



Tourist Route





1

Castle of Penela

Listed Monument

Its construction started in the 11th century, although what you can see of the Castle these days only goes back to the 14th and 15th centuries. Inside is the Church of St Michael, which was originally built in the 12th century.

Highlights:

Beyond the Town Gate, there is another which is called the "Traitor's", or "Fields" gate, that has double opening, in the form of an elbow, incorporated into a tower, which demonstrates the enduring influence of Moorish traditions on Portuguese fortifications at the end of the Middle



2

Church of St Michael

The Charter of 1137 contains a reference to the existence of a church. The building that can be seen these days is the result of major works undertaken in the second half of the 16th century.

Highlights:

The chancel, completely covered by baroque carving, mostly from the 17th or early 18th century. The image of the Virgin Mary and Infant Jesus, sculpted by João de Ruão sometime in the 16th century (1530/1540).



3

Pillory of Penela

Listed Monument

This pillory dates back to medieval times, and is composed by a column with an octagonal shaft, made of pine wood and three steps. At first it was placed in the middle of the main square, now it is in the Rua 25 de Abril.

Highlights:

The four metal shafts in the form of snakes, with rings dangling from their mouths. It also has two similar coats of arms, which are thought to represent the armorial bearings of the Municipality of Penela.



4

Church of the Misericord

This church is from the second half of the 16th century, even though it has the year 1616 engraved on its doorway. This was the date of refurbishment work..

Highlights:

The quality of the processional banner, composed of two paintings by Ernesto Condeixa which represent Piety and Our Lady of Mercy. The main doorway has elements from the Manueline, Renaissance and Mannerist periods.



5

Church of St. Eufémia

Listed Monument

Even though there are references to this church in 1254, it is mainly from the Renaissance period, with a body composed of three aisles, separated by Tuscan arcades, a wooden ceiling and a triple apse.

Highlights:

The altar has a baroque retable with gilt woodcarvings. Chapel dedicated to the Holy Ghost, where you can find a retable made of Ançã stone, brought straight from a Coimbra workshop in the middle of the 16th century, and a Gothic sculpture of the Virgin and Child, from the end of the 15th century, also by a Coimbra workshop. Font in the Manueline style.



6

Podentes Mother Church

The outside of this Church is the result of 19th century restoration work. Inside it only has one aisle, and a single chapel in the apse, with a nineteenth century high altar.

Highlights:

The two side chapels: the one on the left from the 17th century and dedicated to the Holy Sacrament, and on the right a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, which has a dome made of 16th century stone.



7

Pillory of Podentes

Listed Monument

This is a Manueline style pillory, with a marble shaft, probably taken from a ruined Roman building. It is the biggest single-piece shaft from this period that has been found in Portugal.

Highlights:

The marble shaft stands on a four-step base. The capital is a cube, displaying the Cross of Christ and the armillary sphere on two sides, and two weathered shields on the other sides, one of which is the quartered shield of Sousas de Arronches.



8

Mother Church of Rabaçal

The building that can be seen today is the outcome of several efforts at reconstruction, the most noticeable one having taken place towards the end of the 18th century. This church has an apse with a single aisle and chapel, and attention is especially drawn to the retable, carved in wood, with a canvas alluding to its patron saint, Mary Magdalene.

Highlights:

The quality of the two side altars, carved in the neoclassical style of the end of the 17th century. In their niches, two 18th century sculptures of São Domingos and Santa Teresa.



9

The Roman Villa of Rabaçal

Located 12 km from Conimbriga, the Roman Villa of Rabaçal is on a hillside in the parish of Rabaçal, between a wooded ridge and a stream, and is an integral part of the ancient civitas territory, close to the Roman road which connected Olisipo to Bracara Augusta (Lisbon to Braga).

Of this Roman Villa which dates from the 4th century A.D., the pars urbana (residential area), balneum (baths), pars frumentaria (section of the farmyard with a porch), pars rustica (servants' quarters, store houses, workshops) are known.

Highlights:

The figurative motifs of the mosaics and some of the geometrical and plant patterns bear no resemblance to any others yet found in Portugal,



10

Valley of Rabaçal

The Valley of Rabaçal has very particular characteristics. Its soil is calcareous, and it is mostly covered with low-growing vegetation, with wormseed, which gives the Rabaçal Cheese its unique taste.

You will find grazing flocks all over these arid landscapes, and another abundant element in this area is the olive tree. A you pass through the Valley of Rabaçal, you must visit Rabaçal's Roman Ruins and the Museum, as well as the Castle of Germanelo and the small village of Chanca, where you can appreciate the whole beauty of the Valley.



11

Castle of Germanelo

Built by D. Afonso Henriques between 1140-1142, this castle, typical of the Reconquest period. The castle has a wonderful view over the valley of Rabaçal.

Highlights:

It is possible that it originated from a Romanized fort. It is private property, and its northern wall is supposed to have been rebuilt by Dr. Salvador Dias Arnaut.



12

Santo António Convent

Listed Monument

This convent was founded in 1578, however, the various constructions (church, residential area and outbuildings) date from the 18th century. It has been privately owned since 1834, the year in which the Franciscan Order became extinct, and at the moment it is in a poor state of repair.

Highlights:

The chancel's retable, in a mannerist style, has a handsome outline and fine woodcarvings. It should be pointed out that the 18th century tiles were made in Coimbra, and the panels depict scenes from the life of Stº António.



13

Monte de Vez

Reached through São Sebastião, from this Hill you can enjoy a breathtaking view. The Chapel and a restored windmill are two things which give this spot a unique beauty. A large part of the Municipality can be seen from here, not only the towns of Penela and Espinhal, but also the Castle of Germanelo and the Serras do Espinhal and Rabaçal.



14

Caves and Potholing

Potholing is one of the Municipality's most promising strengths. Even though they have only been publicised very recently, the Algarinho and Talismã caves have been explored by several caving groups and are still in the examination phase.

Located to the south of the source of the River Dueça, and just yards away from the EN 110, in the Taliscas area, the Caves of Algarinho and Talismã are considered the biggest caves in the country.



15

Mother Church of Cumieira

It is thought to already have existed in the fifteenth century. Dedicated to St. Sebastian, the martyr, it still contains several elements from the Renaissance period.

Highlights:

The carved gilt baroque tabernacle, which is on the altar of one of the side chapels, and its two painted panels depicting Ecce Homo. The Renaissance vault of the Sacramento Chapel, where there are two sculptures in white Ançã limestone, sculpted in workshops in Coimbra, and representing our Lady with the Infant Jesus and a Holy Martyr.



16

Typical Villages

The Municipality of Penela has a great many hill villages, which have kept their typical rural architecture. Of special interest among these is the Ferraria de S. João (S. João's Forge), in the Parish of Cumieira.



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Camp Site
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Sports FacilitiesPublic
Swimming Pool
Tel. 00351 239 560 123

Multipurpose Hall
Tel. 00351 239 560 124



17

São João do Deserto - Espinhal Hills

"With a good pair of binoculars and a little imagination, you can see five Districts (apart from Coimbra, of course): Leiria, Castelo Branco, Guarda, Viseu and Aveiro. Climbing for a few kilometres to see five Districts, is definitely worth it. And you won't use anything apart from shoe leather."

Eugénio de Castro



18

Mother Church of Espinhal

It was erected in the second half of the 15th century, and its patron saint is St. Sebastian.

Highlights:

The baroque painting over the triumphal arch which represents the Appearance of Christ to the Virgin. The three aisles which form the interior of the church, separated by arcades formed by ionic columns. The main chapel with a half-barrel vault, with baroque gilt carved retables. The side chapels, covered by domes of corbels, contain stone retables in a Renaissance Coimbran style.



19

Pedra Ferida (Wounded Rock) Waterfall - Espinhal

The Pedra Ferida Waterfall is in the Espinhal hills, and to get there you first go take the road to Ribeira da Azenha. To visit this pleasant spot, you'll have to leave your car a few hundred yards from it and walk a little way along a footpath.



20

Serra do Espinhal - Espinhal Hills

The Serra do Espinhal offers a unique landscape to the traveller. From here you can see the beautiful town of Penela, topped by the Castle. Depending on the time of year, the hills are covered by a palette of colours, from green to blue, to pink and yellow, thanks to the diversity of plants and trees that thrive there. It must be pointed out that the Belvedere of Serra de Stª Maria has a traditional sundial.



21

Louçarinha Natural Dams - Espinhal Hills

The freshness, the green hillside scenery, the serenity and peace of this place, make it one of the most attractive natural areas in the Municipality. Here, you will find natural pools, a picnic area and a panoramic restaurant.

FLORA

The vast variety of plants that can be enjoyed slightly throughout the County, reflect on the quality of some of the best known endogenous products such as cheese of Rabaçal and Mel Serra of Espinhal.

The peculiar flavor of the cheese of Rabaçal comes from the huge amount of "grass of santa maria" ingested by grazing goats and sheep while in the mountains and valleys of Rabaçal, where this plant is very vulgar. Even the taste of the honey from Espinhal Hills is deeply marked by the nectar of the heather, plant abundant in the Espinhal hills.
The Wine Terras de Sico
Nuts
Olive oil

