

Activities

All the activities are conducted in Portuguese and in English by our guide or by one teacher. Students may need to pay for boat trips, cinema and theatre tickets and dinners.

Ribeira

The riverside Ribeira district is the most alluring part of Porto, a window onto the past with shadowed lanes, grimy cobbled passages and boats at the quayside (now mostly for show, advertising or tourist jaunts).

Jardins do Palácio de Cristal

These modest, leafy park, named after a long gone 19th century crystal palace, is home to a sport pavilion, gardens and a pond, roving peacocks and a reasonable self service restaurant. But pride of place goes to the new, high tech Biblioteca Municipal Almeida Garrett.

Solar do Vinho do Porto

The finest place in Porto to drink Port wine is the Solar do Vinho do Porto, a posh bar with a river view terrace beside the Palácio de Cristal's garden. Waiters will help you choose from hundreds of varieties.

Museu Romântico

Beside the Palácio de Cristal's garden is the Quinta da Macieirinha, where the abdicated King of Sardinia, Carlos Alberto, spent his final days in 1843.

Sé Catedral

This fortress of a Cathedral dominate central Porto from its highest hill. It was founded in the 12th century but rebuilt a century later and extensively altered in the 18th century. Only a Romanesque rose window and the 14th century Gothic cloister remain from earlier incarnations. Much of the rest, inside and out, bears the baroque stamp of Nicolau Nasoni. Best of all is the upper story of the cloister (rich via a Nasoni – designed stairway), decorated with 18th century azulejos (hand painted tiles) and affording some fine views.

River Cruises

Several outfits offer cruises in barcos rabelos, the colourful boats once used to transport port wine from the vineyards. Board at Porto's Cais da Ribeira or Cais da Estiva, or Vila Nova de Gaia's Cais de Gaia or Cais amarelo, cruises last one hour or more should you wish to see Porto Bridges' or go to Peso da Régua, in the North of Portugal.

São João

The most popular party in Porto. Everything is open - windows and doors of cafes, bars, houses and restaurants; tables, chairs and benches line every available space, as squares, cobbled alleys and the riverfront become one giant open-air cafe. The whole night long sees a mixture of people and ages out on the streets. This is the one party that no one in Porto wants to miss.

Estádio do Dragão

The old Antas stadium - official name Estádio das Antas - was already one of the greatest stadiums in Portugal, but a new stadium has arisen in its place for 2004 European Championship tournament - the Dragao Stadium. The Euro 2004 Dragao stadium is a special stadium with an impressive design. The stadium has a total capacity of 52,000 seats.

Francesinha Festival

In the beginning of June we have in porto the Francesinha Festival. This festival, with more than 50.000 visitors, is located in Foz do Douro and is the best place to taste one of the Porto's famous Francesinha.

Fado

There are many restaurants and houses where you can listen to Fado while having dinner or tasting some Port Wine.

One of the most interesting places where you can listen to Fado is Café Guarany, right at the centre of Porto. Founded in 1933 Guarany has always been known as the musicians' cafe.

Library of Faculdade de Letras

It is known as one of the most important university libraries in Europe. It also provides an excellent view over Douro and it is open to everyone who wants to read in a modern and pleasant environment.

Museu e Casa de Serralves

A very modern museum of contemporary art situated in one of the most exquisite districts in Porto very near to the beach. This building was built by one of the most important architects of Portugal and Porto, Siza Vieira.

The surroundings of the museum are in fact important gardens, already awarded with some prizes concerning the preservation of natural landscape in general.

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Feira de Espinho (street market)

Espinho is a small holiday resort. Mondays are special there as it is the day to visit one of the biggest and most traditional street markets in Portugal. You can buy whatever you want there!

S. Francisco Church

The São Francisco Church is one of the few remaining medieval buildings in Porto. Also, it is the only Gothic church in the city. It was part of a Franciscan convent and its construction lasted from the late 14th century until the early 15th century.

Stock Exchange Palace Baroque 18th century construction by Nicolau Nasoni. Worthy of notice are the church's interior decorated with Baroque-roccoco gilt carvings, the polychromatic retable by Manuel Porto and the impressive 75.60-metres tower.

Casa do Infante (House of the Prince) or Casa da Alfândega Velha (Old Custom House). It is the house where Henry, the Navigator was born. The services of the Municipal Archive are located there. The Archive promoted a project of study and of deep remodelling of the building. An important Roman palace as well as better knowledge of ancient royal buildings from the 14th century to present days were the result of the research carried out. The relevance of the archaeological finds led to the creation of a site museum situated by the Archive and a small Tourist Office.

Tram to Foz

This is an opportunity to go to the beach by tram along the river. The whole journey (around 20 minutes) allows you to enjoy a great view over Douro and to pass by different parts of the city until you reach Foz, the estuary of Douro.

Palácio do Freixo

A 17th century palace built on the right side of Douro home to several exhibitions during the whole year. Its interior walls are decorated with frescos and oriental paintings and sculptures.

Medieval Market - Santa Maria da Feira

The Medieval Journey in Santa Maria de Feira is a romantic journey back to the times of knights and shows medieval society in village. In Santa Maria da Feira you have the chance to see one of the most beautiful castles in Portugal surrounded by a medieval environment that lasts more or less for a week.

Torre e Igreja dos Clérigos

One of the best places to get your bearings and your photos of the city is Torre dos Clérigos, 76m-high baroque tower. The Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni designed the 225 step tower and the joining oval-shaped Igreja dos Clérigos in the mid 18th century.

O Palácio da Bolsa

The neoclassical Bolsa is a splendidly pompous monument to Porto's past-and-present money merchants. It took 68 years to build (1842-1910) and is now the headquarters of the city's Commercial Association.

Museu Soares dos Reis

Porto's other important art museum occupies the staid neoclassical Palácio das Carrancas. During the Peninsular War Marshall Soult, the French commander made his headquarters here but was evicted so suddenly by the future Duke of Wellington that he left an unfinished banquet behind. Transformed into a museum of fine and decorative art in 1940, its best works are from the 19th century.

Lello Bookshop

An Art Deco confection is stacked to the rafters with new, second hand and antique books, in lavish quarters more suited to a gentlemen's club.

Tiles

Porto has some dramatic tile work. Largest and most intricate is Silvestre Silvestris panel illustrating the legend of the founding of the Carmelite order, covering an outer wall of the Igreja do Carmo. Another church covered in blue tiles-in a traditional style but dating from the early 20th century and undertaken by Eduardo Leite- is the Capela das Almas.

In the entrance hall of São Bento train station several huge works by Jorge Colaço (1930) depict scenes ranging from daily life to historic battles.

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