

  Travel with

SESNANDO DAVIDES

The Alvazil of Coimbra



CASTLES AND TOWN WALLS OF THE MONDEGO NETWORK



B: Tentúgal (?), c. 1020
 D: Coimbra, 08.25.1091

SESNANDO DAVIDES

The Alvazil of Coimbra



Circular route

Departure / Arrival: Coimbra

Total distance: 186 Km



This tour takes us through the turbulent times of the Christian reconquest. In 1064, the Christians took control over Coimbra and Sesnando was appointed governor of a vast territory. He played a leading role in establishing defensive structures and in the pacification and settlement of these lands. Since he was probably at the root of the geopolitical situation that led to the vision of Portugal, it is only fitting that we embark upon this journey in Sesnando's company.

Sesnando was the son of David and Susana, landowners in Tentúgal. He was taken to southern lands while still a child, possibly having been captured during a Muslim attack on the region (c. 1026). He was educated in the court of the king of Seville, al-Mutadid and went on to hold prominent positions such as 'alvazil' (minister), a title that he would use forever. Despite the prestige he achieved there, Sesnando returned to the Christian north to offer his services to Fernando Magno. Knowledge of the Muslim culture and situation allowed him to develop an important role alongside both this monarch and Alfonso VI, advising and serving them on missions and in military campaigns. It appears to have been on his advice that Fernando Magno decided to lay siege to Coimbra, retaking it in 1064. He was then entrusted with the government of the city and a vast territory stretching from Lamego to the mouth of the Douro River and down to the southern boundary of the reconquered lands. Sesnando became the most important figure south of the Douro. He took up permanent residence in Coimbra and married Lady Loba Nunes, daughter of the last count of Portucale, forming a strategic alliance with northern nobility. After conquering Toledo, the mythical capital of the Visigoth kingdom, in 1085, Alfonso VI of Leon appointed him as the city's governor, a position which reflected his importance at the time. Religious conflicts, however, led him to return to Coimbra. He wrote his will in 1087, died on 25th August, 1091 and was buried in the churchyard where the old Coimbra cathedral was built. In 1096, Henry of Burgundy was appointed Count of Portugal by Alfonso VI. The country of Portugal was on the horizon.

SYMBOLS

Visiting the monuments:



Interpretation centre



Brochure



Informative panel on-site



Guided tour



Audio-guide service

Check out the other routes in this collection:

(TAH) Travel with Afonso Henriques; (TGP) Travel with Gualdim Pais

➤ **From Coimbra to Tentúgal**
 We set off from Coimbra on the EN111 to Tentúgal. The first stop on our route takes us to this village just off the road that connects Coimbra with Montemor-o-Velho and Santa Olaia castle and continues on to Buarcos.

Tentúgal was first referenced in 954, when Christian rule temporarily prevailed in the region. Sesnando's parents, David and Susana, owned several properties in this village. This fact leads us to believe that our hero was born and lived here, probably until a Muslim invasion in the region of Coimbra in 1026, during which he may have been captured. What is certain is that Sesnando ended up in Seville, in the court of King al-Mutadid. We know that during his time there, he served as the alvazil between 1040 and 1050. However, despite the prestige he achieved there, Sesnando returned to Tentúgal as a grown man about 40 years later to become governor of Coimbra and a vast territory that would make him the most important figure of Christianity south of the Douro. This route takes us to the tangible and intangible vestiges of his actions and achievements.

➤ **From Tentúgal to Montemor-o-Velho**
 We continue for a few kilometres along the EN111 towards Montemor-o-Velho.

1 TENTÚGAL

Tentúgal, the first family reference



Misericórdia church — (16th century)

THE CREATION OF THE MONDEGO DEFENCE LINE

After the reconquest of Coimbra in 1064, Fernando Magno put Sesnando in charge of the territory bordered to the north between Lamego and the mouth of the River Douro and extending south to Coimbra, plus all land beyond the city that Christian forces managed to conquer. Sesnando had become vital to the consolidation of the reconquest campaign. Its advance south is evidenced by the appearance of a new military architecture and the introduction of distinctive construction techniques. Between 1065 and 1091, in addition to interventions in Coimbra castle, Sesnando developed several population and military campaigns. The most notable of these was the construction or rebuilding of a ring of defensive structures along the Mondego basin that were intended to monitor and control access to Coimbra: Arouce castle (Lousã), Montemor-o-Velho castle and the one in nearby Santa Olaia, Penela castle, Buarcos tower (in Figueira da Foz) and Soure castle. This strategy formed the basis of the creation of the Mondego defence line, the current platform for the Mondego Castles and Walls Network.

★ **NOT TO BE MISSED: IN TENTÚGAL**
 Misericórdia church (16th century) and the clock tower (15th century); Local pastries: pastel de Tentúgal and queijada.

2 MONTEMOR-O-VELHO

We start our tour with the remaining vestiges of Sesnando Davides' work at Montemor-o-Velho castle.



➤ **MONTEMOR-O-VELHO CASTLE** — (10th century)
 National monument

The oldest remains of this fortified structure date back to a period of Muslim rule in the 10th century. The castle was conquered by Fernando Magno in 1064 and delivered to Sesnando between 1071 and 1072; he then quickly set about its restoration and repopulation. Then the long process of restoration works and renovations that led to the current structure began. The primitive upper castle matches the wall that surrounds the grassy polygon to the north, missing only the southwest wall. The semicircular towers strengthened this original structure, one on the north side and three on the south side; some have been more heavily restored than others. The gateway would have been in the area where the keep was later built; little more than a section of decontextualised wall now remains. In the following centuries the castle underwent other interventions (📍 TAH and TGP)

📍 📖 🗺️ 🎧 / GPS: 40°10'33,22" N; 8°40'57,40" W

The knowledge that Sesnando had of peninsular politics made him a key figure in the service of the Christian kings, whom he served as envoy and mediator between them and the Muslims. His government coincided with a period of relative peace and stability with Christians, Muslims and Jews coexisting and living in the region, which was partly due to their Mozarab sensitivities.

Definitive control over the Mondego territory in the 11th century brought the Christians a rich cultural heritage resulting from over three and a half centuries of Muslim presence, coexistence and influence on the native Hispano-Visigoth culture. The ensuing Mozarabic culture is evidenced by the presence of Mozarabic epigraphs.

★ **NOT TO BE MISSED: IN MONTEMOR-O-VELHO**
 Historical centre;
 Our Lady of the Angels church (16th and 17th century);
 Local pastries: pinecones from Montemor-o-Velho.

SO WHAT IS A MOZARAB?

An Iberian Christian who lived under Muslim government in al-Andalus and allowed themselves to be influenced by Arabic culture. The term 'muzarave' is first used in Christian sources in a Leonese document, probably written in 1026. The Mozarabs lived between two worlds, Christianity and Islam. In the Iberian Peninsula, they preserved the Roman-Visigothic cultural legacy and were simultaneously carriers and transmitters of the remarkable cultural richness and sciences of Islam. This feature of the Mozarabic culture explains why they enjoyed undisputed prestige throughout the 12th century. Given the ease of intercultural communication, the Iberian Peninsula attracted many Europeans who were eager to learn Arabic science.



★ NOT TO BE MISSED: ON THE JOURNEY FROM MONTEMOR- O-VELHO TO BUARCOS (VIA EN111)

PR1 FIG - Maiorca walking trail
Maiorca palace (18th century);
Historical centre of Figueira
da Foz.



► From Monte- mor-o-Velho to Buarcos

We follow the EN111 to the A24 (toll-free section) then head towards Figueira da Foz, the city we will cross to get to Buarcos. We'll discover the hidden castle of Santa Olaia along the way.

► CHURCH OF ST. MARY OF THE ALCAZABA — (end of the 11th century)

Everything indicates that this church was erected on the site where an Islamic mosque previously stood and may even have used part of its structure. Significant evidence of the Taifa period, an Islamic caliphate capital and two plaster panels, has survived from that time and is now in collections at the Machado de Castro National Museum in Coimbra. The Christian church dedicated to St. Mary may have been founded by the elder, Vermudo, to whom Sesnando donated Montemor-o-Velho with the obligation of restoring it and populating the locality. The features of the present church are from the 16th century when it was rebuilt in the reign of King Manuel I. (📍 TAH and TGP).

3 BUARCOS

The most advanced post on the mouth of the Mondego

We cross the city of Figueira da Foz towards Buarcos. Figueira da Foz was only established as a village in the 15th century. Until then, Buarcos was the centre of this territory around the mouth of the Mondego River. The characteristics of its cove and the ease of landing it provided made this coastal section a prime area for trade but also for enemy assaults, privateers and pirates. As a result, this territory was soon

dotted with defensive structures. There were at least two towers in this area; one in the town of Eimide (later known as Redondos) and another in Buarcos (by the sea, dubbed the low tower or Gonçalo Pryvado tower). The current town of Buarcos stems from the union of these two adjacent settlements. All that remains of these historic towers is one imposing corner.

► REDONDOS TOWER (ruin, 11th century)

The earliest documented reference of this structure dates from 1096, when a tower located at the highest point of Buarcos with ample visibility over the coastline was donated to Coimbra cathedral by the abbot Pedro. It is therefore very likely that this tower was one of the military structures that served Sesnando. The tower was again mentioned in the 13th century as the property of the Santa Cruz monastery in Coimbra and the castle seems to have served as a prison during the reign of King Afonso IV (1325 - 1357). In 1411, it was owned by Prince Pedro.

A testimony in 1450 describes a sturdy, square masonry tower crowned with battlements and merlons. It had a solid ground floor and a doorway on the first floor which was accessed by movable wooden stairs. There were three or four floors with narrow crevices built into the walls. In the 16th century, reference was made to it still being in good condition for defence. However, despite its fortifications and further improvements in the 16th century, less than a century later this tower and others that existed here could no longer defend the town and were ineffective against the developments in the art of war. The town's defence functions were then catered for by building the Buarcos fortress and what was left of the tower was demolished in 1854. Just one corner of it now remains, saved by Engineer Francisco Maria Pereira da Silva on the grounds that it served as a geodesic marker and as a reference for sailors.

📍 🗺️ 🎧 / GPS: 40°10'00,43"N; 8°52'37,16"W



★ NOT TO BE MISSED:
IN BUARCOS
Buarcos fortress (17th
century); Sea Museum (Núcleo
Museológico do Mar);
Boa Viagem mountains.

★ NOT TO BE MISSED: ON THE JOURNEY FROM BUARCOS TO SOURE

Salt Museum (Núcleo Museológico do Sal) in Lavos;
PR Rota das Salinas (Salt pans walking trail); Murraceira
Island; Desagravo do Santíssimo Sacramento convent (17th and
18th centuries), Lourçal.

🚗 ► From Buarcos to Soure
We proceed to Soure
along the EN109 as far
as Carriço and from here, take
the EN342 passing through
Lourçal.

SESNANDO DAVIDES

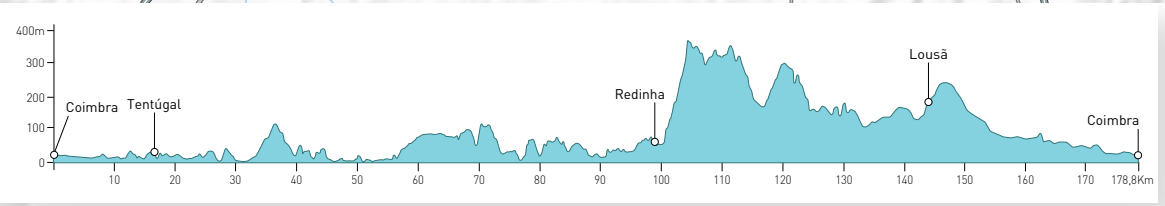
Chronology

- c. 1020** — Born in Tentúgal region.
- c. 1026** — Taken to Seville.
- c. 1040 a 1050** — Held important positions at the court of Seville.
- 1064** — Participated in retaking Coimbra and was named governor of this territory.
- 1085** - Appointed governor of the mythical city of Toledo after its reconquest.
- 1087** — Wrote his will.
- 1091** — Died in Coimbra.



KEY / SYMBOLS

	Castle		Monument
	Museum		Accommodation
	Restaurant		



Places to visit

(car and bicycle)
Highway
Paved roads

_cumulative gap:

- +3520m
- 3520m

Key (roads)

- Travel route (car and bicycle)
- Highway
- Paved roads

4 SOURE

What first surprises us in Soure is that contrary to the norm, the castle was not built on high ground but on flat land near the meeting point of the Anços and Arunca rivers. It was a strategic choice that used the rivers as natural

defence elements, a situation that is less evident nowadays because the increasing silting up of the valley in which these rivers flow together has significantly altered the local landscape. Soure castle is closely linked to Sesnando, to the efforts of Order of the Temple to defend Coimbra and the timing of assaults during the

reconquest of the south. This monument is shared by the three network routes, encouraging you to discover the others. Located close to the road between Lisbon and Braga, Soure was the most advanced point of the Christian forces for about 70 years (1064-1135, until the construction of Leiria castle).



► SOURE CASTLE — (second half of 11th century) *National monument*

The oldest remains of this castle are the east, south and west walls. Restored or built by Sesnando, this primitive structure already had the more or less rectangular outline that characterises it today, although it probably wasn't equipped with towers. The door opened up the east wall at ground level, next to the four slits that are still visible. At first floor level you can see two ajimezes (double windows divided vertically by a small column), their twin arches decorated by a frieze of diamond shapes. These must date from the second half of the 11th century, Sesnando's era. Also on the first floor, on the south wall there is another frieze and a glassed ajimez. A fourth ajimez from the same era was reused in the access door to the southwest tower, built later by the Templars. The west wall is the most incomplete and ruined of them all. Inside, we can still identify the walls corresponding to the first phase of construction, as well as supports for the wooden floorboards of the first floor. (📍 TAH and TGP)

The Sico-Alvaiázere SCI

The Sico-Alvaiázere Site of Community Importance (SCI) is a Nature 2000 space that sits entirely upon limestone substrate. It is populated with Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea* subsp. *Broteroi*) and holm oak (*Quercus rotundifolia*). In the spring we really need a good local flora guide to identify the numerous species of wild orchids and aromatic plants. The diversity of habitats is great, from the fertile characteristics of the riparian zone to those that manage to survive on more skeletal soils or almost bare limestone slabs. Such habitat diversity implies diverse landscapes, which is what we see as we cross the Sicó massif.

★ NOT TO BE MISSED: IN SOURE

Remains of Our Lady of Finisterra church and Soure Municipal Museum; Walled Space Interpretation Centre; St. Matthew's Chapel (12th century) with Mudéjar tiles (16th century); Pão de Ló (sponge cake) and Beijo de Dom Sesnando biscuits.



► THE CASTLE TOWER AJIMEZ — (beginning of the 11th century)

The ajimez in the southwest of the castle tower is one of the most remarkable Mozarabic pieces in the region. It is currently deprived of its central mullion and its usage as a door

lintel is clearly inappropriate given the function for which it was designed. Judging from the sacred nature of its decoration, it would have come from a religious building where its symbolism made perfect sense. Its reuse is only understandable if the original setting was abandoned when this tower was built. It is very likely that this ajimez was created for Soure monastery, which was founded by the elder, João, and his brothers in the 11th century and donated by them to Varcariça monastery in Mealhada in 1043. The monastery was destroyed in 1116 when, faced with imminent Islamic invasion, the village was torched and abandoned by its inhabitants. The ajimez was repurposed in around 1128 when the Templars began a series of building works at the castle, which included the construction of this tower.

★ NOT TO BE MISSED: ON THE JOURNEY FROM SOURE TO PENELA

Wool spinning factory and watermills in Paleão; Casal Cimeiro and surrounding landscape; St. Anthony's Chapel and the views over the Lower Mondego at Degraçias; View of the Sicó mountains in Malavenda, near Pombalinho.

► From Soure to Penela across the Sicó mountains

We head towards Paleão and Porto Coelheiro, going across the EN1 and through Degraçias, Pombalinho and Rabaçal before reaching Penela.

5 PENELA

The first documented reference to this locality is the statement in Dom Sesnando's will (1087) regarding the population of Penela castle. The castle stands on a rocky cliff formation and derives its name from the Latin 'penella' (little rock).



★ NOT TO BE MISSED: IN PENELA

Museum space and Roman villa at Rabaçal; Ferraria de São João schist village; Louçainha river beach.

► From Penela to Lousã

We will take the EN17-1 that hugs the base of the western slopes of the Lousã mountains, taking us past Miranda do Corvo to Lousã.

► **PENELA CASTLE** — (second half of 11th century)

National monument

We find the most important vestiges of Sesnando's era and the Mondego defence line in this castle. The upper castle is also known as the keep, having been allocated this role between 1170 and 1180. It is built on the highest point of the outcrop which supports the entire military structure. The limestone hill was cut to create virtually insurmountable vertical sections to hinder assaults. Access to the top was made, as it is today, along a narrow path with many steps carved into the rock. At the top, a small irregular surrounding wall was built to fit the available surface area. Originally, this construction formed a separate fortress; a small but effective walled area fitted with a cistern. It was possible to shoot into virtually all access routes from the battlements, making it easier to defend. In the 12th century, this stronghold was transformed into a 'castle within the castle' and turned into a keep, despite not conforming to the typical characteristics of a keep such as a square floor plan and elevation on several floors. It was successively rebuilt later on but still largely retains its original appearance. (📍 RAH and RGP)



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6 **LOUSÃ**

The forefathers of this population, already referred as *Arauz* in 943, lived in a walled village next to Arouce castle. However, the added security brought by the southwards advance of the reconquest and the harsh terrain of the site by the old castle encouraged the villagers to move to the more fertile fields where the town of Lousã now stands.

★ **NOT TO BE MISSED: IN LOUSÃ**

Our Lady of Piety sanctuary; Schist villages (Candal, Casal Novo, Cerdeira, Chiqueiro and Talasnal); Pastry and local gastronomy.

► **AROUCÉ CASTLE** — (11th century)

National monument

Nestled in a valley on the western side of the mountain range is a small fortification on top of a hill encircled by the River Arouce. This little castle is made entirely of schist, except for the white sandstone door frame of the keep. It was one of the fortifications established in the foothills of the mountains in order to defend the western lowlands of the mountain passes. It seems there were no protective walls around the sparse houses on this small plateau. In his will, written in 1087, Sesnando states that he ordered the site to be populated. We can deduce from this that he had built or rebuilt the castle, introducing several features of the Muslim influenced military architecture he knew so well. Among them are the two semicircular towers that frame and defend the gateway, facilitating a wider range of shooting angles and strengthening the walls. The corner entrance is another such feature; a greatly effective defensive option that impeded direct entry to attackers, forcing them to expose themselves. Enclosed in a confined space, they then became easy targets for the defenders positioned on the towers to shoot down on. Lastly, we have the herringbone pattern architecture of the wall facing the parade ground and of the second floor of the keep, in which alternate rows of stone are laid diagonally. (📍 TGP)

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7 **COIMBRA**

The final resting place

Few elements from the golden age of Sesnando's governance have survived intact to this day. However, a visit to the Núcleo da Cidade Muralhada (Nucleus of the Walled City) is essential, as is one to the Machado de Castro National Museum and a final stop at the Coimbra's old cathedral (Sé Velha), where our hero rests.

► **Walls, towers and site of the former Coimbra castle** — (late-Roman period to the 16th century) **ALMEDINA TOWER**

National monument

Although part of the 2 km long Coimbra walls can be attributed to late-Roman times, several interventions were subsequently made by Dom Sesnando. Significant damage was caused during the siege, assault and capture the city was subjected to in 1064, resulting in a number of necessary repairs and alterations to wall sections, doors and towers. Porta do Sol is referenced in documents in 1087/1088 as is the Genicoca Gate in 1094. It is likely that Sesnando ordered the construction of the arch that joins the two towers flanking the Almedina Gate as well as the tower on top of it. Today, this tower houses the Nucleus of the Walled City, which will transport you to medieval Coimbra. The gate was a horseshoe archway in the Muslim style. As for the castle (now gone), it is also possible that it was built in the 11th century by Dom Sesnando. (📍 TAH)

📄 🗺️ 🗣️ 🎧 / GPS: 40°12'31,86"N; 8°25'43,49"W

★ **NOT TO BE MISSED: ON THE JOURNEY FROM LOUSÃ TO COIMBRA**

House of the count of Foz de Arouce (18th century) and wine shop; Monument to the Battle of Foz de Arouce (3rd French Invasion); Medieval bridge.

🚗 ► **From Lousã to Coimbra**

🚲 *Let's take this opportunity to call into Foz de Arouce as we carry on along the EN17, following the right bank of the River Ceira towards Coimbra.*





INDULGE IN THE TENTÚGAL PASTRY

It is said that the secret to making the thin and crispy pastry (less than 0.15 mm thick) and the sweet egg filling came from the Our Lady of the Nativity Convent. Formerly known as a 'pastry toothpick', this delicacy was created about four centuries ago and was originally given to sick children at a time when sugar served as medication when food was in short supply (Olga Cavaleiro). Following the extinction of religious orders in 1834, the cake became a means of survival for the remaining nuns and at one point the convent kitchen had 30 rooms. The pastel de Tentúgal became renowned among poets and students, giving rise to stories of love notes hidden among the fine sheets of pastry. The stretching of the dough by skilled hands is an art form in itself... Several bakeries in Tentúgal produce this cake and open their doors so that you can watch the pastry-making magic in action.

▶ LET YOURSELF BE WON OVER BY OUR CAKES

As we conquer these lands alongside Sesnando, why not give your tastebuds the chance to surrender? While touring the castles, take the time to contemplate their history as you sit down to enjoy local delicacies that sweeten the body and the spirit. Don't say we haven't whetted your appetite for discovery!

O BEIJO DE D. SESNANDO – a sweet biscuit 'kiss' from Dom Sesnando

The Beijo de Dom Sesnando (Sesnando's Kiss) biscuit won the Mondego Castles and Town Walls Network contest for its ability to integrate various local products of excellence, including Montemor-o-Velho rice, traditional salt from Figueira da Foz, walnut and olive oil from the Sicó mountains as well as honey and Licor Beirão from the Lousã mountains, into a single cookie. This 'kiss' dissolves in the mouth to reveal a surprise you will not want to miss. The winner, Carla Silva, is from Soure and bakes this delicacy for various outlets in Soure, Coimbra and Figueira da Foz.

TALASNICO, THE CAKE FROM LOUSÃ

Talasnico originate from the hands of Dona Mirita, an artisan who wanted to combine the flavours of two of the best indigenous products that the Lousã mountains have to offer, honey and chestnuts. These delicious cakes are named after one of the schist village of Talasnal, where they were initially sold exclusively.

COIMBRA DESERVES A SWEET TRIP TO THE BAIXA (DOWNTOWN AREA)

The city inherited a multitude of secret cakes from its convents. Here are three of these delicious treats: Pastel de Santa Clara, whose origin is attributed to an ancient recipe from the Santa Clara-a-Velha convent; Manjar-branco (blancmange), also known as 'nun's boobs' this came from Celas monastery and its ingredients include rice flour, chicken breast, whole milk, sugar and orange blossom; and Cruzios, the name by which St. Augustine's regular canons from the Santa Cruz monastery were known and are now immortalised in this delicacy.

FEEL THE OCEAN BREEZE WITH BRISAS DA FIGUEIRA DA FOZ CONVENT CAKES

Brisas are one of this county's most distinctive sweet specialties. The recipe had been almost forgotten until it was rediscovered by Pastelaria Dionísio in 1998. There are two secrets to this cake - the pastry should be no thicker than 1 mm and the longer you can leave the filling to rest, the better; at least 48 hours. The sugar, egg yolks and almond flour will do the rest. Will you resist the temptation?

PÃO DE LÓ SPONGE CAKE FROM SOURE, A FOOD OF THE GODS!

The recipe for Soure's pão de ló is said to have been a secret guarded by the wealthiest families in this village for many years. Made with sugar, a costly ingredient at the time, the recipe for this soft moist cake was only shared among a very restricted group of people. A medium sponge cake is today made with 500g of sugar, 26 egg yolks, 6 whole eggs and 150g of flour. You can still find homemade cakes at some bakeries in Soure.



▶ THE EARLY ST. JOHN OF ALMEDINA'S CHURCH – (end of the 11th century)

The archaeological excavation of this church is contextualised in the museum. The first documentary mention of the original church, probably built during the second Muslim occupation (between 987 and 1064), was in 1083. Sesnando facilitated its rebuilding in 1087. The pre-Romanesque church was later demolished and a new Romanesque church built in its place between 1128 and 1131. This was subsequently replaced by the current church in the 17th century. All that remains of the religious complex from the early church is the pre-Romanesque cloister, reassembled in the 1940s in its place of origin. It is considered a rare example, representative of the first phase of Portuguese Romanesque architecture.

GPS: 40°12'32,25"N; 8°25'30,99"W (TAH)

▶ MACHADO DE CASTRO NATIONAL MUSEUM

In this region there are few remaining Muslim architectural elements from the period of the first taifas (small kingdoms) resulting from the fragmentation of the Cordoba caliphate that lasted between 929 and 1031. That being the case, the few existing remains are of particular importance.

GPS: 40°12'32,25"N; 8°25'30,99"W

★ NOT TO BE MISSED: IN COIMBRA

Botanical gardens (18th century); Coimbra Academic Museum; Santa Clara-a-Velha monastery (14th century).

TOURIST INFORMATION / CONTACTS

- ▶ **Coimbra Tourist Information Office** (Turismo do centro)
Tel.: 239 488 120 / Email: info.coimbra@turismodocentro.pt
- ▶ **Coimbra Municipal Tourist Information Office** (University)
Tel.: 939 010 201 / Email: universidade@turismodecoimbra.pt
- ▶ **Coimbra Municipal Tourist Information Office** (Praça da República)
Tel.: 939 010 084 / Email: info@turismodecoimbra.pt
- ▶ **Figueira da Foz Municipal Tourist Information Office** (Buarcos)
Tel.: 233 433 019 / Email: figueiraturismo@cm-figfoz.pt
- ▶ **Figueira da Foz Municipal Tourist Information Office** (Avenida)
Tel.: 233 422 610 / Email: figueiraturismo@cm-figfoz.pt
- ▶ **Lousã Municipal Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 239 990 040 / Email: posto.turismo@cm-lousa.pt

- ▶ **Miranda do Corvo Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 239 530 316 / Email: turismo@cm-mirandadocorvo.pt
- ▶ **Montemor-o-Velho Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 239 680 380 / Email: geral@cm-montemorvelho.pt
- ▶ **Penela Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 239 561 132 / Email: turismo@cm-penela.pt
- ▶ **Pombal Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 236 210 556 / Email: turismo@cm-pombal.pt
- ▶ **Soure Tourist Information Office**
Tel.: 239 507 132 / Email: turismo@cm-soure.pt

Castelos e Muralhas do Mondego (Castles and Town Walls of the Mondego Network)
Tel.: 911 051 882 / E-mail: geral@castelosemuralhasdomondego.pt
Facebook: facebook.com/castelosemuralhasdomondego
www.castelosemuralhasdomondego.pt

ISLAMIC ART FROM MONTEMOR-O-VELHO (11th century)

The column and its white marble capital from Montemor-o-Velho are considered among the most significant elements from this era. This capital displays acanthus leaves, delicately worked in the Byzantine manner, and dates from the 11th century. The museum also contains two plaster panels decorated with asymmetrical palmettos, schematic pines and ringed stems, also from Montemor-o-Velho castle and the same period. Despite their artistic notoriety, it is difficult to indicate their precise use since from an artistic point of view they could equally have been used in a religious building (mosque) or a prestigious residential building.



SESNANDO DAVIDES' TOMB

16th century – COIMBRA
(Situated at the Old Cathedral of
Coimbra, classified as National
Monument)

When he died on August 25, 1091, Dom Sesnando was buried in a shallow grave in the churchyard of the then St. Mary's cathedral in Coimbra. At the end of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century, Sesnando's mortal remains were collected in a tomb which was displayed prominently on the north façade of the cathedral following a cathedral enlargement campaign carried out by Bishop Dom Jorge of Almeida. The tomb is currently in St. Catarina's chapel in the south gallery of the cloister. The inscription carved into it loosely translates as: *"Here lies one that in another time was a great baron | wise and most eloquent and rich and now | of ashes seen in this monument| and with him lies his nephew of which one | was already old and the other a young man and the uncle's name | Sesnando and Pedro Avia his nephew's name".*

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