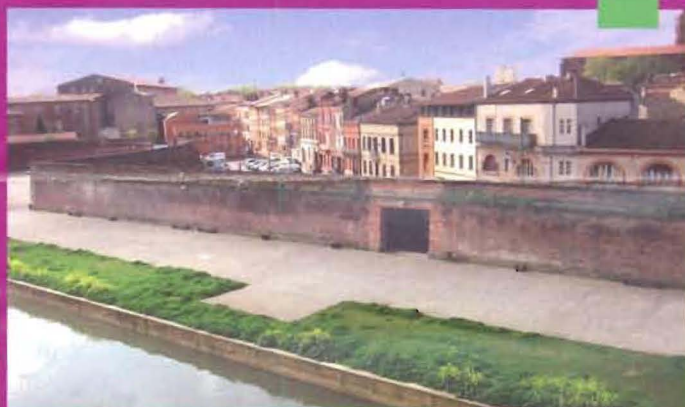




# Immediately after the town was liberated on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1944

and following five years of hardship caused by retreat (Retirada), underground life and Resistance, the Spanish Republican Exile's political activity broke up, investing all areas of Toulouse where more than twenty thousand exiles lived. To tour the streets and buildings of Toulouse is to journey through their memory.

For more than thirty years, many other sites such as Récébedou camp, cinemas that have since been destroyed, community centres, parks and river-side woodlands housed the political and cultural activities of a Republican Exile that never gave up.



↑ The Spanish Republican Exile Quay dedicated in 2009 by the City of Toulouse to the memory of Spanish refugees



↑ La place du Capitole

This document was compiled by the Town Hall of Toulouse (Communication Department/Municipal Archives) with thanks to:

**Photos by Enrique Tapia Jimenez**

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## Prison Saint-Michel



MORO

Francisco Ponzán Vidal, anarchist-unionist and Resistance fighter, was detained there on the eve of the Liberation of Toulouse prior to being handed over to the Germans, to be shot and burnt along with 53 other hostages in neighbouring Buzet forest.

← Francisco Ponzán Vidal



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## N° 7 rue Gambetta



Photo Tapia

← Ceremony in honour of the patron of the Hôtel de Paris who died in Germany (2 January 1948)

N° 7 housed the Hôtel de Paris. In 1947, the PSOE met there and decided to withdraw from the Republican Government in Exile, which it presided over, to initiate negotiations with the monarchists.

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## N° 69, rue Pargaminières



Photo Tapia

↑ Entrance to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the P.S.O.E. in exile, at the Jacobins (1946)



Photo Tapia

↑ Indalecio Prieto, president of the P.S.O.E. in exile during the 3<sup>rd</sup> party congress (February 1948)

N° 69 rue Pargaminières is to be found the Refectory of the Jacobin convent.

The huge exhibition hall accommodated two of the PSOE's historic congresses in 1946 and 1948.

## N° 51, rue Pargaminières

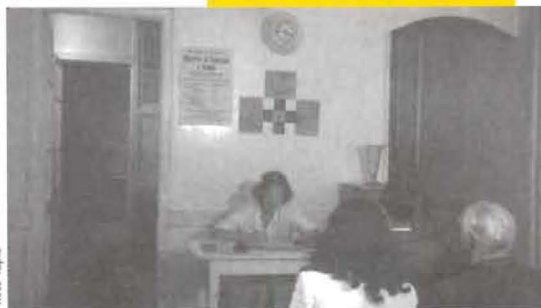


Photo Tapia

At n° 51 stood the Republican Spanish Red Cross Health Centre.



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## N° 30 bis, rue Valade



Photo City of Toulouse

The gathering of the XI<sup>th</sup> congress of the UGT in 1971 thrust Nicolas Redondo to the head of the union. JSE members also held conferences there.

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## Place Saint-Sernin



Photo Tapia

←  
The CNT-MLE  
Pleno meeting  
(16 December  
1944)

The **Bourse du Travail** (Labour Exchange) served as a meeting place for the SCP -until it was banned in 1950- as well as for other organizations including the CNT, which convened Plenos (plenary meetings) there, in October 1944 in particular. Around the back at n°3 **rue Merly** were the premises of the CNTs' Toulouse section.



←  
Headquarters  
of the P.S.O.E.  
in exile  
on the death  
of Largo  
Caballero  
(April 1946)



←  
Courtyard  
of Ciné Espoir  
during the 6<sup>th</sup>  
P.S.O.E. congress  
(1955)

The 16<sup>th</sup> century Bachelier gate opened onto the courtyard of the **Ciné Espoir** (the "Hope" cinema -now a film theatre) where groups of artists in exile performed in its theatre. Traditionally used for Christmas celebrations and meetings, the theatre was mostly used for numerous PSOE congresses. And, in August 1972, Felipe Gonzalez materialized the Renovation of his party there. Above that was **Casa del Pueblo**, Toulouse's section of the PSOE and its National Directorate.

At n° 71, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, the UGT established its National Directorate, as well as the SDE (Solidaridad Democratica Española),



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## Place du Capitole



Photo Tapia

↑ Demonstration against the visit of Franco's representative to Toulouse (30 May 1945)



Photo Tapia

↑ Official Reception of José Giral, president of the Spanish republican government in exile (30 March 1946)

This was a true "Plaza Mayor" for exiles: they came here in their thousands to attend anti-Francoist demonstrations, the many cafés that border the square serving as meeting places (PSUC, Casal Català). In 1946 José Giral, President of the Republican Government in Exile, was officially greeted in the City-hall.

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## 17, rue de Rémusat



Photo Tapia

← The tribune of the 2nd Congress of the UGT in exile (September 1946)

It was in the Salle du Sénéchal (Seneschal Hall) that the first PSOE congress in exile met in September 1944. In November, the UGT reorganized there and its amphitheatre was to be used for many political meetings (CNT, MSC...) and conferences.

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N° 4, rue Belfort

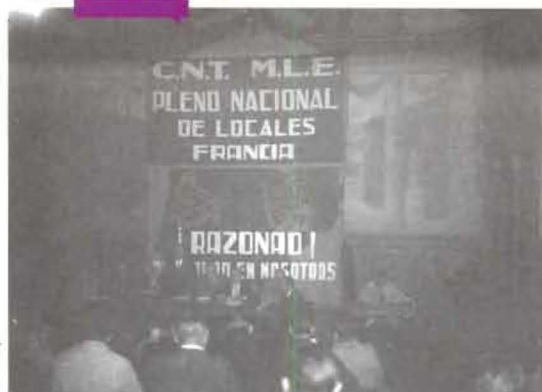


Photo Tapia



Photo City of Toulouse

This was to be the head-office for the Management of the MLE-CNT, the FIJL and the SIA as from August 1945, and later of the Secretariado Intercontinental of the CNT.



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## Place Wilson



The Republicans liked to gather here for lengthy discussions: it was their "**Parlamento**". All around them, street peddlers sold their newspapers such as **CNT**, **Ruta**, **Mundo Obrero** and **El Socialista**..., which were printed in Toulouse in the early years.

## N° 6, place Wilson



Photo Tapia

←  
Meeting  
Toulouse-  
Barcelona  
(10 May 1945)

At n° 6 the « Plaza » cinema was located, a venue for many political events.

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N° 54-56, boulevard Carnot



Photo Tapia

← Militants of the CNT during a meeting (1<sup>st</sup> May 1946)

The old cinema « Les Nouveautés » was venue to many political meetings and conferences.

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N° 14, rue de l'Étoile



Archives Thibon

← A conference at the Ateneo

At the end of 1959, the **Ateneo Español** was created at the initiative of the anarchist-unionists: a place of free culture in the spirit of Republican Ateneos. They were open to all "democratic" associations and abstained from all forms of proselytism.

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## La Halle aux Grains, Place Dupuy



← Commemoration of 16 July 1936

Photo Tapia



← Dolores Ibarruri, the "Pasionaria", during the "dissident" U.G.T. meeting (October 1945)

Photo Tapia

"La Halle aux Grains" (the Grain Exchange) was to witness a great many public gatherings, at times organized by the PCE, as in 1945 with the presence of Dolores Ibarruri (La Pasionaria). But, above all every year it welcomed CNT militants and sympathizers to commemorate their "19<sup>th</sup> of July 1936, date of the "Revolution" - the day on which the population took up arms to defend the Republic.

Photo City of Toulouse



At the end of the war groups of huts appeared to house the many activities of the exiles: health centres, the Warsaw Hospital maternity, the Casal Catala premises, a theatre...





**15****N° 7, rue des Novars**

First founded in October 1944,  
Casa Català has remained at this  
address since 1952.

**16****N° 15, rue Varsovie****HOSPITAL VARSOVIA**

★



←  
Brochure  
of « El Hospital  
Varsovia »  
(around 1950)

Photo FPI

Calcutta 15, Rue Varsovie

In the Autumn of 1944, the guerilleros and the FFI founded .  
**El Hospital Varsovia** (Warsaw hospital) where Spanish doctors  
and nurses cared for their compatriots until 1950, date of their  
arrest.

It later became the **Joseph Ducuing Hospital** and the **Joseph-  
Ducuing clinic**.

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N° 63 rue du Cimetière Saint-Cyprien  
(Rapas cemetery)



Photo Tajia

← Federica  
Montseny  
(May 1945)

Among the gravestones of the many exiles one can find that of Federica Montseny, the charismatic leader of CNT and first woman minister in Europe.

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N° 85, avenue des Minimes



Photo City of Toulouse

At the entrance of Jardin Claude Nougaro, on the site of the Casa de España, is the **Monument à l'Exil espagnol** created by Joan Jorda in memory of the Spanish Exile.