

## Monção

### ABOUT



Photo: R.T.Alto Minho

This fortified city on the bank of the River Minho, home to spas and the Alvarinho wine, was once the backdrop to the many battles between the kingdoms of Portugal and Castile... Its Sueve name Orosion was translated to Latin as Mons Sanctus that subsequently evolved into the Portuguese Monção. In 1291, Portuguese king Afonso III granted it a royal charter and in 1306, king Dinis ordered the construction of the old defensive castle. Its walls still welcome the visitor.

Looking out over the river Minho, with its appealing terraces and belvederes, such as the Neris esplanade, it would be hard to imagine that this was the scene of ferocious combat in the battles between the kingdoms of Portugal and Castile. Not to mention that such combat would draw out the great bravery of three women: Deuladeu Martins, Mariana de Lencastre and Helena Peres. Now, memories of the good and the bad are relived in the charming popular traditions of the Coca Festival, celebrated every year on Corpus Christi Thursday.

The 16th century walls guard the historic centre replete with monuments such as the Matrix Church, the Church of Misericórdia and the Church of Santo António dos Capuchos. Beyond, the Monção Spas complement any visit to the city with their therapeutical waters.

On the outskirts, there is the Church of Longos Vales, a rare example of Romanic architecture, and the impressive Palace of Brejoeira, where the famous lightly sparkling Alvarinho wine is produced. This completes the heritage of Monção.