

NORTHERN PORTUGAL THE ROMANESQUE ROUTE



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The Romanesque Route

The Romanesque Route is a tour of 58 monuments located in northern Portugal, spread over 12 municipalities in the valleys of the Sousa, Douro and Tâmega rivers. It includes monasteries, churches, bridges, castles and towers, all built in the characteristic Romanesque architecture of this region. The architectural heritage and this region are indelibly associated with the beginning of the Portuguese nationality, as it was here that lived the noble families who helped the first kings in the Christian Reconquest of the territory that is now Portugal. In this itinerary, we only recommend some important visits.



LOUSADA | VILAR DO TORNO | POMBEIRO | FELGUEIRAS | AGILDE | ARNOIA | AMARANTE

Departure from the city of Porto towards Lousada. Try to arrive at the opening time (10h00) of the Romanesque Interpretation Centre, an exhibition space that concentrates all the information about the places and monuments that are part of the historical and cultural heritage of the route. It is well worth a visit. Departure from Lousada towards Vilar do Torno and Alentém, where you can see the Park and the Tower of Vilar (built between the 13th and 14th centuries). More than just a military construction, this tower is a symbol of power of the nobility, and it is an important example of the "domus fortis" [fortified residence] in the territory of Tâmega and Sousa. Proceede in the direction of Felgueiras to reach the town of Pombeiro de Ribavizela, to visit the Monastery of Santa Maria de Pombeiro, one of the most important Benedictine monasteries in Entre-o-Douro and Minho. It is time for lunch. We suggest the restaurant "O Veleiro". After the meal, don't miss a visit to the factory of the famous Pão de Ló de Margaride sponge cake, made with the art and wisdom of recipes passed down from generation to generation, since its foundation in 1730. Here you will also have the change to taste this delicacy. It has supplied the Portuguese Royal House for centuries. This factory is right in front of the Town Hall building. Leave for Agilde and Fervença (Celorico de Basto), where you can find the Divino Salvador de Fervença Church, which is of Romanesque origin, but only the main chapel now shows the main features of this style. Return to the main road. Further ahead and following the Romanesque Route, you will find the Romanesque castle of Arnoia, on top of an enormous rock, once situated in the Terra de Basto. This castle was built as part of the settlement movement in the European territory between the 10th and 12th centuries. On the way back to the main road, take the N210 to Amarante. Don't miss a walk through the Historical Centre: the typical streets, the São Gonçalo convent and the bridge over the river Tâmega will surely surprise you! The famous conventual sweets, which were originally made by the nuns, at Confeitaria da Ponte, the Vinho Verde (white wine, not fully matured, and slightly sparkling) and the "tasquinhas" (typical taverns) on Rua 31 de Janeiro will make you hungry. For dinner, we suggest the Taberna Miranda or the "Adega Kilowatt", also known almost all over the world as "A Gruta de S. Gonçalo". Accommodation at the friendly "Hostel Des Arts".

AMARANTE | MARCO | TABUADO | ANCEDE | CINFÃES | C. DE PAIVA | SÃO VICENTE

Departure towards Marco de Canaveses. Cross the bridge over the Tâmega river and before entering Marco, follow the indication of the Romanesque Route and visit the small Church of Santo Isidoro, built in primitive Romanesque style and still in good condition. Built in the second half of the 13th century on a small plateau, it was dedicated to the bishop Santo Isidoro. Further on, in Tabuado, visit the Church of the Saviour of Tabuado. Inside, the most striking feature of the Romanesque style is the triumphal arch, with its archivolts set on two columns. The 16th century mural painting that fills the back wall of the chancel is impressive, representing Christ between St. John the Baptist and St. James the Greater. Proceede to Ancede (via Baião). On the road, enter a small recreation area among the trees to see here the small Esmoriz Bridge, with its single perfect arch, slightly raised deck, which joins the banks of the river Ovil. Not far from here you reach the mighty Monastery of Santo André



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de Ancede. The Canons of Saint Augustine made Ancede an important economic, cultural and spiritual centre. In the churchyard of the Monastery, the Chapel of Senhor do Bom Despacho is the highlight of one of the most remarkable periods of the Monastery: the 18th century. This baroque chapel, with its octangular shape, depicts a fascinating narrative of the life of Christ. Proceede the trip to Cinfães. After crossing the small bridge over the Bestança River, the road continues uphill through the N222, with a spectacular view over the Douro River to the right. Arrival to Cinfães. Free time for lunch. We suggest the restaurant "A Tasquinha do Amado ". Drive towards Castelo de Paiva. Now you go downhill, while before you were going uphill, continuing on the road 222 until Tarouquela, to visit the Church of Santa Maria Maior de Tarouquela, founded in the 12th century. The existing church was built in the time of the Benedictine reform, including a nun monastery that existed here until the 16th century. The Romanesque style reached Tarouquela under the influence of this religious order. Proceede in the direction of Castelo de Paiva. Cross the bridge over the Paiva river and go up to Castelo de Paiva, to visit the Marmoiral do Sobrado, usually called Marmoiral da Boavista, dating from mid-12th century, a unique site in the country and located near the roundabout to exit to Entre os Rios. Leave on the N224 crossing the bridge over the Douro, arriving in Entre os Rios for a visit to the São Miguel Church, a church that combines the Romanesque style with elements of the Gothic style. The journey continues along the N106 towards Penafiel. On the way, you will arrive at Termas de São Vicente. Overnight stay at the Palace Hotel. Dinner and overnight stay.

SÃO VICENTE | IRIVO | PAÇOS DE SOUSA | CÊTE | LORDELO | PORTO

Leave the hotel and take the N106 towards Penafiel. When you reach Rans, at the large roundabout, turn left towards Irivo and Paços de Sousa. At the end of Irivo and at the roundabout at the entrance to Paços, you will see, on your left-hand side, the Memorial da Ermida, with features that suggest it was built in the mid-13th century.

It is a monument of great interest, corresponding to a type of which only six examples remain in the whole country. Continue to Paços de Sousa to visit the fantastic Salvador Monastery, founded in the 10th century, which was an important Benedictine monastery linked to the Ribadouro family. Inside the church is the tomb of Egas Moniz de Ribadouro, King D. Afonso Henriques's valet. The journey continues to Cête. Pay attention to the signs on the Romanesque Route, indicating the way to the Monastery of São Pedro de Cête so you don't get lost! The Monastery dates back to the 10th century and was restored between the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century. Inside the Monastery, the limestone images of Saint Peter, Saint Lucy and Our Lady of Grace stand out. Return to the N319 and continue towards Lordelo, passing through Baltar. Here, at the last large roundabout, take the Porto/Valongo (N15) exit. Then you reach the village of Rebordosa and soon after, Lordelo. Time for lunch. We suggest the Restaurant d'Avental. After the meal, a visit to the Alcoforados Tower, built in Gothic style between the 14th and 15th centuries, an example of a "domus fortis" (fortified manor residence) and an example of a type of manor house that stood out during the Middle Ages in Portugal. Take a short drive to the access to the CREP/A42 motorway. Where do you want to go? North (Porto or Vila Real) or south (Lisbon)? Decide for yourself.



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