

Arco da Rua Augusta

ABOUT

This majestic triumphal arch, the noble gateway onto the interior of the "Downtown", was planned in the time of the Marquis de Pombal to finish off the northern side of the Praça do Comércio. However, it was only begun in 1862 and finished in 1873.

The monument features a set of allegoric symbols such as "Gloria crowning Genius and Value", the work of the French sculptor Anatole Calmels. Immediately below there are (from left to right) statues of Viriato, Vasco da Gama, the Marquis of Pombal and Nuno Álvares Pereira (these being the work of Portuguese sculptor Vítor Bastos), with representations of the rivers Tagus and Douro on each side.

The latin inscription "virtutibus maiorum" (the greatest virtues) summarises both the concepts behind the great values of Portuguese patriotism and pays homage to past heroes. The location is particularly suitable being on the bank of the Tagus from where the Portuguese set off to discover new worlds and civilisations thereby opening the way to a universal sense of the world.