
Buçaco, Luso, Curia - a tour around Bairrada

ABOUT



Photo: Paulo Magalhães

Buçaco, Luso, Curia - a tour around Bairrada

Between the majestic forest of Buçaco and the thermal spas of Luso and Curia, you will find a region that offers everything you need to make you feel good.

Start with the beauty of the landscape, whose main feature is the **Buçaco Mountain**, a magical place that earned protected status by papal decree in the 16th century and was transformed into a monastic retreat isolated from the rest of the world. You can still see today, dotted around the mountain, the chapels and sanctuaries which form the Stations of the Cross and can be visited by following one of the trails of the National Forest. But there are other itineraries and guided tours that present century-old trees, and a great number of lakes and stone crosses to visitors, where you can find memorable places such as Vale dos Fetos (Fern Valley) and the Fonte Fria (Cold Spring).

Another unforgettable picture will certainly be that of the **Palace Hotel**, emerging from amongst the leafy vegetation. Built in the late 19th century in the Neo-Manueline style for the last Portuguese Kings, the palace occupies part of the Santa Cruz Convent, of which the cloisters and a few cells still survive. It is yet another enchanted place in an environment conducive to romance and contact with nature.

Nearby, on the western slope of the Buçaco Mountain, are the **Luso Thermal Baths**, whose spring supplies one of the most popular table mineral waters. The spa dates back to the late 19th century, although the therapeutic properties of the water had already been known a century earlier, and it preserves the original buildings which, together with innovative spa facilities, make it an exceptional space of well-being.

Some 15km away, the **Curia Thermal Baths** compete for health and leisure opportunities. Here you breathe a “Belle époque” atmosphere, evoked by the early 20th century architecture. In addition to the spa facilities, there is a plethora of charming hotels, an artificial lake stretching for about a kilometre, a fitness circuit, tennis courts and golf courses. All in the name of a healthy lifestyle!

Besides the waters, the wines and the **gastronomy** also contribute to the reputation of this region called “**Bairrada**”. Roast suckling pig is the most famous speciality and attracts many people who come just to taste it. It ideally goes with the white, red or sparkling **wines** that are produced here. If you care to know them better, you can visit the Museums dedicated to them, such as the **Bairrada Wine Museum** and the **Aliança Underground Museum**, or follow the Bairrada Itinerary for tastings and purchases at the producers’ wineries and cellars. The tour finishes with a toast to the pleasures of life.

Don't miss

> admire the view from the Cruz Alta belvedere in the Buçaco Mountain

- > visit the Fern Valley and the Cold Spring
 - > follow the National Forest trails
 - > drink water at the Luso springs
 - > take a pedalo out on the Curia Thermal Park Lake
 - > taste suckling pig
 - > make a toast with Bairrada sparkling wine
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USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more:

- Rota da Bairrada
<http://www.rotadabairrada.pt>
 - Visit Centro de Portugal
<http://www.visitcentro.com/en/>
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GETTING HERE

By road: A1 - Mealhada/EN 234 exit

By train: (www.cp.pt) change at Coimbra B for Luso-Buçaco