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1. Geographical location

Located in the Cávado Valley in Minho Province of Northern Portugal, Braga is the fifth largest city in Portugal after Lisbon, Porto, Amadora and Vila Nova de Gaia. The city is spread across an area of approximately 184 square kilometres and is characterized by irregular valleys, interspersed by rivers and mountainous spaces. The city is situated at elevation 188 meters above sea level.



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2. Neighbouring cities/countries

The Cities/ Towns Lying Closest To Braga Are Guimaraes (15 Kms), Ponte Do Lima (27 Kms), Viana Do Castelo (37 Kms), Porto (47 Kms), Chaves (82 Kms), Aveiro (102 Kms) And Viseu (107 Kms) To Name A Few.



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3. Significance

Baroque churches, ancient narrow lanes, religious festivals, excellent restaurants and chic boutiques - Braga is a historically rich city brimming with a modern, youthful energy. The city is home to the famous Universidade do Minho and therefore has a good percentage of young population. No wonder, it was pronounced the European Youth Capital in 2002. Braga is known for its abundance of churches and is lovingly called the "city of archbishops". The city is also known for the beautiful views from the hills surrounding it.



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4. History

The city of Braga was founded by a Celtic tribe called Bracari. It was later occupied by the Romans around 250 BC who named it Bracara Augusta and made it capital of their province Gallaecia (present-day Minho and Spanish Galicia).



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5. Cultural identity

Braga is known as the religious capital of Portugal. The city is known for its abundance of baroque churches, chapels, and monasteries and is also lovingly called the "city of archbishops" or the "Portuguese Rome". Its religious festivals – particularly the famous Semana Santa (Holy Week) – are well renowned throughout Portugal. The city is home to the famous Universidade do Minho and has a good percentage of young population. No wonder it was pronounced the European Youth Capital in 2002.



Index**6. Natural resources**

Portugal may not be very well endowed with agricultural resources but it is rich in mineral resources including but not limited to gold, tin, copper, iron ore, marble, rock salt, uranium, and wolframite.



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7. Key site seeing places (paid and free)

7.1. Paid

7.1.1. Braga Municipal Stadium

An unusual blend of football and architecture, a visit to the Braga Municipal Stadium (Estádio Municipal de Braga) or AXA Stadium is an absolute must. Built by renowned architect Eduardo Souto de Moura, the stadium was built for the Euro 2004 but is currently used by the city's football team, Sporting Clube de Braga. Situated in the city's new Parque Urbano, it is easily accessible by public transport.

Address : Parque Norte R. de Montecastro, 4700-087 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-087

Location : 41.5619546, -8.4304938000000022

Contact : +351 253 206 860

Website : <http://www.scbraga.pt>

Nearest Public Transport : S Martinho (S Jerónimo) Bus Station

Entry Fee : 0-3 years: Free admission 4-18 years: €3 19-64 years: €6 Above 65 years:

€4 Groups 20-35 people: 10% discount Groups 36-50 persons: 12.5% discount

Groups 51-75 people: 15% discount Groups: 76 people: 20%

Open & Close Timing : Monday to Friday: 10:30hrs and 15:30hrs Saturday by prior appointment only

Time Required : 2

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.2. Palácio dos Biscainhos

Built in the 17th century and modified over the years, Museu dos Biscainhos gives an invaluable insight into the past of the Portuguese aristocracy. It is a heady contrast of history, decorative arts and formal gardens that divulge the day-to-day life of the 18th-century nobility.

Address : R. dos Biscainhos, 4700-415 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-415

Location : 41.55123630000001, -8.4295176000000054

Contact : +351 253 204 650

Website : <http://museus.bragadigital.pt/>

Nearest Public Transport : Cons Torres Almeida I Bus Station

Entry Fee : €2 for all (Including garden)

Open & Close Timing : Tuesday to Sunday 10:00hrs-12:15hrs, 14:00hrs-17:30hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.3. D. Diogo de Sousa Museum

Museu Dom Diogo de Sousa is a well-preserved educational museum exhibiting a collection of fragments from Palaeolithic times to Roman and Suevi-Visigoth rule. Located inside a building in the center of where once stood the Roman city of Bracara Augusta, it is a must-visit for those who harbor a deep love for history and archeology.

Address : R. dos Bombeiros Voluntários, 4700 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700

Location : 41.546072, -8.427199599999994

Contact : +351 253 273 706

Website : <https://mdds.culturanorte.pt/>

Nearest Public Transport : Paulo Orósio Bus Station

Entry Fee : Adult: €3 Student: €1.50 Free admission on Sundays

Open & Close Timing : May to September: Tuesday to Sunday: 09:30hrs-18:00hrs

October to April: Tuesday to Sunday: 09:30hrs-17:30hrs

Time Required : 2

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : Yes

7.1.4. Mosteiro de Tibães

Located in Mire de Tibaes, Mosteiro de Sao Martinho de Tibaes (The Monastery of St Martin of Tibaes, or Tibaes Monastery) is a beautiful monastery in the heart of the city which was originally the main house of the Benedictines in Portugal. A distinctive feature of the monastery is the virtues stairway, which is a set of stairways with fountains illustrating the 7 virtues. There is also a Rococo-style church beside the monastery and a venue for special events.

Address : Rua do Mosteiro, 4700-565 Mire de Tibães, Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-565

Location : 41.555924, -8.4792079999999971

Contact : +351 253 622 670

Website : <https://mosteirodetibaes.org>

Nearest Public Transport : Mosteiro III (Mosteiro Tibães) Bus Station

Entry Fee : Visit to the monastery and its gardens: Adults: €4.50 Adolescents/young adults (15-25 years): €2.25

Open & Close Timing : Monday to Friday: 09:00hrs-18:00hrs

Time Required : 1

Expected Wait Time : 15 minutes

Buy Ticket : Yes

7.1.5. Teatro Circo de Braga Sa

An architectural icon in Braga, Theatre Circo is a 20th-century Portuguese revivalist theatre designed by the architect João de Moura Coutinho. The central foyer is painted in rose, white and gold with marble columns and large glass doors along with a roof composed of stucco panels. With almost 100 years of existence, it holds a great place in the cultural scene of the city and is an absolute must-visit for the lovers of art and culture.

Address : Av. da Liberdade 697, 4710-251 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710-251

Location : 41.5497678, -8.4223873999999934

Contact : +351 253 203 800

Website : <https://www.theatrocirco.com/>

Nearest Public Transport : Carlos Amarante Bus Station

Entry Fee : €3.50

Open & Close Timing : Monday to Friday: 09:00hrs-18:00hrs

Time Required : 2

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.6. Nogueira da Silva Museum

Located in the middle of Central Avenue, Nogueira da Silva Museum houses beautiful statues and fine old paintings. The museum hosts temporary exhibitions

related to painting, sculpture, photography, decorative arts, and others are frequently held in the gallery. The adjacent garden is also worth visiting.

Address : Av. Central 61, 4710 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710

Location : 41.5518979, -8.421887599999999

Contact : +351 253 601 275

Website : <https://www.mns.uminho.pt/>

Nearest Public Transport : Central II Bus Station

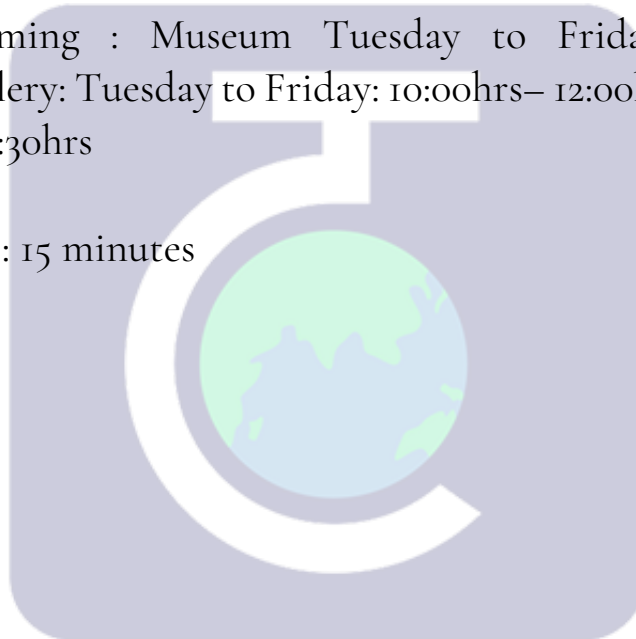
Entry Fee : €2

Open & Close Timing : Museum Tuesday to Friday: 10:00hrs-12:00hrs, 14:00hrs-17:00hrs Gallery: Tuesday to Friday: 10:00hrs- 12:00hrs, 14:00hrs-18:30 pm Saturday 14:00hrs-18:30hrs

Time Required : 1.5

Expected Wait Time : 15 minutes

Buy Ticket : Yes



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7.2. Free

7.2.1. Braga Parque

Celebrated as the second largest shopping center, Braga Parque is situated on an area of 50,000 square meters in the parish sector of St. Victor in the city of Braga. It has all the prominent brands including Zara, Primark, Pandora, Adidas, Nike and 9 cinemas halls, out of which one has 3D projection. Many famous eateries can also be found inside the mall.

Address : R. dos Congregados, 4710-427 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710-427

Location : 41.5581141, -8.40626700000007

Time Required : 0

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.2. Braga Shopping

Braga Shopping focuses more on high-street brands and premium outlets. It houses a cinema hall, restaurants, and famous labels, making it a popular destination for tourists as well as locals.

Address : 2º Sala 5 comercio, Av. Central 33, 4710-228 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710-228

Location : 41.5527126, -8.422558999999978

Time Required : 0

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.3. Sé de Braga

Dating back to the 12th century, Sé de Braga (Braga Cathedral) is one of the most significant buildings in the entire country. The Romanesque Cathedral is situated in the hub of the city and mingles fantastically with the environment around it. It is infused with history and has undergone many decorative and architectural changes over the years. If there is only one cathedral you plan to visit in Braga, make it this one.

Address : R. Dom Paio Mendes, 4700-424 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-424

Location : 41.5499885, -8.426901199999975

Contact : +351 253 263 317

Website : <http://www.se-braga.pt/catedral.php>

Nearest Public Transport : Carlos Amarante Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Daily 08:30hrs-18:30hrs

Time Required : 1.5

Expected Wait Time : 5 minutes (20-25 minutes on weekends)

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.4. Praça da República

Praça da República (The Republic Square or the Arcade) is the main square in Braga city surrounded by grand architecture from a variety of historical periods and choked with a lot of restaurants as well as shops around it. The main highlight of the square is the lovely fountain, named the Vianna Fountain. During Semana Santa (Holy Week), the square transforms itself into a vibrant street fair lined up with booths and stalls selling local crafts and confectioneries. When in the square, make time to visit the oldest café in the city - Vianna Café.

Address : Praca da Republica, Braga 4710-305, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710-305

Location : 41.5514224, -8.422403499999973

Nearest Public Transport : Central IV Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 1.5

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.5. Termas Romanas de Maximinos

This is an archaeological site with ruins corresponding to the Roman Thermae that existed in the city of Bracara Augusta in the beginning of the 2nd century. It used to be a place for socializing and relaxing for the Romans and is believed to have had many different cold and hot rooms as well as an exercising spot. This well-preserved archaeological site allows tourists to learn more about the rich Roman past of Portugal through a pleasant walk. While visiting the site, spare some time to eat a hearty breakfast or brunch at Colinatrum, a nearby café.

Address : R. Dr. Rocha Peixoto 13, 4700-043 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-043

Location : 41.54622790000001, -8.429654700000015

Contact : +351 253 278 455

Website : <https://www.cm-braga.pt/en>

Nearest Public Transport : Cairies Bus station

Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 1.5

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.6. Shair

Shair is an amazing art gallery in the heart of the city that works with artists, curators and creative thinkers. It also has an auditorium that is used for press conferences, concerts, debates and film festivals. Explore their collections curated by themes and various inspirations. When in the gallery, we recommend you to try their famous Greek yogurt with Oreo at the in-house café and bar.

Address : R. Raio 175, 4710-229 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4710-229

Location : 41.5500879, -8.419588299999987

Contact : +351 253 196 832

Website : <https://shairart.com/>

Nearest Public Transport : Raio (Novais e Sousa) Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Monday to Friday: 09:00hrs-18:00hrs Saturday and Sunday closed

Time Required : 1.5

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.7. Image Museum

Located next to the famous Porta Nova Arch, the Image Museum (Museu da Imagem) in Braga features a vast collection of historical cameras and photographs. It is housed in a 19th-century building and hosts numerous photography exhibitions all round the year. This museum has a striking collection and holds images of both classic and contemporary photographers.

Address : Campo das Hortas 35-37, 4700-421 Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-421

Location : 41.5503436, -8.4293878999999938

Contact : +351 253 278 633

Website : <https://museudaimagem.blogspot.com/>

Nearest Public Transport : Biscainhos Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Tuesday to Friday: 11:00hrs-19:00hrs Saturday and Sunday: 14:30hrs-18:30hrs

Time Required : 1.5

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.8. Galeria Mário Sequeira

Nestled within a beautiful landscape and architectural frame is the famous museum of contemporary art - Galeria Mário Sequeira. Here you will find engaging exhibitions of contemporary artists, paintings, video, performances and installations. This place will particularly interest those with a deep-rooted love for art, architecture or nature.

Address : Quinta da Igreja, 4700-803 Parada de Tibães, Braga, Portugal

Zipcode : 4700-803

Location : 41.561029, -8.4608479999999942

Contact : +351 253 602 550

Website : <https://www.mariosequeira.com>

Nearest Public Transport : Cima II Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Monday to Friday: 10:00hrs-13:00hrs, 15:00hrs-19:00hrs
Saturday and Sunday closed

Time Required : 2

Expected Wait Time : 10-15 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

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8. Key sites sports & adventure

There is little scope for extreme sports activity in the city. However, there are some sites to satiate your sporty spirit.

- **SSS Building -**

Address : R. do Carregal, 4700-688 Palmeira, Portugal

Location : 14.5578294,121.0189063

Contact No : +351918756924

Website : <http://ww1.paraquedismobraga.com/>

Nearest Public Transport : Capela I Bus Station

Entry Fees : Starting €160 per person

Time Required : 3

Wait Time : 20 minutes

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9. Adventure sports, Local sports, stadiums

Football takes the Number One spot on the list of the most popular sports in Braga, Portugal. Sporting Clube de Braga or Sporting de Braga is a well-known Portuguese sports club, from the city of Braga. Estádio Municipal de Braga (AXA Stadium) is a popular Portuguese football stadium in the municipality.



10. Spas and relaxation

After a long day of sightseeing in Braga, you might want to relax and rejuvenate for the next day. The city offers a range of beauty and health treatments that can be availed at discounted prices if booked in advance. Given below are some of the best relaxation opportunities in Braga:

- **Melia Braga Hotel and Spa:**

Address : Av. Gen. Carrilho da Silva Pinto 8, 4715-380 Tenões, Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.556831,-8.395326

Contact No : +351 253 144 000

Website : <http://www.meliabraga.com/>

- **Hotel Golden Tulip:**

Address : Estr. Via Falperra, 4800-000 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.520751,-8.389265

Contact No : +351 253 240 700

Website : <http://www.goldentulipbraga.com>

- **Hotel De Templo:**

Address : Bom Jesus do Monte, 4715-056 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.554132,-8.377236

Contact No : +351 253 603 610

Website : <http://www.hoteldotemplobraga.com>

- **Natura Spa:**

Address : Centro empresarial de Lote C, Trás,, R. da Misericórdia, Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.528157,-8.447276

Contact No : +351 912 628 376

Website : <http://www.naturaspa.pt/>

- **Open Village Sports Hotel and Spa:**

Address : Tv. da Ribeira 629, 4810-235 Mesão Frio, Guimarães, Portugal

Location : 41.442390,-8.249548

Contact No : +351 253 540 630

Website : <http://www.openvillagesportshotel.com>



11. Events calendar

Month

Events

Braga Romana

The festival aims to recreate what the daily life of Braga was at the time when the city was a part of the Roman Empire. The festivities include street processions, workshops, theatrical performances etc. A special Roman Market is also recreated in the central area of the city.

Semana Santa

Semana Santa is a major religious festival and one of the largest events in Braga. The celebrations include 10 days of processions and activities all over the city, especially in the churches. Moreover, there are also many exhibitions, presentations and performances that may be attended free of charge

Sao Jaos Festival

Sao Joao is a popular festival celebrating the birth of St. John the Baptist. It is a huge event in

the city and well worth making the effort to coincide with your trip to the city. Most performances are held at the Rossio da Sé, the Arcada (Praça da Republica) and the D. Diogo de Sousa Museum.

Braga International Folk Festival



A week-long cultural fest consisting of street processions by costumed dancers and traditional groups.

Braga Jazz Festival

The festival attracts jazz musicians and lovers of jazz music from all corners of the world.

Music in the Fall

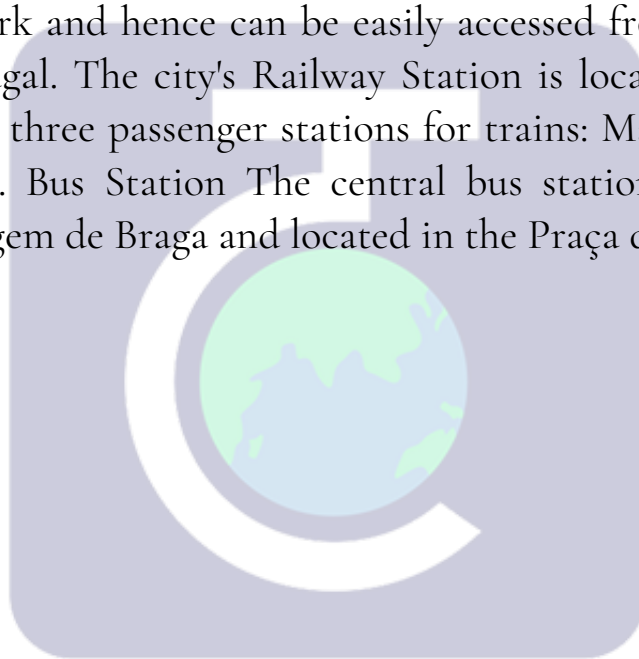
This popular festival includes a series of shows and events, each featuring different musical genres at some of Braga's most notable theatres and entertainment venues.

12. Key local guides and tours

Braga has many layers of history and its charms are abundant. Having a friendly guide by your side just helps to make the most of your stay in the city. Some of the most popular private guided tours in the city are listed below: i) Cris Fonte Cris is well versed with the North of Portugal. She specializes in walking and hiking tours as well as Portuguese gastronomy & wine production trips across the city. ii) Leonor Abrantes She is a certified tour guide and specializes in historical tours of the city. She has been working in the industry for the last 17 years and is well versed with the important tourist spots of the city. iii) Manuel Rodrigues Manuel is known for his historical and cultural tours in and around Braga. He speaks and understands French (Fluent), Spanish (Fluent), German (Basic) and Italian (Basic). iv) Rui Barbosa Rui specializes in tours of National parks and mountains in and around Braga. v) Carlos Macedo Carlos is a resident of Braga and can show you all the historically important monuments as well as nature spots in the city. He has also been awarded for Unesco Humanity interest.

13. Transportation hubs

Airport The closest airport to Braga is the Sá Carneiro International Airport in Porto. The distance from Porto airport to Braga city is approximately 50 kms. From there, you may either take a train/ metro which will take around 2 hours to reach the city center and cost €5 or take a bus which take around 50 minutes and costs €8. Taxis can be hired for €50-60. **Railway Station** Braga is located on Portugal's rail network and hence can be easily accessed from Lisbon and other stations across Portugal. The city's Railway Station is located in Braga Station Square and there are three passenger stations for trains: Maximinos, Tadam and the Arentim station. **Bus Station** The central bus station of Braga is called: Central de Camionagem de Braga and located in the Praça da Galiza.



14. Transportation cost

Although public transport in Braga is not as established as in some other Portuguese cities, the city still has a decent system of local public transport including buses, city trains and subways. Transportes Urbanos de Braga (TUB) is the company that provides public transportation within the city.



15. Baggage allowance

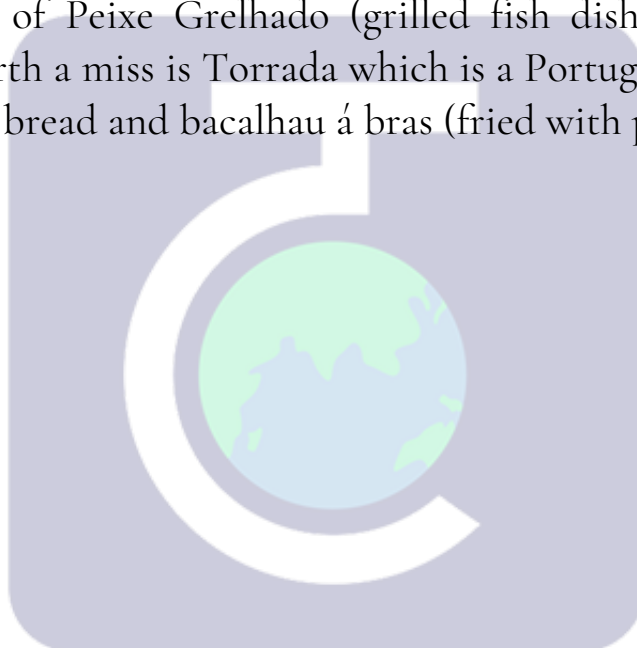
Free baggage limit for most buses/ trains in Braga is one item of hand luggage and two items of baggage. Backpacks, however, are easy and most comfortable to carry around the city.



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16. Must try food and local savouries

Among the most common Portuguese dishes are Alheira de Mirandela (a type of fowl sausage), salted codfish (Bacalhau à Lagareiro, Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá and Bacalhau à Brás being most popular), bifanas (juicy pork steak sandwiches), francesinha (contains two slices of bread interspersed by steak, ham, sausage and chorizo), Sardinhas (sardines), Kyodai Sushi, Caldo Verde (green soup). Main course is comprised of Peixe Grelhado (grilled fish dishes) and carne (meat dishes). Also, not worth a miss is Torrada which is a Portuguese toast made from a specific Portuguese bread and bacalhau á bras (fried with potatoes and onions).



17. Restaurant & Nightlife

Eating out is one of the greatest pleasures of visiting Braga. The city is home to some of the best dining spots in Europe. There are plenty of options to choose from for all kinds of different cuisines. The food of the Minho region is highly talked about. Cozinha da Se Restaurant is the first listing from Braga city in the coveted Michelin guide. It is the brainchild of visionary owner and chef, Ricardo Pereira, who serves his own unique mix of contemporary and traditional Minho. Given below are some of the most popular restaurants in the city:

Food -

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- **Spirito Cupcakes and Coffee:**

Address : Largo de São João do Souto 19, 4700-326 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.550208,-8.424616

Contact No : +351 253 062 861

Website : <https://www.spiritocupcakes.com>

Open / Close Time : Monday and Tuesday 13:30hrs-19:00hrs, Wednesday to Saturday: 13:30hrs-19:00hrs, 21:00hrs-00:00hrs

- **Restaurante Pipo Velho:**

Address : 2415 545, R. de Valverde 42, Marrazes, Portugal

Location : 39.764654,-8.801698

Contact No : +351 244 813 814

- **Brac Restaurant:**

Address : Campo das Carvalheiras, 4700-419 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.548586,-8.428950

Contact No : +351 253 610 225

Open / Close Time : 17:30hrs-01:00hrs

- **Sao Frutoso:**

Address : R. Costa Gomes 168, 4700 Real, Portugal

Location : 41.557334,-8.443072

Contact No : +351 253 623 372

Website : <http://www.saofrutoso.com>

- **Velhos Tempos:**

Address : R. do Carmo 7, 4700-309 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.553641,-8.425598

Contact No : +351 253 214 368

Open / Close Time : 12:00hrs-14:30hrs, 20:00hrs-22:30hrs

- **Silvas:**

Address : Largo do Terreiro do Castelo 305, Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.551296,-8.423667

Contact No : +351 253 272 801

Open / Close Time : 12:00hrs-15:30hrs, 19:00hrs-23:00hrs

- **Anjo verde:**

Address : Largo da Praça Velha 21, 4700 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.549984,-8.429169

Contact No : +351 253 264 010

Open / Close Time : 12:00hrs-15:00hrs, 19:30hrs-22:30hrs

- **Biba Ofir:**

Address : Fão, Portugal

Location : 41.515494,-8.779570

Website : <http://www.bibofir.com>

Open / Close Time : Monday to Friday 19.45hrs-04:00hrs

- **Lagars:**

Address : Lugar da Bornaria - Ferreiros, 4720 Amares, Portugal

Location : 41.625643,-8.362881

Contact No : +351 253 993 278

Website : <http://www.lagars.com/>

- **Cru escapa cultural:**

Address : R. Alves Roçadas, 4760-111 Vila Nova de Famalicão, Portugal

Location : 41.406918,-8.518246

Contact No : +351 252 059 330

Website : <https://www.cru-espacocultural.com>

Open / Close Time : Tuesday to Thursday 15:00hrs-00:00hrs, Friday and Saturday 15:00hrs-04:00hrs, Closed on Sunday and Monday

- **Estudio 22:**

Address : Rua Dom Paio Mendes 22, 4700 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.549675,-8.428151

Contact No : +351 253 053 751

Website : <http://www.estudio22bar.blogspot.com/>

Open / Close Time : Monday to Thursday 08:00hrs-02:00hrs, Friday and Saturday 08:00hrs-04:00hrs, Sunday 08:00hrs-00:00hrs

- **B-Side night club Karaoke Bar:**

Address : Praceta Beato Inácio Azevedo, 1, 4700-366 Braga, Portugal

Location : 41.555666,-8.424389

Contact No : +351 919 149 090

Open / Close Time : Saturday, Monday and Friday 22:00hrs-04:00hrs

Index**18. Average meal cost**

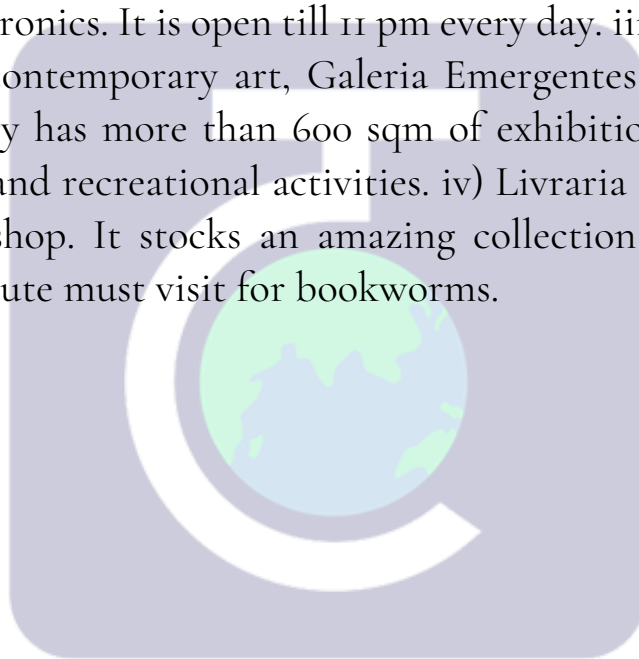
● 3-course meal at an inexpensive Restaurant: €7.00 ● 3-course meal at a mid-range restaurant (for 2 people): €25-30.00 ● Combo meal at McDonalds or equivalent: €5 ● 0.5 liter draught beer: €2



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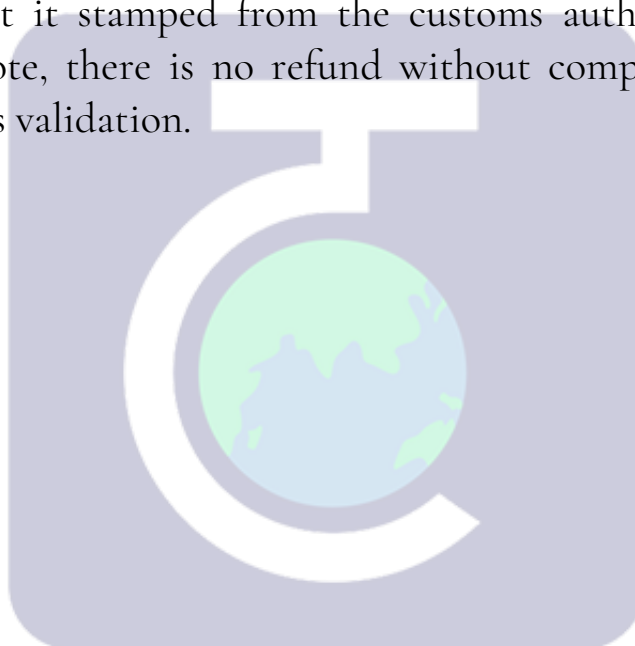
19. Shopping

i) Braga Parque Opened in 2007, Braga Parque is the largest shopping mall in the Minho region of Portugal. It is the ultimate hub of fashion, culture and leisure and is dotted with many retail stores and restaurants. The mall is visited by approximately 8 million visitors every year. ii) Bragashopping This is a popular shopping center with various stores dedicated to apparels, health and beauty, home decor and electronics. It is open till 11 pm every day. iii) Galeria Emergentes Excellent space for contemporary art, Galeria Emergentes is a paradise for art lovers. The art gallery has more than 600 sqm of exhibition area and organises frequent workshops and recreational activities. iv) Livraria Ideal Livraria Ideal is the city's best bookshop. It stocks an amazing collection of books (especially maps) and is an absolute must visit for bookworms.



20. Tourist benefits

In Portugal, the VAT rate ranges between 6% to 23%. If you are a non EU citizen, you are eligible for a VAT refund provided you spend a minimum of €50 on goods that you export within 90 days of your purchase. To avail this benefit, all you are required to do is look for stores with tax free shopping signboard, get the VAT reimbursement receipt from the store at the time of your purchase, fill it out carefully and get it stamped from the customs authorities on your final departure. Kindly note, there is no refund without completed forms, receipts attached and customs validation.



21. Essential local apps

Portugal off.Guide is a useful mobile app for tourists in Braga. It equips users with offline city and road maps. It also has a great currency and language converter. TUB Mobile is another great app for navigation. It is the official app of TUB that helps users with detailed routes and schedules of Braga Urban Transport.



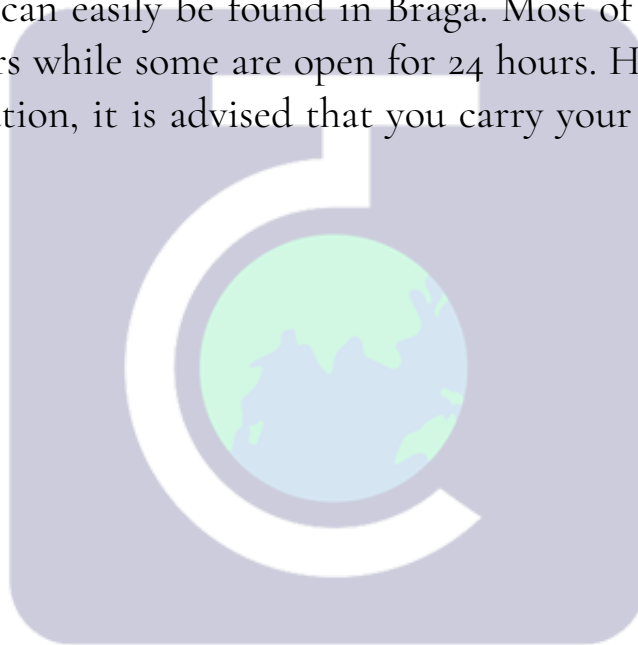
22. Driving

Braga is one of the most difficult cities to drive in Europe. Roads in the city are hilly, narrow and the signage is rather weak. However for those who still wish to drive, the legal driving age in the city is 18. The driver must hold a full license for minimum 2 years with no major endorsements as well as an International Driving Permit (IDP). While driving in the city, make sure you do not cross the cobblestone bike path. The locals take biking very seriously and it may cause a quarrel on the street.



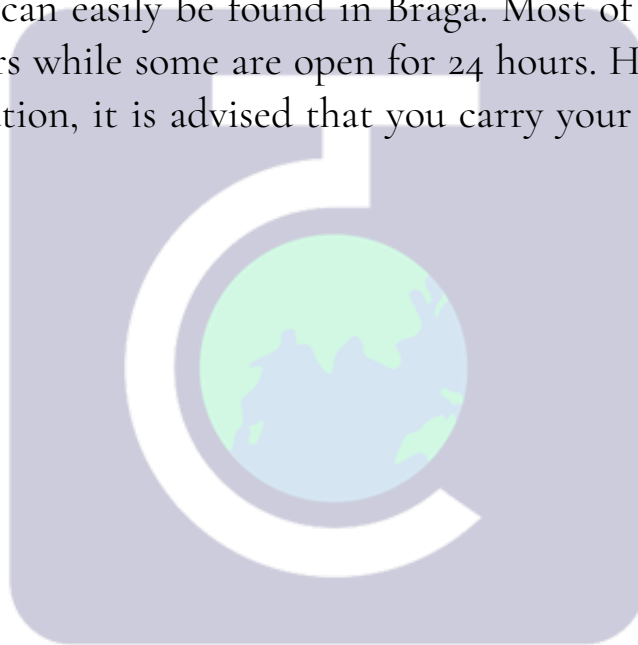
23. Travel essentials

Like most of continental Europe, Portugal is on the 230-250 Volts. The standard electrical socket (outlet) in the country is of "Type C" with two round pins. If the plug of your appliances does not match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter during your stay in Braga. Most battery chargers have a built-in voltage converter, but you might need one if coming from a non-European country. Pharmacies can easily be found in Braga. Most of them operate during normal working hours while some are open for 24 hours. However, if you are on some specific medication, it is advised that you carry your medicines from your home country.



24. Essential clothes

Like most of continental Europe, Portugal is on the 230-250 Volts. The standard electrical socket (outlet) in the country is of "Type C" with two round pins. If the plug of your appliances does not match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter during your stay in Braga. Most battery chargers have a built-in voltage converter, but you might need one if coming from a non-European country. Pharmacies can easily be found in Braga. Most of them operate during normal working hours while some are open for 24 hours. However, if you are on some specific medication, it is advised that you carry your medicines from your home country.



25. Local currency

The official currency of Portugal is Euro (€). One Euro equals to 1.13 USD. Major credit cards (including VISA, MasterCard, American Express etc) are accepted in the city but not everywhere. It is advised that you must always carry some cash handy for small purchases.



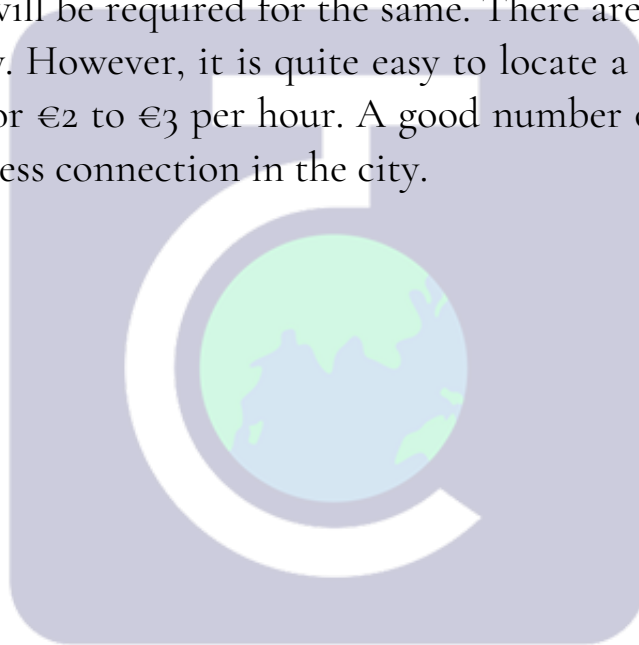
Index**26. Change vendor's commission, ATM charges**

For international money transfers and currency exchange, you must check out exchange bureaux located in the various banks. ATM machines are scattered all around the city and it is not difficult to find one for cash withdrawals. ATM withdrawals and credit card charges are likely to incur a typical surcharge of \$1 to \$5 per withdrawal. Kindly connect with your bank for more information on international withdrawal fees.



27. Staying connected

There are 3 major mobile network providers in Braga: ● Vodafone ● Optimus, and ● TMN There is a standard mobile network (GSM 900/ 1800/ GPRS) in the country and you should check beforehand if your phone is compatible, especially if you're coming from the US. If you plan to stay in the city for a longer period of time, you might as well consider buying a Portugal SIM card. A photocopy your passport or ID card will be required for the same. There are no major public Wi-Fi services in the city. However, it is quite easy to locate a cyber cafe where you can access internet for €2 to €3 per hour. A good number of cafés and fast food joints also offer wireless connection in the city.



28. Time Zone

Braga falls under WET (Western European Time): No UTC/ GMT offset.
Daylight Saving Time +1 hour from March to October.



Index**29. Languages**

The official and the largest spoken language in Braga is Portuguese. A large percentage of population also understands and speaks basic English. Most traffic signs and hotel menus have an English translation. Hence there should be no language problems for tourists who are visiting Braga or the surrounding coastline.



30. Political Scenario

There is no formal city government in Braga, only a municipal Government authority, with local administration handled by the individual juntas de freguesia or civil parish councils.



31. Economic Scenario

The major industries in the Braga region are construction, metallurgy and mechanics, software development and web design. IT is growing rapidly in the city and holds tremendous potential. Advancements in the software industry in Braga have had a substantial impact on productivity and GDP growth of the country.



Index**32. Religious belief**

Portugal has no official religion. The most predominant religion in Portugal is Roman Catholicism and approximately 81% of the population of the country is Catholic.



33. Visa requirements

If you have a Schengen visa, you can stay (but not work) in Braga for approximately three months. EU nationals with residence permit may stay for as long as they like and can enter with a valid EU identity card too. However, registration at Bürgeramt office is mandatory for stays exceeding a few months. Nationals of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA and a few others can visit Braga with a valid passport for a period of three months. Nationals of the rest of the world need to apply for a visa to visit the city.



Index**34. Essential vaccination**

Before your visit to Braga, make sure you are up-to-date on routine vaccines like measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), varicella (chickenpox, polio and seasonal flu. Depending on the duration of your stay and the country you are traveling from, you might need vaccines for Hepatitis A and B. The World Health Organization recommends that you visit a physician at least six weeks before your departure.



35. Theft and Safety

Braga is pretty safe for a European city and apart from existence of petty crimes such as pickpocketing and snatching, there is no major crime heard of in the city as such. The city is never really abandoned (even at night) but it makes sense to be careful especially if you are traveling alone. If you keep tabs on your possessions and apply common sense you should not face any problems. It is also advised you do not keep too much cash with you. Also try to avoid using ATMs at night.



36. Embassy/Consulate

For any emergencies, foreign tourists can get assistance at their embassies in Braga. You can find the complete list of foreign representations in the city at: <http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/portugal>



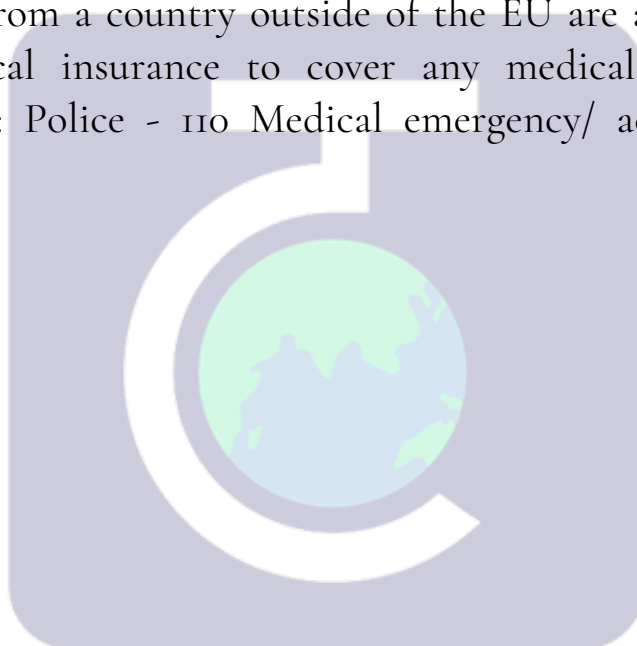
37. Accessibility

Most of the streets in Braga are cobbled and uneven. However, most of the buses and metro (trams) have good accessibility. You can also easily find wheelchair accessible hotels and restaurants in the city.



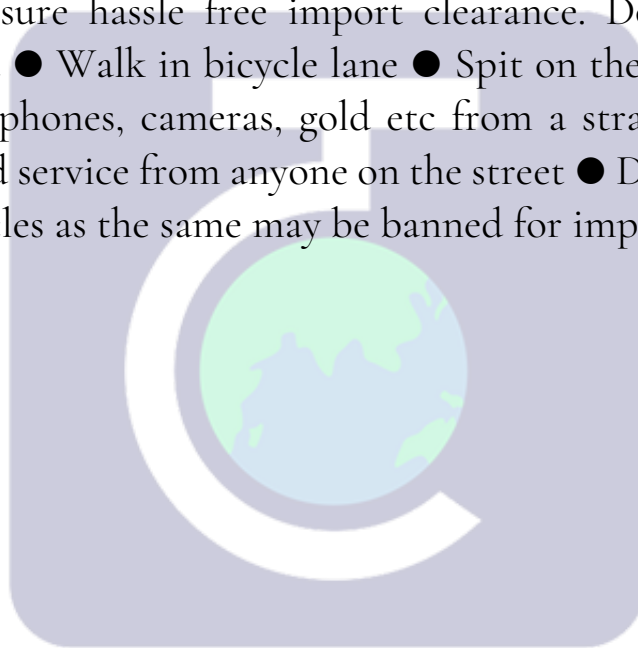
38. Emergencies

Having a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) will provide you access to Braga's public healthcare system at greatly reduced cost. Since the EHIC will not cover medical repatriation, ongoing medical treatment or non-urgent treatment, it is advised that you sign up for an adequate travel insurance and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment and repatriation. Visitors who come from a country outside of the EU are advised to take out a valid, private medical insurance to cover any medical expenses in Braga. Emergency numbers: Police - 110 Medical emergency/ accident services; fire brigade - 112



39. Do's and Don'ts

Do ● Take the Boat Tour ● Taste the world famous Port Wine ● Ask for the prices or menu before ordering ● Carry your passport and ID card at all times ● Lock your bike properly ● Carry some cash. A lot of restaurants and shops do not accept credit cards ● Be wary of your surroundings at night, especially in the dark alleys. ● It is advisable to carry a certified doctor's prescription along with the medicines to ensure hassle free import clearance. Do not ● Leave your valuables unattended ● Walk in bicycle lane ● Spit on the road ● Leave tip on the table ● Buy cellphones, cameras, gold etc from a stranger in the street ● Accept any unwanted service from anyone on the street ● Do not carry unsealed/unbranded food articles as the same may be banned for import



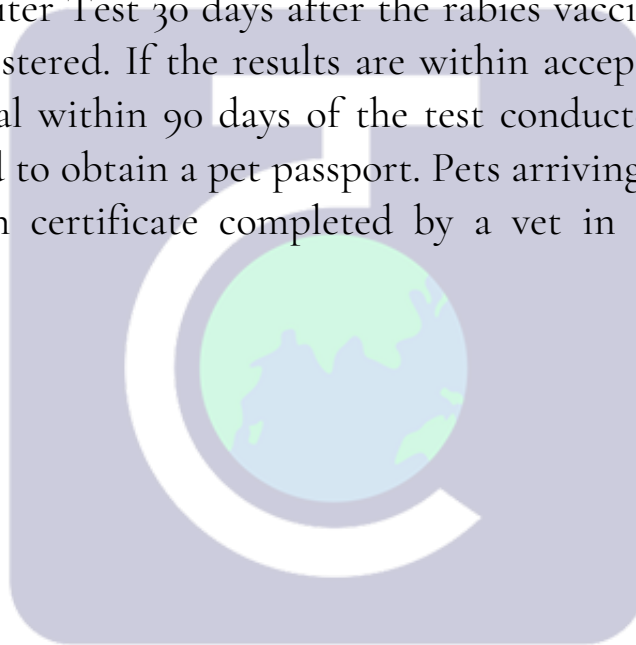
40.Tipping basics

Tipping is customary in Braga. Depending on how happy you were with the service you were offered, you could tip 5-10% or round off the bill to the nearest Euro. A 10% tip generally means exemplary service. It is advised that you do not leave the tip on the table and rather hand it over to the waiter directly. Porters who take your bags in hotels usually expect a tip of €1.



Index**41.Pet info**

Braga is a pet friendly city. There are, however, certain rules and regulations that you must adhere to before bringing pets into the country. i) Pet Microchip Your pet should be microchipped with an ISO 11784/ 11785 pet microchip ii) Proper Vaccination After the microchip, your pet will need a rabies vaccination, especially if you're traveling with them from a rabies-free or rabies-controlled country. iii) Blood Titer Test 30 days after the rabies vaccination, a Blood Titer Test must be administered. If the results are within acceptable limits, your pet can travel to Portugal within 90 days of the test conducted. Note: Pet owners from EU are required to obtain a pet passport. Pets arriving from outside the EU will require a health certificate completed by a vet in either Portuguese or English.



Index

Conclusion – Why to select this destination

Braga is undoubtedly one of the oldest and loveliest cities of Portugal. The city is historically quite rich, yet it also brims with a modern, youthful energy. The city is a popular tourist destination because of its abundance of churches, chapels, and monasteries, beautiful natural views, excellent museums, colorful religious festivals and hidden plazas. The presence of Universidade de Minho in the city ensures a lively student scene and hence a great selection of cafes, restaurants and bars exists in Braga. If you are religious yet youthful at heart, Braga is the perfect place for you. The beautiful museums, galleries and churches of the city won't disappoint you.



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