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## Vila Nova da Barquinha

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### ABOUT



Located right next to the River Tagus, in an extremely green and fertile area, Vila Nova de Barquinha is a very picturesque place.

Opposite it, on an islet in the middle of the river, is one of the most attractive Portuguese castles - the Castle of Almoural, built by the Templars in 1171. It is associated with legends of enchanted Moorish women and captured princesses saved by itinerant knights.

This castle, often the setting of performances that take advantage of its location by using son et lumière effects, can be visited by a boat that leaves from Tancos.

Vila Nova da Barquinha has the second oldest bullring in Portugal, which bears witness to the tradition of the festa brava ("festival of daring"), a vital ingredient of the important events in the council, such as the Town Festivals in July and the "Festa do Rio e das Aldeias" (Festival of the River and Villages) on 15th August, in which the celebrations take place on both sides of the river, in the villages of Tancos and Arripiados.

In the environs, a visit to the 16th century Parish Church of Atalaia, whose façade is one of the best examples of the Renaissance style in Portugal, is worth taking some time over.

As for the local cuisine, the highlights are the river fish dishes, such as the caldeiradas (fish casseroles), the fish soup, the striped mullet cooked on a tile, the açorda de savel (purée of bread, herbs and garlic with shad), and the eels cooked in the fisherman's style.