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Today's visit is all about
Portuguese Culture and Tradition!



You are about to discover some hidden gems in the city and get to know many interesting facts.

We are going to pay special attention to **AZULEJO**!

“Azulejo” is the Portuguese word for tile. Its origin is, of course, Arabic, and it means “small polished stone”. They are a huge part of Portuguese history and the two are really inseparable. Portuguese tiles come in many forms and are made of ceramic and are painted and glazed to withstand weather and wear. The technical aspect around the production of tiles is very specific and its main characteristic is the longevity it offers to the final product, which is why almost every building in Portugal is decorated with tiles. And some date back centuries!

So let's start our visit to the City!

1. The **Câmara Municipal** (City Hall) in Porto dates from the 1920's and is located at the top of the elegant Aliados Avenue near Trindade Station. The work was architecturally inspired in the great communal palaces of northern France and Flanders. The tower of the building rises to 70 metres with a carillon clock in its centre. A staircase of almost 200 steps leads up to the top of the tower.



Curiosity: this building has the shape of a church because it was built exactly to hide the church behind it, so that all the way from the bottom of the avenue, one can only see the power of State and not of the Church!

2. José Falcão, 199 Street, the **Neo-arab building** with a

fascinating façade in the middle of Porto stands out, even if it is covered with azulejos like so many other historical



houses there. Azulejos are exactly the keyword to understanding the existence of such an edifice: the house number 199 was once the ceramics warehouse of an important factory, situated in Vila Nova de Gaia. The representative façades of this building, dating from the beginning of the 20th century, were meant to demonstrate the vast array of ceramic elements that could be produced in there. It is inspired by the Moroccan architecture and on the other, by classical mythology. Even if not very consistent in terms of architectural styles, the building does show the whole range of available approaches to ceramics production.

Curiosity: this building has already been a disco, a restaurant, a bar, and is now a coworking space for Selina, an international successful company, which has rented it for the next 20 years.

3. **Praça Carlos Alberto** -

This square is called Carlos Alberto in homage to the king of Piemonte and Sardinia, who after being dethroned in 1849, found refuge in the city of



Porto, in the Palacete dos Viscondes de Balsemão, a manor house which is located in this square and you are going to visit.

Curiosity: In early times, it was once called Feira das Caixas (Box Fair) because there used to be a carpenter's tent there where they would make the suitcases used by emigrants going to Brazil.

4. **Igreja do Carmo** was built between 1756 and 1768 in the rococo or late Baroque style. Igreja do Carmo has an outstanding azulejo-covered exterior with the azulejos added in 1912. The tiles were made locally and designed by the artist Silvestro Silvestri. They depict scenes of the founding of the Carmelite Order and Mount Carmel. The exterior façade of the church is richly crafted with a rectangular portal, flanked by two religious sculptures of the prophets Elijah and Elisha carved in Italy. The interior of the church has a single nave with seven lavish gilt altars, as well as a number of fine oil paintings.



5. **Igreja das Carmelitas** next door, is the earlier of the two churches and was built in the mid-17th century with the exterior completed in 1628. The church was part of a convent that no longer exists. The façade is done in granite with three arched entrances topped with statues. There is a single bell tower on the left, the top of which is covered with blue and white azulejos tiles. The interior of Igreja dos Carmelitas has a single nave with six ornately decorated side chapels. The white ceiling adds a special lightness to the interior aided by the many large windows. The organ has been restored thanks to in part from contributions from the general public.

Curiosity: The two churches are separated by a very narrow (1-meter-wide) house. The 3-storey house Casa Escondida ("Hidden House") was, according to legend, built so that the two churches would not share a common wall and to prevent any relations between the nuns of Igreja dos Carmelitas and the monks of Igreja do Carmo. Another, more prosaic reason, and more likely the correct one, is that the building was constructed for purely aesthetic reasons to prevent an unsightly gap between the two churches.

6. Jardim da Cordoaria

(Rope-Makers

Garden), known in the Middle Ages as the Campo do Olival (olive grove), its name is due to the bishop's ropery, who was installed there in the XV century.

In 1611, the former



Campo was converted into an Alameda (lane) and, in 1865, by the hand of the German Emile David, the garden was born. In the following century, and after the cyclone's devastation in 1941, it was replanted. With rare plants around a lake, several statues, benches and bandstand, this garden was characterized by a traditional XIX century city garden atmosphere. It was considered a Botanic garden, for the variety of plants here existent, until the beginning of the XX century.

Curiosity: An amusing group of statues portrays thirteen human figures and is called '*Trêze a rir uns dos outros*', meaning 'Thirteen people laughing at one another', a work by the sculptor from Madrid, Juan Muñoz, which was installed in 2001, when Porto was the European Capital of Culture.

7. Praça dos Leões - The

centre of Porto's student life. The official designation of this square in Downtown Porto is homage to Gomes Teixeira, a mathematician who was the first rector of the University of Porto. However, it is best known



for the Praça dos Leões (Lions Square), due to the granite and bronze fountain that exists in the central zone, dating back to 1887. The current building of the Rectory of the University of Porto was built throughout the nineteenth century and it also served as the Faculty of Sciences and Engineering. The square then gained a

new life; the presence of the students was decisive for the emergence of cafes, such as the mythical Café Âncora d'Ouro (better known as O Piolho- the Lice), bookstores and other services linked to academic life. The shops and warehouses nearby also created, along with the people of Porto and who visited the city, the habit of shopping in this area. Nowadays it is one of the main places in Porto for nightlife activities and it continues to be a meeting point in the main moments of the academic life of the city, such as Queima das Fitas (first week of May) or the Reception to the new students of the University of Porto.

Curiosity: Portugal has a very import academic tradition, so, every year, in early September, the young people who have just joined university, are “baptized” in this fountain by older students, testifying their new life as freshmen.

8. Largo Moinho de vento

(Windmill square) - The name of this old square corresponds to the idea that a rural area was located here, where it is assumed that there really was a windmill. It is likely

that, having even existed, this mill would have survived until the mid-19th century, the date of the configuration of the main building located there – although there are those who point its origins to the 18th century. The central point of this place is the tile mural covering the façade of a building, constituting the largest work of public art to date by the artist Joana Vasconcelos. You can observe the modern approach of the use of tile, here as a work of art!



Curiosity: the panel is more than twenty meters wide and composed of 8,000 hand-painted tiles.

9. **Rua de Cedofeita** – we want you to pay special attention to the pavement (calçada portuguesa) which is a traditional-style pavement used for many pedestrian areas in Portugal. It is a form of art in our cultural tradition. It consists of small flat pieces of stones arranged in a pattern or image, like a mosaic. Black and white, symmetrical or not, the sidewalks have shapes and designs that narrate an era. When the “Portuguese sidewalks”, as they were known, originated in the mid-1500s, they used granite brought from the Porto region as raw material. However, transportation made the continuation of the work unfeasible.



Curiosity: Very little new paving is done and the entire profession is at risk. The long hours and low wages typical of calceteiros have reduced apprenticeships and thus new pavers. Furthermore, as the pavement is less safe (provides less traction when wet; loose stones can become tripping hazards), costs more (especially with the difficulty of obtaining appropriate stones), and wears quicker than concrete or asphalt, there is also dropping interest in investment and construction in it. Although there were once hundreds of calceteiros, most modern work is on conservation or major architectural projects.

10. **Lello Bookshop** – founded in 1869, the building's exterior has a mixed architectural suggesting Neo-Gothic, and Nouveau elements, and in the interior, implied Art Deco elements. It is considered one of the most beautiful book shops in the world and has inspired writers and artists.



Curiosity: J.K.Rowling lived in Porto for a long time before becoming a famous writer. It is said that Lello inspired her to write Harry Potter and it is obvious she used that inspiration to create the Hogwarts stairs that moved from one side to the other and took students to areas of the castle where they shouldn't be.

11. **Clérigos** – undeniably the ex-libris of the city, Baroque style, its architecture is characterised by the irregularity and exaggeration of the forms that originate a surprising scenic effect. The irregular plans stand out, the corrugated façades, highlighted by a contrast of protrusions, balconies and recesses, interrupted arches, and a great profusion of varied windows, complemented by the exuberant bell tower. Considered a National Monument since 1910. In the year 1753, at the request of the Brotherhood of Clerics, the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni presented the project for a bell tower, and in 1754 they would start the works of what would become the most beautiful Tower, dominating the entire urban landscape of Porto. In July 1763, with the placing of the iron cross on the top, and the image of St. Paul in the niche above the door, its construction was finished.



Curiosity: At more than 75m high, after climbing 225 steps and reaching the top of the tower, the view over the city is absolutely stunning. From a 360° perspective, visitors can enjoy a unique moment, whether day or night, when in special times, the tower opens its doors until 11 PM.

12. Nossa Senhora da Silva Chapel -

Building where the Confraria de Nossa Senhora da Silva has operated since the 15th century. On the facade, on the first floor, there is an oratory from the 18th century with the images of saints, protected by a wooden carved surface. Inside the building is the chapel of the brotherhood, which along with an inn, was administered by City blacksmiths, boilermakers and fish hook makers. You can also appreciate the colourful stained glass.



Curiosity: This is the only chapel in the city of Porto that is located on the 1st floor.

13. The installation “Kneaded Memory”

by the Portuguese visual artist Dalila Gonçalves, presents a series of objects that resemble rocks and wreckage-shaped forms with different shapes and sizes. Part of the surfaces of these forms is covered with ceramic tiles (azulejos), which were moulded to sit perfectly on the irregular

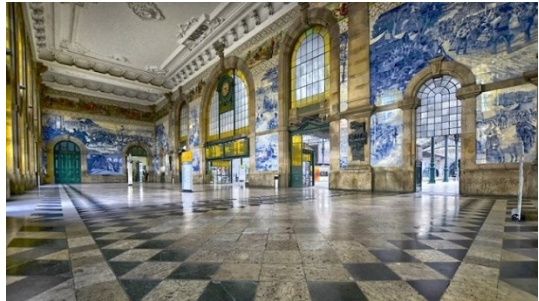


and round surfaces of these forms. Along with the exclusion of traditional decorative elements, the past century has also seen an increase in the usage of cement and concrete on the façades of most public and private buildings. ‘Kneaded Memory’ looks into this particular relation between past and present, between memory, remembrance and oblivion.

Curiosity: this work of Art is one of many scattered through the city as part of the Public Art Programme in place since 2015.

14. **S. Bento Railway**

Station, in the city centre of Porto is often described as one of the most beautiful train stations in the entire world. And this is not an



overstatement. Indeed, we are talking walls and ceilings covered with 22 thousand tiles - azulejos - by Jorge Colaço, painter, caricaturist and potter, which depict some of the most relevant episodes of Portuguese history.

Curiosity: The first train arrived at the station in São Bento in 1896, it was built in French architectural style and it was inaugurated on 5 October 1916.

15. **Congregados Church** -

Conceived in the austere and imposing Baroque style of the late 17th century, its facade is divided into two floors. The walls of the upper floor and the tympanum are covered with modern tiles, designed by Jorge Colaço and alluding to the life of Saint Anthony, also expressing various Eucharistic symbols. The windows on the facade have stained glass made by Mendes de Oliveira and manufactured in 1929, locally at Fábrica Antunes, dealing with Marian and Christological themes.



Curiosity: In the chapel of the Sacred Family lies the tomb of the richly dressed mummified body of Pope Saint Clement, the martyr, the only Pope who rests away from the Vatican.

16. **Santo Ildefonso Church** - the 11 thousand tiles on the facade of the Church of Santo Ildefonso, which began to be built in 1709, stand out. Inside, we are dazzled by the stained-glass windows, dating from 1967, by Isolino Vaz.



Curiosity: It was from the steps of this church that, in 1891, the shots were fired that would end the revolution that was the first attempt to establish the Republic in Portugal.

17. **The Palladium Clock** - It is not the oldest clock in the city, nor the most iconic, especially considering that Porto has such different examples as the clock in the City Hall building or in the Clérigos Tower. However, it is, with some certainty, amongst the most photographed and filmed clocks by those who visit Porto. This is due to the symbolism that it is loaded with. It does not just mark the passage of time, but also tells a little about the history of Porto and some of its most emblematic figures.

Curiosity: at noon, 3 and 6 pm, you can see the figures coming out: they are S. João, the most cherished and annually celebrated saint among the people of Porto, Infante D. Henrique, crucial in the period of the Discoveries, and Almeida Garrett and Camilo Castelo Branco, two important names in Portuguese literature and closely linked to our city.



18. **Majestic Café** – The café is connected to the history of the Porto of the twenties and the tradition of café discussions where politicians, writers and intellectuals would meet and find the time to discuss ideas. The



luxurious establishment opened for business on 17th December 1921 under the name Elite. However, the following year it was rebaptised the Majestic, a name it has since maintained. A true example of the café-cum-talking shop, this was where the intellectual elite, and so many others who contributed to the artistic and cultural heritage of Portugal. The building is from the *Art Noveau* period, reminiscent of Parisian cafés at the time.

Curiosity: The café went through decades of decline, until it was considered a building of national historical interest in 1983. After major restoration works, it reopened in July 1994 in the original *Belle Époque* style. Since the 1980s it has become iconic in Porto and is a popular destination in the city.

19. **A Pérola do Bolhão** is a traditional grocery store, opened since 1917. It sells a large variety of quality products, from mountain cheese to dried fruits, from good wine to delicatessen and Portuguese traditional cookies. Before the products catch your eye, the façade will: beautiful Art Noveau entrance covered in Portuguese tiles. If you look closely you'll realize that the images are of women holding tea plants and coffee plants, as the lettering on top refers to Tea ("Chá") and Coffee ("Café").



Curiosity: You can buy the quantity you desire of exquisite dried, caramelized fruit or flowers! I advise you to buy “alheiras” there, a typical Portuguese sausage mainly made of poultry, bread, olive oil, lard, garlic and paprika.

20. Capela da Almas

(Souls Chapel) is one of the most photographed buildings in Porto. Located in the heart of downtown, it stands out for the 15,947 tiles that cover its façade. When these tiles were placed on the main façade and on the side wall, it immediately



became one of the favourite churches of the people of Porto. Built in the first half of the 18th century, it is a religious building with very simple features, but of rare artistic beauty.

- 21. Bolhão Underground** – we end this journey with what we started: AZULEJO! You can observe a huge panel by Júlio Resende, depicting moments of daily life in the Bolhão Market, the most iconic in town, which has been refurbished for the last few years and is finally opening its doors again next Summer.



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