TURISMO DE PORTUGAL algarve

guide to

the cultural heritage of the algarve

Thanks:
The Tourism Board wishes to thank all the organisations that provided assistance with the photographic survey, and have thus contributed to informing residents and tourists about the Algarve's valuable cultural and religious heritage.

Specifically:
Municipal Councils
São Lourenço Cultural Centre in Almancil
Faro Jewish Heritage Centre
Diocese of the Algarve
Algarve Regional Culture Directorate
Parish Offices
Ramalho Ortigão Maritime Museum
Algarve Regional Museum
Parishes
Pousadas de Portugal
Teatro Lethes

preface

Culture is an essential element for affirming the importance of the Algarve in our country and this is the reason for publishing this guide. Rooted in the history of the region, which has been a crossroads for people and experiences, we feel that this is a unique opportunity to widen our vision to embrace the vestiges of earlier civilisations, and bring them into the context of the contemporary Algarve. What we offer you is a timeless journey, but one that is made through time.

The "Guide to the Cultural Heritage of the Algarve" reveals over 100 treasures in the different municipalities of the region - including churches, archaeological sites, museums, monuments – and it calls for a slow process of discovery through careful contemplation. Because each one is of interest in its own right, each must be valued and promoted on a national level. And ultimately, that is the aim of this publication.

The heritage sites that are brought together here are accompanied by useful information to help you get the most out of a visit, all so that nothing of the immense cultural fabric of the Algarve, now becoming a key tourism segment, should be lost.

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António Ventura Pina

President of the Algarve Tourism Board

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introduction

Visiting the Algarve is not just an opportunity to enjoy the magnificent beaches and delicious cuisine; it is also a chance to discover a rich cultural heritage handed down over many centuries of history.

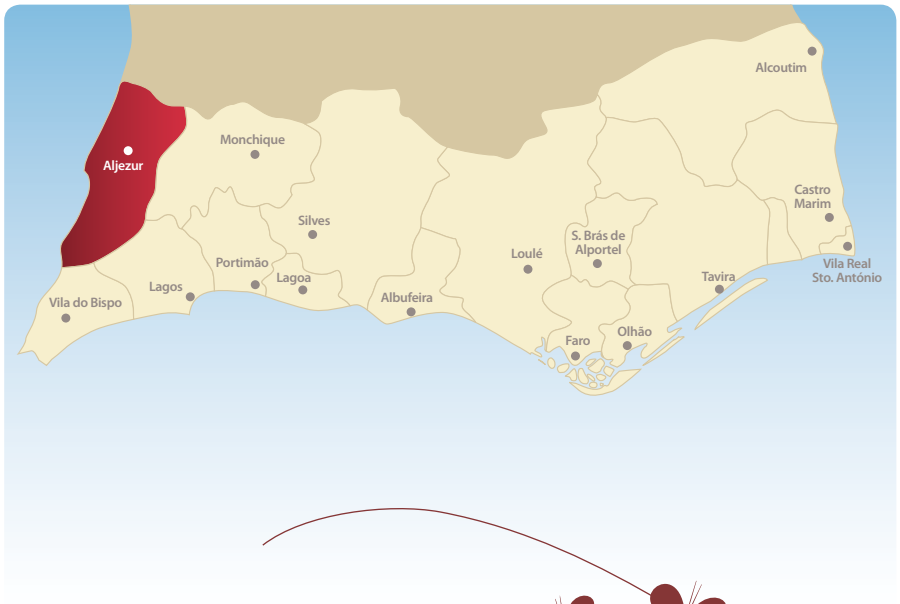
Through the publication of this guide, the Algarve Tourism Board (RTA) wishes to provide information about all the most interesting monuments, churches, archaeological sites and museums in the region.

The aim is to draw the attention of local residents and tourists to all the best things that can be found in each of the municipalities in the Algarve, using as criteria not only the historical, architectural and artistic value of sites, but also their condition, whether they can be visited by the public and whether they are easily accessible.

As this is intended as information for tourists, it was decided to write in clear, accessible language, without, however, diminishing the rigour of the content, so that this guide may serve as an introduction to the rich cultural heritage of this region, where there is so much to discover.

aljezur

Arregata Windmill



the municipality

Occupied since pre-historic times, the municipality of Aljezur enjoyed a period of great prosperity during the five centuries of Islamic occupation. Indeed, the town of Aljezur was founded by the Arabs in the 10th century, and they built the imposing castle that can still be visited today.

In 1249, D. Paio Peres Correia won the town back from the Moors. In 1280, King Dinis granted Aljezur its charter and in 1504 it was awarded a new charter by King Manuel I.

After a period of prosperity which coincided with the maritime Discoveries and the town sending its agricultural produce to Lagos, Aljezur faced hard times, later exacerbated by the 1755 earthquake. The earthquake destroyed most of the town and left the main church in complete ruins. The intervention of the then Bishop of the Algarve, D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar, was needed to build this church and set in motion the construction of a new urban centre.

Aljezur Castle

An Arab military building dating from the 10th century, located on the top of a hill. It has a long stretch of wall with two towers, and on the inside a vaulted cistern of Arab origin, as well as the remains of houses and barracks.
Aljezur Castle was taken by the Christians in the 13th century and fulfilled an important defensive role until the 18th century.
Despite the fact that the building is not well preserved, visitors can enjoy the wonderful view.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate)

Aljezur Main Church

After the 1755 earthquake, the old Aljezur Main Church, a medieval building in the Gothic style, was so badly damaged that the bishop D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar decided to sponsor the building of a new Main Church for the town.
The church that can be seen today was built between the end of the 18th century and the first years of the 19th century, in the neoclassical style.
It is a church with three naves and a chancel, two chancel chapels and two side chapels. In the chancel, there is an altarpiece from the beginning of the 19th century with an excellent statue of the town's patron saint: Nossa Senhora da Alva (Our Lady of Dawn).
In addition to the side altars in the neoclassical style, some Mannerist paintings from the old main church can be seen, as well as a 16th century statue of São Sebastião (St Sebastian).

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday at 12 noon
Contact: Tel. 282 998 204 (Aljezur Parish)

Aljezur Municipal Museum

Housed in a 19th century building that was once the Town Hall, the Aljezur Municipal Museum includes an art gallery which hosts temporary exhibitions. In the same building, there is an archaeology centre with finds from all over the municipality, and an ethnography centre with a reproduction of an old house and an interesting collection of agricultural implements.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday,
from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2.30 to 6.30 p.m.
Contact: Tel. 282 995 019

Aljezur Misericórdia Church and Museum of Religious Art

A 16th century church rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake. The doorway is in the Renaissance style and it has an art collection comprising a number of pieces of religious art, including the flags of the Irmandade da Misericórdia (Misericórdia Confraternity) and some 18th and 19th century statues.
In an annex, there is a small museum of religious art where visitors can see objects connected with the liturgical seasons of the Catholic Church and also some personal items belonging to the patron of the museum, Monsenhor Manuel Francisco Pardal.

Restricted access
Contact: Tel. 282 998 415

Bordeira Main Church

An 18th century church, it has a longitudinal floor plan with a single nave and a chancel with a carved gilt triumphal arch in front.
The main features are the altarpiece in the chancel and the two side altarpieces in the Baroque style, where some high quality statues can be seen. Examples are the statues of Nossa Senhora da Encarnação (Our Lady of the Incarnation) and Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary)(18th century), of Santo António (St Anthony) and São Francisco (St Francis)(17th century) and of São Sebastião (St Sebastian)(16th century).

Open for worship
Times of masses: 2nd Saturday of the month at 3 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 998 204 (Bordeira Parish)

Moinho da Arregata Museum

In the village of Rogil can be found a typical windmill which is still in operation and where the whole process of milling cereals can be seen.

Open to the public during the summer months
Contact: Tel. 282 995 001 (Rogil Parish Office)

Odeceixe Winery Museum

Housed in a former winery dating from the beginning of the 20th century, this museum provides visitors with an opportunity to find out about the process of wine production and to see some of the implements used in this activity.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday,
from 9 am to 12 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 947 255 (Odeceixe Parish Office)

vila do bispo

Sagres Fortress

the municipality

A place of settlement since pre-historic times, Vila do Bispo owes its name to the fact that it was granted to the Bishop of Silves at the beginning of the 16th century.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, it prospered thanks to tuna fishing, an activity which Prince Henry the Navigator partly used to fund the maritime Discoveries.

Indeed, it was during the 15th century that Vila do Bispo, the municipality to which Cabo de São Vicente (Cape St Vincent) and the Sagres Fortress belong, grew most in importance, something that was largely due to the visits of Prince Henry to the region, especially to the Sagres Fortress, where he founded a nautical school.

Another place of great importance in the region was Cabo de São Vicente which since pre-historic times had great religious significance, and during the Middle Ages was the destination for pilgrimages to the tomb of St Vincent, the martyr whose body was brought here in the 4th century, until it was taken to Lisbon in the 12th century on the orders of D. Afonso Henriques.

At the end of the 16th century, this region was systematically attacked by Moorish pirates and by the English privateer Francis Drake, who were responsible for serious damage which made the construction of a new defensive system necessary.

As along much of the Algarve coast, the 1755 earthquake caused much destruction in this region which nowadays has one of the major tourist attractions: its glorious historical past.

Vila do Bispo Main Church

The Igreja Matriz de Vila do Bispo dates back to the 16th century. However, the present building was the result of major remodelling work that was carried out at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries.
The body of the church consists of a single nave and a chancel with a triumphal arch in front.
The ornamentation on the inside of the church dates mostly from the beginning of the 18th century, so that the church displays an almost perfect aesthetic unity, in which decorative elements in the Baroque style predominate.
From among the church's altarpieces, the highlight is the one in the chancel dating from the first quarter of the 18th century, as well as the one in the Chapel of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel).
As far as the collection of statues is concerned, the one of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) dating from the 16th century together with a 15th century incense boat and two paintings depicting São Pedro (St Peter) and São Paulo (St Paul) are the oldest pieces in the Vila do Bispo Church.
One of the most interesting features of this church is the ceiling above the nave which consists of coffers decorated with frescoes.
Also worth noting are the Baroque tiles which came from Lisbon and were used to cover the church walls in 1715.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open for worship
Times of masses: in winter, Monday to Friday at 5 pm and Sunday at 12 noon. In summer, Monday to Friday at 6 pm and Sunday at 12 noon
Contact: Tel. 282 639 400 (Parish of Vila do Bispo)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora de Guadalupe (Raposeira)

This is one of the oldest churches in the Algarve. It was founded in the 14th century as a chapel of pilgrimage, and was remodelled in the 15th century, possibly with the sponsorship of Prince Henry the Navigator, who, legend has it, came here to pray.
The façade, with a triangular gable, has an eye-window and an ogival doorway, and on the inside columns with abacuses and capitals with rope motifs, precursors of the Manueline style.
The chapel's chancel is covered by a vault. It is interesting to note that the keystones of the vault and the capitals on the triumphal arch display symbols relating to the legend of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm / 6 pm in summer
Closed: Mondays, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, 1st May, 25th December
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate)

Raposeira Main Church

It is known that Prince Henry the Navigator lived in Raposeira, where he had a house. However, this church is from a later period, so it was not there in his time.
It is a Manueline church built at the beginning of the 16th century, as can be seen from the Manueline doorways, the triumphal arch and the holy water font.
The main doorway is a good example of the Manueline style: it has two archivolts and capitals decorated with geometrical and plant motifs.
On the inside, don't miss the side altarpieces in the Baroque style or the statues from the 17th and 18th centuries.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sundays at 9.30 am
Contact: Tel. 282 630 600 (Vila do Bispo Municipal Council) and 282 639 400 (Raposeira Parish)

Sagres Fortress

Located on the Cape of Sagres, the Promontorium Sacrum famous for its unparalleled beauty, Sagres Fortress owes its origins to Prince Henry the Navigator who created a town and died here in 1460.
There is little left of the walls that the father of the Discoveries ordered to be built, as the fortress was rebuilt in the 16th century and during the second half of the 18th century, at which time it was altered to the "Vauban" defensive system.
The entrance to this bastioned fortress is a good example of neoclassical architecture. On the inside can be seen cannons, a 16th century tower and also the Church of Nossa Senhora da Graça (Our Lady of Grace), built in the 16th century on the exact spot where previously the Church of Santa Maria had stood, which was founded by Prince Henry but was destroyed by the English privateer Francis Drake in 1587.
One of the most important attractions of Sagres Fortress is without doubt the "rosa-dos-ventos" (the wind rose), a sundial which many think dates from the time of Prince Henry and the nautical school he founded in Sagres.
A place of great historical and symbolic value, this monument offers visitors an opportunity to revisit the glorious period of the maritime Discoveries and to enjoy one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm /8 pm in the summer
Closed: Mondays, 1st May and 25th December
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate) and 282 620 140 (Sagres Fortress)

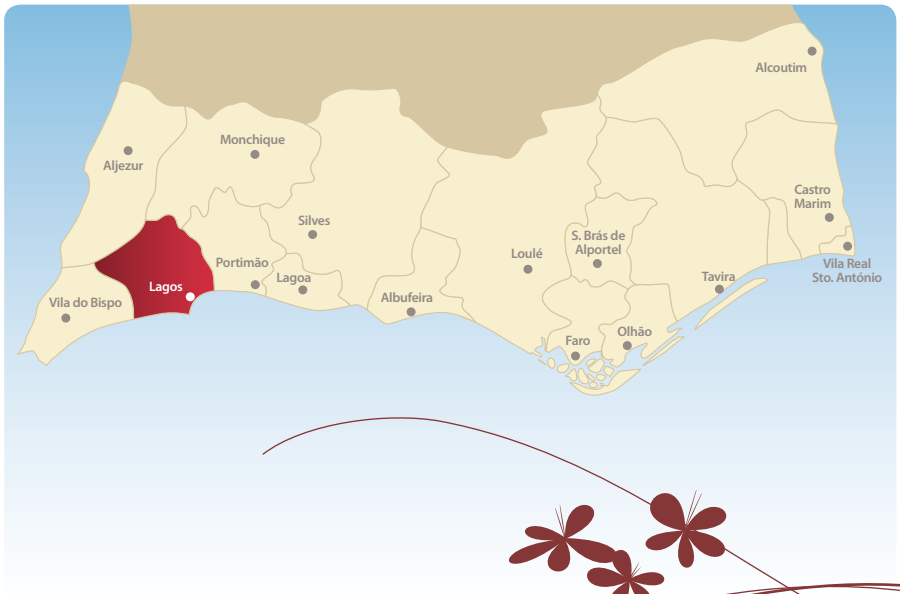
Cape St Vincent Fortress

This fortress was built in the 16th century in order to protect the coast from the frequent attacks by Moorish pirates. It stands on the site of an earlier medieval convent, which, legend has it, is supposed to have housed the mortal remains of São Vicente (St Vincent).
It is a military construction with a polygonal floor plan, with a gateway crowned by the royal shield and which once had a drawbridge.
Inside the fortress can be seen the lighthouse of São Vicente which was built in 1904 and is still in operation today.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 282 630 600 (Vila do Bispo Municipal Council)

lagos

Ponta da Bandeira Fort



the municipality

Inhabited since pre-historic times, the city of Lacobriga has Celtic origins, dating from about 2000 B.C.

It is known that its harbour was visited by Mediterranean peoples such as Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians, and it was still of great importance during the period of Roman rule.

With the Arab occupation of the Algarve in the 8th century, the city changed hands but retained its economic and strategic importance, as shown by the building of an important defensive wall in the 10th century.

With the Christian re-conquest in 1249, Lagos began a new period in its long history. In the 15th and 16th centuries, it witnessed great growth in its economy and population. It was during this period that the city became the main port of arrival and departure for the vessels that explored the African coast, making Lagos one of the main centres in the world for the trade in exotic produce and spices.

Prince Henry the Navigator, father of the maritime Discoveries, lived in Lagos, and it was he who made this city into the port for the ships of Gil Eanes, the Algarve sailor who rounded Cape Bojador in 1434.

The most difficult period in the history of Lagos was the 1755 earthquake, which destroyed much of the city and meant that it was only in the 19th century with the fish-canning industry, that it returned to its previous levels of prosperity.

Nowadays, Lagos is one of the main tourist centres in the Algarve.

Lagos city walls

The walls date back as far as the Roman period. They were rebuilt by the Arabs and considerably enlarged during the 16th century between the reigns of D. Manuel and Filipe I, because of the need to protect the growing city centre.
The walls had huge strategic significance in the 15th and 16th centuries. They connect nine towers that were built for artillery and there are seven gates.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Contact: Tel. 282 780 060 (Lagos Municipal Council)

Ponta da Bandeira Fort

From this 17th century fort built at the entrance to the Ria de Bensafrim, visitors can enjoy a magnificent view.
It is built on a quadrangular floor plan, is surrounded by a moat and has an impressive gateway with a drawbridge which provides access to the inside.
There, a 17th century chapel covered with tiled walls can be visited.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday, from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 780 060 (Lagos Municipal Council)

Church of Santo António and Municipal Museum

Founded at the beginning of the 18th century, the Church of St Anthony suffered considerable damage in the 1755 earthquake, which led to its reconstruction in 1769.
It is a church with a single nave, modest in size and with a simple façade, on which the main feature is an eye window with a border with seven shells.
Inside the church can be found one of the Algarve's great artistic treasures: a magnificent ensemble of Baroque gilded wood-carving made by Gaspar Martins and Custódio de Mesquita which, as well as the main altarpiece, includes the carved covering of the side walls and the lower choir.
The works of art include a dado of Baroque tiles, a number of 18th century paintings representing the miracles of Santo António, and also a series of statues including one of Santo António on the altarpiece.

The Church of Santo António is visited via the Dr. José Formosinho Municipal Museum, of which it forms part. Here, archaeology and ethnography exhibitions can be seen and a room of religious art which, among other pieces, has a 17th century alabaster statue representing Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Our Lady of Piety).

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday,
from 9.30 to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 762 301

Santa Maria Main Church

Built at the beginning of the 16th century as the "misericórdia" church, it was made the parish church after the 1755 earthquake.
The church has a single nave and a main doorway in the Renaissance style formed by two Doric columns flanked by figures of São Pedro (St Peter) and São Paulo (St Paul).
The main features of the ornamentation on the inside are the collections of statues of Nossa Senhora da Assunção (Our Lady of the Assumption), of São Gonçalo de Lagos, of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel) and Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Our Lady of Piety), all in the Rococo style, as are the two statues of the crucifixion.

Open to the public
Opening times: from 8 am to 7.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 762 723 (Parish of Santa Maria)

Church of São Sebastião

A 15th century church with three naves separated by semi-circular arches.
On the façade there is a doorway dating from 1612, formed by two fluted Doric columns.
The outstanding features on the inside of the church are the altarpiece in the chancel, typical of the 19th century but with a Baroque tribune, the 18th century altarpiece in the Capela do Santíssimo (Chapel of the Most Holy) and an important collection of statues including one of the crucifixion from the 16th century, and one of Nossa Senhora da Glória (Our Lady of Glory) in the Baroque style.
Finally, another source of interest in the church is the chapel of bones.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open for worship
Times of masses: Saturday at 5.30 pm and Sunday at 10 am
Contact: Tel. 282 089 186 (Parish of S. Sebastião)

Luz de Lagos Main Church

A late Gothic church as can be seen from the buttresses on the side walls. The chancel has a ribbed vault with three keystones in a longitudinal line.
Another interesting feature is the ogival triumphal arch, with three archivolts and capitals decorated with animal and human figures surrounded by foliage.
The Baroque altarpiece in the chancel is a high quality example from the first quarter of the 18th century, and is well worth having a close look at.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday at 9.30 am
Contact: Tel. 282 762 723 (Luz de Lagos Parish) and 282 789 722 (Luz de Lagos Parish Office)

monchique

Monchique Main Church

the municipality

The Romans were the first people to settle in Monchique, in search of the curative powers of its waters.
From the Islamic period onwards, the town prospered owing to the production of goods such as honey and medronho brandy.
In the 1570s, Monchique was visited by King Sebastião and in 1773 it became a town.
Nowadays, visitors continue to be attracted to this attractive spot by the pureness of the mountain air, the quality of its famous spa waters, and by its handicrafts and delicious cuisine.

Monchique Main Church

This is a fine, early 16th century church that was partially rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake. There is an interesting Manueline doorway on the main façade, with a pointed arch and decorated with plant motifs. Above the doorway there is an eye-window that is also Manueline.

The inside is divided into three naves that are separated by columns with capitals decorated with plant motifs.

The Manueline side chapel is worth special attention with its simple ogival vault with a cross of the Order of Christ on the keystone and covered in figurative tiles dating from the end of the 18th century.

Of especial interest for visitors are the Baroque altarpieces in the chancel, in the Capela do Santíssimo Sacramento (Chapel of the Most Holy Sacrament) and the

Capela do Sagrado Coração (Chapel of the Sacred Heart), on which there are some statues of great quality.

The church also has a small museum with a collection of liturgical objects.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 12 noon
Contact: Tel. 282 912 289 (Monchique Parish)

Misericórdia Church

This 16th century church has a single nave and underwent major rebuilding work in the 18th century.
The Monchique Misericórdia Church has a Baroque altarpiece of great quality in the chancel.
Other noteworthy features are the Baroque pulpit and the two side altarpieces in the Rococo style.
Also deserving mention are the processional panels, the statue of Christ on the Cross on one of the side altarpieces, and what are known as "imagens de roca" (statues on a wooden frame) of Nossa Senhora das Dores (Our Lady of Pains) and São Francisco.

Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 282 912 871 (Monchique Parish Office)

Alferce Main Church (and Museum of Religious Art)

This 15th century church has a main doorway with a pointed arch and a chancel with a ribbed vault with a late Gothic triumphal arch in front.
In terms of the ornamentation on the inside, the highlight is the altarpiece in the chancel, an example of the neoclassical style, as well as the "retábulo das almas", the altarpiece of souls. This incorporates a painting from the late 18th century portraying the archangel São Miguel (St Michael).
The church's collection of works of art also deserves mention, part of which is on display in a small museum of religious art, including a stone statue of São Romão (15th century) and a 16th century statue of Nossa Senhora da Consolação (Our Lady of Consolation).

Open for worship
Times of masses: Mondays and Wednesdays at 12 noon
Contact: Tel. 282 912 289 (Alferce Parish)

portimão

Alvor Main Church

the municipality

A human presence in the municipality of Portimão dates back to pre-historic times, as is shown by the major archaeological site at Alcalar.

It is also know that there was a Phoenician and a Carthaginian presence in this area which, like other places on the Algarve coast, played an important role in trade between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and North Africa.

However, despite a Roman and an Arab presence in the area, it was only in the 15th century that Portimão finally made its mark through the concession by King Afonso V in 1463 of a licence to found a fortified settlement to defend the mouth of the Arade river against Moorish pirates.

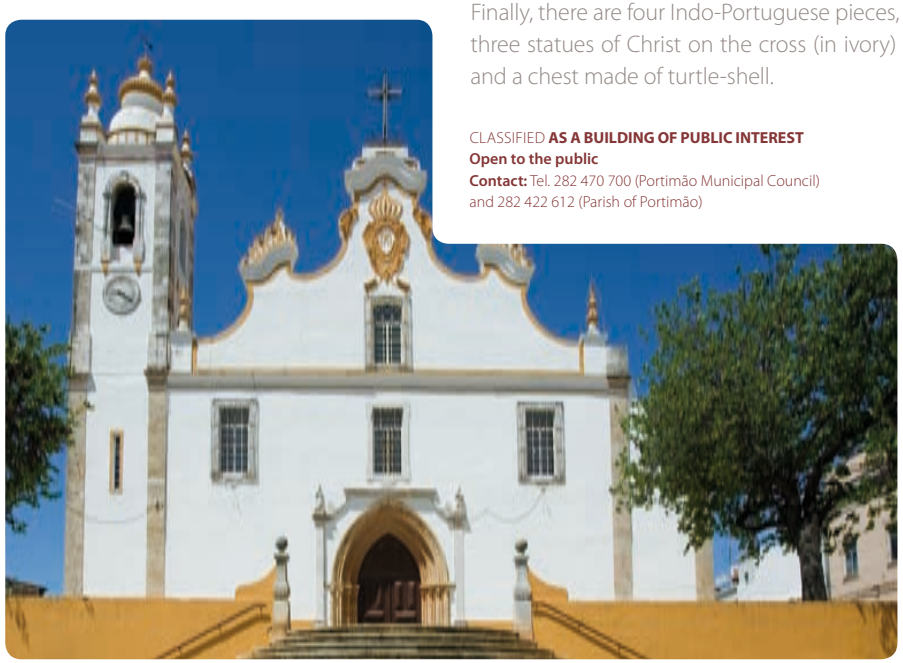
During the Discoveries, the new town of Portimão developed but the damage caused by the 1755 earthquake led to a period of stagnation which was only completely overcome in the 19th century with the fishing and canning industries.

It was made a city in 1924 by the then president Manuel Teixeira Gomes, an illustrious writer who was himself a native of Portimão, and nowadays the city is enjoying a new period of economic growth based on tourism.

Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Main Church)

The Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) was built at the end of the 15th century in the 1755 earthquake because only the main doorway from the original medieval building survived, which is similar to the one at the Monastery of Batalha.
The church has a triple apse, four side chapels and three naves separated by columns with Tuscan capitals. On the façade, there is a pediment decorated with the typical plasterwork of the late 18th century.

On the inside of the church, the highlights are the Baroque altarpieces in the chancel and in the Capela do Santíssimo Sacramento (Chapel of the Most Holy Sacrament), as well as the statues of Nossa Senhora das Almas do Purgatório (Our Lady of the Souls of Purgatory), of São Pedro and São Gonçalo de Lagos which date, like the altarpieces, from the second half of the 18th century.
Finally, there are four Indo-Portuguese pieces, three statues of Christ on the cross (in ivory) and a chest made of turtle-shell.



CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 282 470 700 (Portimão Municipal Council)
and 282 422 612 (Parish of Portimão)

Church of the Old College of the Society of Jesus

Despite the fact that building work on the church began in 1660, it was only opened for worship in 1707.
It has a single nave, in the architectural style that is typical of the Jesuit colleges. Covered by a cradle vault, it has a triple apse and six side chapels with tribunes above.
On the façade, which was partially rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake, six large windows can be seen, and a pediment with curving lines and an eye window in the centre.
Inside, the Baroque altarpieces in the chancel and chancel chapels should not pass unnoticed, nor should the statues of São Camilo de Lélis and Santo António (dating from the 18th century).
Other features that are worth mentioning are the ostensory with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a statue of Christ on the cross in the chancel, as well as the mausoleum of Diogo Gonçalves, the founder of the church, who died in 1664 before seeing its completion.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF MUNICIPAL VALUE**
Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 282 470 700 (Portimão Municipal Council)
and 282 422 612 (Parish of Portimão)

Portimão Municipal Museum

Located in the old Feu canning factory, the museum houses a major collection connected with the canning industry and with fishing.
This museum is still at the stage of being set up, and only opens for cultural events.

Restricted access
Contact: Tel. 282 470 830

Fortress of Santa Catarina

Built between 1623 and 1629 to defend the mouth of the Arade river, it has a small chapel on the inside and provides a magnificent view over the water.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 282 470 700 (Portimão Municipal Council)

Alcalar Megalithic Monuments

One of the most important archaeological sites in the south of the country is located in Alcalar. Here there are the remains of a Megalithic community, for example the necropolis whose tombs have architectural features such as dolmens and cupolas.
To help visitors gain a better understanding of the archaeological remains, a reception and interpretation centre was set up which provides all the necessary information.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: in winter, from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm, and in summer from 10 am to 6.30 pm
Closed: Sundays, Mondays, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, 1st May and 25th December
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate) and 282 471 410 (Alcalar Megalithic Monuments)

Alvor Main Church

This early 16th century church was built on the orders of King Manuel.
The body of the church consists of three naves with four bays and a triple apse.
On the façade, the main doorway is an excellent example of the artistic style at the time of the Discoveries. It is a doorway with a semi-circular arch, with three archivolts decorated with plant motifs (leaves and stalks).
The collection of altarpieces deserves special attention, in particular the one in the chancel. It was made in the second half of the 18th century, and on it can be seen a painting of

the Divine Saviour dating from the end of that century, by the Algarve painter Joaquim José Rasquinho.
Also deserving attention is the quality of the statues on the altars and the interesting panel of tiles in the Rococo style on the side walls of the church, depicting the Last Supper and the Washing of the Feet.
A final point of interest: next to the side door of the church is a small chapel which was created out of an old Muslim marabout.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open for worship
Times of masses: in Portuguese – in winter, Saturday at 9 pm and Sunday at 10 am; in summer, Saturday at 6 pm and at 9.30 pm, Sunday at 10 am. In English – in winter, Saturday at 6 pm.
Contact: Tel. 282 459 151 (Parish of Alvor)

Marabout of São Pedro

In the same place, next to the cemetery, there is a small chapel known as the "Morabito de São Pedro" which was converted to the Catholic faith from a small Islamic place of worship with a quadrangular floor plan and a spherical cupola.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Restrited Access
Contact: Tel. 282 470 700 (Portimão Municipal Council)

Mexilhoeira Grande Main Church

A Manueline church dating from the beginning of the 16th century with three naves and a triple apse. It underwent major rebuilding some years later, in the Renaissance style.
The church's outstanding features are the main doorway in the Renaissance style and the triumphal arch in front of the chancel which, interestingly, is in the Manueline style, although it reveals knowledge of the style of the early Renaissance.
The ornamentation on the inside of the church includes the excellent altarpiece in the chancel, from the beginning of the 18th century, and the altarpiece in the Capela do Santíssimo Sacramento (Chapel of the Most Holy Sacrament), in the Baroque style. Also of great quality is the altarpiece in the Capela de Nossa Senhora da Graça (Chapel of Our Lady of Grace), in the Rococo style.
Finally, the statues of Nossa Senhora da Graça (Our Lady of Grace) and of São Luís, both from the second half of the 18th century, also deserve mention.

Open for worship
Times of masses: in winter, Monday to Friday at 5 pm and Sunday at 11 am; in summer, Monday to Friday at 7 pm and Sunday at 11 am
Contact: Tel. 282 968 258 (Mexilhoeira Grande Parish)

lagoa

Lagoa Main Church

the municipality

Little is known about the origins of Lagoa. However, it is probable that the original urban centre developed around a lake, whose marshes were drained to allow agriculture to be practised.

Like most of the coastal area of the Algarve, the region was occupied by the Arabs between the 8th and 13th centuries, and it was retaken by the Christians during the fifth decade of the 13th century and incorporated into the area of Silves.

It is probable that, in the 15th and 16th centuries, Lagoa also enjoyed a period of economic prosperity brought about by the Discoveries. But it was only in the 18th century that the municipality assumed true importance, especially after it became a town in 1773 under a charter issued by King José.

At the end of the 19th century, the municipality of Lagoa prospered thanks to the fish-canning industry, which began to decline in the middle of the 20th century. Today, tourism is one of the main economic activities in the region.

Lagoa Main Church

Built in the 16th century but considerably altered at the end of the 18th century, this church has a simple Manueline doorway on the bell tower. This doorway and the church's three naves are the main elements that remain from the original 16th century construction. The façade is in the neoclassical style, and seems to anticipate the interesting altarpiece in the chancel, where an 18th century statue of Nossa Senhora da Luz (Our Lady of Light) can also be seen. There are also four side altarpieces in the Rococo style in the church, with their respective statues.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Saturday at 6.30 pm, Sunday at 12 noon, from Monday to Friday at 9 am
Contact: Tel. 282 341 056 (Lagoa Parish)

Convent of São José

Built at the beginning of the 18th century, it hosts temporary exhibitions and cultural events in the old chapel, the cloister and the auditorium.
The cloister, which is of great simplicity, has four arcades and a well in the middle. In the small chapel, there is an 18th century altarpiece.
Another notable feature is the foundlings' wheel located at the entrance to the convent.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm. On Saturdays and public holidays, from 2 to 6 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 380 434

São Tiago de Estombar Main Church

A 16th century church, with three naves and a triple apse, it has three Manueline doorways and two interesting columns with sculpted shafts on which human figures can be seen.
On the façade, which was rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake, the magnificent main Manueline doorway is especially noteworthy, as is the pediment with interesting plasterwork decorations, typical of the second half of the 18th century.
Inside, the highlight is the Baroque altarpiece in the chancel, and the Capela das Almas (Chapel of Souls) which contains an altarpiece also dating from the 18th century.
There is also an interesting collection of Baroque figurative tiles in the chancel. These show representations of different scenes from the Gospels and a scene of São Tiago (St James) fighting the Moors.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday at 12 noon, Friday at 6 pm and the summer also on Saturdays at 7 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 431 067 (Estombar Parish)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Rocha

Built on top of a cliff where there was once a military fortress, the chapel has some quite old features although the present building was built at the end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th century, as seems to be suggested by the octagonal cupola and the narthex on the façade, where a column with a Visigothic capital can also be seen.
On the inside, the most important feature is an interesting 16th century statue of Our Lady with Child, as well as a Mannerist altarpiece.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Not open to the public, but it is possible to see the inside
Contact: Tel. 282 342 390 (Porches Parish Office)

silves

Cross of Portugal

the municipality

From the distant past, the Arade river was one of the main communication routes to the Algarve interior and it was due to its navigability that a number of peoples settled in Silves. Of these, the most important in the history of Silves were the Arabs, who made it into the Islamic capital of the Algarve.

Known in the 11th century for its development and prosperity, it was a cultural centre where the most brilliant poets, chroniclers and jurists in the region resided.

Precisely because of its importance, Silves was the first Algarve city to be taken by the Christians in 1189, led by King Sancho I, but two years later it was lost to the Arabs again until it was definitively retaken in 1249.

In 1266, King Afonso III granted Silves its charter and he ordered the construction of a Catholic cathedral on the foundations of the old mosque. The city retained its importance during the following years and remained the capital of the Algarve until the middle of the 16th century, when the seat of the bishop was transferred to Faro, a decision that was strongly influenced by the fact that the river had silted up leading to the economic decline of the city.

With the 1755 earthquake, as well as the Napoleonic invasions and the liberal wars, Silves went through a difficult period, despite returning to prosperity in the 19th century thanks to the cork industry. During this period it witnessed a growth in population and major urban renewal.

Nowadays, Silves is wisely focusing on cultural tourism as a factor in economic development, attracting thousands of tourists to its historical centre and to the events that are held there.

Silves Castle

Built on top of a hill, the imposing Silves castle is Roman in origin, but it was the Arabs who built the magnificent castle we see today, between the 8th and 13th centuries.
Built of Silves sandstone, it is an irregular polygon in shape and it has a main gate flanked by two defensive towers. The extensive walls include three towers and seven sections of wall, and visitors can walk along the wall walk.
There are a number of remains from the period of Muslim occupation on the inside of the castle, in particular a silo which was used for storing cereals and a cistern covered by a vault seated on five semi-circular arches.
Despite having been rebuilt in the 13th century after the city was taken from the Moors by D. Paio Peres Correia, Silves castle is the best example of Arab military architecture in Portugal.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Sunday, from 9 am to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 440 800 (Silves Municipal Council)

Silves Cathedral

Built at the end of the 13th century, probably on the site of the old mosque, this church is in the Gothic style with its floor plan in the shape of a Latin cross, with three naves, a triple apse and also a main doorway with a pointed arch in a style similar to that of the Monastery of Batalha.
One of the main sources of interest in Silves cathedral is the chancel which was built at the end of the 15th century in the Manueline style, the principal features being the ribbed vault and the tomb of D. João II.
After the 1755 earthquake, some repairs were needed, as can be seen from the late Baroque style of what is known as the "Porta do Sol" (Door of the Sun), dating from 1781.
Amongst the artistic details of the church, the Baroque altarpiece in the Capela do Santíssimo (Chapel of the Most Holy) and a jasper statue of Our Lady, dating from the late 15th or early 16th century, deserve special mention.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public, but with limited access because of restoration work
Contact: Tel. 282 442 472 (Silves Parish)

House of Mercy

This 16th century building has a single nave. It has a side doorway in the Manueline style, decorated with foliage and crowned by a pine-cone with the inscription "House of Mercy".
Also of interest is the main doorway in the Renaissance style, comprising two Tuscan columns which support a triangular pediment.
The Mannerist altarpiece on the inside, on which there are eight paintings depicting the Visitation and the Seven Works of Mercy, is well worth a closer look.
Today, this church functions as an art gallery and there are regular exhibitions of painting and fine art.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 440 800 (Silves Municipal Council)

Silves Municipal Archaeology Museum

Not far from Silves Castle, in a building which includes a section of the town walls and a cistern well of Arab origin, is the Municipal Archaeology Museum.
On display to the public is an interesting collection of archaeological finds from the municipality, dating from the Palaeolithic period right up to the Middle Ages, embracing eight thousand years of human settlement in Silves.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Saturday, from 9 am to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 444 832 (Municipal Museum)

Cross of Portugal

A cross dating from the late 15th or early 16th century, conceived in the florid Gothic style. Some researchers have identified Manueline elements on it, an idea that is reinforced by the theory that this cross could have been given to the city of Silves by King Manuel at the time of his visit in 1499.
On one side of the cross there is a Pietá, on the other a crucifix.

Located next to a public road close to the Silves Palace of Justice

Fábrica do Inglês/ Cork Museum

In the "Fábrica do Inglês" (The Factory of the Englishman), where there is also a wide range of restaurants and entertainment on offer, you can visit the Cork Museum, one of the best industrial museums in Europe, which was distinguished with the "European Industrial Museum" award.
Housed in a 19th century building, which was used for a number of years for the processing of cork, the museum provides visitors with an opportunity to find out about one of the most important economic activities in the region.

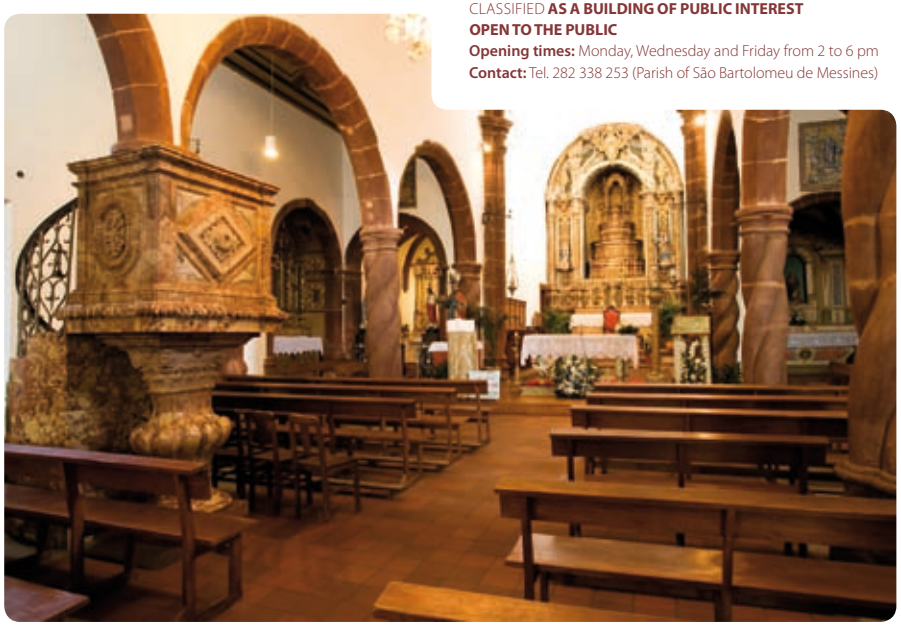
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm and from 2 to 6.15 pm/9.45 pm in the summer
Contact: Tel. 282 440 480

São Bartolomeu de Messines Main Church

Built at the beginning of the 16th century, the Church of São Bartolomeu de Messines underwent major remodelling at the beginning of the 18th century, which explains its mixture of styles.
From the Manueline period, the interior of the church remains, with three naves and four bays formed by interesting twisted pillars. The main façade and the chancel date from the Baroque period, with the latter having a fine altarpiece in the Rococo style.
Owing to the use of materials of contrasting colours (limestone and sandstone) and such diverse architectural features as spiral columns and a stairway, this church makes a strong visual impact.

The ornamentation on the inside of the church includes a late 18th century painting by the Loulé painter Joaquim José Rasquinho, depicting the Annunciation.
Equally charming is the altar in the Chapel of Santo António and the statues which date mostly from the 17th and 18th centuries.
Other notable features are the panel of Baroque tiles in the church's side chapels, as well as the excellent 17th century lavabo in polychrome marble.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Opening times: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 2 to 6 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 338 253 (Parish of São Bartolomeu de Messines)



Alcantarilha Main Church

This 16th century church was built in the Manueline style. It has three naves separated by semi-circular arches seated on octagonal capitals, and a chancel with a vault with three key-stones, of which the central one bears a cross of the Order of Christ.
Also from the Manueline period is the triumphal arch of the chancel, which comprises two semi-circular archivolts.
The ornamentation on the inside of the church includes the 18th century altarpiece in the chancel in the Rococo style, and a beautiful Baroque chest in the sacristy.
Another source of interest is the small Chapel of Bones in an annex to the church.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 322 420 (Alcantarilha Parish)

Algoz Main Church

Built in the 18th century, this church has a single nave and simple apse.
The church's works of art include the altarpiece in the chancel, two side altarpieces in the Baroque style and the Rococo altarpiece in the Chapel of Senhor Jesus (Lord Jesus), where two "imagens de roca" as they are known (statues on a wooden frame) of Nossa Senhora das Dores (Our Lady of Pains) and St John the Evangelist can be seen, as well as another of Our Lord on the cross.

Open for worship
Times of masses: in winter, Saturday at 5 pm, Sunday at 12 noon, Wednesday and Friday at 5 pm. In summer, Monday to Friday at 6 pm, Saturday at 9 pm and Sunday at 12 noon.
Contact: Tel. 282 575 355 (Algoz Parish)

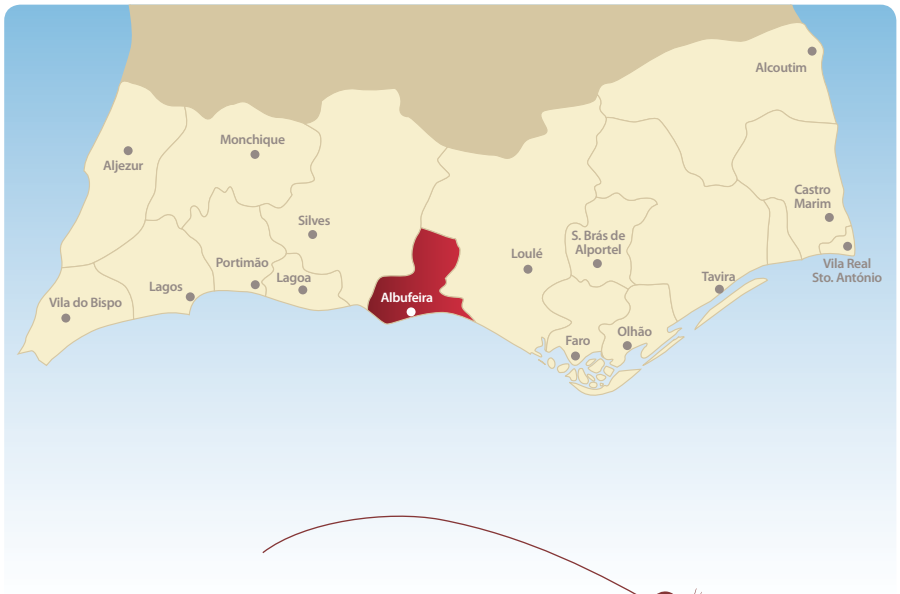
Pêra Main Church

Built in the 18th century, it has a single nave and a simple apse.
The highlight is the Baroque altarpiece in the chancel with a pyramid-shaped throne. Also from the Baroque period are the two side altarpieces, as well as those in the Chapels of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and Sagrado Coração de Jesus (Sacred Heart of Jesus), in which some 18th century statues can be seen.
Also of interest are the figurative tiles in the chancel: they are examples of the Baroque style and depict the four evangelists.

Open for worship
Times of masses: in winter, Tuesday at 5 pm, Thursday at 9.30 am and Sunday at 11 am. In summer, Tuesday at 6 pm, Saturday at 7 pm and Sunday at 11 am
Contact: Tel. 282 322 420 (Pêra Parish)

albufeira

Albufeira Main Church



the municipality

Occupied by the Romans over two thousand years ago, Albufeira developed as a centre for fishing and mining in the area around Paderne.

In the 8th century, the Arabs invaded the peninsula and took the city, changing its Roman name – Baltum – to Al-buhera.

At that time, the municipality developed important commercial links with North Africa, and the Arabs built a wall to protect the city, and Paderne Castle, which can still be visited today.

In 1249, with the Christian re-conquest, Albufeira began a new period in its history.

The 15th and 16th centuries were a period of economic development brought about by the maritime Discoveries. And it was in 1504 that Albufeira was granted its charter as a town by King Manuel I.

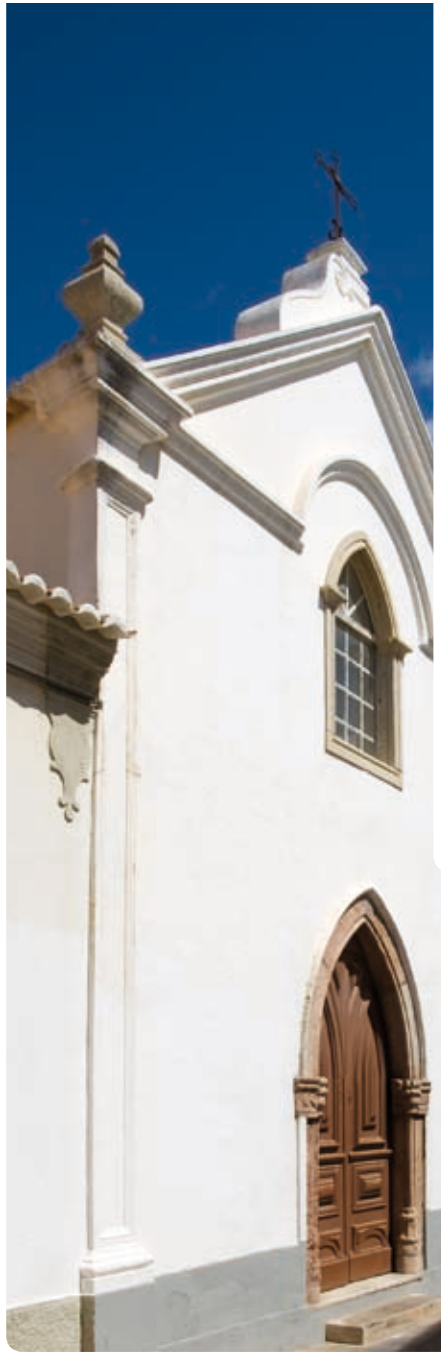
In the 18th century, the 1755 earthquake caused serious damage and brought a decline in the town's fortunes, which only began to recover in the 19th century thanks to the growth of the canning industry.

Nowadays it is enjoying a new period of prosperity. It became a city in 1986 and is today regarded as the "capital" of tourism in the Algarve.

Albufeira Main Church

This church was built at the end of the 18th century and is an example of neoclassical architecture in the Algarve.
On the façade, the main features are the triangular pediment and the three windows with masonry surrounds and semi-circular arches.
The interior has a single nave and there are four side altars in the neoclassical style on which two late 18th century statues of São Luís (St Louis) and São Pedro (St Peter) can be seen.
However, it is in the chancel, which has an imposing triumphal arch in front, that the main point of interest in this church can be found. It is a statue of the patron saint of the city of Albufeira, Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception), in the Rococo style. Dating from the second half of the 18th century, this high quality work is of an unusual size: about 2 metres 40 centimetres in height!

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Saturday, from 10 am to 12.30 pm and from 3 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 585 526 (Parish of Nossa Srª da Conceição)



Misericórdia Chapel

In 1499, the city's old mosque was converted into the Misericórdia Chapel, and a programme of work was begun which gave this little church the late Gothic style that is still clearly visible today. It was in this period, the late 15th century, that the present-day main doorway was built.
The church has a single nave with a simple apse, whose chancel is covered by an ogival groin vault, with a Manueline triumphal arch in front.
After the 1755 earthquake, the church underwent reconstruction, which can be clearly seen from the pediment on the main façade.
On the inside of this church, the 18th century altarpiece in the chancel merits particular attention, as do the 17th and 18th century statues.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF MUNICIPAL INTEREST**
Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 599 500 (Albufeira Municipal Council)

Church of Sant'Ana

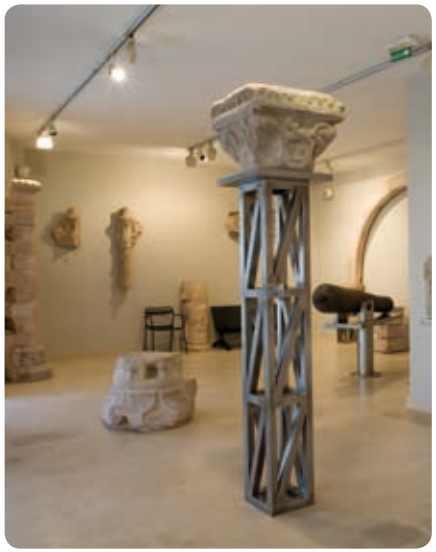
This small 18th century church has a single nave with a chancel covered by a vault. On the façade, there is a pediment decorated with volutes and flanked by pinnacles.
On the inside, the highlight is the altarpiece with polychrome woodcarving in the chancel, which was made in the second half of the 18th century in the Rococo style, as were the pulpit and the side altars.

Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 599 500 (Albufeira Municipal Council)

Chapel of São Sebastião (Museum of Religious Art)

Originally built in the 16th century, as can be seen from the side door in the Manueline style, the Chapel of St Sebastian was rebuilt in the first half of the 18th century and underwent major architectural renovations. On the façade, there is an interesting doorway in the Baroque style, which is profusely decorated with volutes.
The chapel is a small building with a single nave where a museum of religious art currently operates, which has a significant collection of items from churches in the municipality of Albufeira.
The works on display in the museum include a polychrome altarpiece from the second half of the 18th century, on which there are three statues: of São Sebastião, São Francisco Xavier and São Domingos.
Other pieces deserving special attention are those in silver, in particular an incense boat, a chalice and the crown of Nossa Senhora da Orada (Our Lady of Orada), as well as some statues from the 16th and 18th centuries.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday, from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2.30 to 4 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 599 500 (Albufeira Municipal Council) and 289 585 526 (Albufeira Parish)



Municipal Archaeology Museum

The museum is housed in the former building of the town hall, and visitors can see exhibitions drawn from the museum's collection, including items representing the history of the municipality from pre-historic times up to the 17th century.

Open to the public
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday, from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. In the summer, from 2 to 8 pm.
Contact: Tel. 289 570 712

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Orada

Although this chapel dates back to the 16th century, it was rebuilt during the second half of the 18th century.
It is a typical example of popular architecture, a style which grew out of the devotion of the fishermen to the patron saint of fishermen.
On the façade, there is a lively pediment, with a neoclassical doorway crowned by a window, above which there is plasterwork decoration typical of the region.
Inside, the highlight is a carved gilt altarpiece in the Rococo style.

Open for worship
Times of masses: 1st Saturday of every month at 9 am
Contact: Tel. 289 599 500 (Albufeira Municipal Council) and 289 585 526 (Albufeira Parish)

Guia Main Church

17th century church, with a single nave and chancel.
Inside, there is a carved high altar from the 18th century and on the side walls a dado of figurative Baroque tiles.

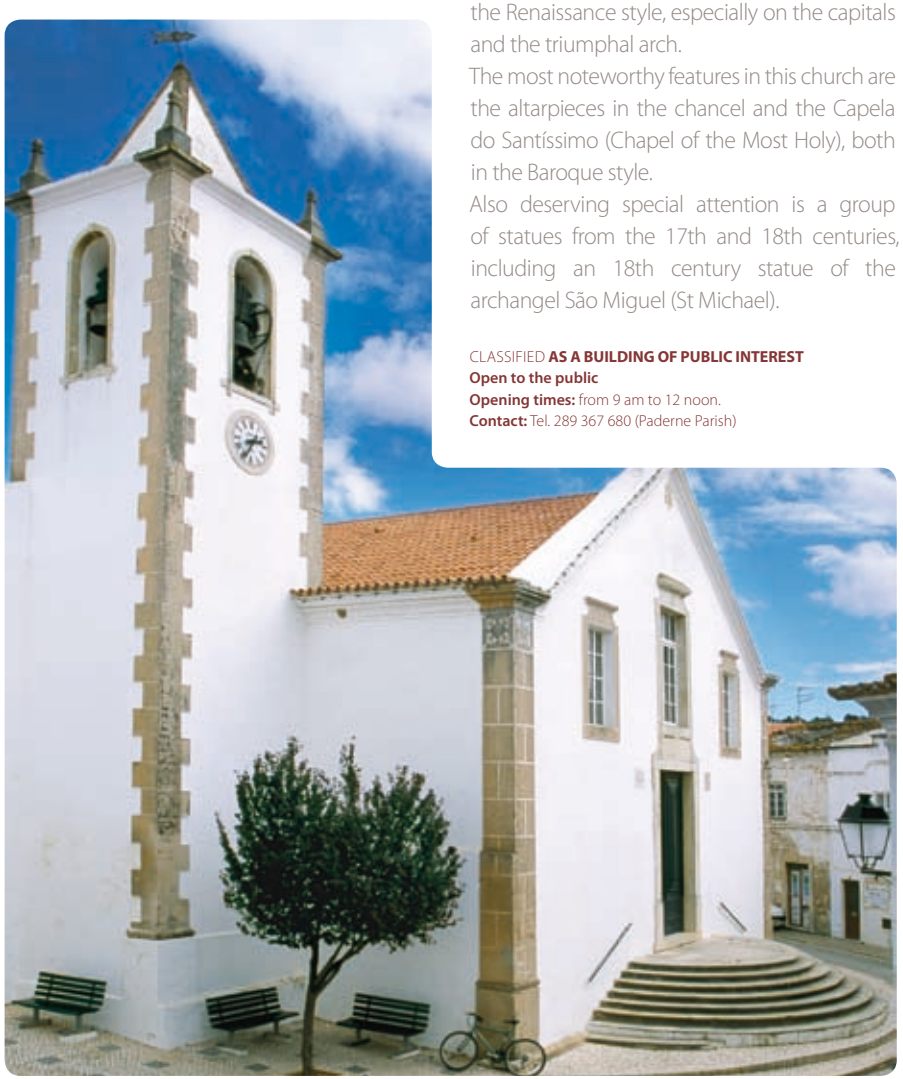
Open to the public
Opening times: from 3 to 5 pm.
Contact: Tel. 289 561 103 (Guia Parish Office)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Guia

A 17th century church remodelled during the 18th century.
Outstanding features of the ornamentation inside the chapel are the altarpiece in the Baroque style, which also includes a 17th century statue of Nossa Senhora da Guia (Our Lady of Guidance), and the polychrome wall tiles.

Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 561 103 (Guia Parish Office)

Paderne Main Church



Built in the sixth decade of the 16th century, and significantly altered in the 18th and 19th centuries, Paderne Main Church has a number of Manueline features combined with details in the Renaissance style, especially on the capitals and the triumphal arch.

The most noteworthy features in this church are the altarpieces in the chancel and the Capela do Santíssimo (Chapel of the Most Holy), both in the Baroque style.

Also deserving special attention is a group of statues from the 17th and 18th centuries, including an 18th century statue of the archangel São Miguel (St Michael).

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: from 9 am to 12 noon.
Contact: Tel. 289 367 680 (Paderne Parish)

Paderne Castle

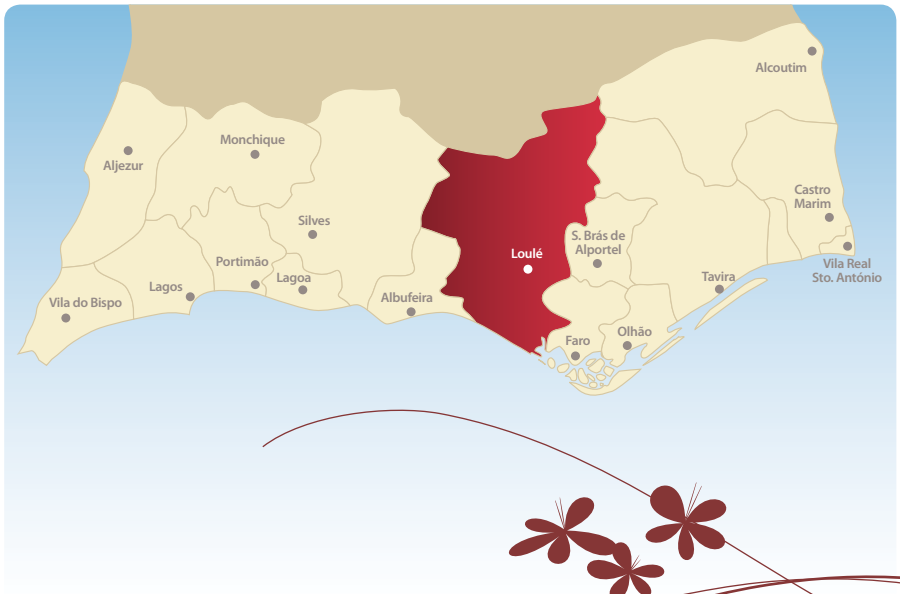
Paderne Castle is one of the seven castles represented on the crimson border surrounding the white shield on the coat of arms of the Portuguese flag.

Built by the Arabs in the 12th century, it was taken by D. Paio Peres Correia in 1280. It is an excellent example of Muslim military architecture, being built in taipa (made of mud mixed with lime and stones), but was badly damaged by the 1755 earthquake.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Restricted access
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate)

loulé

Church of São Lourenço (Almancil)



the municipality

The municipality of Loulé was inhabited from pre-historic times and it is known that there was mining in the area around Alte during the Roman period.

The old part of the city, where the medieval castle can be seen today, was also inhabited by the Romans, who were followed by the Visigoths and later the Arabs, whose 500 year presence was decisive for its transformation into an important urban centre known as Al –'Ulya´.

It was retaken by the Christians in 1249, and in 1266 was granted its charter as a town. In 1291, on the orders of King Dinis, it started organising an annual fair, but this did not succeed in halting the decline of the following centuries. With the arrival of the maritime Discoveries in the 15th century, Loulé saw a new period of prosperity, based on trade and the export of produce such as olive oil, dried fruits, salt and fish.

After a recession at the end of the 17th century, Loulé, like much of the country, blossomed again during the reign of King João V, when churches and mansions were built which still today characterise the city centre.

After the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake and the political instability of the early years of the 19th century, Loulé found a new source of development in the cork and dried fruits industries until, in the 1970s, it became one of the most important municipalities for tourism in the Algarve, including places such as Vilamoura and Almancil.

Loulé Castle

A military construction that is Arab in origin, Loulé Castle was rebuilt in the 13th century after the city was taken from the Moors by D. Paio Peres Correia.
There are still three crenellated towers standing and part of the wall that encircled the city. Inside, the Municipal Museum and the Loulé Tourist Office can be found.

Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 400 600 (Loulé Municipal Council)

Ruins of the Convento da Graça

In the 14th century, a convent was built of which only the doorway of the church remains. This is an interesting example of the Gothic style, with the characteristic pointed arch, flanked by two smooth columns with capitals decorated with plant motifs.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Located in the Largo Tenente Cabeçadas

Municipal Museum

The building of the castle's old "alcaidaria" (governor's residence) houses the Municipal Museum where visitors can see an interesting exhibition of archaeology with objects found in the municipality of Loulé.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 5.30 pm.
Saturday, from 9 am to 1 pm.
Contact: Tel. 289 400 642

Main Church of São Clemente (St Clement)

In Loulé, a city rich in history, can be found the Igreja Matriz de São Clemente. Built in the 14th century in the "southern Gothic" style, it has three naves and a vaulted triple apse.
The church is built on the foundations of the old mosque, and the bell tower was adapted from the Muslim minaret. For its part, the main doorway is one of the few Gothic examples in the region.
At the beginning of the 16th century, two side chapels were added to the church: the chapel of São Brás, which has an entrance arch that combines Manueline decorative elements with other proto-Renaissance elements, and the chapel of Nossa Senhora da Consolação (Our Lady of Consolation), which has a ribbed vault.
There are a number of points of interest in the church, such as the quality of the altarpieces in the chancel, of the Chapel of São Brás and the Capela das Almas (Chapel of Souls), all dating from the first half of the 18th century.
The collection of 18th century tiles in the Capela de Nossa Senhora da Consolação and the Capela das Almas also deserves mention.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open for worship
Times of masses: Saturday at 6 pm and Sunday at 11.30 am; from Tuesday to Saturday at 9.30 am
Contact: Tel. 289 415 167 (Parish of São Clemente)

Convent of Espírito Santo (Holy Spirit)

This convent, which was built at the beginning of the 18th century, suffered serious damage in the 1755 earthquake. It is known that it had a church with a single nave and a longitudinal floor plan, which has meanwhile disappeared.
What remains is the neoclassical cloister built at the end of the 18th century, thanks to the patronage of the Bishop D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar.
At present, the Municipal Art Gallery is housed in the convent, where temporary exhibitions of contemporary art can be seen, as well as the city's old foundlings' wheel, where abandoned children were left.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday from 10 am to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 400 600 (Loulé Municipal Council)

Misericórdia Church

Built in the 16th century, the church has a very interesting Manueline doorway, framed by two twisted columns and decorated with plant motifs.
In front of the main entrance of the Loulé Misericórdia Church, stone statues from the early 16th century of a crucifix and Our Lady and Child can be seen.
Inside the church, the highlights are the Baroque altarpiece in the chancel and two 16th century statues, of Nossa Senhora de Leite (Our Lady of Milk) and another in alabaster of Our Lady.

CLASSIFIED **AS NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 400 600 (Loulé Municipal Council)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição

Built in the sixth decade of the 17th century, the Chapel of Our Lady of the Conception is a small church with a single nave that is very typical of the so-called "chão" (plain) style.
Despite the architectural simplicity, the chapel contains a number of artistic treasures, such as the Baroque altarpiece in gilt woodcarving with some statues of great quality, especially that of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception).
Also of interest is the series of figurative tiles depicting the life of the Virgin which decorate the walls of the chapel. The tiles came from Lisbon in the middle of the 17th century, and reveal early elements of the rocaille style.
Finally, the painting on the ceiling must be mentioned: it is a representation of Nossa Senhora da Assunção (Our Lady of the Assumption), an 1841 work by the Loulé painter Joaquim José Rasquinho.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings
Contact: Tel. 289 415 167 (Parish of São Clemente)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Mãe Soberana)

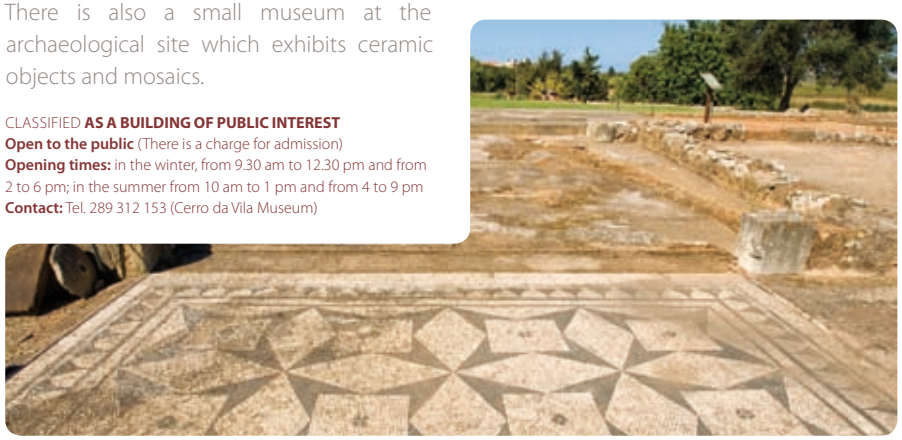
Built in the 18th century, this chapel with its simple architecture has, over the centuries, been a place a pilgrimage for devotees of Our Lady.
The most important aspects of the decoration on the inside of the chapel are the quality of the Rococo altarpiece and the statue of Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Our Lady of Piety) that can been seen there. This is an example of 17th century religious sculpture which, apart from its artistic value, also has enormous symbolic importance for the faithful of the municipality and can be seen every year in the procession which takes place at Easter time in honour of Nossa Senhora da Piedade, also known as the Mãe Soberana.

Open to the public
Opening times: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from 2 to 5.30 pm, and all day at weekends.
Contact: Tel. 289 400 600 (Loulé Municipal Council)

Cerro da Vila Roman Ruins

In Vilamoura, there was an important Roman villa which was built between 27 B.C. and 14 A.D., and was occupied by Romans, Visigoths and Arabs.
Here, a number of different economic activities were carried out, the most important being the fish-preserving industry.
There is also a small museum at the archaeological site which exhibits ceramic objects and mosaics.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: in the winter, from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 6 pm; in the summer from 10 am to 1 pm and from 4 to 9 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 312 153 (Cerro da Vila Museum)



Almancil Cultural Centre

Just a few metres from the Church of São Lourenço in Almancil stands the Cultural Centre, where exhibitions of contemporary art can be seen, as well as an interesting collection of sculptures in the garden, and concerts are held.

Open to the public
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 7 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 395 475

Chapel of São Lourenço dos Matos – Almancil Main Church

The Main Church of São Lourenço (St Lawrence) in Almancil is without doubt one of the great artistic treasures of the Algarve. Built during the first half of the 18th century, it is a church with a single nave and it has a chancel with a fine cupola covered in figurative tiles, which continue on the walls of the nave and the vault.

The quality of the tiles decorating this church is especially noteworthy. Designed by Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes in 1730, they depict the life of São Lourenço and constitute the best example of Baroque art on tiles in the Algarve.

But in addition to the impressive visual impact of the tiles, the gilt carved altarpiece in the chancel deserves mention. It is an example of the Baroque style and is attributed to master Manuel Martins, the greatest Algarve carver and sculptor, who also created the statue of São Lourenço to be found there.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 1.30 pm and from 2.30 to 5.30 pm. Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons
Contact: Tel. 289 395 451 (Almancil Parish)

Alte Main Church

Although it dates back to the 13th century, the Igreja Matriz de Alte was rebuilt at the beginning of the 16th century in the Manueline style. An example of work from that period is the fine doorway on the main façade which gives access to the main part of the church.

Inside, the highlight is the chancel which is completely covered in 18th century tiles.

The most important works of art in the church are the Baroque altarpiece in the Chapel of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel), as well as the altarpieces on the side altars in the Rococo style.

The church also has a collection of good quality statues, including ones of Our Lady (in ivory), of Santa Margarida (St Margaret), of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel) and of the dead Christ, all dating from the 18th century.

There is also a small museum where there are two Mannerist pictures and a number of 17th century statues.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sundays at 12 noon
Contact: Tel. 289 478 510 (Alte Parish)

Querença Main Church

This 16th century church has a doorway in the Manueline style with simple, but interesting decoration.

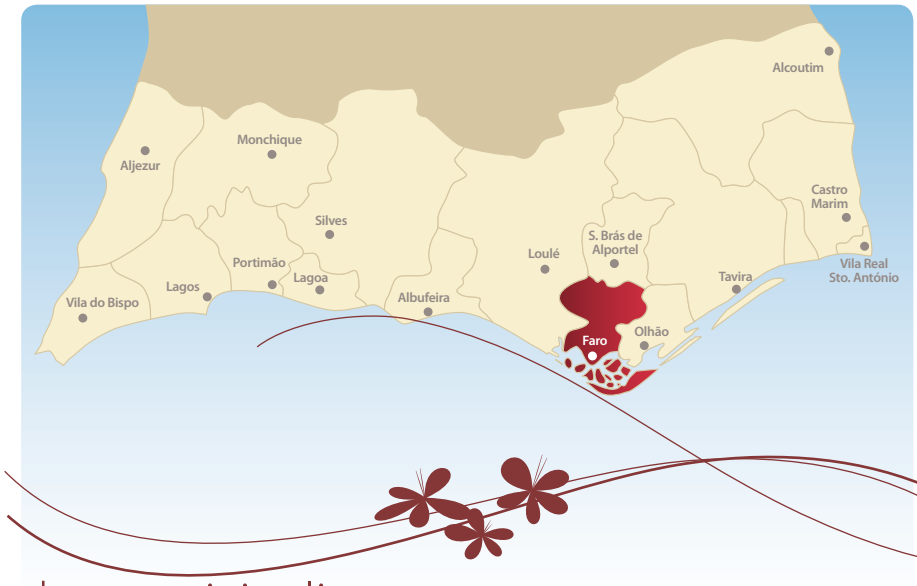
On the inside, the quality of the main altarpiece and the two side altarpieces, all in the Baroque style, deserves special attention.

The most important works of art include the statues of Our Lady (from the mid-16th century), of Our Lord on the Cross (18th century), of Nossa Senhora do Pé da Cruz and Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) (both from the 18th century).

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sundays at 9 am
Contact: Tel. 289 469 510 (Querença Parish)

faro

Baroque Organ (Faro Cathedral)



the municipality

The capital of the Algarve owes its origins to the Romans. Ossonoba was one of the most important cities in the region during the Roman period, and it had the right to mint coins.

During the Visigoth period, Ossonoba was the seat of the bishop, and it continued to be a place of great importance during the period of Muslim rule. It was fortified during this period and it began to be known as Santa Maria de Hárune, which later became Faro.

During the period of Christian re-conquest in 1249, the city's main economic activities were fishing and the salt trade. And it was also during this period that the Jewish community made its mark with the printing of the Pentateuch (1487) by Samuel Gaucon, considered to be the first book printed in Portugal.

In 1540, Faro was made a city, and this period represented the culmination of a phase of profound urban renewal during which the convents of Nossa Senhora da Assunção (Our Lady of the Assumption) and São Francisco (St Francis) were built, as well as the Customs House, the hospital and the Misericórdia church.

With the transfer of the bishop from Silves to Faro, the city became the capital of the Algarve, surviving the attacks of the English privateers of the Earl of Essex in 1596, and the damage caused by a number of earthquakes.

At the end of the 18th century, the city benefited from further urban renewal, which had become necessary following the 1755 earthquake. The building of the Arco da Vila and the Episcopal Seminary was due to Bishop D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar, as well as the renewal of the Church of São Francisco (St Francis) and the commissioning of some of the most interesting works of art in the municipality.

Nowadays, Faro is a city of services, the administrative capital of a tourist region where Faro airport and the University of the Algarve are the main centres of development.

Igreja da Sé (Cathedral)

Built in the Gothic style after the city of Faro was taken from the Moors in 1249, the cathedral is located on the same site as the earlier Roman temple and Muslim mosque.
Some important parts of the original building still stand, in particular the tower at the front and the grand ogival doorway that gives access to the main body of the church. Also in the Gothic style, but dating from the 15th century, are the two side chapels in the transept which are covered by groin vaults.
In 1577, owing to the move of the Bishop of the Algarve from Silves to Faro, this church became the cathedral. But in 1596, it was sacked and set on fire by the privateers of the Earl of Essex, and it suffered considerable damage which led to further restoration work.
The main elements that remain from this period are the columns of the Doric order on which the semi-circular arches are supported that separate the church's three naves.
In the years following the Restoration, a new chancel was built, covered by a coffered cradle vault and decorated with a Mannerist altarpiece, which is regarded as the best example of 17th century gilded carving in the Algarve.
In the 18th century, some of the side chapels were given carved gilt altars in the Baroque style, with the most noteworthy being the Chapel of Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres (Our Lady of Pleasures) and the Chapel of Santo Lenho (The Holy Cross). Finally, the late 17th century tiles decorating the Chapel of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) (made by Gabriel del Barco) deserve special mention, as well as the collection of statues on the altars (mostly from the 17th and 18th centuries), the medieval tomb of the knight Rui Valente and the Baroque organ next to the high choir which is decorated with oriental motifs known as chinoiseries.
The cathedral museum can also be visited, where a significant collection of vestments and vessels and other items for the Eucharist can be seen, which belonged to the Bishops of the Algarve.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: in the winter from 10 am to 5 pm and in the summer from 10 am to 6.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 806 632

Episcopal Palace

With the transfer of the Episcopal See from Silves to Faro at the end of the 16th century, it became necessary to create an Episcopal Palace facing the cathedral in the old city.

The Episcopal Palace was built at the beginning of the 17th century and is without doubt one of the most representative buildings of the "chã" (plain) style in the Algarve.

On the main façade, which is symmetrical in composition, two floors can be seen topped by a cornice, and seven pyramid-shaped "tesoura" (scissor) roofs.

The 1755 earthquake caused some damage to the building and some work was needed on the door and window surrounds which were redone in the Rococo style.

From the point of view of decoration, the highlight of this palace is the magnificent collection of tiles on the inside. Consisting of examples from the 18th century in the Baroque and Rococo styles (the latter showing enormous chromatic richness), as a whole they produce a wonderful scenic effect.

The most notable works of art in the Episcopal Palace collection are 17th and 18th century sculptures and also a collection of paintings with portraits of a number of bishops of the Algarve.

Restricted Access
Contact: Tel. 289 894 040 (Diocese of the Algarve)

Faro city walls

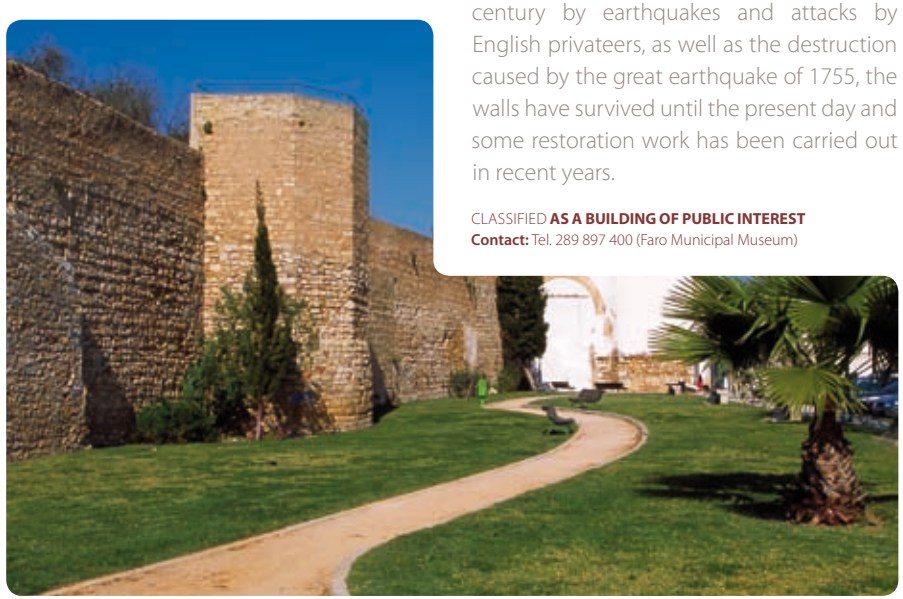
The old part of Faro, known as the Vila Adentro, is surrounded by a wall that is oval in shape and dates back to the Roman period about two thousand years ago.

The wall underwent major alterations and enlargement between the 9th and the 11th centuries during the period of Arab occupation, and it has two "albarrã" towers dating from this period which protected the entrance to the Arco do Repouso (Arch of Rest) where, legend has it, King Afonso III rested after the city had been taken from the Moors in 1249. Also dating from the Arab period is the entrance with a gateway in the shape of a horseshoe arch which can be seen inside the Arco da Vila.

Also of interest are the two octagonal towers which were built by the Byzantines a century before the Muslim occupation of the city.

Since the late 18th century, the main entrance into the historical part of the city has been the Arco da Vila, an interesting example of neoclassical art which was designed by the Italian architect Francisco Xavier Fabri. It contains a niche with a statue of St Thomas Aquinus and it was classified as a national monument in 1910.

Despite the damage caused in the 16th century by earthquakes and attacks by English privateers, as well as the destruction caused by the great earthquake of 1755, the walls have survived until the present day and some restoration work has been carried out in recent years.



CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Contact: Tel. 289 897 400 (Faro Municipal Museum)

Convent of Nossa Senhora da Assunção Faro Municipal Museum

Work on this building began in 1519 on the initiative of two Clarissan nuns who were originally from Beja.
The early work on the Convent of Our Lady of the Assumption was late Gothic. But in about 1530, Queen Catarina, the wife of King João III, to whom the town had recently been granted, sponsored a second building programme which included work in the Renaissance style, in particular in the cloisters and on the outer doorway to the church (nowadays the main entrance to the Municipal Museum).
Completed in 1548, this is one of the first cloisters built in the proto-Renaissance style in Portugal. Decorative details include gargoyles in grotesque shapes and with fantastic creatures typical of the early Renaissance.
Another characteristic feature of the architecture of this period is the main doorway which, like the cloister, was built by master Afonso Pires and which contains a rectangular surround framed by finely worked pilasters.
At present, the Faro Municipal Museum is housed in the old convent. Here there is an interesting exhibition of old paintings that is open to the public, with works dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, by Portuguese, Italian and Spanish painters, as well as two permanent exhibitions of archaeology.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 897 400

Church of the Third Order of São Francisco

Built at the end of the 17th century, the Church of St Francis underwent major renovations 40 years later, such that the new main entrance was built where the chancel had been previously, and vice versa.
After the 1755 earthquake, work continued for years and it was the Italian architect Francisco Xavier Fabri who finally completed this church in the 1780s.
As regards the decoration on the inside of the church, the most notable features are the altarpiece in the chancel, the tiles on the vault, the side altars (from the middle of the 18th century) and the carved work on the cupola above the crossing.
Other important features are the four Italian paintings that were commissioned by the Bishop of the Algarve D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar in 1792, and in particular "The Death of São Francisco" painted in Rome by Marcello Leopardi.
As a whole, the church is a magnificent example of the 18th century decorative style in Portugal, owing to the combination of gilt woodcarving and tiles.

Open for worship
Times of masses: every day at 6.30 pm, as well as at 9 am on Sundays
Contact: Tel. 289 823 690

São Pedro Main Church

Built during the second half of the 16th century, the Church of St Peter has an interesting doorway in the Renaissance style, framed by two pairs of Ionic columns, and a niche with a shell-shaped top flanked by pilasters with a statue of São Pedro inside.

The church has three naves and an apse consisting of a chancel and two vaulted side chapels.

The chancel contains an altarpiece dating from the 1680s, probably one of the first examples of the Baroque in the Algarve.

However, the highlight is the Capela do Santíssimo (The Chapel of the Most Holy) which has a magnificent Baroque altarpiece from the "Joanine" period (1808 – 1821) on which a splendid relief of the Last Supper can be seen.

Also important is the painting of the descent from the cross located in the sacristy, painted by Diogo Teixeira, regarded as the best example of Mannerist painting in the Algarve.

Other features deserving of mention are the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Vitória (Our Lady of Victory) which has an interesting Rococo altarpiece, the tiles in the Chapela das Almas (Chapel of Souls) and the series of 17th and 18th century sculptures on the church's different altars.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: from 10 am to 1 pm and from 3 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 805 473 (Parish of S. Pedro)

Church of the Third Order of Nossa Senhora do Monte do Carmo

Work on the building of this church began in 1713 and it was completed in 1719. The initial work was the responsibility of a Carmelite architect and was done in the "chã" (plain) style.

After the 1755 earthquake, the church was remodelled including the rebuilding of the façade and the chancel in the late Baroque style.

The most notable pieces of ornamentation inside the church are undoubtedly the gilt carved altars. And the altarpiece in the chancel deserves special mention as it is a genuine masterpiece created by Master Manuel Martins in 1736-37, and was the first example of the "Joanine" style (first half of the 18th century) in the Algarve.

The remaining altarpieces also date from the 18th century, with the one in the Chapel of São José (St Joseph) being a good example of Rococo woodcarving in the Algarve.

The statues on the church's different altars, almost all of them made by the craftsmen responsible for the altars, should also not go unnoticed. Because of the quality of their craftsmanship, the statues of Santa Teresa de Ávila (altarpiece of Santa Teresa) and of São José (altarpiece of São José) also stand out.

The Baroque organ, which has recently been restored, is also interesting and can be seen in the high choir.

Finally, the Capela dos Ossos (Chapel of Bones) deserves mention. Located in the courtyard attached to the church, it is an attraction for many tourists visiting the city.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 824 490

Teatro Lethes

Occupying the old College of the Society of Jesus, this 17th century building was bought by an illustrious Faro family after the abolition of the religious orders in the 1830s.
Once the work to turn it into a theatre was complete, it opened to the public on 4th April 1845. It is a clear example of the Romantic decorative style, and is very similar to the Teatro de São Carlos in Lisbon.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2.30 to 5.30 pm. Also open in the evening and at weekends where there is a performance.
Contact: Tel. 289 820 300

Algarve Regional Museum

Housed in the building of the Algarve District Assembly, the Regional Museum has a reproduction of a typical Algarve house on public display, with all the objects used in domestic life and the tools used in the different economic activities in the region. In addition, visitors can see a collection of paintings by the Algarve artist Carlos Porfírio.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm. Closed on Saturdays and Sundays
Contact: Tel. 289 827 610

Maritime Museum "Almirante Ramalho Ortigão"

Located on the first floor of the building of the Faro harbourmaster's office, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to see a wide range of items connected with fishing, as well as models of naval and fishing boats.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission, for adults only)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9.30 am to 12 noon, and from 2.30 to 5 pm.
Contact: Tel. 289 894 990

Faro Jewish Heritage Centre

Next to the Estádio de São Luís (Stadium of São Luís), you can visit the cemetery of the former Jewish community of Faro. In use from 1838 to 1932, it was restored and re-inaugurated in 1992.
The cemetery has a small museum about the history of the cemetery and also a synagogue, where a Jewish wedding is re-created.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 3 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 282 416 710

Milreu Ruins

On the way in to the village to Estoi can be found the Milreu archaeological site. This is an old Roman villa, which was occupied as far back as the 1st century A.D. It had baths and a religious building built in the 4th century. And a large number of mosaics can still be seen today.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm / 6 pm in the summer.
Closed: Mondays, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, 1st May, 25th December
Contact: Tel. 289 896 070 (Algarve Regional Culture Directorate) and 289 997 823 (Milreu Ruins)

Estoi Main Church

Built in the middle of the 16th century, Estói Main Church underwent two periods of remodelling: the first in the years following the 1755 earthquake; the second during the first half of the 19th century when, thanks to the support of Bishop D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar, it was possible to start a restoration project under the guidance of the Italian architect Francisco Xavier Fabri to retain the essence of the architecture that existed prior to the earthquake.

The church thus has the same internal structure that it had in the 16th century, namely a body with three naves and a chancel. The façade, however, was completely redesigned in the neoclassical style.

As regards the ornamentation on the inside, the altarpiece in the chancel deserves special mention, with its pyramidal throne built, like the other altarpieces, in the fourth or fifth decade of the 19th century.

However, the most important feature is the fine collection of sculptures in the church, especially that of São Vicente (St Vincent), in the mannerist style as are those of Santo António (St Anthony) and São Luís (St Louis), and those of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel), both dating from the 18th century.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday at 12 noon, Wednesday at 10 am and Friday at 6 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 991 133 (Parish of Estói)

Santa Bárbara Main Church

This medieval church was rebuilt at the beginning of the 16th century, and has three naves separated by columns with octagonal capitals and a vaulted chancel.

Owing to the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake, a new doorway was built in 1805.

The most important point of interest in this church is the vaulting in the chancel. It is a ribbed vault, on which the ribs create a five pointed star and whose keystones are joined by ribs in the shape of ropes, and it is a magnificent example of the Manueline decorative style.

In front of the chancel, there stands a triumphal arch that is quite richly decorated with plant and proto-Renaissance motifs.

The highlights among the works of art are the altarpiece in the Chapel of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and the Chapel of Santo Amaro, both in the Baroque style.

The statues of Santa Bárbara (late 17th century), of São Luís, Santo Amaro and Santa Luzia (from the 18th century) are also of great quality.

Open for worship
Times of masses: in the winter, Monday to Friday at 9 am and Sunday at 9 am and at 4 pm; in the summer, Monday to Friday at 9 am and Sunday at 9 am and at 6 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 999 233 (Parish of Sta. Bárbara de Nexe)

são brás de alportel

Museum of Algarve Costume

the municipality

Occupied from pre-historic times to the Roman period, São Brás de Alportel was home to the Arab poet Ibne Ammar during the period of Arab occupation.

A small town in the Algarve interior, São Brás de Alportel became the summer residence of the Bishops of the Algarve from the 17th century until the institution of the Republic in 1910.

In the 19th century, São Brás de Alportel witnessed great development, partly thanks to its location. This was where the roads linking Loulé to Tavira and Faro to Almodôvar met, which was also favourable for transporting the region's main product, cork, the production and processing of which were largely responsible for turning the town into the national cork capital. As a consequence of economic development, the population of São Brás grew significantly and in 1914 this rural parish became a municipality.

Years later, the town entered a period of decline as many factories moved to the north of the country which had better roads, which led to a surge in migration which lasted for decades.

São Brás de Alportel Main Church

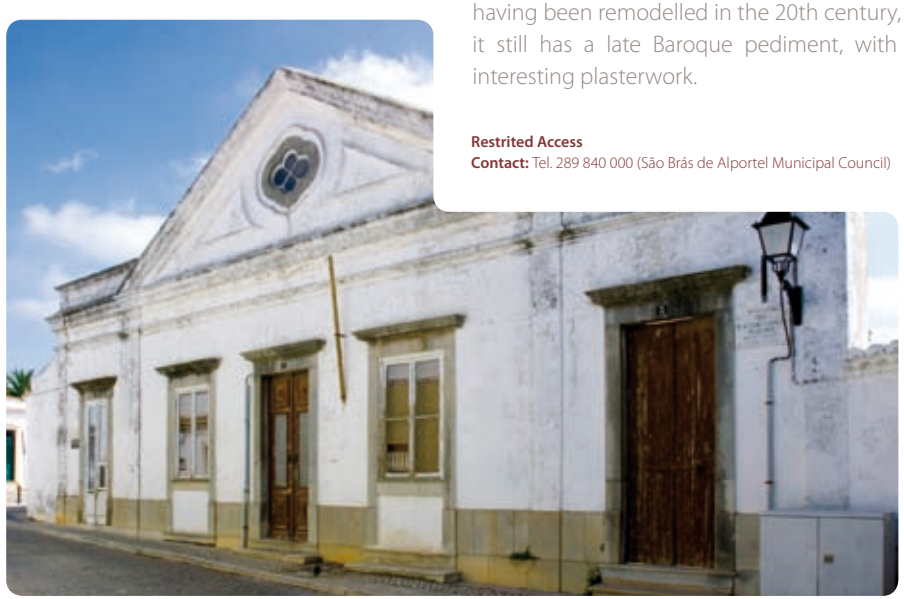
Built in the sixth and seventh decades of the 16th century, the Igreja Matriz de São Brás de Alportel has three naves separated by columns of the Tuscan order.
It suffered considerable damage in the 1755 earthquake and the chancel had to be renewed and the main façade rebuilt, including its pediment with curved lines.
The main features of the ornamentation on the inside of the church are the neoclassical altarpieces in the chancel and the baptistery, and the rocaille altarpiece in the Chapel of Senhor dos Passos (Lord of the Stations).
In addition, the statues of São Libório, São José, Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and the Archangel São Miguel (St Michael), dating from the 18th century, deserve special mention.
In the chancel, there are some paintings from the end of the 17th century.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Saturday at 7 pm, Sunday at 10.30 am, Monday to Friday at 8.30 and 10.30 am
Contact: Tel. 289 842 125 (São Brás de Alportel Parish)

Former Episcopal Palace of São Brás de Alportel (and "Palace of the Passion")

Built at the end of the 16th century to serve as the summer residence of the Bishop of the Algarve. The Episcopal Palace of São Brás de Alportel was a spacious building with an interior patio, a private chapel and ample gardens with fruit trees and fountains.
Unfortunately, the alterations that were carried out in the 20th century changed its original form. However, what is known as the "Episcopal fountain" remained, covered by an interesting dome. It served the local population for many years and was a symbol of the role of the church in society.
Next to the Episcopal Palace stands the "Paço da Paixão", the Palace of the Passion. Despite having been remodelled in the 20th century, it still has a late Baroque pediment, with interesting plasterwork.

Restrited Access
Contact: Tel. 289 840 000 (São Brás de Alportel Municipal Council)



Museum of Algarve Costume

In this pleasant town in the Algarve interior is located the Museum of Algarve Costume. Housed in a late 19th century mansion, which belonged to a rich cork industrialist, it enables visitors to see exhibitions of traditional vehicles, agricultural implements and popular art.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 1 pm and from 2 to 5 pm; at weekends and on public holidays, from 2 to 5 pm.
Contact: Tel. 289 840 100

Calçadinha Roman road

The "Calçadinha" cobbled road of S. Brás de Alportel is 1480 metres long and was part of the Roman road network. The archaeological remains consist of two stretches designated "A" and "B", and they are separated by a few metres that were surfaced at a different time. The stretches of road differ one from the other. Stretch "A" is about 100 metres long and the paving was renewed in the 19th century, probably on the initiative of Bishop D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar. Stretch "B", which is 550 metres long and 2.50 metres wide, is more true to its Roman origins.

Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 289 840 000 / 289 840 004
(São Brás de Alportel Municipal Council)

olhão

Olhão Main Church

the municipality

Since the distant past, an abundance of fish has attracted people to the municipality of Olhão.
For centuries, Olhão was only a small fishing community with humble people who lived in huts. However, the growth in population and the economic importance of fishing led in 1679 to the construction of the Fortress of São Lourenço (St Lawrence), with the aim of repelling pirates from North Africa.
In 1698, the first stone building was built, the Main Church dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary). The settlement developed in the years that followed, and an urban centre began to grow with houses in the style of the Maghreb, in North Africa, cube shaped, with terraces and decorated chimneys reminiscent of Islamic minarets.
But it was in the 19th century that Olhão established itself as an important urban centre. In 1808, King João VI made Olhão a town as a gesture of thanks for the struggle that had been waged against the Napoleonic troops. And it was from here that the boat set sail taking the news of the expulsion of the French to the Portuguese monarch, who had taken refuge in Brazil, which earned Olhão the epithet "The Town of the Restoration".
The end of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries brought great economic growth to Olhão thanks to the fish canning industry, which made Olhão into one of the most industrialised cities in the Algarve.

Olhão Main Church/Church of Nossa Senhora do Rosário

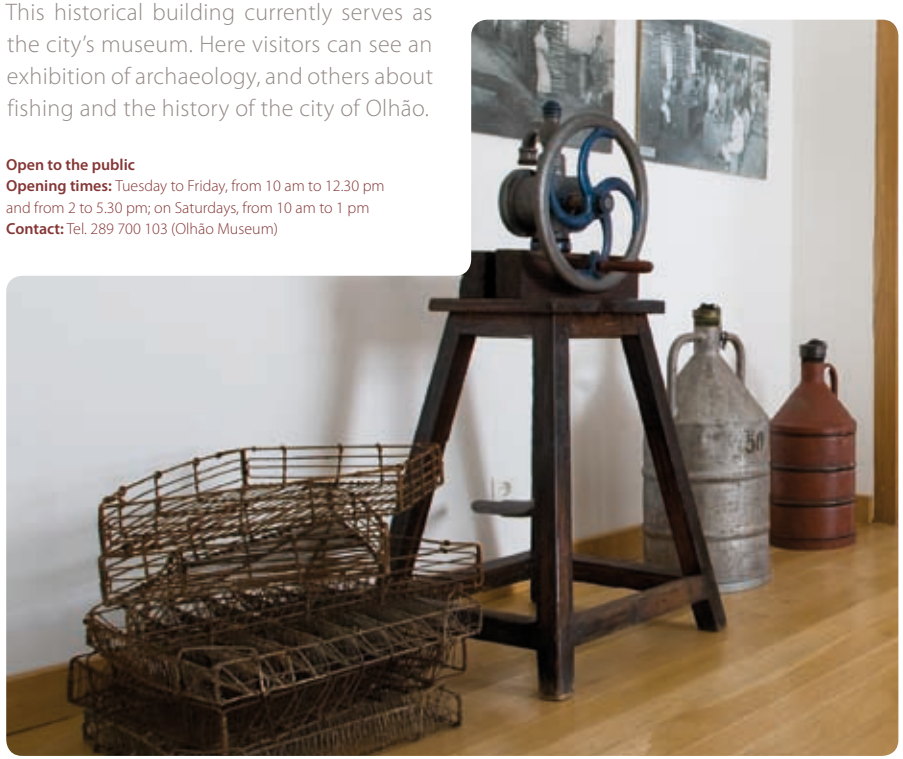
This church was built between the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. In has an imposing façade, the most important feature of which is the pediment decorated with interesting plasterwork in the Rococo style.
The most striking feature on the façade is the impressive ensemble of six large windows which provide good illumination on the inside.
In terms of the ornamentation on the inside of the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, the highlights are the Baroque altarpiece in the chancel and the two side altarpieces, dating from the second half of the 18th century.
Worth closer attention is the collection of statues, mostly dating from the 18th century, among which the one of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) is outstanding.

Open to the public
Opening times: from 9 am to 12 noon and from 3 to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 705 117 (Olhão Parish)

House of the "Compromisso Marítimo"/Olhão City Museum

The building of the Olhão House of the "Compromisso Marítimo" (the "Maritime Agreement" mutual society) was funded by the local fishermen. It was built in the 18th century and has two floors and roofs with four sloping sides, typical of Algarve architecture.
On the façade, a niche with a statue of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) can be seen.
This historical building currently serves as the city's museum. Here visitors can see an exhibition of archaeology, and others about fishing and the history of the city of Olhão.

Open to the public
Opening times: Tuesday to Friday, from 10 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm; on Saturdays, from 10 am to 1 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 700 103 (Olhão Museum)



Moncarapacho Main Church

A few kilometres from Olhão stands the Igreja Matriz de Moncarapacho. Built at the end of the 15th century, it has a Gothic side door with a pointed arch and capitals decorated with plant motifs and human figures.
The Capela do Calvário (Chapel of Calvary) is also medieval, and has a ribbed vault.
The church was renovated in the 16th century, and it was provided with a doorway in the Renaissance style with fabulous representations of demonic figures, twinned heads and cherubs.
Inside, the three naves are divided into five bays defined by semi-circular arches which are supported on columns in the Doric style; the chancel has a triumphal arch in front of it

in the Renaissance style.
Among the church's works of art, the Mannerist altarpiece in the Capela das Almas (Chapel of Souls) deserves special mention, along with that in the Chapel of Santo António (St Anthony) in the Rococo style, and the collection of statues from the 17th and 18th centuries, especially the statue of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel).

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday to Friday at 9.30 am
Contact: Tel. 289 792 191 (Parish of Moncarapacho)

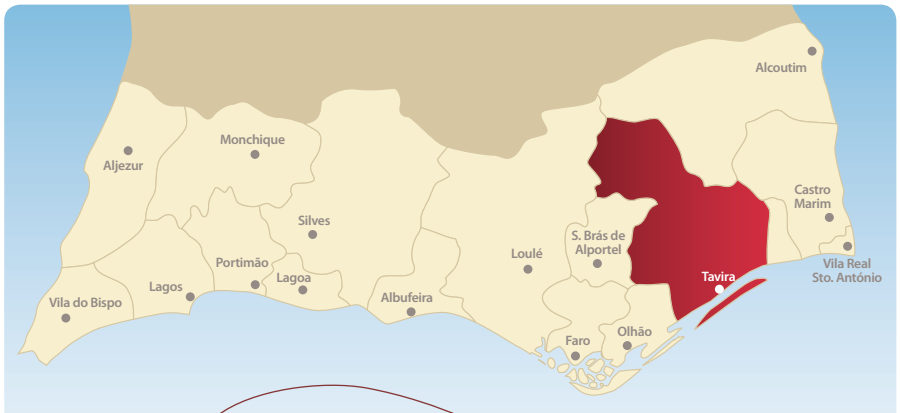
Chapel of Santo Cristo/ Moncarapacho Parish Museum

This is a small chapel built in the 17th century during the period of rule by the Philippine Dynasty.
In the chancel, there is an interesting Mannerist altarpiece with three paintings depicting the Passion of Christ.
The highlights are the two 18th century statues – one representing Santa Catarina (St Catherine), another São Francisco (St Francis).
There is also a notable collection of 17th century polychrome tiles covering the walls of the chapel.
The Moncarapacho Parish Museum operates in an annex where there is a collection of religious statues from the 16th to 18th centuries, among which five ivory statues and a Neapolitan nativity scene merit special attention.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 11 am to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 289 792 191 (Moncarapacho Parish)

tavira

Tavira Misericórdia Church



the municipality

It is probable that the city of Tavira was founded by the Phoenicians, but it was the Romans who left the most significant traces from the pre-Islamic period in the region, including the famous Roman bridge which links the two banks of the Gilão river.

In the 8th century, as everywhere in the Algarve, Tavira was occupied by the Muslims who gradually developed the city until it became, along with Silves and Faro, one of the most important cities in the Islamic Algarve, something that can be seen from the size of its castle.

In 1242, the city was retaken by the master of the Order of Santiago (St James), D. Paio Peres Correia.

During the centuries that followed, Tavira grew in economic importance thanks to its harbour, which played a key role during the 15th and 16th centuries in supporting Portuguese garrisons in North Africa.

In 1520, Tavira was made a city by King Manuel I, who thus gave recognition to the importance of the town which was one of the richest and most populous in the region, as can be seen from the large number of churches and civic buildings built in the 15th and 16th centuries.

With the Iberian Union, Tavira lost some of its strategic and economic importance to port cities such as Seville and Cadiz. But it was only with the silting up of the harbour mouth, which made it difficult to reach the port, with the epidemics of 1645/46 and with the 1755 earthquake that Tavira saw much of its earlier economic dynamism disappear.

In the 19th century, Tavira found a new source of economic prosperity in tuna fishing and the canning industry. With the disappearance of tuna from the Algarve coastline, the city is now turning to tourism.

Tavira Castle

A military construction of Arab origin that was rebuilt in the 13th century during the reign of D. Dinis.
There are some sections of wall still standing, as well as the nucleus of the castle.
Inside there is a pleasant garden and you can enjoy a fine view over the city.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public
Opening times: in the Summer Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 12 noon and from 1 to 5 pm; Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, from 10 am to 7 pm; in the winter: Monday to Friday from 8 am to 12 noon and from 1 to 5 pm; Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, from 9 am to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 380 620 (Tavira Verde)

Santa Maria do Castelo Main Church

Built during the second half of the 13th century, on the site where the Tavira mosque previously stood, the Church of Santa Maria do Castelo was originally built in the Gothic style, as can be seen from the ogival doorway, but it suffered considerable damage at the time of the 1755 earthquake, which meant that it needed to be rebuilt.
The design was the responsibility of the Italian architect Francisco Xavier Fabri, who wanted to retain the church's original structure – three naves and four bays - and he made use of the apse and some side chapels, for example the Gothic Capela do Evangelho (Chapel of the Gospels) and the Chapel of Senhor dos Passos (Lord of the Stations) in the Manueline style but covered in 17th century tiles.
The main features of the ornamentation on the inside of the church are the chancel, where an early 19th century altarpiece with simulated architecture (painted) can be seen. On the side walls of the chapel can be seen two medieval inscriptions marking the presence of the tomb of D. Paio Peres Correia and the six knights who died in the Christian re-conquest of Tavira.
Also of interest are the altarpiece of the Passion, in the Rococo style, and the neoclassical altarpiece in the baptistery, which incorporates a fine late 18th century painting depicting the Assumption of Our Lady, ascribed to the Italian painter Corrado Guiaquinto.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 326 286 (Parish of Santa Maria)

Pousada do Convento da Graça

Founded in 1542 but only opened in 1569, the old Convent of the Hermits of St Augustine is located on the castle hill and it was recently remodelled in order to house one of the exclusive hotels of the group Pousadas de Portugal.
This was one of the first buildings in the "chão" (plain) style in the Algarve and despite its poor state of repair and the fact that it was then converted to a pousada, it is still possible to see the cloister with arches seated on columns and capitals of the Tuscan order, and the old convent church with its single nave and a chancel with a triumphal arch in front.

Open to the public
Contact: Tel. 281 329 040

Santiago Main Church

Located in the old part of the town, this is a medieval church built during the second half of the 13th century.
The church has a single nave with a chancel and a number of side chapels. It has a collection of carved altarpieces of great quality as well as four 15th and 16th century paintings depicting St John the Baptist and São Pedro, São Vicente and São Brás.
The main façade is the outcome of the work that was done during the second half of the 18th century, as a direct consequence of the 1755 earthquake, and of special interest is the medallion with plasterwork representing São Tiago (St James) on horseback.

Open to the public
Opening times: from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 1.30 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 326 286 (São Tiago Parish)

Tavira Misericórdia Church

Work on the Tavira Misericórdia Church began in 1541, and it was completed a decade later. It is a church with a wooden ceiling and three naves with four bays supported on columns with Renaissance capitals.

The main doorway, which was designed, like the body of the church, by André Pilarte, is regarded as a masterpiece of the Algarve Renaissance. At the top, it has three sculpted figures of great quality of Our Lady and two apostles.

The most important things to see on the inside of the church are the altarpiece in the chancel and the two side altars which were built in 1722 and 1723 in what is known as the "National Baroque" style.

Also of interest are the magnificent tiles covering the lower part of the walls of the church. Made in Lisbon in about 1760, the series comprises 18 panels depicting the Works of Mercy.

Other highlights are an excellent painting of the Immaculate Conception, dating from 1730 by the Italian painter Giovanni Odazzi.

Finally, visitors should have a look at the statues dating from the 17th and 18th centuries on the different altars.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm.
Every day except Sunday and Monday.
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Church of São Pedro Gonçalves Telmo (or Nossa Senhora das Ondas)

The origins of this church date back to the first half of the 16th century, when it was built by the Tavira "Compromisso Marítimo".

Little remains of the original Renaissance building, with the triumphal arch of the chancel being the most important vestige from the 16th century church.

As was the case with other churches in the Algarve, it suffered considerable damage in the 1755 earthquake, which necessitated major architectural and artistic renovation work.

As regards the decoration on the inside of the church, the altarpiece in the Baroque style in the chancel deserves special mention, with the other examples being in the Rococo and neoclassical styles. There are some high quality paintings on the altarpieces, which date from the 18th century.

One of the most original features of the interior decoration of the church is the ceiling above the nave which is decorated with an interesting painting in perspective.

Finally, the quality of the statues in the church must be mentioned, in particular that of Nossa Senhora das Ondas (Our Lady of the Waves) from the 17th century.

Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Church of São José do Hospital (or Espírito Santo)

Built in the second half of the 15th century, the Church of São José do Hospital was originally a church in the Gothic style, but all that remains today is a late medieval side chapel.
As a result of the 1722 and 1755 earthquakes, this church suffered irreparable damage which led to the building of a new church. The building work took a decade, and was completed in 1768.
The reconstruction produced a church with a single nave, an octagonal floor plan and a chancel.
The façade has a pediment decorated with late Baroque plasterwork, and the door and window surrounds are in the rocaille style.
On the inside, the main feature worth noting is the altar in the chancel, one of the few examples in the region executed with a "trompe l'oeil" effect, ascribed to the Algarve painter Joaquim José Rasquinho.
The beauty of the church's four side altars should also be stressed, two in the Rococo and two in the neoclassical style, and the "imagem de roca" (statue on a wooden frame) of São José, in the Baroque style, which has been held to be miraculous since 1721.

Not open to the public
Contact: 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Church of the Third Order of Nossa Senhora do Carmo

This church was built between 1747 and 1789 in the style that was typical at the time: a single nave with a floor plan in the shape of a Latin cross covered by a cradle vault.
On the façade, which is clearly late Baroque, there is a large window above the doorway on the main entrance and a pediment that is typical of the period.
On the inside, a magnificent ensemble of carved gilt altars can be seen, including the one in the chancel which is regarded as being the most interesting Rococo altarpiece in the Algarve. In the chancel, apart from the quality of the carving, a number of statues in niches can be seen, as well as a choir stall, four paintings and a cupola painted in perspective with a representation of Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel) in the centre.

Restricted access
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 4 to 5 pm.
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Church of the Old Convent of the Hermits of St Paul

This 17th century building in the "chão" (plain) style, has three windows on the façade. The middle one is crowned by a niche containing the statue of St Paul the Hermit.
Inside, the church has a single nave and a chancel, and a number of altarpieces can be seen, for example the four Baroque altarpieces which are dark in colour as they were not gilded.
Also worth mentioning is the interesting collection of statues, mostly from the 17th and 18th centuries, and a number of paintings, in particular four examples in the Mannerist style.

Not open to the public
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Chapel of São Sebastião

This small church built in 1745 is of some architectural interest and it has a cubic chancel.
The interior walls of the church are covered in "trompe l'oeil" paintings and 18th century paintings, depicting the life of the Virgin Mary and the martyr St Sebastian.
Equally interesting are the statues, the vestments and the gilt wood-carving to be found here.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF MUNICIPAL VALUE**
Not open to the public (under restoration)
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Chapel of Sant'Ana

Recently restored, this small chapel of medieval origin has a single nave with a chancel and two 17th century doorways, which are contemporary with the fine altarpiece in the chancel.

Another important feature is the statue of the patron saint, probably from the 15th century.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF MUNICIPAL VALUE**
Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Palácio da Galeria Municipal Museum

Occupying one of the most typical buildings of civic architecture in Tavira, the Palácio da Galeria houses the entire collection of items that will provide the focus of the future Tavira Municipal Museum, including archaeology and religious art.
At present, this cultural venue offers visitors temporary exhibitions of contemporary art.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, from 10 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm (7.30 pm in the summer)
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500

Roman Bridge

Oral tradition ascribes this bridge to the Romans, as an integral part of the road linking Faro to Mértola. What is certain is that its existence has been documented since the Middle Ages.

The bridge provides a link between the two banks of the Gilão river as it passes through the city. It is 87 metres long and has seven arches, and it has been rebuilt on several occasions.

BUILDING **OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Contact: Tel. 281 320 500 (Tavira Municipal Council)

Luz de Tavira Main Church

This 16th century church is regarded as the first hall church in the Algarve.
It has three naves covered by ribbed vaults supported on very elegant columns.
On the façade, the highlight is the main doorway in the Renaissance style and the interesting semi-circular pediment, below which a niche with a statue of Nossa Senhora da Luz (Our Lady of Light) can be seen.
Interestingly, this church, which in some respects is so clearly in the Renaissance style, has a Manueline doorway on the southern side with small columns suggesting twisted ropes, evidence of its Manueline origin.
As regards the decoration on the inside of the church, the Renaissance altarpiece in the chancel stands out. A number of 17th and 18th century statues can also be seen, as well as a Manueline holy water font and an excellent statue of Nossa Senhora da Luz, dating from the 16th century.

Open to the public
Opening times: from 2.30 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 962469 (Parish of Luz de Tavira)

vila real de santo antónio

Marquês de Pombal Square

the municipality

Despite the fact that there was a small village here in the 16th century, it was not until 1774 that the city of Vila Real de Santo António was born. The city took only two years to build and it came about following a political decision by the Marquês de Pombal, who was seeking to affirm the power of the Portuguese crown in an area coveted by the Spanish. The town plan was drawn up in Lisbon by the "Casa do Risco" (Planning Office). This institution was set up by the Marquês de Pombal to tackle the speedy reconstruction of Lisbon after the 1755 earthquake. The best Portuguese architects were summoned to work there, many of whom had vast experience in civil and military construction. The approach was typical of the Enlightenment and proclaimed a type of urban planning that was based on the careful measurement of areas, heights and volumes, which explains the geometric layout of the streets.

The 19th century brought great prosperity to Vila Real de Santo António, which took advantage of the abundant fish in its waters to develop an important canning industry. An indication of the flowering of the town is the fact that, in 1886, it was the first town in the Algarve to have gas lighting. Nowadays, Vila Real is concentrating on tourism and its proximity to Spain means that many thousands of Spanish people visit every year.

Vila Real de Santo António Main Church

This church was built at the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth decade of the 18th century, as part of the Marquês de Pombal's project for the reconstruction of Vila Real de Santo António. It is a church with a longitudinal floor plan, with a single nave and a chancel with an imposing neoclassical triumphal arch in front.

The Rococo-style altarpieces stand out from the rest of the church's ornamentation because of both the quality of the woodcarving and the splendid statues of Nossa Senhora da Encarnação (Our Lady of the Incarnation), Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Our Lady of Carmel) and Santo António (St Anthony), all dating from the 18th century.

Finally, the 17th century painting depicting the crucifix should also be mentioned.

Open for worship
Times of masses: in winter, Monday to Friday at 9 am, Saturday at 6 pm and Sunday at 9 am and 11.30 am. In summer, Monday to Friday at 9 am, Saturday at 6 pm and Sunday at 9 am and 7 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 510 001 (Vila Real Santo António Municipal Council)

Historical Centre of Cacela Velha

In the small village of Cacela Velha, occupied over the centuries by different peoples, can be found a historical centre which includes a church of medieval origins, which was restored in the 16th and 18th centuries, and a 16th century fortress, rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake.

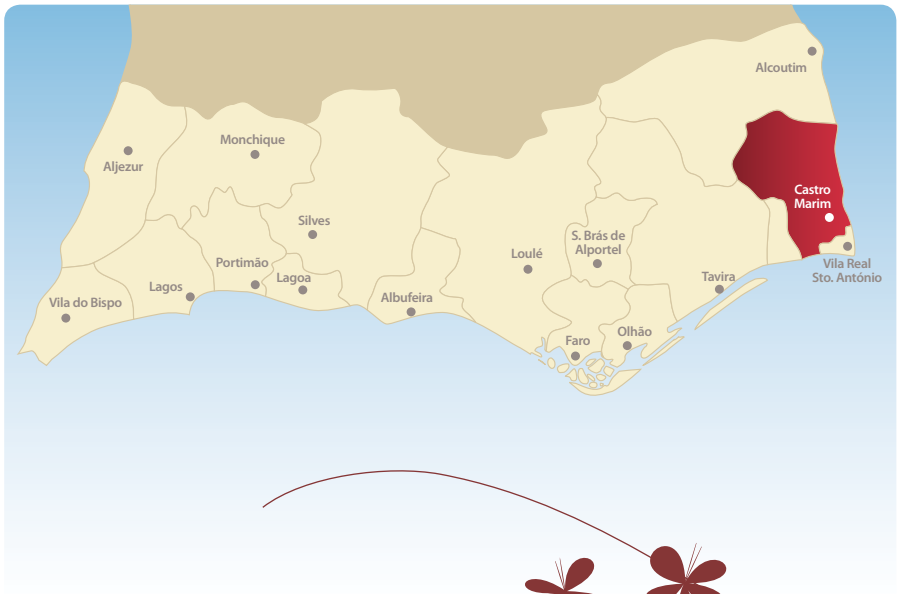
The Renaissance doorway on the church façade deserves special mention, as does a neoclassical altarpiece on the inside.

From the historical centre of Cacela Velha, you can enjoy a wonderful view over the Ria Formosa and discover this village with its typical houses.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Friday from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 952 600 (Cacela Heritage Research Centre)

castro marim

Castro Marim Castle



the municipality

Starting in the Phoenician period, Castro Marim, which was surrounded by water at that time, served as a harbour for boats which sailed up the Guadiana to collect the copper that was extracted from the mines in Alcoutim and Mértola.

In 1242, D. Paio Peres Correia took the village from the Moors and in 1277 King Afonso III granted it a charter with the aim of attracting more people to this strategically important location.

Years later, during the reign of King Dinis, the Castle of Castro Marim was rebuilt. It became one of the most important in the Algarve and served as the headquarters of the Order of Santiago (St James) from 1319 to 1356.

With the arrival of the 15th century and the beginning of maritime expansion, Castro Marim was granted the status of a place of exile by King João I with the aim of increasing the local population.

In 1509, King Manuel I ordered the renovation of the castle.

After the Restoration in 1640, Castro Marim's strategic location was once again decisive for the crown, and work on the building of the Fortress of São Sebastião began.

Castro Marim Castle

Built in the 13th century by King Afonso III, Castro Marim Castle has an interesting stretch of wall that is semi-circular in shape, on the inside of which stand the Old Castle, the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Mártires (Our Lady of Martyrs) and a number of ruins, including the old governors' palace.

This major monument provides visitors with a marvellous view over the town and the Guadiana river.

At present being remodelled, the Castro Marim Archaeology and Ethnography Museum is located inside the castle and is another point of interest.

In the summer, the Municipal Council makes use of the castle's charming setting to organise a festival during which fairs, banquets and medieval tournaments are re-created.

CLASSIFIED **AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT**
Open to the public
Opening times: April to October, from 9 am to 7 pm; November to March, from 9 am to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 510 746

São Sebastião Fortress

This fortress was built in the 17th century with the aim of reinforcing the defences of this border town during the wars of the restoration.

It is built on an irregular floor plan with five defensive bulwarks and, on the inside, there are a number of ruins.

Will open to the public once restoration work is complete
Contact: Tel. 281 510 740 (Castro Marim Municipal Council)

Castro Marim Main Church

This late 18th century church has a façade with a late Baroque doorway, a triangular pediment and three large windows which provide good illumination of the inside.
On the roof of the church, the main feature is the imposing dome surmounted by a false lantern.
On the inside, the principal features are the altarpieces in the neoclassical style, a statue of the archangel São Miguel (St Michael) (15th century), a statue of Nossa Senhora dos Mártires (Our Lady of Martyrs) (16th century) and some others dating from the 18th century, including one of Santa Luzia.

Open to the public
Opening times: Wednesdays, from 9 to 11 am and Sundays from 4 to 6 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 531 179 (Parish of Castro Marim)

Odeleite Main Church

The façade of this 18th century church has a triangular pediment, and on the inside there is a single nave and a chancel.
The highlights are the neoclassical altarpiece in the chancel and the two side altarpieces in the Rococo style.
From the collection of statues in this church, the ones of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and the archangel São Miguel (St Michael) deserve special mention.

Open for worship
Times of masses: Sundays at 3 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 531 179 (Parish of Castro Marim)

alcoutim

Alcoutim Castle

the municipality

From at least 2500 B.C., veins of copper, iron and manganese attracted different peoples to Alcoutim. However, it was the Romans who developed a mining industry in the region, building access routes and transporting the minerals needed by the empire down the Guadiana to the Mediterranean.

This occupation by people whose main motivation was the search for minerals continued with the Visigoths and the Arabs until 1240, when Alcoutim was retaken by the Christians; the town received its charter in 1304 during the reign of King Dinis.

Because of the town's strategic location, its importance was recognised by the Portuguese crown who, in addition to reinforcing its defensive structures, granted Alcoutim to the Military Order of Santiago (St James).

After the Wars of the Restoration, Alcoutim lost its strategic importance. This coincided with a decline in mining which, along with the relative poverty of the agricultural land in the municipality, led to economic stagnation and many people leaving the area, which increased in the second half of the 20th century.

Alcoutim Castle / Archaeology Museum

Built in the 14th century with the aim of defending this border region, Alcoutim castle has a long stretch of wall with defensive towers.
Visitors to the castle can enjoy a magnificent view over the Guadiana river, the town of Alcoutim and the Spanish village of Sanlucar.
Inside the castle, there is an opportunity to visit the Alcoutim Archaeology Museum, where a range of finds can be seen that provide evidence from all the different periods of history in the municipality.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm
Tickets give admission to other museums in the town (the Museum of Religious Art and the Museum of the River).
Contact: Tel. 281 540 500 (Alcoutim Municipal Council)

Alcoutim Main Church

This medieval church was rebuilt in the 16th century in the Renaissance style. It has three naves separated by arches supported on columns with Corinthian capitals, and a doorway in the classical style.
A statue of Christ the Saviour, another of São Luís Bispo, from the 17th century, a statue of Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary), made in the Baroque style, and the sacrarium on the altarpiece in the Capela do Santíssimo (Chapel of the Most Holy) are the most important works of art in this church.

Open to the public
Opening times: Monday to Saturday, from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 540 500 (Alcoutim Municipal Council)

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Museum of Religious Art)

This is a 16th century chapel with a doorway in the Manueline style. It was renovated in the 18th century. Dating from this period, there is an interesting stairway which gives access to the chapel.
The chancel also dates from the 18th century, and it contains a Baroque altarpiece with a Manueline frontal.
Also deserving mention are two statues of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) and Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary), both from the 18th century.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday, from 9.30 am to 1 pm and from 2 to 5.30 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 546 631

Museum of the River

A small museum devoted to the local history of Alcoutim, in particular the town's close ties to the Guadiana river.
It is housed in a former primary school and contains interesting items connected with fishing.

Open to the public (There is a charge for admission)
Opening times: Tuesday to Friday, from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2 to 5 pm
Contact: Tel. 281 547 380

Martim Longo Main Church

This former mosque was converted into a Catholic church, which can be seen from the cylindrical buttresses and the bell tower, the result of the remodelling of the old minaret.
The church has a simple façade with a doorway with a pointed arch, and three naves on the inside separated by ogival arches supported on truncated-pyramidal capitals displaying a Byzantine influence.
There are three statues of particular interest: one of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) from the 16th century, one of São Luís Bispo from the 17th century and one of Santo António (St Anthony) in the Baroque style.

CLASSIFIED **AS A BUILDING OF PUBLIC INTEREST**
Open for worship
Times of masses: Sunday at 12 noon, Monday and Wednesday at 11 am.
Contact: Tel. 281 498 434 (Parish of Martim Longo)

Algarve Tourist Offices

Faro International Airport
Aeroporto Internacional de Faro
8001–701 Faro
Tel. 289 818 582

Albufeira
Rua 5 de Outubro
8200–109 Albufeira
Tel. 289 585 279

Alcoutim
Rua 1º de Maio
8970–059 Alcoutim
Tel. 281 546 179

Aljezur
Largo do Mercado
8670–054 Aljezur
Tel. 282 998 229

Alvor
Rua Dr. Afonso Costa, n.º 51
8500–016 Alvor
Tel. 282 457 540

Armação de Pêra
Avenida Marginal
8365 Armação de Pêra
Tel. 282 312 145

Carvoeiro
Praia do Carvoeiro
8400–517 Lagoa
Tel. 282 357 728

Castro Marim
Rua José Alves Moreira n.º 2 – 4
8950–138 Castro Marim
Tel. 281 531 232

Faro
Rua da Misericórdia, n.º 8 – 11
8000–269 Faro
Tel. 289 803 604

Lagos
Rua Belchior Moreira de Barbudo (S. João)
8600–722 Lagos
Tel. 282 763 031

Loulé
Avenida 25 de Abril, n.º 9
8100–506 Loulé
Tel. 289 463 900

Monchique
Largo S. Francisco
8550 Monchique
Tel. 282 911 189

Monte Gordo
Avenida Marginal
8900 Monte Gordo
Tel. 281 544 495

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