In the Heart of Portugal

In the extreme south west of Europe lies a region we can call the Heart of Portugal. Many of the events dating from the birth of Portugal — the realm with the oldest borders in Europe — took place in this region, which is infused with History, but also with myths and legends. The existence of three of the most important Portuguese monuments, recognised as World Heritage sites by UNESCO, in an area of little more than 90 km², bears witness to this amazing truth.

The Cistercian Abbey of Santa Maria de Alcobaça was founded in 1153 by the first King of Portugal, D. Afonso I, with the blessing of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. It is one of the best-preserved Cistercian monasteries, where we can find the original buildings of the monastery complex and one of the order’s most monumental churches. It was no mere chance that the taming of a formerly swampy and uninviting land radiated from Alcobaça, transforming it into a veritable orchard for the kingdom.

In order to protect these territories, the Knights Templar built a castle to the south at the request of the King. Founded in 1160, in Tomar, it became the seat of the Portuguese Order of the Temple and one of the most important Templar sites outside of the Holy Land. Here, the knights ensured that the conquered lands were maintained and launched offensives, pushing Christian domination ever southwards. When the Order of the Temple was disbanded, in the aftermath of a celebrated and incredible trial, the Order of Christ was created in Portugal to provide it with continuity. The headquarters of the Order of Christ, naturally, was in Tomar. It was here that Prince D. Henrique (“the Navigator”) settled and, from the 15th to the mid 16th centuries, monastic buildings in the most varied styles were added to the original Templar building. The final building phase resulted in an impressive architectural amplification that is a veritable masterpiece of the Renaissance. In turn, the Order of Christ — as if keeping the famous and allusive “Templar mission” alive — played a fundamental role in the Portuguese discoveries.

But it was also in the area around the old Cistercian monastery and to the north of Tomar where one of the most dramatic pages in Portuguese History was written: at the Battle of Aljubarrota. This took place on 14th August 1385, with around three thousand men in the Portuguese army confronting the Castilian army of around forty thousand. They were fighting to prevent D. Juan I of Castile from taking the throne
from the newly acclaimed King of Portugal, D. João de Avis. Despite the clear disproportion in numbers, the Portuguese army and its English allies, commanded by D. João and by the Constable D. Nuno Álvares Pereira, occupied a favourable strategic position and adopted a tactic that lead to the defeat of the Castilian army and its French allies. On the battlefield of Aljubarrota a chapel dedicated to St. George was built to commemorate the encounter, while the Monastery of Nossa Senhora da Vitória (Our Lady of Victory) — also known as Batalha Monastery — was built a little further north, to fulfil a vow that the newly victorious monarch had made to the Virgin on the eve of the great battle. The monastery, founded in 1385, is a late gothic masterpiece, and, on the death of King D. João I, it became the official pantheon of the new reigning dynasty in Portugal.

These three monuments constitute an authentic compendium of medieval art and architecture and a unique portrait of historical sedimentation in the forming of Europe. Alcobaça was not merely a project for territorial consolidation at the height of the feudal period, it also represented cultural consolidation — since the monastery was a medieval centre for culture, housing the largest library in Portugal. In addition to keeping alive the link to the “mysterious Templars”, Tomar was a centre of military power and European expansion, while Batalha venerated a generation of men — the victorious and the vanquished — that shaped the present contours of Europe and the world.

Heart of Portugal. Heart because, long before, long after and far beyond the ambit of historical matters, this region remained a melting pot of cultures, as expressed in the syncretism of the “Mozarab” people, the place where Portuguese identity was forged. Furthermore, it is in this “magic triangle”, as it has been called, that one can find nature that is simultaneously wild and welcoming, among the peaks and the valleys of the Serras de Aire e Candeeiros — where the four elements declare themselves with quiet force —, and one of the world’s major pilgrimage sites: Fátima.
The Treasure of the Templars

1. CITY OF TOMAR D2
2. CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DO OLIVAL, TOMAR D2
3. CHURCH OF SÃO JOÃO BAPTISTA (ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST), TOMAR D2
4. TOMAR SYNAGOGUE, TOMAR D2
5. CHAPEL OF SÃO GREGÓRIO, TOMAR D2
6. RODA DO NABÃO D2
7. TOMAR CASTLE, TOMAR D2
8. CHAPEL OF NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO (OUR LADY OF THE CONCEPTION CHAPEL), TOMAR D2
9. MANUELINE CHURCH OF THE CONVENTO DE CRISTO, TOMAR D2
10. CONVENTO DE CRISTO, TOMAR D2
11. CHAPEL OF NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO (OUR LADY OF THE CONCEPTION CHAPEL), TOMAR D2
12. MATA DOS SETE MONTES (WOOD OF THE SEVEN HILLS), TOMAR D2
13. PEÇÕES AQUEDUCT D2
14. CASTELO DO BOGE (CASTLE OF THE RAM), TOMAR E2
15. CHURCH OF ATALAVA, ATALAVA, VILA NOVA DA BARQUINHA D3
16. ALMOUROL CASTLE, VILA NOVA DA BARQUINHA D3
17. QUINTA DA CARDIGA, GOLEGÁ D3
18. D. GAIÃO’S TOWER, PEREIRO E1
19. AREIAS, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE D1
20. DORNES TOWER, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE D1

Paths of Faith

1. MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH, PENICHE A3
2. CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA DOS REMÉDIOS, PENICHE A3
3. CHURCH OF SÃO LEONARDO, ATOUGUIA DA BALEIA A3
4. CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO, ATOUGUIA DA BALEIA A3
5. TOWN OF ÓBIDOS A3
6. ALÇAÇOVA DE ÓBIDOS, ÓBIDOS A3
7. CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DE ÓBIDOS, ÓBIDOS A3
8. MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH, ÓBIDOS A3
9. CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA DO PÓPULO, CALDAS DA RAINHA B3
The quest for the Holy Grail

1. AGROAL
2. TOMAR
3. A RODA DO NABÃO
4. TOMAR CASTLE
5. A CHÁROLA E A IGREJA MANUELINA DE TOMAR
6. CHAROLINA, MATA DOS SETE MONTES
7. CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DO OLIVAL
8. SANTA IRIA CONVENT
9. FESTA DOS TABULEIROS
10. ALMOUROL CASTLE
11. STONE OF THE HOLY MARTYRS
12. QUINTA DA CARDIGA
13. GAÍÃO’S OR LANGALHÃO’S TOWER
14. DORNES TOWER
15. TOMBS OF D. PEDRO I AND D. INÊS DE CASTRO
16. MENHIRS OF THE WEST
17. CHAPEL OF SÃO JORGE DE ALJUBARROTA
18. MONESTERY OF SANTA MARIA DA VITÓRIA
19. SERRAS DE AIRE E CANDEEIROS

Batalha

1. THE TREASURE OF THE TEMPLARS
2. PATHS OF FAITH
3. THE 4 ELEMENTS
4. THE QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

Leiria

1. PORTO DE MÓS
2. SERRAS DE AIRE E CANDEEIROS (THE SERRAS DE AIRE E CANDEEIROS NATIONAL PARK)
3. CASTELO DO BOQUELO
4. A RODA DO NABÃO
5. DORNES TOWER
6. ABBEY OF SANTA MARIA DE ALCOBAÇA
7. TOMBS OF D. PEDRO I AND D. INÊS DE CASTRO
8. MENHIRS OF THE WEST

The order came to have immense international power and was extremely rich and famous. A veritable popular mythology grew up around it, not always congenial, which explains the accusations made against the Templars in the trial that led to their disbandment. Pope Clement V, who had been elected through the machinations of the French King, Philip, the Fair, who was keen to appropriate Templar wealth, ordered an iniquitous inquisitorial trial. On 2nd May 1312, the order was disbanded.

However, everything was different in Portugal. In 1319, King D. Dinis founded the Order of Christ, which perpetuated the Templars in name and form. All the knights and possessions of the old order were transferred to the newly created Order of Christ. In 1357, the headquarters was “re-established” at Tomar Castle, returning to the point of origin. In this unusual case, the Order of the Temple was re-founded as the Order of Christ. In 1417, the position of Master came to be held by the dignitaries of the Royal Household, with the first incumbent being the famous Prince D. Henrique, who, to all appearances, configured the Order of Christ in such a way as to maintain its knightly and crusading spirit, but directing it towards what would seem to have been its original “mission”: the conquest of Asia by sea voyages, financed by the order itself.

The establishment was reformed in 1529, during the reign of D. João III, when it became a strictly cloistered order, inspired in the Rule of St. Benedict. The change was so great that it led to the construction of the “new” Renaissance convent of Tomar, which was built on to the medieval monastery and fortress. The castle remained as a relic of the original vocation, that of the Templars. Thus, the possessions of the order remained untouched in the extreme south-west of Europe. And this reconstitution of the medieval (and modern day) Templar high places can be made by following the route that does not disdain including the sorcery of the countless enigmas which, rightly or wrongly, have been linked to the Knights Templar and their successors. There is no other region where the Templar legends have left such a clear and evocative trail of mystery and magic.
The Treasure of the Templars

- CITY OF TOMAR (2)
  One of the most important “memory sites” in Portuguese History, the true centre of the sacred geography of the Templars, the city has a rich symbolic heritage, including, on the hilltop, the fascinating Convento de Cristo (Convent of Christ).
  C- 39º 36’ N 8º 24’ W

- CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DO OLIVAL, TOMAR
  One of the first Portuguese churches in the gothic style. Pantheon of the Templars, containing the tomb of the knight D. Gualdim Paes, founder of Tomar Castle and 4th Grand-Master of the Order of the Temple in Portugal.
  C- 39º 36’ 05” N 8º 24’ 26” W

- CHURCH OF SÃO JOÃO BAPTISTA (ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST), TOMAR (5)
  Gothic-Manueline church. It is the mother-church of the city and the true centre of the sacred world.
  C- 39º 36’ N 8º 25’ W

- TOMAR CASTLE, TOMAR (9)
  At the time when it was founded, circa 1180, the Templar castle was the largest, most modern and advanced military equipment in the realm, inspired by the fortifications of the Crusades in the Holy Land.
  C- 39º 36’230” N 8º 25’109” W

- CHAROLA OF THE CONVENTO DE CRISTO, TOMAR (10)
  The great Templar rotunda, the largest and best-preserved in Europe, is inspired by the “image” of the Holy Sepulchre. It is the mythical remembrance of Jerusalem and of the founding place of the Templars: the Temple of Solomon.
  C- 39º 36’230” N 8º 25’109” W

- MANUELINE CHURCH OF THE CONVENTO DE CRISTO, TOMAR (4, 1)
  In 1510, construction began on this addition to the Templar rotunda. The symbology of the building expresses the ideas of the time of King D. Manuel I. In the western facade can be seen the great “window”, one of the most famous works of art in the world.
  C- 39º 36’230” N 8º 25’109” W

- CONVENTO DE CRISTO, TOMAR (3)
  In this masterpiece of Renaissance architecture, the convent buildings conform to a rational and symbolic concept, fruit of the great reform in the Order of Christ in 1529.
  C- 39º 36’230” N 8º 25’109” W

- CHAPEL OF NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO (OUR LADY OF THE CONCEPTION CHAPEL), TOMAR
  This intriguingly perfect work of pure classicism was destined for the pantheon of King D. João III.
  C- 39º 36’230” N 8º 25’109” W

- MATÁ DOS SETE MONTES (WOOD OF THE SEVEN HILLS), TOMAR (12)
  The most important part of the ancient estate of the Convento de Cristo, its leafy vegetation hides a miniature temple: the Charolinha.
  C- 39º 36’ N 8º 25’ W

- PÉGÖES AQUEDUCT (13)
  This 7 kilometre long aqueduct in the Pegões valley has great monumental value. One of the most significant seventeenth century public works in Portugal.
  C- 39º 36’ N 8º 26’309” W

- CASTELO DO BADE (CASTLE OF THE BAD), TOMAR (14)
  In its name can be found echoes of the famous (and infamous) Templar bafomet, the idol supposedly worshipped by the “heretical” Templars.
  C- 39º 32’34” N 8º 19’ W

- CHURCH OF ATALAJA, ATALAJA, VILA NOVA DA BARQUINHA (15)
  This building, which the Count of Cantanhede had constructed in 1528, is one of the earliest examples of Renaissance architecture in Portugal.
  C- 39º 36’ N 8º 27’ W

- ALMOURUL CASTLE, VILA NOVA DA BARQUINHA (16)
  At-morolan (= big rock). A castle on an island in the middle of the Tagus. Building work began in 1171. It has generated mythical and literary appropriations. A favourite setting for “spiritual chivalry” where “legends of giants” endure.
  C- 39º 27’ N 8º 23’ W

- QUINTA DA CARDIGA, GOLEGÁ (17)
  One of the most productive farming establishments in the whole country, this former fortress – part of the Templar front line – was later transformed into country house and farm.
  C- 39º 26’43” N 8º 27’02” W

- D. GAIÃO’S TOWER, PEREIRO
  The property of D. Gaião, the al-cayde of Santarém, who donated it to the Templars in 1152. Ruined residence of the fabled giant Langalhão.
  C- 39º 37’ N 8º 26’ W

- ARIAS, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE
  This former parish of the Templar territories is today a small village with a huge, three-naved church (1502-1548).
  C- 39º 41’ N 8º 17’ W

- DORNES TOWER, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE (18)
  This Templar watch-tower on the Zêzere-Tejo line has a pentagonal floorplan and turrets over the waters forming one of the most evocative landscapes in the region.
  C- 39º 37’ N 8º 26’ W
Paths of Faith  In the extreme south-west of Europe is the site of what is now one of the most important sanctuaries of the Catholic faith and one of the largest pilgrimage centres in the world: Fátima.
The older basilica, opened in the 1950’s, is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. It opens onto a large square where the pilgrims gather on the most holy dates, as happens during the spectacular “Candlelit Procession”. It honours the site as a key point of religious experience and includes the Little Chapel of the Apparitions, which was built next to the holm oak where the Virgin appeared to the three shepherd children, according to the story of the miracle. 13th May 1917, the date of the first miraculous event – the first apparition of the Virgin –, is now celebrated worldwide. On the far side a new basilica was recently inaugurated, dedicated to the Holy Sacrament.

Nowadays one can make a journey through Fátima’s sacred geography, recognising the places where various events related with the said miracle took place.
However, it is a known fact that man’s veneration of divinities in this region, especially of female deities, is an apparently continuous tradition whose roots are lost in the mists of time, with pagan legends dating back to mythical times — the “time of the Moors” — that magical and miraculous expression that attended the peopling of the region. Thus we have the legend of the fairy Oriana, after whom Ourém is named. Christianity was able to harness this powerful sense of devotion, perhaps rooted in female agrarian divinities, focussing it in the figure of the Mother of God, Our Lady. Worship of Santa Maria and the countless places of worship dedicated to her attest to this ongoing and deeply entrenched religious feeling that has gained even greater universal strength.

A circuit of the places of Marian devotion coincides with the paths of faith and with the ancient pilgrimage routes that have been long established here. To start with a land’s end: Nossa Senhora da Nazaré. The miracles of Our Lady, as experienced in the 12th century by a personage who seems to inhabit a dimension outside “History”, the Knight Templar D. Fuas Roupinho, were bolstered by the chroniclers of the Cistercian Order. The place of worship came to be the tip of the cliff at Nazaré, transforming the place into one of the most significant Marian sanctuaries in Portugal, from the 17th to the 19th centuries.
However, other places have exercised the same fascination, although they have been circumscribed to regional devotions, almost unknown and unheard of in the outside world. Nevertheless, they represent a priceless religious landscape: Nossa Senhora de Reguengo do Fetal, Nossa Senhora da Ortiga, countless springs, formerly with curative properties, or the great monuments that were also dedicated to Our Lady, such as the grandiose Abbey of Alcobaça or Batalha Monastery. A filigree overlay on the historical — but also mythical — narratives that forged the identity of this region.
D. Afonso Henriques’ Christian time of its conquest by King
the perimeter of the town at the
walls, still displays the layout of a
town, contained within its old city
architectural heritage, this ancient
TOWN OF ÓBIDOS
C- 39º 20' N 9º 19' W

One of the jewels of Portuguese
weather of the pagan divinities
SERRAS DE AIRE E CANDEEIROS: the use of oil lamps, a Christianised form of

SÑHORA DA GRAÇA (OUR LADY
OF CANDEIAS), ATAÍJA DE CIMA
The seat of a widespread ritual in

SANCTUARY OF NOSSA SENHORA
DA ORTIGA, FATIMA, OURÉM
The chapel was founded at an
unknown date following another
apparition by Our Lady to a little
shepherd girl. Local centre for
worship of the Holy Spirit.
C- 39º 34' 39'' N 8º 54' 56'' W

CHAPEL OF NOSSA SENHORA
DA PÓPOLO, CALDAS DA RAINHA
The church, which is about 50
metres long, shows how big the
oldest ruined monastery was. The
interior is a good example of the
Mannerist and Baroque style of
decoration.

CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA
DA NAZARÉ (CHURCH OF THE
MIRACLE) (11)
The main temple of the sanctuary,
housing the image of Our Lady of
Nazaré, a “dark skinned virgin”, a
gothic variation of a Black Virgin.
C- 39º 36’ 19” N 9º 04’ 36” W

CHURCH OF SÃO BRÁS, PEDERNEIRA,
C- 39º 04’ 36” W

One of the oldest Christian
churches in Portuguese territory
(7th to 10th centuries), it stands
on the coastal zone to the south
of Nazaré, around 300 metres
from the sea.
C- 39º 36’ 46” N 9º 05’ 22” W

SÃO GAO DA NAZARÉ, NAZARÉ
Site of one of the most important
feasts dedicated to St. Brás in the
Portuguese Estremadura region.
C- 39º 39’ 35” N 9º 03’ 07” W

SANTUÁRIO DA NAZÁRÉ, NAZARÉ
One of the oldest Christian
churches in Portugal.
C- 39º 36’ 47” N 9º 05’ 05” W

ABBEY OF SANTA MARIA DE
ALCOBRACA, ALCOBRACA (3, 4, 12)
Work on the abbey started in
1176 and the dedication of the
temple was in 1252. This is one of
the biggest and best-preserved
Cistercian abbeys in all Europe.
It was one of the political and
cultural “cradles” of Portugal.

MONASTERY OF CÓS, CÓS
The church, which is about 30
metres long, shows how big the
old ruined monastery was. The
interior is a good example of the
Mannerist and Baroque style of
decoration.

C- 39º 36’ 07” N 8º 57’ 20” W

SANTA RITA CHAPEL, PEDRADA
This small chapel is a site of
popular festivals. It was founded to
celebrate an apparition of Our
Lady who returned to a village
woman her lost house keys.
C- 39º 34’ 34” N 8º 54’ 56” W

SANTUÁRIO DE NOSSA SENHORA
DO FETAL, RESGUARDO DO FETAL
(13) The chapel was founded at an
unknown date following another
apparition by Our Lady to a little
shepherd girl. According to the legend and mi-
rracle of Ortigia, a deaf and dumb
shepherd was tending his sheep
when he suddenly saw the shining
and extremely beautiful image of
Our Lady descending from heaven. The prototypome of
the miracle of Our Lady of Fátima.
C- 39º 36’ 13” N 8º 37’ 33” W

www.pathsoffaih.com
The Sanctuary of Fátima is one of the biggest devotional spaces in the world these days, visited by over two million pilgrims every year. It has become one of the most popular religious destinations for Catholics in the long history of the religion, and the devotion to Our Lady of Fátima has not ceased growing.

HEART OF THE SANCTUARY OF OUR LADY OF FÁTIMA
This is at Cova da Iria, in that depression (‘cova’) of land where the three shepherd children witnessed the majority and the most significant of the apparitions of Our Lady.

CHAPEL OF THE APPARITIONS, FÁTIMA
Built between 28th April and 15 June 1919, to comply with the will of the Lady who appeared to the three shepherd children. This chapel, still standing today within the sanctuary thanks to successive restorations, forms the focal point on which the crowds of pilgrims converge.

IMAGE OF OUR LADY OF FÁTIMA
By José Ferreira Thedim (III) (1892-1971), a maker of holy images from São Miguel do Coronado, in Braga.

MONUMENT TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, FÁTIMA
This column at the centre of the square or esplanade, crowned with a gilded bronze image, was made possible thanks to an anonymous donation. It is mounted over water well.

BASILICA OF THE HOLY TRINITY, SANCTUARY OF FÁTIMA
The new basilica was officially inaugurated on 13 October 2007. It has a circular floor plan and smooth outer walls containing thirteen doors — the main door plus twelve secondary doors.

CABEÇO, ALJUSTREL, FÁTIMA
The exact site of the first and third apparitions of the Angel to the three shepherd children.

HAMLET OF VALINHOS, FÁTIMA
Around 3 kilometres from the Sanctuary, in Valinhos, is the place of the fourth apparition of Our Lady to the three shepherd children (19 August 1917).

HAND OF FÁTIMA, SOUTH WINDOW, CHAPTER ROOM, BATALHA MONASTERY
Representation of the Virgin with a pitcher in her hand and a rope with six “open hands” around her neck, i.e. amulets known as the hand of Fátima.

ARNEIRO WELL, ALJUSTREL, FÁTIMA
Also known as the Angel’s Well, this was the private well belonging to the house of seer Lúcia, where the second apparition of the Angel occurred.

OURÉM
The name of the town is indelibly linked to the Templar legend of the knight D. Gonçalo Hermigues, who fell in love with the Moor Fátima. She converted to Christianity to be able to marry him, being baptized with the name of Oureana.

OURÉM PALACE AND CASTLE
One of the most innovative Portuguese works of military architecture in the 15th century. It was sponsored by D. Afonso, the Count of Ourém and later Marquis of Valença, the eldest son of the Duke of Bragança, D Afonso.

OURÉM COLLEGIATE CHURCH
This was founded in 1445 by D. Afonso, the Count of Ourém. His mortal remains are kept in the crypt in a remarkable sarcophagus.

HAND OF FÁTIMA, SOUTH WINDOW, CHAPTER ROOM, BATALHA MONASTERY
Representation of the Virgin with a pitcher in her hand and a rope with six “open hands” around her neck, i.e. amulets known as the hand of Fátima.
Part of the far south westerly territory is divided up between the four elements of nature. Water, in the boundless sea horizons, is found in the coastal zones, in the magic of land’s end, but also in the abundant rivers and ribbons of water that have gouged out the inhospitable valleys or basins humanized by mankind over the centuries, or even the underground caverns, unsuspected by many. Air, disarmingly limpid, is there to be enjoyed in the sparkling blue sky of day or in the star filled vault of the night time. Fire reveals its igneous power in the rocks moulded by the geological antiquity of the countryside, while Earth devotes itself to providing man with sustenance, or denying it, so thin is its mantle, subsiding at times into hard rock.

Could this have been the home of the famous mares fertilized by the wind that Herodotus fixed for posterity in ancient myth? We cannot tell. But we do know that the harshness of the peaks and the mildness of the valleys permit every eventuality, even the most obscure. Here can be found, moulded by thousands of years of erosion, rocks with capricious fissures, the so-called “fields of lapides; but also natural pools opened in the limestone crust, the “algares”, that provide us with a reading of geological sedimentation over aeons. Some of these also provide access to the most spectacular Portuguese caves (Mira d’Aire, Santo António, Alvados, Algar da Pena). But even small lakes, like the bounty of divine whim, appear here and there in the high mountain range, in the valleys carved out, natural deposits of pure icy waters dotted among the dolines (sinkholes) and the poljes (large depressions in the limestone). A testament to this remarkable nature are the dinosaur footprints, a veritable Jurassic Park come true, or the rock salt works, white mantles harvested since Roman times.

A magical nature? Undoubtedly, and one that has nourished the strange archaic landscapes that men of all eras have made sacred, as happened with the dolmen-chapel of Alcobertas.
The 4 Elements

- **CAPE CARVOEIRO, PENICHE (2, 4)**
The extreme point of the Iberian Peninsula, where the city of Peniche now stands. Inhabited since pre-history, it is a site of archaeological remains.

- **FURNINHA CAVE, PENICHE**
Traces of human occupation from the Middle Paleolithic (by Neanderthal men, around 100000 B.C.) to the Ancient Neolithic (5000-4000 B.C.).

- **BERLENGAS ISLANDS, PENICHE (5)**
A micro-archipelago made up of Berlenga Grande island, Berlenga Pequena island (the Berlengas) and the islets of Farilhões, Estelas and Forcadas.

- **BALEAL, PENICHE (6)**
An urban agglomeration built on the rocky outcrop of Santo Estêvão. It was once an island (as was Peniche), but is now linked to land by a sandy isthmus.

- **CABEÇO DA LUA, SERRA DOS CANDEEIROS (7)**

- **FOUNTS OF THE SERRA D’AIRE AND CANDEEIROS (1, 7)**
In these high mountain ranges, we are taken amazed by their aridity and their wild aspect, as if nobody had ever set foot there before. A central site to the entire Western region, it appears to be an infertile land where only the miraculous “lights” impel man to settle there.

- **CANDEEIROS GEOIDESIC POINT, SERRA DOS CANDEEIROS**
The right place to be astounded by the view to the wide horizons, especially during the limpid days of Spring, which are also the most highly perfumed.

- **DOLMEN-CHAPEL OF ALCOBERTAS, ALCOBERTAS, RIO MAIOR (11)**
A Christianised dolmen. The most spectacular Portuguese dolmen chapel and one of the most important megalithic monuments of its kind in the whole of Europe.

- **ARCO DA MEMÓRIA (MEMORY ARCH), PORTELA DO PEREIRO, ÉVORA DE ALCOBACA**
According to legend, it was from this point that D. Afonso I fired an arrow indicating the site for the foundations of the Alcobaça Monastery. The arch marks the event and delimits the territory of the monastery.

- **STONE OF THE FONTE DA SENHORA, BENEDITA**
Linked with a duly Christianised water spring, the stone, which is probably pre-historic, stands in front of the drinking fountain.

- **SERRAS D’AIRE E CANDEEIROS (1, 7)**
These high mountain ranges, we are taken amazed by their aridity and their wild aspect, as if nobody had ever set foot there before. A central site to the entire Western region, it appears to be an infertile land where only the miraculous “lights” impel man to settle there.

- **STONE OF THE FONTE DA SENHORA, PORTO DE MÓS (12)**
A large natural amphitheatre, around half a kilometre in diameter, formed by the semicircular junction of the tops of the Ladeiras, Penia de Água and Cabeco Raposeiro mountain ridges.

- **CAVERN OF ALGAR DA PENA, VALE DO MAR (VALDEMAR), ALCANEDE (13)**
The biggest subterranean chamber ever discovered in Portugal. C- (Alcaneida) 39° 24’ 48’’ N 8° 45’ 18’’ W

- **SANTO ANTÓNIO CAVE, PORTO DE MÓS**
One of the biggest in a group of caves in the Serra de Minde. Its subterranean chambers are considered to be among the most spectacular in the world.

- **ALVADOS CAVE, ALVADOS, PORTO DE MÓS**
Group of rock chambers in a cave, with suggestive names inspired by the formations there.

- **QUINTA DA MURETA, MINDE, PORTO DE MÓS**
From here one can see the characteristic vegetation and typical birdlife.

- **ARRIMAL LAKES, ARRIMAL, PORTO DE MÓS**
The waters in the Lagoa Grande come from run-off from the Vale de Espinho, other lakes are fed by the Mendiga polje.

- **CAMPOS DE LAPIÁS, MENDIGA, PORTO DE MÓS (9)**
The campos de lapiás consist of areas of rocks, almost always limestone that have been eroded by rainwater.

- **QUINTA DO VALE DE VENTOS, TURQUEL, ALCOBACA**
One of the key sites for the development of the Alcobaça estates, at around 5 kilometres to the east in the vicinity of Turquel, on the slopes of the mountain range. This was the main site of one of the order’s largest farms (Accommodation Centre).

- **CABEÇO DA LUA, SERRA DOS CANDEEIROS, TURQUEL**
In the Serra dos Candeiros, a legend is associated to the Vale de Ventos Country Manor that seems to perpetuate the memory of a sacred prehistoric geography.
CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA DA AJUDA, VESTIARIA, ALCobaÇA
The building was founded to commemorate the discovery of an image of Our Lady. Miraculous recapitulation of the Miracle of Nazaré. Note the remarkable Manueline doorway. C- 39º 33’ 17” N 8º 59’ 53” W

ÉVORA DE ALCobaÇA, ALCobaÇA
Parish church (15th-17th centuries). On the southern facade is a low-relief plaque representing Santiago “knight”. C- 39º 30’ 55” N 8º 5’.25” W

QUARRIES, MOLIANOS
In Portugal, “molianos” is a synonym for stone. If stone flooring is required for a given room, the contractor might say: “Put in a little moliano”… C- 39º 3’ 09” N 8º 54’ 19” W

HOLY FOUNTAIN OF NOSSA SENHORA DA LUZ, JUNCAL, COZ
One of the most remarkable fountains in the region, being of unusual type and superior architectural interest. C-39º 35’ 47” N 8º 56’ 28” W

POÇO SUÃO, PRAZERES, ALCobaÇA
A break in the rock, a small cave, providing a glimpse of the subterranean waters of the Alcoa before it breaks to the surface at its “source”. C- 39º 31’ 57” N 8º 55’ 34” W

FONTE DA CHIQUEDA, CHIQUEDA
(CHIQUEDA DE CIMA), ALCobaÇA
In this village is the main spring that provides drinking water for the hydraulic system of ALCobaÇA Monastery. C- 39º 32’ 17” N 8º 56’ 57” W

MAIORGA PILLORY, ALCobaÇA
The charters granted by the lord determined the rules by which matters in the sub-district should be determined. The pillory was the monument that certified feudal power and local laws. C- 39º 34’ 43” N 8º 56’ 49” W

VALADO DOS FRADES, ALCobaÇA
The Pousada of the Quinta do Campo is in a large 18th century civil building. This simple and imposing building is a former grange of the Cistercian Order. C- 39º 35’ 12” N 9º 01’ 38” W

ROMAN VILLA OF PARREITAS, VALADO DOS FRADES, BÁRRIO, ALCobaÇA
On this site, there was once a settlement with very ancient foundations, dating back in all probability to the Iron Age, and which was Romanized in the I/II-IV centuries AD. C- 39º 34’ 54” N 9º 01’ 50” W - Geocache Parreitas (GCNXJ9)

MENHIR OF THE SERRA DA PESCARIA, PRAZERES, GOLEGÁ
One of the most significant megalithic remains in the region. It stands on top of one of the hillocks that make up the mountain landscape and, from here, one can see the sea and the lands around Nazaré. C- 39º 27’ 00” N 8º 56’ 21” W

MEGALITHIC SANCTUARY, CASAL DO RESONEIRO, ALCobaÇA
Prehistoric sanctuary, resulting from the use of rocky outcrops or the choice of one or more suggestively shaped stones placed there. An integral part of a ritual landscape.

PELLE GALEGA, CASAL DO RESONEIRO, ALCobaÇA
Associated with several legends and with the Church of Nossa Senhora das Areias, this is part of a sacred Christianised landscape. C-39º 27’ 00” N 8º 58’ 21” W

PAÚL DO BOQUILOBO, RIACHOS, GOLEGÁ
A wet area, with lakes, streams and calm brooks, it culminates in the basins of two rivers, the Tagus and the Almonda, found substantially in this zone (Interpretive Centre of Paúl do Boquilobo). An ideal area for bird watching. C- 39º 23’ 20” N 8º 31’ 58” W

DOLMEN I OF VALE DA LAJE, SERRA, TOMAR
Dolmen I of Vale da Laje offers a treasure dating back to the Late Neolithic period (c. 3500 BC). It was part of a nucleus with at least another four monuments of the same type, of which only this one has survived. C- (Casalinho) 39º 43’ 06” N 8º 18’ 12”

CASTELO DO BODE DAM, TOMAR
A popular tourist spot, thanks to its beautiful scenery that provides facilities for water sports and fishing (trout, eel and bass), this is one of the largest artificial lakes in Europe. C- 39º 32’ 34” N 8º 19’ 11” W
The quest for the Holy Grail At the exact same time that the formation of Portugal as an independent state was underway, the famous narratives dedicated to the search for the Grail by the Knights of the Round table appeared in Europe. The first versions of the story date from the end of the 12th century by the Burgundian Chrétien de Troyes and by Frenchman Robert de Boron, and yet another, in 1207, by the German Wolfram von Eschenbach. However, the most widespread had to be the anonymous and probably collective version: the so-called “vulgate cycle”, *Quest del Saint Graal*, written around 1210.

This version was translated shortly after into the Portuguese language, and became known as *The Quest of the Holy Grail*. It has all the ingredients of the previous versions: virtuous knights, from the court of King Arthur, set off in search of the chalice in which the Blood of Christ was collected after his crucifixion. The main hero, Galahad, who, with his companions, penetrated the thick forests of the imaginary Kingdom of Logres, meeting beautiful (and ugly...) damsels, strange folks, monsters and dragons, on an enigmatic journey with traces of magic that subsume to one goal: finding the famous vessel, which represents Man’s salvation. We now know that this story was the fruit of an adaptation by Cistercian monks, who transformed an old pagan narrative into something more in keeping with the principles of Christian virtue and spiritual knightly chivalry. Why not, then, project the map of the Grail Quest onto the lands of the extreme south west of Europe, where one of the most important Cistercian monasteries stood (Alcobaça), where there were clear connections to Burgundy (the Cistercian St. Bernard and the founder of Burgundian descent, King D. Afonso I) and where, in and around Tomar, there was always the high-profile presence of the knights of that fighting religious order, supreme representatives of the spiritual chivalry that St. Bernard himself sponsored and encouraged, known as the Knights Templar? This imaginary geography, as will be seen, then becomes a mythical geography that can be explored with the eyes of the imagination. The fictional places become real places, should we wish to project them onto the Western landscapes, filled with legends and myths, transposing, without exhausting them, the symbols of the Quest. As if we were really dealing with the Kingdom of Logres — as if we were dealing with the imaginary *Britains* and *Irelands*, superimposed with Hibernias and Iberias, and where we finally find that which could be the true Portugal or Porto do Graal (the Grail’s Harbour...)

However, this is not an exercise in draining symbolic meaning. The quest is internal and the way is personal.
AGROAL
The River Celisa

TOMAR
Meeting point for the heroes of the Quest, the Spiritual Palace (Spiritual or Celestial) is also the site of the principal manifestation of the sacred chalice of the grail.

A RODA DO NABÃO
Portugal as Door to the Grail

TOMAR CASTLE
The New Jerusalem

A CHAROLA E A IGREJA MANUELINA DE TOMAR (1)
The Temple of Solomon

CHAROLINHA, MATA DOS SETE MONTES, TOMAR (2)
The Garden of Urganda

CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DO OLIVAL, TOMAR
Hermitage of the Red Olive

SANTA IRIA CONVENT, TOMAR (3)
Saint Iria of Tomar: from Irene to Fátima, from Fátima to Ouréana.

FESTA DOS TABULEIROS, TOMAR (4)
The Pentecostal Bodo (religious feast where food was distributed to the needy): at the table of the Grail. The apparition of the Grail to the Knights of the Round Table.

ALMOUROL CASTLE, VILA NOVA DA BARQUINHA (5)
Castle of Jaiam [the giant Jaiam].

STONE OF THE HOLY MARTYRS, PAIALVO, TOMAR (7)
Legend of the holy Martyrs

QUINTA DA CARDIGA, GOLEGA (8)
The Giant Cardiga

GAIÃO’S OR LANGALHÃO’S TOWER, PEREIRO, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE (9)
Jaiam’s tower. Home of the fearful giant Jaiam.

DORNES TOWER, DORNES, FERREIRA DO ZÉZERE (6)
Strange Castle

ABBOT OF SANTA MARIA DE ALCOBACA
Abbot of Uther Pendragon. Founded by king Uther (Uther Pendragon).

TOMBS OF D. PEDRO I AND D. INÉS DE CASTRO, ABBEY OF ALCOBACA (7, 8)
The Lady of the Chapel. Tristam in the Quest for the Holy Grail

MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DA VITÓRIA, OR BATALHA MONASTERY, BATALHA (10)
The Celestial City

CAPELA DO FUNDADOR, BATALHA MONASTERY, BATALHA (11)
The True Chapel and the King’s Chapel

SERRAS D’ AIRE E CANDEEIROS (THE SERRAS D’ AIRE E CANDEEIROS NATIONAL PARK) (12)
The Waste land

CHAPEL OF SÃO JORGE DE ALJubarrota, SÃO JORGE DE ALJubarrota (9)
The Perilous Chapel

MENHIRS OF THE WEST
The Sword in the Stone

CHURCH OF SÃO JORGE DE ALJubarrota, SÃO JORGE DE ALJubarrota (9)
The Perilous Chapel

BATTLEFIELD OF ALJubarrota, CALVARIA DE CIMA, SÃO JORGE DE ALJubarrota, PORTO DE MÓS
The “Painful ground” ("Chão dorooso") (The Quest for the Grail, § 304). Camlann: where there was a fierce battle in which Lancelot killed the son of Mordred and Bors killed Melehan. King Lionel was also slain the battle
roads
FROM LISBOA (LISBOA-ALCOBAÇA): A 1 - A 8 - N 8-4
FROM LISBOA (LISBOA-FÁTIMA): A 1 - N 356 - N 360
FROM LISBOA (LISBOA-TOMAR): A 1 - A 23 - IC 3
FROM MADRID (MADRID-ALCOBAÇA): A 6 - A 13 - A 8 - N 8-4
FROM MADRID (MADRID-FÁTIMA): A 6 — A 13 — IC 10 — A 1 — N 356 — N 360
FROM MADRID (MADRID-TOMAR): A 6 — A 13 — IC 10 — A 1 — A 23 — IC 3
FROM PORTO (PORTO-ALCOBAÇA): A 1 — IC 36 (LEIRIA) — A 8 — N 8-4
FROM PORTO (PORTO-FÁTIMA): A 1 — N 356 — N 360
FROM PORTO (PORTO-TOMAR): A 1 — A 23 — IC 3

www.visitportugal.com