
Castelo de São Jorge

ABOUT



Photo: João Paulo

The Castelo de São Jorge is one of Lisbon's most distinctive monuments, being situated on the city's highest hill.

The oldest known fortification at this spot dates from the 2nd century BC, although some of the remains found here date from as far back as the 6th century BC. Archaeological evidence has also made it possible to discover traces of the presence of Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans and Muslims, confirming the human occupation of this area since very remote times.

The castle itself was founded in the 10th and 11th centuries, when Lisbon was an important Moorish port. In 1147, the first king of Portugal, Dom Afonso Henriques, captured both the castle and the city from the Moors. The castle enjoyed its most important period between the 13th and 14th centuries. It was also here, in the 16th century that the king Dom Manuel I received Vasco da Gama after his sea voyage to India and that the first Portuguese theatre play, written by Gil Vicente, was performed to mark the birth of the king Dom João III.

Declared a National Monument in 1910, the castle underwent major restoration work in the 20th century, which left it with its present-day appearance. It is one of the most important places in the city and a very popular leisure space amongst the people living in the neighbouring area. It is generally agreed to afford the best view over the city and the River Tagus.

Inside the walls, you will find a museum, where you can see a presentation of the history of Lisbon, and the Torre de Ulisses (the Tower of Ulysses). The city's legendary founder has given his name to the former Torre do Tombo, which now houses a camera obscura with a giant periscope that allows you to enjoy a 360° panoramic view of the city in real time.

Contacts

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Characteristics and Services

Guided Tours
Restaurant
Shops
Cafeteria

Timetable

9am - 9pm (From March to October); 9am - 6pm (From November to February); Closed: 1 January, 1 May and 25 December
