



PORTO & NORTH

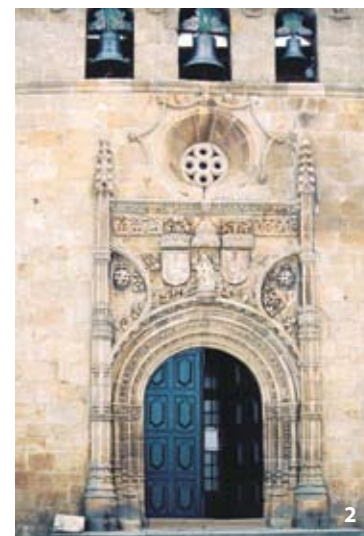
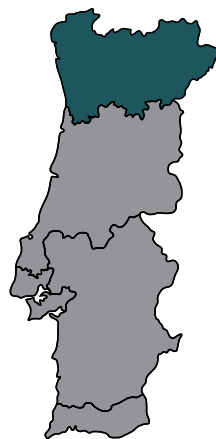
This region includes the Douro valley and part of the mountainous areas surrounding it and can be divided into two major zones.

Firstly, there is the coastal area, which includes the Porto Metropolitan Area and all its satellite cities and the Minho, the greenest area in Portugal, where rainfall is high and natural sanctuaries such as the Peneda-Gerês National Park can be found in the mountains. Essentially, the Minho is a very green area where the mountains are protected by a layer of forest land and vegetation.

The other area, through which the River Douro runs, bristles with mountain ranges and is called Trás-os-Montes (literally, "behind or beyond the mountains"). It starts in the city of Vila Real and extends northwards and eastwards as far as Spain. It is a rugged area where nature is relatively wild, yet in the northern interior there is also something of the Upper Alentejo region, where the sparse trees, olive plantations and cork oaks give it a Mediterranean feel.

One of the most famous wines in the world has, for centuries, been produced in the Douro valley. The vines are grown in terraces cut into the rocky schist and granite slopes where machinery cannot reach and they can only be tended by hand, as has been the practice for generations. The River Douro cuts deep into the landscape and it is not unusual to find high plains followed by ravines where the river below plunges onwards towards the sea.

This region is also the birthplace of the Portuguese national identity and the area where the Condado Portucalense (the origin of the kingdom of Portugal) was established. It therefore features strongly in the national imagination and many legends and tales associated with its fountains, churches and ruins survive to this day. The name "Portugal", of course, comes from Porto.



- 1 - Saint Gonçalo Monastery, Amarante.
- 2 - Parish Church, Vila Nova de Foz Côa.
Photo by José Manuel.
- 3 - Largo da Oliveira, Guimarães.
Photo by CMG/PPacheco.
- 4 - Orgeat at Braga's Cathedral.



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Albeauro/flickr.com



inapopics/shutterstock.com



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Reine Droyer/dreamstime.com

- 5 - Barcelos cockerel.
- 6 - Wine cellars, Vila Nova de Gaia.
- 7 - Sausages from Northern Portugal.
- 8 - Traditional pottery.
- 9 - Rabelo boat on the Douro.



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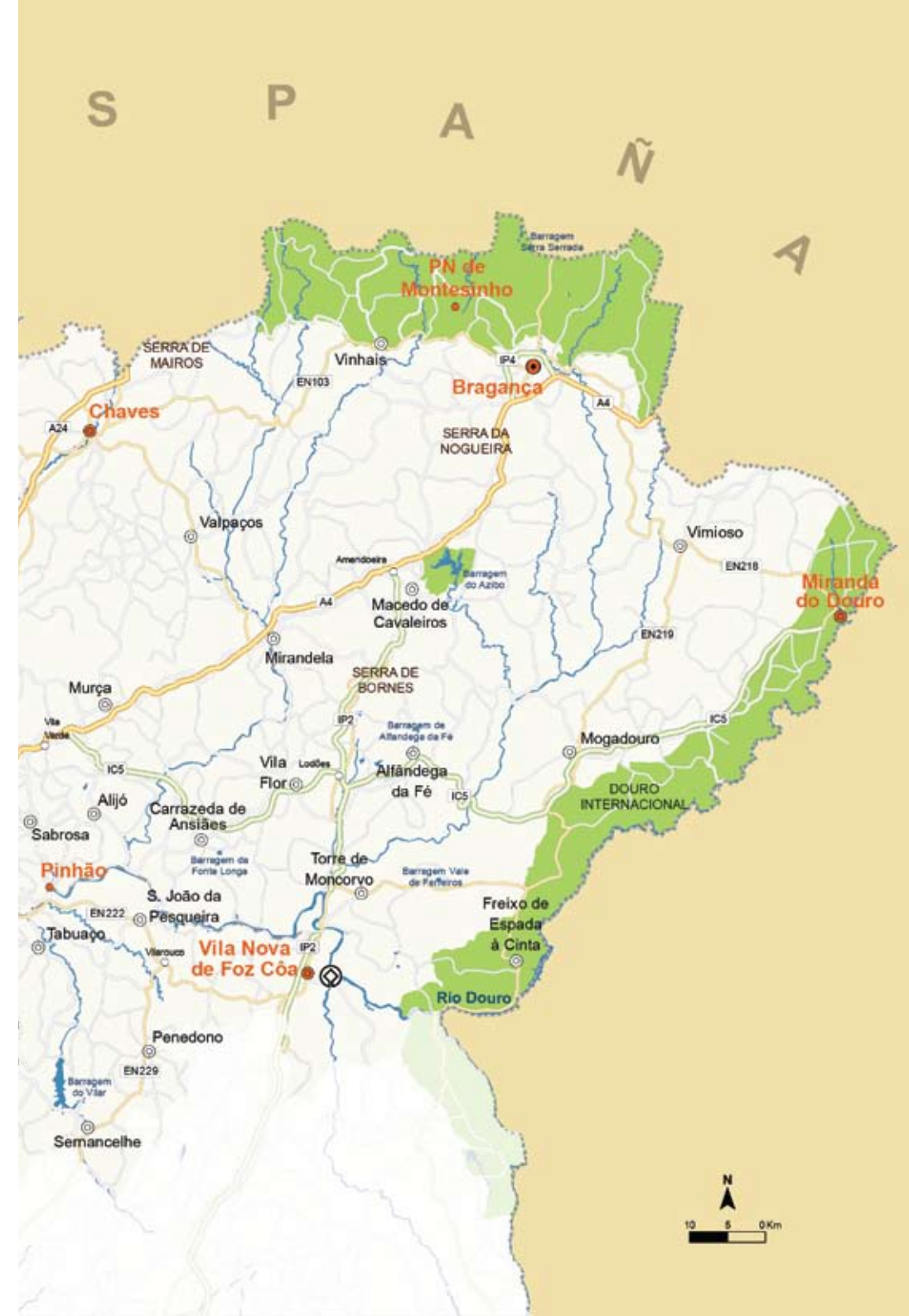
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- 10 - Trekking in Paul da Serra de Santa Luzia, Viana do Castelo.
Photo by Paulo Magalhães.
- 11 - Harvest time in the Douro Wine Region.
- 12 - Vineyards and River Douro in the Alto Douro Wine Region.
- 13 - Small creek in Gerês Nature Park.



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AMARANTE

A small, unpolluted city, Amarante is one of the jewels of northern Portugal, with its rows of seventeenth century mansions and wooden balconies that cast their reflections into the calm waters of the River Tâmega. St. Gonçalo is a figure often associated with Amarante, to whom prayers may be offered in the first weekend of June for fertility or help in finding a husband, together with offerings of phallic-shaped cakes. Come and discover the beauty of a city that makes you feel as if you are stepping into a romantic film!

WHAT TO SEE

Mosteiro de São Gonçalo (St. Gonçalo Monastery).

The monastery stands near the bridge in a pleasant square surrounded by white granite houses and has a very unusual dome covered in red tiles. The entrance is marked by a beautiful Renaissance portal. Inside, the image of St. Gonçalo is carved on his tombstone, worn by the touch of thousands of devout followers.

Ponte de São Gonçalo (São Gonçalo Bridge). A medieval bridge reconstructed in 1790 after the original collapsed due to severe flooding. It still bears an inscription recording the battle between the French and Anglo-Portuguese armies. According to legend, when the old Roman bridge over the River Tâmega collapsed in the 18th century, it was rebuilt by St. Gonçalo.

Igreja de S. Domingos (St. Domingos Church) The area behind the Igreja de S. Gonçalo is the perfect place to enjoy a panoramic view of the river, as the French Generals Delaborde and Loison discovered at the time of the French Invasions. The church also has a beautiful Baroque façade.

Museu Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso (Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso Museum). Dedicated to Amarante's most famous prodigal son, Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso (1887-1918), a Modernist painter from the same generation as Fernando Pessoa and Almada Negreiros. The museum is famed above all for its collection of paintings from Amadeo's final period: 1919-1918. Also on display is a pair of figures representing male and female devils that belong to a fertility cult prior to the time of St. Gonçalo. The cult so enraged the Bishop of Braga that he decided to burn them ... but in the end settled for castrating the male devil. ☎ 255 420 272. Alameda Teixeira de Pascoaes. 🕒 Summer: 10 am-12.30 pm and 2 pm-6 pm. Winter: 9.30 am-12.30 and 2 pm-5.30 pm. Closed on Mondays and public holidays.

Ruins of the Convento de Santa Clara (Santa Clara convent). The nuns of Santa Clara were responsible for the town's tradition of convent recipes.

Solar dos Macedos (Macedos Manor House). A beautiful 18th century manor house used by the French as a field hospital during the battles of 1809.

Solar dos Vasconcelos (Vasconcelos Manor House). This is a former hospital and the birthplace of the Portuguese writer Teixeira de Pascoaes.

📍 **Portugal Trails tip** Leave your car in the car park by the Municipal Museum.

WHAT TO DO

Take a rowing boat out on the River Tâmega (in summer), to appreciate the harmony between the city and the river even more! Ask for further information at the Tourist Office.

Visit the small bakery at Rua 31 de Janeiro to take a peep at the cavacas (cakes), which could be considered just regular pastries, if the designs were not so original (not to say naughty), as to bring a smile to the faces of locals and foreigners alike. Don't forget to have tea in one of the many cake shops which have balconies overlooking the river, where you can enjoy the rural scenery.

Drive from Amarante to Pinhão. For the most fearless of drivers, this one and a half hour trip offers a glimpse of the Serra do Marão mountains and a fabulous view of the River Douro. Leave Amarante on the N101, a winding road that passes through the Marão range via mountain villages and landscapes. The descent to Mesão Frio brings the River Douro into full view far below, meandering through the valleys. It is a dazzling sight, with the terraced vineyards on the mountainside above and the Douro below. Continue your descent, following the right-hand bank of the river. When reaching Peso da Régua, cross the river by the old bridge and head for Pinhão. Take the N222

until you pick up the Douro again, which will now be on your left-hand side. The stretch of road as far as Pinhão is extremely beautiful, as it follows the path of the Douro, with the terraced vineyards rising up above, cut into the slopes of the mountain. On arrival at Pinhão, relax in the esplanade of the Vintage House Hotel.

WHERE TO EAT

🍷 **Adega Regional Quelha.** This rustic tavern decorated with agricultural tools is hidden away behind a modest doorway in the centre of Amarante. It serves good traditional Portuguese tapas, wine from the barrel and specialises in kid and veal dishes. ☎ 255 425 786. Rua de Olivença, Madalena.

🍷 **A Eira.** With a view over the Tâmega landscape, this restaurant offers dishes inspired by Iberian flavours, in particular Maronesa beef. ☎ 255 095 490. Rua da Vinha, Lote 19, Amarante. 🕒 Closed on Tuesdays.

🍷 **Confeitaria da Ponte.** Sample the famous convent sweets and traditional pão-de-ló (a kind of sponge cake) in the tea room esplanade, with its view of the River Tâmega. ☎ 255 432 034/932 533 417. Rua 31 de Janeiro, 186, Amarante.

🍷 **Zé da Calçada.** With a rustic yet refined atmosphere and a view of the River Tâmega, this restaurant offers regional cuisine whose highlights include salted codfish Zé da Calçada style, Maronesa beef, roast kid, rojões (cubed fried pork) and cozido à Portuguesa (boiled meat, potato and cabbage). ☎ 255 426 814. Rua 31 de Janeiro, 83, Amarante.

🍷 **Restaurante da Pousada de Marão.** This is a restaurant which is part of an upmarket TOURIST venture and offers a spectacular view of the sunset. The menu is typical of the mountain region and includes roast pork loin with Monte Marão herbs, and roast mountain kid. There are also plenty of tempting desserts and a well-stocked cellar. ☎ 255 461 353. Pousada Marão.

🍷 **Restaurante Largo do Paço.** This is the Hotel Casa da Calçada restaurant, and has been awarded Michelin star. Striking a balance between traditional and contemporary and also between simple and sophisticated, the menus vary according to the seasons in order to incorporate the freshest organic produce on the market. ☎ 255 410 830. Largo do Paço, 6, Casa da Calçada – Relais & Châteaux.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

The "festas pequenas". January 10th. Also in honour of St. Gonçalo.

Festa de São Gonçalo (Festival of St. Gonçalo). First weekend of June. The most important festival in honour of the local patron saint, drawing thousands of pilgrims and revellers to the city from all over the country.

TOURIST OFFICE

☎ 255 420 246. Largo Conselheiro António Cândido. 🕒 Winter: 9 am-12.30 pm and 2 pm-6 pm. Summer: 9.30 am-7 pm. Closed on 25 Dec and Easter.



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This city, which was founded on the banks of the River Cávado, rose to the height of its importance during the 15th century as the residence of the first Duke of Bragança. Nowadays it is famous for its omnipresent cockerel, which is paraded through the streets in the colourful *Cockerel Parade*, and for its ceramics and craft fair.

LOVERS' HANDKERCHIEFS

Lovers' handkerchiefs are squares of cloth embroidered in multi-coloured cross-stitch that are full of symbolism. The handkerchief was presented to a boy by the girl who had embroidered it to show that she wanted to court him. If the boy wore it around his neck, it meant that he was interested in her. The childlike designs feature brides and grooms, animals, flowers and even poems with spelling mistakes in them. Nowadays they are often used as decorations.

"AND THE COCK CROWED": THE LEGEND OF THE BARCELOS COCKEREL

A pilgrim who had set off from Barcelos for Santiago de Compostela was accused of stealing silver and sentenced to death by hanging.

Anxious to prove his innocence, he requested a meeting with the judge, who was about to eat a dish of roast cockerel. The pilgrim swore that he was innocent and said that, as proof of this, the cockerel would rise up from the dish and crow. The judge ignored his appeal.

However, at the very moment when the man was being hanged, the cockerel did, in fact, stand up and crowed! Realising his mistake, the judge rushed to the gallows to find that the pilgrim's life had been saved by a badly tied knot. According to legend, the pilgrim returned many years later to sculpt the Cruzeiro do Senhor and Cruzeiro do Senhor do Galo crosses which can be found nowadays in the Barcelos Archaeological Museum.

WHAT TO SEE

Igreja do Senhor da Cruz (Senhor da Cruz church).

This church was built in the 18th century in the place where, two centuries earlier, a local shoemaker had a miraculous vision of a cross etched into the ground. It has an elegant dome.

Igreja Matriz (Parish church). This 18th century church features Romanesque architecture with Gothic influences. It is worth taking a look inside at the 18th century decorative tiles and striking rose window.

Medieval bridge. This bridge over the River Cávado connects Barcelos and Barcelinhos. It is a Gothic construction dating from the beginning of the 14th century and was commissioned by Knight Pedro, the 3rd Count of Barcelos.

Museu Arqueológico (Archaeological Museum). Here you will find stone crosses, sculpted coats of arms, sarcophagi and the Senhor do Galo Cross, a homage to the legend of the Barcelos Cockerel. ☎ 253 809 600. Praça do Duque. ⌚ 9 am–5.30 pm. Closed on public holidays.

Museu de Olaria (Pottery Museum). There is a longstanding tradition of pottery in this region. The museum displays over six hundred items from different areas of Portugal and beyond. ☎ 253 824 741. Rua Cónego J. Gaiolas. ⌚ 10 am–12.30 pm and 2 pm–5 pm. Closed on Mondays and public holidays.

WHAT TO DO

Vinho Verde Route. Several estates offer guided tours of vineyards and wineries which also include opportunities to sample and purchase wine (advance booking required). Quinta das Toquinheiras. ☎ 919 265 891. Lugar da Bouça Nova, Prado, Melgaço. ⌚ 10 am–12 am and 2 pm–6 pm.

WHERE TO EAT

☎☎ **Galliano.** This restaurant offers traditional food with a touch of signature cuisine, served in a cosy atmosphere with an emphasis on good design. ☎ 253 815 104, Campo 5 de Outubro, 20. ⌚ Closed at dinnertime on Sundays.

☎☎ **Pedra Furada.** As an ambassador of regional flavours since the 1970s, this rustic restaurant offering dishes prepared from organic produce is already a stopping-off point on the pilgrim route. Highlights include Barcelos stuffed rooster, kid roasted in a wood-burning oven and Minho rojões (fried cubed pork). ☎ 252 951 144, Rua Santa Leocádia, 1415. ⌚ Closed at dinnertime on Mondays.

☎☎ **Restaurante Hotel da Bagoeira.** This hundred-year-old establishment specialises in local Minho cuisine, serving strictly home-cooked dishes in generous proportions. ☎ 253 813 236. Av. Sidónio Pais, 495.

☎☎☎ **Turismo Restaurante Lounge Internacional.** This sophisticated and welcoming restaurant with an ample view of the River Cávado offers fusion cuisine with Mediterranean and Atlantic influences. ☎ 253 826 411. Rua Duques de Bragança.

WHAT/WHERE TO BUY

Local handicrafts. Don't miss the Barcelos clay figures.
Pastries and sweets. You will find the best of local confectionery at Confeitaria Salvação, which is over 100 years old.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Feira de Barcelos. Every Thursday. Takes place in the Campo da República and is a market where you can buy just about anything, from clothes to livestock. It is one of the biggest and most important markets in the Minho district.

Festa das Cruzes. 3 May. This huge open-air festival commemorates the appearance of crosses marked in the ground over 500 years ago. Start the month of May with plenty of entertainment, folk music and dancing and a procession.

TOURIST OFFICE

☎ 253 811 882. Largo Dr. José Novais, 27. ⌚ Winter (October to February) – Monday to Friday: 9.30 am–12:30 and 2 pm–6 pm,



Braga is an ancient city that was once the seat of the local Roman government, the capital of Galicia, the capital of the Suevo-Bracara kingdom and an ecclesiastical centre. Even today, the Portuguese still call it the "archbishop's city". In the 16th century it was known as the Portuguese Rome and in the 18th century it was profoundly marked by a taste for the Baroque. Today it is a young, dynamic university city with very friendly inhabitants.

Portugal Trails tip Buy a **Braga Card** from the municipal Tourist Office. The card is valid for 2 days and offers discounts on admission to monuments, tourist buses and hotels and you will also be given a map and tourist route for the city.

WHAT TO SEE

Sé de Braga (Braga Cathedral). The Portuguese will often describe something as being "older than Braga's Cathedral", because the Cathedral is indeed very old, at least one thousand years old, in fact.

The building has Romanesque origins. The façade has been altered many times and is a composite of centuries of work. The lower part of the building features a Renaissance galilee with ribbed vaulting that decoratively reinforces the entrance. The roof of the galilee has a Manueline dome. The openings above the façade were altered in the 18th century to incorporate classical pediments. The chimes of twenty three bells can still sometimes be heard from the two bell towers.

Saturday: 10 am–1 pm and 2 pm–4 pm. Summer (March to September) – Monday to Friday: 9.30 am–6 pm, Weekends: 10 am–1 pm and 2 pm–4 pm. Winter: closed on Sundays and 25 Dec.

The church has three naves and a ground plan in the shape of a Latin cross. The interior contains two lavishly carved Baroque organs, so beautiful that they are music to the eyes... In front of them were two pulpits that look like carved gilt wooden chalices rising to the columns above. This vaulted chancel has a square ground plan and is illuminated by three large ogival windows, lending a medieval atmosphere to the surroundings, enhanced by the heavy granite columns.

The Capela dos Reis (Chapel of the Kings), is a Gothic chapel in which the parents of Dom Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal, are buried.

You should also visit the tomb of Knight Gonçalo Pereira in the Capela da Glória (Chapel of Glory). The carved stone coffin has a life-size statue of the archbishop, guarded by stone lions with smaller figures carved around its sides.

The elegant, finely decorated cloisters are a more recent addition and date from the 19th century.

The Igreja da Misericórdia (Misericórdia Church) with its Renaissance façade is also incorporated into the edifice. In the interior there is a large carved altarpiece and the sacristy contains chests and coffers.

Arco da Porta Nova (New city gate). The Porta Nova gate is a triumphal arch built in the Neo-classical style of the 18th century to replace the old gate which stood in the same place and marked the city limits. It signals the entrance into the historic city.

Praça da República (República Square). A sizeable and very long square containing a large church. A

BRAGA



INFORMATION

- 1 - Police Station B4
- 2 - Hospital de Braga A1
- 3 - Nature park headquarters
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- 5 - Tourist office C3

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- 31 - Biblioteca Pública de Braga - Univ. do Minho .. B3
- 32 - Câmara Municipal de Braga B3
- 33 - Jardim de Santa Bárbara B3

- 34 - Largo do Paço B3
- 35 - Mosteiro de São Martinho de Tibães A3
- 36 - Museu dos Biscainhos A3
- 37 - Paço Episcopal Bracarense B3
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- 39 - Praça da República C2
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- 41 - Sé de Braga B3
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- 71 - O Alexandre A3

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- 90 - Bragashopping C2

pleasant place for a walk, it contains fountains, benches and flowers.

Largo do Paço (Palace Square). A square in the historic centre of the city, lined on three sides by the sober frontage of the Paço Episcopal Bracarense (Bishop's palace). In the centre there is a fountain that was built in 1723 and features the image of a woman who symbolises Braga.

Mosteiro de Tibães (Tibães Monastery). This monastery belonged to the Benedictine order but had been abandoned and left almost in ruins before it became a success story for heritage renovation work.

The church is one of the grandest in the country and a hallmark of international Baroque art. The surface of its enormous façade is reminiscent of Jesuit architecture, with its two large bell-towers covered by onion domes.

The interior, however, is sumptuous. The church has a squared stone vault. Each of the side chapels is a masterpiece of carving, with their twisted columns and perfect arches reflecting an indescribable myriad of shapes. The orgy of gilt-work and decorative rococo stonework in the chancel is quite astounding – the apotheosis of the Baroque. The cloister has a slender

colonnade with Ionic capitals and the walls are covered with blue and white decorative tiles of great artistic merit. The cloisters form part of the monastery building. There are many other areas to visit and some that are not yet open to the public. The garden area covers approximately 40 hectares.

Santuário e Parque do Bom Jesus do Monte (Bom Jesus do Monte Sanctuary and Park). Enter the park through an 18th century portico flanked by two 18th century pyramids. The park has an outdoor wood, gardens, several artificial lakes (the largest of which is suitable for rowing), tennis courts, a children's play park, restaurants and squares. The beautiful sanctuary lies in the outskirts of Braga and consists of a church on top of a hill which is reached by climbing a colossal stairway built into the hillside. There are seventeen flights of stairs which zigzag backwards and forwards across the hill. On either side, the tops of lines of stately trees can be seen. The stairway is decorated with different features, including vases, statues and fountains. There is one unusual fountain, the pelican fountain, which stands on the penultimate level. The façade of the church has a Late Renaissance portico flanked by two monolithic columns on either side. The entablature bears statues of the four evangelists.

The whole is a beautiful example of a work in which the natural landscape and the skills of man are perfectly balanced. The best of all walks is up the stairway, but it needs to be taken slowly and carefully, given that it is a 116 metre climb. Alternatively, there is a lift which runs through the trees. Perhaps the best option is to go up by lift and come down by the stairs.

WHAT TO DO

Go for a coffee in A Brasileira. This traditional Braga café is over one hundred years old, and is ideal for a well-deserved break for coffee, tea or snacks. ☎ 253 262 104. Largo Barão São Martinho, 17. ⌚ 7 am-11 pm.

Santuário do Bom Jesus de Braga (Bom Jesus de Braga Sanctuary). Walk or ride on horseback to Monte do Bom Jesus and breathe in the fresh air, wander along the pathways and enjoy the sensation of time slowing down. Listen to the sound of water flowing in the lake and take a trip out in a boat.

Keep fit. Climb almost 600 steps up to the sanctuary, enjoying the mixture of Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassical styles. When you reach the top you will be rewarded by a park with beautiful flowerbeds, leafy trees, fountains and benches. Enjoy the magnificent view of the city and marvel at the 20th century water-powered lift. The lift goes up and down every half

hour, taking 2.5 to four minutes to make the journey, according to the number of passengers. ⌚ 8 am-8 pm. Open every day, runs every 30 minutes.

Take a trip to Citânia de Briteiros. Near the Braga Sanctuary (15 km) lies Citânia de Briteiros, located in a well-protected site hidden amongst the mountains. It is an Iron Age archaeological site and the ruins are from a Celtic settlement. It contains the remains of cylindrical stone houses that look like stone huts and the outlines of a wall that once surrounded the houses. It stands at the top of a mountain which provides a beautiful view and there is a scenic café where you can relax and enjoy the mountainside around you.

Visit Póvoa do Lanhoso. This small, friendly town is located near the city of Braga, in the midst of a green landscape that has been divided into smallholdings. The settlement includes an enormous granite outcrop where a castle stood for many centuries. Some of the stones from the castle were re-used to build a 19th century church, although part of the castle is still standing, reflecting some of its former majesty. There are also remains of (Celtic, pre-Roman and Roman) settlements and even a Via Sacra with five chapels (representing the final episodes in the life of Christ). In this region, the centuries-old art of the goldsmith has also been kept alive, in the form of filigree work using this metal so highly prized by man since the dawn of time. The work involves hand-crafting items of jewellery of great artistic value to create a fine gold tracery that almost resembles embroidery.

WHERE TO EAT

☎ **O Alexandre.** Situated in the historic centre of Braga, this restaurant offers a varied regional menu, featuring specialities such as salted codfish, *papas de sarrabulho* (a rice and meat dish made with a fresh blood gravy), and veal and kid roasts. ☎ 253 614 003. Campo das Hortas, 10.

⌚ Closed on Wednesdays.

☎ **Paulo Padeiro.** The specialities of this homely restaurant include veal and kid roasts, reflecting Northern Portuguese tradition. ☎ 965 242 333. Rua Américo Ferreira de Carvalho, 94. ⌚ Closed on Tuesdays.

☎ **Restaurante Inácio.** Based in a traditional house with a well preserved façade, this is a roomy and welcoming establishment with granite walls. Enjoy local dishes amidst the antiques and hand-crafted items. ☎ 253 613 235. Praça Conde São Joaquim, 4, Campo das Hortas. ⌚ Closed on Tuesdays.

☎ **S. Frutuoso.** It is situated on the exit from Braga, near the Visigoth chapel of São Frutuoso de Montelius. The meat and *bacalhau* (salted codfish) dishes are a good