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# Santuário de Nossa Senhora de Aires

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## ABOUT



Our Lady of Pity, succouring the believers.

In this sanctuary the Ançã-stone image of the old patroness, Our Lady of Pity, is worshipped. This image, in which Our Lady is seated with Jesus dead in her arms, is an object of great faith, for tradition has never ceased to help believers, as seen in the innumerable ex-votos exhibited in the House of Miracles, a collection of unique and singular popular art that includes objects from various eras, like old photographs, wedding dresses and hair braids.

The Baroque sanctuary was built between 1743 and 1804, based on a project by Father João Baptista, in the spot where there was an earlier 16th century hermitage. On the cover, a Latin inscription recounts that after the Moors were expelled from these lands a farmer ploughed the field and found the image seen at the altar inside a clay pot. The building has a Latin cross floor-plan, consisting of a single nave, with vaulted ceiling. Inside is a carved rococo altar.

Also part of the sanctuary is the fountain of Our Lady of Aires, located on the Terreiro dos Peregrinos and houses of the pilgrims.

Two of the most emblematic events in Viana do Alentejo take place here: the fair of Our Lady of Aires, which has been running since 1751 on the fourth weekend of September; and the Romaria a Cavalo, a horse-back procession which takes place along the 120km old royal road, between the Church of Our Lady of Boa Viagem in Moita do Ribatejo, and this sanctuary in Viana do Alentejo, and which usually takes place on the fourth weekend of April.

## Contacts

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## Accessibility