

MONSARAZ

REGUENGOS

MUNICÍPIO DE **REGUENGOS DE MONSARAZ**

TURISMO
REGUENGOS DE MONSARAZ

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The Municipality of Reguengos de Monsaraz suggests the discovery of our county by using digital media.

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History of Monsaraz

Due to its geographical position, the hill of Monsaraz has always held an important place in the history of the County, being occupied by several settlements since pre-historic times.

The construction of the castle and walls is said to have occurred by decision of D. Afonso III, who gave it the Foral charter in 1276. It is also at this time that the construction of the town's main infrastructures began, with the building of the Church of Santa Maria, the Church of Santiago and the Town Hall. At the end of the 13th century, the Castle of Monsaraz and its military and political elite were already mentioned in the documental sources, as well as the construction of a new Keep according to the indications of King D. Dinis.

After the wars of 1383-1385, the Village of Monsaraz is integrated in the House of Bragança and becomes one of the most precious sources of income of the great Portuguese ducal house.

In 1512, D. Manuel grants a new Foral charter to the village of Monsaraz, reshaping the public and legal life of the County. After the Restoration War of 1640, the village received important tactical additions, such as the raising of a new bastion, becoming a powerful "invincible citadel", interconnected with the defensive system of Elvas, Juromenha, Olivença and Mourão.

Its condition as a medieval castle town, the impetuous growth of the villages of Reguengos, the richness of the artisan activities (namely the blankets), the wine industry and the loyalty of the population of Monsaraz to the “Miguelistas” ideals defeated in the civil war (1828-1834) were the factors that contributed to the transfer of the City Council from Monsaraz to Vila Nova dos Reguengos in 1838, where it was definitely established in 1851.



Castle

Built of granite and schist, the Castle – “Alcáçova de Monsaraz” is a construction of D. Afonso III and his son, D. Dinis. This well-preserved medieval military structure, this medieval fortress, still has the four square defensive towers and to the north, the Keep, the highest point of the small medieval village. It was a strategic place near the border with Castile, greatly sacrificed during the War of Restoration.



Fresco Museum

Formerly the City Hall of Monsaraz and Court House, the oldest reference dates back to the year 1362. The primitive structure reveals characteristics of the Gothic style, while the second floor, built much later, has Manueline elements. It was at the time of this work that a second wall was built to hide the Fresco of the Judge with Two Faces, which was protected from sunlight until 1958, allowing it to be in the best possible state that it is today.



Town Door

It is the most emblematic of all the Doors in the Medieval Wall. The two cylindrical turrets that flank it date back to the 17th century, giving it an architectural beauty that distinguishes it from the other doors. One of them houses the original bell from 1692 and the other serves as a water tank.



Our Lady of the Lagoon Church

Contemporary to the great plan of reforms and expansions of parish churches, it was built in regional masonry on the site of a primitive church. With a rectangular structure, four thick columns that separate the three naves and the three spans support the magnificent dome. Among the elements that enrich it are the white marble pulpit, from the time of its consecration, the eight altars and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel with golden altarpiece in the Baroque style.



Church of Santiago

This church already existed in the second half of the 13th century, however, the building, as it is known today, is largely from the time of D. José I and a consequence of the works that rebuilt it from the damage caused by the 1755 earthquake. Currently and since 1990, the Church of Santiago has other purposes. In addition to being an art gallery, it regularly hosts other events of cultural nature.



Tourist Information Office

Rustic with a simple construction, with thick walls, this building served the population as a butcher shop with paved sidewalks. There you can see the wrought iron scales and the manger in thick masonry.



Church of Mercy

The foundation of the Brotherhood dates back to 1520 and was due to the action of D. Jaime, 4th Duke of Bragança. The temple was renovated in the 17th and 18th centuries. On the façade and over the portal you can admire the Royal Coat of Arms that was placed there in 1762. The Church of Mercy of Monsaraz is a mandatory visit for those looking for the image of the patron saint. The 18th century image of Our Lord Jesus of the Steps can be found in the left lateral chapel. There it rests throughout the year, until the secular procession takes place on the second Sunday of September.



House of Inquisition

This building is said to have been under the jurisdiction of the Court of the Holy Office of Évora and used as a file archive and temporary prison. It presents features of the 17th century and at the top of the main door is a panel of blue and white tiles, with Baroque floral frame. Currently this monument is the Interactive Center of Jewish History in Monsaraz.



Cistern

It is said that there was a Mosque that preceded the construction of the Cistern of the Village, which dates back to the 14th century. The entrance is located next to the Buraco Door. Rectangular in plan, the floor is made of tiles from the region. It is undoubtedly a remarkable work of medieval hydraulic engineering.