

porto tours

MEDIEVAL BAROQUE NEOCLASSICAL TILES



oportunity
to discover

MEDIEVALtour

4 hour walk

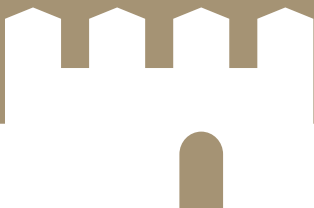
The origins of Porto are linked to the Morro da Sé (Cathedral Hill), overlooking the river Douro, where traces of an ancient settlement have been identified. The Romans brought a great boom to a city that was promoted to diocese during the Visigothic period. The city suffered great setbacks after the Moorish invasions, with its territory being reconquered by Vímara Peres at the end of the ninth century.

D. Teresa, mother of the first King of Portugal, donated the land of Porto to Bishop D. Hugo, who bestowed its first charter in 1123. The development of the commercial activity led to the progressive urbanisation of the riverbank area and in the late fourteenth century the borough was encircled by a second city wall. Commerce with the exterior grew, not only towards the northern ports but also towards the Mediterranean. The control of the city's resources, namely the profits from the port, led to a conflict between the Bishop and the Crown. The construction of the Customhouse in 1324 represented a severe blow to the interests of the Bishop.

In 1405 D. João transferred the jurisdiction of the borough to the Crown. In this period local power was consolidated with the support of the bourgeois merchants.

The opening of the Rua Nova marked a new phase in the urbanisation of the city and its location reflected the importance given to the downtown area, which was the main commercial area until this century.

Medieval Porto was home to Afonso Martins Alho (negotiator of the Treaty with England), Henry, the Navigator and Pêro Vaz de Caminha (author of the "Chart of the Discovery of Brazil").



01 CATHEDRAL..

terreiro da sé

Constructed in the twelfth century in the Romanesque style, the cathedral shows influences of the Limousin region of France and the Coimbra School. The vestry, the cloisters and the chapel of João Gordo – holding the notable tomb of the founder – date from the Gothic period.

On the outside wall of the northern tower, a bas-relief depicts a fourteenth century vessel, showing the importance of the city's maritime vocation. On one of the buttresses of the southern tower there are two measures cut into the stone, the sole remaining vestiges of the medieval fair, which used to take place in front of the Cathedral.



02 MEDIEVAL TOWER..

calçada de d. pedro pitões

This tower house is presently a reconstruction of the original discovered during the demolition of the Cathedral's churchyard in the 1940s, now placed 15 m from its previous location.

Documents report other tower houses inside the primitive enclosure (which have since disappeared).





03 CITY HALL..

rua de s. sebastião



The City Hall tower, built in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, was one of the most important buildings in the upper side of the city. The town meetings were held there until the mid-fifteen hundreds. By that time the building began to decay due to the fact that it had been built on top of the wooden foundations of the old medieval wall.

04 HOUSE AT BECO DOS REDEMOINHOS..

rua de d. hugo



This is one of the most perfect exemplars of civil architecture from the early fourteenth century. Its façade, half-hidden behind the chancel of the Cathedral, used to overlook a lively square of the borough, limited to the west by the Cathedral's former ambulatory.

05 PRIMITIVE WALL..

largo de vandoma

Only a few fragments of the first wall girdling the Morro da Sé still remain and these are partly hidden by a group of houses. The Primitive Wall was probably built during the Roman Empire and rebuilt during the twelfth century. The main entrance into the borough – the “Porta de Vandoma” – was on the northern side between the present Terreiro da Sé and the Rua Chã. One of the most significant parts of the wall is still visible at the top of the Avenida Afonso Henriques.

Standing on the former fortifications, there used to be a gothic house, whose southern wall is presently part of the structure that houses the regional office of the Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses (Portuguese Architects Association). Archaeological ruins of the primitive settlement were discovered on this site and preserved.



06 SANTA CLARA CHURCH..

largo 1º de dezembro

The construction of the Santa Clara Convent dates from the first half of the fifteenth century. It underwent several changes in the Modern Age, when the beautiful Renaissance portal was built. The church still maintains its original gothic structure while its interior is covered with gilt carving.



07 D. FERNANDO WALL..

guindais section



The second city wall was started around 1336 and concluded in 1376. It had a length of 3000 paces and an average height of 30 feet. The wall had many openings that were defended by several towers. The Santa Clara section, restored in the 1920s, presently the most visible, clearly depicts the daring of its execution.



08 BARREDO TOWER..



The house on number 5, Rua de Baixo represents the oldest surviving example of medieval civil architecture in the Barredo block. Its construction dates back to the thirteenth century.

09 WALL OF THE RIBEIRA SHELTERS..

The Praça da Ribeira was formerly separated from the river Douro by part of the D. Fernando Wall, where the main opening to the river was located. The square used to be surrounded by various shelters of which only one remains on the inner façade of the east part of the wall.



10 CARVÃO (COAL) ENTRANCE..

cais da estiva

The only surviving entrance through the fourteenth century wall connected the Estiva quay to the Rua da Fonte Taurina. The steps that led to the higher part of the wall can still be seen on the inside. There used to be an inscription there alluding to the mooring of the boats, which is presently kept in a museum.





11 CASA DO INFANTE

rua da alfândega



This is the building where, according to legend, Henry, the Navigator was born. It was built in 1325 to house the customs office and members of the royal staff. The Mint was joined to this building at the end of the fourteenth century. It underwent large transformations in 1677 serving as Customhouse up to the nineteenth century, when the new Customhouse was built.

12 TRADERS STOCK EXCHANGE..

rua do infante d. henrique



The façade of numbers 47 to 53, Rua do Infante D. Henrique displays D. João I's coat of arms. This house was given by the King to the traders in 1402 to establish the city's first Traders Stock Exchange. A passage to the Mint was opened on the ground floor. One can still see the medieval structure on the inside.

13 HOUSE AT RUA DA REBOLEIRA..

rua da reboleira

The house at 59, Rua da Reboleira, was probably built in the fourteenth century and still keeps its original tower-house structure almost intact. On the inside of other buildings in the neighbourhood one can still see remains of medieval dwellings.



14 SÃO FRANCISCO CHURCH..

rua do infante d. henrique

The presence of the Mendicant Orders in the city dates from the first half of the thirteenth century, when the monasteries of São Francisco and São Domingos began to be built. The walls of these convents enclosed the whole area comprised between Praça do Infante, Mercado Ferreira Borges, and Rua do Comércio do Porto. Of the old convents only one building remains: the Church of the Franciscan Friars with its three naves. Crypts belonging to members of some important medieval families can be found on the inside. Also worthy of notice is the mural of Nossa Senhora da Rosa. The church is also known for its remarkable baroque carvings.





15 D. FERNANDO WALL..

caminho novo section



One of the most monumental sections of the fourteenth century wall is the one parallel to the Caminho Novo stairway. It continues between the houses along the Rua Francisco da Rocha, where one of the towers can still be seen over the roofs. The next visible part of the wall is to be found inside a coffee shop by the Cordoaria garden, where remains of the tower and the Olival entrance are kept.

16 CONFRARIA DO ESPÍRITO SANTO HOSPITAL..



Miragaia used to be an old centre for fishermen and sailors and, in medieval times, the main suburb of Porto. The most important shipyards of the city were located on the shore, where the new Customhouse was later built. The church of São Pedro de Miragaia must date from the Middle Ages but its medieval structure is completely gone. Above and behind the church one can see the chapel of the sailors brotherhood, on whose north wall parts of the old Espírito Santo Hospital can still be seen. The Museu da Confraria (brotherhood's museum), displaying a triptych from the sixteenth century and one of the São Pantaleão reliquaries, is certainly worth visiting.

17 PEDRO SEM TOWER..

rua da boa nova

The tower is mentioned in documents of the fifteenth century. It first belonged to Pedro Sem, chancellor of King Afonso IV, later becoming the property of the Brandão family, who sold it to the Diocese.



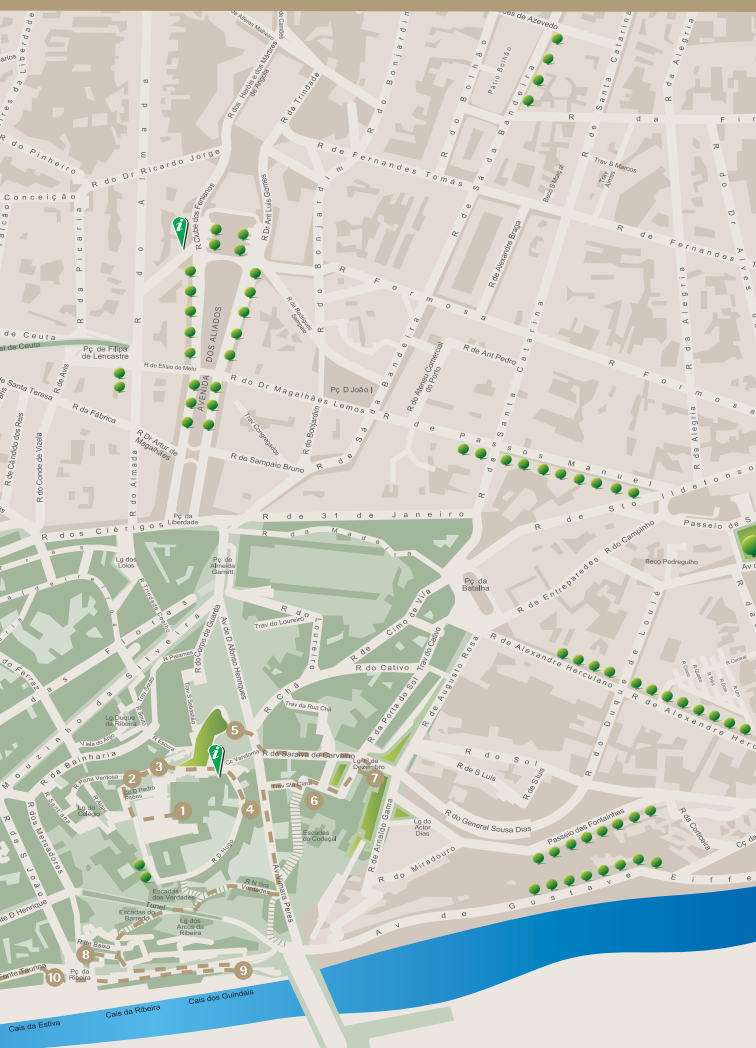
18 CEDOFEITA CHURCH..

largo do priorado

The Cedofeita Church was located on the outskirts of the borough and gave rise to a hamlet that became part of the city in the nineteenth century. The temple is quite ancient, probably dating back to the Visigothic period. It was rebuilt in the Romanesque style and its chancel is known to have been consecrated in 1087. The works continued during the twelfth century. Worthy of notice is the Agnus Dei on the tympanum of the northern portal.







BAROQUEtour

2½ hour walk

You can admire the Baroque style in countless and significant buildings of civil and religious architecture in Porto. Architects such as António Pereira and Nicolau Nasoni gave the city some of the most representative exemplars of this style, completely changing the urban landscape in the seventeen hundreds. Throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries the city resembles a workshop of artists and craftsmen producing a significant collection of works of high aesthetic value. The virtuosity of Nicolau Nasoni, an Italian artist who studied in Sienna and Rome, is mostly evident in his skill at working the granite, as in the Clérigos Church and Tower, the façade of the Misericórdia Church and the Freixo Palace.

The Cathedral, of Romanesque origin, was one of the first buildings to undergo Baroque adaptations, with special mention to the chancel, the porch, the vestry and the cloisters, some of the most outstanding characteristics of the new style being the polychromy and exuberance of forms. The combination of golden covers with the paintings and the tiles created an atmosphere of unforgettable beauty. The gilt carving, one of the most vibrant expressions of the Baroque style in Porto reaches its utmost splendour in the retables of the São Francisco and Santa Clara churches.



01 CATHEDRAL..

terreiro da sé

The Cathedral was built in the Romanesque style in the twelfth century and it underwent various changes in the Baroque period.

Worthy of notice in the interior are the paintings by Nicolau Nasoni, the gilt carving retable, and the Santíssimo Sacramento (Blessed Sacrament) silver altar. Also Baroque and outstanding are the tiles on the cloister, the northern porch and the stairway linking the cloisters to the Chapter House, as well as the ceiling of its Assembly Room.



02 BISHOP'S PALACE..

terreiro da sé

The palace was built in the thirteenth century and the Bishop D. Rafael de Mendonça remodelled it after 1770. This is the city's grandest palace and its design has been ascribed to the architect Nicolau Nasoni.



03 CANON DOMINGOS BARBOSA'S HOUSE..

rua de d. hugo

This building was constructed in the eighteenth century to house one of the most illustrious canons of the Porto's Diocese. It is believed to be the work of Nicolau Nasoni, or of his assistant, master António Pereira. Today, it serves as a museum, exhibiting a collection of the works of the poet Guerra Junqueiro.





04 SANTA CLARA CHURCH..

largo 1º de dezembro



This is a building of gothic origin, whose interior is covered in gilt carving from the first half of the eighteenth century. This true Baroque jewel impresses the visitor with its decorative exuberance and harmonious combination of gilt carving and tiles.

05 ORDEM DO TERÇO CHURCH..

rua de cimo de vila



The author of this project, begun in 1759, is unknown. Its carved granite façade shows Rococo elements and its interior is decorated with stucco and engraving work. The retablo of the chancel, by José Teixeira Guimarães, dates from 1776. The Nossa Senhora do Terço e Caridade Hospital works next to this church since 1781.



06 SANTO ILDEFONSO CHURCH..

praça da batalha



The new Santo Ildefonso Church, whose architect is unknown, was built between 1730 and 1737. Contrary to the graceless façade, the chancel retablo displays all the elegance of its new structure. The design of the engraving work was made by Nicolau Nasoni.

07 NOSSA SENHORA DA ESPERANÇA CHURCH..

av. rodrigues de freitas
(by the s. lázaro garden)

This building was designed by master António Pereira and erected between 1724 and 1743 on the São Lázaro area to house the Orphan Girls Asylum. The construction of the church began in 1746, following the plans which some believe to have been drawn by Nicolau Nasoni. The interior shows various Baroque carved retables.



08 TERCEIROS DO CARMO CHURCH..

rua do carmo

A church constructed in the second half of the eighteenth century according to a project of the architect José Figueiredo Seixas. The ashlar masonry façade, crowned by an ample pediment that holds the figures of the four evangelists, shows the influence of the style created by Nicolau Nasoni.





09 CLÉRIGOS CHURCH AND TOWER..

rua de s. filipe nery



This architectural set was built between 1732 and 1773 by the Irmandade dos Clérigos. Various artists worked on the construction of the church, with a special mention to Nicolau Nasoni and the master mason António Pereira. The tower that completes the building on its west side is one of Nicolau Nasoni's masterworks and is considered one of the city's landmarks.

10 SÃO JOÃO NOVO PALACE..

largo de s. joão novo

This palace was built by the master António Pereira in the second quarter of the eighteenth century to be the residence of Pedro da Costa Lima, a nobleman from the Royal House who held various public posts in the city. Noteworthy are the main façade and the main staircase on the inside.



11 MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH (FAÇADE)..

rua das flores

This is one of the most significant exemplars of Porto's eighteenth century architecture, designed by Nicolau Nasoni. The work, dating from 1750, produces an impressive scenic effect and already shows the influence of the new rococo decorative style.



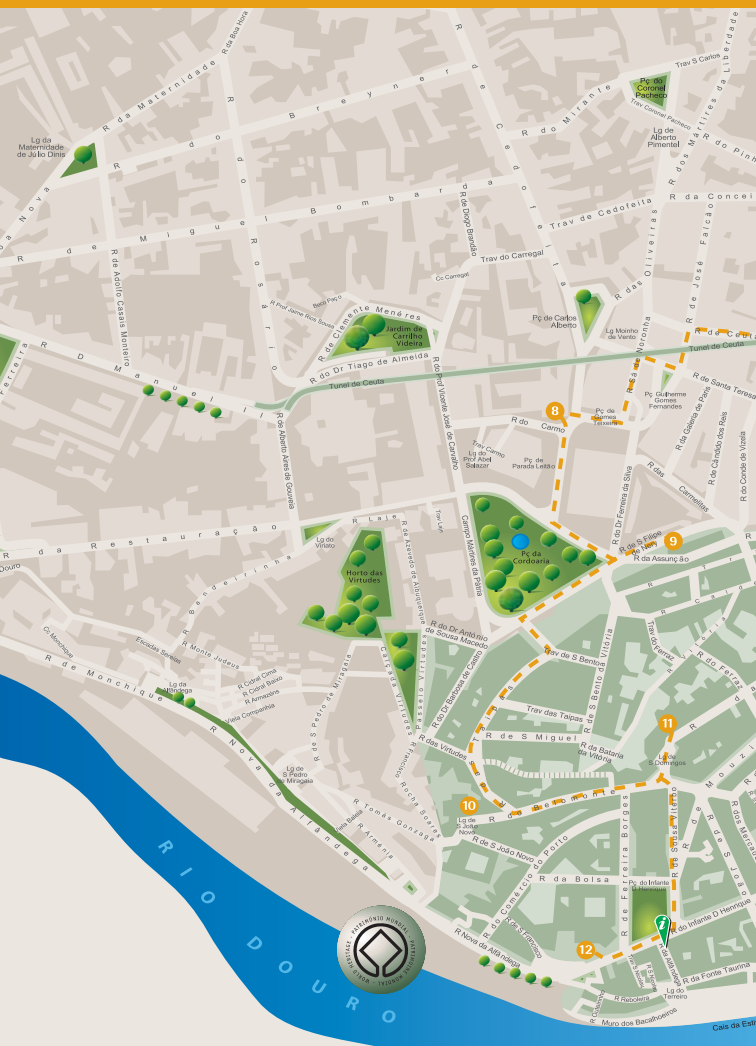
12 SÃO FRANCISCO CHURCH AND "CASA DO DESPACHO" (CHURCH OFFICE)..

rua do infante d. henrique

The construction of this church – the city's most significant Gothic temple – began in the fourteenth century. However, its interior makes this church also one of the most important Baroque exemplars, owing to the gilt carving it displays, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Especially worthy of notice is the Árvore de Jessé (Jesse's Tree) by master Manuel Carneiro Adão.

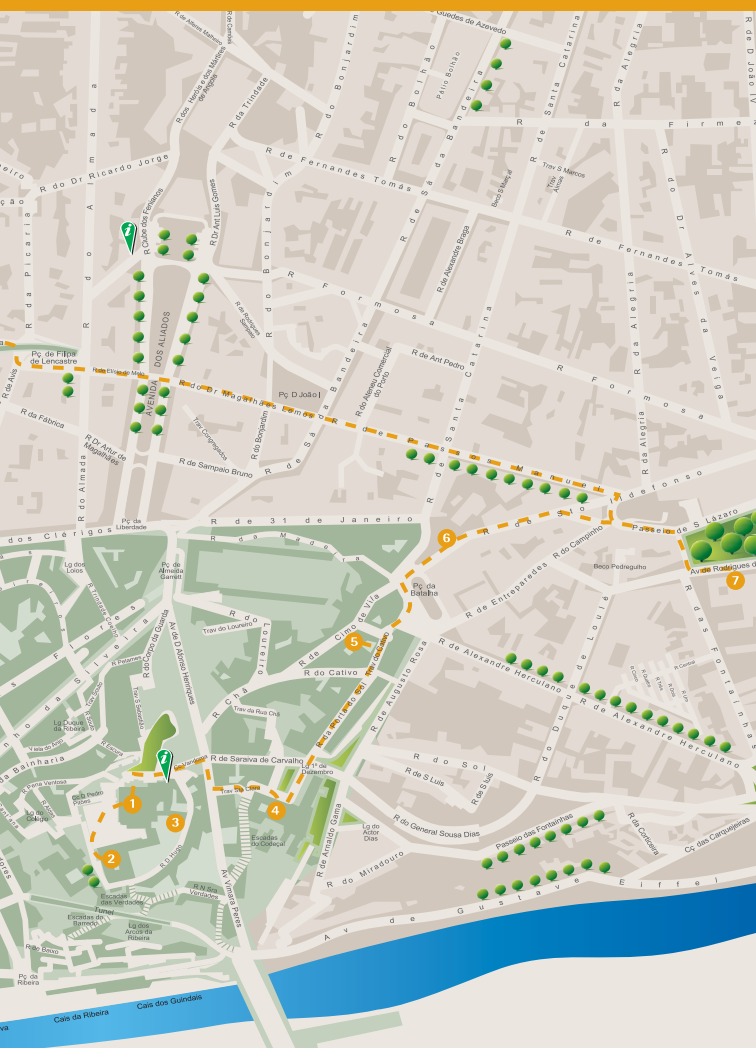
The Casa do Despacho (Church Office) must have been built according to the design of Nicolau Nasoni between 1746 and 1749. The interior is richly decorated with special mention to the eighteenth century original furniture.





BAROQUEtour





NEOCLASSICALtour

3 hour walk

During the second half of the eighteenth century Porto underwent great urban and architectural transformations. João de Almada e Melo guided the design of a plan to renew the old city and to organize the areas beyond the city walls. The "Junta das Obras Públicas" (Public Works Department) co-ordinated the works, which were financed by a tax put on the wine trade. The reconstruction of the Praça da Ribeira, the opening of new streets and the creation of esplanades with a view to the river are signs of a new spirit and a taste for more open and better lit spaces, both functional and suitable for entertainment. The Santo António Hospital, one of the many public buildings the Almadás provided the city with, introduced the Neopalladian style in Porto (the dominating style in England at that time). This clearly shows the influence of the English community, namely of the Consul John Whitehead, the designer of another structure that marked the era: the English Association. These buildings already present solutions that would be used in the civil and religious buildings that followed: mezzanines, plain façades, classical porticos and pediments and sash windows.



01 LAPA CHURCH..

largo da lapa

The construction began in the second half of the eighteenth century, initially according to a plan by the architect José Figueiredo Seixas, later slightly changed. The church keeps the heart of D. Pedro IV, offered by the monarch to the city in recognition for the support given during the liberal conflict. The adjoining cemetery holds the graves of the writers Camilo Castelo Branco and Soares de Passos.



02 TRINDADE CHURCH..

praça da trindade

The Trindade church was built during the whole nineteenth century, following a plan by the architect Carlos Cruz Amarante. The chancel displays an outstanding panel painted by José de Brito, depicting the Baptism of Christ.



03 BUILDING OF THE FORMER CASA PIA..

rua de agosto rosa

Francisco de Almada e Mendonça ordered the construction of this building in 1790, designed by Reinaldo Oudinot. Special mention goes to the central section of the façade out from which a sober pediment stands.



04 BUILDING OF THE FORMER POLYTECHNIC ACADEMY..

praça de gomes teixeira

This project was designed by the architects José da Costa e Silva and Carlos Amarante. The construction works began during the regency of Prince D. João, D. João VI-to-be, and were concluded only in the late nineteenth century. It shows some similarities to the Santo António Hospital. The building was formerly home to the Polytechnic Academy, housing the Faculty of Sciences since 1911.



05 SANTO ANTÓNIO HOSPITAL..

largo prof. abel salazar



This hospital was designed by the architect John Carr, introducing the English Neopalladian style into Porto. It was built between 1790 and 1825, although the original plan of four façades and a chapel in the centre of the quadrilateral was never completed.



06 CARRANCAS PALACE..

rua de d. manuel II

This eighteenth century building belonged to the Moraes e Castro brothers (whose nickname it kept), later serving as residence for the Royal Family. Presently it houses the Soares dos Reis National Museum, which holds outstanding collections of jewellery, decorative arts, porcelain and Portuguese faience from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, as well as Portuguese paintings from the nineteenth century.



07 BUILDING OF THE FORMER COURT OF APPEAL GAOL..

campo dos mártires da pátria



The construction of the building began in 1765 by the order of João de Almada e Melo. It was designed by the engineer and architect Eugénio dos Santos. Camilo Castelo Branco, the author of "Amor de Perdição", was imprisoned in one of its cells.



08 NOSSA SENHORA DA VITÓRIA CHURCH..

rua de s. bento da vitória



This church was reconstructed in the second half of the eighteenth century, under the initiative of Bishop D. Frei António de Sousa. One of the altars holds a statue of Nossa Senhora da Vitória by Soares dos Reis.

09 STOCK EXCHANGE PALACE..

rua ferreira borges



The construction began in 1842 where the old São Francisco monastery used to stand. The author of the plan is the architect Joaquim da Costa Lima and it reflects the influence of the English neo-Palladianism. In the central body a vestibule gives access to the Nations Yard, covered by a structure made of metal and glass. The tile floor was inspired by Greco-Roman models discovered in Pompei. In the remaining interior decoration special mention goes to the works of Soares dos Reis, Teixeira Lopes and António Carneiro. The Arabian Hall, whose construction began in 1862, was planned by Gonçalves de Sousa, using the Alhambra Palace as a model.



10 TERCEIROS DE SÃO FRANCISCO CHURCH..

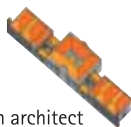
rua infante d. henrique

The construction of the Terceiros de São Francisco Church was initiated in 1795 according to the plan of A. Pinto de Miranda and under the direction of the Italian Chiari. The façade exhibits Doric-roman columns and stands as an exponent of Neoclassicism in Porto.



11 CUSTOMHOUSE..

rua nova da alfândega



The new Customhouse, designed in 1860 by the French architect C.F.G. Colson, is located on the former Miragaia sand and is composed of three perfectly symmetrical parts. It is mostly made of iron, but in a singular and wise blend with other materials, such as stone, brick and wood.



12 ENGLISH ASSOCIATION..

rua do infante d. henrique



This house was built between 1785 and 1790, following a plan by the Consul John Whitehead, to serve as a meeting place for the English businessmen living in Porto. The ground floor of the main façade, facing the Rua Infante D. Henrique, is made of seven arches that give access to the portico. In contrast with the mezzanine, the main floor has high openings with balconies and pediments. A balustraded attic finishes the building.

13 PRAÇA DA RIBEIRA..



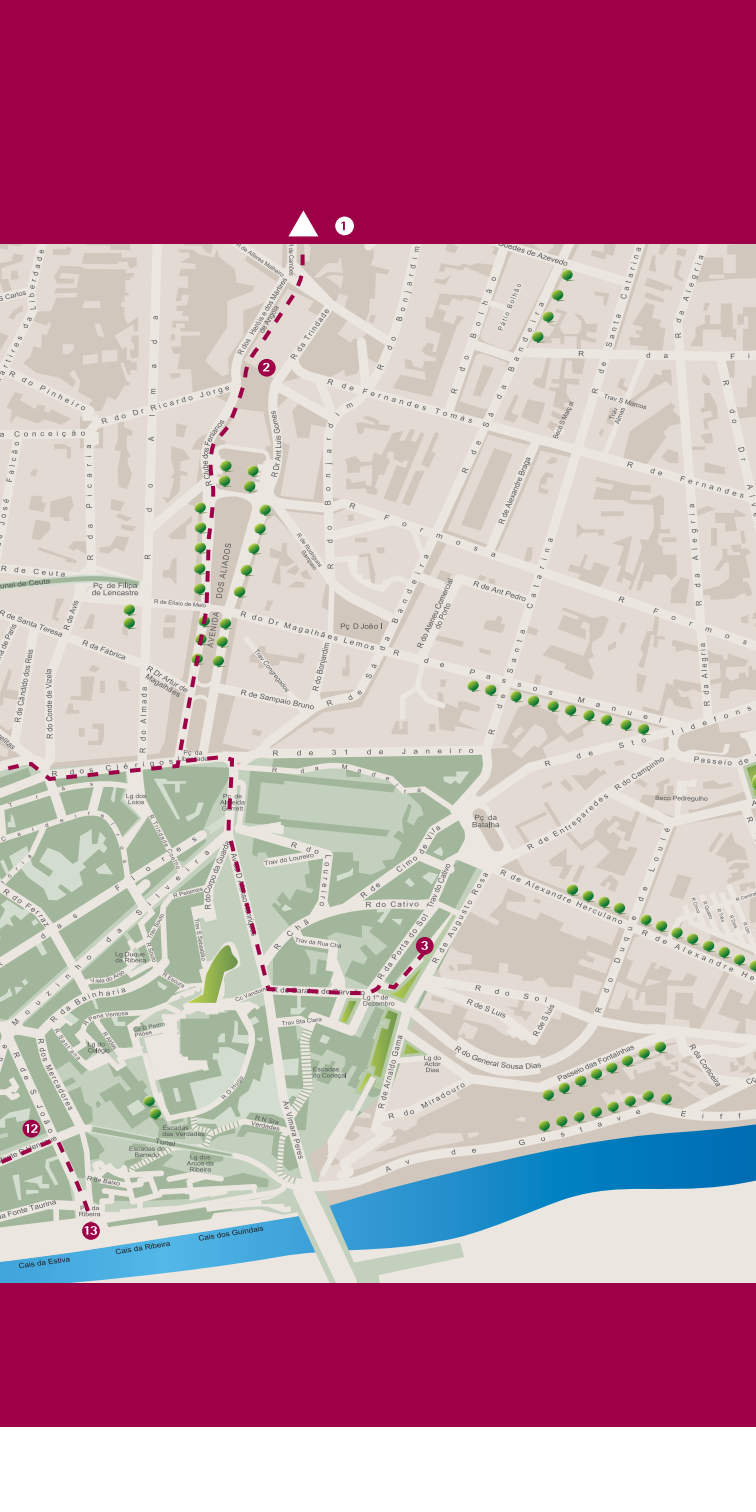
This square of medieval origin was transformed in the eighteenth century by João de Almada e Melo. According to a suggestion of the English consul John Whitehead an arcade would close the southern, eastern and western sides of the square. This plan was not completed, leaving only some signs on the western façade and on the imposing fountain that served as background. Between the square and the bridge there is an interesting arcade against part of the D. Fernando Wall articulated with the upper passage and the houses. Even though it was built in the nineteenth century, its design was inspired by the Adelphi, the former warehouses in the London port area.





NEOCLASSICALtour





TILEtour

2 hour walk

The intensive use of decorative tiles covering the outside of the buildings in Porto is something the visitor will undoubtedly notice. This usage, intensified by "Brazilian" emigrants during the nineteenth century, marks the golden period of tiles covering the façades. The first techniques of hand printing and/or painting were substituted after the industrialisation by mechanical printing.

The North is also characterized by the relief drawings. Special mention goes to the monumental tile panels from the beginning of the twentieth century by Jorge Colaço in the vestibule of the São Bento railway station, as well as on the facade of the Santo Ildefonso and the Congregados churches; by Silvestre Silvestri and Mário Branco, on the front of the Carmo Church; and by Eduardo Leite on the Almas Chapel.

Various residences exhibit curious registers, mainly Art Nouveau, remarkably adapted to architecture. One can admire beautiful exemplars of interiors from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with special reference to the cloisters of the Cathedral, the Chapter House, the Misericórdia, Santa Clara, Carmelitas, and São João Novo Churches, as well as the Ordem Terceira do Carmo and São Francisco Churches.



01 ALMAS CHAPEL..

rua de santa catarina



The tile panels on this church were painted by Eduardo Leite at the beginning of the twentieth century, imitating eighteenth century Portuguese tiles. Two panels depict the death of São Francisco de Assis and this same saint in the presence of Pope Honorius III. Others show the martyrdom of Santa Catarina.



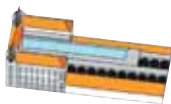
02 SANTO ILDEFONSO CHURCH..

praça da batalha



An eighteenth century church with tile panels by the painter Jorge Colaço depicting scenes from the life of the church's patron.





03 SÃO BENTO RAILWAY STATION..

praça de almeida garrett



The São Bento Railway Station was built in the early twentieth century on the site of the former São Bento de Avé-Maria Convent, thus keeping its name. The vestibule is covered with 20,000 azulejos (tiles) illustrated by the painter Jorge Colaço (1864–1942). It is one of the most remarkable artistic achievements as far as decorative tiles of the twentieth century are concerned. The panels depict various moments of the railway and the history of transports, as well as of famous events in the history of Portugal.

04 CATHEDRAL..

terreiro da sé



The most representative tiles of the Cathedral are those covering the walls of the galleries of the Gothic cloister designing panels with images inspired by the Canticle of Canticles. In the upper gallery of the cloister five panels by Vital Rifarto (1733–37) can also be admired. More panels cover the notary's office, the chapter room and the staircase to it, forming high ashlars trimmed with rich frames depicting profane themes.



05 SANTA CLARA CHURCH..

largo 1º de dezembro

The church was founded in 1416 and modified in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The interior is presently in baroque style. The decorative tiles covering various parts of the church are mainly blue and white. On the western side of the choir there is another tile panel depicting the Sacred Monstrance with an angel on each side.



06 "RIBEIRA NEGRA" (DARK RIVERSIDE) PANEL..

túnel da ribeira

This monumental sandstone mural by Júlio Resende, inaugurated in 1987, represents the characteristic hustle and bustle of the urban riverside area, in which human and animal figures share the space in an atmosphere of colour and light peculiar to that place





07 MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH..

rua das flores



The construction of this church began in 1555 and the decorative tiles were assembled and laid by Domingos da Rocha in 1629-30. These are printed tiles showing interwoven symbols such as the chalice, the cross and vine leaves.

08 CARMO CHURCH..

rua do carmo



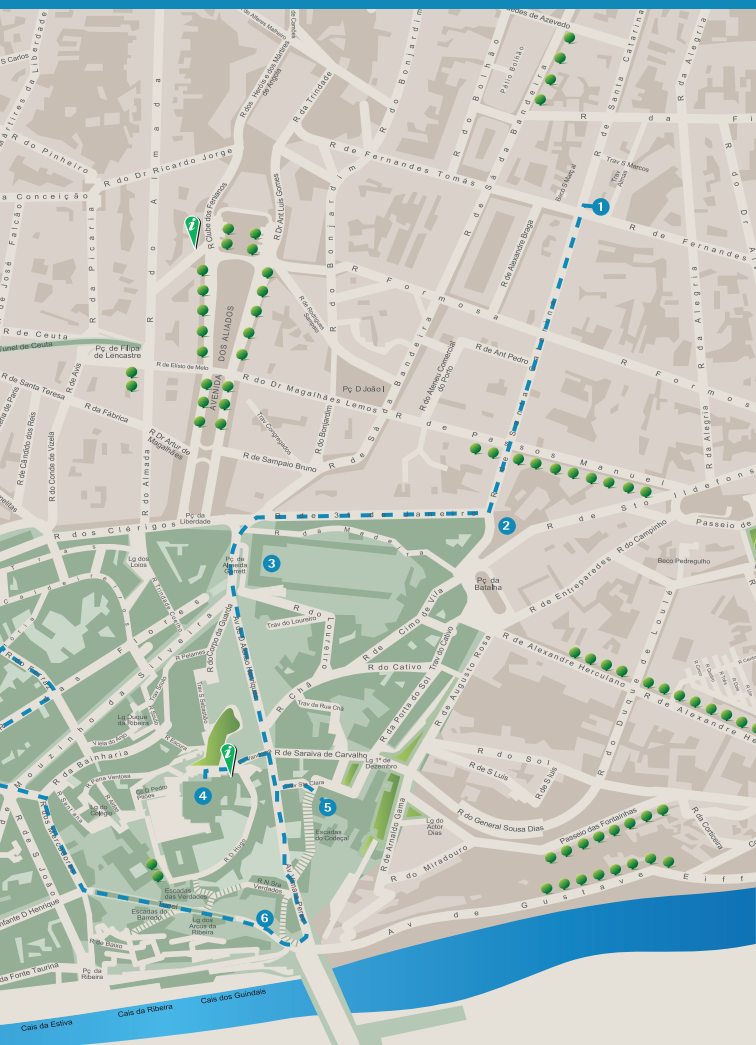
The lateral façade of this church was covered in 1912 with a painted tile with drawings by Silvestre Silvestri, showing figurative compositions alluding to the devotion to the Virgen Mary. The tiles of this church form the city's grandest ceramic panel, owing to its richness and distribution of characters, ornaments, blue shade, etc..

09 MASSARELOS CHURCH..

largo do adro

The church is located on the site where, in 1394, there was a small Corpo Santo chapel dedicated to the devotion of São Pedro Gonçalves Telmo, patron of navigators. It exhibits an allegorical tile panel alluding to the Discoveries epoch, showing the Patron Saint and Prince Henry, the Navigator. The latter is placed on the outside of the chancel and it is inspired by a composition of the painter Mendes da Silva.





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Publisher – Porto City Council/ Tourism Department

Translation – Porto City Council/ Tourism Department

Design – Bmais comunicação

Photographs – Porto City Council

Legal deposit – 329 441/11

Printing – Gráfica Maiadouro

October 2011

PORTUGAL

