

Celorico da Beira – Tourism

Celorico da Beira is located in the central region of Portugal and embraces the concept of regional brand “Serra da Estrela”, regarding namely tourism, snow and nature. Celorico has other more endogenous brand signs, recognized nationally and internationally, as is the Serra da Estrela cheese.

Regarding tourism, Celorico da Beira has in its historical area a castle built in the 12th / 13th centuries and is typologically classified as a Romanesque-Gothic castle. Today the tower of this castle today has several spaces that promote the history and culture of Celorico Beira.

The ground floor serves as the projection room. On the entrance floor of the tower there is an information point, with access to information materials about the castle and the architectural, archaeological, cultural and ethnographic historic heritage of the town and county of Celorico Beira.

Also on this floor, there are archaeological remains, found in archaeological research conducted in the castle.

At the top of the tower there is a multimedia space, which consists of an area of research and study of local history.

It has internet access and an archive of old books that contain some important records of the County and Portugal. This last space ends in an area along the battlements, where there is a virtual viewpoint that through the use of new technologies makes it is possible to recreate the history and main events of the castle of Celorico da Beira, as well as its legends.



A little further into the Historic Center is the Solar do Queijo dated from the 18th century and that once had an administrative role: here was the Town Hall.

Currently and since 1998, it has other functions: promoting the Serra da Estrela cheese. This building has a museum room that represents the typical kitchen where the cheese used to be manufactured.

Visitors can buy or simply taste the cheese and other regional products, with quality certification. The Serra da Estrela cheese is the crowning jewel of national cheeses. Appreciated nationally and internationally, this cheese is produced in the demarcated region of Serra da Estrela cheese. Celorico da Beira is considered to be the Capital of Serra da Estrela cheese given the fact that it has many producers of Serra da Estrela cheese.

Given that Celorico da Beira is in a remote and mainly rural region, it was important to portray the rural and laborious people of Celorico da Beira, who made agriculture and grazing



their main way of life. Thus, the Museum of Farmers and Cheese was created. The site chosen for its installation was an old agricultural farm, which was recovered with the purpose of realistically conveying the reality of this county.

Aware of the its responsibilities and duties in a primordial field such as the environment, the Museum of Farmers and Cheese began, in 2003, a series of activities designed primarily for the school population, stimulating and promoting values and behaviors that result in a new attitude of "man" towards nature, prioritizing the correct management of environmental resources. Today, the museum brings together a representative collection of Agriculture and Grazing in our county.



The Museum of Farmers and Cheese is composed of four distinct but complementary areas:

- On the ground floor there is a cellar and a storage room.
- On the first floor there is an exhibition room, an office, a reception and a storage room.
- There is a porch that surrounds the museum building, where agricultural implements are exhibited;
- There is an auditorium, a bar, a point of sale and a library.

The purposes of this museum are the transmission, to this and future generations, of the diversity, richness and multifaceted culture of our region, achieved with great effort, suffering and sometimes even hunger.

Situated near the Mondego River, in the Municipality of Celorico da Beira, we find the Centre for Food Research (Municipal Olive Oil Press) that is the perfect retreat to enjoy the true flavors of Beira, in a green natural ambience.

Both its exterior and interior are made of granite, which is so typical and constant in the surrounding landscape. The ceilings are covered in wood and the floor is made of glass to allow visitors to see below. In the ancient olive oil press, many kg of different varieties of olives, such as verdial, cordovil, camponesa, galega and serra do gato have arrived and left only after being crushed and turned into olive oil that, during many years, fed and illuminated the residents of the county.



The millstone that made de old press work is still visible. Visitors can sit comfortably, enjoying the company of river Mondego, and if they look carefully they can see the fish from the river swimming against the current.

This Food Research Centre was created with the purpose of providing excellent services to visitors, with a good relationship price-quality, which is achieved through the development of practical research – action projects.

The mission of the Food Research Centre - Municipal Olive Oil Press, is therefore to stimulate thought and innovation, inside and out, providing the community and its key stakeholders, with a study center equipped with tools and social analysis, able to face market needs.

This space is ideal for family, business, christenings or themed dinners. Its authenticity cannot leave anyone indifferent and without a desire to return.

In order to preserve the collective memory, through our ethnographic heritage, the municipality of Celorico da Beira sought to restore one of the watermills of stream Cabeça Alta. It is the restoration and preservation of a cultural element that humanized and filled the margins of the main streams and the river Mondego, in the county of Celorico Beira for centuries.

There are two types of water mills: one powered by a vertical waterwheel through a gearing mechanism.



The mill has a vertical waterwheel with “paddles” that are moved by a strong stream of water. This movement is transmitted to the mill stone by a sprocket-wheel. And the other equipped with a horizontal waterwheel and is characterized by intermittent water supply. Recent studies have linked vertical water wheel mills to the main watercourses and horizontal waterwheel mills to the secondary or tertiary hydrographic network.

Due to this different location of the two types of grinding, horizontal waterwheel mills are usually subject to droughts, preventing them from functioning. On the contrary, there are no indications of seasonal stops in vertical waterwheel mills, since they are located on major water courses, and therefore not being subject to the drought in the warmer periods of the year.

The Interpretation Centre - House of the Rural World is in the village of Prados, which is located in the foothills of Serra da Estrela. This museum centre opened on November 15th, 2008 with the purpose of portraying the daily lives of our people in the early twentieth century. To successfully complete this project, a house with traditional architecture was restored, with the use of regional materials (granite and wood). This type of houses, which for many years filled the cultural landscapes of our villages have been progressively replaced by another type which usually no longer uses the materials of the region, breaking the almost natural symbiosis between landscape of granite and natural environment.

The mission of the Interpretation Centre of Prados is the collection and preservation of local heritage, acting not only as memory safeguard instrument, but also as instrument of affirmation and diffusion of local identity, allowing the visitors to experience and observe everyday traditional rural life.

This museum center also recreates a period in which the facilities inside a house were virtually nonexistent, recalling the experiences of older people and showing younger generations what seems like a surreal setting when compared to nowadays living conditions, of what it would be like to live in a house without running water, electricity, a bathroom or telephone.



Thus, the House of the Rural World is in close dependence of local building materials. According to shape, there are two distinct types: North and South, both rectangular and generally with pitched roofs. The house of type Center/North is essentially characterized by having two floors, a ground floor store designed to keep livestock, implements and agricultural products and a living floor where the kitchen, living room and bedrooms are. These two floors are nevertheless independent. The entrance to the housing floor is made via an external staircase of stone, parallel or perpendicular to the facade, with a porch in front of the main door. The blocks on the walls are visible, more or less regular, just overlapped without mortar, plaster or whitewash.

The Village of Linhares da Beira, recognized nationally and internationally as a Historic Village of Portugal, managed to develop paragliding, having become the national and Iberian capital of this sport. It has the longest course flights, the record of the greater flight duration which has been increasing. In 2010, it organized the 1st International Meeting of Paragliders having received about 290 foreign paragliders. Let's not forget the Castle of Linhares da Beira, with a magnificent view and some technological innovations. Inside the castle of Linhares visitors may even find a paragliding simulator, specially created for those who want to experience flight without taking risks.



For hiking lovers and for those who enjoy nature, there are several pedestrian paths, as is the case of the Serra do Ralo trail, which begins in the Wind Farm Substation of Serra do Ralo and covers a distance of 11.1 km. This route can be enjoyed throughout the whole year but hikers are advised to take precautions regarding high temperatures in summer. This is due to the lack of trees and shadow along the trail. In the winter time weather conditions can be very harsh, caused by the cold wind and possibly even snow.

The trail Serra do Ralo was created with the purpose of improving the knowledge of hikers on wind power. On departure, educational panels explain how the wind farm works, from the formation of wind to its use to generate electricity.

The two pedestrians trails integrated in the Municipality of Celorico da Beira, are called trail S. Gens and trail das ladeiras. The first covers a distance of 6.5 km visiting the historic village and the second covers a distance of 4km starting at Linhares da Beira.

Given that Celorico da Beira is a mainly rural and agricultural county, the Municipality Authority has always played an important role in the promotion and dissemination of the best that this county produces, with special focus on the Serra da Estrela cheese. Therefore, it organizes annual events aiming to promote the region, such as street markets to sell regional and local products in Porto and Lisbon.

The Cheese Fair is held, annually, around Carnival time. Its program includes a carnival parade of parishes and associations, a crafts fair and it represent an opportunity for cheese producers to sell and promote their products.

The Serra da Estrela mutton is also a product with significant impact on the county's economy due to its excellent quality. The Mutton Festival is also held annually in the village of Carrapichana in order to promote, publicize and celebrate this product, highly appreciated in Regional Food. The Chestnut Festival is held in early November in the village of Prados, with the aim of promoting and selling chestnuts.

Last year the 1st International Festival of Wine was held and it brought to Celorico da Beira hundreds of national and international connoisseurs, critics and wine tasters.

In August, we welcomed the big event Water Dances + Andanças24, these two festivals are united by a sense of responsibility and commitment regarding social environmental sustainability and guided by certain principles, such as: reducing local and global environmental impacts; learning and working with the local community in order to help create and establish gradual changes towards sustainability; and help to nationally spread principles and best practices for social environmental festivals and other cultural events.



This event was held in the village of Ratoeira, on the river side of Mondego that has its source in Serra da Estrela. The community and local culture provided the inspiration and the invitation for people to dance, share and enjoy traditional music and dances, entertainment and activities of local identity, workshops, dances and outings.