Towns and Villages

Alentejo

Alcácer do Sal

Alcácer do Sal
Towns and Villages

Graciously laid out over the right bank of the Sado river and rising up a gentle slope, Alcácer do Sal has been settled since the earliest of times. Archaeological remains have been found that date back to the Neolithic period not to mention

Almeirim

Almeirim
Towns and Villages

Of very ancient origin, this region was already populated in prehistoric times, but it was in the 16th century that Almeirim underwent major development, at a time when the Portuguese Court chose it as a favourite summer resort. The journey was made

Alpiarça

Alpiarça
Towns and Villages

Situated on the vast, alluvial plain of the Ribatejo, the region of Portugal where the traditions associated with horse-breeding and bullfighting are most deeply rooted, Alpiarça is a peaceful town which still bears the evidence of human occupation

Alter do Chão

Alter do Chão
Towns and Villages

A calm and peaceful town, Alter do Chão dates back to the Roman period.At that time, it was called Abelterium and the public baths at Ferragial d´El Rei and the bridge at Vila Formosa are some examples of Roman remains to be found in the region.

Alvito

Alvito
Towns and Villages

Situated at a high point in the midst of the Alentejo plains, and offering extensive views over the distant horizons, the graceful town of Alvito has grown around its palatial castle, where the Pousada de Alvito is now housed.The white houses give

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Arraiolos

Arraiolos
Towns and Villages

Arraiolos is a pleasant Alentejo town, whose foundation dates back to the second century BC. The mediaeval castle was built at the orders of D. Dinis (1279-1325), although the town soon spread beyond its walls. An important part of the town's

Avis

Avis
Towns and Villages

This picturesque Alentejo town, composed of narrow streets and white limewashed houses, holds within it the memory of the old and powerful Military Order of Avis. After the town had been captured from the Moors in 1211, the land was given by the

Azambuja

Azambuja
Towns and Villages

Founded by the Romans and named Oliastrum, Azambuja was occupied by the Moors, who called it "Azzabuja", the origin of its present name. In the 12th century, King Dom Sancho I, aided by the Knights of Flanders, drove the Arabs out of this region and

Beja

Beja
Towns and Villages

The site of modern Beja has been occupied since the beginning of modern history. However, it was the Roman empire that most contributed to its early development. It was here, in 1 bc that Emperor Julius Cesar signed a peace treaty with the

Benavente

Benavente
Towns and Villages

The village of Benavente originates from a group of foreign colonists who settled on the south bank of the Tagus in the 13th century, according to a plan drawn up by King Dom Sancho I for the settlement of these lands, which were practically

Borba

Borba
Towns and Villages

Borba was founded long ago when the Iberian Peninsula was occupied by Gallo-Celtic tribes, although the town's importance and development are, of course, closely linked to the Christian Reconquest and the defence of the Portuguese territory.Borba

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Campo Maior

Campo Maior
Towns and Villages

Like so many other towns in the Alentejo, Campo Maior is a quiet and peaceful town in the south of Portugal, situated very close to the Spanish border. Tradition has it that its origin can be explained by the wilful determination of three peasant

Cartaxo

Cartaxo
Towns and Villages

About 10 kilometres from Santarém, Cartaxo is a village of very ancient origin, and at the time of the Roman occupation it was an important staging post on the road linking Lisbon to Santarém.The region is still basically agricultural, and is

Castelo de Vide

Castelo de Vide
Towns and Villages

The castle, surrounded by the town's white houses, dominates the surrounding landscape and is undoubtedly the first of many surprises encountered by the visitor. When seen from this high point, the Alentejo landscape is finally revealed in all of

Chamusca

Chamusca
Towns and Villages

A whitewashed town on the bank of the River Tagus, Chamusca lies in the Ribatejo alluvial plain, an extremely fertile region where farming and cattle-breeding are still the main occupations. This is evident in its traditional festivals, of which the

Coruche

Coruche
Towns and Villages

Situated on the alluvial plain, in an area of the Ribatejo near the Alentejo, the town of Coruche is a typical peaceful village, whose low white houses of good quality popular architecture stretch along the plain alongside the River Sorraia.

Elvas

Elvas
Towns and Villages

Anyone arriving in Elvas on the road from Estremoz immediately comes face to face with the Aqueduto da Amoreira, which has become the city's hallmark. This calm city is famous for the important defensive role that it has played throughout

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Estremoz

Estremoz
Towns and Villages

A white and noble city, Estremoz can be divided into two separate areas that testify to its different stages of development: the group of mediaeval houses near the castle and, outside the city walls, the modern town.Estremoz has a rich cultural

Fronteira

Fronteira
Towns and Villages

A pretty typically Alentejo village, Fronteira is situated on the left bank of the River Avis, north of Estremoz and southwest of Portalegre.Traces of human occupation here date back more than 10,000 years, as is evidenced by the numerous megalithic

Golegã

Golegã
Towns and Villages

Golegã is situated in a fertile region, irrigated by the two rivers that form its boundaries, the River Tagus and its tributary, the River Almonda. This geographical fact influenced the choice made to settle in this region and immediately benefited

Grândola

Grândola
Towns and Villages

The Grândola region has its own very special characteristics, combining the influences of the coast with those of the inland regions of southern Portugal. Farming continues to be a very important activity here, with rice being the most significant

Marvão

Marvão
Towns and Villages

Between Castelo de Vide and Portalegre, and only a few kilometres from Spain, stands the peaceful town of Marvão, on the highest crest of the Serra de São Mamede.The hilltop village of Ammaia, as it was then known, owes its current name to the

Monsaraz

Monsaraz
Towns and Villages

This extremely beautiful mediaeval town has succeeded in preserving its own distinctive characteristics over the centuries. Walking through the streets of Monsaraz is like going back in time, for it is a truly unique place where one can find all the

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Moura

Moura
Towns and Villages

There are many interesting features for visitors to see in this bright and cheerful Alentejo town situated close to the River Guadiana. This is a region of undulating hills, planted with extensive olive-groves and producing some excellent wines. The

Mértola

Mértola
Towns and Villages

The nesting site of storks where the gracious white houses roll down to the Guadiana contains all the charms of a thriving and surviving museum town.Formerly a Roman town before becoming the capital of the Arab kingdom and the original national home

Odemira

Odemira
Towns and Villages

This beautiful name is said to have originated from the Arab words wad (meaning river) and Emir, leading to the name Odemira in Portuguese.Despite being conquered from the Moors by the first Portuguese king D. Afonso Henriques, the town was not

Portalegre

Portalegre
Towns and Villages

Located in the São Mamede Hills close to the border with Spain, Portalegre retained strategic importance for national defence throughout the Middle Ages. King Afonso III (1248-79) granted the settlement its first royal charter before handing it

Porto Covo

Porto Côvo
Towns and Villages

Porto Covo continues to be the friendly fishing village full of small white houses that was rebuilt by the Marquês de Pombal shortly after the 1755 earthquake.Some of the greatest attractions for visitors are the many beautiful beaches sheltered by

Redondo

Redondo
Towns and Villages

The Alentejo town of Redondo has become particularly important for the Portuguese economy as a result of its two main regional products: pottery and wine.The local hand-made pottery is well known all over the country. It is possible to find here

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Reguengos de Monsaraz

Reguengos de Monsaraz
Towns and Villages

The history of Reguengos has frequently been confused over the years with that of Monsaraz, since the limits of the municipality were exactly the same until 1838, the year when the municipal seat was moved to Reguengos, a situation which contributed

Rio Maior

Rio Maior
Towns and Villages

Nearby the Serra dos Candeeiros, Rio Maior was for centuries an important mining centre, since the local population's main occupation was extracting rock-salt from a mine in the Serra. Farming is still the main occupation in the region, with large

Salvaterra de Magos

Salvaterra de Magos
Towns and Villages

A peaceful town in the Ribatejo, Salvaterra de Magos used, centuries ago, to be one of the places favoured by the Court, so buildings, now in ruins, were constructed here, which enabled the Court to enjoy all the conveniences they were used to in

Santarém

Santarém
Towns and Villages

The River Tagus and the fertile meadowland surrounding the plateau on which Santarém stands have been important factors in the settlement of the area since remote times. The Roman name for Santarém was Scalabis, and they were also responsible for

Santiago do Cacém

Santiago do Cacém
Towns and Villages

Santiago do Cacém is a peaceful town in the south of Portugal, whose origins date back to remote times. In the Roman period, it was an important town situated on the road linking Lisbon to the Algarve, a factor which greatly contributed to its

Serpa

Serpa
Towns and Villages

Located on higher ground just a few kilometres from the left bank of the Guadiana, the great river that crosses southern Portugal, there is the town of Serpa. The site is known to have been settled since Roman times, around 2,000 years ago.With the

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Sines

Sines
Towns and Villages

An old fishing town, Sines has been gradually transformed by tourism and industry. Nowadays, it is a major port and oil-tanker terminal of great importance to the Portuguese economy.Overlooking the bay are the ruins of a mediaeval castle, which was

Tróia

Tróia
Towns and Villages

Situated on a peninsula on the south side of the River Sado, opposite the city of Setúbal, with which there is a regular ferry link, Tróia still has important Roman ruins, in particular a plant for salting fish (an important industrial complex at

Viana do Alentejo

Viana do Alentejo
Towns and Villages

Viana do Alentejo castle, built in the reign of D. Dinis, was later rebuilt at the orders of D. João II, who held a meeting of the cortes (parliament) here in 1482.It is a walled enclosure with cylindrical towers in the corners. Built against the

Vidigueira

Vidigueira
Towns and Villages

The existence of a settlement here has only been documented since the thirteenth century. However, there is evidence of the human occupation of this region since prehistoric times. In addition to the megalithic heritage to be found here, attention

Vila Nova de Milfontes

Vila Nova de Milfontes
Towns and Villages

This pleasant town situated at the mouth of the River Mira owes much of its recent development to the great increase in tourism in this region. The calm and beautiful beaches along the Costa Vicentina are much sought after, mainly because they still

Vila Viçosa

Vila Viçosa
Towns and Villages

Situated in one of the most fertile regions in the south of Portugal, Vila Viçosa was often at the centre of some of the most important moments in the country's history.The House of the Dukes of Bragança, the most powerful noble family after the

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Zambujeira do Mar

Zambujeira do Mar
Towns and Villages

Affording an excellent view over the beach, Zambujeira do Mar is a small fishing village where it is still possible to enjoy a feeling of great peace and tranquillity.The beautiful beaches are one of the main attractions for the many visitors that

Évora

Évora
Towns and Villages

Topped by an imposing cathedral, Évora is laid out over a gently sloping hill rising out of the huge Alentejo plain. It guards its historic centre with a vast outer wall and represents a valuable cultural legacy that UNESCO has classified World

Algarve

Albufeira

Albufeira
Towns and Villages

The progress has turned Albufeira into a city with tourism and leisure as its vocation but the streets in the hold Cerro da Vila (mediaeval area) still preserve the picturesque appeal of whitewashed houses and steeply narrow streets. In Travessa da

Alcoutim

Alcoutim
Towns and Villages

Alcoutim´s origins are presumably linked to the fact that it is situated at the place where the Guadiana becomes tidal. The vessels that traded metals and other wares were obliged to wait at this spot for hours, until the river conditions allowed

Aljezur

Aljezur
Towns and Villages

The boundaries of Aljezur are delimited by the sea and the hills reflecting this double influence in its landscapes. While the coast is marked by high cliffs hiding sandy coves and dunes, the hinterland is a place of rolling hills covered with

Almancil

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Almancil
Towns and Villages

A small Algarvian village that is worth visiting in particular for the Capela de São Lourenço de Matos, a small chapel decorated on the inside with some of the finest examples of eighteenth-century azulejos in Portugal.Around the chapel, the

Alte

Alte
Towns and Villages

Some consider Alte, which has existed since the period of the Roman occupation, to be the village most typical of the Algarve.With their whitewashed houses, windows and façades with colourful borders, and decorated chimneys, the streets of the

Armação de Pêra

Armação de Pêra
Towns and Villages

For many centuries, Armação de Pêra was essentially a small village, inhabited by fishermen, who had been drawn there by the great abundance of fish, particularly tuna and sardines. After salting, the fish was sold for consumption in the southern

Castro Marim

Castro Marim
Towns and Villages

On the top of one hill stands a castle, on the other a star-shaped fort. Between them the houses of Castro Marim, with their white walls with brightly-painted borders, their flat roofs and their ornate chimneys sculpted into lace-like patterns.

Faro

Faro
Towns and Villages

It was during the Roman period that this region developed and gained standing. It was then known as Civitas Ossobonensis, with its borders stretching to where modern Tavira lies, and included a number of towns with specific productive, rural and

Lagoa

Lagoa
Towns and Villages

The date of Lagoa´s foundation remains uncertain, although it is known that the first settlement grew around a lagoon (lagoa), from which its name derives. One or two interesting examples of Manueline architecture can still be found in the town,

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Lagos

Lagos
Towns and Villages

Lagos has a long history linking it to the sea. Its original name, Lacobriga, reflects the fact that the first inhabitants of this port, in roughly 2000 years BC, were of Celtic origin. After them came the Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians, but

Loulé

Loulé
Towns and Villages

The date of the city's foundation is uncertain, although it most certainly dates back to the distant past. There are, however, clear traces of the area's occupation by the Romans, with the fishing and fish-salting centre of Cerro da Vila in

Monchique

Monchique
Towns and Villages

The houses of Monchique display many of the traditional features of the architecture in the Algarve - white walls, carved stonework, stripes of color around doors and windows - but with their "saia" chimneys (literally "skirt") quite different from

Monte Gordo

Monte Gordo
Towns and Villages

For centuries fishermen´s shacks were the only sign of human life on the broad sands surrounded by pine woods.The beauty of the beach and the warm, safe waters attracted the first foreign tourists in the 60s, making Monte Gordo something of a

Olhão

Olhão
Towns and Villages

To discover the hidden charm of Olhão you have to go up to the top of the main church tower, the higher point. Only then you can see the hundreds of roof terraces - the "açoteias" -, typical of the Algarve, which create a unique urban panorama, as

Portimão

Portimão
Towns and Villages

The white contour of a church on a hilltop, the narrow streets of the old fishermen and tradesmen quarter, the presence of the sea and the immense beach known by the name of Praia da Rocha are some of the aspects that identify the character of this

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Quarteira

Quarteira
Towns and Villages

Once a simple fishing village, Quarteira has become in the last decades in a cosmopolitan tourist centre, main reason to receive hundreds of vistors every year.Its past identity can be glimpsed in a 17th century church and in a nucleous of houses

Sagres

Sagres
Towns and Villages

Dating back from the Roman conquest times, it was in the 15th century that Sagres achieved great importance.The frequent presence of Prince henry the Navigator during the first days of Atlantic navigation and the Discovery of the African coast as

Silves

Silves
Towns and Villages

Located on a hill in the Serra de Monchique chain, Silves owes its foundation and development to the Arade river. This was long an important means of communication attracting settlers as far back as the Iron Age, 3,000 years before Christ.The Arade

São Brás de Alportel

São Brás de Alportel
Towns and Villages

This village still shows a tranquil and unhurried lifestyle by the friendly local population. The streets of white houses whose ranks are broken only by the lofty outline of the church and its bell tower, the ring of hills around the town that look

Tavira

Tavira
Towns and Villages

In the Algarve, archaeological remains have been discovered tracing settlement back over 6,000 years. However, it was under the Roman empire that the southern coastline was settled in a more organised fashion. The city of Balsa was established in

Vila Real de Santo António

Vila Real de Santo António
Towns and Villages

In the sixteenth century, there existed a town known as Vila de Santo António de Arenilha, which was probably much closer to the sea. By the eighteenth century, this town had disappeared, having been engulfed by the sea and sand. It was, however,

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Vila do Bispo

Vila do Bispo
Towns and Villages

The windmills which recorded the fact that for centuries Vila do Bispo was the breadbasket of the Algarve have disappeared. What remains, however, is the charm of whitewashed houses scattered down the slopes of a hill crowned by the looming bulk of

Vilamoura

Vilamoura
Towns and Villages

Vilamoura is nowadays one of the biggest centres in Europe.Golf, tennis, horse-riding, equipment to go shooting and fishing, a casino and an aerodrome are complemented by a tourist complex where the big star is the marina.Not only for its size - the

Azores

Angra do Heroísmo

Angra do Heroísmo
Towns and Villages

Associated to the Discoveries during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Angra do Heroismo is the example of the creation of a city closely linked to its maritime function and was an obligatory port of call of the fleets of Africa and the Indies.

Horta

Horta
Towns and Villages

The city of Horta has plenty to see, scenically built between two bays, divided by the isthmus that leads us to the Monte da Guia.Its streets tell us the story of a city founded five centuries ago, which saw the arrival of the caravels that brought

Ponta Delgada

Ponta Delgada
Towns and Villages

Ponta Delgada began as a simple fishing village whose fishermen were once attracted by its safe coves, but soon began to play the role of main port of the São Miguel Island.The city grew and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the convents,

Centro de Portugal

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Abrantes

Abrantes
Towns and Villages

Situated on a hillside next to the River Tagus, Abrantes has always been an important place in terms of military strategy, since from its highest point one can enjoy an immense panoramic view, including most of the River Tagus, and extending to the

Alcanena

Alcanena
Towns and Villages

At the foot of the Aire and Candeeiros Mountains, an area classified as a Natural Park, the village of Alcanena underwent considerable development in the 19th century, when several factories involved in the tanning industry were established. It was

Alcobaça

Alcobaça
Towns and Villages

Alcobaça lies in the valleys of the Rivers Alcoa and Baça, which according to some authors is the origin of its name. It has also been suggested that it was the Arabic name of the place which was split to name the two rivers.Alcobaça owes its

Alenquer

Alenquer
Towns and Villages

Of Moorish origin, the village of Alenquer was recaptured for the Christians by Dom Afonso Henriques, the first King of Portugal, in the 12th century, in his offensive towards Lisbon, which is only 35 kilometres from Alenquer. Alenquer is popularly

Almeida

Almeida
Towns and Villages

Classified as a historical village, Almeida is a fortified town that, when seen from the air, has all the appearance of a 12-pointed star, this being the number of bastions and ravelins enclosing a space with a perimeter of 2500 metres. This

Arruda dos Vinhos

Arruda dos Vinhos
Towns and Villages

Founded in the 12th century by Dom Afonso Henriques, the first King of Portugal, the district of Arruda dos Vinhos was donated by this King to the Religious and Military Order of Santiago de Espada for defence and settlement. Traditionally an

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Aveiro

Aveiro
Towns and Villages

The capital of the Ria, a vast lagoon where the freshwater of the River Vouga joins with the sea, Aveiro is intersected by canals, genuine streets of water, along which can be seen gliding the brightly coloured boats known as barcos moliceiros.

Batalha

Batalha
Towns and Villages

The town of Batalha developed alongside the Monastery of Santa Maria de Vitória, constructed in 1386 to keep a vow by Portuguese King Dom João I to the Virgin Mary that he would build it if Portugal defeated Castile at the Battle of Aljubarrota on

Belmonte

Belmonte
Towns and Villages

All roads in this ancient settlement - its first charter was granted by king Sancho I in 1199- lead up to the hilltop granite castle. A document dated 1258 describes the construction: the lofty donjon, walls, bulwarks and the noble residence.

Bombarral

Bombarral
Towns and Villages

In a predominantly agricultural region, with a tradition going back to the 14th century, when this area was part of the farm of the Monastery of Alcobaça and was looked after by the monks, Bombarral is famous as a fruit and wine-producing centre, a

Buçaco

Buçaco
Towns and Villages

A large and majestic forest, the Serra do Buçaco is a genuine botanical garden where roughly 700 native and exotic species can be found, all of them protected by a Papal Bull issued in the seventeenth century threatening anyone damaging the trees

Cadaval

Cadaval
Towns and Villages

A picturesque town surrounded by vineyards and orchards, Cadaval is a region where agriculture, especially the extensive vineyards and orchards, continues to dominate the economy.In the environs, on the Serra de Montejunto (the highest point in the

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Caldas da Rainha

Caldas da Rainha
Towns and Villages

The town owes its name to the thermal spring that was much appreciated by Queen Dona Leonor, wife of the 15th century King Dom Manuel I, who had the opportunity to confirm the curative properties of these waters when they cured her of a wound that

Castelo Branco

Castelo Branco
Towns and Villages

The origins of Castelo Branco can be found in Roman times with the settlers who established Albi Castrum on the slopes of the Cardosa hill. In 1214, king Afonso II bestowed this land on the Order of the Templar Knights, entrusting them with its

Castelo Mendo

Castelo Mendo
Towns and Villages

Built on the top of a hill at a point of great strategic significance, on the remains of earlier fortresses dating back to the Bronze Age and Roman times, Castelo Mendo is a historical village surrounded by walls that were rebuilt in the twelfth

Castelo Novo

Castelo Novo
Towns and Villages

Set in the superb amphitheatre formed by the Serra da Gardunha, Castelo Novo has some surprisingly beautiful manor houses that once belonged to the region's noble families.Built in the 12th century but badly damaged by the earthquake in 1755, the

Castelo Rodrigo

Castelo Rodrigo
Towns and Villages

From its lofty hilltop position, the small village of Castelo Rodrigo looks down over the plateau stretching eastwards to Spain and northwards to the deep valley of the River Douro. According to tradition, it was founded by Alfonso IX of León, in

Celorico da Beira

Celorico da Beira
Towns and Villages

Celorico da Beira sits 550 metres high but still at the foot of the Serra da Estrela mountains, with the Mondego river running through. Any visit to this region takes in centuries of history set against a granite mountain background cut by crystal

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Coimbra

Coimbra
Towns and Villages

Long ago, this site was occupied by the Celts, but the process of Romanisation brought a great cultural transformation to this region. The presence of the Romans is still visible in the various archaeological remains housed at the Museu Nacional

Constância

Constância
Towns and Villages

Located at the confluence of two rivers - the Tagus and the Zêzere - Constância has a characteristic physiognomy on account of the row of white houses harmoniously inset on a hillside.It was its geographical position that formed the

Covilhã

Covilhã
Towns and Villages

Lying among rivers and mountains, the city of Covilhã is one of the gateways to the Serra da Estrela.The original inhabitants of the land were Lusitanian shepherds. Covilhã was reconquered from the Moors by King Dom Sancho I, who built city walls

Entroncamento

Entroncamento
Towns and Villages

Entroncamento started developing at the end of the 19th century around the most important railway station in the country, at the junction of the Northern and Eastern railway lines. The railway junction led workers from all over the country to settle

Ferreira do Zêzere

Ferreira do Zêzere
Towns and Villages

Situated between a large area of forest and the River Zêzere, which is transformed here into the enormous blue lake of the lagoon of the Castelo de Bode dam, Ferreira do Zêzere is a peaceful town with some notable palacelike houses and the Igreja

Figueira da Foz

Figueira da Foz
Towns and Villages

Figueira da Foz took its name from its situation at the mouth (foz) of the River Mondego and it has developed into one of the main seaside resorts in the centre of Portugal. A cosmopolitan and lively city, it first began to gain in importance

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Fundão

Alpedrinha
Towns and Villages

Built on the southern slope of the Serra da Gardunha and protected from the harsh winter winds, Alpedrinha offers its visitors the chance to enjoy clean, pure air.The Romans called the village Petratinia and perhaps they took away with them the

Fátima

Fátima
Towns and Villages

With its origins deep in history, it was during the Arabian occupation that this settlement developed and was named. According to legend, during the Christian Reconquest, the Templar knight Gonçalo Hermingues, also known as Bringer-of-Moors, fell

Guarda

Guarda
Towns and Villages

Set at 1,056 metres on the slopes of the Serra da Estrela, this is the highest city in Portugal. Given its strategic location, it has served as a battleground since pre-history and settled since pre-Roman times.Recognising its importance as a key

Idanha-a-Velha

Idanha-a-Velha
Towns and Villages

Successive settlements of the region by different peoples have left Idanha-a-Velha with a most valuable historical heritage.Anyone visiting the modest village to be found here nowadays and observing its peaceful pace of life will have difficulty

Leiria

Leiria
Towns and Villages

Leiria has a river that flows uphill, a tower that does not have a cathedral, a cathedral that does not have a tower, and a High Street that is not straight. (According to a popular Portuguese rhyme.)For Dom Afonso Henriques, the first Christian

Linhares da Beira

Linhares da Beira
Towns and Villages

Situated on the western slopes of the Serra da Estrela, Linhares da Beira was originally a Lusitanian hill fort. In fact, the Montes Hermínios (this was the Lusitanian name for the Serra da Estrela), with its pastureland and abundant water supply

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Lourinhã

Lourinhã
Towns and Villages

Inhabited since ancient times, it was in the Lourinhã region that the most important evidence of the presence of dinosaurs in Portugal was discovered - the fossilised eggs and respective embryos, which are displayed in the Municipal Museum.On the

Lousã

Lousã
Towns and Villages

Located right in the centre of Portugal, Lousã is a town with much of interest even though many of its visitors are sports enthusiasts seeking it out for the nearby Serra da Lousã, the true highlight of this region.In the far south-west of the

Marialva

Marialva
Towns and Villages

Because of its splendid location on the top of an almost inaccessible cliff, on the left bank of the River Alva, the small village of Marialva was an important military stronghold in the Middle Ages.The same position was, in fact, also the cause of

Marinha Grande

Marinha Grande
Towns and Villages

The history of Marinha Grande is closely linked to the 11,500 hectares of the Pinhal de Leiria, also known as Pinhal do Rei (the King's Pine-Forest). This forest of maritime pine-trees was planted in the 13th century by D. Afonso III and later

Mação

Mação
Towns and Villages

In the hinterland of the country, in the area of Pinhal, so called because it belongs to the largest forested area in Europe, Mação is a peaceful town which mingles characteristics of the Lower Beira (especially the landscape of hills and valleys)

Meda

Meda
Towns and Villages

In the mediaeval period, Meda was the setting for hard-fought skirmishes between Christians and Muslims, since at that time it was essentially a border town. Its watchtower (formerly known as the Torre de Vigia, but referred to nowadays as the Torre

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Monsanto

Monsanto
Towns and Villages

In their geography, climate and fauna, the plains of the Beira Interior region, between the foothills of the Serra da Gardunha and the River Ponsul, form the transitional zone between the north and south of Portugal. Standing above them on a high

Monte Real

Monte Real
Towns and Villages

Previously known as the Póvoa (hamlet) of Monte Real, this town developed considerably during the 20th century, due to the increasing demand for the acknowledged therapeutic qualities of its waters. The hot springs, within the Pinhal (pine forest)

Montemor-o-Velho

Montemor-o-velho
Towns and Villages

Overlooking the fertile valley of the River Mondego, the streets of Montemor-o-Velho reveal the town's long history in all their nooks and crannies and in the many architectural details that it is well worth taking some time to discover.The region

Nazaré

Nazaré
Towns and Villages

A typical fishing town, Nazaré is nowadays a busy summer resort, where side by side with the crowds of tourists, one still sees all over the streets of the town the fish-sellers, and the carapaus (horse mackerel) laid out to dry. The Sítio

Oleiros

Oleiros
Towns and Villages

The town of Oleiros, situated in a region usually referred to as the Pinhal area, and nearby the Cabril Dam, is an excellent place for a few days of rest in contact with nature. It still preserves from its distant past the vestiges of the presence

Ourém

Ourém
Towns and Villages

At the top of a high hill, which was the ideal place for the building of a settlement in the old days, stands the older part of the town of Ourém, founded under the name of Abdegas. The Moorish occupation of the region from the 9th century onwards

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Peniche

Berlengas
Towns and Villages

Located opposite Peniche, the Berlengas Archipelago consists of 3 groups of small islands: Berlenga Grande (the only inhabited one, that can be visited by boat from Peniche) and the nearby reefs, Estelas and Farilhões-Forcadas; their geological

Peniche
Towns and Villages

In Peniche, the fortress that D. João IV ordered to be built in the seventeenth century was, like the forts on Consolação beach and the S. João Baptista fort on the Berlenga Islands, an important military complex for protection against invasions

Piódão

Piodão
Towns and Villages

Buried deep in the Serra do Açor (a protected landscape area), which is full of breathtaking views, springs and pastureland, the historical village of Piódão is reminiscent of a crib because of the harmonious way in which its houses are arranged

Pombal

Pombal
Towns and Villages

It was the Master of the Templars Dom Gualdim Pais who, in the 12th century, ordered the building of the Pombal Castle (which the town developed around), in a region that was then the dividing line between the territory already reconquered by the

Porto de Mós

Porto de Mós
Towns and Villages

The name is thought to originate from the time of the Roman occupation, when there was a port here on the River Lena, navigable in those days, in which the millstones (Mós), extracted from a quarry in the region, were loaded and unloaded.The fact

Proença-a-Nova

Proença-a-Nova
Towns and Villages

Surrounded by large areas of forest and cultivated fields, in particular the olive groves and cherry trees that blossom in the spring, covering huge areas with a white shroud in a stunning spectacle, Proença-a-Nova is a town waiting to be

Sardoal

Sardoal
Towns and Villages

Inhabited since prehistoric times, as demonstrated by several archaeological finds, the oldest document proving the existence of Sardoal dates back to 1313, and consists of a letter written by Queen Santa Isabel, the wife of King Dom Dinis, now kept

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Sertã

Sertã
Towns and Villages

According to legend, Sertã owes its name to the wife of a Lusitanian nobleman who, after her husband died in a battle against the Romans, threw a "sertã" (frying pan) full of boiling oil from the battlements of the castle over the Romans,

Sobral de Monte Agraço

Sobral de Monte Agraço
Towns and Villages

Situated in a region where farm smallholdings are predominant, where the landscape is harmoniously composed of vegetable gardens and vineyards, the peaceful and picturesque town of Sobral de Monte Agraço contains some interesting buildings,

Sortelha

Sortelha
Towns and Villages

Surmounted by a castle built on a formidable crag at an altitude of 760 metres, Sortelha still retains its mediaeval appearance intact through the architecture of its rural granite houses.Sortelha had therefore part of an important line of defence

São Martinho do Porto

São Martinho do Porto
Towns and Villages

The bay of São Martinho do Porto, shaped like a closed shell, has been frequented for years by the same families who long ago chose it as their favourite place for holidays and weekends. Very crowded during the summer, when it turns into a truly

Tomar

Tomar
Towns and Villages

The development of Tomar is closely linked to the Order of the Templars, which received these lands in 1159 as a reward for the assistance they gave Dom Afonso Henriques (the First King of Portugal) in the Christian reconquest of the territory.It

Tondela

Caramulo
Towns and Villages

For the very best in clean and pure airs, and a sure remedy to any concept of stress, spend some time in Serra do Caramulo. So healthy are the surroundings, this region has long since been sought out as a cure for lung and breathing ailments.Located

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Torres Novas

Torres Novas
Towns and Villages

This region has been inhabited since Roman times, as evidenced by the ruins of the Vila Cardílio, with its precious polychrome mosaics. The most prestigious monument in Torres Novas is its castle with eleven turrets, the former residence of the

Torres Vedras

Torres Vedras
Towns and Villages

Inhabited in prehistoric and Roman times, Torres Vedras received its Charter in the mid-13th century. The Convent of Varatojo, one of the most important religious monuments in the region, was founded in 1470 by King Dom Afonso V, in gratitude for

Trancoso

Trancoso
Towns and Villages

With a past that parallels the history of Portugal, Trancoso is a town whose narrow streets and stone houses preserve the medieval atmosphere. The plateau on which it is situated, at an altitude of 870 metres, gave it a strategic position in the

Vila Nova da Barquinha

Vila Nova da Barquinha
Towns and Villages

Located right next to the River Tagus, in an extremely green and fertile area, Vila Nova de Barquinha is a very picturesque place. Opposite it, on an islet in the middle of the river, is one of the most attractive Portuguese castles - the Castle of

Vila de Rei

Vila de Rei
Towns and Villages

If you imagine a line crossing Portugal from north to south, and another from east to west, Vila de Rei is situated right in the geodesic centre of the country, a fact that is marked on a peak of a geodesic pyramid in the Serra de Melriça, a point

Viseu

Viseu
Towns and Villages

According to some explanations, the city's name derived from the Roman term "viso", which means a good view, and in fact from its highest point, where the original settlement was formed in Roman times, Viseu offers its visitors some quite

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Ílhavo

Ílhavo

Towns and Villages

Around 3km from Aveiro, down the coast road heading southwards, there is Ílhavo, formerly called Illabum which is believed to have been originally settled by the Greeks. Similar to Aveiro, it is located on the flatlands surrounding the lower

Óbidos

Óbidos

Towns and Villages

The delightful town of Óbidos, with white houses adorned with bougainvilleas and honeysuckle was captured from the Moors by the first king of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques, in 1148. D. Dinis later presented it to his wife, Queen Santa Isabel. From

Lisboa Region

Alcochete

Alcochete

Towns and Villages

Alcochete was founded by the Moors and called "Alcaxete", meaning ovens, which is thought to be due to the large ovens for baking clay that existed here. Alcochete was captured by Dom Afonso Henriques, the first King of Portugal, in the 12th

Almada

Almada

Towns and Villages

Almada, on the south bank of the River Tagus, has undoubtedly the best view of the city of Lisbon. The most outstanding views are from the castle, the panoramic funicular of the Boca do Vento (Mouth of the Wind), and above all the statue of Christ

Amadora

Amadora

Towns and Villages

The town of Amadora, a suburb of Lisbon, has experienced extraordinary development in the 20th century, as thousands of people who work in the capital have chosen to live there, since it is easy to commute by train or car.The most important of the

Barreiro

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Barreiro
Towns and Villages

Raised to the category of town in the 16th century, the original nucleus of the village of Barreiro was composed of various fishermen from the Algarve, who settled here and worked in the barra (river mouth) of the port of Lisbon, and hence were

Cascais

Cascais
Towns and Villages

Situated close to the sea and traditionally a fishing village, Cascais enjoyed an important period of development in the 14th century, when it was a major stopping off point for boats on their way to Lisbon, turning it into a very busy port at that

Guincho
Towns and Villages

Near to Cascais, the long sandy beach of Guincho is very popular with bathers, and all through the year with surfers and windsurfers, sports for which the beach offers excellent conditions. Along the road by the sea there are several top quality

Costa de Caparica

Costa de Caparica
Towns and Villages

A traditional fishing village, Costa da Caparica was transformed in the 20th century into the busiest beach in the Lisbon region. Its location and easy accessibility attracts crowds on summer weekends. The strip of sand about 25 kilometres long

Ericeira

Ericeira
Towns and Villages

A traditional fishing village, Ericeira has developed enormously during the 20th century due to the growing interest in it as a summer resort. It has, however, maintained its original characteristics and its own individual atmosphere.Fifty

Estoril

Estoril
Towns and Villages

Estoril, a world-famous resort, is a true cosmopolitan centre with wonderful nightlife and all the infrastructure for a summer centre - beaches, excellent hotels, golf courses, a casino and even a motor-racing circuit.The planned transformation of

Lisboa

Lisboa
Towns and Villages

On the right bank of the broad Tagus river estuary, the capital of Portugal graciously reclines over rolling hills. This is a spectacular geographical location and does much to explain the cosmopolitan history of the city. Its exceptional natural

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Loures

Loures
Towns and Villages

In the outskirts of Lisbon, the Loures region is traditionally known as the saloia (country) area, because the gardens that used to supply the city of Lisbon with vegetables and fresh produce were situated here.From the former times when it was in

Mafra

Mafra
Towns and Villages

This town near Lisbon, in the "saloia" (rustic) area, which used to supply the capital with garden produce, is famous for its imposing Palace-Convent, the largest edifice in Portugal, built by order of King Dom João V in the 18th century. The king,

Moita

Moita
Towns and Villages

Originally a fishing village, on the south bank of the Tagus, near Lisbon and Setúbal, Moita started to be frequented by the nobility as a place of leisure, and in the 16th century as a refuge, on account of the plague which was sweeping Lisbon.

Montijo

Montijo
Towns and Villages

Situated next to the River Tagus, this area was donated in the 12th century by the King of Portugal to the Military Order of Santiago de Espada which controlled a vast territory with the Castle of Palmela as its highest point. For centuries it bore

Oeiras

Oeiras
Towns and Villages

Situated by the sea and around 10 kilometres from Lisbon, the town of Oeiras has for centuries been the place chosen by many noble or wealthy families for their summer residences. The most important of these buildings are the 18th century palace of

Palmela

Palmela
Towns and Villages

This town, located on one of the foothills of the Arrábida mountain range, has over the centuries attracted the various peoples who have passed through the Iberian Peninsula.It is believed to owe its name to the Romans, specifically to a praetor

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Seixal

Seixal
Towns and Villages

On the south bank of the River Tagus, the extremely fertile region of Seixal was used during the Moorish occupation for introducing various Mediterranean cultures, such as vineyards, olive groves and fig trees. Because of the characeristics of its

Sesimbra

Sesimbra
Towns and Villages

Sesimbra, a picturesque fishing town set in a sheltered bay, was founded on the hilltop around the Moorish castle that Dom Afonso Henriques (the first King of Portugal) captured in 1165. This castle fell back into Moorish hands in 1191, and was

Setúbal

Azeitão
Towns and Villages

Situated in the Nature Reserve of the Serra da Arrábida, the Azeitão area includes various characteristic villages, in particular Vila Fresca and Vila Nogueira , which adopted the names of the quintas (country houses/estates) around which they

Setúbal
Towns and Villages

Setúbal was inhabited in ancient times by the Phoenicians, and by the Romans who settled on the south bank of the River Sado (in Tróia, opposite the present town), who called it Cetobriga, from which the name Setúbal is derived.It was the Romans

Sintra

Colares
Towns and Villages

At the foot of the Sintra mountains and very close to the sea, the town of Colares is absolutely delightful and has long been a very popular summer resort.Colares is also a demarcated wine-growing region, producing the very popular and increasingly

Queluz
Towns and Villages

Queluz is a populous area in the municipality of Sintra about 12 kms from Lisbon. In the early 18th century it was the idyllic country setting of the royal family's estate and hunting lodge, which the Infante Dom Pedro, son of King Dom João V,

Sintra
Towns and Villages

A beautiful town at the foot of the mountain range of the same name, its unique characteristics have led UNESCO to classify it as a World heritage site. It was even necessary to create a special category for the purpose - that of "cultural

Vila Franca de Xira

Vila Franca de Xira
Towns and Villages

On the bank of the River Tagus, Vila Franca de Xira is surrounded by fertile plains - the lezírias (alluvial plains), where the campinos (Ribatejo cowboys) keep constsnt watch on the horses and bulls that are bred there. Vila Franca de Xira is

Madeira

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Funchal

Funchal
Towns and Villages

No-one visiting Funchal can be indifferent to its beauty and the hospitality of its people. There are many places to visit in this 500-year old city, and some cannot be missed...The capital of Madeira, Funchal is situated on the south coast of the

Ilha de Porto Santo

Ilha de Porto Santo
Towns and Villages

Getting to know Porto Santo means discovering the first port that provided access to the epic maritime adventure of the Portuguese discoverers.This was the first of all the islands discovered by the Portuguese navigators and it contains within its

Porto and the North

Alfândega da Fé

Alfândega da Fé
Towns and Villages

The town has been inhabited since prehistoric times, as can be seen by the numerous archaeological remains that have been found in the area. Its name comes from Arabic - "alfândega" meaning inn - to which the words "da fé" (of the faith) were

Alijó

Alijó
Towns and Villages

Located in the heart of the Douro demarcated region, its importance is closely linked to the production of wine, for many of the estates that produce the famous Port Wine are to be found in this municipality. The town´s first charter dates back to

Amarante

Amarante
Towns and Villages

All visitors to Amarante will most certainly be impressed by two imposing natural features: the great Serra do Marão rising above the city in a series of majestic landscapes and the river Tâmega, the longest tributary of the river Douro, whose

Amares

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Amares
Towns and Villages

Situated between the valley of the River Cávado and the mountains of the Serra do Gerês, this is a very fertile region, known particularly for its oranges and its production of vinho verde. Right from the early days of Portuguese nationhood, the

Arcos de Valdevez

Arcos de Valdevez
Towns and Villages

Inhabited since prehistoric times, as can be seen by the various archaeological finds on display at the Mezio Megalithic Centre, the town is situated in the valley of the River Vez and still retains much of the typical charm of the Alto Minho

Armamar

Armamar
Towns and Villages

Standing on the banks of the River Douro, which has always exerted such a distinctive influence on the surrounding landscape, the town of Armamar still has a peaceful feel to it. Here, in a region where farming is the predominant activity, wines of

Baião

Baião
Towns and Villages

This is a very ancient territory taking its name from the Christian warrior D. Arnaldo de Bayan or Bayão, who conquered the region from the Moors in the tenth century. The countryside´s distinctive features are influenced by the River Douro and

Barcelos

Barcelos
Towns and Villages

After crossing the old bridge over the River Cávado, we enter into one of the most emblematic cities of popular Minho art, Barcelos.Is an ancient city, situated in an area that has archaeological remains dating back to prehistoric times, although

Boticas

Boticas
Towns and Villages

The town is situated in the rugged, mountainous region of Barroso, where the famous barrosã breed of beef cattle are reared. The meat that they produce has long been appreciated as the food of kings and was recently awarded a certificate, thereby

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Braga

Braga
Towns and Villages

Work on the Roman "Bracara Augusta", a regional juridical capital, began during the reign of emperor Augustus in 27 bc. It was part of the Empire´s network criss-crossing the Iberian peninsula to link it with Rome. Demonstrating the importance of

Bragança

Bragança
Towns and Villages

A wander around the historical centre inevitably leads to the calm of the medieval citadel, the home to the Dukedom of Bragança.As a recognised settlement, dates back to the 12th century. Fernão Mendes, a member of the Braganções family, and

Cabeceiras de Basto

Cabeceiras de Basto
Towns and Villages

The town is situated in a region known as the lands of "Basto", its name being linked to the legendary Lusitanian warrior, "Basto", who fought so bravely against the Moorish invaders and was later depicted in a series of granite statues. Such

Caminha

Caminha
Towns and Villages

A fortified border town situated at the mouth of the River Minho, where several battles were fought between Portugal and Spain, Caminha now enjoys much more friendly relations with its neighbour and there is a daily ferry-boat linking the two banks

Carrazeda de Ansiães

Carrazeda de Ansiães
Towns and Villages

In an area where granite tends to predominate, it is well worth paying a special visit to the mediaeval castle, Romanesque churches and the remaining evidence of the region's occupation in prehistorical times, with some excellent examples being

Celorico de Basto

Celorico de Basto
Towns and Villages

Standing close to the River Tâmega, this town was of great importance in the mediaeval period, as it was here that the most strategic points for the region's defence were to be found - the castles of Celorico de Basto and Arnóias. In more recent

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Chaves

Chaves
Towns and Villages

During the time of its occupation by the Romans, the city of Chaves was known by the name of "Aquae Flaviae", given to it by the Emperor Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Vespasian), who recognised the excellent quality of the thermal springs located here.

Cinfães

Cinfães
Towns and Villages

Situated between the banks of the River Douro and the Serra de Montemuro, it was here that the first king of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques (1139-85), was brought up by his tutor D. Egas Moniz, who was the lord of this region in the twelfth century.

Espinho

Espinho
Towns and Villages

Originally a fishing village consisting of wooden houses ("palheiros"), the town was transformed in the nineteenth century into a seaside resort, becoming one of the most popular in a period when people were strongly advised to bathe in the sea

Esposende

Esposende
Towns and Villages

At the time of the Portuguese Maritime Discoveries, Esposende was an important fishing and sea port. These activities have continued into the present day, although it is also a very popular seaside resort. In the nearby village of Apúlia, besides

Fafe

Fafe
Towns and Villages

Having only recently become an administrative centre (in the nineteenth century), Fafe is heavily marked by the influences brought back by many of its inhabitants who emigrated to Brazil in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. On returning to

Felgueiras

Felgueiras
Towns and Villages

All around Felgueiras, set in the midst of a luxuriant green landscape, are a series of villages with small Romanesque churches. The town is also famous for its embroideries and lace-work, its production of vinho verde and the much appreciated pão

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Freixo de Espada à Cinta

Freixo de Espada à Cinta
Towns and Villages

There are many explanations for this town's curious name (literally it means "Ash-tree girded with sword"). Some say that it was derived from the name of a Gothic nobleman called "Espadacinta"; others say that it comes from the coat of arms of a

Gondomar

Gondomar
Towns and Villages

Standing in the midst of gentle, fertile valleys, Gondomar is famous for its goldsmith's work, an activity that has been carried out here for several centuries and is believed to date back as far as the time of the Visigoths and Celts. The origin of

Guimarães

Guimarães
Towns and Villages

On 13 December 2001, UNESCO inscribed the historical centre of the city of Guimarães on the list of World Heritage. A distinction that is fully merited by this city, one that is full of historical memories and has so carefully preserved its

Lamego

Lamego
Towns and Villages

Roughly 12 kilometres from the banks of the Douro, Lamego enjoyed a period of great prosperity in the eighteenth century when the city produced the so-called "fine wine" that later gave rise to the world famous Port wine. It is a very ancient city,

Lousada

Lousada
Towns and Villages

Being situated in a region that is highly developed in economic terms but still maintains a strong farming tradition, Lousada also has an architectural heritage that is well worth visiting. In recent years, Lousada has become known for the motor

Macedo de Cavaleiros

Macedo de Cavaleiros
Towns and Villages

Situated in the north-east of Trás-os-Montes, Macedo de Cavaleiros is a land of manor houses in the midst of a fertile valley, close to the Serra de Bornes mountain range, where adventure sports, such as paragliding, are particularly popular. In

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Maia

Maia
Towns and Villages

The municipality of Maia is highly developed in economic terms and is now an important industrial centre, although it still preserves many of its ancient traditions and customs.Not far away, at the convent of Moreira da Maia, there is a relic of the

Marco de Canaveses

Marco de Canaveses
Towns and Villages

Standing in one of the most fertile areas of the Douro region, Marco de Canaveses has acquired great importance as a centre of agricultural production, particularly wine and chestnuts, and all over the surrounding mountains are traces of its

Matosinhos

Matosinhos
Towns and Villages

Tradition and progress in this Atlantic coast city... Founded at the mouth of the river Leça, Matosinhos has always benefited from its close proximity to the sea. Early references to a settlement known as Matesinus date back to the 11th century. In

Melgaço

Melgaço
Towns and Villages

Situated close to Galicia, the original settlement developed around the castle built in the twelfth century at the orders of the first king of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques. In the heart of the cool and luxuriantly green region where the famous

Mesão Frio

Mesão Frio
Towns and Villages

A quiet town situated in the Douro demarcated wine region, Mesão Frio has always been linked to wine-making. The vines grow in terraces on the banks of the river, lending great beauty to the landscape, and dotted here and there are large estates

Miranda do Douro

Miranda do Douro
Towns and Villages

This very ancient city was once a Roman settlement and later on, in the eighth century, was occupied by the Arabs, who gave it the name of "Mir Andul", which later gave rise to Miranda.Its location by the border gave it great importance as a

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Mirandela

Mirandela
Towns and Villages

This beautiful city stands on the banks of the River Tua and is often referred to as the garden city. It is popularly said by the local inhabitants that "when people see Mirandela they inevitably want to stay here".The festivals held at the end of

Mogadouro

Mogadouro
Towns and Villages

Mogadouro first became part of the kingdom of Portugal when it was conquered from the Moors in the thirteenth century. The land was then given to the Order of the Knights Templar, who founded a castle here, although this now stands in ruins. The

Moimenta da Beira

Moimenta da Beira
Towns and Villages

The name of "Moimenta" refers to a funereal construction or mausoleum and is thought to derive from the fact that in prehistoric times there was once a burial ground here. Aquilino Ribeiro, a Portuguese writer from the nineteenth and twentieth

Mondim de Basto

Mondim de Basto
Towns and Villages

Situated close to the River Tâmega, Mondim de Basto was founded in the twelfth century in the reign of D. Sancho I and it still retains many traces of its occupation over the years by the various peoples that passed through here. Overlooking the

Montalegre

Montalegre
Towns and Villages

Located in the heart of the Peneda-Gerês National Park, this region offers visitors a wide range of stunning views, in an area where nature has been allowed to preserve all of its many charms. The town of Montalegre is dominated by its castle,

Monção

Monção
Towns and Villages

This fortified city on the bank of the River Minho, home to spas and the Alvarinho wine, was once the backdrop to the many battles between the kingdoms of Portugal and Castile... Its Sueve name Orosion was translated to Latin as Mons Sanctus that

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Murça

Murça
Towns and Villages

The symbol of this town is the famous "Porca de Murça", a great stone statue in the shape of a pig, originating from the Iron Age and believed to be linked to the ancient fertility rites of the Celtic peoples. It is also said that this figure

Paredes

Paredes
Towns and Villages

Due to the region´s particular geographical characteristics, the conditions here are ideal for water sports such as canoeing, as well as rock climbing and mountaineering. A special mention should be made of the many Romanesque monuments in the

Paredes de Coura

Paredes de Coura
Towns and Villages

Situated in a region that has many sites of great archaeological interest, Paredes de Coura was particularly important during the Wars of Restoration fought between Portugal and Spain in the seventeenth century. In recent years, the town has begun

Paços de Ferreira

Paços de Ferreira
Towns and Villages

This region has been inhabited since the very earliest of times and still preserves some very ancient remains from this period, such as the dolmen at Lamoso and Citânia de Sanfins (one of the most important archaeological sites in the north of the

Penafiel

Penafiel
Towns and Villages

In a region that is known to be of very ancient origin, it is said that there were once two castles here, one by the name of Aguiar de Sousa and the other known as the castle of Pena. When the Moors occupied this region, they tried to invade the

Penedono

Penedono
Towns and Villages

Penedono´s mediaeval castle stands on a huge rock, a unique example of military architecture that dominates the surrounding countryside. There is plentiful evidence of the region´s occupation in prehistoric times, in particular the dolmen in the

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Peso da Régua

Peso da Régua
Towns and Villages

It is thought that the town´s name originated from the name of a Roman house that once stood here - the "Villa Reguela". Its great development was, however, only to begin after 1756 with the creation of the Real Companhia Geral da Agricultura das

Pinhão

Pinhão
Towns and Villages

Pinhão is considered to be the geographical centre of the Douro demarcated wine region, and it is here that many of the Port wine estates are to be found, some of which offer accommodation under the system of rural tourism. Worthy of particular

Ponte da Barca

Ponte da Barca
Towns and Villages

Situated in a luxuriant green region by the banks of the River Lima, Ponte da Barca is thought to have taken its name form the boat (barca) that connected the two banks before the bridge (ponte) was built in the fifteenth century. Previously, this

Ponte de Lima

Ponte de Lima
Towns and Villages

The Roman bridge that gave its name to this very ancient and very beautiful town, which received its first charter in 1125 from D. Teresa, the mother of the first king of Portugal (a number of years before the foundation of the kingdom).In the

Porto

Porto
Towns and Villages

Capital and gateway to the north of Portugal, Porto is both the city that provided a nation with a name and a fortified wine known world-wide: port.With its splendid geographical location on the mouth of the river Douro and an architectural heritage

Póvoa de Lanhoso

Póvoa de Lanhoso
Towns and Villages

The castle built on the top of the hill known as Monte do Pilar is the most important monument in the region and, according to tradition, D. Teresa, the mother of the first king of Portugal was held prisoner there in the twelfth century after the

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Póvoa de Varzim

Póvoa de Varzim
Towns and Villages

This ancient settlement was given a charter in the fourteenth century, although it was not until the eighteenth century that it began to be known as an important fishing port, when a large number of fishermen settled here and soon formed a

Resende

Resende
Towns and Villages

Resende is believed to take its name from the Christian knight "Rausendo", who conquered the town and then repopulated it in the eleventh century. This is the region in which D. Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal, was brought up by his

Ribeira de Pena

Ribeira de Pena
Towns and Villages

Situated in a transitional zone between the provinces of Minho and Trás-os-Montes, Ribeira de Pena is located deep in the heart of the vinho verde demarcated wine region. The municipality is crossed by several rivers, which make the countryside

Sabrosa

Sabrosa
Towns and Villages

Situated in the Port wine demarcated region, Sabrosa still retains various features from the time of its settlement in the Neolithic period (dolmens and cromlechs) and some hill-top forts from the Iron Age, amongst them Castro da Sancha, which was

Santa Maria da Feira

Santa Maria da Feira
Towns and Villages

Situated in the centre of a region that, in the 11th and 12th centuries, was known as "Terras de Santa Maria" and provided the link between the north of the country and Coimbra, this place gave its name to a fair that was held in the area at that

Santa Marta de Penaguião

Santa Marta de Penaguião
Towns and Villages

Situated in the Douro demarcated wine region, Santa Marta de Penaguião is famous for its wine-making co-operative where some greatly appreciated table wines and fortified wines are produced. The landscape in this region is filled with vineyards

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Santo Tirso

Santo Tirso
Towns and Villages

Situated in the valley of the River Ave, this town first developed around the monastery of São Bento, founded in the tenth century, which was also known as Santo Tirso de Riba de Ave. The region's largest religious festival is held here every July

Sernancelhe

Sernancelhe
Towns and Villages

Reconquered by the Christians in the eleventh century, this town had previously been occupied by the Romans and the Arabs, who each left behind them distinct traces of their presence. The Romanesque parish church is considered by many to be one of

São João da Pesqueira

São João da Pesqueira
Towns and Villages

Situated on the banks of the River Douro, São João da Pesqueira owes its name to a natural lake that was once full of different species of fish. This turned the spot into a paradise for fishermen and it therefore became known locally as the

Tabuaço

Tabuaço
Towns and Villages

Tabuaço is situated close to the River Távora, a tributary to the region´s most important river, the Douro. In the surrounding area are several important Romanesque monuments, such as Barcos parish church (dating from the thirteenth century), the

Tarouca

Tarouca
Towns and Villages

The region's monasteries played an evident role in the town's origins, in particular the monastery of São João de Tarouca, the first to be founded by the Cistercian Order in the Iberian Peninsular (XII century) and whose dominion extended over a

Terras de Bouro

Terras de Bouro
Towns and Villages

Situated close to the River Homem, most of the municipality of Terras do Bouro is contained within the borders of the Peneda-Gerês National Park. Close by are the extremely beautiful reservoirs formed by the dams of Caniçada and Vilarinho das

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Torre de Moncorvo

Torre de Moncorvo
Towns and Villages

The name of this town is linked to that of a Leonese noble, Mendo Curvus, the lord of this region, who, after taking part in the Christian Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, ordered a castle to be built both as his residence and for the defence of

Valença

Valença
Towns and Villages

Standing on the border with Spain and overlooking the River Minho, Valença is surrounded by walls and displays all the characteristic features of a town that was fortified in the seventeenth century in the style of the French military architect,

Valongo

Valongo
Towns and Villages

Situated almost within the city limits of Porto, of which it is now an extension, Valongo was probably founded by the Romans, who mined gold in the region. Today, it is a bustling city, which still retains a number of typical features from the

Valpaços

Valpaços
Towns and Villages

The municipality of Valpaços was founded in the nineteenth century, although it is thought that this region was already inhabited in prehistoric times and later occupied by the Romans, as is in fact proved by the many remains to be found here from

Viana do Castelo

Viana do Castelo
Towns and Villages

Situated close to the mouth of the river Lima, 65 kilometres to the north of Porto and 50 kilometres from the Spanish border at Valença, Viana do Castelo was founded in the thirteenth century by D. Afonso III, the king of Portugal, under the name

Vieira do Minho

Vieira do Minho
Towns and Villages

Located in a very mountainous and densely forested region, the municipality of Vieira do Minho is an ideal place to spend one's leisure moments, with the lakes formed by the dams of Caniçada and Ermal being extraordinarily beautiful. Scattered all

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Vila Flor

Vila Flor
Towns and Villages

The town was previously known as Póvoa de Além-Sabor, until D. Dinis, king of Portugal, visited the area and was so enchanted by its beauty that he gave it the name of Vila Flor (Flower Town), ordering walls to be built around the town, although

Vila Nova de Cerveira

Vila Nova de Cerveira
Towns and Villages

Founded in the 14th century by Dom Dinis, on the condition that one hundred residents would be brought together to form the community, the town took the name of Cerveira due to the colony of deer (cervos) that were to be found in the region.Situated

Vila Nova de Famalicão

Vila Nova de Famalicão
Towns and Villages

Famalicão, which was founded in the thirteenth century by the king D. Afonso III, is believed to have existed even before the foundation of the Portuguese nationality as the regional seat of the Terras de Vermoim. Its great development did not,

Vila Nova de Foz Côa

Vila Nova de Foz Côa
Towns and Villages

This small inland town stands on a plateau in the region known as the "terra quente" (hot land), so called because of the scorching heat that is felt here throughout the summer. It has recently gained international recognition as a result of the

Vila Nova de Gaia

Vila Nova de Gaia
Towns and Villages

Standing on the left bank of the River Douro, this city had been inhabited since very remote times, although it was not until the eighteenth century that Gaia was to gain its present-day prosperity with the building of the Port Wine Lodges. It was

Vila Pouca de Aguiar

Vila Pouca de Aguiar
Towns and Villages

Situated near the the Alvão Natural Park, the area around Vila Pouca de Aguiar still contains a number of remains from its very ancient settlement in the Iron Age (Castro de Cidadelhe), as well as evidence of its occupation by the Romans, such as a

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Vila Real

Vila Real
Towns and Villages

The provincial capital of Trás-os-Montes, Vila Real stands on a 427m high outcrop that forms the watershed between the Corgo and Cabril rivers with its elegant houses harmoniously descending the slopes.The first royal charter was granted to Vila

Vila Verde

Vila Verde
Towns and Villages

Standing in the heart of an extremely fertile region, at the point where the River Homem flows into the River Cávado, Vila Verde offers visitors the chance to appreciate some of the most beautiful countryside in Portugal, in a bucolic setting that

Vila do Conde

Vila do Conde
Towns and Villages

A quiet city that gained in importance and increased its prosperity as a ship-building yard at the time of the Maritime Discoveries. The sea has always had a major influence on the life of the local inhabitants, inspiring the motifs used in the

Vimioso

Vimioso
Towns and Villages

The town of Vimioso received its first charter in the sixteenth century, although the region had already been inhabited since prehistoric times, as can be seen from the remains found on the hill of Atalaia, which overlooks the town. This frontier

Vinhais

Vinhais
Towns and Villages

The military road built by the Romans to connect Braga, Chaves and Astorga passed close to the present-day site of Vinhais and the Ponte da Rauca bridge also dates from that time. The town was founded in the thirteenth century by the Portuguese king

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