

Açores Village

The village of Açores is about 10 km from Celorico da Beira. It was once the capital of a Visigoth Episcopate, and was formerly classified as a town. For centuries it has been a place of pilgrimage and worship of Nossa Senhora do Açor, whose image lies at the main altar of the Church and to whom many miracles are attributed, represented in naive paintings dating from the 18th century that adorn the chancel. Also worthy of a closer look are the baroque-johannine altarpieces and tiled walls.

In this sanctuary, there is the tomb of a Visigoth princess stood named Suintiliuba, who died in the year 666 AD, and was the daughter of a king who travelled here on pilgrimage. Other points of Interest of Açores:

- Main Church
- Monument of Nossa Senhora de Açor
- Pelourinho
- Square
- Stately Homes



Old Hostel and Hospital now named Casa da Fortaleza

Next to the Church is the old Hostel from the 12th century that used to welcome travelers and pilgrims. An addition was built in the 16th century and it was also the Old Hospital and Hostel of Linhares. The building is of medieval construction and the main facade is dominated by a rounded arch as an entrance, then becoming a hospital. The people chose that ancient monument as the residence of Mrs. Lôpa, who was possessed by the devil, so in the main facade we can observe two gargoyles, which are identified with the Devil and the Goat, there is also a niche with the image of Saint António.

Today, it is just a day center, with the main purpose of preparing everyday meals to older people who no longer dare to consistently cook.



Castle of Celorico da Beira



Castle of Linhares da Beira

The construction of the Castel of Linhares da Beira, built on a huge granite massif, remounts the mid-eleventh century, on the occasion of the final conquest of this territory to Muslims by Fernando Magno.

It is a Romanesque-Gothic castle, consisting of two walled closed areas, with elongated shape. It has two towers: the Keep, of rectangular shape and integrated in the wall separating the two areas and the Clock Tower, addorsed the exterior curtain wall.

It has four doors: the first is south facing, leading to the smallest area, with a lancet arch and covered with a ribbed vault; the second is on the curtain wall opposite with a round arch; the third is located in the curtain that separates the two areas with lancet arch; and the fourth door is known as the treachery door. The layout of the castle of Linhares, as well as all other fortifications located nearby, are supposedly the responsibility of King Dinis and his vast program of construction and rehabilitation of fortifications.



Gallows – FORNOTELHEIRO

On a hill opposite, called Pendão or Outeiro da Forca, the ghastly upright beams of the uncanny instrument still stand, composed of two parallel stone columns 3 meters tall. We can still see the notches that supported the crossbar where the tortured hung.



Roman Forum - Linhares

The forum was a tribune where the good men of the county had a seat and in the back of its largest sedia displays the ancient arms of the village. It was in this place, with stone table and benches that decisions were made regarding administrative and judicial issues, long before the very existence of the Town Hall. Underneath, there is an ancient type of fountain, i.e. a stone basin to capture and hold precious drinking water.



16th century Manueline windows of Linhares

Linhares town is ancient, of medieval foundation, with its first charter granted by King Afonso Henriques. The antiquity of its settlement determined the first urban structure, which expanded between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. But, it was in the period of economic prosperity and development experienced throughout the sixteenth century that most strikingly affected the shape of this town.



Therefore, it is only natural that the Manueline elements of the facades of many private houses belonging to people of greater means stand out due to their beauty, picturesqueness and certainly by their abundance. They were mostly the homes of local bourgeoisie, often connected with trade, and including many Jews. The later lived in the Jewish quarter, which developed around the Jewry Street, a side street off Rua Direita (formerly Rua da Procissão), in the vicinity of the castle, today called Rua do Passadiço, given that its first building integrates the access the neighborhood.

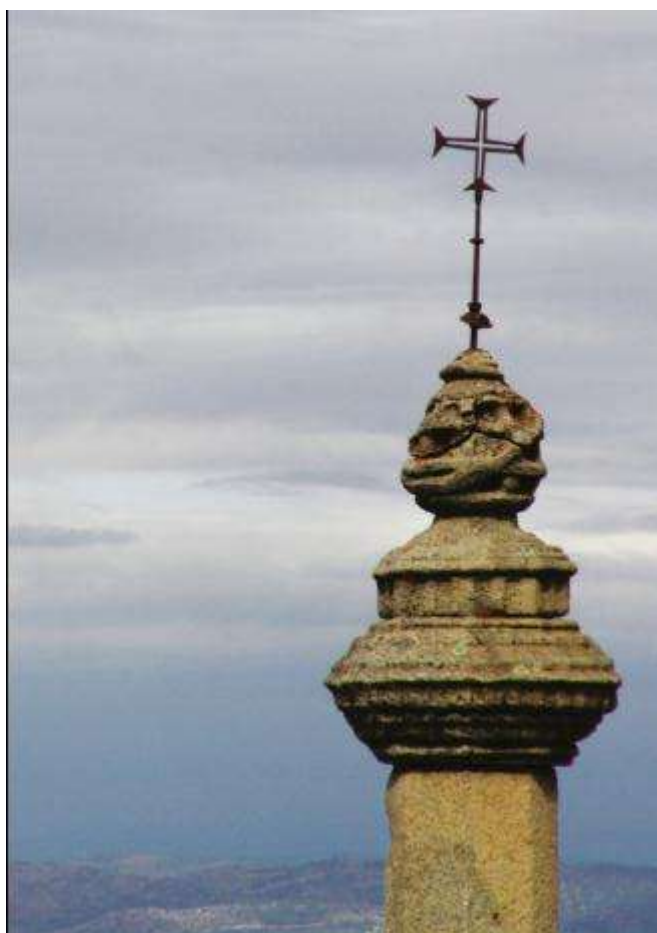
In this same building, from the 16th century, currently known as the Casa do Judeu (Jewish House), passing the walkway, entering through a depressed arch, there is one of the most interesting and rich Manueline windows of Linhares. The house where it's built is a noble

building, with good construction and with granite stonework. We believe the original owners ordered this window, but we don't know who they were. We do know that in 1523 nobleman Francisco de Almeida was the donee and received 5000 reis annually as rent for that same house. The window has a double arch, with a trefoil arch on the intrados and an ogee arch on the extrados, topped by three large crockets. The arches rest on delicate capitals carved on thin smooth small columns and framed corbels.



PELOURINHO OF LINHARES DA BEIRA

Linhares has been inhabited since remote times and it is very likely that the medieval town was developed on an ancient Roman Castro. The Christian conquest of Linhares took place in the reign of Afonso Henriques and led to an early repopulating of the territory, which received its first charter still by the hand of this monarch, on an unknown date, but before 1169 (date of its first confirmation). The town was the county seat and judicial district for a long time, having several counties under its jurisdiction. In 1855, the county was abolished and integrated in Celorico da Beira, of which it is now a parish.



The antiquity of occupation of this territory is evident in the still noticeable medieval structure of town, although it reached its apogee in the reign of King Manuel, having also left several architectural testimonies, among which is the Pelourinho.

It probably dates back to the years immediately following the granting of a new manueline charter in 1510. It stands in a central square of town, next to the old City Hall building and the famous Roman Forum, which displays the arms of the old town. It consists of a column and top raised on three octagonal steps, made of crudely cut stone, and the bottom step is double the height of the others. The prismatic column has a square base carved in the same block which is ornamented with four small spheres in the angles. Crowning the Pelourinho there is heraldry

ornamentation: the Armillary Sphere and the Cross of Christ, symbols of D. Manuel, placed in every building built or remodeled by this king.

Lavandeira Bridge

Despite having probably been a bridge from the 1st to the 4th centuries, it was in the 16th century that so-called Ponte Nova (New Bridge) was built. In the first half of the 18th century renovation works were carried out by order of King João V.

The current Lavandeira Bridge has a modern, civil and baroque architecture. It is an arch bridge with deck on top of three round arches with piers protected by breakwaters. The deck is paved with granite. The cross is Baroque, built on a quadrangular foundation and platform, surmounted by two stepped plinth and Latin cross. The bridge linked two important Roman roads, one connecting Viseu to Celorico and the other one connecting Braga to Merida. It has a cross and a stone with the royal arms on top. The bridge has breakwaters, to protect the piers upstream and downstream and still keeps the granite paving. The cross has a two stepped plinth. The lower one is framed and the main side is tripartite and ornate, framing a niche of "shrines". The second one is and emblazoned and adorned by decorative elements.



S.Gens

The archaeological centre of S. Gens is located on a gentle hillside and adjacent plain, close to the confluence of the stream “dos Tamanhos” with the River “Mondego”.

It was probably occupied in Roman times (1st -4th centuries) and extended until the end of the Middle Ages (11th-12^h centuries).

S. Gens has probably maintained or even increased its importance, especially during the Reconquista (9th – 11th centuries). In addition to the continued occupation of the village founded in Roman times, the construction of a rural castle, i.e. a small defensive stronghold where populations could take refuge, probably also dates from this period, given that traces of earlier times have not been identified. Of this castle there are still traces of a rock fence using several granite blocks. Forty-eight cavern graves, a sarcophagus and three small olive oil presses. Among the graves the most predominant are of anthropomorphic shape, including double anthropomorphism. Despite their importance, only the graves are, for now, visible and capable of being studied, because the rest are traces of a past reality, existing underground and undiscovered.

