



VIANA DO CASTELO City Guide



1 The "Praça da República" Fountain
16th Century

The fountain was erected, or at least concluded, in 1559. It is a fine work of the master mason João Lopes "o velho" ("the old man"), the same that some years before built the Caminha fountain and, very probably, some of the similar fountains that one can see in Galician cities as it is the case for "Pontevedra". It was, for several centuries, the source of drinkable water supplying point for Viana's inhabitants and, due to monumentality and localisation, one of borough's urban points of reference.



2 The Old Town
16th Century

This Town Hall, which was the former council former meeting place, was created out of the city walls in the early 16th century. Before, the place was occupied by the church of Santa Maria Maior (which today is the Cathedral). This building is, as are a lot of others similar constructions of the Hispanic North-West, a wooden floored building with, on the first floor, the Town Hall and the town council meetings and, on the ground floor an archway to shelter the people and the scribes who were drawing up, for the illiterates people, the requests and others documents, intended to the Town Hall. Which is nowadays a cultural space dedicated to the city.



3 "Edifício da Misericórdia" (the Mercy Building) and its Church
16th Century

Created in 1520, the brotherhood evolved in such a good way that, in the second quarter of the 16th century, the brotherhood administration comity decided the construction of the so-called "Casa das Varandas". This building from 1589 is a unique copy of the architecture inspired by the Renaissance and mannerist styles, with Italians and Flemish influences. In 1716 the works of renovation of the church has started and were handed over to the Viana's military engineer, Manuel Pinto de Vilalobos. Inside, the church presents a great decorative wealth corresponding to the tendency of the time, with the gilded carved wood altarpieces in nacional style by Ambrósio Coelho, the wall tiles by Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes, or the frescos on the ceiling by Manuel Gomes. It is, without any doubt, one of the best baroque patterns of all the country.



4 "Hospital Velho" (The Old Pilgrims Hospice)
15th / 16th Centuries

Founded by João Paes "o velho" ("the old man") in 1468 and renovated in the 16th century, this building was built constructed to shelter the "Santiago de Compostela" pilgrims. The façade is the result of modifications from the 16th century, as one can see with the Manueline windows and according to the original eroded inscription above the door (since the Arabic figures were not used in 1468). The stone sculpture and the niche in the façade, above the door, dates back to the 17th century. The courtyard inside that one reaches by crossing three wide and abated arcs of beveled corners is also of the 16th century. Actually hosting the "Caminho Português da Costa" (Portuguese pilgrimage) Interpretative Centre.



5 The Cathedral
15th Century

Even if it presents a massive structure corresponding to the Romanesque architecture, the Viana's Cathedral, whose construction started in the early 15th century, is, without any doubt, a work influenced by the gothic tradition. Around the entrance, there is an archway crossed by three archivolts plentifully decorated and supported by six sculptures which are reliefs of six apostles (St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, St. Bartholomew, St. Jack and St. Andrew). At both structural and thematic levels, this gateway has some analogies with the Galician's gateways, in particular with the one of S. Martin de Noya Church.



6 "Museu do Traje" (The Museum of Traditional Clothes)
20th Century

Located in the heart of the historical center, the building of the former Bank of Portugal, shelters since 2004, the Museum of Traditional Clothes which allows you to get acquainted with the ethnographic raising awarness about the richness of Viana's traditional clothes. The relics exhibited also include the tools used for the handcrafting confection of clothes, besides the permanent exhibitions "The wool and the flax in the Upper-Minho costume", "Vianesa Costume" and "Gold Atelier". The Museum of Traditional Clothes has an important number of temporary exhibitions about the costume and the ethnography of Viana.



7 "A Igreja das Almas" (The Souls Chapel)
13th / 18th Centuries

Until the construction of the current Cathedral in the walled perimeter in the middle of the 15th century, it has been the first Viana's Cathedral. Traditionally known as "Matriz Velha" ("Old Cathedral"), it was renamed "Capela das Almas" due to the fact that its churchyard was a funeral place since the time of Afonso III of Portugal until the end of the 19th century. It remains from the original structure, re-built and enlarged in 1719 by the initiative of the canon Domingos de Campos Soares, an arcossolium on the south wall of the temple and the Headboard Cross. The rest is a typical building of the small baroque temples from the 18th century.



8 "Casa dos Nichos" (The House of Niches) Centre Museum of Archaeology
15th Century

Implanted in the middle of the "Rua de Viana", former "Rua do Cais", the so-called "House of Niches", even if it has undergone modifications, mainly the doors and the windows; it provides us with two gorgeous gothic sculptures, headed by small canopies in rock representing the Announcement scene.



9 The Eiffel Bridge
19th Century

It was inaugurated the June 30th 1878, by the iron architecture period. Designed by the prestigious Eiffel House, the metallic bridge over the "Rio Lima" allowed the railway traffic but it also replaced the old wood bridge that linked the S. Bento place in Viana to the left bank of the "Rio Lima" (Darque). With 563 meters length and 6 meter large, 2 000 000 kilos of iron had been required for the construction of the platforms that lay on nine granite squared stone pillars, whose substructures reach the 22 meters.



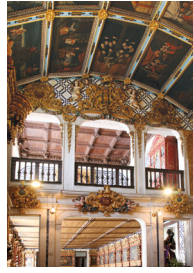
10 The Malheiras Chapel
18th Century

The so-called "Chapel of the Malheiras" (as an allusion to the family's owner - the Malheiro Reimão), is one of the most beautiful example of the Portuguese rococo architecture, which construction was ordered by D. António do Desterro (Malheiro), at the time of the Rio de Janeiro Bishop. In addition to the graceful front, which for some authors is a work of Nicolau Nasoni or of its school, this Chapel presents a remarkable altar piece in polychrome carving. According to Robert Smith, this is one of the best examples of carving of the Minho in a rococo style.



11 The House of the Abreu Távora "of the Earls of the Carreira"
16/18th Century

Built in the middle of the 16th century, the Abreu Távora Palace, renamed some years later "the Earls of the Carreira House", is one of the city's most beautiful manor houses, remarkable for its Manueline doors and windows that the alterations and the amplifications has preserved but also given more splendour and wealth. Since 1972, the Town Hall is established in this building.



12 The Church of Charity "The Saint Anne Convent"
16th / 20th Centuries

The old Saint Anne convent church construction, for Benedictines nuns, was ordered by the local nobility on the back of the Town Hall, to lodge the unmarried daughters of the city's nobility. The original convent, of gothic origins, is a work of Pedro Galego, an inhabitant of Caminha, where he led the second phase of work in the First Church, in the early 16th century. It suffered some enlargements in the early 18th century, but the principal modifications had been made between 1897 and 1905. The result is a fine architectural unit which kept the frontispiece of the church of the 18th century in a "baroque joanine" style and a sumptuous spire in the tower.



13 The Municipal Theater Sá de Miranda
19th Century

An "Italian" theatre built according to the plan of the architect João Marques Sardinha. It is a restrained building with some neo-classical elements where one can point out the vaulted roof decorated with a fine fresco, by João Baptista Rio. It also has the initial curtain conceived by the Italian scenographer, Manini, and made by Hercole Lambertini. This theater, recently renewed is, without any doubt, the main cultural item of the city.



14 "The Melo Alvim House"
16th Century

Built in the early 16th century, it is considered as the city's oldest manor-house. It shows Manueline windows and battlements, as one can see the enlargements of the end of the 16th century. Inside are some elements of the 16th and the 17th centuries, especially the majestic staircase in granite. It was renovated in the 90's to install a Hostelry.



15 The Municipal Museum "The Small Palace of Barbosa Maciel"
18th Century

Installed in a distinguished stately mansion from the 18th century, Viana do Castelo Municipal Museum offers one of the most important and precious collections of old Portuguese earthenware from the 17th and 18th centuries. This collection includes several pieces of the Viana's Crockery Factory. In addition to an important quantity of paintings, drawings and parts of sacred art, one can point out the fine indo-Portuguese furniture collection of the 18th century. In this space, it is also possible to discover remains of an "azulejaria" (tiling) Portuguese and hispáno-Arabic, unique for its variety and wealth.



16 Our Lady of Agony Church
18th Century

Our Lady of Agony Church current building, dating from the middle of the 18th century, is the result of the reconstruction of an old Chapel which was the last point in the way of the Cross. In this baroque example it is possible to spot out some influences of the luso-Brazilian baroque style, including the remarkable altarpiece of the altars decorated with "large carved wood", especially the cenotaph of the Passion designed by André Soares. The tower of 1868 was built disconnected from the rest of the building, to allow pilgrimmage around the church.



17 Fort or Castle of São Tiago da Barra
15th / 17th Centuries

The first fortification implanted on the border of the "Rio Lima" mouth, dates back to "D. Afonso the 3rd" reign. However the oldest known date is from the 15th century when a fortress was built there and was completed under Manuel I of Portugal, as it is suggested by some Manueline architectural elements, like the "Torre da Roqueta", located on the south-west bastion of the current fortress. By the end of the 16th century, the fortress was the target of successive improvement works. It was under Filipe II (Filipe I of Portugal), at the time under Spanish domination that, the current fortress with a polygonal plan, was built based on a project from Fillipo Terzi, the period's most famous military edifications designer.



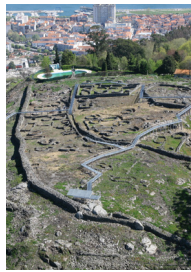
18 The Saint Lucia Basilica
20th Century

The "Jesus Holy Heart Temple", built on the Saint Lucia Mountain west spur, from where it dominates and "blesses" the city is, without any doubt, one of the country most famous and symbolic monuments. This is an excellent example of the revivalist architecture embracing in a huge but harmonious way, neo-Romans, neo-Byzantines and neo-gothic elements. It was made by one of the most famous architects from this period, in the country and outside, Miguel Ventura Terra (1866-1919) an inhabitant of the Upper-Minho, responsible, for example, for the modifications done in the Palace of S. Bento (Lisbon), modern-day Parliament. Even if the project dates of 1898, the work only began in the early 20th century. The temple was opened for worship the 22th of August from 1926, after the death of its architect, and completed only in 1943, almost a half decade later.



19 The Gil Eannes Ship
20th Century

Built in 1955 in Viana do Castelo, the hospital-ship Gil Eannes, has seconded, during decades, the codfisher fleet which performed on the Newfoundland and Greenlandic banks. The re-conversion project transformed it into a Museum and a Sea Centre, offering to its visitors an unforgettable experience. Today, it has been an attractiveness for the city by receiving since the opening to the public in 1998, about 400 000 visitors.



20 The pré-roman city fortified

The pré-Roman city fortified, locally known as "Cidade Velha" ("Old Town"), is one of the most famous "Castros" of the North region and, without any doubt, one of the most important for the studies of the Proto-History and of the Upper-Minho Romanization. Its strategic localization allows it, not only to dominate wide areas of the marginal coastal zone but also, to control the in-and-outs movements in the "Rio Lima" mouth, which in the classic antiquity was mainly navigable. The village presents very proper characteristics, principally concerning the architectonic structures, especially the polygonal equipment, used in some houses showing a circular plan with a vestibule or atrium, that in some cases sheltered the bread oven.



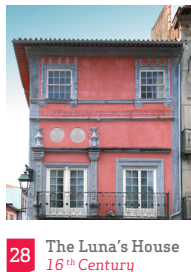
25 The Train Station
19th Century



26 The House of Sá Soutomaior
16th Century



27 The House of the Arches "The House of Old People"
15th / 16th Centuries



28 The Luna's House
16th Century



29 The House of the Alpuins
16th / 17th Centuries



30 The House of Werneck
19th Century



21 The Viana Statue
18th Century

The statue, founded in parallel to the Temple-Monument of Santa Luzia, in 1774 by the Earl of Bobadela, José António Freire de Andrade, the Fencing Master of the Minho province, is one of the city's finest examples. The rococo feminine figure dressed with undulating holding, which holds a caravel, in Rococo style overcoming all the whole, symbolizes Viana and its marine vocation. The four busts that crown the pedestal angles, symbolize the European, the Asiatic, the African and the American continents, as an allusion to the "four corners of the world" and the sailing and merchant tradition.



22 The Church of Saint Dominic
16th Century

The church of St. Dominic is the part that remains from the former Santa Cruz (Holly Cross) convent founded by the Dominican D. Frei Bartolomeu dos Mártires (the Saint Archbishop, recently beatified (2001) by the Pope John Paul II, and famous for his participation in the Council of Trent). It is a temple from the 16th century, built between 1566 and 1576, designed by the Dominican Frei Julião Romero, the one who designed the church of São Gonçalo in Amarante. Inside, one can contemplate several altars which have a graceful carved gilded and more particularly the magnificent altarpiece by the north arm of the transept in "large carved", made by the master of Braga, José Alvares de Araújo, from a draw ordered by the Rosary Brotherhood in 1760 to the master André Soares and that the respected specialist Robert Smith has classified as, "the masterpiece of the rocaille style in the entire Europe".



23 The Costa Barros House
16th Century

Manor dating back to the discoveries period, it is remarkable for one central window, unusual for its size, inspired by Renaissance style decorated with "Manuelines" and "Plateresque" designs. Built in the middle of the 16th century it is, without any doubt, the most beautiful and the most imposing window of the 16th in the city.



24 The Small Fort of Areosa
17th / 18th centuries

This interesting example of the military architecture from the 17th century was built to prevent some potential Spanish attacks during the Restoration war (1640-1668). It is part of a defensive line strategically built on the Minho river-side and along the Atlantic coast, succeeded thanks to the restoration of former fortifications - as it is the case of the Castles of Valença, Vila Nova de Cerveira and Santiago da Barra (Viana do Castelo) - or thanks to the edification of new forts such as the Lobelhe (Vila Nova de Cerveira), Ínsua (Caminha) and Paçó (Carreço) ones, among others. Some of these fortresses have had an important role, not only during the Restoration war but also during the Napoleonic invasions. Moreover their strategic military function has sometimes been reactivated during the liberal struggles of the 19th century.



31 The Church of S. Bento
16th Century



32 The Convent and the Church of Saint Anthony
17th / 18th Centuries



33 The Church and the Convent of the 3rd Order of S. Francis
18th Century



34 Municipal Library 21st Century
It is a project of the architect Álvaro Siza Vieira



35 Cultural Center 21st Century
It is a project of the architect Eduardo Souto Moura

VIANA DO CASTELO



ATLANTIC OCEAN

HISTORIC CENTER



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- TAXI CAB
- FERRY BOAT
- FUNICULAR
- TENNIS
- SWIMMING POOL
- COUNTRY CLUB
- THE "CAMINHO PORTUGUÊS DA COSTA" (PORTUGUESE PILGRIMAGE) INTERPRETATIVE CENTRE
- MALL
- SUPERMARKET
- BEACH

QUEM GOSTA VEM. Quem ama fica.

"Quem gosta vem, quem ama fica" ("Those who like it, visit. Those who love it, stay") is the slogan for the campaign that has been spread across the city and surrounding regions, drawing people's attention to all the significant and memorable things that Viana do Castelo has to offer: landscape and history, beaches and sea, traditions and fine cuisine.



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