

Title:

Porto, Portugal

Word Count:

282

Summary:

Enjoy the sights and the atmosphere of the Portugal`s second city.

Keywords:

porto,portugal,europe

Article Body:

Ever since the Romans built a fort here, at the mouth of the Duoro, Porto has prospered from commerce. Today it is Portugal`s second city and a thriving industrial center.

The commercial center of the city and the Baixa ("lower") district attract fashionable shoppers. Also in the Baixa is the colorful Bolhao market. Most of the tourist sights, however, are to be found in the older riverside quarters.

High above the river, on Penaventosa Hill, stands Porto`s cathedral, or Se, originally a fortress church. A noteworthy 13th-century feature is the rose window, while the upper level of the beautiful 14th-century cloister affords splendid views.

Nearby are the Renaissance church of Santa Clara, and Sao Bento Station, completed in 1916, decorated with spectacular azulejo panels.

Below the Se is the hillside Barredo quarter, seemingly unchanged since medieval days. This leads down to the riverside quarter, the Ribeira, its houses decorated with tiled or pastel-painted facades. The district is being restored, attracting restaurants and clubs.

Sights close to the river include the Palacio da Bolsa, the city`s stock exchange, built in 1842. Its highlight is the Arabian Room decorated in the style of the Alhambra. Close by is the 14th-century Sao Francisco church. Its interior is richly covered in carved and gilded wood. In the Cordoaria district, west of the Se, stands the 18th-century Igreja dos Clerigos. The church tower, at 75 m offers superb views.

Situated in the lovely Serralves park, the Fundacao de Serralves, is dedicated

to contemporary art. It presents temporary exhibitions in the Art Deco Casa de Serralves, and its art collection, from the 1960s to the present, in the Modernist Museu de Arte Contemporanea, designed by Alvaro Siza Vieira.