
Spas in Porto and Northern Portugal

ABOUT



Photo: Termas do Gerês

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The Porto and Northern Regions are particularly rich in Spas, with waters gushing from the earth sometimes at high temperatures and with well-known therapeutic effects.

In some cases, their benefits have been known since Antiquity, such as in the Caldelas, São Vicente, Taipas and **Chaves Spas**, the latter originally named “Aquae Flaviae” after the Roman Emperor Flavius Vespasianus who, with his legions, already used these natural well-being springs 2000 years ago. Other waters have been known since the Middle Ages, such as **Caldas da Saúde** and **Caldas de Aregos**.

While basing their programmes on the mineral-medicinal properties of the waters, these days thermal baths also offer complementary health and well-being programmes for a diversity of purposes. Using showers, baths, massages and many other modern techniques, you will find in these up-do-date facilities relaxation programmes, invigorating and aesthetic treatments and many others, of short or longer duration, aimed at rebalancing the body and the mind. With a good climate all year round, they are restful and well-being places promoting health and contributing to relaxation and the improvement of the quality of life.

In addition, these facilities are all located in beautiful, inspiring natural environments which in themselves induce peace and tranquillity. Suffice it to mention the various spas in the green region of Minho, notably in the Peneda-Gerês National Park, where the flora and fauna add to a sense of coolness and beauty. Here you can watch wild horses and traditional customs that will take you back in time and make you delve into nature.

Many of these thermal baths are in reputed hotel complexes, some of which are centuries-old yet magnificently refurbished, others with modern spas associated with major names of world architecture, such as Siza Vieira, as in the case of the **Pedras Salgadas Thermal Baths** and the **Vidago Spa**. Others have natural parks of lush vegetation and their surroundings include various features that will enrich your stay, from footpaths to monuments and even an 18-hole golf course in Vidago.

Many are located by the rivers, which add a picturesque feel and complement their enjoyment, as in the Douro, the setting of a UNESCO World Heritage landscape. Others are close to cities whose historic centres are worth a visit, such as Guimarães and Porto, also World Heritage sites.

All in all, you will find in this region some twenty thermal centres offering enjoyment to those who seek a holistic programme or specific treatment according to the mineral-medicinal properties of the waters of each spring. Benefitting from country fragrances and flavours, they offer an opportunity to immerse yourself in natural, pure environments, true havens for restoring harmony and vitality.

Don't miss

- > visit the cities of Monção and Melgaço and taste alvarinho wine
- > visit other cities on the River Minho: Valença, Vila Nova de Cerveira and Caminha
- > visit the cities of Viana do Castelo, Ponte de Lima and Ponte da Barca on the River Lima
- > visit Arcos de Valdevez, on the River Vez, and Barcelos, on the River Cávado
- > visit the city of Braga and its rich heritage
- > visit emblematic villages in the Peneda-Gerês National Park, such as Lindoso, Soajo, Castro Laboreiro and their dams
- > take a boat ride on the Douro to discover sceneries of great landscape beauty