

Other interesting features

A trip through the Alto Minho

Other informations:

A trip through the Alto Minho; Embark on a reinvigorating trip through the Soajo and Peneda mountains. You'll find it difficult to take your eyes off the spectacular landscape, including pasture land, and magnificent views over rolling horizons that have a long historical and geological pedigree. The ruby coloured wines and local dishes constitute a mouthwatering treat.

Visitors can reach the mountains of the Serra de Soajo via the national road EN 203 that runs parallel to the left bank of the River Lima. The route is signposted from the city of Viana do Castelo to the frontier with Galicia. In the town of Ponte da Barca, you may choose whether to continue along the same road, or cross the river in direction towards Arcos de Valdevez and then follow your journey along EN 202. Both routes penetrate the mountains and lead to the village of Soajo - a natural starting point in order to discover the local culture, heritage and varied and spectacular natural beauty of this mountainous region.

In the 13th century the King, D. Dinis granted special privileges to the local inhabitants, establishing that no nobleman could stay in the village, except in the presence of the King himself, "for any longer than it takes for bread to cool on the point of a lance". Today, the privileges accessible to visitors include archaeology and art, green terraced slopes overlooking crystal clear waters, a rich and varied gastronomy complemented by the local vinho verde wine, and of course the local population which is harmoniously integrated within its surroundings.

In order to sense this unique experience more intensely, spend the night in one of the village houses, where you'll find full modern comforts allied to respect for tradition.

Take the chance to discover the abundance of life found in the Peneda Gerês National Park, and contact the Park Services, who organise pedestrian walks, and may help you discover the riches and variety of animal and plant life and the singular forms of habitat that have originated a natural architecture which is adapted to the needs of a mountain economy, based on indigenous breeds, in small-scale pastoral systems and community practices of management of the local area.

If you travel during the spring or summer, don't forget to bring your swimming costume. The wide variety of fresh water streams in the area form beautiful natural lagoons that invite us to take a dip.

Almond-Trees in Blossom

Other informations:

Almond-Trees in Blossom; At the end of winter, especially in the months of February and March, the soft white colour of the almond-trees in blossom mixes with the greens and browns of the surrounding landscape.

This is an excellent time for visiting this particular region of Trás-os-Montes and also provides the ideal pretext for Torre de Moncorvo Municipal Council to promote the "Festa das Amendoeiras em Flor" (Festival of the Almond-Trees in Blossom). In addition to a full programme of cultural and recreational activities, there is always a Handicraft Fair, where it is also

ADD FUEL

Location: Coimbra

Diogo Machado, aka ADD FUEL, graduated in Graphic Design from IADE and worked at several agencies in Portugal and Germany, but soon realised that freelancing was the status he coveted and that illustration was his passion.

The combination of both became a reality in 2006. Since then, his career has been divided between collaborations and orders from major brands such as Nike, Red Bull, MTV, Burton and Alfa Romeo.

As well as participating in several exhibitions, the last few years have been marked by a greater presence in public spaces, bringing continuity and depth to the work begun in Cascais Art Space reinterpreting and reinventing traditional Portuguese tiles. He has also returned it to the streets, either through spontaneous and unusual combinations of ceramic pieces or through the painting of large murals.

This new urban facet of his work can be seen in Lisbon, Lagos, Figueira da Foz and Coimbra.

Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso

Other informations:

Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso; Born in Manhufe, a village roughly 9 kilometres to the west of Amarante, where members of his family still preserve his birthplace, easily recognised by its crenellated tower, Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso (1887-1918) died prematurely at the age of 31, although his death did not eclipse the extraordinary genius that can be seen in all his work.

Influenced by the artistic atmosphere of Paris, where he lived for a few years, Amadeo became an important pioneer of modern painting in Portugal.

Images:
"Canção Popular e o Pássaro do Brasil" - 1916

Bordalo II

Website: <http://www.bordaloii.com/>

Owl Eyes / Olhos de Mocho
Location: Rua Alexandre Herculano / Rua do Cotovelo, Covilhã

This work was carried out in the historical centre of Covilhã in October 2014, as part of Wool, an urban art festival.

The location chosen by Bordalo II, although in the city's old quarter, is a badly decaying, deserted and ageing area. With this in mind, Bordalo II asked for material and social investment in the area and built a huge owl, the symbol of wisdom and culture, using waste and scrap material.

possible to appreciate the delicious tastes of the regional cuisine.

Don't miss this opportunity to taste the special "amêndoas cobertas" (coated almonds), one of the regional specialities, especially if you have the chance to observe the unusual ritual involved in their making. The almonds are toasted over a gentle heat, in a large copper basin, into which the confectioners, their fingers protected with thimbles, patiently pour sugar whilst they roll the dry fruits round and round between their fingers for hours on end. There are three types of coated almonds: those coated with white sugar ("amêndoa bicuda"), those coated with chocolate and cinnamon ("amêndoa morena") or those coated with a very thin layer of sugar ("amêndoa peladinha").

Atlantic Beaches

Other informations:

Atlantic Beaches;

This coastal region has a succession of long sandy beaches, all with the green of the maritime pines as their backdrop, contrasting with the blue of the sky and the golden tones of the sand.

After visiting Marinha Grande, make sure to pass through the ancient forest of Pinhal de Leiria, breathing in its fresh pine-scented air, and head for the resort of São Pedro de Moel.

Make a slight detour and drive up to Ponto Novo, a privileged spot for observing the immense "green and whispering cathedral", in the words of the poet Afonso Lopes Vieira.

Situated between the pine-forest and the sea, São Pedro de Moel has a magnificent beach and is an excellent spot for surfing. Here you will find a swimming-pool of sea water and many restaurants with terraces where you can sit and enjoy the traditional cuisine based on the use of very fresh fish. Make sure also to visit the Museum at the former home of the poet Afonso Lopes Vieira (1878-1946), its impressive exterior built in the style of the architect Raul Lino.

To the north of São Pedro de Moel, there are more than ten kilometres of immense sandy beaches, dunes and pine-forest.

At the seaside resort of Vieira, the fine craftsmanship and flavoursome regional cuisine reflect man's close links with the sea, whether in the tasty fish-stews and dishes of shellfish with rice or in the bright colours of the wooden boats.

Bridges in the Douro estuary

Other informations:

Bridges in the Douro estuary;

D. Maria Pia Bridge

Designed by the engineer, Gustave Eiffel, this bi-articulated arched railway bridge, measuring 352.875m long and 61 m high, was inaugurated in 1877 by the Royal family. It operated until 1991, on which date the railway service was transferred to the São João Bridge.

Luís I Bridge

A 2-level road and pedestrian bridge, with a span of 172m and 44,6m spire was built at the end of the 19th century, by the Belgian company, Willebroeck, of Brussels, designed by the engineer, Teóphile Seyrig, a former collaborator of Eiffel.

Arrábida Bridge

Designed by Professor Edgar Cardoso, this bridge once held the world record as the longest reinforced concrete arched bridge.

Artur Bordalo aka Bordalo II was born in Lisbon in 1987. During his youth, he found himself between two worlds; in one he watched his grandfather, the artist Real Bordalo, painting watercolours and in the other he dedicated his time to producing illegal graffiti and experienced the consequences. Gradually, his habits changed and he shaped and developed them into the artwork he produces today.

As to what inspires him, Bordalo says 'I am part of a very consumerist, materialistic and greedy generation. The education we receive, it's directed towards overconsumption. With excessive production of stuff, especially technology, but not only that. We also produce a lot of 'rubbish', so there's a huge increase in the over-consumption of these things. I say 'rubbish' in quotes because it's a very abstract definition. One person's rubbish is another's person's treasure.'

By car through the Upper Douro Wine Region

Other informations:

By car through the Upper Douro Wine Region;

For those wishing to take in the river by car, first prepare yourself. The constantly undulating road is narrow and twisting. However, with due care and attention, and stopping off at the sign-posted places of interest that exist all along these secondary roads, this is a wonderful way to view all that the Douro has to offer.

There are the calm, peaceful towns; the vineyards strung along the curves of the lands; castles which date back to the region's reconquest from the Moors and many other sites that are well worth stopping off at for a gentle stroll to take in the wonderful panoramas.

We would like to detail here just a few of the many suggestions for visiting this region.

Beginning our route in Peso da Régua and heading towards Pinhão, the route over the plains protecting the Douro Valley is along the EN 322-3 between Pinhão and Alijó, joining the EN212 between Alijó and Carrazeda de Ansiães before crossing over the Tua river prior to continuing along the EN214 through to Vila Flor.

Taking the IP2 out of Vila Flor a Torre de Moncorvo, it is then possible to make it down to Barca d'Alva along the EN220 and EN221, passing through Freixo de Espada à Cinta along the way. The EN 222 runs between Vila Nova de Foz Côa and the Douro, passing through São João da Pesqueira, before returning to Pinhão. Whenever time allows, head off down any of the secondary roads leading downwards. On the left bank, there are two essential detours: the EN 222-4, that leads down to Quinta do Vesúvio, and the EN 324, that ends up with at impressive Castle of Numão.

Cabo da Roca

Other informations:

Cabo da Roca

If you go to Sintra, don't miss the chance to visit the westernmost point of mainland Europe, Cabo da Roca.

The spire of the arch is 52m and the bridge has a total height of 70m above the average level of the waters. Construction of the bridge began in May 1957 and it was inaugurated on June 22, 1963.

São João Bridge

Designed by Professor Edgar Cardoso, this bridge was inaugurated in 1991 on St John's day. The central pillar measures 250 m and its lateral pillars measure 125 m, supported by two pillars with foundations in the river next to the river banks.

Freixo Bridge

Located upstream from the other bridges, this road bridge was designed by Professor António Reis. It is constituted by two twin beams across its length. The bridge has eight spans. The middle span measures 150 m, and has spans of 115 m either side, followed by shorter spans.

Infante Bridge

Designed by the engineer, Adão da Fonseca, the Infante D. Henrique Bridge, is unique in the world. It substituted the upper level of the Luís I Bridge, which will now be used for the metro connection between Oporto and Vila Nova de Gaia. With a total length of 371 m and an arch with a span of 280 m, the Infante Bridge has two lanes in each direction, that connect the zone of Fontaínhas with Serra do Pilar. Construction of the bridge began in 1999, and was concluded in October 2002, and inaugurated in March 2003.

C215

Location: Largo do Terreiro do Trigo, Lisboa

C215 is a French artist who, using a stencil, captures light, depth and humanity in a unique way.

The stencils tend to flatten the images and make them static, but C215 has developed his own unique style of illustration that produces an impressionistic illumination of the characters he creates.

Cacela Velha

Other informations:

Cacela Velha

Cacela Velha is a small coastal town in the southern reaches of the Algarve coastline. It lies in the Ria Formosa Natural Park and grew primarily during the 17th century when it formed part of the coastal defensive system and the Fort was constructed.

The site has thrown up evidence it has long been settled as a fishing port. Archaeological excavations have found an important Roman villa, an Almohade residential neighbourhood (12th to 13th centuries), visible at the Poço Antigo (Ancient Well) close to the Cacela waterfront, and a 14th century Christian cemetery. In 1283, king Dinis granted a Royal Charter to the settlement, highly indicative of its medieval economic and social importance. The historic centre of the town is made up of the Fort, the Matrix Church and an Almohade cistern.

The progressive silting up of the river and the devastation caused by the 1755 earthquake resulted in it losing its status as a town and consequent integration into Vila Real de Santo António.

Located at latitude 38° 47' north and longitude 9° 30' west, Cabo da Roca is an important coordinate for those sailing along the coast, as it is the most westerly point of mainland Europe, a fact borne out by the certificates that visitors take away as a souvenir.

Around 150 metres above the sea, here you can have a panoramic view over the Serra de Sintra and the coast, which makes it worth the visit.

Historical records indicate that there was a fort on Cabo da Roca in the 17th century that played an important part in guarding the entrance to Lisbon's harbour, forming a defensive line along the coast, especially during the Peninsular Wars. Today there are only traces, as well as the lighthouse which is still an important point for navigation.

It lies within the Parque Natural de Sintra-Cascais and is one of the points of interest on the walking trails that can be followed here, along the coast.

Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian

Other informations:

Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian;

Born in 1869 in Scutari, Calcedonia, near Istanbul, Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian came from a leading Armenian family from Cesareia, in Capadocia, straddling the crossroads between Europe and Asia.

This cultured, brilliant and highly eclectic man graduated from London's King's College. He spoke perfect English and held French culture in such great admiration he was to buy property in Normandy where he would take refuge among the trees, flowers and wildlife.

Towards the end of the 19th century, he realised the future role of oil as the key source of energy. Due to his perseverance, diplomatic skills and powers of negotiations, he played a key role in defining the general framework governing the development of the Middle East oil industry. This resulted in the 1928 agreement that agreed to divide up this "black gold" among four major companies: the British Anglo-Persian Oil Co. (now BP), the Royal Dutch-Shell Group, the Compagnie Française des Pétroles and the Near East Development Corporation (a consortium of six leading American oil producers).

Calouste Gulbenkian gained rights over five per cent of all revenue, hence his nickname "Mister five-per-cent".

In April 1942, as the Second World War raged, Calouste Gulbenkian decided to head to Portugal. He took the luxurious Hotel Avis (where the current Hotel Sheraton stands) as his residence. This man from the Middle East was never again to leave the most westerly country of Europe and its welcome and friendship through to his death in 1955.

And Gulbenkian more than knew how to repay Portugal for its hospitality. In 1953, he set up a Foundation, rendered permanent under Portuguese private law through statutes drawn up by friend and lawyer, Dr. José Azeredo Perdigão.

The headquarters of the Foundation house Museum which exhibits the works of art (over 6,000 of them) collected from all over Europe, the United States and the Far East by Gulbenkian throughout his life. The collection - considered one of the best in Europe - reveals the passion of a collector for beauty in its most diverse forms and who proved able to establish a synthesis

Currently, it is well worth a visit for its magnificent vantage point out over the sea and the extensive sandy banks of the Formosa river.

Campervanning

Discover Portugal by camper van/motorhome

Wandering around Portugal in a camper van or motorhome is a delightful way of discovering the amazing variety of landscapes in our country. You can get to know the entire territory with more freedom, at your own pace and in safety.

To get the most from this kind of trip, you must respect the rules operating in each place; don't stay in illegal or unlicensed places or in unofficial parking lots where the conditions might not be safe and comfortable, and you could be subject to action from the authorities.

You should also show the greatest civic awareness for the community that welcomes you, and for nature, respecting the space of others, so don't make too much noise, and do leave the site as you found it.



Photo: Parque Natural do Vale do Guadiana - Mértola © BB - ToR

Service Areas for motorhomes

There are motorhome service areas spread around the country, to support you during your trip. They have an overnight stay area (limited to 72 hours) and service stations with facilities that include drinking water supply point(s), and places to dump dirty water and the waste from chemical toilets, as well as solid waste. These areas could also have electricity power points for charging the batteries of camper vans and motorhomes.

To check where you can find service areas or service stations for motorhomes on your route, go to:

<http://www.campingcarportugal.com/areasServico>
<http://autocaravanismo.pt>

between European and Middle Eastern artistic traditions.

In 1969, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and Museum opened not only their own doors but also a most beautiful park and right in the centre of Lisbon. Throughout many years now, Portugal, and Lisbon in particular, has owed the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation a debt of gratitude for its services to culture.

Picture courtesy of: Service of the Armenian Communities, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Campino

Other informations:

Campino;

The campino is the expressive and popular personality typically found in the vast Ribatejo meadowland.

He is still considered today to be a representative national figure even though it has unfortunately now become much rarer to see him sitting solidly astride his horse on the distant horizon.

Generally speaking, the campino's work involves tending and herding the region's wild bulls. Riding on horseback and armed with his inseparable pampilho (a long wooden stick ending in a point and used for goading the cattle), the campino has the difficult task of dealing with these dangerous animals.

At bullfights, where he performs the task of removing the bulls from the ring, or at festivals and fairs, where he can be seen parading with his lofty demeanour, the campino is to be found dressed in his typical costume: trousers held in place just below the knee with a white metal buckle, a red sash around his waist, a red waistcoat, a tasselled green pom-pom hat with a red hem, a white shirt and socks, embroidered cuffs, black shoes with spurs and the indispensable pampilho.

However, in his day-to-day work, the campino wears a completely different costume.

Generally dressed in a jacket, waistcoat and long trousers with a black belt, his costume is no longer mainly green and red and now has much darker colours, normally grey or black.

Carnival

Other informations:

Carnival;

Carnival, or "Entrudo", formally designates the period of time between Epiphany (January 6) and Lent, but normally refers to the three "fat days" leading up to Ash Wednesday (Sunday, Monday and Tuesday).

These are three days of festivities and excess, with a great deal of food, anticipating the period of fasting, rigour and religious discipline of Lent that commences on the following Wednesday, and only ends at Easter.

Vestiges of this festivity dates back to antiquity, in manifestations of a religious character that marked the period of transition between the end of winter and the beginning of spring. They were rituals of fertility and the desire for abundance that it was hoped would be reaped in the new year about to begin.

During the same period, the Romans celebrated the Saturnalia, which expressed the same message of regeneration and balance of nature. Saturn was the Latin name for the Greek god, Chronos, who was considered to be one of the supreme rulers of the universe and protector of Sowers. He ruled the world, until he



Photo: Zambuieira do Mar © Shutterstock - Francisco Caravana

Camping and Caravanning Sites

For camping you'll find a huge network of Camping and Caravanning sites spread all around the country, and equipped with all the facilities and services you need during your stay. [Here](#) you can search by region and locality.

For specific information about the **Algarve** region please visit <https://autocaravanalgarve.com>

Carlos Relvas the first amateur photographer in Portugal

Other informations:

Carlos Relvas the first amateur photographer in Portugal; An important farmer in the region of the Ribatejo, a most skilful horseman, a sportsman, and a distinguished and cultured man of his time, Carlos Relvas was born in Golegã in 1838. His wealth and, above all, his cultivated mind led him to develop an interest in photography, that "revolution in the arts of drawing" which, at the time of his birth, was just beginning to take its first steps in France with Nicéphore Niepce and Daguerre.

A keen traveller, Relvas visited several countries in Europe, where he had the chance to learn more about the most advanced techniques involved in this new art and to acquire all the materials that were necessary for photography, which he collected at his studio in Golegã. As a result of these journeys, he began working in this area and put together an extremely valuable collection of views taken from various points in Europe, which now represents an interesting document testifying to the different places and ways of life to be found in the 19th century.

Carlos Relvas devoted a great deal of his time, and indeed his life, to photography. In this particular field, he was simultaneously a theorist, researcher and distinguished artist, whose work deservedly won prizes at various international exhibitions (Madrid, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Vienna, Philadelphia), whilst he himself was awarded a whole host of national and foreign decorations.

Castelo Branco - Walking the City

Other informations:

Castelo Branco - Walking the City; Visitors to Castelo Branco inevitably end up in the centre, the Alameda da Liberdade. If arriving by car, there is parking and the opportunity to pick up a map and other information from the Tourist Office located there.

was removed from his throne by his son, Zeus (the Greek god Jupiter) and fled to Italy, taking with him the time of perfect happiness and peace which had distinguished his reign, known as the Golden Age. Major festivities were celebrated in his honour during the winter, known as Saturnals or Saturnalia. It was believed that in this manner, it would be possible to recover the golden age during the period of the solemn festivities. War could not be declared on these days, executions were postponed, slaves and masters ate at the same table, family members and friends mingled together and the spirit of equality between all men was exalted. These principles of freedom and equality also mark the period of carnival, which simulate a subversion of the established order, followed by restructuring of the social balance.

The Saturnalia festivities were also marked by moments of reconciliation with the dead and the spirits. For this purpose, the figure of death was personified with white costumes and masks, and a doll and other symbols of the evil spirit were burnt, in an act of purification and liberation from malevolent influences. In many places in Portugal, the carnival festivities still end with the burial of the "Entrudo", a final act of freedom and breaking of the rules prior to a return to order.

Christmas

Other informations:

Christmas; Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, on 25 December, a date that was established during the 3rd century. The first references to the celebration of the Nativity are to be found in the mid-2nd Century, at a time when the Christians were still being persecuted. The festivities were given formal recognition during the 4th century, when the Emperor Constantine was converted to Christianity and ensured the continuity of the religious celebrations.

Many Roman customs ended up being included in the Christian festival, as, for example, the habit of decorating the house with leaves and green plants representing eternal life and the hope that Spring will come again. This custom was practised during the "Saturnalia", the festival celebrated in honour of Saturn, the god of agriculture, held in mid-December, and on the calends of January (i.e. the beginning of the month). During this period, presents were exchanged with friends, wishing them good luck for the forthcoming year.

It was in 567 that the Council of Tours established a period of fasting before Christmas, during the Advent period, and proclaimed the twelve days between Christmas and Epiphany to be a sacred and festive time. This Christian rule was maintained for many centuries and is still observed today by the more religious believers.

Since the early 20th century, the beginning of the Advent of Christmas was fixed as being the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew's Day (30 November), continuing thereafter over the following four Sundays, for a period of at least 28 days.

Cister in the North of Portugal

Other informations:

Cister in the North of Portugal; The Northern region constituted the gateway to Portugal for the Cistercian order during the first half of the 12th century. The Abbey of São João de Tarouca, to the South of the River Douro, was the first institution to begin to observe the Order in a consistent manner, in 1144. Portugal played an active role in the

On foot, head along Rua Sidónio Pais. At the end, there is the impressive Cathedral, the best example of religious architecture in what has been a cathedral city since 1711.

From the Largo da Sé, Rua das Olarias takes you along to the Francisco Tavares Proença Júnior Museum. Here, you can take in the famous Castelo Branco Embroidery as well as the pleasant Baroque gardens of the Episcopal Palace, the jewel in the Castelo Branco crown.

On the other side of the street, there is the City Park, and at the end, the Convent of Graça housing the Misericórdia Museum of Sacred Art, both well worth visiting.

Head back to the Largo da Sé and proceed down Rua de São Sebastião. The Torre do Relógio (Clock Tower) represents the medieval walls and the end of the first stage of your tour.

Praça Camões, also called the Praça Velha (Old Square), signals the start of old Castelo Branco. Here, there is the 18th century Paços do Concelho, with an armillary sphere, the royal symbol of king Manuel, adorning its façade.

Alongside is the former Office of the Administrator of the Order of Christ, entrusted with jurisdiction over the city, identified by a Cross hanging over the entranceway.

In front, there is the arch that stands on one of the former city gates. Here, the Templars built a house for the bishop. The Bishop's Arch leads onto the Church of Santa Isabel, the first home of the Castelo Branco Misericórdia (state charity institution).

Turn to the right and be taken in by those views. You'll be surprised by a historic city dotted with houses from a range of historical periods. Dating back to the Middle Ages, they've been embellished with small details to the doors and windows. It is still possible today to make out their historical origins highlighted by the granite used. Rua Nova, Rua dos Peleteiros, Rua d'Éga and Rua do Muro all head upwards to the summit and the Church of Santa Maria and the Castle ruins. The finale to this stroll is the wonderful view out over the city of Castelo Branco and beyond.

Christmas Eve Supper and Midnight Mass

Before Christmas Day, the Catholic Church recommends a period of fasting.

But, after the Midnight Mass, the table is supposed to be filled with appetising delicacies, meats and traditional sweets and puddings for the family supper. This occasion is known as the night of the Consoada.

The word Consoada refers to a small meal that is taken at the end of a day's fasting and derives from the Latin word consolare, meaning "to comfort". In the North of Portugal (Minho, Porto and Guimarães), it is the custom for people to reserve places at the table set for the Consoada supper for those relatives who have recently passed away, or else to leave the table laid and a candle or lamp lit throughout the night to comfort and warm their souls.

Traditionally, the Christmas Eve supper consists of bacalhau (salted cod) or another fish, whilst the meals after this are seen as a chance to savour meat dishes. In many places in the south of Portugal, a pig is killed a few days beforehand, and its various cuts of meat and sausages are used to enrich the Christmas table.

success of this extraordinary European-wide spiritual and economic movement, that established many branches throughout the country during the 12th and 13th centuries.

The Order aggregated vast land and buildings in the regions where it was installed, and had a civilising effect on the local populations, leaving a legacy in terms of heritage and culture that we can now rediscover today. The austerity and singularity of the monastic buildings exhibit innovative architectural solutions that also marked the passage from the Romanic to the Gothic style.

Many monasteries were enlarged and renewed in the 18th century, and a Baroque movement was initiated that had a decisive impact on the interior of their churches and in certain cases added decorative elements to the façades, although sometimes thereby reducing their primitive purity. An important set of monasteries is distributed across two main geographical nuclei: one in the Alto Minho region – next to the course of the main rivers - Minho, Lima and Cávado, penetrating to the heights of the Gerês mountains. The other in the region to the South of the River Douro, located close to the river, from the coast to the frontier with Spain, to the East.

For all those who are fascinated by discovering the distant past, or appreciating spectacular settings, these two routes will reveal landscapes that you never dreamed even existed.

Cruises on the Douro River

Other informations:

Cruises on the Douro River;

Through to the end of the 19th century, the Douro was the major means of accessing inland parts of the region and the way of transport products and people from lands rendered effectively distant.

Difficult to navigate, impeded by natural barriers, only a unique and ancient vessel, the rabelo boat, could manage, due to both its robustness and the courage of the men who crewed it, to overcome the adverse conditions encountered over its long course.

Currently, after the building of various dams, the river is navigable, smoothly and calmly, for 210 km, between Oporto and Barca d'Alva.

The cruise boats leave Porto on trips generally lasting a day to Peso da Régua, passing through the locks of Crestuma/Lever and Carrapatelo. The beautiful stepped slopes of Port wine terraces start at the heights of Barqueiros and stretch to Pinhão, offering one of the most impressive hand-built and hard-worked rural landscapes.

Should you opt for a cruise lasting more than a day, you'll be staying in a 4-star hotel or in countryside accommodation with complete programmes available including visits to regional monuments, themed dinners, folk music and dancing, wine tasting, among other options. All to ensure your visit is truly unforgettable!

The cruise up the river provides a wonderful vantage point for this region's unique landscapes and the opportunity to encounter its traditions, culture and gastronomy. Discover the unique heritage the Douro has to show its visitors.

Ella & Pitr

Website: <http://www.papierspeintres.net>; <https://vimeo.com>

During the festivities, the famous Bolo Rei is eaten, together with fried sweetmeats (made from eggs, flour, sugar and yeast, sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon). The Bolo Rei (literally the King Cake) is a cake made in the shape of a crown, filled and decorated with dry and crystallised fruits. Amongst the traditional fried sweetmeats are filhoses, coscorões, velhoses, sonhos, azevias (filled with chickpeas) and rabanadas.

After supper, Christian custom dictates that people should attend the Missa do Galo or midnight mass, offering them the chance to meet up with old friends and to give the Season's Greetings to the other members of the community.

The Missa do Galo (literally the Cock Mass) was included amongst the Christmas celebrations during the 5th century. It is celebrated at midnight, which is the time referred to as being "in galli cantu" (at cock crow), and it was originally the first of three masses comprising the liturgy of Christmas Day. During the Missa do Galo, people can admire the crib, which has been specially prepared for the occasion, and, after communion, everyone moves up to the altar to "kiss the Baby Jesus", an act that is sometimes accompanied by songs of worship.

Costah

Website: <http://www.costah.net>

Location: Avenida dos Aliados, Porto

The painting of the phone booth, located at Avenida dos Aliados, was part of the Street Art Axa Porto event, in which Porto artists were invited to make their mark on the Axa Insurance Building on the Avenida dos Aliados. This was one of the largest displays of urban art in the city of Porto, promoted by the City Council.

Nuno Costah, born in 1982, took up extreme sports, graffiti and music in the 1990s. Currently, his time is devoted to tattoos, street art, illustration and music. He is frequently invited to create murals, as well as contribute to collective and individual art exhibitions.

Easter - origins of the tradition

According to ancient Jewish rituals, Passover (which in Hebrew designates "passage") commemorates the Jews' exodus from Egypt and was celebrated on the 14th day after the spring equinox, with a meal constituted by unleavened bread. Jesus was condemned after a paschal dinner, and for this reason the catholic church adopted the Jewish festivity, but altered its meaning -- which was transformed into the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The date of the Easter celebrations were set in the fourth century in the Council of Nicea.

The liturgical calendar determines that Easter will be preceded by Lent and that the week prior to Easter Sunday will be holy, including a series of religious ceremonies that evoke the Passion of Christ. The word "passion" refers to the torments experienced

om/101549722

Quando as crianças dormem... / When children sleep...
Location: 180 Creative Camp / Castelo de Abrantes

The work in Abrantes Castle by Ella & Pitr Castle was done during the 180 Creative Camp, an event organised by TV Channel 180 in 2014.

Ella & Pitr are two artists who form the couple 'paper painters'. They draw sleeping giants, large birds with heavy wings, eaters of children, cairns, chairs or charred tree trunks.

Sometimes they ask passersby to take pictures of themselves in front of large frames painted on the wall and ask them to send the photos. So far the web page has received more than 4,000 photographs, all available on site.

They describe themselves as 'a couple of French artists who draw on the floor to make the clouds speak'.

Festivity of the Entrudo

Other informations:

Festivity of the Entrudo;

The carnival period that begins on January 6, Epiphany, is marked by various moments of community spirit leading up to the festivity of Fat Sunday and Carnival Tuesday, designated by the days of the "Compadres and Comadres" (the "godfathers and godmothers") -- which are essentially preparatory celebrations for the principal days of fun and amusement.

The "Compadres and Comadres", are groups of young men and women, that confront each other on the two Thursdays prior to Fat Sunday. Each day is led by one of the two groups. Straw dolls are made, dressed in old clothing that poke fun at the opposite sex, and are mocked with jingling sounds. In certain regions, the Comadres (godmothers) offer a meal to the young men which is retributed to them on the day of the Compadres (godfathers). In this manner, they express solidarity between members of the same sex and opposition of the opposite sex, delineating community tasks and positions by subverting traditional customs - On the Thursday of the Comadres, by winning an exercise masculine authority, and on the Thursday of the Compadres by dedicating themselves to domestic tasks.

On Carnival Tuesday, the dolls are burnt in public, after reading a will that highlights the defects and imperfections of the members of the opposite sex. On Ash Wednesday, life returns to normal and it's traditional balance, thus initiating the period of abstinence of Lent.

In Portugal, there are two great examples of carnival tradition: the Caretos (large headed figures) in Podence and the Mascarados (giant masked figures) in Lazarim.

From Faro to Vila Real de Sto António

Other informations:

From Faro to Vila Real de Sto António;

The Algarve capital since 1756 has been Faro, where the Ria Formosa - a natural park considered the most important wildlife sanctuary in the Algarve - hints at its' true splendour and size. One of the last places in Europe to preserve intact it's coastal zone composed of lagoons, canals ,off-shore islands and marshland ,stretching still further east until Manta Rota (close to Vila Real de Santo António). Around 1500 species find refuge in these damp 18,400 hectares extending for over 60 km.

by Jesus Christ from his imprisonment until his crucifixion. His trajectory while carrying the cross, from the Roman tribunal of Pontius Pilate that condemned him, is known as the holy way or "painful way".

The holy week celebrations include Palm Sunday (one week before Easter Sunday), Maun Thursday (the day of condemnation and crucifixion), Good Friday (the day on which the cross was deposited and the burial), Holy Saturday (ascension to heaven) and Easter Sunday (resurrection of Christ).

In Portugal, during these days, many centuries-old traditions are organised which do not form part of the Roman Missal, such as the processions of the Lord Ecce Homo, burial of the Lord and the resurrection. Although the Easter festivities are held throughout the country, two particularly emblematic events are the solemn processions of holy week in Braga and holy week in Castelo de Vide due to their unique regional characteristics. The former displays rigorous observance of Christian ritual, while the other is of Christian expression significantly influenced by Jewish culture.

Ermelo circuit

Other informations:

Ermelo circuit;

In order to undertake this circuit, you may choose to enter the Park in Mondim de Basto and then continue to the village of Ermelo, surrounded by woods and agricultural fields, that conserves an admirable set of rural architecture, where the walls of the local houses have been built using local stone.

The village received its charter in 1196, and conserves an elegant pillory, the church, a sacred way of enigmatic crosses and a set of corn granaries that were designed for storing cereals. You can round off your visit by a visit to the museum unit.

Continue your journey in direction towards Fojo and then to Varzigueto. At the entrance to this village, the river Olo winds its way towards a high waterfall in Fiskas de Ermelo, covering a drop of a round 300 m, surrounded by a grandiose landscape enveloped in a unique religious atmosphere.

The road between Varzigueto and the village of Barreiro offers unique spectacular views over the western horizon. Perched on top of a perfect geological column - the Monte da Farinha - we discover the Church of Senhora da Graça.

As you travel to Fervença, note the green and fertile valleys, cultivated in terraces. As in the Gerês region, this ancestral farming technique is intended to reduce erosion, while enabling farming activities. At the bottom of the valley, we glimpse the stream of Fervença. We then returned to Ermelo through the valley formed by the stream of Fervença, that has a mixture of oak trees and cork oak trees, in an almost Mediterranean forest area.

Sources: Alvão Nature Park /Institute of Nature Conservation

Five views of the Douro

Other informations:

Five views of the Douro

Of all the historical sites of Faro, in the heart of the Old City, the highlight is the Cathedral, the elegant Episcopal Palace (17th century) that surrounds it, and the Arch of the Town. Outside the walls, the Church of S. Francisco (18th century), the Church of Sao Pedro and the Church of Carmo complete a generous collection of religious buildings. The main meeting place of the city is the Manuel Bivar Garden, along with the elegant and busy pedestrian street of Santo Antonio, full of shops and restaurants. At the municipal market in Largo Sá Carneiro you can find fresh food and handicrafts, and at the hermitage of Santo Antonio don't miss the beautiful panorama over the sea and the salt-beds.

The beach (at 8 km) is like a big tongue of sand separated from the land by the Ria, full of life and with excellent conditions for sailing or for an interesting and relaxing walk or boat-trip. The islands around Faro are a characteristic of this city embraced by the Ria Formosa, and it's only 45 minutes by boat (from Faro or Olhão) to the island of Culatra, which is the southernmost point in continental Portugal. Here can be found the lighthouse of the cape of Santa Maria, which can be seen from both Olhão and Faro.

Nearby one can find the Roman complex in Milreu (1st or 2nd century). Though the baths still have their original tiles, the major part of the pieces you'll find in the Archeology Museum in Faro.

Leaving Faro, heading eastwards, pass through Olhão, "cubist town", and Tavira, one of the most typical Algarve cities.

As for gastronomy, "bolos folhados", Dom Rodrigos, fish stews, fish dishes, the local wine and leg of lamb are delicacies not to be missed.

Hugo Makarov/Mário Belém/Nuno Saraiva/Pedro Soares Neves/UAT /Vanessa Teodoro

Fado Vadio / Fado bohemio

Location:Escadinhas de São Cristóvão, Lisboa

In Lisbon, on the way to the Castelo de São Jorge (St. George's

Castle), we are surprised on the Escadinhas of São Cristóvão by

a large mural depicting amateur fado singers, painted by an

artists' collective. It is worth taking your time up the steps to

appreciate the details in the drawings of these Lisbon

inhabitants.

The collective comprises:

- Hugo Makarov, a tattoo artist who makes excursions into urban art.

- Mário Belem, a graphic designer and graduate of the Lisbon

school of arts, Ar.Co, who worked in various companies before

becoming a freelancer. He likes to try out new techniques,

1 - São Leonardo da Galafura

Close to Régua, and in the vicinity of the village of Poiares, there is the São Leonardo da Galafura viewpoint. The landscape below encompasses both the Douro valley and the Serra do Marão and was described by writer Miguel Torga as geological poetry. There is also a small chapel and a charming park.

2 - Quinta do Noval

Both given its favoured location and the coloured geometry of its vines, this estate remains both very much a showcase for the entire Douro and one its most famous producers of fine wines. It is here that, according to the American magazine «Wine Spectator» one of the 12 best wines of the 20th century was produced (the 1931 Noval Nacional vintage). Located on the left bank of the river Pinhão, the farm is built over schist walled terraces, divided up by flights of stairs carved in the same white as the buildings and the sloping road that makes its way across the estate.

3 - Casal de Loivos

This veranda looks out over Pinhão and the open, curving Douro valley. Right next to the village cemetery, the views take in some of the most beautiful landscapes of the entire Douro demarcated wine region. There is the imposing Quinta das Carvalhas in front with the Roêda estate down below. The Foz is over on the right as the river twists its way through an «s» right by Pinhão.

4 - São Salvador do Mundo

A sacred and mythical site located just a few kilometres from São João da Pesqueira, São Salvador do Mundo is a place of worship and pilgrimage, particularly for devout females. Women wanting to marry a decent kind of man, so tradition goes, have to tie knots in the genistas found along the road leading up to the chapel. From there, look right down to the Douro. At the bottom of the abyss, twisted by rocky outcrops, runs the river now calmed by the Valeira dam. Gone are the famous rapids that, through to the end of the 18th century, represented an impassable obstacle to navigation. This stretch of river was so dangerous that sailors, on reaching here, would offer up their souls to the creator among other supplications to St. Salvador. Among those shipwrecked at Valeira, the baron of Forrester is probably the most famous.

5 - The Vale Meão Estate

It was here that the almost mythical Barca Velha wine was produced throughout decades. It now gives its name to different grapes and to another red wine, Quinta do Vale Meão 1999. Located on the gently sloping right bank near to Pocinho which is the northern limit of the UNESCO classified area. This huge, grandiose estate very much bears the determined hallmark of its founder, Antónia Ferreira. In just nine years, he took apart the Meão hill to plant around 900,000 vines. Some 800 people worked on building houses and setting up the vineyard. Antónia Ferreira was to die the very year the estate was inaugurated, 1896. Vale Meão is thus the culmination of a life that is unparalleled in the region. It contains the very essence of the Douro: the beauty, the dream, the legend and the genius behind its creation.

Gonçalo MAR

Focused on building its own imaginary environment, the work of Gonçalo MAR merges elements of comic books, Japanese anime and other stricter cultures with the codes of street art.

The colourful characters are wrapped in a surreal aura, shown in situations that seem to have come out of a dream, with a

materials and styles.

- Pedro Soares Neves (www.userdesign.org), a pioneer in introducing contemporary graffiti, on an altruistic basis, into Portugal. An urban designer with a multidisciplinary academic training and a postgraduate qualification in design and architecture, he specialised in participatory methodologies and the informal and spontaneous pictorial appropriation of public space.

- UAT (Trancão Artists' Union) was founded in February 2011 by Adrião Resende, André Santos, Fábio Santos, Flávio Carvalho, Miguel Brum, Nuno Barbedo, Paulo Ferreira and Sérgio Hortelão

- Vanessa Teodoro, aka Super Van, works as an illustrator and artist, but advertising and graphic design are important parts of her day-to-day life. She particularly likes 'getting her hands dirty' in urban art-related projects.

Lamas de Olo circuit

Other informations:

Lamas de Olo circuit;

The ascent up the Serra do Alvão Mountains from Vila Real is made via a winding municipal road. Before continuing on to Lamas de Olo, turn down a wide road that will lead you to the village of Arnal, perched on top of a large granite massif, a zone of rugged, mountainous beauty, filled with a large variety of boulders, scattered across the landscape. Make sure to visit the museum unit in the village.~

On the journey between Agarez and Arnal, in Galegos da Serra, there is a beautiful waterfall, surrounded by trees, where you will see an ancient watermill. Return to the road in direction towards Lamas d'Olo, passing by the artificial dam that captures the crystal clear waters from the River Olo that supplies the city of Vila Real.

The village of Lamas d'Olo, at 1000 m above sea level is surrounded by oak groves and marshes and maintains an atmosphere of peace and simplicity, with traditional small granite houses and thatched roofs. In order to divert traffic from the village, a variant has been built that bypasses the village. Here, the River Olo looks more like a stream, and we find a very ancient stone bridge at the exit to the village. The irrigation channels that flow out from the river in this site are designed for so-called "rega de lima" (lime irrigation), a centuries-old irrigation techniques, used to create humid marshland where grass grows. The irrigation system is distributed across the pasture area, harmoniously distributing the water, in order to ensure that the terrain is completely irrigated and will not freeze even on the coldest days. Only in Sweden can we find a similar example of a popular irrigation device.

As we continue down the road we reach the village of Anta, whose name ("cromlech") suggests that human occupation of the area may date back to megalithic civilisation. There are many oak groves and holly bushes along the road to the neighbouring village of Pioledo. Here, we are in the heart of the park. In the village of Bilhó (located outside the boundaries of the park, but is immediately contiguous to it) there is a highly popular fair of Maronês cattle held on August 24 (Saint Bartholomew's day). The breed is indigenous to this region, is hard-working and produces an excellent and succulent meat.

Sources: Alvão Nature Park /Institute of Nature Conservation

Lisbon of Discoveries

lyricism that is unmatched for this kind of art form in Portugal.

In this particular case, he was invited to evoke the values of Northern Portugal at a tourism fair at Madrid so that the base of the piece is a very special object that speaks for itself: a barrel of wine.

In Montesinho Park, Bragança

Other informations:

In Montesinho Park, Bragança; The mountain villages were protected over centuries from their isolation from the main centres of population and the harsh climate, due to communal forges and ovens, community watermills and wine and olive presses, and communal pasture land. Encrusted in the mountain slopes, the villages cast their gaze over the surroundings, where visitors are greeted as friends.

Leaving Bragança, and journeying to the ancient village of Gimonde, where the Rivers Sabor, Onor and Ribeira do Frio converge, we cross three bridges, one of which has a Roman origin. In the villages of Babe, Palácios and Caravela each has a fascinating Rural Museum, located in community houses – dedicated to topics such as the linen cycle, the blacksmith's forge and traditional cuisine.

The road ends in the village of Guadramil, where a rough road leads to the border settlement of Rio de Onor. For those who prefer more comfortable trajectories, return to Gimonde and then travel towards Baçal, Vargos and finally to Rio de Onor. This village is divided by the Portuguese-Spanish border, and therefore has been subject to a wide variety of ethnographic studies. The family ties between the inhabitants on both sides of the frontier, have effectively eliminated the dividing line between the two halves of the village. The village maintains a wide variety of instruments used communally by the local population – including the bread oven, the forge, two water mills, the wash-house, pasture land, and even the village bull that mates with all the cows. The community is managed in «Council» meetings, and decisions are inscribed in a wooden rod, representing the power of the elected judge.

Another entrance into the zone of Bragança leads us to the village of Montesinho, in a trip alongside the beautiful banks of the River Sabor, passing through the villages of Rabal and França. In the latter, we discover a watermill that is still in operation, restored by the local population with support from the Park. Nearby, in Prado Novo, we may visit one of the most attractive spots in the Park, next to a trout nursery. Access to the site is achieved via a forest road.

In Montesinho, a typical and authentic village located 1025 metres above sea-level, we sense the soul of the Park. The houses have been restored with traditional materials and techniques and show how they offer the best protection against the harsh climate.

In your visit, don't miss the opportunity to enter the Montesinho interpretational centre, in a building that was once a community forge.

Largo do Carmo

Other informations:

Largo do Carmo; The Largo do Carmo is currently a calm, tranquil square even if it has been the scene of some of the most turbulent moments in

Other informations:

Lisbon of Discoveries; Of all Lisbon, Belém most clearly evokes the era of the Discoveries and Portugal's maritime expansion. It was from Belém that caravels would depart and arrive throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. King Manuel I ordered the construction of the Monastery of Jerónimos (Hieronymos) and the Tower of Belém as symbols of the wealth and splendour of the times. Classified as World Heritage, they are among the very best examples of the "Manueline" architectural style; a Portuguese interpretation of the gothic. In the buildings that used to serve the monastery, there is now the National Museum of Archaeology and the Naval Museum including exhibits explaining and demonstrating the navigation techniques developed by the Portuguese for their voyages of exploration.

In the 18th century, King João V chose to transfer the royal residence to Belém. This subsequently involved the restoration of the Palace and constructing stables. The latter have now been turned into the National Coach Museum with the "pink" palace converted into the President of the Republic's official residence.

In 1940, on the grounds of commemorating the founding of the Portuguese nation, the Salazar regime decided to hold an "Exposition of the Portuguese World". This resulted in substantial changes being made to Belém including the creation of the Praça Afonso de Albuquerque, in honour of the first Vice-Roy of India, the Praça do Império (Empire Square), the Monument to the Discoveries and walkways and leisure facilities along the river.

The Church of Memória (Memory), the Chapel of São Jerónimo (Saint Jerome), the Tropical Gardens, the Belém Cultural Centre and the Museum of Ethnology complete the range of attractions contained in this district.

Nowadays, neither the port nor the beach of 'Discoveries' remain but instead there is a most pleasant leisure and cultural space which is an extremely popular destination for Lisboners when out strolling. No visit to Belém would be complete without stopping off in the Casa dos Pastéis de Belém, (Belém Pastry Shop) which has been producing this sweet delicacy for well over one hundred years.

Masked Figures

Other informations:

Masked Figures; The masked figures are fundamental elements in the popular festivities of the Trás-os-Montes region. They are not exclusively linked to one event, but they appear throughout the year, in such important popular celebrations as Christmas or Carnival.

At these times, the young men disguise themselves as mascarados or caretos and the young ladies as a filandorra, or as madamas or mandogueiras. They dress in old clothes or brightly-coloured blankets, cover their faces with a mask made of wood, cork or cardboard, tie bells around their waists and on their feet and, now unrecognisable, run through the villages jumping and shouting and generally making their presence felt at local events.

These are cultural manifestations that go beyond the rules of what is normally permitted by the authorities, who only allow themselves to be criticised and made fun of on these occasions. They embody the devil and perversity and appear from all over the place, denouncing sins and ill-will, except in the case of churches, which are considered to be protected and quintessentially sacred spaces. In this way, the exuberance

Portuguese history.

The Pombaline buildings and the 18th century fountain in the centre of the square are evidence of the reconstruction work carried out in the wake of the devastation of the 1755 earthquake. There is no clearer sign of the damage caused than the ruins of the Carmo Convent that was never to be fully restored.

Part of the convent became the headquarters of the Republican National Guard.

This was the site of one of the most significant incidents in the Carnation Revolution of 1974. On the 25th April 1974, prime minister Marcello Caetano, who had been in power for 48 years, sought refuge in the headquarters. Out in the square, gathered a company of the Armed Forces who had led the revolution and thousands of citizens who cheered on events as they unfurled. The headquarters were eventually successfully captured under the leadership of captain Salgueiro Maia.

On the same day, successful operations both in Lisbon and across Portugal, including the seizing of the state radio and television buildings, the Bank of Portugal, the military headquarters in Lisbon and Oporto, the capital's airport, prisons and the secret police headquarters, right by Chiado in Rua António Maria Cardoso, resulted in the collapse of the dictatorial regime. With the Carnation Revolution, the Estado Novo (New State) came to an end with freedom of speech and the democratic regime of modern Portugal established. 25th April is now a national holiday.

Madeira - Latest News

Other informations:

Madeira - Latest News;

After the violent storm that hit Madeira on 20 February, life on the island has completely returned to normal since 1 March. Public services are now working normally and most shops and businesses have reopened. There are, however, some cleaning up operations still being undertaken in the city of Funchal, which are due to be completed by 8 March.

The hotels were not affected by the storm and, throughout this period, have continued to remain open to guests in complete safety. The Madeira International Airport remained fully operational at all times, as did the Port of Funchal, which since 28 February has once again started to receive cruise ships, a clear and auspicious sign that this important activity has returned to normal.

The Madeiran Regional Government is doing everything it can to guarantee that the economic activity of the autonomous region will continue as before, and work is currently in progress to re-establish accesses to all points of the island and to repair the damaged houses. Everyone, government and population alike, is united in their commitment to ensure that the island's Flower Festival in April will be a great celebration of the life of the Madeiran people and a clear demonstration of their full recovery.

More detailed and up-to-date information is available at: <http://www.madeiraislands.travel>

Miguel Januário

Website: <http://www.maismenos.net>

Place: Mercado do Chão do Loureiro

In the Baixa district of Lisbon, anyone who uses a lift to get to the Castelo de São Jorge (St. George's Castle) is bound to pass

shown by these grotesque figures contrasts with the moderation exhibited by the mordomos, who are the ones that are truly responsible for ensuring that the traditions are continued and that order is maintained.

Municipal Park and Calvário Hill

Other informations:

Municipal Park and Calvário Hill;

Located on the highest reaches of Vila Real and close to the more modern buildings, the Municipal Park is a leafy terrace with an approximately 200 metre central walkway flanked by rows of trees that are hundreds of years old.

In one corner of the park there is a bronze bust of romantic writer Camilo Castelo Branco.

Close to the Park, there is the church of São Pedro, the second parish of Vila Real, coming in the wake of the church of São Dinis which retained its status throughout almost three centuries.

Os Gêmeos

Location: Av. Fontes Pereira de Melo, Lisboa

Born in 1974, in São Paulo, Brazil, Gustavo and Otávio Pandolfo have always worked together. As children in the streets of the traditional neighbourhood of Cambuci in São Paulo, they developed a distinctive way of playing and communicating through art.

With the support of their family, and the arrival of Hip Hop culture in Brazil in the 1980s, Os Gêmeos (The Twins) found a direct link between their magical and dynamic universe and a way of communicating with the public. They explore the various techniques of painting, drawing and sculpture with dedication and care, and use the streets as their place of work.

Penha Garcia

Other informations:

Penha Garcia;

The oldest part of the village of Penha Garcia, situated between Monsanto and Monfortinho stands perched on the top of an escarpment overlooking a deep narrow gorge of the River Ponsul. From here, where the modest houses display the sense of nobility conferred upon them by their walls of schist and granite, nobody will remain indifferent on seeing the imposing and austere beauty of this particular region.

The small village is crowned by the castle built by D. Sancho I, the second king of Portugal, reminding us that Penha Garcia was once part of the kingdom's strategic defence system, particularly in the disturbed early years of the nation's existence. In the 14th century, both the town and castle were given to the Order of the Knights Templar, who fought hard to defend the Christian territory. Before that, however, the land belonged to a certain lord of the manor, D. Garcia Mendes, who gave his name to the village.

The interior of the parish church houses a most valuable treasure: the image of Our Lady breastfeeding her child, carved in Ançã stone and a most touching demonstration of motherhood, which is based on a Gothic inscription dating from 1469.

the former Chão do Loureiro market. The building, as well as housing one of the lifts that help people up the hill to the castle, a supermarket and a café/restaurant at the top, has had several floors converted into parking facilities which also serve as large galleries for urban art in the city. Among the various pieces on show, one of them created by Miguel Januário depicts the buildings typical of these historical neighbourhoods, and highlights some of the iconic aspects of Lisbon, such as the Águas Livres Aqueduct.

Miguel Januário was born in 1981. He graduated in Communication Design from FBAUP, specialising in graffiti and street art.

He considers himself more or less an activist artist, this being his most visible side, and it is through this identity that he interacts with the urban landscape.

Odeith

Website: <http://www.odeith.com/>

O Rapaz dos Pássaros / The Boy with the Birds
Location: Auditorio José Afonso, Setúbal

The work 'The Boy with the Birds' was considered the best mural of 2014 by the 'I Support Street Art' movement. Painted on the side of the Auditorium José Afonso in Setúbal, the mural 'The Boy with the Birds' reproduces a photograph taken by Américo Ribeiro in the 1930s. The boy in the photo is Vicente Inácio Martins, now over 90 years old, who at the time was selling birds barefoot in the streets of Setúbal.

Odeith was born in 1976 in Damaia, and first got his hands on a spray can in the mid-1980s, but it was in the following decade, when graffiti began to spread in Portugal that he first made contact with the emerging movement.

His first experiments were on the street and on railway lines, which is how the passion he had always shown for drawing found a new direction. Before long, there were opportunities to paint large murals in Damaia, in Carcavelos and on several housing estates. Early on, he showed a special interest in perspective and shadow, with a dark style that became known as '3D dark', where the compositions, whether landscapes or portraits, messages or tributes, stood out for their realism and technique.

In 2005, recognized internationally for innovative forays into so-called anamorphic art, where he excelled at perspective compositions painted on different surfaces, such as right-angled or wall-to-ground corners, creating an optical illusion effect.

Pedro Álvares Cabral

Other informations:

Pedro Álvares Cabral;
Little is known of the life and personality of Pedro Álvares Cabral, even though he was one of the most important figures in the history of the Portuguese Discoveries.

Born in Belmonte in 1467, he was the son of the governor of the

Places and patrimony of the region

Other informations:

Places and patrimony of the region;
The human occupation of the region dates back to Neolithic times and there are still some well-conserved remains of this ancient period in human history.
Around six kilometres away from the village of Soajo you can visit some important examples at the Núcleo Megalítico do Mezio (Mezio Megalithic Area).

If you walk through the mountains you will come upon an unusual characteristic of this area, of ethnological and patrimonial interest: the Brandas (constructions used by herdsmen as summer shelters).
In Ermelo, a semi-abandoned but nonetheless idyllic village in the surrounding area overlooking a curve in the River Lima and full of orange trees, you will find what remains of the monastery of Santa Maria do Ermelo, built by Cistercian monks in the twelfth century.
The impressive Santuário de Nossa Senhora da Peneda is less than an hour's drive away.
On the way you will find a number of Brandas, spectacular mountain viewpoints and formations of enormous blocks of granite resembling giant Pharaonic sculptures.
From time to time you will be discreetly observed by the large dark eyes of the Barrosã cows that graze by the roadside.

Around two kilometres from the border with Galicia lies the beautiful village of Lindoso, with its granite houses and an old castle built by D. Afonso III at the top.
The nearby Alto do Lindoso dam blocks the waters of the River Lima for electricity production. The enormous height and size of this dam make it an impressive work of engineering.

Pulo do Lobo

Other informations:

Pulo do Lobo;
Pulo do Lobo (literally Wolf's Leap) is a waterfall located at an altitude of between 33 and 35 metres in a very narrow gorge in the River Guadiana. The difference in levels is caused by the effects over time produced by the various geological eras.

According to legend, only a brave man or a wild animal when chased could leap over this gorge.
Observing the course of the river from the viewpoint overlooking the gorge on the right bank, it can be seen that the river has two beds upstream: one is wider and consists of rounded shapes undoubtedly formed by the activity of a glacier, and, in the centre of this, is the river's present-day bed, visible as a deeper channel carved out by the erosion of the water.
It is down this deep gorge, which gradually becomes more rounded, that the River Guadiana flows until it reaches Mértola.

Pulo do Lobo can be reached on either bank, from the village of Amendoeira, on the road from Mértola to Beja (left bank), or, if coming from Serpa, via the village of Vale de Poços, where the route is signposted to the right (right bank).
Both routes are clearly marked and viewpoints are provided at the end of the track.
The best view of the waterfall is, however, gained from the right bank. Further on, you can see Pego dos Sáveis, where the river suddenly becomes becalmed and forms a peaceful-looking lake.
If you're planning to visit this area on foot in order to fully appreciate the river's great beauty, you must be very careful, especially if you have children with you, for the terrain is very

castle of Belmonte. In 1478, he joined the Court and became part of the personal guard of the king D. João II. Although nothing is known of any earlier maritime adventures, he was chosen by D. Manuel I to command the fleet that was to undertake the second expedition to India, consisting of 13 ships. The faithful servant was being sent on a diplomatic mission, to propose peace and friendship and to establish a trade route for the spices coming out of Calicut.

After stopping off in the Cape Verde archipelago, he headed in a south-westerly direction and ended up finding land. Although at first he was unsure whether he had reached terra firma or just some island, his navigational data and the contact he made with the local inhabitants were sufficient for him to realise that he had disembarked in an unknown land and he sent a ship back to Lisbon with news of his discovery. Amongst other evidence, the ship carried parrots, macaws and kingwood (pau-brasil). Due to the great abundance of this wood, this latter item gave its name to the territory. He continued on his voyage to the Far East, where, after overcoming some difficulties, he managed to establish a trading post.

On his return in 1501, he settled in Santarém, where he died in 1520. He is buried in a plain grave in the Igreja da Graça at Santarém. The church is in the Largo Pedro Álvares Cabral, where a statue has been erected in homage to this historical figure, made in 1971 by Soares Branco.

Next to the church is the Casa Brasil or the house of Pedro Álvares Cabral, where he lived until his death. It is currently a cultural centre providing support for Portuguese-Brazilian relations, equipped with a library that specialises in the Portuguese Expansion and the Discoveries and has a programme of periodical cultural activities.

Pinhão Station

Other informations:

Pinhão Station;

One of the most beautiful Railway stations in Portugal, located in the heart of the Douro region. The station's façades are decorated with 25 azulejo panels, that portray work in the vineyards and local landscapes.

The station still adorns its walls with certificates from prizes received as the best flower laden station. It is one of the main tourist attractions in the zone.

President Obama praised Souto Moura's work at Pritzker Prize ceremony

Other informations:

President Obama praised Souto Moura's work at Pritzker Prize ceremony;

At the 3rd June, the President Barack Obama attended the Pritzker Prize ceremony in Washington D.C., where the Portuguese architect Eduardo Souto Moura received this important recognition.

This was the second time that an American President attended the Ceremony of Pritzker Prize-giving, that was created 30 years ago. The president congratulated the architect, saying that "he spent his career not only pushing the boundaries of his art, but doing so in a way that serves the public good. Eduardo Souto Moura has designed homes, shopping centers, art galleries, schools and subway stations - all in a style that seems as effortless as it is beautiful. He's an expert at the use of different materials and colors, and his simple shapes and clean lines

uneven here.

Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue 2010 magazine in Portugal

Other informations:

Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue 2010 magazine in Portugal; The 2010 annual Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition is out; and it features, for the first time, Portugal as backdrop to some of the most beautiful women and alluring bathing suits in the world. The Swimsuit Issue is the highest selling edition of any magazine on the planet, with more than 60 million readers. And, the producers chose Portugal for 2010 because of its amazing beaches, historic monuments, and its wine industry.

In the 2010 edition, the models were photographed in and around Lisbon.

The Portuguese capital, Lisbon is a city with more than 20 centuries of history, built on several hills at the point where the River Tejo meets the Atlantic Ocean. For almost the entire year, a bright sky lights up the modern and cosmopolitan city of Lisbon, which has long inspired writers, photographers and filmmakers. The natural beauty of the city matched perfectly with the elegant models.

The shooting sessions continued in the lively and sophisticated Estoril Coast, well know by their beaches perfect for practicing water sports. Another session took place on Portinho da Arrábida beach. A bay with white sand, framed by the green of the mountains of the Serra da Arrábida Natural Park, where many rare and very ancient plant species are to be found. Not so far away, in Azeitão the models were photographed in one of the finest renaissance Palaces in Portugal - Quinta da Bacalhoa, also famous for its wines.

Come visit us and discover all the fantastic spots where the Sports Illustrated magazine models were photographed. Accept our invitation... Portugal is waiting for you!

The "Mascarados" (masked figures) in Lazarim

Other informations:

The "Mascarados" (masked figures) in Lazarim;

In Lazarim, in the municipality of Lamego, the Carnival cycle encompasses two periods. The first starts on the fifth Sunday before Fat Sunday, and the second takes place between Fat Sunday and Ash Wednesday. The various celebrations preceding the main Carnival festivity are held on successive Sundays.

The first Sunday pertains to friends, where the initial masked figures or persons wearing large sculpted heads walk through the town. During this week, the typical menu is enriched with a wide variety of meats, above all pork meat, that will be ritually served throughout this period, preceding the period of abstinence of Lent. The following Sunday pertains to female friends, and is succeeded by the Sunday of Compadres ("godfathers") and Sunday of Comadres ("godmothers"). During this period there is a marked opposition between the sexes, with demonstrations of authority, in an environment of permissiveness and folie. It is the subversion of the established order, which is characteristic of the carnival period, seeking a final equilibrium within the community.

Over the course of five weeks, the compadres prepare the large masked heads and the comadres raise funds in order to pay for the mannequins that will be sacrificed in a public bonfire on Shrove Tuesday - when one of the key events is reading of the carnival will, that involves unique traditions in Portugal. A girl

always fit seamlessly into their surroundings.”

Barack Obama also said that perhaps Eduardo Souto Moura most famous work is the Stadium of Braga, where never one to settle for an easy answer. In fact, as Souto Moura wanted to build this stadium on the side of a mountain, so he blasted out nearly a million and a half cubic yards of granite from the mountain side, then crushed it to make the concrete necessary to build the stadium.

Concluding his speech the president referred: “and that combination of form and function, of artistry and accessibility, is why today we honor Eduardo with what is known as the “Nobel Prize of Architecture”.

Souto Moura won the Pritzker prize 2011

Other informations:

Souto Moura won the Pritzker prize 2011; The architect Eduardo Souto Moura won the Pritzker prize 2011, what is come to be known throughout the world as architecture’s highest honor. This is the second time on the history of the prize that a Portuguese architect has been chosen . The first was in 1992 when it was granted to Alvaro Siza, with whom Souto Moura worked for five years as a student.

According to the Pritzker Prize’s jury, Souto Moura has produced a body of work that is of our time but also carries echoes of architectural traditions. His buildings have a unique ability to convey seemingly conflicting characteristics — power and modesty, bravado and subtlety, bold public authority and a sense of intimacy —at the same time.” Since forming his own office in 1980, Souto Moura has completed well over sixty projects, most in his native Portugal, but he has designs in Spain, Italy, Germany, United Kingdom and Switzerland.

Among his works the jury distinguished Braga Football stadium and calls this work, “...muscular, monumental and very much at home within its powerful landscape.” In the city where he lives and works, Porto, we find other projects, like the Burgo Tower, described by the jury as “...two buildings side by side, one vertical and one horizontal with different scales, in dialogue with each other and the urban landscape” and Casa das Artes, a Cultural Center which the jury describes as “a testament to his ability to combine materials expressively.” He used copper, stone, concrete and wood.

A convent and monastery in a mountainous terrain near Amares, called Santa Maria do Bouro originally built in the 12th century, was converted into a state inn in conformity with the project by Souto Moura. The jury declares in their citation that he “has created spaces that are both consistent with their history and modern in conception.”

One of his most recent projects is “Casa das Histórias Paula Rego” at Cascais, a museum that house a collection of paintings by Paula Rego. In the middle of a fenced off forest, this building is formed by a set of volumes of varying heights, where two large pyramids along the entrance axis prevent the project from being a neutral sum of boxes.

São Domingos Copper Mine

Other informations:

São Domingos Copper Mine; Located on the left bank of the River Guadiana, this area was mined from Roman times until the early 1960s, when the mine was finally abandoned. The region has the appearance of a ghost

reads the Compadre's will and a boy reads that of the Comadre. The text is divided into three sections: in the "beginning" the executors of the will are named, in the "bequeathances" section, a donkey is symbolically distributed between the heirs - Compadres and Comadres - and then there is a final reckoning, the "end" in which the Entrudo (Carnival doll) is burned.

The masks of Lazarim express a momentary division of the community. On the one hand, we see the Caretos (persons wearing large sculpted heads) and on the other hand the Senhorinhas, their female equivalent. Both roles however are performed by men, who are distinguished by their clothes and the caricatural betrayal of certain types of ridiculous situations that can be easily identified by everyone. In addition to the traditional masks sculpted in wood, the Careto also uses an anthropomorphic truncheon known as a "roberto".

The Cistercian Order to the south of the river Douro

Other informations:

The Cistercian Order to the south of the river Douro

Beginning its trajectory in Spain, the river Douro crosses Portugal from east to west, flowing into the Atlantic, next to the city of Oporto. Until construction of the railway in the 19th century, the river served as the region's main access route, filled with "rabelo" boats that transported products from the interior to the coast, including the most famous product of them all, Port wine. The entire Douro valley, due to its incomparable beauty, was listed as a world Heritage site by UNESCO, as a unique example of age-old human culture.

The river’s left bank was one of the main sites of election for an important series of Cistercian abbeys, huge landholdings and permanent settlements, including rich manor houses that managed a wide array of resources, taking advantage of the local salt and fish caught from the sea, controlling fishing and river rights, vineyards and fields dedicated to cereal crops and also exploiting iron mines and metallurgical workshops.

As we journey from the coast up the river, we begin by visiting the Monastery of São Pedro and São Paulo de Arouca. Then continuing our journey, towards Lamego, a village that is very rich in historical monuments, and in whose environs we find the majority of the Cistercian monasteries, we begin by visiting the monastery of São João de Tarouca - the first to be founded in Portuguese territory. The monastery of Santa Maria de Salzedas, a few kilometres away, is the next stop in this pilgrimage to the Cistercian Order. On the way, we may also visit the Bridge of Ucanha, a mediaeval construction that marks one of the entrances into the monastery's enclosed grounds.

Further north, not far from the town of Tabuaço and benefiting from proximity with the River Távora, that flows into the Douro, we discover the monastery of São Pedro das Águas. To the south, near to Moimenta da Beira and Sernancelhe, we visit the monasteries of Nossa Senhora da Purificação de Moimenta da Beira and of Nossa Senhora da Assunção de Tabosa, which are examples of feminine Cistercian communities.

The last stage in this itinerary dedicated to Cistercian order, takes us to Portugal's eastern border, in Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, in order to visit the monastery of Santa Maria de Aguiar, next to the historical village of Castelo Rodrigo.

And since it's on our way, why not stop in Penedono -- the

town, where the wealth of former times has now given way to industrial archaeology.

What now remains of the former industrial complex are a few of the mine's structures, the old miners' residential quarter and the platform of the railway line once used to convey the copper ore to the river port of Pomarão (close to the park's southernmost boundary), where it was put on boats and transported to the estuary at Vila Real de Santo António.

The village, with its roughly 770 houses, grew around the mine. More than 1500 miners were involved in the mining of copper pyrites (copper) and, together with their families, they brought a great deal of life and animation to the region.

As you walk around the village's streets, take time to notice how the memory of the past is still very much alive. Not far from the village, you can also visit what remains of the former São Domingos copper mine.

The Cistercian Order in the Alto Minho

Other informations:

The Cistercian Order in the Alto Minho;

In the green and pleasant land of the Alto Minho, located nearby the great rivers that flow from East to West, in unforgettable settings, we can discover four important nuclei of Cistercian monasteries - in locations that, from the 11th century onwards, hosted religious communities devoted to the Benedictine Order and subsequently to the Cistercian order.

Around 7 km from the town of Melgaço - that overlooks a natural amphitheatre incorporating the River Minho - the Convent of Santa Maria de Fiães and the Church of Nossa Senhora da Orada, were built when Portugal was founded as a nation - symbolised in the castle that crowns Melgaço, commissioned by D. Afonso Henriques in 1170.

Further South, if we leave the charming town of Ponte da Barca towards the impressive mountains of the Serra do Soajo, we encounter an enchanting setting next to a curve in the River Lima - where the Monastery of Santa Maria de Ermelo was built.

Returning to Ponte da Barca and travelling down the national road, EN 101 towards Vila Verde, we cross the River Cávado and follow in the direction towards Amares where we encounter the Cistercian monastery of Santa Maria do Bouro. The austere monastic cells have disappeared as has the principles of posterity and austerity, and frugal diet. The site now houses one of Portugal's most beautiful Pousadas.

In order to complement our trip to Cistercian sites in the Alto Minho, we travel to Santa Maria das Júnias - a magical setting in the heart of the Serra do Gerês. To reach the site, we journey down the road towards Vieira do Minho, cross the dam in Venda Nova and follow the mountain road to Covelães. The landscape is illuminated during our trip by the blue waters of a succession of weirs and dams.

The cloister of the Sé Cathedral, Viseu

Other informations:

The cloister of the Sé Cathedral, Viseu;

Composed by two galleries, the lower gallery dates from the Renaissance period and the upper gallery was added in the first half of the 18th century.

The Renaissance Gallery is very elegant with fine proportions,

location of one of Portugal's most original castles, and in Marialva - another historical village topped by an impressive castle, which was an important military outpost in the Middle Ages.

The Crib

Other informations:

The Crib;

According to the gospels, the crib represents the stable where Jesus was born, a place that is still worshipped in Bethlehem today, at the Basilica of the Nativity.

Based on the interpretation of the Old Testament by the apocryphal gospels, the Nativity was represented in the 4th century by the image of the Baby Jesus lying on the ground, accompanied by figures representing the ox, the donkey and the shepherds. The representation of the Crib began to spread from the 8th century onwards.

It became even more popular due to the actions of St. Francis of Assisi, in 1223, when he celebrated the Christmas Eve mass in front of a large crib, in the middle of the woods of Greccio in Italy.

After this, the Franciscan monks became the great promoters of this habit, with the crib becoming much more elaborate both in terms of its scenario and in the characters that it contained, to the extent that it was transformed into a source of inspiration for both popular and erudite art.

In Portugal, attention is drawn to the use of locally crafted clay figures in the cribs at Estremoz and Barcelos, as well as to the baroque cribs designed by the sculptor Machado de Castro (an example is to be found in Lisbon cathedral) or by the sculptor António Ferreira (with an example at the Basílica da Estrela). This erudite representation of the crib from the 18th century is particularly interesting because, although it remains centred around the main motif of the Nativity and the arrival of the Three Wise Men at Bethlehem, it also includes recreations of Portuguese rural settings and the social classes of that time: clergy, nobility and the common people. Also worth noting here are the details of the clothing and the representation of certain crafts and professions, some of which have now disappeared.

The legend of the Holy Miracle

Other informations:

The legend of the Holy Miracle;

It is said that during the year of 1266 a poor woman living in Santarém, who had fallen victim to her husband's infidelity, resorted to the services of a witch to see if she could put an end to her suffering.

As a cure for her unhappiness, she was told that she would have to get hold of a consecrated host.

After hesitating for some time, she went to the Igreja de Santo Estevão and, during the communion, she concealed the host and then went with it to the witch's house.

On the way, blood began to run from the cloth around the host and the woman was forced to run home and hide it in a chest in her bedroom.

It then happened that, during the night, an intense and mysterious light came from the chest and strangely invaded the house, forcing the woman to tell her husband the truth. They both repented and spent the night in prayer, deciding that the next day they would go and tell the priest what had happened. The news spread and the population ran to behold the miracle.

including the delicate work of the capitals of the pillars and the finely grooved shafts, that reveal the artists' surprising degree of mastery over the hard granite stone. Prior to the 16th century the site was occupied by a royal palace, demolished at this time in order to build the cloister. The azulejo tile panels were created in the 18th century, and represent scenes from the life of S. Teotónio, the patron saint of Viseu.

In 1918, after works carried out on the walls, a Roman-Gothic door was found in the north wing of the cloister, connecting it to the central body of the church, constituting the most interesting surviving remnant of the primitive church. The eastern wing of the cloister houses the Renaissance chapels of the Calvary and Tierce.

The Douro Line

Other informations:

The Douro Line;

The 203-kilometre Douro railway line runs from Oporto to Barca d'Alva and was opened in 1887. The engineering difficulties in overcoming the natural features of the valley resulted in a grand total of 26 tunnels and 30 bridges. The result is an unforgettable route through some truly impressive natural beauty.

The historical route begins at Régua Station, in the heart of port wine country, where the first train arrived right in 1878.

The journey considers to Pinhão right along the bank of the river. This is one of the most beautiful railway stations in the country. It is finished in tile panels depicting workers in the vineyards and some of regional landmarks and records of the years when it would win the annual "Station in Bloom" prize. The station has become an essential stop-off for all tourists visiting the region.

The Tua station is at the end of the line. Its name derives from the tributary that joins the Douro between colossal rock cliffs. However, from here it is possible to continue through to Mirandela on the Linha do Tua, another impressive piece of engineering, was completed in 1887. Dynamite was used to carve out the route running along the peaks of sheer cliffs. From the windows of the small train, the views out over the ravine tens of metres below are both impressive and austere. When the landscape begins to soften, you know that you are approaching the Mirandela plain which represents the end of the line.

The Mariano Cult in Portugal

Other informations:

The Mariano Cult in Portugal;

According to some experts, the veneration of Mary represents the spontaneous transformation of the religious worship of Mother Earth. Remnants of this tradition became Our Lady of Rocha, of Penha, of Fraga or of Lapa.

It was the Conciliate of Ephesus, in 431, that provided official church recognition in proclaiming the Holy Virgin and the Mother of God.

It is this concept of divine maternity that patterned worship and Christian iconography.

It has become one of most frequently portrayed images.

The spread of the Mariana cult across the Iberian peninsula was due to the founding and expansion of religious orders. In particular, the Cistercian Order played a key role in repopulating Portugal after the Christian Reconquest.

The «Salve Regina» sermons are attributed to its founder, Saint Bernard, also known as «the knight of Mary». They present the

The Miraculous Host was then returned in a procession to the holy place to which it belonged, the Igreja de Santo Estevão. Since then, it has been kept in a silver gilt monstrance, which can still be admired today.

The episode is recounted in four large early Baroque (17th-century) paintings to be found inside the church, having been commissioned by a believer in the miracle.

In 1653, the simple Chapel of the holy Miracle was built, on the site of the house where the woman had lived (in Travessa das Esteiras).

The Portuguese Discoveries

Other informations:

The Portuguese Discoveries;

In the reign of King João I (1385-1433)

1415 - Conquest of Ceuta

1418 - João Gonçalves Zarco and Tristão Vaz discover the island of Porto Santo

1419 - João Gonçalves Zarco and Tristão Vaz discover Madeira

1427 - Diogo de Silves discovers the Azores

In the reign of King Duarte (1433-38)

1434 - Gil Eanes rounds Cape Bojador

In the reign of King Afonso V (1438-1481)

1441 - Nuno Tristão leads an expedition to Cape White, on the African coast

1445 - Nuno Tristão leads an expedition to Senegal

In the reign of King João II (1481-95)

1460 - Diogo Gomes discovers the Cape Verde archipelago

1471 - Discovery of the islands of Fernão Pó, São Tomé, Príncipe and Ano Bom

1483 - Diogo Cão discovers the mouth of the Congo river

1485 - Diogo Cão reaches Namibia

1488 - Bartolomeu Dias rounds the Cape of Good Hope

In the reign of King Manuel I (1495-1521)

1498 - Vasco da Gama discovers the sea route to India

1500 - Pedro Álvares Cabral discovers Brazil

1501 - Gaspar Corte Real reaches Newfoundland

1510 - Afonso de Albuquerque conquers Goa

1511 - Portuguese vessels reach the Moluccas

1513 - Portuguese trading posts established in China, Macao and Canton

1519 - Portuguese captain Fernando Magellan begins the first circumnavigation of the globe, completing the voyage in 1522

In the reign of King João III (1521-57)

1543 - Portuguese vessels reach Japan

The Santiago Route - Braga

Other informations:

The Santiago Route - Braga;

The administrative capital of a province that covered regions including Galicia and the Minho and one of oldest bishopdoms, Braga forms the beginning of one of the Routes of Santiago.

This was once a matter of great rivalry as in the 11th century, Braga was struggling to become a more important Christian

centre than Compostela. While Compostela guarded various

relics associated with the apostle James (Santiago), Braga could

answer with relics from martyrs from the times of Romanic

persecution (the Saints Silvestre, Susana, Cucuphate and

Frutuoso de Montélios), while their churches remained under the

Virgin as the advocate and protector of men.

This was later taken up by the Mendicant Orders. In the sixteenth century, Queen Leonor established the Misericórdias (religious-charitable organisations).

These proved essential in taking the divine word to the less-advantaged social groups. Through acts of charity, encouraged by both the throne and the court, the Virgin's protective symbolism was further strengthened.

It should be noted there remains a Misericórdia in every Portuguese city to help those less fortunate.

The veneration of the Mother of God has taken various forms over the ages, symbolising the respective stages of life. From an extensive list, there is Our Lady of Conception, of Nativity, of Exile, of Boa Morte (Passing On), of Assumption, of Suffering and of Healing. She has been adopted as the patron saint of churches, monasteries, cathedrals and even of towns and cities. In the XVII century, King João IV nominated Our Lady Queen of Portugal. Henceforth, Portuguese monarchs no longer used the royal crown that then became used in representing Our Lady of Conception. Santa Maria is still commonly to be found in Portuguese place names.

The various forms of veneration are differentiated according to the attributes. The cloak, the colour blue and the halo are found in the majority of depictions with the royal crown and the world at her feet usual for Our Lady of Conception, the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove for the Annunciation, the Boy with the cloak open in protection symbolising Charity, or the rosary, amongst others.

Particularly striking are some of the Middle Age carvings in rough granite, with the Virgin Mary positioned forwards, sat with the Baby Jesus on her left knee or held to her bosom.

There are also two representations peculiar to the Iberian Peninsula: the Black Virgins and the Pregnant Lady of O.

May is Mary's month with bank holidays on the 15th August and 8th December dedicated to Our Lady of Assumption and Our Lady of Conception, the patron of Portugal. In October, there are festivals to commemorate Our Lady of the Rosary. These are but the most prominent with many other festivities and celebrations taking place nationwide.

Hence, this is open an invitation to come and search for other Portuguese forms of venerating Mary...

The religious and military order of Avis

Other informations:

The religious and military order of Avis;

The origin of the Order of the Knights of S. Bento de Avis dates back to the Christian Reconquest, in the middle of the 12th century. Based in Évora, initially under the name of the Friars of Évora, after the city was conquered from the Moors. Under the aegis of the Spanish order of Calatrava, the knights were subsequently entitled the Militia of Évora or the Order of Calatrava. The knights then severed their ties with Spain and assumed the name of the Order of Avis when in 1211, D. Afonso II donated the town of Avis to the Friars, on condition that they would populate the settlement and build a castle there.

The first Master of the Order was Fernão de Anes (1196-1219), who oversaw the building of the town and castle. The last Master was Fernão Rodrigues de Sequeira, who died in 1433 and whose remains are buried inside the convent's church.

The Order's most renowned figure was D. João, Master of Avis, the bastard son of D. Pedro I, who ascended to the throne of Portugal by popular demand after the interregnum of 1383-1385.

jurisdiction of Compostela.

The Route of Santiago closely followed the old Roman ways. Leaving Braga, pilgrims would pass through São Frutoso de Montélios, cross the Cávado river to head to Terras de Bouro and then onto Gerês before crossing over into Spain at Portela do Homem.

The route, known as the Path of the Geira Romana, features various Roman milestones and was but a section on the route connecting Braga to Santiago de Compostela and hence to Rome.

And it is not even necessary to leave Braga to get an insight into the extent of this cult of Santiago.

Start in the historic centre at the Cathedral, head down Rua D. Gonçalo Pereira and then Largo de São Paulo as far as the Largo de Santiago.

There, you can find the Fountain of Santiago, the Tower of Santiago, providing an idea of the extent of the medieval walls. Right by the Tower, there is the Santiago Seminary, a former Company of Jesus building. Continue along Rua dos Falcões as far as the Church and Hospital of São Marcos, one of the most important stopover points on the Portuguese side of the route. Outside the city, on the EN 201, do not miss the Chapel of São Frutuoso de Montélios, housing relics that were much coveted by Santiago de Compostela, and the Monastery of Tibães, a Benedictine convent that would shelter and aid pilgrims.

Image in GIL, Carlos, RODRIGUES, João, Por Caminhos de Santiago, Publicações Dom Quixote, 1990, page 173

The Yule-Log

Other informations:

The Yule-Log

In the heart of Portugal, in the **inland region**, Christmas is marked by the ceremony known as the "burning of the yule-log", on **Christmas Eve night**. This ceremony is particularly popular in the area stretching from Trás-os-Montes to the Alto Alentejo, covering towns and villages in the districts of Bragança, Guarda, Castelo Branco and Portalegre.

This ritual is essentially a community celebration, being an occasion when the private habit of gathering together around the fire is brought outside the home helping to consolidate the cohesiveness of the local group. A **huge bonfire** is made in the churchyard, or in another similar space where the local population can meet after the Missa do Galo. The bonfire can sometimes be as high as the church and is left to burn all night long until it finally goes out. What remains is then stored away and used throughout the winter.

The **lighting** of the bonfire is preceded by the ritual gathering of the wood, which is then transported to the site of the bonfire by different means depending on the respective region. In some places, the logs or tree stumps that are to be used in the communal bonfire are immediately put to one side when the wood is gathered at the beginning of the winter. In other places, a special group of people is formed to gather the wood, an activity which takes place either on 8 December (the day of the Immaculate Conception), or a few days before Christmas or even on Christmas Eve itself, to ensure that everything will be ready for the night. The **wood** can be either offered or stolen, which does not in any way alter the actual performance of the various tasks, although it may change the way in which the wood arrives at the site of the bonfire. If the wood is given, there will be a

The Order's name was thus linked to the Dynasty of Avis, the most notable of all Portugal's dynasties, which was responsible for the strategy that led to Portugal to opt for Atlantic expansion that culminated in the great Discoveries. From D. João I onwards, the order ceased to be governed by Masters elected by chapters of the order. From that time, its governors and administrators were chosen by the Crown. The first Master to be chosen under the new system was one of the King's own sons. The king, D. Fernando, the "Saint", died as a martyr in Ceuta.

The Friars used a long, white cloak with cords that extended to their feet, and a green cross featuring a fleur-de-lis, the insignia of the Order.

The village of Soajo

Other informations:

The village of Soajo;

Small houses built of granite blocks line the stone streets, leading the visitor to the square where the unusual pillory stands, a National Monument since 1910.

A friendly anthropomorphic face, carved on the pillory and crowned with a triangle resembling a three-peaked hat, welcomes visitors to the village, where they will find a relaxed and very hospitable atmosphere.

On the outskirts, at a high point dominated by a large granite outcrop, visit the communal threshing terrace, an impressive group of twenty-four stone espigueiros (granaries), with architectural features dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where the community used to store its corn, mainly maize, which is abundant in the region. The crosses at the top represent divine protection of their contents, survival of the community, "our daily bread".

There are two excellent restaurants in the village where you can try out the local specialities: the tasty meat of the Barrosã cattle, bred in the mountain pastures, chicken risotto and the indispensable green wine of the region, are the fortification demanded by the appetite stimulated by the cool mountain air.

Vhils / Pixel Pancho

Website: <http://www.alexandrefarto.com>

Location: Jardim do Tabaco, Av. Infante D. Henrique, Lisboa

Alexandre Farto, who also signs as **Vhils**, has developed a unique visual language based on the aesthetic of vandalism derived from his background in illegal graffiti. He removes the outer layers of walls and other surfaces with tools and unconventional techniques, creating symbolic reflections on identity, urban lifestyles, the passage of time and the interdependence between people and their environment. His innovative gouging technique has been critically acclaimed.

Since 2005 he has been presenting his work around the world at solo and group exhibitions, events, institutions, various site-specific interventions and projects. He has taken part in some of the most prestigious contemporary urban art projects. Vhils is currently working with the Vera Cortes Art Agency (Portugal), Lazarides Gallery (UK), and Magda Danysz Gallery (France and China). His work can be found in many public and private collections in various countries.

Pixel Pancho is an Italian street artist, born in Turin. He specialises in large murals and is considered one of the best artists in his field. He works constantly with earth tones to convey a feeling of age.

party held with great pomp and circumstance, at which the person offering the wood will also distribute wine to those present. If the wood is stolen, then it is left at the site of the bonfire early in the morning, in anticipation of the owner's subsequent protests.

In some villages in the district of Castelo Branco, this ritual has developed a number of specific features that have been maintained over the years. Here, the task of gathering the logs is entrusted to the young unmarried men and those who have been called up for military service. In recent times, married men have also begun to help in gathering the wood, due to the changes in everyday habits and the decrease in population as a result of the colonial wars and emigration.

The wood is cut and transported either on Christmas Eve or on the preceding Sunday. In the village, the local population waits for the group's arrival, which is announced by the church bells, transforming this event into a moment of great celebration, frequently accompanied by music and singing. At midnight, the bonfire is lit to coincide with the beginning of the mass.

Young Men's Festival

Other informations:

Young Men's Festival;

In the region of Bragança, from 24 December to 6 January, some villages are enlivened by the holding of the Young Men's Festival or Festa dos Rapazes.

It is also known as the Festa dos Caretos (Masked Devils' Festival, in the village of Aveleda), Festa da Mocidade (Youth Festival, at Montesinho and Gimonde), Festa dos Reis (Festival of the Kings, at Baçal and Rio de Onor) or, just simply, as the Festa de Natal (Christmas Festival, at Varge and França), with slight variations being noted in the dates of the festivities.

Young unmarried men are the main protagonists in this event, for they are the ones who prepare and organise the festival, consisting of rondas (house visits), masses, collections, dances and loas (Christmas tales).

The young men gather together at the Casa da Festa, a house specially loaned to them for the occasion, where people can only enter if they have permission from the mordomo (major-domo or steward), who decides when the various activities should begin and end. It is here that the group make their meals and prepare themselves for the various stages of the festivities.

Of all the different events that take place, the most notable are perhaps the rondas and the loas.

The rondas may involve young men calling round at people's houses at night, or at dawn, either to wake them up or to wish them Merry Christmas, depending on the time of day or the particular aim of the visit.

The young men, who are masked or dressed as caretos (devils), wander around the village accompanied by musicians and the mordomos, asking the local inhabitants to make a small contribution towards the festival. The most important moment is when they call round door to door giving everybody in the village festive greetings and continuing to make their collection.

The Missa do Galo or midnight mass is an integral part of the festivities, in which the young men station themselves in a prominent place close to the altar and are the first to "kiss the Baby" and also the first to leave the mass so that they can go and put on their masks and dress up as devils, in order for the festivities to be able to continue.

After the ceremony, they direct the population to the site where the loas or Christmas tales are to be told. Loas is the term used

Pixel creates robotic creatures inspired by different environments: beaches, forests, the sci-fi universe. The artist uses a wide variety of surfaces, but tiles and wall painting are the most significant.

Your passenger rights at hand

Other informations:

Your passenger rights at hand ;
Denied boarding? Cancellation? Long delay? Lost luggage?
Reduced mobility?

Passengers need a common set of principles, so that they can be more easily aware of their rights if something goes wrong with their trip, regardless of the mode of transport they use or whether a journey takes place wholly within a single Member State or goes through an intra-Community or external frontier.

In the light of this, the EU has committed itself to placing users at the heart of transport policy.

Your passenger rights at hand in
<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights>.

to describe the moments when the young men satirically recount, in four-line rhyming stanzas, strange episodes that have taken place in the village over the previous year, most of them spiced up with a heavy dose of social criticism.

At the end of the festival, physical competitions are held to see who will be nominated as the mordomos for the next year's event.

Alentejo

Alcácer do Sal

Small villages near Alcácer do Sal

Other informations:

Small villages near Alcácer do Sal;
Santa Susana village

Not far from the Pego de Altar dam, the village of Santa Susana (Saint Susan) holds quite some novelty: buildings in modernist architecture from the 40s. They were built by the benefactor, Henrique Louro Fernandes, whose monogram (HF) adorns some buildings. A small church, with two 16th century panels, somewhat worn but still magnificent, round off a visit to this oddity of a village.

Porto de Rei

This was the navigable limit for the vessels of the people settling the Sado. A small palace, even if in poor state of repair, points to a time when the river still represented a key trading route between the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

Torrão

Located at one tip of the Vale de Gaio dam, this tiny town has bleached white houses with enormous chimneys to characterise its streets. The matrix church boasts a lovely Manueline portico and, inside, still has Spanish-Arabian tiles in the lateral chapels. Of what remains of the convent, there is still the belvedere where nuns could look out over the fields of sunflowers that both then and now surround this charming place.

Vale do Gaio Dam

30 kilometres from Alcácer, there is the perfect spot for a spot of walking, bicycling or boating, hunting or fishing. By the bank, the Vale de Gaio pousada (manor hotel) puts on horse-drawn coach rides and rents row boats.

Aljustrel

Albufeira do Roxo

Characteristics and Services:

Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing; Outdoor parking;

This dam supplies the municipalities of Beja and Aljustrel, to which it pertains in administrative terms, intended primarily for irrigation.

The practise of secondary activities is subject to restrictions, and motorised watersports are not permitted.

Almodôvar

Albufeira de Monte Clérigo

Characteristics and Services:

Swimming allowed; Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing; Outdoor parking; Bar;

This dam, located in the course of the stream of Barranco do Adão, in the hydrographic basin of the River Guadiana, pertains to a protected area within the municipality of Almodôvar. It represents a zone of transition between the provinces of the Alentejo and the Algarve.

Support infrastructures exist in the site for canoeing, guaranteed by a local club and a small cafe/bar.

Barragem da Boavista

Characteristics and Services:

Fishing;
Earth dam on the Ribeira do Monte dos Monchões (Guadiana catchment).

Borba

Padrão de Montes Claros

Address: Herdade de Travassos - Rio de Moinhos

Close to Rio de Moinhos, one of the parishes of the municipality of Borba, is to be found the Monument of Montes Claros, which stands on a hilltop of the Herdade de Travassos.

The monument commemorates the Portuguese victory in the Battle of Montes Claros, in 1665. It was the last great struggle waged in the Wars for the Restoration of Independence, which had been begun by D. João IV and ended with the signing of the peace agreement between Portugal and Spain in 1668, during the regency of D. Pedro II. The monument was built in the same year at the orders of D. António Luís de Menezes, Marquis of Marialva and Count of Cantanhede, who bravely led the Portuguese troops into battle as captain of the army.

Built using the white marble that is typical of the region, the monument is surmounted by a closed royal crown made of metal. At its base is an inscription stating that D. António wished to pay homage to all his fighting companions. The space around the monument is protected by railings.

Very close by, roughly 2 kilometres away, is the Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Vitória, built at the orders of the prince-regent D. Pedro II. At the behest of its founder, it was dedicated to the Souls of Purgatory, in memory of the soldiers who lost their lives here. Although it has no particularly remarkable artistic features,

the church is worth visiting if only for its location at a high point overlooking the Serra da Ossa and the marble quarries, providing a most pleasant view over the whole of the surrounding region.

Castelo de Vide

Easter in Castelo de Vide

Website: <http://www.castelodevide.pt/turismo/pt/antes-de-chegar/propostas/fim-de-semana/semana-santa>

Other informations:

Easter in Castelo de Vide;

Easter in Castelo de Vide is one of the major local events and is of special interest due to the way it intermingles Catholic traditions with aspects of Jewish culture, in turn, highlighting the town's past history.

The celebrations are broken up into two stages: from Palm Sunday through to Good Friday and then from that evening through to Easter Monday, when celebrations most clearly demonstrate their Jewish antecedents. The traditions are still kept up even if for many of those involved there no longer is the initial religious meaning.

On Palm Sunday, there is the Blessing of the Palms and the Procession of Our Lord.

On the Thursday, mass is dedicated to the Lord's Last Supper with the Solemn Offering of Wine, Wax and Wheat for the celebration of Holy Mass throughout the rest of the year. Throughout the night, the Sacrament is worshipped.

Good Friday sees celebration of the Passion of our Lord, with the Adoration of the Holy Cross and the holding of Communion and late in the afternoon there is the Burial Procession of Our Lord.

On Easter Saturday there is the traditional Blessing of the Lambs with shepherds taking over the centre of the town along with their flocks so they can be blessed before being sold.

Animals bought on this day are killed in line with Jewish practices although many carry out the slaughter on the previous day prior to sun set as is set down in the Scriptures. The animals are left by the door of the house with the skins being cleaned and sold on to local artisans. They also serve as the highlight of rich Easter dining to mark the end of fasting throughout Lent.

At night, there is the Easter Vigil with the Blessing of the New Light and the Baptismal Water, the Eucharist and the Resurrection of Our Lord is announced. On leaving church, there is a most interesting tradition. Some people will approach and ask, in secret, for forgiveness, in a tradition that recalls the Jewish festival of Pardon, known as Kippur. At the end of mass, the Alleluia Procession begins inside the Matrix Church before heading out onto the main streets accompanied by a philharmonic band and the church bells.

This is one of the high points in the entire Easter festival as all those participating take along castanets and bells that they ring in accompaniment to the procession.

Easter Sunday begins with the Resurrection Procession with its long established routing and hierarchy.

It involves various local associations and institutions in addition to some of the longest standing (carpenters, cobblers, ironsmiths, stone masons, etc) as well as more recent professions. Mass in the Matrix Church closes celebrations. It is then the congregation makes its donations to help cover the costs of Holy Week.

Easter Monday is a municipal holiday in Castelo de Vide to commemorate the Festival of Our Lady of Light. The morning

The Castelo de Vide Jewish Quarter

Other informations:

The Castelo de Vide Jewish Quarter;

The best way in which to discover the Castelo de Vide Jewish Quarter is most definitely on foot.

Leaving from the main D. Pedro V square, head along Rua de Santa Maria as far as the Castle. This is the perfect time to take a look around before heading down the North slope (on the left-hand side). Dating back to distant times, the streets you wander feature discreet examples of their antiquity. The medieval lay out of the streets combines with a Jewish influence on their names: Rua da Judiaria (Street of Jews), Rua Nova (New Street), where Jews converting to Christianity lived and were known as new-Christians, Rua do Arçário (Street of Arcades), the source of the community's wealth and the Rua das Espinosas, named in honour of the 17th century philosopher Spinoza, son of a Castelo de Vide resident.

Take a careful look at the houses in the Jewish Quarter. On the ground floor, two doors connect with the exterior. Normally in granite, one leads into the store where the business was done and the other leads onto stairs leading to the two upper floors which were the living quarters. On the doors that still retain their ogival gothic structure, there are sculpted symbols. On the right doorpost, there are small indents of around 10cm. These are "mezuzot" (plural of "Mezuzah") and clear evidence the Jewish faith was practised. They were used to attach a small parchment that represented a profession of faith. On one side, there was the name of God and on the other the word Shemah was inscribed. Shemah is the name given to the first sentence in the Book of Deuteronomy meaning "listen".

At the crossroads between Rua da Judiaria and Rua da Fonte there is the former synagogue, which served as both a meeting place and school for the Jewish community. According to what is known, through to the 12th century, this was but a modest house before being transformed into a place of worship in the 14th century. In the 16th century, with the order given to expel all Jews, it again returned to being a residence. Within one of the walls, a tabernacle and a receptacle were discovered confirming the building's former purpose. The tabernacle, divided into two, served to store the sacred manuscripts and the holy oils used in religious ceremonies. The receptacle, to the left, was used to hold the scriptures.

Also in the Jewish quarter, the first house on Rua do Arçário reveals further history. This was home to the midwife or "quencher" as she was called due to her ability to extinguish or renew life. In the upper window, there are still the granite supports for the lines used to hang out the delivery cloths. Only then would those waiting outside learn what was happening inside.

Heading down the north slope, the stroll inevitably ends in a square pleasantly set off by the Town's fountain. This represented one of the boundaries to the Jewish quarter.

mass is held in the Church of Senhora da Luz (Our Lady of Light) and in the afternoon, the Band tours the town inviting the people over to the celebration where there is the Ramos market and bar.

Throughout Holy Week, the Municipal Council puts on a wide range of activities and special events.

Cuba

Albufeira do Alvito

Characteristics and Services:

Swimming allowed; Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing;

Alvito Dam is located in the hydrographic basin of the river Sado, in the course of the stream of Odivelas. Surrounded by an almost virgin oak grove landscape, it is an attractive leisure space.

Elvas

Padrão de Elvas

Address: Sítio dos Mortais, perto da capela de Santo Amaro

Padrao de Elvas

A monument commemorating the Battle of Elvas, erected on the orders of King Afonso VI (seventeenth century).

Built in white Estremoz marble, the monument comprises a Tuscan column standing on a square base, reached by three steps. A royal crown sits on the capital.

It is classified as a national monument.

Évora

From Praça do Geraldo to the Graça Church

Other informations:

From Praça do Geraldo to the Graça Church; From the square in front of the Sé, head down Rua 5 de Outubro that leads directly onto Praça do Geraldo. On the way, there is a rare surviving piece of the gothic walls of the city: the tower of Selaria.

Defined to the north by a medieval arcade, the Praça do Geraldo can be interpreted as a citizen's forum, enlivened by the pleasant esplanades and the impact of the fine 16th century marble fountain, crowned in bronze. It's said that the eight bronze gargoyles correspond to the number of streets opening onto the square. In the extreme north, Cardinal Henrique ordered the destruction of a Roman a three triumphal arch gateway and had built in its place, the church of Saint Anthony, consecrated in 1563.

Under the clear skies of the Alentejo, leave this central square to discover ancient history as told by the labyrinth of streets. Sharp eyes will pick out the gothic doorways, the Manueline windows or an arcade leading onto the cool of a shaded patio. The very names of the streets tell the story of the city: its personalities (the streets of Vasco da Gama, Mestre Resende,

From Évora's Cathedral to Largo das Portas de Moura

Other informations:

From Évora's Cathedral to Largo das Portas de Moura; Turning the apse of the Sé, head down the Freiria de Cima street looking for the porches and twinned windows that ornament some of the houses.

Continuing along the streets of Cenáculo and Freiria de Baixo, you come across S. Manços street where there is the House of Garcia de Resende (who was royal secretary, poet and writer). The house boasts three beautiful twinned Manueline windows decorated with small columns and Moorish style points.

Further along, in the Portas de Moura square, in addition to the Mudéjar - Manueline veranda of the Cordovil house, the beautiful renaissance fountain draws all eyes. The interesting angle of the Sé can be particularly effectively discerned from this spot.

Close by there is the former University of the Holy Spirit founded in 1559 by Cardinal Henrique for the College of the Company of Jesus.

Since 1973, this has been the central building of the current

Serpa Pinto), its professions (rua dos Alfaiates (tailors), dos Mercadores (traders), the connections with the nobility (rua das Armas do Cardeal (the Cardinal's coat in arms), the communities (Mouraria (Moors), Judiaria (Jews) and even the people's sense of humour (Mal-Barbado (Badly-Bearded), Cicioso (whispering), beco do Beiçudo (blubber lipped dead end).

Should you prefer to stick to a better defined itinerary, leave Praça do Geraldo down rua da República until you come across a small lake on your left and the Church of Our Lady of Graça (Forgiveness), an unusual Mannerist monument. Head rightwards from the lake towards the square 1º de Maio. There you will come across the Church of São Francisco (Saint Francis) one of the best-defined examples of the gothic - Moorish style that characterises so many monuments in the Alentejo. In the Municipal Gardens, there are the remains of the Palaces of São Francisco.

The Roman Temple and the Cathedral

Other informations:

The Roman Temple and the Cathedral;

The starting point on this itinerary is by Roman temple. Dating back to the second century, this is the jewel in Évora's glittering crown.

Many of the elegant columns remain intact rising up to finely decorated Corinthian points.

To the north of the temple, there is a garden that extends to the Roman wall. This is the place for panoramic views out over the huge Alentejan plain.

To the south of the temple, located in the now restored building that used to be the convent of John the Evangelist (15th century), there is the charming surroundings of the Pousada dos Lóios (Lóios Country Hotel). Well worth a visit is the convent's church with its entrance around the side. Built towards the end of the 15th century, the gothic door is an important feature along with the tiled finishings.

The building enclosing the church is the Palace of the Dukes of Cadaval (also known as the Palace of the Five Shields) that used to be the residence of this leading Portuguese family. It was topped by battlements and flanked by two imposing towers and provides a fine example of a noble residence. In the quadrangular tower Fernando, Duke of Bragança, was imprisoned in 1483 accused of conspiring against king João II. He left only for his beheading in the Praça do Geraldo. In the palace, there is also the interesting Museum of the House of the Dukes of Cadaval.

Behind the Pousada (country hotel), the Marqueses de Marialva square is dominated by the imposing structure of the Sé de Évora which contains the Museum of Religious Art in one of its towers.

Over in front, there is the former Palace of the Inquisition, founded in 1536. Over the pediment, there are the tools used by the horrific Inquisition. In Évora alone, over 22,000 people were condemned.

Moving past the Sé, in the Praça Conde Vila Flor, in the Episcopal Palace, there is the Museum of Évora which boasts a valuable art collection.

On the right of the square there is the Casas Pintadas street. On this street, in a house currently home to Jesuit priests, Vasco da Gama, discoverer of the sea route to India, lived between 1519 and 1524.

In the house, there is a small Manueline cloister decorated with frescos depicting mermaids and fantasy animals featuring the imaginative dimension to the voyages of Discovery.

University of Évora, attended by over 8,000 students. In the building, there are the double gallery cloisters. Opening onto the galleries are the rooms still fitted with the antique teaching stands and benches complete with magnificent tiled panels depicting aspects of the various classes taught.

The College Church was well suited to teaching uses as can be seen by the pulpit placed in the very middle of the room and the excellent acoustic conditions. In one of the chapels, there is the great wooden crucifix that is carried at the head of religious processions.

Ferreira do Alentejo

Albufeira de Odivelas

Other informations:

Riverfront leisure zone; picnic area ;

Characteristics and Services:

Motor boats; Swimming allowed; Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing; Bar;

Odivelas Dam

Located in the stream of Odivelas, that flows into the river Sado, Odivelas Dam is a leisure space.

On the banks of the dam, that pertain territorially to the municipality of Alvaro, there is the Markádia Campsite, including a restaurant, canoe hire, paddle boats, windsurfing, horseriding and bicycles.

A riverside beach is located in the municipality of Ferreira do Alentejo, close to the village of Odivelas. The practice of activities is subject to restrictions, and motorised watersports are not permitted.

Mértola

Albufeira da Tapada Grande

Other informations:

Classified as an "accessible beach ", children's playground; amphitheatre; paddle boats and canoes for hire; blue flag in 2005;

Characteristics and Services:

Swimming allowed; Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing; Outdoor parking; Bar;

Accessibility:

Disabled access;

The Tapada Grande Dam is located in the privileged area of the Guadiana Valley Natural Park. It is located in the course of the stream of Geraldo, close to Minas de São Domingos and the village of Corte do Pinto (in the municipality of Mértola).

In former times, the dam supplied mining complex and is currently a recreational site that is highly popular amongst the local residents that includes a pleasant riverside beach.

Moura

Açude de Pedrogão

Characteristics and Services:

Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing;

One of the largest dams in the Baixo Alentejo region, it forms part of the Alqueva Dam undertaking.

The legend of the Moorish maiden Salúquia

Other informations:

The legend of the Moorish maiden Salúquia;

The legend of the moorish maiden Salúquia dates back to the time that the region of Moura was in the hands of the Moors, whilst the Christian kings of the Iberian Peninsula, most notably D. Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal, were doing all they could to reconquer the region for Christianity.

Salúquia, the daughter of the Muslim governor Abu Hassan, was engaged to be married to the young commander of the castle.

Barragem do Alqueva

Other informations:

Boat trips and boats for hire, information panels about the Dam and a tourism office ;

Characteristics and Services:

Motor boats; Waterski;

Alqueva Dam

The largest artificial lake in Europe, whose borders measure over 1000 km and which includes dozens of islands.

Standing atop one of the towers, Salúquia awaited the arrival of her betrothed, who had set forth to fight the Portuguese. However, the Christian forces, who were advancing upon the town and preparing to conquer it, had already ambushed the young Moor and killed him, along with his companions. They then put on their enemy's clothes and tricked those inside the castle into opening the doors and letting them in.

On realising that she had been deceived, the beautiful maiden Salúquia preferred to die than to become the slave and prisoner of the Christians and threw herself from the tower. This legend is said to explain the origin of the town's name: Moura (meaning Moorish maiden).

Odemira

Albufeira de Santa Clara

Santa Clara Dam
Santa Clara Dam is close to the village of Santa Clara-a-Velha, in the course of the river Mira, pertaining to the municipalities of Odemira and Ourique.

Ourique

Albufeira do Monte da Rocha

Monte da Rocha Dam
Monte da Rocha Dam is located in the course of the River Sado, close to the village of Panóias, in the municipality of Ourique, in a zone of oak groves.

Portalegre

Portalegre Carpet Weaving

Other informations:

Portalegre Carpet Weaving;
Portalegre carpet weaving is an expression of the Portuguese creative spirit applied to the textile industry. From its very beginnings, there was innovation in technical traditions including the knot point technique developed by Manuel do Carmo Peixeiro in the early 20th century on a vertical loom invented by Guy Fino.

The Knot point technique used involves the complete interweaving of the thread resulting in a point by point approach featuring an impressive level of detail. The threads are interlinked by a connecting weft that ensures regularity and uniformity thereby avoiding the spaces commonly left by traditional weaving processes when the colour is changed. This technique allows control over the chromatic pattern, clear definition of shape and subtle progression in colour in turn enabling a perfect transposition of a painting or design onto the carpet.

In addition, the loom combines the mechanical advantages of low-heddle looms with the control of high-heddle looms to ensure manual control over weaving through dividing the threads into odds and evens. This itself is characteristic of pedal-operated horizontal looms. The designs are accurately enlarged on squared guidance maps where each individual square corresponds to a point and a colour. It is 5 points per centimetre resulting in total density of 250,000 points per square metre.

Portalegre Carpet Weaving is art in practice becoming an original work of art in itself thanks to the craftsmanship involved. Aware of its qualities, many artists chose this means to reproduce or create their works. These have included Almada Negreiros, Vieira da Silva, Arpad Szenes, Júlio Pomar, Abel Manta, Costa Pinheiro and José de Guimarães, among others.

Image in "Turismo Norte Alentejano - 2001"

Rio Maior

Salinas da Fonte da Bica

Address: Marinhas de Sal - RIO MAIOR

Timetable:

Partially accessible for persons with motor disabilities;
On the slopes of the Serra dos Candeeiros, around 3 kms from Rio Maior, the salt pans are located in a large valley next to the Fonte da Bica, in a place known as Marinhas do Sal. The salt pans cover the ground with a white/grey blanket of geometrically shaped flat strips, forming an unusual landscape in the midst of the mountains.

The extraction of salt in this region has a long history, including references in documents written in 1177. The salty water, whose salt level is seven times stronger than normal sea water, is extracted from rock salt mines in the depths of the mountains - the only rock salt mines still in operation in Portugal and the largest in the Iberian peninsula.

Santarém

Cenotáfio de D. Duarte de Menezes

Amongst the exhibits at the Museum of São João de Alporão, attention is drawn to the tomb of D. Duarte de Menezes, a lieutenant during the reign of D. Afonso V, who was killed defending the Moroccan military stronghold of Alcácer-Seguer, conquered in 1458.

The tomb was commissioned by his widow, D. Isabel de Castro, for the chapel that they had at the Convento de São Francisco. It is a delicate 15th-century work, in the flamboyant Gothic style, following the decorative language of the tomb of the founders of the Monastery of Batalha.

It is said that, as they were unable to find his body, the tomb was used to house just a single tooth belonging to D. Duarte de Menezes, which his widow had in her possession.

Suggested visits

Other informations:

Suggested visits;

One of the best ways of getting to know Santarém is by following one of the thematic tours. Those presented here have taken as their criterion the artistic movements that accompanied the city's social and economic development. If possible, choose the Portas do Sol as the starting point for your tour. This garden provides an excellent view of the surrounding region and gives a wonderful introduction to the city's history.

From Scalabis to Santarém

Other informations:

From Scalabis to Santarém;

The city's name is related to two legends that are now an important part of the local tradition: the legend of the King Abidis and the legend of Santa Iria (Saint Irene).

Legend of the King Abidis

It is said that Ulysses of Ithaca passed through Lusitania and fell in love with Calypso, the daughter of the Visigothic king Gorgoris. As a result of this encounter, an unwanted child was born, Abidis, who was immediately abandoned at the orders of his grandfather.

He was placed in a basket and thrown into the River Tagus. Miraculously, the basket was carried upstream against the current and washed ashore on the beach at Santarém, where it was picked up by a she-wolf, who fed and protected Abidis. After a series of unexpected adventures, the son was finally recognised by his mother Calypso, who made him her legitimate heir, choosing the site of Santarém as the capital of the kingdom. He called it Esca Abidis (meaning the food of Abidis), which was corrupted popularly to form the name Scalabis. For the Romans, the town was known as Scalabicastrum.

Even today, this original name has continued into the Portuguese language as the name for the city's inhabitants, who are known as "escalabitanos".

Legend of Santa Iria

At the end of the 7th century, the town was given the name of "Santa Irena".

This name was later adopted by the Moors as Chanterein or Chantarim, which was then altered to form the name of

Roman Santarém

- Roman Temple of Scalabis

Gothic Santarém

- Fonte das Figueiras
- Igreja de Santa Clara
- Convento de São Francisco
- Santarém Archaeological Museum / Igreja de São João de Alporão
- Igreja da Graça
- Igreja de Santa Cruz da Ribeira
- Torre das Cabaças / Time Museum

Manueline and Renaissance Santarém

- Igreja de Santa Maria de Marvila
- Igreja do Santo Estevão or Church of the Holy Miracle

Mannerist Santarém

- Igreja da Misericórdia de Santarém
- Seminário Patriarcal - Antigo Colégio dos Jesuítas
- Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Piedade
- Igreja de Hospital de Jesus Cristo

Santarém.

This fact is said to be due to the story of Santa Iria (Saint Irene). Iria was a devout nun at the Benedictine convent of Nabância (Tomar). Having fallen victim to a certain passion for her spiritual guide, the monk Remígio, she was obliged to drink a tisane, which caused her belly to swell up, a fact that was noted by everybody and taken as a sign that she was pregnant. But there was a young pagan who had also become interested in Iria. Unable to have his loved one, he ordered her to be killed as she was praying by the banks of the River Nabão, a tributary of the River Tagus.

Although the crime was discovered and the criminals repented, they did not manage to find the martyr's body, which was carried away by the river.

On visiting Santarém in 1324, Queen Isabel was informed in visions of the exact spot where the body of Santa Iria had been washed ashore, having been carried by the River Nabão to the banks of the River Tagus at the foot of the city.

When her husband, the king D. Dinis, heard of this fact, he immediately decided to mark the place of burial with a monument.

In 1644, the Council Senate placed a stone sculpture on top of this monument in homage to the saint.

Due to its location, a hydrometer was added to the monument to record the river's water levels.

Algarve

Castro Marim

Barragem de Odeleite

Address: OdeleiteCastro Marim

Characteristics and Services:

Swimming allowed; Rowing boats; Sailing boats;

Odeleite Dam, the river of the Blue Dragon

Located in the municipality of **Castro Marim in the Algarve**, the Odeleite Dam was built on the River Odeleite, which rises in the uplands of the Serra do Caldeirão and flows into the Rio Guadiana.

An aerial photograph showed that the reservoir is shaped like a blue dragon, a symbol of power, strength and good luck in Chinese culture, as well as being an emblem that was traditionally used by the emperors throughout history. This fact has attracted the attention of many visitors, who started to refer to it as the "River of the Blue Dragon".

Close to the dam, the small village of **Odeleite** has several points of interest such as the Main Church, built in 1534, some archaeological remains from the Roman era, and a number of watermills and windmills that are typical of this part of the Algarve. The natural heritage and outdoor activities such as walking and cycling, boat trips and other water sports are also good reasons to visit the region.

Lagos

Estátua de El-Rei D. Sebastião

Address: Lagos

Standing in Praça Gil Eanes, this statue by João Cutileiro has been described by the art historian José Augusto França as one of the most beautiful examples of sculpture to be found to the south of the River Tagus.

Inaugurated in 1972, it perpetuates the memory of Sebastian I, the king who raised Lagos to the category of a city in 1573 and later set sail from here in 1578 in a failed attempt to conquer Alcácer Quibir, in what turned out to be a fatal military expedition to Morocco. Two years after this defeat, King Philip II of Spain took over the Portuguese Crown and brought about the dynastic union that was to last until 1640.

The disappearance of King Sebastian led to the formation of the "Myth of Sebastianism", which has endured in the memory of the people, being perpetuated in Portuguese literature and philosophy until the 20th century. The people refused to accept the king's tragic and fatal destiny and believed that one day he could come back to them, walking towards them out of the fog.

Loulé

Querença

Other informations:

Querença;

The village of Querença, in the hinterland of the Algarvian mountains, is one of the most typical villages in the Algarve, with white houses, decorated chimneys and clear signs of an Arab architectural influence.

Querença has been able to establish suitable conditions for the development of agro tourism by publicising the traditional characteristics of the rural area, as a factor to attract tourism. The village of Querença is now distinguished as a privileged tourism area, that offers an attractive alternative to coastal zones in the Algarve.

Renowned for its rich traditional gastronomy conserved by local restaurants in as genuine a manner as possible, the village also distils the famous arbutus-berry brandy and produces a very popular variety of chouriço sausage, in addition to other traditional products.

Portimão

Museu de Portimão vence prémio DASA

São Brás de Alportel

Festa das Tochas Floridas

Other informations:

Festa das Tochas Floridas;

Easter in São Brás de Alportel

The torches, which were formerly long candles, are now poles festooned with flowers. They are carried by men who gather together in two wings during the procession, which marks the Resurrection of Christ, celebrated on Easter Sunday in São Brás de Alportel.

The Alleluia Festival begins at 10 o'clock in the morning, and goes round the town to the sound of the tones "He is risen as He has said - Alleluia, Alleluia!". The townspeople turn out in force and join in the deep, deafening chant, which climaxes in the refrain "Alleluia!".

The Festival of Sounds and Tastes begins at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in the churchyard of the Parish Church, where the torches and the most traditional and artistic quilts receive prizes during a cultural evening that includes music and poetry.

This is a hallowed day for all of the townspeople, and a festival where the religious and the pagan are harmoniously combined. The atmosphere is one of joy and a lot of colour. The air is scented by the branches of lavender, rosemary and wild flowers that decorate the torches, and the town is decorated with the red and white quilts that hang in the windows.

During the day they eat the traditional and unique almonds and pine nuts, which have been homemade by the same family in São Brás de Alportel for more than a century.

Azores

Ilha Terceira

Furna D'água

Address: Cabrito - Posto Santo Ilha Terceira

Timetable:

Visits must be booked in advance.;

Characteristics and Services:

Length: 560m; Signposted routes; Guided Tours;

The Gruta D'água, on Terceira island, is a cave of volcanic origin. Inside, there are abundant springs of water and it is possible to admire a whole range of lava stalactites.

Monumento Natural Regional do Algar do Carvão

Address: Ilha Terceira

Timetable:

24th April -31st May: 3am - 5pm 1st June - 30th September:

14h45 - 17h45 1st October - 17th October: 15h00 - 17h30;

Characteristics and Services:

Altitude: 640m; Length: 120x20m; Signposted routes; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Bar;

Gruta do Natal

Address: Picos Gordos Reserva Florestal Natural da Serra de Santa Bárbara - Ilha Terceira

Timetable:

1st June - 30th September: 3pm - 5:30pm;

Characteristics and Services:

Length: 697m; Signposted routes; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Bar;

The Gruta do Natal on Terceira island is considered ideal for enjoying a first contact with the different lava features that are to be found in the Azores, making it possible to enjoy the beauty and novelty that this type of natural phenomenon can provide.

During the Christmas season, the cave takes on a certain social importance for the community, for, whenever possible, the Christmas mass is held here. This explains the origin of its name (Gruta do Natal = Christmas Grotto).

Algar do Carvão is situated in the central area of Terceira island, at an altitude of roughly 550 metres.

Previously forming part of a Natural Geological Reserve, the area of Algar do Carvão (roughly 40.5 hectares) was recently reclassified as a "Regional Natural Monument" because of its volcanic peculiarities and its importance in environmental terms.

The mouth of the cave (17m x 27m) opens onto a vertical channel with a drop of roughly 45 metres. After a ramp, formed by a gravitational deposit, there is another vertical drop ending in a lake of clear water, at a depth of roughly 80 metres. The lake is fed by rainwater and has a maximum depth of roughly 15 metres, being almost completely dry in the summer in those years when there is little rainfall.

The complex geological and biochemical phenomena occurring in the hydrogeological system that characterises Algar do Carvão have led over the years to the formation of exuberant and rare stalactites and stalagmites of amorphous silica, which are amongst the most beautiful in this cave and in the various volcanic cavities of the Azores.

Ilha da Graciosa

Furna do Enxofre

Address: Ilha Graciosa

Characteristics and Services:

Length: 194m; Signposted routes; Outdoor parking; Bar;
The Furna do Enxofre, situated in the south-eastern part of the Caldeira da Ilha Graciosa, is an impressive lava cave, whose main feature is its perfect dome-shaped roof. The inside of the cave is reached via a tower roughly 37 metres high and containing a spiral staircase with 183 steps.

It was explored in the nineteenth century by such illustrious visitors as Prince Albert of Monaco and the naturalists Fouqué and Hartung, and is considered unique in the international panorama of volcanism and speleology. The cave's origin is associated with an important period of effusive intrac crater activity of the Hawaiian type.

Inside, besides a lake of cold water, there is an important degasification field consisting of a mud pot and diffuse gaseous emanations of carbon dioxide, which are released imperceptibly in various areas of the cave floor.

Ilha de São Miguel

Monumento Natural Regional da Gruta do Carvão

Address: Rua de Lisboa - Ponta Delgada - Ilha de São Miguel

Timetable:

Visits must be booked in advance.;

Characteristics and Services:

Length: 700m; Guided Tours;

The natural wealth of the Gruta do Carvão lies in its great variety of geological aspects, structures and phenomena that are typically caused by volcanic activity. These features include structures known as "gas bubbles", corresponding to sectors of the cave wall that "burst" under the action of the accumulated gases, or the presence of cracks in the walls and ceiling, resulting from the cooling of the lava flow.

Countless stalactites can be seen on the ceiling of the cave: some are conical in shape with a smooth surface, resulting from the solidification of drops of lava; others are irregular in shape, with a whitish colour and very fragile, resulting from phenomena caused by the alteration and sedimentation of the water that infiltrated into the cave. This water also caused the oxidisation of the basalt rocks that form the Gruta do Carvão, giving them red and orange tones. As in other caves in the Azores and on the island of São Miguel, what we see here is clear evidence of the different levels of lava that flowed through the inside of the cave at various times in the past.

The presence of countless volcanic micro-structures prove the importance of the Gruta do Carvão for our knowledge and interpretation of basalt volcanism on the island of São Miguel.

Ilha do Pico

Monumento Natural Regional da Gruta das Torres

Address: Criação Velha Madalena - Ilha do Pico

Timetable:

May and October - Weekend: 2:30pm - 5:30pm June and September: 2:30pm - 5:30pm; July and August: 10am - 12pm / 2:30pm - 5:30pm;

Other informations:

Access for persons with disabilities in the visitor's centre;

Characteristics and Services:

Altitude: 295m; Length: 5140m; Signposted routes; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Temperature: 15°C;

The Gruta das Torres, located on the island of Pico at an altitude of 285 metres, is the largest lava tunnel known to exist in the Azores, with a total length of roughly 5150 metres and a maximum height of 15 metres.

It consists of a large main tunnel and several secondary tunnels above and to the sides, which, despite being smaller in size, have a wide range of geological structures.

The interior is rich in geological formations, resulting in the presence of various types of lava stalactites and stalagmites, lateral "side-benches", lava balls, striated walls and long rope-shaped strings of lava. One of the most interesting aspects is the floor of the cave which presents a variety of forms, such as a fine, smooth crust under which the lava continued to flow, taking on the form of a rope or a rough, prickly and irregular surface, with pointed protuberances.

It should be noted that the architectural project for the Visitors' Support Centre was selected for the "European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture Mies van der Rohe Award 2007", organised by the European Union, in partnership with the Mies van der Rohe Foundation in Barcelona.

The Centre's innovative project reproduces the image of the local building systems used in the livestock pens found in the landscape of Pico island, classified as a World Heritage zone. One should also note the similarity of the texture of the finishing, the black hue and the vitrified lava found within the Grotto. In order to minimise the impact on the soil, the structure has been mounted on a rail.

Centro de Portugal

Aveiro

Aveiro - On the left bank of the Canal Central

Other informations:

Aveiro - On the left bank of the Canal Central; In Rua João Mendonça, by the Canal Central, there are three buildings with interesting Art Nouveau façades. Along this canal, which was once the city's main trading artery, there now glide the brightly-coloured prows of the moliceiros, to the great delight of tourists.

In the angle formed by the Canal Central and the Canal das Pirâmides is the Rossio, a spacious garden area, lined with palm-trees and vaguely reminiscent of the Eastern Mediterranean, with occasional Art Nouveau details.

At the intersection with the Canal de São Roque, pass along the Cais das Falcoeirias and continue on to the Cais dos Mercantéis, strolling through the picturesque fishermen's quarter. Preferably, you should take this walk in the early morning when the fish market is busily and colourfully alive with people selling the fish caught during the night. In this area, you can also visit the capela de S. Gonçalinho, a small 18th-century chapel dedicated to this match-making saint, to whom, each year, the city's inhabitants devote one of their liveliest festivals.

Returning to the Canal Central, you have two choices: you can either cross the canal over the elegant Ponte dos Arcos to the Right Bank, or walk up Avenida Dr. Lourenço Peixinho. If you take the latter choice, make sure to visit the railway station at the top of the avenue, a beautiful building covered with panels of azulejos depicting regional motifs. We also recommend a visit to the Igreja do Carmo (in the street with the same name) and the chapels of Nossa Senhora da Alegria and Senhor das Barrocas, one of the most interesting monuments in Aveiro, which can be reached along Rua Luís de Carvalho.

Images: Courtesy of Miguel Lacerda

Costa Nova

Other informations:

Costa Nova; In the mid-19th century, this became a very popular beach, largely through the influence of the tribune and politician José Estevão, who built his own palheiro here (recognisable by its blue and brown stripes). It was in this house that he met with intellectuals and politicians, including the writer Eça de Queiroz.

Palheiros are the traditional houses built in this coastal region of Portugal, which provided shelter for colonies of fishermen, as well as for the machinery and animals that were used to haul the fishing boats onto the beach. Initially, they were built on stakes to prevent the accumulation of sand blown there from the nearby dunes.

Towards the end of the 19th century when it became fashionable to bathe in the sea, the local fishermen began to rent out their palheiros in the summer season and the idea then arose to paint the outside panels of these wooden houses in bright colours. In this way, they are reminiscent of the polychrome moliceiros, the boats used for harvesting seaweed on the Ria de Aveiro, all of which gives this coastline a brightly-coloured and quite unique appearance.

Aveiro - On the right bank of the Canal Central

Other informations:

Aveiro - On the right bank of the Canal Central; Starting in Praça Luís Cipriano, walk along Rua de Coimbra and into the Praça da República, framed by the buildings of the Paços do Concelho (the 18th-century town hall). The city's coat of arms can be seen on the pediment, surmounted by a bell-tower.

Other interesting features are the Teatro Aveirense (1947) and the extremely beautiful and classical portico of the Igreja da Misericórdia. The figure standing on a pedestal here is a representation of the great tribune, José Estevão (1809-1862), in the praying position that was attributed to him by the sculptor, Simões de Almeida.

Continue along the Rua dos Combatentes da Grande Guerra (the former Rua Direita), which has a very interesting layout of buildings and serves as an important connecting artery in Aveiro's urban structure, leading to Praça Marquês de Pombal. Here, the most striking features are the house of Santa Zita, with its exceptional azulejos, the Igreja das Carmelitas and the palace of the Viscondes Almeidinha, rebuilt after a violent fire in the 1940s.

In Avenida Santa Joana Princesa, the Museu de Aveiro occupies part of the buildings attached to the Convento de Jesus. It has a number of exceptionally interesting and valuable pieces, including the magnificent tomb of Princess Joana. Further on is the Igreja de São Domingos, the see of the diocese of Aveiro. Continuing along Avenida Artur Ravara, you will come to the Parque do Infante D. Pedro, a pleasant garden with an artificial lake, where boats can be hired. You can also walk around its network of paths and visit the Hunting and Fishing Museum. Close to the park is Aveiro University, with a number of buildings that were designed by some of the most prestigious contemporary Portuguese architects.

Image: Courtesy of Miguel Lacerda

Ria de Aveiro

Other informations:

Ria de Aveiro

The diversity of habitats contained within the Ria is the reason for its enormous ecological wealth. The water provides a habitat for a wide variety of fish. Full of countless varieties of seaweed, it is also an important source of food for certain birds. The uniform-looking marshland is home to a profuse biological life. Intersected by canals and full of islands, it has its own quite characteristic appearance.

Crustaceans and molluscs can be found in the silt and mud deposits revealed at low tide, whilst countless birds are to be seen concentrated on the salt flats. In the farmland surrounding much of the lagoon area, where rice and corn are grown, reeds and rushes, alders, poplars and willows provide shelter for a sizeable bird population. Ponds and ditches are inhabited by numerous frogs and toads, whilst the less conspicuous watercourses are inhabited by otters.

Besides providing an important natural barrier holding back the sea's advance, the sand dunes are also the home to a number of

specific plant communities.

Nowadays, the Ria de Aveiro extends from Ovar to Mira. It is very shallow and there are several watercourses that flow into it, most notably the River Vouga. It is separated from the sea by a long line of sand dunes, of varying width, interrupted only by an artificial bar built in the 19th century. The delta has four main arms - Ovar, Murtosa, Vagos and Mira - and the lagoon has several islets dotted around it.

Castelo Branco

Castelo Branco Embroidery

Other informations:

Castelo Branco Embroidery;

Known to have been in production between the 17th and 19th centuries, the first reference to this local style was made by Jaime Lopes Dias, at the 4th Beirão Congress held in Castelo Branco in 1931. He called for greater recognition of this form of artistic expression as part of the regional heritage. In 1976, the Atelier-School of Regional Embroidery was set up in the Francisco Tavares Proença Júnior Museum. The centre continues to operate and is dedicated to preserving, producing, restoring and promoting this style.

The embroidery is done in silk thread on linen using various styles of stitch but especially the defining slack stitch, also known as the Castelo Branco stitch. There is no limit to the range of colours although there are monochromatic examples where the design takes on greater prominence. In general terms, Castelo Branco Embroidery can be divided into two styles: the popular, with more obvious designs, and the erudite, more elaborate and complex and attributed to the upper, better educated classes. Some designs reflect influences brought back from the Orient on the Portuguese voyages of exploration. However, there are also references to daily life, the local fauna and flora or even just erudite artistic figures appropriate to the respective periods and taken from Renaissance and Baroque imagery.

In some parts of the Castelo Branco district, they are still part of the bride's trousseau shown on her wedding day when the bride and groom open up their homes to the guests.

Coimbra

Coimbra - Percurso da Alta da Cidade (Tour of the Upper Town)

Other informations:

Coimbra - Percurso da Alta da Cidade (Tour of the Upper Town); This is the oldest part of the city, composed of steep, narrow streets leading to the top of the hill where the city was born and where the lively student life is now the most dominant feature.

Starting in Rua Ferreira Borges, the Arco de Almedina marks the edge of the old city, where the students lived, as they were not allowed to reside outside the walls, except at the monasteries on the banks of the River Mondego, from where certain teachers came.

If you climb the steps of Rua de Quebra Costas and turn left, you will immediately find the arch and the Palácio Sub Ripas, a 16th-century mansion with a Renaissance façade, designed by the workshop of Jean de Rouen, which, according to tradition, was situated quite close by. A little further on, built upon the

Coimbra - Percurso da Baixa Citadina (Tour of the Lower Town)

Other informations:

Coimbra - Percurso da Baixa Citadina (Tour of the Lower Town); The Lower Town is the name used to refer to that part of Coimbra built outside the mediaeval walls, where some religious and military orders were initially established, close to the natural frontier formed by the River Mondego.

Anyone arriving in Coimbra is immediately welcomed by the Largo da Portagem, in front of the Santa Clara bridge, which crosses over the River Mondego and establishes the connection with the main road leading to either Lisbon or Porto. The tourist information office is on the left in the wide Avenida Emídio Navarro.

This tour begins with a walk along the Rua Ferreira Borges, one of the main streets in the city, accompanying the outer

foundations of the mediaeval wall, stands the Torre do Anto, reminding us of the Portuguese poet António Nobre (1867-1900), who lived here when he was a student in Coimbra.

Halfway up the hill, you can enjoy the delightful view over the city that almost certainly inspired some of his poems. The tower now houses an art gallery and craft shop. By walking along Rua dos Coutinhos, you will reach the square where the Sé Velha recounts its long history from the time of the foundation of the Portuguese nationality.

After Rua Borges Carneiro, the church of São João de Almedina announces itself as another place that you must stop and visit. Nowadays, this church is part of the Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, the city's most important museum. Make sure that you go inside the building and admire the view from the Renaissance balcony. Notice the steep, narrow streets around you, for it is here that the students have their residences, living in houses known as Repúblicas, each house establishing its own rules and keeping alive the academic spirit.

Leaving the museum, you will find the Igreja de São Salvador on your right, a chance to appreciate yet another Renaissance work of art by Jean de Rouen. The street in which it is situated, Couraça dos Apóstolos, marks the place where the Society of Jesus installed itself in order to build the church that was to become the Sé Nova (New Cathedral).

Further ahead is an imposing entrance, the Porta Férrea or Iron Gate, inviting you to enter into the institution that has been responsible for much of Coimbra's history, the University. This is the place that marks the end of his tour.

Coimbra - Songs and Traditions

Other informations:

Coimbra - Songs and Traditions;

With the provocative and challenging spirit that has always been the hallmark of young people from all epochs, the students of Coimbra have inherited the unique traditions that are handed down from generation to generation.

Many of the students live together in residences known as Repúblicas, sometimes with links to the places where the students were born.

Their origin dates back to a royal charter issued by Dom Dinis in 1309, which promoted the building of houses in the area of Almedina destined for the use of students.

Life in the Repúblicas is governed by democratically imposed rules, with all decisions being taken unanimously and with all members being made responsible for the running of the house. Names such as "República do Baco" (the Republic of Bacchus), "República dos Kágados" (the Republic of the Tortoises), "Palácio da Loucura" (the Palace of Madness), "Ninho dos Matulões" (the Nest of the Hunks) illustrate the sense of humour of their occupants, reflecting a period in their lives that will always be fondly remembered.

At the beginning of the academic year (normally between 24 and 31 October) the Latadas are held. These are parades in which the freshmen (first-year students) also take part, walking through the streets of Coimbra and dragging along the ground behind them tins that are tied together with wire and which make an enormously loud noise. The procession ends by the banks of the River Mondego, where the "godfathers" baptise their chosen fresher with the use of a chamber pot. The latadas, which originated in the 19th century, were first organised by the students from the Faculties of Law and

perimeter of the old part of the city, the Upper Town. Standing at the crossroads marking the intersection of Praça do Comércio with Rua Visconde da Luz, the Igreja de Santiago is one of the earliest buildings in this area, as can be seen by its robust mediaeval appearance, with Romanesque decorations on the portals.

From here, carry straight on into Praça 8 de Maio, an administrative centre, where the Town Hall stands. On your right, you will not fail to notice the Mosteiro de Santa Cruz, a most important religious reference in the History of Portuguese Art, for it was here that kings and princes were educated and where the most important Renaissance artists worked. Here, you will also find the tombs of the first Portuguese kings, Dom Afonso Henriques, who was born in Coimbra, and his successor, Dom Sancho I.

Next, make your way through the area between Rua da Sofia and Praça do Comércio, enjoying the picturesque narrow streets of the lower town with their old names (Rua Velha (Old Street), Rua da Fornalhinha (the Street of the Small Furnace), Largo do Poço (the Square of the Well), amongst others) or retrace your steps to the Arco de Almedina in Rua Ferreira Borges and enter the Upper Town.

Fado ou Canção de Coimbra (Fado or the song of Coimbra)

Other informations:

Fado ou Canção de Coimbra (Fado or the song of Coimbra); Some say that the Fado originated in the melodies imported by Brazilian students who, from 1860 onwards, came to Coimbra to study; others say that this form of song was brought here by students from Lisbon and that the university city made it sound different and gave it an individual flavour; yet others still connect its origin to the love songs and other tunes sung by the troubadours from Provence in the Middle Ages, which were brought to Portugal by the court of knights and minstrels who accompanied the weddings of princes and princesses.

Whatever its origin, however, even those who do not speak Portuguese cannot help being overcome by the deep feelings inspired by the music's melody. It

is normally associated with the male voice and its greatest exponents in the second half of the twentieth century were Adriano Correia de Oliveira, António Bernardino, Fernando Machado Soares, José Afonso and Luís Góis, amongst many others, who gave Portuguese music a new dimension of universality and fraternity.

Accompanied by the melancholic chords of the Portuguese guitar, this type music has also been blessed with two quite exceptional instrumentalists: Artur Paredes and his son Carlos Paredes.

The Fado de Coimbra is played and sung by various groups who have helped to make it better known in all the continents of the world, disseminating the dream-like and nostalgic temperament of the Portuguese soul, which the Fado transmits so wonderfully well through the melody and poetry of its words.

Mosteiro de Santa Cruz - The façade, the pulpit and the tombs of the kings

Other informations:

Mosteiro de Santa Cruz - The façade, the pulpit and the tombs of the kings;

Before entering, note the exuberance and lightness of the statues decorating the portico, the work of the great master

Theology, who used to end the academic year earlier than the students of other faculties and made this tremendous noise in order to disturb them just as they were getting ready to take their exams.

Student life in Coimbra includes a wide range of Praxes (traditional ordeals) designed to test the powers of resistance of the freshmen. One of the places where the rituals of these academic tests were carried out, always being directed at those just starting their courses, was the Porta Férrea. The veteran students formed two columns in the corridor between the two porticoes and lay in wait for the freshmen, shouting at them, pushing them and kicking them on the shins. Another of the customs peculiar to Coimbra was the Tourada (literally meaning "bullfight"), a noisy demonstration made by the students and directed against new teachers lecturing at the University for the first time.

At the end of the academic year, the Queima das Fitas (literally the "burning of the ribbons") is held. Final-year students symbolically hand over their brief-cases to those students who will themselves be completing their courses the following year, whilst the traditional academic costume (cloak and gown) is torn to shreds, in a symbolic gesture that marks the end of academic life. This is followed by a brightly-coloured procession of allegorical floats, in which there is no shortage of ironic references to the University masters.

As different collective forms of artistic expression, mention should also be made of the Orfeão de Coimbra, the famous choral group founded in 1880 by João Arroio, which still exists today, performing in many different countries, and the Fado or Canção de Coimbra.

Mosteiro de Santa Cruz - The Cloisters of Silence and the Sacristy

Other informations:

Mosteiro de Santa Cruz - The Cloisters of Silence and the Sacristy;

With a square ground plan, the arches of these cloisters present a beautiful decoration of laurel leaves carved out of stone. They were designed by Marcos Pires and built in the first quarter of the 16th century. On the walls, visitors should notice the three limestone low reliefs: Ecce Homo, the Burial of Our Lord and the Road to Calvary, carved with great artistic sensitivity and skill.

Opening onto the cloisters is the Chapter House, lined with 16th-century azulejos. In the Capela de Cristo, attention is also drawn to two elegant Renaissance tombs, belonging to two of the monastery's priors, both designed by the same Marcos Pires.

In 1530, the Claustro da Manga was added (these cloisters have now almost completely disappeared and are entered from outside the building in Rua Olímpio Nicolau). According to tradition, the plans for the cloisters were drawn by the king Dom João III on his sleeve (manga in Portuguese - hence the name) of his own cloak. In the centre is a beautiful templet surrounded by water tanks, whose structure is the work of the Norman artist Jean de Rouen.

In the sacristy, we find ourselves enveloped in a very genuine Mannerist atmosphere transmitted by the elegant columns that support a wooden ceiling, polychrome azulejos, beautiful openings for the light and rich-looking 17th-century chests of drawers for religious vestments.

Above all, the attention of visitors is drawn to the 16th-century paintings from the Portuguese School, the works of Cristóvão de Figueiredo and Gaspar Vaz, where, amongst others, religious

builders Diogo de Castilho and Nicolau de Chanterenne, contrasting with the austere Romanesque spirit of the two solid-looking towers that frame the door.

In the interior, Diogo Boitaca maintained the Romanesque structure of the single nave, raising the height of the church through a new vaulted ceiling with delicate ribbing and rebuilding the chancel. It takes time to observe the beautiful pulpit, a jewel carved out of Ançã stone by the master builder Jean de Rouen, around 1520, where the figures of St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Clement, doctors of the Church, are to be found.

The chancel houses the tombs of the founder of Portugal, Dom Afonso Henriques, and his son, Dom Sancho I. Through a decision of Dom Manuel I, the austere mediaeval boxes in which they had been laid to rest were replaced by these tombs in the 16th century. Through the grandiose design of the arched niches of the tombs, through the enchanting figures that decorate them and, above all, through the admirable carving of the recumbent statues of the kings clothed in their Iberian battle dress, these have come to be regarded as masterpieces amongst Renaissance statues in Portugal and Europe, the work of the eminent master builder Nicolau de Chanterenne.

themes are depicted with great dramatic effect: Ecce Homo, the Calvary, the Virgin Mary and the Women Saints, Pentecost (this latter work being the work of the great Portuguese artist Grão Vasco).

University of Coimbra - Private Examinations Hall

Other informations:

University of Coimbra - Private Examinations Hall;
This room was remodelled in 1701 by José Cardoso, the master builder in charge of the works at the University, and by José Ferreira de Araújo, who painted the ceiling with exuberant decorative features.

On the walls we can see the portraits of the former rectors, the ones who lived before the rebuilding work undertaken by António Simões.

Covilhã

Covilhã - Land of Discoverers

Other informations:

Covilhã - Land of Discoverers;
Despite being inland and without a port, the city of Covilhã was the birthplace of important men who became famous for discovering new worlds in the 16th century.

Prince Henry the Navigator - Lord of Covilhã, received the title from his father, King Dom João I, after his conquest of Ceuta in 1415, which marked the beginning of the era of the Portuguese Discoveries. It was followed by Madeira (1419-1420), the military expeditions to the Canary Islands (1424) and the rediscovery of the Azores (1427). Under the Prince's command, Gil Eanes rounded Cape Bojador in 1434 and reached the Rio de Ouro (river of gold) in 1436. In 1440 he was appointed governor of the frontier district of Beira, which included the whole of the Serra da Estrela region. In 1460, the year of his death, Portuguese mariners reached the Cape Verde Islands and Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa.

Pedro Álvares Cabral - the Discoverer of Brazil, was born in the nearby town of Belmonte, 20 kilometres away, but his family's estates extended to Covilhã. In 1500 he led the fleet of 13 ships on what was intended to be the second voyage to India, but instead reached the coast of Bahia in Brazil.

Pêro da Covilhã - Born in Covilhã. Following King Dom João II's orders, he was the first major explorer of the coasts of Arabia, India and East Africa. His information was extremely useful for Vasco da Gama's discovery of the sea route to India.

Afonso de Paiva - Born in Covilhã, he went on voyages with Pêro da Covilhã, most notably exploring the coast of Africa and searching for Prester John.

Master Joseph Vizinho - Dom João II's cosmographer and physician, born into Covilhã's Jewish community. Mentioned by Christopher Columbus, his knowledge of astronomical navigation was crucial in introducing latitude to navigational charts. This discovery contributed to Portugal's leading position in naval navigation.

Rui Faleiro - Cosmographer, born in Covilhã in the late 15th century, he was a key member of Ferdinand Magellan's (Fernão de Magalhães) voyage round the world. His greatest discovery was the measurement of longitude, which enabled mariners to find their position at sea.

Covilhã's Old Jewish Quarter (Judaiaria)

Other informations:

Covilhã's Old Jewish Quarter (Judaiaria);
The old Jewish Quarter used to be demarcated by what are now the Rua das Flores, Rua do Ginásio Clube, Rua da Alegria, Beco da Alegria and Travessa da Alegria, making up a self-contained area within the medieval city walls.

The narrow, winding streets follow the slope of the hill, blending into the terrain and the city walls.

The houses follow the medieval pattern, with 2 or 3 floors, the ground floor being used as a shop and the upper ones as living quarters.

The most important decorative features are two Manueline windows, one at Rua das Flores 29 and the other at Rua do Ginásio Clube 39.

Archaeological data shows that the Synagogue, the centre of knowledge in Jewish communities, was in the Rua das Flores.

Francisco Faleiro - brother of Rui, also a cosmographer. In 1535 he produced the "Treatise on the World and on the Art of Navigating", one of the earliest works about the study of the phenomena of the earth's magnetism.

Ponte Pedonal da Covilhã

Website: <http://www.cm-covilha.pt>

The Footbridge in Covilhã One of the most recent works of modern architecture in Covilhã is the footbridge over the Ribeira da Carpinteira, designed by João Luís Carrilho da Graça. This has helped to make the city one of "the World's Coolest Design Destinations", a distinction awarded by the magazine "Travel & Leisure".

Its wavy, segmented lines were the solution adopted by the Portuguese architect to afford pedestrians access to one of the steepest areas in Covilhã. Besides making it easier to cross to the other side of the valley, it also provides an excellent vantage point for viewing the whole region, with the Serra da Estrela on one side and the vast open countryside of Cova da Beira, on the other.

Built in reinforced concrete, the footbridge was opened in 2009 and, at a height of 52 metres, is one of the highest in the country. Measuring 220 metres long and 4.4 metres wide, it was built to take pedestrians across the valley of the Ribeira da Carpinteira.

Carrilho da Graça is an internationally renowned Portuguese architect, and his other notable works include the adaptations that he made at the Flor da Rosa Monastery, in Crato, the Museu do Oriente, the Museum in the São Jorge Castle and the Cruise Terminal, all in Lisbon, as well as the Convento de São Francisco, in Coimbra.

Fátima

Casas dos Pastorinhos

Address: Aljustrel - FÁTIMA

Other informations:

Partially accessible for persons with motor disabilities;
The three shepherd children to whom Our Lady appeared - Lúcia and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta - were born in the small village of Aljustrel, around 2 kms from the sanctuary of Fátima.

The single-storey cottages formerly inhabited by the little shepherds are very similar in terms of architecture and simplicity and are open to the general public. The house inhabited by the brother and sister, Jacinta and Francisco was built in 1888 and is located around 200 m from the house of their cousin, Lúcia, built in 1885. The House-Museum of Aljustrel is located next to the latter, displaying agricultural implements, cooking utensils, clothes and furniture, in order to demonstrate the everyday lives of local mountain dwellers in the early 20th century.

Pilgrimages to Fátima

Other informations:

Grutas da Moeda

Address: Largo das Grutas da Moeda 2495-028 SÃO MAMEDE (Fátima)

Timetable:

October/March - 09h00/17h00 April/June - 09h00/18h00
July/September - 09h00/19h00 ;

Other informations:

Free transportation in touristical bus from Fátima/Grutas/Fátima

Call for free 800 20 56 18.;

Characteristics and Services:

Pilgrimages to Fátima;

The Sanctuary of Fátima annually welcomes hundred of thousands of pilgrims and tourists. Many come to participate in the celebrations that commemorate the apparitions of Our Lady to the three witness of Fátima.

In the Fátima calendar, the dates May 13th (the first apparition) and October 13th mean a rise in the numbers visiting the Sanctuary - built on the site of the first apparition - and the places where the three children lived in Aljustrel, a village located around two kilometres away.

In Aljustrel, there is a religious route tracing the spots where Lúcia de Jesus, aged 10, and cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, aged nine and seven respectively, declared they saw the Angel of Our Lady of Fátima.

Between April and October 1916, the three children bore witness that they saw the Angel on three occasions with them being invited to join in prayer and penitence.

In May 1917, the children were tending a small flock of sheep in Cova da Iria, within the parish of Fátima, in the council of Vila Nova de Ourém. Around mid-day, after saying the rosary as was their custom, they set about building a small construction out of loose stones on the spot where there now is the Basilica. Suddenly, they saw a brilliant light and above a small holm-oak tree (where the Chapel of the Apparitions now is) appeared a «Lady more brilliant than the Sun». The Lady told the three shepherds that much prayer was required and invited them to return to Cova da Iria at the same time on the 13th of each of the five following months.

The children did just that and on the 13th of June, July, September and October, the Lady again appeared before them and talked to them.

On 19th August, there was an apparition at Valinhos, some 500 metres from Aljustrel, as, on that 13th, the children had been taken by the Council Administrator to Vila Nova de Ourém.

For the final apparition, on 13th October, around 70,000 people were in attendance, the Lady told them she was the «Lady of the Rosary» and that they were to build a chapel there in Her honour.

After the apparition, all those observed the miracle, promised to the three children in July and September: the sun, resembling a silver disc, could be looked upon without difficulty. It then began rotating, taking the form of a wheel of fire, seeming to disappear into the earth.

Later, in Spain, Lúcia, who joined the order of Saint Dorothy, experienced a further three visions of Our Lady (10th December 1925, 15th February 1926 and during the night of 13th to 14th June 1929).

The vision called for the five first Saturdays to be devoted to the conversion of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

This final request was part of the «Three Secrets of Fátima» - a set of revelations made to Lúcia by Our Lady. Lúcia later wrote to Pope Pius XIIth to inform him of what had been revealed to her.

On 13th October 1930, the Bishop of Leiria gave the seal of church approval to the apparitions, officially authorising worship of Our Lady of Fátima, declaring it «Divine Providence».

13th May 2000, Pope John Paul II visited Fátima to beatify the witnesses Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

Depth: 45 m; Length: 350 m; Shops; Signposted routes; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Bar; Temperature: 19º-21º;

Accessibility:

Disabled access;

The Grutas da Moeda (the Coin Caves) of São Mamede, Fatima, were discovered in 1971 by two hunters while chasing a fox. Once in the cave, they were overcome with curiosity which led them to explore the area more thoroughly. To their amazement, they soon found the "Shepherd's Chamber", a chamber full of the most fantastic limestone formations. For nearly two months the two men continued to dig away at the narrow cracks which led on from the first cave, slowly discovering the other chambers and galleries included today in the Grutas da Moeda.

Soon measures were taken to make use of the cave as a tourist attraction; geologists and other technicians were contracted to rigorously maintain the natural features of the cave, including the mountain landscape above ground. The names given to the chambers are very suggestive of the images that each one presents to the visitor: Nativity Scene, Shepherd, Cascade, Virgin, Red Dome, Marine, Flawed Chapel, Wedding Cake and Spring of Tears.

Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo

Cruzeiro de Almofala

Address: A cerca de 1 Km da povoação de Almofala

On the road to the Spanish border, this small village is situated next to one of the old routes followed by the pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela.

In fact, one can find the solitary old granite cross by the side of the road, probably built in the 16th century and carved with scallop shells, one of the symbols worn by pilgrims travelling to the tomb of St. James.

Between Castelo Rodrigo and Almofala, the road passes by the reservoir formed by the Santa Maria de Aguiar dam.

Guarda

Visiting Guarda

Other informations:

Visiting Guarda;

How about beginning your tour on Rua Infante D. Henrique in front of the Tourism Office. Cross the José Lemos garden, the former medieval Rossio, where fairs were once held.

On the left, there is the imposing granite structure of the Convent of São Francisco (St. Francis), founded in the 13th century and currently the District Archive.

Continue along Rua Camilo Castelo Branco. At the end, the Tower of Ferreiros defines the entry into the old medieval walls that contain the city's historic centre.

Turn left along the road that was home to the Cathedral's clergy and where there remain some of the original houses with their ogival entranceways.

Continuing, on Rua D. Miguel Alarcão, there is the Cathedral, Guarda's most impressive monument. On the left, heading up the street, the Keep is all that remains of the Castle that used to protect the centre.

Returning to the Cathedral, there is the broad Praça Luís de Camões, the heart of the city since the 12th century. Here, among other aspects, there is an interesting 17th century arcade built for the Paços do Concelho (City Hall).

Leave the square down Rua Francisco de Passos, formerly Rua Direita, the main thoroughfare cutting across the area between the city walls, forming a cross with Rua de São Vicente that connects the two gates Porta d'El Rei and the Porta da Erva.

At the crossroads, there is the Church of São Vicente on the site of the former market. After dropping in on this Baroque church, continue along Rua de São Vicente, before turning into Rua do Amparo, where the medieval Jewish quarter is to be found. Squeezed up against the wall, Guarda was home to a prosperous Jewish community through to the 15th century. This neighbourhood was designated to them by king Pedro I (1357-67).

Moving along, the road joins Rua Francisco Passos and the Largo do Torreão, a pleasantly landscaped square. At the end, in the Largo do Paço do Biu, there is what is usually known as the House of D. Sancho, with its 16th century contours.

Crossing the Porta da Erva, head right down Rua Dr. Lopo de Carvalho where there is the Church of Misericórdia. From here, turn left along Rua Marquês de Pombal before ending your walk with a visit to the Museum of Guarda and an opportunity to learn a little more about the city's rich history.

Images: Courtesy of Câmara Municipal da Guarda

Leiria

A Walking Tour of the Historic Centre

Other informations:

A Walking Tour of the Historic Centre;

On arriving in Leiria, you naturally come to the Luís de Camões Garden where the Tourism Office is located. Cross over Largo 5 de Outubro and into Praça Rodrigues Lobo, the very heart of the city and an ideal place to relax under the 16th century arcades with their pleasant café esplanades.

In one corner, there is a statue of the poet Rodrigues Lobo (1579-1621) pointing in the direction of Tomar.

Head down Miguel Bombarda street to the Church of Misericórdia, built on the site of a synagogue.

Right by, on Barão de Viamonte, formerly known as Rua Direita (Straight Street), was the limit of a prosperous Jewish community through to the 15th century.

Nearby, on Travessa da Tipografia, the writer Eça de Queirós lived for some time. A marker stone commemorates this fact.

Then, head down to the Largo da Sé. Take a break in this impressive place of worship before moving on. While in the Square, take a look at the façade of the former Paiva Pharmacy, a fine example of 19th century tile panelling. Take the left uphill to the Cathedral Bell Tower and then onto the Church of São Pedro. Close by, a steep street rises up to the Castle where the views from the veranda are the best in the city and a just reward for all the effort spent getting up there.

Ernesto Korrodi (1870-1944)

Other informations:

Ernesto Korrodi (1870-1944);

Ernesto Korrodi, Swiss by birth, came to live in Leiria aged 24 when he took up a post as design teacher at the Leiria Industrial Design School. He was to marry Quitéria da Conceição Maia in an unusual ceremony given that Korrodi was a Protestant. He died in Leiria in 1944.

Highly interested in medieval religious and civil architecture, he found in the city the ideal location in which to indulge his vocation.

Indignant at the treatment of the national heritage by the authorities, he set about various historical-archaeological studies of national monuments becoming a leading specialist in monument restoration and an important defender of industrial-art teaching in Portugal.

The romantic surroundings of Leiria

Other informations:

The romantic surroundings of Leiria;

Close by Leiria, heading northwards, is Marrazes, a small settlement and home to an interesting Museum School. A little further on there is the Sanctuary of Senhor Jesus which resulted in the founding of Milagres that now encircles it. 6 kilometres further on there is the Monte Real Thermal Spa.

Along the banks of the Lis

Other informations:

Along the banks of the Lis;

Leaving from the Luís de Camões Garden, where the Tourism Office is to be found, follow the curving bank of the River Lis, historically key to the city's prosperity. The Avenida Heróis de Angola takes you down to a retail district that boasts all that is new in fashion.

Move on past the José Lúcio da Silva Cine-Theatre, the most important of its kind in the city, take a look at the Residence of the old Church of São Francisco, with its medieval paintings that are among the most valuable in Leiria's rich artistic heritage. Then, head back along the River.

Heading in the other direction from the Luis de Camões Garden, there is the Church of Espírito Santo. Going along Rua João de Deus and Rua Tenente Valadim you come to the Convent of Santo Agostinho with its pleasant gardens.

A little further on there is an old paper mill. It continues in operation but now produces flour.

Further along and up, there is the Monte de São Gabriel enclosing the Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora da Encarnação with views out across the city capable of rivalling even those from the Castle.

The Lis Paper Mill

Other informations:

The Lis Paper Mill;

Located by the Caniços Bridge over the River Lis, there is the Paper Mill. Built in 1411, according to a nearby stone carved during the reign of king João I, this was the first paper producing facility in Portugal. It bears reference to the Jewish community of Leiria with its own typographic heritage as it was here that the paper was actually produced.

The city is referred to as the site of the first printing works in Portugal stating that in 1495, it produced the first ever national scientific book, the "Almanach Perpetuum".

The location of the mill is highlighted by a tile panel. There remains the warehouse, the miller's house and the mill itself. It still works, producing flour, even if it has seen better days.

To the south, in Cortes, pay a visit to the Matrix Church of Nossa Senhora da Luz with its Baroque style displaying Manueline influences.

However, the major attractions are a little further on, the Natural Park of Serra de Aires e dos Candeeiros, in addition to the unique Monastery of Batalha, a priceless example of Portuguese World Heritage.

Lourinhã

Dinosaurs in Região do Oeste (western region)

Other informations:

Dinosaurs in Região do Oeste (western region); Perhaps not many people realise that the Lourinhã region, bordering the Atlantic and where we now head down to the sandy beaches spilling out from its spectacular river valleys, was once a favoured haunt of Upper Jurassic period dinosaurs as they roamed this part of the earth some 150 million years ago.

These wonderful terrestrial beings, which Man never came into contact with, lived in what has since become the Western region of Portugal among its many water courses and rich vegetation. These were ideal conditions and fostered the development of the kind of dinosaurs that now so amaze us.

As this area was at that time shrinking and consequently being filled with sediment, any skeletons were being rapidly covered and thus fossilised.

Throughout the many millions of years that separate us from the Upper Jurassic period, these sediments have again been pushed upwards. A process that has been speeded up by the impressive archaeological excavations carried out by both Portuguese and international palaeontologists.

The Museum of Lourinhã, one of the major organisers of such digs, is now famous for its palaeontological collection in addition to having a large fossil treatment laboratory, a replica workshop and has, since 2000, run an annual international dinosaur illustration competition.

In 1993, Paimogo was the site of the discovery of the largest nest of dinosaur eggs in the world and the only eggs ever found in Europe to contain embryos, and a highly rare find by any standards. Come and discover their story.

Image: Vladimir Bondar / Museu da Lourinhã

Nelas

Canas de Senhorim Carnival

Other informations:

Canas de Senhorim Carnival; The development of the carnival in Canas de Senhorim has accompanied the town's historical evolution. The carnival was launched following the formation of the neighbourhoods of Paço, where many nobleman lived, and Rossio, where the bourgeoisie and ordinary people lived. Given the social difference between the two neighbourhoods, it was perhaps inevitable that these two groups would confront one another in the Carnival – a unique time of denunciation and criticism, without anybody "taking offence".

Nowadays, two carnival marches continued to be organized. They advance through the town's streets on the main Carnival day (Shrove Tuesday), and meet each other at the crossroads between the main street of the Rossio neighbourhood and the

street that provides access to the neighbourhood of Paço. At this precise moment, the "revenge" takes place, in which the two groups dance and sing in a festive battle, in order to show who has greater conviction. The group that imposes its spirit of joy and happiness, is considered to be the winner of the carnival.

The Canas de Senhorim Carnival starts on January 6, Epiphany, with the "pots and pans" event. Originally, masked individuals entered the town's streets at this time, and, taking advantage of the traditional peep-windows in the doors, would throw old clay pots into people's houses, filled with ashes and gall-nuts that caused great noise and confusion. This custom gradually disappeared and the carnival festivities now officially begin on "Fat Sunday" (Carnival Sunday) when the two rival groups enter the streets, in preparation for the main Carnival procession on Shrove Tuesday.

On the Monday, the carnival celebrations are divided into two moments. The "Flour-throwing" festivities take place during the morning, when girls that leave their homes until midday run the risk of being showered in flour. In the afternoon, there is the "Old ladies' Monday". Ancient marches are sung and processions are held, with costumes that allude to the past. The opportunity is taken to organise two informal marches that ridicularise the proceedings of the general rehearsal held on the previous day.

The carnival festivities end on Ash Wednesday, with the burning of the "Entrudo" ("carnival clown"). After the "Batatada" (potato feast) -- a group feast in which the main dish is salted cod with potatoes, eggs, mint, bread and wine, the Carnival Clown is carried through the streets, signalling the end of the carnival. After reading the clown's will, the stuffed doll is burnt in public, thus signalling the end of the festivities and the beginning of Lent.

Ourém

Pelourinho de Ourém

Address: Largo do Pelourinho Ourém

Peniche

Cabo Carvoeiro

Address: Peniche

Cabo Carvoeiro is located on the far western corner of the peninsular of Peniche, in a zone of great beauty due to the curious geological formations that have been sculpted by the sea over time, such as the Nau dos Corvos, a large boulder which resembles a giant, half-shipwrecked vessel.

This site offers spectacular views over the sea and the Berlenga islands, and is also an excellent spot for observing sea birds.

Porto de Mós

Grutas de Alvados

Address: Alvados - 2480 PORTO DE MÓS

Timetable:

October/March - 9.30am to 5.30pm April/May - 9.30am to 6.00pm June and September - 9.30am to 7.00pm July and August - 9.30am to 8.30pm;

In 1964 a group of quarry workers in the Serra dos Candeeiros heard a strange noise, as if a stone had fallen into a very deep abyss. This was how the Alvados caves were discovered, more than 150 million years after their formation in the Middle Jurassic age, when the dinosaurs populated this region.

The entrance is at an altitude of 440m, and the depth inside reaches 100m, in a succession of rooms adorned with stalagmites and stalactites forming fairytale figures like those found in the Statue, Sleeping Beauty and Cypress rooms, the Wonderful Planet and the Lake of Wonders.

Appropriate lighting, steps, stepping-stones, background music and the pleasant temperature of 17 degrees Celsius invite you to enter the wonderful kingdom of one of the finest of Nature's works.

Grutas de Santo António - Alvados

Address: 2480 Alvados

Timetable:

October to March - 9.30am to 5.30pm April and May - 9.30am to 6.00pm June and September - 9.30am to 7.00pm July and August - 9.30am to 8.30pm;

Characteristics and Services:

Altitude: 530; Depth: 40; Length: 400; Restaurant; Shops; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Bar; Temperature: 17;

In 1955 two men working at a place called Pedra do Altar went through a large opening as they were trying to catch a bird. The Santo António caves were discovered more than 150 million years after their formation in the Middle Jurassic age, when the dinosaurs populated this region. Their footprints can be seen here today.

The entrance is at an altitude of 530m, and the depth inside reaches 40m. The caves occupy a huge area of 6,000 square metres, comprising various rooms adorned with stalagmites and stalactites. In the Room of the Bats, you can observe these charming creatures of the night, which sleep while the sun is shining outside and go out at night in search of food. In the Fátima Room, your guide will show you a stalagmite that looks like the image of Our Lady of Fátima with the Child in her arms.

Appropriate lighting, steps, stepping-stones, background music and the pleasant temperature of 17 degrees Celsius invite you to enter this wonder that Nature took millions of years to form.

Grutas de Mira de Aire

Address: 2485-050 MIRA DE AIRE

Timetable:

October/March - 9.30am-5.30pm April/May - 9.30am-6.00pm June/September - 9.30am-7.00pm July/August - 9.30am-8.30pm;

These caves were discovered in 1947. The entrance is 300m in altitude, but inside they reach 180m in depth. Their formation goes back 150 million years to the Middle Jurassic age, when the dinosaurs populated this region. Their footprints can be seen here today.

The caves are lit with coloured lights that emphasise the beauty of the shapes of the stalagmites and stalactites. During the tour, your guide will draw your attention to the strange limestone shapes, formed over millions of years, such as the "Jellyfish", the "Martian" and the magnificent "Organ". The "Black River" descends in a waterfall to the "Great Lake", where the magical sound and light show takes place.

The lighting, steps, stepping-stones, a lift and the background music make the descent to this hidden world into an unforgettable experience.

Miradouro Jurássico

Address: Alqueidão da Serra (PORTO DE MÓS)

Other informations:

Partially accessible for persons with motor disabilities; Located in the Natural Park of Serras de Aire e Candeeiros, around 500 metres above sea level, the Jurassic Belvedere offers an excellent observation point over the territory to the north and west of this mountain range, from where it is possible to see the Castle of Porto de Mós, the Monastery of Batalha or the Castle of Leiria.

The Belvedere is constituted by 15 limestone blocks that represent the main epochs of the Jurassic period when the predominant rocks found in the Serras de Aire e Candeeiros were formed, including two basalt elements - a stone typically found in sedimentary limestone massifs.

Tomar

Barragem do Castelo de Bode

Characteristics and Services:

Motor boats; Waterski; Swimming allowed; Fishing; Rowing boats; Sailing boats; Windsurfing; Outdoor parking; Bar; Jet-ski; Located in the River Zêzere, in a zone of great beauty, Castelo de Bode Dam has one of the largest reservoirs in Portugal. It extends across a total distance of 60 kms, spanning the municipalities of Tomar, Abrantes, Sardoal and Ferreira do Zêzere.

Surrounded by leafy vegetation, especially pine trees, the reservoir offers ideal conditions for practising nautical sports or leisure activities in contact with nature. Anyone who wants a more detailed experience of this huge lake may go on a boat trip to visit spectacular landscapes within the reservoir - such as the Island of Lombo, a small patch of land that contains an inn that is ideal for spending a few days in complete tranquillity.

Roda do Nabão

Address: Parque do Mouchão TOMAR

The Roda do Nabão is one of the most frequently photographed sites in Tomar, located next to the entrance to Mouchão Park, in the centre of the city.

This wheel, a solid structure made from pinewood, is an example of the hydraulic devices driven by the force of the waters of the River Nabão and which played an important role in the local economy.

Torres Vedras

Torres Vedras carnival

Torres Vedras carnival maintains a strong traditional component, constituted by 13 large-scale allegorical floats, groups of masked revellers, typical figures wearing large carved heads, giant figures, and Zés Pereiras drumming groups, with traditional drums and bagpipes. The Carnival Kings, both of whom are male, are normally personalities from the region. The two kings are accompanied by a court of caricature ministers and "Matrafonas" ("grotesque matrons") and also a caricature of the Royal guard.

Another special aspect of the Torres Vedras Festival is the fact that a pre-presentation is provided during the month of August, in Praia de Santa Cruz. This involves four days of festivities, including the presentation of samba schools, allegorical floats and lively Zés Pereiras drumming groups.

At the end of the 19th century, carnival was celebrated in Torres Vedras by means of dances organised by the municipality, without any street entertainment, except for several groups of masked individuals that walked through the streets, entertaining the local population. It was only in 1912 that a carnival commission first met, with the aid of the Philharmonic Orchestra, and organised the procession during the two days of the festivity, requesting donations in order to distribute aid to poor

Procession of the Tabuleiros

The Procession of the Tabuleiros, heralded by pipers and fireworks, is led by the Banner of the Holy Ghost and the three Crowns of the Emperors and Kings. They are followed by the Banners and Crowns from all the parishes, and the girls carrying the trays. In the rear are the cartloads of bread, meat and wine, pulled by the symbolic sacrificial oxen, with golden horns and sashes. The girls who carry the trays have to wear long white dresses with a coloured sash across the chest. They are helped by boys, who also wear a formal costume, white shirts with rolled-up sleeves, dark trousers, a black tasselled cap and a tie matching the girl's sash.

The tabuleiro (tray headdress), which must be of the same height as the girl, is made up of 30 loaves of bread, specially shaped and each weighing 400 grams, threaded at equal spaces on 5 or 6 canes. The canes are tied to a wicker basket, and at the top there is a Crown with the Cross of Christ or the Dove of the Holy Ghost. The decoration is completed by paper flowers, greenery and wheat sheaves.

The Festival of the Trays takes place every four years.

Information kindly provided by the Committee of the Festa dos Tabuleiros.

people.

The first procession of allegorical floats, drawn by oxen, with a "king" and "guard of honour", mounted on donkeys, took place in 1924. In 1926, the first carnival with a king and queen was organised. In 1928, the "matrafonas" (men dressed as women in a ridiculous fashion), joined the procession. In 1931, the first "battle of the flowers" was held, in a closed venue with an entrance fee. In 1933 there was major divulgation of the festivities, which were filmed and presented in a cinema in Lisbon. In that year, the procession was held on both the Monday and Tuesday. The revenues obtained during these years were donated to local or charity institutions.

Festivities were cancelled from 1937 onwards, due to the Second World War. Finally, in 1948 the local newspaper, "O Torreense", called for the carnival to be revitalised. Annual processions were once again organised, but on an irregular and often precarious basis.

In 1985, a new period commenced in the history of the Torres Vedras carnival. An organisational committee was created, with support from the municipal council, that annually defined a theme for the carnival decorations.

Trancoso

Pelourinho de Trancoso

Address: Trancoso

Trancoso was granted its first charter by the king Dom Afonso Henriques (between 1173 and 1185), which was later confirmed by Dom Afonso II in 1217 and Dom João I in 1391. However, it was only in the 16th century that Trancoso was awarded the ultimate symbol of local power, the pillory, when the charter was renewed by Dom Manuel I in 1510.

The period when it was built justified the elegance of the lantern (the upper part), which displays a notable use of the typical decorative features of the Manueline style of architecture, namely the armillary sphere and the Cross of the Order of Christ in iron.

The pillory is situated in the heart of Trancoso's historic centre, at the intersection of the axes that connect the four gates in the wall.

Viseu

From Rossio to the Almeida Moreira house Museum

Other informations:

From Rossio to the Almeida Moreira house Museum;

The Rossio in Viseu (also known as the Praça da República) is a pleasant rectangular square, ornamented with lime trees and is very popular amongst the city's population, which gathers in the site and considers it to be its "drawing-room".

The town hall is located on the west side of the square, dating from the second half of the 19th century. In the interior atrium, visitors should note the large wrought iron chandelier and painted allegories on the ceiling, that allude to Lusitanian heroes, by José de Almeida e Silva (1864-1945).

On the east side of the square, we see a branch of the Bank of Portugal, designed by architect Adães Bermudes. There is an exquisite garden overlooking the square, on the northern side. The access ramp to the garden, features various azulejo panels by Joaquim Lopes (1886-1956), representing traditional activities.

On the right-hand side of the garden square, visitors should observe the beautiful 17th-century neoclassical palace, with a curved facade that features a coat of arms. The Almeida Moreira House-Museum, which was the residence of the first director of the Grão Vasco Museum, is located slightly further up.

On the southern side of the Rossio, in a beautiful corner decorated with gardens, visitors should note the Church of the Terceiros de S. Francisco, that has a double staircase, and represents a fine example of baroque architecture. The church is located before one of the entrances to the Aquilino Ribeiro Park, a pleasant green zone in the city centre.

Treasury of the Sé Cathedral

Other informations:

Treasury of the Sé Cathedral;

After the sacristy and upper cloister, we encounter the Museum of Sacred Art of the Sé cathedral in Viseu which occupies various rooms, including the elegant and ancient Chapter room.

Decorated in an 18th century style, the room has a ceiling formed by panelled boxes. The walls are covered in fine azulejo panels, that represent hunting and battle scenes.

In this sumptuous environment, visitors should make sure that they visit the Treasury of the Sé Cathedral, constituted by a countless number of holy artefacts of great value, which all pertain to the period between the 13th and 18th centuries. Special emphasis should be placed on two golden and enamelled copper 18th century Limoges chests, an ivory wafer box, of Luso-African production, dating from the end of the 15th century, a golden copper byzantine chest cross and a gospel book, and illuminated manuscript on parchment, dating from the 13th or 14th century.

The most important gold and silver articles include a golden silver Gothic custodial, dating from 1533, two 17th-century golden silver chalices and a priceless engraved silver processional cross, dating from 1754. In terms of vestments, there are several articles of great value, including the Vestment of Macau and the Vestment of Rome, and several fine silk counterpanes, embroidered in silver. Noteworthy sculptures include the 16th century statue of Queen Santa Isabel, and the polychromated statue of the Archangel Rafael and Tobias,

In Viseu, from the Rossio to the Largo de São Miguel

Other informations:

In Viseu, from the Rossio to the Largo de São Miguel;

Rua Formosa begins in the Rossio, and intersects first with the Rua do Comércio and further along with the Rua Direita, which is the city's longest street and one of its oldest. The street is bordered by several 15th century houses, with significant details, including large doors, Coats of Arms, Manueline windows and doors that endow a special charm to this stroll through the noble city of Viseu.

In the Rua dos Andrades, to our right, between nos. 23 to 31 we can see a magnificent example of a Portuguese baroque palace bearing a coat of arms, dating from the first half of the 18th century -- the manor house of the Counts of Prime -- bearing the coat of arms of the Teixeira de Carvalho family. Returning to Rua Direita we proceed until the Largo Mouzinho de Albuquerque, where we encounter the Church of Santo António, that contains an extremely rich collection of 18th century azulejo tiles and a fine golden woodcarved altarpieces.

Visitors should also note the Casa do Arco that formerly pertained to the Albuquerque family. Contiguous to the building, we see an arch that corresponds to one of the doors inscribed within the Afonsine wall, that has survived until the present day, known as the Porta dos Cavaleiros ("Knights door"), that gave its name to an excellent wine from the Dão region. The square also houses the monument to the dead from the First World War, by sculptor Anjos Teixeira.

Continuing down the Rua de João Mendes, which in the 15th century included the abode of the Master Grao Vasco. Visitors should note the 18th century Casa das Bocas, which includes the curious feature of gargoyles that have been adapted after removal from the cathedral dating from the same era. In the Largo de S. Miguel we see a small church - S. Miguel do Fetal, in a baroque style, that has extremely ancient traditions. We return to the Rua João Mendes and complete this long circular walk in the Largo de Santa Cristina.

The garden square includes the elegantly designed Church of Carmo, and the bronze statue by sculptor António Teixeira Lopes, representing the prelate, D. António Alves Martins (1808-1882), a popular local figure, who was a public speaker, journalist and Bishop of Viseu.

attributed to the 18th-century sculptor, Machado de Castro.

Lisboa Region

Lisboa

Altice Arena / Pavilhão Atlântico

Address: Rossio dos Olivais, Lote 2.13.01A 1990-231 Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 891 84 09 **Fax:** +351 21 891 84 13/37

E-mail: info@pavilhaoatlantico.pt **Website:** <http://arena.altice.pt/>

The Altice Arena / Pavilhão Atlântico is a multi-purpose space designed to host performances, conferences and large-scale sporting events.

Designed within the framework of Expo 98 by the architect Regino Cruz associated to the international architecture firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the Pavilion reminds us of a spaceship or marine animal. Its interior structure highlights the building's relationship with the theme of the world exhibition -- the Oceans -- given that the wooden beams supporting the roof covering remind us of the ribs of a 16th century ship.

The quality of the Pavilion's architectural and operational characteristics were recognized in 2001 by the International Olympic committee and International Equipments Association, with attribution of the IOC/IAKS Gold Prize in the category of "sports equipment for international events".

According to the Portuguese architect responsible for designing the building, Regino Cruz, the most evocative aspect of the theme developed by EXPO '98 - the Oceans - lies in the supporting structure and the form of the roof covering. For the architect, this structure, composed of lamellated wooden arches, with a span attaining a maximum of 114 metres, is similar to the ribs of one of the ships that took part in the Discoveries.

Biblioteca Nacional

Address: Campo Grande, 83 1749-081 Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 798 20 00 **Fax:** +351 21 798 21 38

E-mail: bn@bn.pt **Website:** <http://www.bn.pt>

The National Library was designed in 1956 by the architect, Porfírio Pardal Monteiro, who died in the following year. The work

Architecture - Innovative and Modern

Other informations:

Architecture - Innovative and Modern;
Right from initial planning, the Parque das Nações constituted an opportunity to create a new city, one where architecture would take varied forms, with imagination the limit. Examples of innovative design include the Portuguese Pavilion, Atlantic Pavilion, Knowledge Pavilion, Vasco da Gama Tower and Orient Station.

Portuguese Pavilion

The Portuguese Pavilion, designed by the architect Álvaro Siza Vieira, is a building comprising two side-by-side volumes separated by a "construction seam". One of the volumes is a covered square. The square volume is a large area (65 x 50 m) covered by a concrete canopy. This consists of a thin sheet of concrete reinforced with stainless steel tie rods that are fixed to the lateral porticoes supporting it. With two floors above ground level, the pavilion volume stands slightly higher than the other, a canopy reaching out from it across the "construction seam", which is used by the architect to create a slight hierarchy in relation to the two volumes.

Atlantic Pavilion

According to the Portuguese designer of the building, Regino Cruz, it is the supporting structure and the form the roof that most evoke the theme of EXPO '98 - the Oceans. For the architect, this structure comprised of laminated wooden arches (with a 114-metre cross-beam) will be similar in visual terms to the frame of one of the old ships that set out on the Portuguese Discoveries.

Knowledge Pavilion

According to its architect, João Luís Carrilho da Graça, the building is a megalithic cross between the vertical and the horizontal. Nevertheless, although the vertical volume is set directly on the ground, the other is not. All this within that "megalithic" framework. In other words, with a tectonic sense in which form and construction work together to create a building that also signifies permanence, one of the conceptual bases of Architecture since time immemorial.

Vasco da Gama Tower

Leonor Janeiro (Profabril) and Nick Jacobs (Skidmore, Owings and Merrill) have made a direct allusion to the ships of the past in this 140-metre high building, by designing a circular restaurant at the top of the vertical beam (crow's-nest) and reinforcing it with a curved metallic structure reminiscent of a sail billowing in the wind.

The wedge-shaped volume jutting out over the water could be interpreted as the hull of a ship.

Orient Station

Santiago Calatrava, the architect responsible for the Oriente Station, sees the whole station as a powerful urban structuring element and not as an isolated object simply "bolted on" to the railway line.

was completed by his nephew, António Pardal Monteiro.

It is a grandiose building with installations considered at the time to be a model example, both in terms of their capacity for storing books, and the various reading areas and support services - inventorying, cataloguing and workshops.

The National Library also has various offices for researchers and specialised staff, together with an auditorium and space for temporary exhibitions.

Chapel of Saint John the Baptist

Other informations:

Chapel of Saint John the Baptist;

This chapel is considered one of the great attractions of the São Roque church due to how clearly it represents the influence of European art on Portugal in the 18th century. It combines aspects of the rocaille style into a structure notable for its austere neo-classical lines. It was ordered from Italy in 1740 by king João V, and had its official Lisbon inauguration in 1750. Italian architects Luigi Vanvitelli and Nicola Salvi oversaw a project which involved over 130 craftsmen.

Before being dispatched to Lisbon, it was blessed by Pope Benedict XIV, in the Church of Saint Anthony the Portuguese. Three ships were used in its transport. The inlays and precious stones covering the entire chapel, on the specific request of the Portuguese court, are impressive. Among others, close attention reveals lapis lazuli, agate, alabaster, Carrara marble, amethyst, purple porphyry, French white black, ancient-green and ancient fault marble and stone types, diaspora and jade.

In addition to the physical space of the church, the Chapel of Saint John the Baptist has a rich collection of religious pieces including vestments, liturgical ornaments and documentation that can be admired in the Museum of São Roque, located in the building next door to the Church.

Diário de Notícias

Address: Avenida da Liberdade, 266 1250-149 Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 318 75 00

Designed by the architect Porfírio Pardal Monteiro in 1936-1939, the headquarters of the Diário de Notícias newspaper was the first building to be designed specifically for a newspaper, thus combining two attributes - industry and office space.

It is a reference work in Portuguese architecture due to the originality of its design, that represents a balance between the idea of monumentality that was very prevalent at the time and innovative and Modernist solutions. As a result of these qualities it received the Valmor Prize in 1940.

Key features of the interior includes the frescoes by Almada Negreiros - an important Portuguese painter from the first half of the 20th century.

Encosta das Olaias

Address: Olaias - Lisboa

The project for the Encosta das Olaias residential zone was

With the overall urban design of the future neighbourhood based on a block-generating grid, Santiago Calatrava, decided to organise the whole structure around two axes: one is obviously the railway line that serves four platforms, the other is a symmetrical line of composition that extends from the river, passes between the Atlantic Pavilion and the Olivais Dock, cuts through the centre of the Vasco da Gama Centre and ends the other side of the railway line.

According to the architect "the complex lies east to west in the following configuration: bus station and car park; metro station; railway station; longitudinal Gallery.

Centro Cultural de Belém

Address: Praça do Império 1449-003 Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 361 26 92 / 351 21 361 26 97 Fax: +351 21 361 27 08

E-mail: ccb@ccb.pt Website: <http://www.ccb.pt>

Timetable:

8am - 8pm (from Monday to Friday); 10am - 7pm (Saturday and Sunday) Closed: 25 December;

Situated in one of Lisbon's most important historic quarters, the Centro Cultural de Belém is an emblematic cultural space.

This contemporary art centre comprises various temporary exhibition spaces and several concert and lecture halls, as well as a recreational and educational area specially dedicated to a younger audience. The cafeteria and its outdoor terrace afford a pleasant view over the River Tagus, which makes this one of the most popular leisure areas in the city.

It was built to serve as the headquarters for the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union in 1992, in keeping with a project designed by the Italian architect Vittorio Gregotti and the Portuguese architect Manuel Salgado.

Cloisters of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos

Other informations:

Cloisters of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos;

On entering the cloisters, any visitor cannot help but be immediately impressed by the perfect proportions and the decorative exuberance of the stonework.

Attention is drawn to the corners of the cloister and the great originality of the angled cut contrasting sharply with the usual straight lines.

The lower level is embellished with natural themes and Manueline emblems. The upper level, set back somewhat, reveals the renaissance lines of its architect, João de Castilho.

Opening onto the cloisters are the various monastic services. Of especial interest are the Canteen and Chapter Room, with its wonderful ribbed vaults.

In the Chapter Room, there is the neo-gothic tomb of romantic writer Alexandre Herculano (1810-1877).

On the upper level of the cloisters, an access door opens onto the upper choral chamber where the visitor can admire the impressive carved monastic throne and again take the opportunity to peruse this wonderful Manueline church.

In one of the galleries, there is a small monument symbolically guarding the great Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa who so wonderfully typifies this monastery.

Edifício Franjinhas

Address: Rua Braamcamp, 9 1200 Lisboa

designed by architect Tomás Taveira and was distinguished with the Valmor Award in 1982. This is fairly compact set of buildings aiming to take the greatest possible advantage of the available space and stands out within the city's urban framework due to its exuberant forms and colours.

Largo de Camões

Other informations:

Largo de Camões;

Continuing on from the square with its two churches, there is the beautiful Luís de Camões square.

This is the most pleasant of open spaces embellished with trees and stone banks and the floor completed in the famous Portuguese cobbles displays geometric effects and designs depicting the sea, a mermaid and a caravel.

The fine overlooking Pombaline buildings have recently been restored as has the elegant statue of the Poet in the centre while an underground car park has been installed.

The monument to Luís de Camões symbolises due Portuguese homage to one of the major figures of the Renaissance and whose epic and lyrical writing has taken on a universal dimension.

For the richly ornamented pedestal, lias stone was used for its whiteness to provide harmony with the Lisbon sunshine.

The statue of the poet, by Vítor Bastos, is in cast bronze weighing in at 9,700 kg. The statue as a whole has a height of 11.49 m with its corner stone laid in the presence of King Luís I, in 1862. The statue was completed in 1867.

Camões, decked out with a crown of laurels around his head, in his left hand is holding a sword and in his right hand clutching to his chest his epic poem "The Lusíadas" considered his greatest work. The base is particularly pleasing and interesting, based on four steps, the central face is completed with the arms of Portugal as they were in the 15th century.

Surrounding, on small plinths, there are eight statues depicting leading Portuguese figures that gained prominence throughout the 14th and 15th centuries: chronicists Fernão Lopes and Gomes Eanes de Azurara; the epic poets Jerónimo Corte Real, Francisco de Sá Meneses and Vasco de Quevedo; historians Fernão Lopes de Castanheda and João de Barros; the mathematician and chief-cosmographer Pedro Nunes.

Pavilhão de Portugal

Address: Parque das Nações 1990-231 Lisboa

Website: <https://www.ulisboa.pt/patrimonio/pavilhao-de-portugal>

The Pavilion of Portugal, designed by the architect Álvaro Siza Vieira, is constituted by two main bodies separated by a "construction joint". One of the bodies is a public square, measuring 60 x 50 m, covered by a thin concrete canopy, reinforced by stainless steel beams attached to the lateral porticos.

With two floors above the ground, the main body of the Pavilion is slightly higher than the rest. A concrete canopy extends over

Designed by the architects, Nuno Teotónio Pereira and João Braula Reis, this building is located in the intersection between Rua Braamcamp and Rua Castilho. It received the Valmor Prize in 1971 - thus generating a major polemic, due to the building's daring architectural lines that shocked a significant part of public opinion at the time.

It is an office building with commercial galleries on the lower floors. Its name "franjinhas" (little fringes) is due to the solution found by the architects in order to provide solar protection for the windows.

Instituto Superior Técnico e Alameda D. Afonso Henriques

Address: Alameda D. Afonso Henriques Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 841 70 00 Fax: +351 21 849 92 42

The campus of the Instituto Superior Técnico (Higher Technical Institute) is one of the main works of modernism in Portugal, designed in 1927 by the architect, Porfírio Pardal Monteiro.

The Campus is constituted by several low-lying buildings that as a whole transmit an idea of monumentality emphasised by their implantation on an elevated plot of land and by the high staircase providing access to the zone from the Alameda D. Afonso Henriques.

At the other end of this avenue, designed by the Rebelo de Andrade brothers, we encounter the Luminous Fountain of 1948, that completes this urban complex, highlighting its grandiose appearance.

Parque das Nações

Address: Av. D. João II 1900-014 LISBOA

Telephone: 218 919 333 Fax: 218 919 003

E-mail: info@parquedasnacoes.pt Website:

<http://portaldasnacoes.pt/>

Imagine a site that offers some of the most daring examples of contemporary architecture, the Oceanarium, one of the largest in Europe, delightful thematic gardens, exhibition centres, shows and events. All located along a breathtaking 5 km stretch of the Tagus riverfront, in the heart of Lisbon, with easy access and parking, and benefiting from a wide array of shops, restaurants and bars.

Only five minutes from Lisbon International Airport, Parque das Nações builds on the heritage of EXPO'98 - the last world exposition of the twentieth century. An invented city turned into reality.

Praça do Comércio

the "construction joint", enabling the architect to mark a subtle hierarchy in the relationship between the two bodies.

Designed by Siza Vieira for the 1998 World Exhibition, the Pavilion of Portugal is famous for its impressive concrete canopy.

Constructed with the collaboration of the engineer, Segadães Tavares, and made of reinforced concrete, the canopy appears to be elegant and light, based on the idea of a sheet of paper resting on two bricks. It covers a large ceremonial square, looking out to the city, and is ideal for hosting large scale events.

For the structure of the interior area, currently closed to the public, Siza Vieira benefited from the collaboration of another leading Portuguese architect - Eduardo de Souto Moura.

Praça do Rossio

Other informations:

Praça do Rossio;
Reborn out of the wreckage of the 1755 earthquake, this lovely Lisbon square marks the northern reach of the Pombaline Downtown. It stretches out in a quadrilateral form dominated by the neo-classical harmony of the D. Maria II Theatre, built on the site of the former House of the Inquisition.

According to the Marquis of Pombal, the Praça do Comércio would be the centre-point of the city and symbol of the new social order he wished to create for the Nation. However, as time moved on, it was Rossio, a bright and welcoming square, which established itself as the bourgeois forum for Lisbon.
The square took on life with its hotels (now disappeared) that were filled with travellers, stores and tobacconists. There was also no short supply of that very Portuguese institution - the café. These would be the forums for talk, conspiracy, politics and the arts.

Life has long since changed, but Café Nicola (on the western side) and the Pastelaria Suíça (the eastern) remain to bear testament to times gone by.
At the centre is the 28 metre high column that was erected in 1870. On top is king Pedro IV who holds the Constitution in his right hand.
Two monumental fountains were added in 1889, where florists now set out their wares.

To the south, observe how the gracious arc forms the connection with the Rua dos Sapateiros. It is a fine piece of Pombaline architecture from the end of the 18th century with ornamental embellishments including a fine window with its veranda opening out onto the Square. Its construction was paid for by businessman Pires Bandeira and later became known as the Arch of Bandeira.

The entire square recently underwent a complete makeover restoring the splendour of the original Portuguese cobbling with the central area featuring a combination of blue and white stones tracing the waves of the sea.

Other informations:

Praça do Comércio;
This is one of the most beautiful squares in all Europe, opening southwards onto the huge Tagus estuary.
Until the era of mass aviation, this was Lisbon's great reception hall for visitors arriving by sea even better able to enjoy its beauty from their vantage points on slowly docking vessels. It was at the dock here that the Kings and Heads of State would disembark when visiting Portugal.

Prior to the 1755 earthquake, it was called the Terreiro do Paço (Royal Yard). The Royal Palace had been sited on the western side of the square since the 16th century when king Manuel transferred the court down from the Castle of São Jorge (St. George).
In 1580, Filipe I of Portugal ordered the building of a new square with the work the responsibility of Filippo Terzi and Juan Herrera (the architect responsible for the Escorial).

Everything was destroyed by the earthquake. The name Praça do Comércio (Commercial Square) belongs to the Pombal era and represents the new social order that the minister to king José I wanted to favour and promote: the trading, financial and bourgeois classes that had contributed so much to rebuilding the city.

In the geometric centre of the Square, and facing the river, there is a statue of José I, mounted on his horse Gentil, the work of sculptor Machado de Castro.

It was unveiled with all due pomp and circumstance on 6th June 1775, the king's birthday. He discreetly viewed the event from one of the windows in the Customs building. The celebrations lasted three days and included a gigantic banquet for all the people of Lisbon.

On a pedestal by the riverside, there is a likeness of Pombal (removed when the minister fell into disgrace but replaced by the Liberals in 1834) raised onto the royal shield. The sculpted figures on either side represent Triumph, with a horse, and Fame, with an elephant, in a clear allusion to Portugal's overseas possessions. On the rear side of the pedestal, in low relief, there is an allegoric representation of royal generosity towards a city in ruins with Commerce opening up a chest full of money that is placed at the disposition of this royal generosity.

Underneath the northern arcade, right by the entrance to Rua do Ouro, make sure you stick your head into the Martinho da Arcada café-restaurant. This is a reference for the city and a most cultured destination.

Before heading up Rua Augusta, which leads onto Rossio, take a moment to look at the Triumphal Arch which overlooks the thoroughfare.

Saint Roch

Other informations:

Saint Roch;
Saint Roch was born in Montpellier (France) in the middle of the 14th century with his saints day celebrated on 16th August. His name came from the birthmark he bore on his chest that took the shape of a red cross (rouge #MAIOR# roc).

Orphaned at a very early age, he renounced his inheritance in favour of an uncle and distributed what goods he had among the poor and set off on a pilgrimage to Rome. In Italy, he devoted himself to treating victims of the plague and ended up catching the disease himself. He then withdrew to a forest near Piacenza (Italy). According to legend, he was helped by an angel and a dog which would bring him food and remained faithful until he

Teatro Camões

**Address: Passeio de Neptuno - Parque das Nações
1998-000 Lisboa
Telephone: +351 21 892 34 70**

Website: <http://www.cnb.pt>

The Camões Theatre was designed by the architect, Manuel Salgado, in respect for the guidelines designed for the public spaces of Expo '98, which he also designed.

Facing two buildings with a very prominent volumetry - the Pavilion of Knowledge and the Oceanarium - the Camões Theatre has a simple figurative composition, with a large glass atrium overlooking the River Tagus, which in this zone is known as the Mar da Palha (the "Straw Sea").

The Camões Theatre's auditorium has a capacity for 1000 persons and stages musical and dance performances. The theatre is also the headquarters of the Companhia Nacional de Bailado (Portuguese National Ballet).

Teatro Tivoli

**Address: Avenida da Liberdade, 182-188 1250-146 Lisboa
Telephone: +351 21 315 10 50 / 51 Fax: +351 21 357 63 37**

E-mail: geral@teatro-tivoli.com Website: <http://www.teatro-tivoli.com>

Inaugurated in 1924, the Tivoli Theatre designed by the architect, Raul Lino presents a facade of neoclassical inspiration, and a sumptuous Louis XIV style interior decoration.

The building was subject to restoration works in the 1990s that restored it to its former glory. It now once again hosts dance, theatre and cinema performances.

The conquest of Lisbon

Other informations:

The conquest of Lisbon;
Prior to entering the Church of the Martyrs, look over at the profile of the St George castle that stamps the horizon at the bottom of Rua Garrett, beyond the Chiado Shopping Centre. That is the very same perspective had by participants in the Crusades. They came from France, England, Germany and Flanders to help Afonso Henriques in his 1147 conquest of Lisbon from the Moors.

On one of the strategic points for a western assault, there were the English, Scotch and Normandy forces. On the other, the German, Flemish and northern Crusaders. On the hill of Graça, the 5,000 men gathered by Afonso Henriques. To the south, the siege was completed by boats anchored out in the Tagus. In the 17 weeks (from June to October) that the siege of Lisbon lasted, the fierce fighting resulted in enormous bloodshed with thousands of lives lost.

Many of the attackers were buried on this hill hence its name, the Martyrs, for all those who died on the Crusades against the

was cured. Disfigured by the disease, he returned to his homeland where he was imprisoned as an Italian spy as nobody recognised him. He was found guilty and died in prison. It was then that the birthmark on his chest was recognised.

In this portrayal, he dresses as a pilgrim (with staff, broad rimmed hat, gourd and bag), revealing his leg with the injuries inflicted by the plague and accompanied by a dog. His life is set out in four 16th century panels found in the Museum of São Roque.

Teatro Nacional D. Maria II

**Address: Praça D. Pedro IV (Rossio) 1100-201 LISBOA
Telephone: +351 21 325 08 00**

E-mail: geral@teatro-dmaria.pt Website: <http://www.teatro-dmaria.pt>

Other informations:

Guided tours - information and bookings: E-mail: visitasguiadas@teatro-dmaria.pt or tel.: %20351 21 325 08 28 (Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.); Founded by Almeida Garrett, and inaugurated in 1846, the D. Maria II National Theatre, designed by Italian architect Fortunato Lodi, has a neoclassical architectural style. The Theatre was virtually destroyed by fire in 1964 and re-opened to the general public, after having been rebuilt and modernised, in 1978. The National Theatre's mission is to disseminate leading works from world theatre, having staged performances of great artistic and technical quality.

Anyone who wants to learn more about the backstage life of this building, from a historical and technical perspective, may do so on Mondays at 11:30 a.m., via 1-hour guided tours that visit spaces rarely seen by the public. These tours, which require prior booking, are also accessible for persons with reduced mobility and are provided in Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, German and Italian.

The Chiado charm

Other informations:

The Chiado charm;
Located on one of Lisbon's hills, the Chiado evokes the bourgeois charm of its 19th century origins. The neighbourhood was then the cultural and social heart of the city, home to the São Carlos Opera House, the São Luís and Trindade theatres, bookshops and the grand stores, inspired by their French and Italian precursors, dictating the fashions of the time. There were also all the most elegant and popular cafes and restaurants, such as A Brasileira.

Previously, this had been one of the ways out of the city on the way to the farms and convents that dotted the surroundings. The squares around the two churches, the Loreto and Encarnação, still represent gates in the ancient walls built by king Fernando in the 14th century. The remains of these walls can still be found in some of the buildings in this neighbourhood. The Chiado was named as far back as the 15th century. Opinion is divided as to whether it is in memory of the poet António Ribeiro (1520-1591), who is honoured by a statue in Largo, or of Gaspar Dias, owner of a tavern on Rua Paiva Andrade. Both went by the nickname Chiado, that in the 16th century, meant sharp or malicious.

The boundaries to the Chiado are ambiguous. It can be concluded they certainly include the Largo do Carmo, the stretch of the Rua Garrett where there is the Church of the Mártires (Martyrs), the Largo do Camões and the Largo Trindade Coelho

enemies of the Christian faith.

The Pombaline downtown

Other informations:

The Pombaline downtown;

On the 1st November 1755 a violent earthquake, followed by equally devastating fires, destroyed the centre of Lisbon.

The Royal Palace, the House of India, aristocratic palaces, the Opera House that was still under construction, art and royal treasures were all irreversibly lost.

From the ruins of medieval Lisbon came a zone redesigned along modern and functional lines.

The whole project became linked up to the will and pragmatism of the all-powerful Marquis of Pombal, minister to José I. He set about the swift implementation of a redevelopment project drawn up by Carlos Mardel and Eugénio dos Santos.

In the wake of the cataclysmic destruction, the first priority was to rehouse people and get mercantile trading restarted. To do this, it was necessary to rebuild rapidly.

The Lisbon dating from the second half of the 18th century was set down according to geometric pattern, a grid on which buildings were built. They were provided with a "cage-like" anti-earthquake system. This was a system of crossed wooden beams over which the walls were built.

The construction was totally revolutionary for the time as it was the first time a system of mass production was applied to housing with the standardisation of certain details: the windows, the verandas on the first floor, the steps and inner areas covered with layers of tiles.

The "Downtown" of Lisbon, or "Pombaline Downtown", as it is also known in honour of Pombal, is not characterised by the ornamentation of its buildings, it rather represents a new social order that emphasised the trading and financial classes. However, to more than counterbalance this, there is the harmony of the effect, the perpendicular streets with many a view down to the Tagus, the traditional stores and interesting monuments.

Any wander through the very heart of Lisbon certainly proves to be a most pleasant experience.

Thematic Gardens

Other informations:

Thematic Gardens;

Water Gardens

Between the Alameda dos Oceanos and the Tagus River, learn about the water flow.

Along the central water flow the visitor will wander in between the various components of an hydrographic bay: the glacier, the current, the artificial lake it's surrounding and the estuary.

One hundred years old trees of unique characteristics can also be studied.

The Water Gardens sequence is from west to east passing through: Palm Garden, Mediterranean Orchard, Ulisses Lake, Cascade, Hydraulic Garden, Wave Garden.

Garcia de Orta Gardens

Garcia de Orta Gardens presents, in landscaped areas, vegetation characteristic of various ecosystems considered representative of the areas of the origin of species, at the time of the Discoveries on a total of approx. 2500m2.

In this way it allows us to observe nature and its vegetation, since the crossing of the Oceans in 1498 until today.

and its Church of São Roque. Heading down to the river, close to the theatre district, there is another point of the interest: the Chiado Museum.

As dawn broke on 25th August 1988, a devastating fire swept through the huge Grandella department store. Over 1500 firemen, 300 fire engines and 15 hours of fighting the flames proved incapable of preventing the destruction of a section of one of Lisbon's most characteristic neighbourhoods. The restoration project was awarded to the renowned architect Álvaro Siza Vieira. Winning the European Architectural Award, he respected the original history and architecture in managing to maintain the external Pombaline designs typical of the 18th century while ensuring the interiors were fully modernised. The people of Lisbon gained the great satisfaction of getting back "their" Chiado.

The neighbourhood is relatively small and can easily be explored on foot. The pleasure to be had from perusing the retail establishments, nipping into a café for a rest, swiftly pays off any effort.

Stay on for the evening and wander the adjoining Bairro Alto. Its narrow streets are packed with bars and restaurants to suit every taste. Bairro Alto is certainly one of the most entertaining and fashionable nightlife districts of Lisbon.

The heart of Lisbon - From the Praça do Comércio to the Praça do Rossio

Other informations:

The heart of Lisbon - From the Praça do Comércio to the Praça do Rossio;

This route takes you through the Pombaline downtown, the zone of Lisbon that was reborn in the 18th century after the devastating earthquake of 1755. It was rebuilt according to an original layout as can be easily observed.

Begin in the Praça do Comércio, the great visiting room of Lisbon, opening up generously onto the wide Tagus estuary. Then, take the Rua da Alfândega passing the Welcome Center of Lisbon, a modern reception facility to provide a warm greeting to all visitors to the Portuguese capital. Inside, there is a Tourism Post for answers to all your questions on Lisbon.

In front, there is the Praça do Município, that has the city's pillory at its centre and is flanked by the Paços do Concelho (Royal Council Building) building, a work of unquestionable architectural value.

Return to the Praça do Comércio and head down the pedestrianised Rua Augusta (under the triumphal arch), with shops crowding either side and the middle given over to inviting esplanades.

In Rua Santa Justa (the final road crossing Rua Augusta before reaching the Praça do Rossio) take a turn to the left and the Santa Justa elevator. Go up to the top floor for some of the best views out over the sloping, distinctively ochre coloured roofs of downtown Lisbon with the blue strip of the Tagus over in the distance.

Head back down and finish your stroll in Rossio, the square that used to be the political and social forum for Lisbon.

The Santa Justa elevator

Other informations:

The Santa Justa elevator;

The steep hills on which Lisbon lies bestow the city with an urban rhythm that is part of its charming contrast to other European capitals.

Cabeço das Rolas Gardens

The Gardens are situated on the largest rise in the Parque das Nações, and really stand out on the horizon. Landscaped into a set of grass-covered terraces, it's a nice place to go for a walk, with a panoramic view over the whole of the Parque das Nações.

Jacarandas Gardens

This garden is characterised by a tree-covered section, and featuring a series of terraces, so common to hilly Lisbon, arranged into a series of planted beds and walls.

Riverside Gardens

On a flat, grassy plane, this series of gardens can be found between Vila Expo and the Tagus Park.

However, for the people who spend their lives in the city, climbing up by foot is rather less romantic and elevators were installed in the 19th century as a means to meet this need and improve the quality of life of Lisboners.

The only vertical lift in Lisbon is the work of Raul Mesnier de Ponsard, an engineer originally from France but living in Oporto. It was inaugurated in 1902 and serves to link downtown Lisbon with the Largo do Carmo by means of a viaduct which has now been closed.

There is some wonderful ironwork, very specific to the era in which the lift was constructed. The structure is similar to a metallic tower in which you can go up to the esplanade and take in panoramic views over the city and the Tagus.

Torres das Amoreiras

Address: Av^a. Eng^o. Duarte Pacheco 1070-103 Lisboa

Telephone: +351 21 381 02 00 Fax: +351 21 383 27 35

E-mail: amoreiras-shopping@mundicenter.pt Website: <http://www.amoreiras.com>

Designed by the architect, Tomás Taveira, Amoreiras Shopping Center was inaugurated in September 1985, leaving a definitive mark on Lisbon's landscape.

Amoreiras - as it is affectionately known by Lisboners - was the first large central urban shopping and services complex to be built in Portugal. It achieved prominence due to its monumental appearance and daring architectural lines, that earned Tomás Taveira the Valmor and Municipal Architecture Prize in 1993.

Mafra

José Franco's typical Village

Other informations:

José Franco's typical Village;
Close to Mafra, you have the chance to discover a typical village from Lisbon's "salóio" region. It is made entirely of clay and has been built in a natural size, being the work of the Portuguese sculptor José Franco.

In the village of Sobreiro, close to Mafra, the sculptor José Franco dedicated his whole life to the art of modelling clay. He built a perfect life-size village, with shops and houses displaying the typical architecture of the region and furnished on the inside, as well as a windmill, butcher's shop, water-mill, blacksmith's forge, threshing floor, tavern, carpenter's workshop, etc.... all of this is to be found in this village, reminding us of the way life used to be in Mafra when it was a more rural municipality, with people engaging in various trades and crafts that have gradually begun to disappear with time.

The village depicts the true story of the region and undoubtedly arouses the curiosity of the many travellers of all ages that frequently pass through here.

In the same space, you can also see a permanent exhibition of the ceramic works of José Franco.

Oeiras

Torre de Controlo do Tráfego Marítimo

Address: Passeio Marítimo de Algés Algés

Telephone: +351 21 361 10 00

E-mail: geral@portodelisboa.pt **Website:**

http://www.portodelisboa.pt

Erected on a flat plot of land next to the River Tagus without any other nearby constructions, the Maritime Traffic Control Tower of the Port of Lisbon, in Algés, is a 38-metre high building whose visual impact is enhanced due to its inclination towards the river. The tower was inaugurated in 2001 and built in accordance with the project by the architect, Gonçalo Byrne. It has been equipped with state-of-the-art technology that enables it to orientate navigation of shipping vessels up to a distance of 16.5 nautical miles.

Setúbal

A packed day out on the other side of the Tagus

Other informations:

A packed day out on the other side of the Tagus; The beautiful landscapes of the Serra da Arrábida and the beaches around the Sado river estuary provide an excellent backdrop to this scenic tour to the south of Lisbon.

Do not get confused, there are two "Azeitão". Start in Vila Nogueira de Azeitão. At the foot of the Serra da Arrábida (a Natural Park), this town is home to a rich historic and artistic heritage, particularly from the 16th and 18th centuries, including the renaissance Dukes of Aveiro Palace, the Church of S. Lourenço (St. Laurence) and the baroque Pasmados fountain.

Then continue to Vila Fresca de Azeitão. The church of São Simão (St Simon) features a fine 16th century example of Nossa Senhora da Saúde (Our Lady of Health). In the Quinta das Torres (Farm of the Towers), there is now a country hotel located in the 16th century mansion with the gardens being of particular beauty.

A visit should also be paid to the Palácio da Quinta da Bacalhoa (Palace of Bacalhoa Farm). Dating from the final quarter of the 15th century, it is one of the finest examples of renaissance architecture in Portugal.

Continue towards Palmela. There, the Maria I fountain points the way to the Castle built on an abutment jutting out from the Serra da Arrábida, and now home to an attractive pousada-manor hotel. Donated by Afonso Henriques to the Military Order of Santiago de Espada, and recently restored. The view from its walls is truly magnificent. Inside, there is the tiled Convent and Church of Santiago.

On arrival in Setúbal, follow the course of the city's Roman remains. On the Travessa de Frei Gaspar, take a look at the set of tanks for the fish processing industry and used throughout the 1st to 5th centuries.

Parque Natural da Arrábida - Pedra da Anixa

Other informations:

Parque Natural da Arrábida - Pedra da Anixa; This 40-metre-long island is 250 metres from the coast, near the beach of Portinho da Arrábida.

Its enormous biological diversity is due to the rich composition of its rocky depths, surrounded by a relatively barren sandy seabed.

Its complex structure of underwater platforms, cracks and cavities has given rise to a great diversity of marine micro-habitats, providing shelter and serving as breeding grounds for a wide variety of marine species.

More than 70 species have already been recorded at Anixa, as well as scores of marine invertebrates. It enjoys a status of partial protection as a zoological reserve.

An essential point of interest is the Fortaleza de São Filipe (Fort of St Philip), which has been turned into a most comfortable pousada-manor hotel complete with views over the city, the Sado river and the sandy extent of the Tróia Peninsula.

In the Praça de Bocage (Bocage Square) there is a statue to the poet after whom the square was named in the 17th century. In the Largo de Jesus, there is the city's most striking monument: the Convent and Church of Jesus (15th century). Turn up around lunchtime and succumb to the temptations of the grilled fish at the restaurants along the riverside.

Reaching Portinho da Arrábida, take a wander along the beach, located between the highest point of Serra da Arrábida and the sea. The Pedra da Anixa, a small rocky island just off the sand is a choice spot for underwater spear fishing. Restaurants along the beach specialise in fish caldeirada (a stew-like dish) and the famous Setúbal red mullet.

A little further along, there is the Lapa de Santa Margarida, where the oldest examples of man's presence in the region were found (Lower Palaeolithic).

Back on the road taking you over the top of the Serra, sat on a bend in the road there is the Convent of Arrábida (visits require prior booking) founded by Franciscan friars in 1542, right in the middle of this range of hills. Back on the road, proceed down to Sesimbra which as far back as the 15th and 16th centuries was an important naval and fishing centre.

On the inside of the town's castle, there are a series of ruins and the Church of Stª Maria do Castelo (Saint Mary of the Castle), constructed in the second half of the 18th century. Another distinctive place is the Fortaleza de Santiago (Santiago Fort) where the view out over the beach and sea tempt all down into the waters.

Then, move onto Cabo Espichel, one of the most beautiful capes in all Portugal and the site of the Nossa Senhora do Cabo (Our Lady of the Cape) sanctuary. By the cliff edge, the 15th century Chapel of Memória (Memory) is also well worth a look.

On the Lagosteiros beach, look around to find fossilised dinosaur footprints and tails in the rocks.

Finish your trip on the endless beaches of Caparica perusing Arriba Fóssil, the impressive formations nature has etched into the cliff face. On top of the cliff, there is the Capuchos Convent with its wonderful vantage point for views out over the ocean.

Sintra

Portuguese School of the Equestrian Art

Address: Palácio Nacional de Queluz

Telephone: +351 21 923 73 00 **Fax:** +351 21 923 73 50

E-mail: info@parquesdesintra.pt **Website:** <http://arteequestre.pt>; <http://www.parquesdesintra.pt/en/parks-and-monuments/portuguese-school-of-equestrian-art/>

The Portuguese School of the Equestrian Art was the successor

of the former Picaria Real, the riding school of the Portuguese

Royal Court, which was closed in the 19th century. What has

remained from those times is the special horsemanship and the

The Cultural Landscape of Sintra

Other informations:

The Cultural Landscape of Sintra;

In 1995, Sintra gained the UNESCO Cultural Landscape classification. The town and the northern slope of the Serra de Sintra with its wonderful natural characteristics and impressive historic landmarks were thus accepted as worthy of world heritage status.

In pre-modern times, the region was known as the Mountain of the Moon and linked to prehistoric religious practices. This has been proven by various archaeological finds such as the Tholos do Monge (large burial tombs found up on top of the hills), Bronze Age pieces found in various parts of the town or the Penha Verde Calcolithic settlement. Later the region went onto be conquered by the Romans with the São Miguel de Odrinhas Archaeological Museum providing a good record of their legacies.

In the 15th century, along with alterations made to the Palácio

tradition of bullfighting on horseback, with the horsemen still

riding the same type of horses as were used in the 18th century,

with the same saddles and costumes, resulting in an equestrian

heritage that is unique in the world.

Equestrian Shows

The Portuguese School of Equestrian Art (EPAE) stages regular performances at the Henrique Calado Riding Hall (located on Calçada da Ajuda, in Belém), where training sessions are also open to the general public.

A visit to the Henrique Calado Riding Hall provides an opportunity to travel back through Portuguese history, experiencing the moments that perpetuated the beauty of the Lusitano horses from the Alter Real Stud Farm, founded by King D. João V in 1748. This breed has been used in classical dressage since the 18th century, performing classical dressage exercises alongside those from the Baroque period and the exercises making up the Court Games (tournaments held between the 16th and 19th centuries to commemorate festive occasions). The experience is further enriched by the costumes, saddles and harnesses worn by riders and horses, whether the normal working versions used for daily training, or the gala versions worn for weekly presentations and gala performances, since they are identical to those in use in the earliest days of Portuguese Equestrian Art.

Daily training sessions

Morning sessions are open to the public and showcase the daily work done by the riders at the EPAE to train and prepare horses of different ages for the School's performances. In these training sessions, the riders wear normal working clothes. These sessions are open to individuals and groups of visitors, including school parties.

Weekly presentations

Ballet-style performances set to music and featuring presentations of classical dressage exercises and choreographies by EPAE riders and horses. The riders wear gala costume and use traditional Portuguese saddles and harnesses. Each presentation lasts approximately 45 minutes.

Gala performances

These performances last around 90 minutes and include such feats as the "airs above the ground", equestrian exercises characteristic of the Baroque period, along with Court Games, the tournaments held between the 16th and 19th centuries to commemorate festive occasions. The performances are accompanied by lighting and sound effects that serve to enrich the choreography and the ambience.

da Vila (Town Palace) by king João I, Sintra became the summer destination of choice for the nobility and bourgeois. The Palace itself was to subsequently undergo various alterations with each monarch adding a little something more. The Palace thus represents a unique sample of 15th and 16th century architectural and decorative styles. Work carried out during the reign of king Manuel (1495-1521) was the most significant. The tiles of that period transformed the decorative impact of the palace and are now considered to one of the finest examples of Iberian Mudéjar tiling. The enormous cylindrical palace chimneys, dominating their surroundings, are the defining landmark for this town.

However, Sintra's defining era proved to be the 19th century when it was swept up in the Romantic movement. Dating from this period are the Pena Palace, the Monserrate Palace, the estates Quinta da Regaleira and Quinta do Relógio, among others. Each represents a good example on how Romantic inspiration came to endow an environment of mystery and magic. Much of this came about due to the influence of a Bavarian prince Fernando de Saxe Coburgo-Gotha, prince consort to queen Maria II (1826-53). A great innovator and admirer of the modern and everything artistic, he allied such tastes with an admiration for nature setting about rebuilding parks and gardens incorporating whatever revivalist architectural styles then in vogue. The building of the Pena Palace (in 1836) out of an old, ruined Order of São Jerónimo monastery is one of the defining landmarks of this artistic movement combining in a single construction the most important features from the history of Portuguese architecture. Thus, go and marvel at the fantastic interpretations of the Gothic, Manueline, Mudéjar, among many others.

Thanks to the very peculiar characteristics of the Serra de Sintra microclimate, abundant greenery thrives with many local species standing next to far more exotic cousins from far off lands. Sintra is home to some of the most beautiful parks in Portugal and all with a very Romantic influence. The parks are staged to feature small ponds, nooks, false caves and secret paths leading harmoniously through the thick foliage. 19th century revivalism was to profoundly change the Sintra landscape turning it into a place of unrivalled beauty and heritage.

Madeira

Mercado dos Lavradores

Situated in the historic Santa Maria area, in the centre of Funchal, the Farmers' Market is one of the landmarks that Madeira's capital has to offer its visitors and of course the entire population, where the colours, aromas and tradition join together to enchant and delight anyone visiting it.

It was built in the 1930s to a design by Edmundo Tavares (1892-1983), and is a graceful combination of 'art deco' and modernism. Here, you can find the best and freshest exotic fruits, vegetables and flowers that the lush 'Garden of the Atlantic', as the beautiful island of Madeira is often dubbed, has to offer.

The market has a covered area with two floors. On the ground floor you will find fish and meat stalls, while upstairs tropical fruits, vegetables and a multitude of spices fill the entire space with new aromas.

There are several panels of tiles, produced in Lisbon's once-famous but now defunct Fábrica de Loiça de Sacavém (cookware factory), that decorate both the main entrance and the interior.

Another most charming feature of this Farmers' Market is the tradition and folklore that still exist, and you will find many of the saleswomen dressed in the typical, joyful Madeiran costume in bright colours.

Porto and the North

The Caretos of Podence

In the village of Podence, close to Macedo de Cavaleiros and 40 km from Bragança, Carnival is one of the most important events in the annual calendar. It's when the famous Caretos of Podence appear in the streets, diabolical figures that at this time of the year are authorised to show themselves.

On Fat Sunday and Shrove Tuesday, the boys in the village appear as mysterious characters dressed in colourful clothes, made from bedspreads with fringes, and covering their faces with masks made from wood or leather, with a pointed nose. They carry bells and cowbells around their waist, and energetically run round the village, jumping and shouting, disturbing the daily calm. One of the main reasons for these races is to find girls in order to dance with them and "chocalhar" (jingle their cow-bells). They amuse themselves in this manner, protected under the disguise of anonymity. The youngest boys, who follow and imitate the Caretos are called Facanitos (litte knives) and guarantee continuity of the tradition.

During the evening of Fat Sunday, fictitious weddings are held between unmarried young men and women, in a farcical ceremony. It's a moment of humour, in which the chosen bride and bridegroom have no chance to complain. The following morning, according to tradition the boy must visit the girl that he was allocated by means of a lucky draw, and will receive sweets and fine wine in a gesture of thanks.

In 1985, the Caretos of Podence organised themselves and

transformed the group into a Cultural Association, whose main objective was to preserve these traditional events. As a symbol of culture in the North-East Trás-os-Montes region, the Mascarados have been invited to participate in various cultural and recreational events throughout the country, above all those involving street entertainment.

More information in www.caretosdepodence.pt.

Arouca

Passadiços do Paiva

Address: Loja Interativa de Turismo de Arouca Rua Abel Botelho, n.º 44540-114 Arouca
Telephone: +351 256 940 258
E-mail: turismo@aroucageopark.pt **Website:** <http://www.passadicosdopaiva.pt/>

Barcelos

Barcelos Medieval Bridge

Address: Barcelos

This stone Gothic bridge dates from the early 14th Century, between 1325 and 1330, and was built by Count Pedro, to create a link between Barcelos and Barcelinhos.

The structure consists of five arches, of which the central one is the highest, which is a structural feature of the period.

It has been classified as a National Monument since 1910.

Paços do Concelho - Barcelos

Address: Largo do Município 4750-323 Barcelos
Website: <http://www.cm-barcelos.pt>

Barcelos Town Hall

The Barcelos Town Hall building is the result of a series of annexations, structural changes and additions based on the existing town hall building, to which the major remodelling and expansion works started in 1849 sought to give a certain uniformity.

It includes the old Hospital do Espírito Santo (Holy Spirit Hospital), which rendered assistance to pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela, and the Santa Maria chapel, both dating from the 14th Century. The Tower and Town Hall date from the 15th Century and the Misericórdia Church is from the 16th Century.

The Legend of the Cockerel of Barcelos

Other informations:

The Legend of the Cockerel of Barcelos

The medieval stone cross that can be seen in the Archeological Museum of the town is related to the legend of the Cockerel of Barcelos

According to the legend, the inhabitants of Barcelos were very

Cruzeiro do Senhor do Galo

Address: Museu Arqueológico do Paço dos Duques

Pelourinho de Barcelos

Address: Rua Dr. Miguel Fonseca (antiga Rua Duques de Bragança)

Barcelos Pillory

Also known as Picota, the Barcelos Pillory dates from the end of the 15th century and start of the 16th Century. Built of granite, it consists of a solid base, a hexagonal shaft culminating in a highly decorated ornament known as a cage, in the late Gothic style.

Its artistic richness makes it one of the most iconic pillories in the country. It stands in front of the main church (Igreja Matriz) in landscaped grounds that enhance its beauty. Note the hexagonal cage at the top.

disturbed by a crime whose author had not been discovered. One day a man from Galicia, who was suspected of having committed the crime, passed by Barcelos and was arrested. Ignoring his claims of innocence (he said he was on his way to Santiago de Compostela to fulfill a vow), as nobody believed him, he was condemned to be hanged.

Before he was executed, he asked to be taken to the presence of the judge, who was dining with some friends, and once again protested his innocence and nobody believed him. And then he pointed to a roast chicken on the table and exclaimed: "As surely as I am innocent will that Cockerel crow if I am hanged."

And what seemed impossible actually happened. When the pilgrim was being hanged, the Cockerel stood up on the table and crowed. The judge rushed to the gallows and he saw that the knot of the rope around his neck was caught and thus prevented him from being strangled. He was released and sent on his way in peace.

Years later, he returned to the town and built the monument to São Tiago and to the Virgin.

The colorful representation of the Barcelos Cockerel was adopted for many years as the symbol of the Tourism of Portugal.

Braga

Estádio Municipal de Braga

Address: Parque Norte - Dume 4710 Braga

Telephone: +351 253 206 860 Fax: +351 253 612 929

E-mail: visitas@scbraga.pt. Website:

<http://www.scbraga.pt>

Built for Euro 2004, Braga Municipal Stadium is a notable feat of engineering, with innovative architectural lines.

Conceived by the architect, Eduardo Souto Moura, the stadium is located in a former quarry and is harmoniously integrated within the landscape, set on the slopes of Monte Crasto, overlooking the valley of the River Cávado.

Without seating sections at the two ends, the stadium takes advantage of the natural amphitheatre created by the hill's slope and its vantage point over the surrounding landscape endows it with great scenographic impact. Only the two lateral seating sections and the roof covering appear to result from the architect's work.

Holy Week Ceremonies in Braga

Other informations:

Holy Week Ceremonies in Braga;

In Braga, which has been a diocese since the 3rd century, religion continues to play a dominant role at the heart of the community, and religious ceremonies are celebrated with great fervour. The most splendid of these is Easter.

Fonte de Santiago

Address: Largo de Santiago - BRAGA

On the south side of Largo de Santiago, the fountain of the same name is actually a covered public washhouse with a water fountain outside. The unusual 16th century square design was built on the orders of archbishop Diogo de Sousa to improve the people's lot.

On the fountain, there is a niche with a statue of Santiago and its inscription detailing the donor and the year 1531, the coat of arms of Diogo and an iron donation box right by the water spout.

Mercado Cultural do Carandá

Address: Rua Dr. Costa Júnior 4700 BRAGA

E-mail: comunica@cm-braga.pt Website: <http://www.cm-braga.pt>

Designed by the architect, Eduardo de Souto Moura and built between 1980 and an older market, but was never actually used to sell foodstuffs.

After various unsuccessful attempts to reanimate the space, Braga Municipal Council decided to reconvert it, with a project once again overseen by Eduardo Souto Moura. Carandá Cultural Market currently hosts exhibitions and performances and is primarily used as a venue for dance events.

The city is decorated with Holy Week motifs and the "Passos", or street altars, are filled with flowers and lights, complementing the sumptuousness of the churches.

Out of all the Easter rituals, we particularly recommend the Procession that features the Farricocos. The Farricocos, barefooted men dressed in purple tunics tightened at the waist, hooded and carrying torches, are a reminder of the practice of the reconciliation of public penitents that took place up until the 15th century.

Since the 15th century, the Misericórdia of Braga has continued the tradition in the form of the Ecce Homo Procession, which is held at night.

On the Thursday night of Holy Week, the house and city lights would be turned off while the Farricocos illuminated the streets with torches and went around denouncing the sins and slanders of the residents.

They then remained in the street while the Procession passed by, slowly and silently, as a mark of religious mourning.

The Marian Sanctuary Way

Other informations:

The Marian Sanctuary Way;

Close to Braga there are three major Portuguese sanctuaries dedicated to Mary, Mother of God.

2.5 kilometres to the east of the city, there is the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte (Good Jesus of the Mount). This Baroque construction is surrounded by the dense greenery planted by the Order that took over the site in the 16th century.

Further along the same road, there is the Nossa Senhora do Sameiro (Our Lady of Sameiro) sanctuary, well worth a visit due to its vantagepoint looking out over the surrounding countryside.

On leaving Sameiro, 10 kilometres further along the Bom Jesus road, heading through the Serra de Falperra, you find the Church of Santa Maria Madalena (Mary Madeline), a beautiful example of Baroque architecture.

Bragança

Pelourinho de Bragança

Address: Largo da Porta da Vila, Cidadela

The Pelourinho (Pillory) of Bragança is one of the oldest in the country and matches a type peculiar to the Northeast. A symbol of autonomy and the power of the nobility, the granite pig base dates back to pre-history (500 BC) on which rests a 12th or 13th century column with its upper section carved.

The Lusitanian berrão, known as the "Pig of the Town", was a religious shrine to the primitive agricultural-pastoral peoples of Trás-os-Montes. The incidence of this type of sculpture across Portugal, and some examples from over the border in Salamanca, has enabled them to be attributed to a pre-Celtic people belonging to the Vetons. The pig took on a mythical, protective dimension and was normally located at the entranceway to settlements.

The ornamentation at the top of the column is unique with its four stone arms forming a cross that was usually made out of

iron and attached by rings. They would serve as the gallows for public executions. At the top, completing the pillory, there is a human figure holding a shield with the city's coat-of-arms.

On the site of the Pillory, originally placed in front of the Domus Municipalis, there was the former Church of Sant'ago.

Guimarães

Largo da Oliveira

Other informations:
Largo da Oliveira

The Largo da Oliveira owes its name to a centuries-old olive-tree planted on this same site. Surrounded by picturesque houses that are typical of the north of Portugal, it is the ideal starting point for a walking tour of the city's streets. But, in the square itself, there are also a number of interesting features: on the eastern side is a curious Gothic shrine, built in the reign of D. Afonso IV to commemorate the Battle of Salado, where the Portuguese and Castilian forces together defeated the Moorish army from Granada, in 1340.

Behind this is the Igreja de Nossa Senhora de Oliveira (or the Igreja da Colegiada - the Collegiate Church of Our Lady of the Olive-Tree), which is the first Gothic monument to have been built in the Minho, under the auspices of D. João I and in fulfilment of a vow that he made in return for victory against the Castilian army in the Battle of Aljubarrota (1385). The bell tower, which stands separate from the main body of the church, has evident Manueline features and was therefore built much later. Many distinguished figures were connected to the Colegiada de Nossa Senhora da Oliveira, such as Pedro Hispano, the doctor and philosopher who was elected Pope under the name of Pope John XXI. Inside the church's elegant cloister is now housed the Museu Alberto Sampaio, with a remarkable collection of mediaeval and Renaissance silver pieces, most notably a sumptuous 14th-century silver altarpiece, unique in Portugal, and the tunic worn by D. João I at the Battle of Aljubarrota.

The main feature on the northern side of the square is the mediaeval building that once housed the town hall, surmounted by a stone sculpture that, according to tradition, represents Guimarães.

Beneath this, a Gothic arcade leads into the Largo de São Tiago, one of the most characteristic public spaces in the city.

You may also choose to leave the Largo da Oliveira by entering the spacious and harmonious square of Largo do Toural, setting off from here for a visit of the Museu Martins Sarmiento, housed in the mediaeval cloisters of the Mosteiro de São Domingos, where you will find one of the most valuable collections of archaeological pieces, originating from Citânia de Briteiros, a fortified hilltop settlement some 10 kilometres from Guimarães, which provides clear evidence of life in Portugal during the Iron Age.

Largo do Toural

Other informations:
Largo do Toural;
Whilst the atmosphere in Largo de São Tiago evokes memories of the city's mediaeval past, the architecture of Largo do Toural highlights the great concern of the town planners in the 18th-century period of the Enlightenment with producing wide and

Largo de São Tiago and Rua de Santa Maria

Other informations:
Largo de São Tiago and Rua de Santa Maria;
Forming a very old part of the city, this square is surrounded by beautiful houses with typically northern features, simple three-storey 16th and 17th-century constructions, whose wooden balconies illustrate the great skill of the carpenters at that time. Tradition has it that St. James the Apostle brought an image of the Virgin Mary to Guimarães, which he placed in a pagan temple that stood on this site, so that thereafter the place became known as the square of St. James (São Tiago).

From here, you should follow the narrow Rua de Santa Maria, one of the first streets to be built in Guimarães, having already been referred to by this name in 12th-century documents. The street is lined with several fine examples of past architectural styles: Convento de Santa Clara (17th-century), Casa do Arco, with a small emblazoned bridge over the street, Casa dos Peixotos, the Gothic Casa dos Valadares, all testifying to the importance that the street had in mediaeval times as the preferred area of residence of the city's dignitaries: the clergy, nobility and well-to-do merchants.

Straight ahead of you is the Largo do Cónego, where your attention will immediately be caught by the splendid façade of the Convento de Santa Clara, which now houses the Town Hall, and the manor house known as the Casa dos Carneiros. You should also make sure to pass through the Largo Martins Sarmiento and appreciate some of the city's most impressive 19th-century architectural features: a group of houses and the former Convento do Carmo, one of the most expressive baroque constructions in Guimarães.

spacious areas, revealing the different phases in the urban history of Guimarães that are still preserved today.

If you continue along Rua Paio Galvão, you will find the Museu Martins Sarmento, dedicated to collections of archaeology, which occupies part of the beautiful mediaeval cloisters of the Convento de São Domingos.

Walking along by the side of the convent, you will arrive at Rua D. João I, flanked by old houses and balconies.

At the end of the street, to the left, is the small chapel of Senhora da Ajuda, where the date 1600 has been carved into the stonework.

There are many interesting features to be noted in the area between Largo do Toural, Largo João Franco and Largo da Condessa de Juncal: Castelo dos Almadas (Rua Dr. Avelino Franco), Capela do Anjo da Guarda, Palácio dos Lobo Machado, a typical 18th-century manor-house, and the Casa dos Coutos, directly opposite (in Rua Dona Maria II).

Lamego

Festival of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios

Other informations:

Festival of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios;

In the fifteenth century, close to the site where the shrine now stands was a small chapel dedicated to St Stephen. In the sixteenth century, the bishop of Lamego, D. Manuel de Noronha, commissioned from the "holy city" of Rome a statue of the Virgin Mary that would cure all ills, placing it inside a new chapel that he had ordered to be built in place of the earlier chapel dedicated to St Stephen.

From then on, the number of worshippers of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios continued to grow, until in the eighteenth century work began for the building of the majestic shrine dedicated to her.

Every year, from the end of August to the middle of September, the city of Lamego is given over to festivities, with the Festas da Cidade (City Festival) being held to coincide with the "Romaria de Portugal", a religious pilgrimage dedicated to the city's patron saint.

The festivities are attended by vast hordes of people in their thousands and for three weeks there are shows, exhibitions, concerts, parades, dancing, cultural events and sports competitions.

On the days leading up to the religious festival, the celebrations include a torchlit procession, with a parade of allegorical floats and a battle of flowers.

The triumphal procession is the most symbolic moment of the whole festival. The enormous wooden frame bearing the statue of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios is carried on a brightly decorated cart pulled by coupled oxen, for which special permission is granted by the Vatican, making Lamego the only place in the Catholic world where it is possible to see a statue of the Virgin Mary being carried by animals.

Matosinhos

Biblioteca Municipal (Galeria Municipal e Arquivo histórico)

Address: Rua Alfredo Cunha 4450-519 Matosinhos

Telephone: +351 22 939 09 50 - 22 939 09 58 **Fax:** +351 22 939 09 72

E-mail: mail@biblioteca.cm-matosinhos.pt **Website:** <http://bmfe.cm-matosinhos.pt/#focus>

Municipal Library (Municipal Gallery and Historical Archive) Matosinhos Municipal Library's building was designed by an

architect born in the city - Alcino Soutinho - who also designed the interior equipment and furniture.

The library was opened in 2005 and received the name of

Florbela Espanca in homage to the Portuguese poetess who

spent the last years of her life in Matosinhos.

Padrão do Bom Jesus de Matosinhos

Address: Av. Norton de Matos

Built in the 18th century, the Padrão do Bom Jesus (the Bom Jesus Marker Stone), also known as the Statue to the Lord of the Sand or Our Lord of Padrão, is the physical manifestation of a local belief.

It is told that the Lord of Matosinhos Statue was sculpted by Nicodemos, the man who helped Joseph of Arimathea remove Christ's body from the cross and then embalm it. Thrown overboard at sea, it reached land in the year 124 washed up on the sands of Espinheiro, close to Matosinhos, but discovered minus an arm. Throughout 50 years nobody could manage to sculpt the missing limb in a way that fitted with the rest of the statue. Then, an elderly lady, who lived nearby, was at her fireplace. She noticed a piece of wood that seemed to be on the point of rolling out of the fireplace. Her daughter, dumb since an early age, suddenly gained use of her voice to declare that the piece was the arm for the Bom Jesus. On taking it to the statue, the piece fitted perfectly in place of the missing limb and the people now had their full and complete statue.

The site of the current statue in honour of this popular saint is either where the original statue or where the arm was found depending on whom you ask.

Beneath, there is a panel of 18th century blue and white tiles depicting Christ and the number 50 in commemoration of the number of years it took to discover the missing limb.

Piscina das Marés

Other informations:

Piscina das Marés;

The Leça da Palmeira beach has one of the largest stretches of sand to be found in the North of Portugal. It has been a popular

Centro de Documentação Siza Vieira

Address: Quinta de Santiago - Rua da Vila Franca, 134 4450-802 Leça da Palmeira

Telephone: +351 22 995 24 01 **Fax:** +351 22 995 24 01

Installed in the Matosinhos Arts Centre, the Álvaro Siza Documentation Centre offers complete documentation in a systematic manner concerning the work of this distinguished Portuguese architect.

In addition to the bibliographical and documentation resources, the Documentation Centre aims to enrich its collection with an archive of projects, a collection of furniture and design items and an historical archive related to contemporary architecture.

Paços do Concelho de Matosinhos

Address: Av. D. Afonso Henriques 4450-510 Matosinhos

Telephone: +351 22 939 09 00 **Fax:** +351 22 937 32 13

E-mail: mail@cm-matosinhos.pt **Website:** <http://www.cm-matosinhos.pt>

Inaugurated in December 1987, Matosinhos Town Hall was the first institutional building to be built in Portugal after the April 25, 1974 revolution.

Designed by an architect born in the city - Alcino Soutinho - the building was built at the time when local authorities first began to acquire autonomy in relation to central government, and also became a reference work in Portuguese architecture due to the manner in which it allies the functionality of the spaces to the harmonious volumetry of its modern lines.

Quinta da Conceição

Address: Leixões - Matosinhos

Close to one of the Port of Leixões docks, there is the impressive greenery and woodland making up what is known locally as the Quinta da Conceição (Conceição's Estate).

Within the grounds, there remains the Franciscan monastery. The monks came here in 1478 to escape the windy and Atlantic-exposed Boa Nova monastery, located right where the Lighthouse now stands. A small chapel remains as testament to the former address of these monks.

Of the monastery, all that remains is a fine Manueline entranceway, a few tombs, the well and Fountain of St. John. Currently, the Quinta da Conceição is a great place be it for a gentle stroll or even a little recreational exercise with tennis courts, a swimming pool, a mini-golf course and a fitness circuit.

destination since the very beginning of the 20th century when the English community living in Oporto adopted it as their favourite beach.

Here there is the salt-water swimming pool, the Piscina das Marés. Wonderfully integrated into its surroundings, this is another Álvaro Siza Vieira project built between 1961 and 1966.

Porto

Casa da Música

Address: Avenida da Boavista, 604-610 4149-071 Porto

Telephone: +351 22 012 02 00 - +351 22 012 02 20 Fax: +351 22 012 02 98

E-mail: info@casadamusica.com **Website:**

http://www.casadamusica.com

Timetable:

From 10 am to 08 pm;

Other informations:

Guided Tours

One of Oporto's leading cultural venues, designed by the architect, Rem Koolhaas.

In the Rotunda da Boavista roundabout, half way between the historic centre and the Foz zone, we encounter a large-scale, daringly original building that is sure to catch anyone's attention: the Casa da Música or "House of Music". The building was designed by the distinguished Dutch architect and urbanist, Rem Koolhaas and was conceived in order to cater to an innovative cultural project of Porto 2001-European Capital of Culture.

The building, with its bold architecture, is designed to host all types of music - from classical to electronic, jazz to fado, major international productions to small-scale experimental projects. The site prides itself on the quality of its infrastructures and its dynamic, innovative and prestigious programming.

Estádio do Dragão

Address: Estádio do Dragão 4350-415 Porto

Telephone: +351 22 557 04 00 Fax: +351 22 557 04 98

E-mail: geral-fcp@sportmultimedia.pt **Website:**

http://www.fcporto.pt/Info/NovoEstadio/InfoEstadio.asp

Owned by Oporto Football Club, the Dragão Stadium was built for Euro 2004 and was the venue of the competition's opening ceremony.

Designed by the architect, Manuel Salgado, the stadium substituted the former Antas Stadium and due to its characteristics and dimensions may be used for a wide variety of events.

From a technical perspective, the stadium presents a unified concept of architecture and engineering, which has merited honorary mentions in various architecture and design awards.

Casa das Artes

Address: Rua Ruben A, 210 4150-639 Porto

Telephone: +351 22 600 61 53/ 4 Fax: +351 22 600 61 52

E-mail: casadasartes@casadasartes.iartes.pt

Designed by Eduardo Souto Moura in 1980, the building of the Casa das Artes (House of Arts) in Oporto is one of the architect's most emblematic works. The project was selected within the framework of a public tender for construction of a cultural facility in the gardens of a manor house that had been built in 1927.

The solution presented by Souto Moura made use of a wall existing on one of the gardens boundaries, thus constructing a "wall-building" that demarcates the boundaries of the terrain and is perfectly integrated within the environment. This integration was also achieved by means of the materials used in the exterior covering of the building such as brick, stone and mirrored glass that create an illusionary effect of extension of the garden.

The interior has one basement floor and houses two auditoriums within an amphitheatre that is used for performances, conferences and exhibitions.

Faculdade de Arquitectura do Porto

Address: Via Panorâmica S/N 4175-755 Porto

Telephone: +351 22 605 71 03 Fax: +351 22 605 71 99

E-mail: sre@arq.up.pt **Website:** <http://www.fa.up.pt>

The building of Oporto University's Faculty of Architecture was designed by Álvaro Siza Vieira between 1985 and 1986, when he "returned" to the university where he studied between 1949 and 1955.

Of major international renown, the "Oporto School" trained some of Portugal's leading architects and receives tourists and students from throughout the world.

Port Wine Lodges, Vila Nova de Gaia

Address: Vila Nova de Gaia

Website: <http://www.cavesvinhodoporto.com>

Port wine is born in the valley of the River Douro, but it is beside the city that gave it its name that it ages and gains the flavour that makes it quite unmistakable.

It is cultivated on terraces carved long ago by man on the banks

The roof covering over the seating sections is made of a steel structure covered by polycarbonate sheets and is the largest of its kind in the world. Its impressive scale, complemented by its simplicity and elegance led to attribution of the ECCS' European Metallic and Mixed Construction award in 2005.

Mosteiro de São Bento da Vitória

Address: Rua de São Bento da Vitória.4050-543 Porto
Telephone: +351 22 340 19 00 **Fax:** +351 22 339 30 39
E-mail: geral@tnsj.pt **Website:** <http://www.tnsj.pt>

Timetable:

Tuesday to Saturday 2AM-7PM (or until 10PM, performance days)
| Sunday 2PM-5PM;

At the very heart of Porto, in Vitória parish, the São Bento da Vitória Monastery – a classified National Monument since 1977 – is one of the municipality's most important religious buildings.

In the late 1500s, after a series of difficult negotiations, the monks of the old Benedictine Congregation decided to build the Monastery, as both a sign of monastic presence and a support for clerics travelling from North to South and vice-versa. At the time, the city of Porto was a seat of illustrious monks and the Monastery soon became an important monument, due to its architectural grandiosity and to the monks' work, especially in the field of music and singing, of which they created here a veritable school, as the Church's magnificent organ still shows. After the necessary royal authorization had been granted, in 1598, a project was commissioned from architect Diogo Marques Lucas, a former disciple of Filippo Terzi.

Construction began in 1604, and went on until the end of the century. The adjacent church was built in 1693, but its interior decorations were only concluded at the end of the 18th century.

The foundation stone of the Major Cloister was laid in 1608. The Cloister, a monumental granite structure, was finished during the 1725-1728 triennium. The magnificent monastic house would, however, know troubled times. In 1808, during the Peninsular War, the Monastery was turned into a Military Hospital, and in 1835, after the Religious Orders' expulsion, it became a Military Court and Prison, besides housing the 31st Infantry and Engineer Corps. From 1985 to 1990, IPPAR [the Portuguese Institute of Architectural Heritage] subjected the Monastery to restoration works (overseen by architects Carlos Guimarães and Luís Soares Carneiro), which preserved the building's original structure and several architecturally valuable elements, while preparing it to house a Benedictine congregation, along with the Porto National Orchestra and Porto District Archives.

Under the auspices of Porto 2001 – European Capital of Culture, the Major Cloister was covered with an acoustic shell, a steel structure on four pillars, and received a wooden floor. In 2007, the Portuguese State conceded the TNSJ an important part of the building, which now hosts theatre shows, concerts and special events in the TNSJ's programming, besides various events organized by outside institutions.

Rua das Flores and Church of Misericórdia

Other informations:

of the River Douro, in an area that was safeguarded in 1756 by the Companhia Geral da Agricultura das Vinhas do Alto Douro, thus making it one of the oldest demarcated wine regions in the world. In 2001, the Alto Douro Vinhateiro region was classified as a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

The river has always been used to transport the wine barrels to the mouth of the Douro in boats specific for this purpose, the Rabelo boats. We can still see and admire them today, on the quays of Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia, where the lodges are clustered in which the wine ages before being marketed worldwide. In order to spread the word about the history of port, most of the lodges are open to the public and offer guided tours and tastings.

You can get to the Lodges from the Ribeira district of Porto by walking across the Ponte Luís I on the lower deck. You can also cross the bridge via the upper deck, from Batalha to Serra do Pilar and then reach the lodges on foot or by cable car. This is a mandatory stop for anyone visiting the north of the country.

Check the lodges and visits available in the [Circuits and Tourism Services / Enotourism and Gastronomy](#) option of the advanced search area.

Teatro Carlos Alberto

Address: Rua das Oliveiras, 43. 4050-449 Porto
Telephone: 351 22 340 19 00 **Fax:** 351 22 340 19 07
E-mail: geral@tnsj.pt **Website:** <http://www.tnsj.pt>

Timetable:

Tuesday to Saturday 2AM-7PM (or until 10PM, performance days)
| Sunday 2PM-5PM;

The twelve-year span separating the destruction by fire of the Real Teatro de São João (1908) from the opening of the new Teatro de São João (1920) meant a golden opportunity which the other theatres in Porto quickly seized. All of them carried out improvement works, competing among themselves to temporarily occupy the position of the only "first-rate theatre" in the city. Among them was Teatro Carlos Alberto. It had been named after a Sardinian king who died an exile in Porto, in 1849, where he lived at the Mansion of the Baron of Valado, in the gardens of which the theatre was built by initiative of Manuel da Silva Neves.

Ever since its opening, in October 1897, its vocation had been to present popular spectacles: from circus shows to operettas, light plays and films. In the late 1970s, when it had been almost exclusively reduced to showing films, the Secretariat of State of Culture rented it.

The newly-named Auditório Nacional Carlos Alberto opened its doors in September 1980, and began hosting more diversified programs, in a career that would come to an end in March 2000. As Porto's turn as European Capital of Culture approached, the building was purchased by the event's organisers, Sociedade Porto 2001. To maintain the building's symbolic value while bringing its traditional use up to date were the challenges met by architect Nuno Lacerda Lopes' project.

After a complicated process of advances and recoils, the renewed Teatro Carlos Alberto was finally returned to the city in September 2003.

Rua das Flores and Church of Misericórdia;

In front of the São Bento Station, on the left-hand side, the Rua das Flores (Street of Flowers) was opened in the 16th century to free up movement around the city.

It is a straight, busy thoroughfare where there are quality goldsmiths, keeping alive the noble traditions the north of Portugal has in this craft. Stores crowd either side of the street showing off their wares in impressive storefront displays.

In the midst of this bustling retail area, there is the Church of Misericórdia (Compassion), with its Nicolau Nasoni façade rich in decorative embellishment and one of the most significant examples of baroque found in Porto.

Teatro Nacional São João

Address: Praça da Batalha. 4000-102 Porto

Telephone: + 351 22 340 19 00 Fax: + 351 22 208 83 03

E-mail: geral@tnsj.pt Website: <http://www.tnsj.pt>

Timetable:

Tuesday to Saturday 2AM-7PM (or until 10PM, performance days)
| Sunday 2PM-5PM;

By initiative of Chief Magistrate Francisco de Almada e Mendonça and a group of private investors, the Real Teatro de São João was built from a project by Italian scenographer and architect Vincenzo Mazzoneschi. Officially inaugurated on May 13, 1798, it was the first building in Porto to be specifically conceived for the presentation of stage shows.

The Real Teatro de São João's activity would eventually turn to the universe of Italian opera, presenting all the performances of that genre in Porto until the end of the 19th century. In April of 1908, a fire destroyed the building, but in October of that same year, a public competition for its rebuilding was launched, which was won by a draft of José Marques da Silva, once described as "Porto's last classical and first modern architect". In spite of budgetary restraints, the architect was able to combine ostentation and efficiency, successfully integrating purely architectural aspects with constructive ones. He employed an innovative technique, using concrete for the basic structure and cement mortars for the decorations.

At the time it was built, the Teatro de São João combined technical innovation with a stylistic prolongation of traditional taste. In 1932, only twelve years after its opening (March, 1920), and in keeping with the general decadence of Porto's theatrical activity, it changed its name to São João Cine, operating from then on basically as a cinema. Progressively, the building fell into disrepair.

Finally, it was bought by the Portuguese State on October 1992, and opened to the public one month later, now officially named Teatro Nacional São João. After a process of restoration, renovation and refurbishment, which took place from 1993 to 1995, under the guidance of architect João Carreira, it resumed its regular artistic activity.

The Rabelo Boat

Other informations:

The Rabelo Boat;

Various references to this boat prove its origins lie way back in the 10th century.

The rabelos were purpose designed for the river Douro and its

The Porto Baixa

Other informations:

The Porto Baixa;

The Porto Baixa (Downtown) is laid out around the Avenida dos Aliados (Avenue of the Allies), the city's focal point. At the top of this thoroughfare, there is the imposing Municipal Council building. At the other end, it opens onto the Praça da Liberdade (Liberty Square) where there is a statue of a mounted Pedro IV (19th c.), emperor of Brazil and, like much of Oporto, a supporter of the Liberalism movement. In a show of recognition, the king literally gave his heart to the city, now watched over in the Church of Lapa.

To the side of the square, take a look at the São Bento (Saint Benedict) railway station to see the pictured tiles in the entrance hall. Then head down the Rua das Flores (Street of Flowers), with its goldsmiths and the exuberant baroque façade of the Church of Misericórdia (Compassion), a masterpiece by architect Nicolau Nasoni.

Surrounding this centre, there is a dense network of streets packed with stores and cafes. Of the latter, the magnificent Majestic and the cheerfully bustling Mercado do Bolhão are well worth a visit. On the streets 31 de Janeiro Galeria de Paris and Cândido dos Reis check out the facades with their Art Nouveau finishings.

Heading up Rua de São Filipe Néry, there is the Church and Tower dos Clérigos (Ecclesiastics), the centrepiece of the city and the most original design by Nicolau Nasoni. From 75 metres up in the tower, there is a wonderful panoramic view over the city of Porto and beyond. On the way, nip into the Lello bookshop and admire the lavish decoration bestowed on this temple to culture.

complex navigational challenges as well as for the transport of casks of wine.

Its characteristics enable it to navigate both more easily and at less risk those fast-flowing turbulent river waters.

The rabelo did not simply just transport the casks - never fully filled so at least these would float in case of accident - there was also a most varied cargo of goods and people.

Enjoy the unique experience of this vessel. There is a range of companies providing short cruises on rabelos.

Viana do Castelo

Festival of Our Lady in Sorrow

Other informations:

Festival of Our Lady in Sorrow;

Viana do Castelo's worship of Our Lady in Sorrow dates from 1744, when fishermen first began to call upon her to make sure that the sea would not be rough. 20 August has become established as the day for the festival in her honour. In 1772, a royal order was issued authorising the holding of a free fair in the city. on 18, 19 and 20 August. Since then, the Romaria de Nossa Senhora da Agonia has become one of the most beautiful, colourful and grandiose popular festivals in Portugal.

The three days of festivities are enlivened by various processions, accompanied by a great deal of music, and people dress attractively in the most beautiful traditional costumes of the Minho region.

There is the parade of majordomos, accompanied by fireworks and musical bands, which greets the Festival Committee and the city's highest dignitaries, ending in the Praça da República, where the "zabumbas" beat their big bass drums and the "gigantones" begin to parade.

The latter figures are carnival giants, strange enormous figures that first came from Santiago de Compostela more than a hundred years ago to enliven the festival. Then there is the ethnographic procession, with huge floats recalling the traditional working habits of the people of the Minho, both on land and at sea, offering us a genuine living museum of ethnography.

There is also the historical parade, which mixes legend and reality to tell some of the stories that have marked the development of Viana do Castelo.

The quite remarkable sea procession symbolises the profound links between the city and the element that has been responsible for much of its history and a large part of its very survival.

The image of Nossa Senhora da Agonia, dressed in her blue and purple cloak, is carried aboard a trawler, amidst fireworks and the ringing of bells, so that she can bless the sea and thereby make it calm and forever generous in the sustenance that it provides.

The boat carrying the image of Our Lady sails amidst a procession of hundreds of boats, their masts adorned with flags, and at the end of the day the image returns to the baroque chapel where it is normally housed, the doors remaining open for worship.

Thousands of people spend their time in bars and restaurants, where the traditional Portuguese cuisine, accompanied by the region's famous vinho verde, seems to taste even more succulent, whilst others huddle around the bandstands to listen to the bands playing. On the last night of festivities, with the lights of the fishing boats reflecting in the river Lima, a brilliant display of fireworks on the hundred-year-old bridge announces

Paços do Concelho

Other informations:

Paços do Concelho;

The construction of the former town hall spread over the reigns of D. Manuel I (who began the work) and D. João III. The whole building is made of austere granite and the ground floor forms a porchway of three pointed arches, corresponding on the first floor to three balcony windows. Above the middle window, the royal coat of arms has been carved, together with the armillary sphere and a caravel, the symbol of Viana, which owed most of its prosperity to the sea.

the end of the festival of Our Lady in Sorrow.

Vila Nova de Foz Côa

Rock Art of the Vale do Côa Archaeological Park

Other informations:

Rock Art of the Vale do Côa Archaeological Park;
Through the imposing mountains of the north-eastern region of Portugal, where in early spring the almond trees are in full blossom and in autumn the vines are covered with fiery red leaves, there runs into the River Douro, from the south, a tributary whose name is now known all around the world. This is the River Côa, whose vast valley contains many examples of a long-flourishing artistic cycle. Millennium after millennium, the rock formations that line the river banks have been converted into panels covered with thousands of engravings bequeathed to us by our ancestors' creative impulses.

Dating back to the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic Age, these open-air "panels" bear witness to an artistic vitality and mastery that have brought us into touch with 25,000 years of past time. This extensive art gallery provides us with a record of the Neolithic period and the Iron Age, and then transports us in one fell swoop across two thousand years of history to settle in the Modern Era with its religious representations, names, dates and even, only a few decades ago, some figures drawn by the children of a local miller.

Almost all the motifs are engraved in the rock, presenting us with themes, techniques and conventions common to other contemporary works in Western Europe, such as those found hidden in the French-Basque caves in the nineteenth century and which, by the turn of the century, were already being referred to as great art.

It was, however, not until the end of the twentieth century that we were suddenly to see the art of the Côa valley burst forth from the hidden recesses of the caves into the open air, where the daily and seasonal interplay of light and shade simultaneously exposes and hides it in a fantastic game of revelation and concealment.

As the river wends its way from south to north towards the River Douro, the last seventeen kilometres of its course form a valley that recently became Portugal's first archaeological park. Since December 2, 1998, it has been included in the list of monuments classified by UNESCO as World Heritage. The subsequent simultaneous creation of the Côa Valley Archaeological Park and the National Rock Art Centre, both of which have offices in Vila Nova de Foz Côa, represented the culmination of an important government decision and one that will clearly have a crucial effect on the status of rock art, archaeology and heritage in Portugal at various levels.

All of this magnificent group of open-air engravings, which finally lays to rest the old myth of rock art being forever enclosed in caves, can be admired in organised visits conducted by specialist guides, although it is stressed that all visits must be booked in advance.

The three centres that can be visited are: Canada do Inferno, which was the first group of engravings to be discovered, very close to Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Ribeira de Piscos, at Muxagata, and Penascosa, close to the village of Castelo Melhor.

Situated in the very heart of the archaeological park, the Quinta da Ervamoira provides a complementary service for visitors to the engravings. Here there is a museum that gives a full description of the region and its ancestral customs, without

forgetting the extremely ancient bread-making cycle and the traditional features of Douro wine production, yet another of this region's most undeniable riches.

Vila Nova de Gaia

Barragem de Crestuma / Lever

Crestuma / Lever Dam

Crestuma / Lever Dam is located upstream from the River Douro, in the far eastern portion of the municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia.

The Dam entered into operation in 1986, and is of a movable type, constituted by 9 pillars each measuring 25.5 m in height, that support eight discharging sluices and a navigation lock next to the left bank of the River Douro. The dam has a total length of around 44 km.

Vila Real

1st Count of Vila Real

Other informations:

1st Count of Vila Real;

Apparently, king João I (reigned 1383-1433) was in Vila Real when he summoned Pedro de Meneses to appoint him the first governor and defender of Ceuta, recently conquered by the Portuguese.

The nobleman was playing pelota with some companions in arms and answered his summons with his gaming stick in hand. Asked by the monarch if he were prepared to accept the duty of defending the conquered city, he told king Pedro that he was and that he would even go armed with the gaming basket to repel the Moorish attacks. Having completed the pledge he made the king, Pedro de Meneses was granted the title Count of Vila Real.

The memory of this tradition remains included in the district's symbols.

Old Vila Real

Other informations:

Old Vila Real;

Old Vila Real - along Carvalho Araújo Avenue

In the early years of the 20th century, a section of houses, was demolished, to open up this broad, well laid out avenue with its pavements in Portuguese cobbles. It was named in honour of Carvalho Araújo, a heroic officer in the Navy, who lost his life in combat during the First World War.

On the southern side, there is the elegant 19th century Vila Real Municipal Council Hall. Take a look at the double granite staircase. This entire structure was transferred from the 16th century former convent of S. Francisco (Saint Francis) as the convent and all around it were demolished to make way for the Forest Park along the river Corgo. To the left of the Council Hall, in a characteristically medieval house, with an external staircase leading up to a broad arcade, is the birthplace of explorer Diogo Cão, who discovered the mouth of the river Zaire, in 1483. Further along the same side, there is the gothic church that is the Vila Real Cathedral.

Medieval Vila Real

Other informations:

Medieval Vila Real;

Located on the southern side of the current city was the original "royal town" founded by king Dinis.

Although practically all the original town has since disappeared, the area is impressive for the beauty of its views.

Half an hour is about right to walk the promenade that begins at Largo do Freitas. This was where one of the main gates to the town was located defended by two towers demolished in the 19th century.

On the western side, some 100 metres down, runs the river Cabril. On the eastern side, over in the distance, there is the deep ravine containing the river Corgo. The two rivers converge to the extreme south of the promenade where it is still possible to discern some remains of the medieval wall that Dinis had built.

In the distance, there are the mountains that surround Vila Real: the Montemuro range to the south, the peak of Serra does Marão to the west and the rolling hills of Alvão to the northeast.

Within the walls are the S. Brás (Saint Bras) chapel cemetery, and the adjoining church of S. Dinis (Saint Denis), dating back to the founding of Vila Real.

Head down Rua de Traz do Muro, where the view takes in the Corgo valley whose waters feed a dam that was the first electric power station built by a municipal council in Portugal (1834). From this viewpoint, also resting on the old walls, there is the chapel of Santo António dos Esquecidos (Saint Anthony of the Forgotten) built in the mid-17th century. From there return to the Largo dos Freitas to begin a tour of old Vila Real at the Paços do Concelho (Town Hall) at the end of Avenida Carvalho Araújo.

Old Vila Real - Between the Avenida Carvalho Araújo and the Avenida Marginal

Other informations:

Old Vila Real - Between the Avenida Carvalho Araújo and the Avenida Marginal;

In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the mediaeval town expanded beyond the walled promontory built by its founder, D.

On the opposite side to the Se, there is the tourism office in part of the former Marquis of Vila Real's palace outhouses (also known as the Casa do Arco (House of the Arch)). This 15th century building features four twinned granite Manueline windows, sharply contoured and delicately decorated. The line of the Marquis of Vila Real ended in 1641 when the last descendent, Pedro de Meneses, was accused of betraying king João IV and decapitated in Rossio square in Lisbon.

Almost at the top of the avenue, on a bust in the gardened centre, there is an expressive bronze statue in homage to Carvalho Araújo by Anjos Teixeira (1884-1935).

As you continue along down Avenida Carvalho Araújo and Avenida Marginal, take a look at the fortified houses and retail establishments. This is the traditional, bustling heart of Vila Real.

Dinis, and new palatial and bourgeois dwellings were built, aligned along new streets, now located between the Avenida Carvalho Araújo and the modern Avenida Marginal, cut into the side of the ravine of the river Corgo.

We begin our journey by walking through Rua Camilo Castelo Branco, located right of the Town Hall, where a memorial plaque indicates the manor house (Casa das Brocas) with coat of arms that belonged to the ancestors of the writer and novelist, Camilo Castelo Branco. In the same street, it's also possible to see the house where Carvalho Araújo lived.

We continue our journey down the Rua da Misericórdia, that includes the old Church of Misericórdia. Further on, we encounter a triangular area, where every year on June 29, on the occasion of the feast of São Pedro, a picturesque fair of small pottery articles is held. In the same zone, we can see the elegant facade of the Church of the Clérigos, a masterpiece by the Italian architect, Nicolau Nasoni.

We continue along the long and winding Rua Direita, which was built in the 17th century and is one of the most typical roads in Vila Real, with a high number of traditional commercial establishments, many of which have maintained their original facades. Visitors should also take note of houses ornamented with decorated verandas, with gracious wrought ironwork and windows framed by granite, that constitute a veritable gallery of classic Portuguese civil architecture. As we continue north, at a level above the Avenida Marginal, we encounter the municipal park.