



# S. TORCATO GUIMARÃES

[www.visitguimaraes.travel](http://www.visitguimaraes.travel)



Guimarães  
Porto  
50 Km  
Lisboa



**Tourist Office**  
Praça de S. Tiago (historique centre)  
tel: (+351) 253 421 221  
e-mail: [info@visitguimaraes.travel](mailto:info@visitguimaraes.travel)

**Tourist Office**  
Rua Palo Galvão (town centre)  
tel: (+351) 253 421 233  
e-mail: [info@visitguimaraes.travel](mailto:info@visitguimaraes.travel)

**Tourist Office Irmandade de São Torcato**  
tel: (+351) 253 551 150  
e-mail: [geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt](mailto:geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt)



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## PARQUE DO LAGO

A visit to the Parque do Lago is a must. It has abundant trees and gardens, and the central area has a fountain with water flowing down different levels to the lake, creating a beautiful microsystem. In autumn and winter, the trees lose their leaves and, together with the water of the lake, create a tranquil, gentle and harmonious environment.



## VIVAPARK

Vivapark sits in 10 hectares of natural environment in the National Ecological Reserve, with great adventure, adrenaline and safety, to relax and enjoy time with family or friends.

Vivapark offers a great variety of activities, including Paintball, Laser Tag, a 400m Double Slide Cable, the Bridge Circuit, the Children's Circuit, Climbing and a Botanical Trail.

The park's infrastructures are designed to meet criteria for the conservation of the natural environment and are compatible with the activities there.

The support equipment includes two halls, with seating for 24 people, and mountain retreats. Vivapark also organises business events and birthday parties.

location: Lage do Mócho – Rua do Corgo  
GPS: 41°29'41.82" N 8°16'5.052" W

opening times: 10h00–18h00  
closed on Thursdays

phone: (+351) 253 553 139 / 919 660 625  
e-mail: [info@vivapark.pt](mailto:info@vivapark.pt)  
[www.vivapark.pt](http://www.vivapark.pt)



## PR1 SÃO TORCATO WALKING TRAIL

São Torcato is a village where you feel the harmony between Earth, Man and River, always connected by paths with a history we should recover and conserve. It is a valley of rural traditions, and the introduction of maize in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century meant that windmills played an important part in the development of the local economy. The characteristic hanged vineyards flank the cultivated fields and the river and, together with the windmills, create a beautiful landscape which is unique, different and proper to the region of Minho.

In spring and summer, you can enjoy the cool shade and natural and tranquil environment they create. The park has tables and benches for picnics and relaxation, as well, as fitness equipment, a children's playground, a bar and public toilets.

open all year round  
GPS: 41°28'50.57" N 8°15'33.30" W

types of trail: Short Routes, rural trails  
departure and arrival: Basílica de S. Torcato (circular)  
type of area covered: environmental, scenic, historical-cultural and religious / distance to be walked: 8.5 Km / duration of the trail: about 4 hours, easy / slopes: very gentle



## CAMÉLIAS PARK FLAVIUS

The Camélias Park Flavius nursery is situated close to the Basílica of São Torcato. It is an important space, with more than 2300 varieties and strains of camellia. It presents a vast collection of Portuguese camellias, an enormous variety of japonicas, sasanquas and hybrids and also the largest collection of camellias reticulatas in the country (more than 200 different cultivars). The most important strains in the nursery are the *Camellia changii* (azalea), the *Camellia amplexicaulis* and the *Camellia chrysantha*.

location: Rua das Charnecas – São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'40.7" N 8°15'34.0" W

open all year round  
guided visits by appointment  
phone: (+351) 963 649 175  
e-mail: [viveirosflavius@gmail.com](mailto:viveirosflavius@gmail.com)



## FAUNA

In the wet zones near the river, the fauna includes some invertebrates such as butterflies, including the peacock (*Aglais io*), speckled wood (*Pararge aegeria*), common blue (*Polymmatius icarus*) and Lang's short tailed blue (*Leptotes pirithous*).

Their size and black colour makes the black slug (*Arion ater*) easy to spot, and also abundant in this ecosystem are dragonflies such as the golden-ringed dragonfly (*Cordulegaster boltonii*) which patrols the surface of the river or the beautiful demoiselle (*Calopteryx virgo*) which is found at rest on vegetation.

Camouflaged in the rocks you find the Iberian frog (*Rana iberica*) and, hidden in the aquatic vegetation is Bosca's newt (*Lissotriton boscai*). Walking slowly near the water's edge on wet evenings, you can see the fire salamander (*Salamandra salamandra*).

The vegetation in the woods or in the riparian gallery, is a refuge for numerous species of birds including the common blackbird (*Turdus merula*), Eurasian wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), common whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*), blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), common cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), Iberian green woodpecker (*Picus sharpei*) and red-legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*).

You can also see some mammals like the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), European rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), Spanish mole (*Talpa occidentalis*) and, concealed in the aquatic vegetation, the greater white-toothed shrew (*Crocidura russula*) and southwestern water vole (*Arvicola sapidus*).

## RELIGIOUS FESTIVITIES

### Fair of the 27th 27th February

This unique tradition attracts thousands of people to São Torcato, particularly cattle breeders who come from many different parts of the north of the country to take part in a cattle-breeding competition. These festivities are an example of the way faith and fervour are manifested to celebrate São Torcato (Saint Torcato) – the people's saint – and they keep the tradition and religious uniqueness alive today.

location: Terreiro de São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'56.9" N 8°15'40.5" W  
organisation: Irmandade de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 253 551 150  
e-mail: [geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt](mailto:geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt)

### Romaria Pequena 15th May

The Romaria Pequena or Small Pilgrimage celebrates the appearance of the relic of the Saint and of the Miraculous Fountain. The "Water of the Saint" is celebrated on this date by the inhabitants of São Torcato and the surrounding area.

location: Capela da Fonte do Santo  
GPS: 41°28'56.9" N 8°15'40.5" W  
organisation: Irmandade de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 253 551 150  
e-mail: [geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt](mailto:geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt)



### Romaria Grande de São Torcato 1st Sunday in July

The Great Pilgrimage of São Torcato has been held every year on the first Sunday of July since 1852. Historically, it is considered to be one of the greatest pilgrimages of Entre Douro, Minho and Portugal, and is an impressive manifestation of the people's devotion and religiosity, celebrating the formal moving of the body of the Saint from the Parish Church to the Basílica. A great variety of fun activities take place during this week-end, particularly the wonderful procession on the Sunday.

location: Basílica and Terreiro de São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'56.9" N 8°15'40.5" W  
organisation: Irmandade de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 253 551 150  
e-mail: [geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt](mailto:geral@irmandadesaotorcato.pt)

## TRADITIONAL FESTIVITIES

### Linhal da Corredoura – Linen Festival 3rd Saturday of June

For several decades, the Folkloric Group of Corredoura has worked hard to bring together and research the tasks involved in the Linen cycle, in collaboration with historians and local inhabitants. The first Linen festival, called "Linhal de Corredora" was held in 1980, and is an annual event consisting of a demonstration of each phase in the manufacture of linen, from the gathering of the plant to the production the



thread to be used on manual weaving looms. Admission is free.

location: Corredoura – São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'56.9" N 8°15'40.5" W  
organisation: Grupo Folclórico da Corredoura  
phone: (+351) 918 655 805  
e-mail: [gfcorredoura@gmail.com](mailto:gfcorredoura@gmail.com)  
[www.gfcorredoura.org](http://www.gfcorredoura.org)

## THE TRADITION OF LINEN

For centuries, linen was a textile fibre par excellence, used for making clothes, both in Portugal and throughout the Mediterranean. It was also prevalent in the Far East where it is thought to have originated and began to be cultivated thousands of years ago. In Portugal, the ancient production of Linen is confirmed by various remains dating from pre-historic times.

The Guimarães architect, Martins Sarmento, says he has found dozens of economic "spindle whorls" in the excavations carried out in Citânia de Briteiros and Castro de Sabrosa. Guimarães has continued to produce high-quality linen through the centuries, and still uses primitive methods of production today. The importance of this plant is reflected in the way rents were paid in one of two ways in the past: either with balls of linen fibres or with linen already woven into cloth. Each family sowed its field of linen, had its own reels and spindles and, in one corner of the house, had a wooden loom to meet their needs. Nowadays, it is only grown in one area of Guimarães, in the Rua da Corredoura in São Torcato, where it is produced in exactly the same way as it has been for centuries, using the same procedures and rituals, handed down by generations lost in time. The only change has been in the way the warp is set up, which is now mostly done with cotton.



### Feira da Terra 2nd weekend of July (Thursday to Sunday)

This is an open-air event which aims to promote handicrafts, farming products and traditional gastronomy, valuing the customs of the rural world. Visitors can also enjoy a programme of music and entertainment which showcases the culture and traditions of the region. Admission is free.

Location: Terreiro de São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'56.9" N 8°15'40.5" W  
organisation: Associação para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Locais (ADCL)  
phone: (+351) 253 551 071  
e-mail: [adcl@adcl.org.pt](mailto:adcl@adcl.org.pt)  
[www.adcl.org.pt](http://www.adcl.org.pt)

duration: 1 day with lunch in a local restaurant  
min. and max. no. of persons: 2 to 13 persons in fly&drive



### Harvest Festival 2nd weekend of October (Friday to Sunday)

During the three-day event, visitors can see the re-creation of old customs related to Bread, Wine and the Lord, with the country people dressed in the clothes of the era being recreated (the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries). Admission is free.

location: Terreiro de São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'50.9" N 8°15'33.3" W  
organisation: Grupo Folclórico de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 961937 016 / 968 837 378 / 966 778 731  
e-mail: [gfstorcato@sapo.pt](mailto:gfstorcato@sapo.pt)

## FOLKLORE FESTIVALS

### International Folklore Festival of São Torcato

3rd weekend in July  
The Folkloric Group of São Torcato showcases the singing and dancing of the Baixo Minho region. They have given numerous shows in Portugal and in international folklore festivals, and have won various awards. Admission is free.

location: Terreiro de São Torcato  
GPS: 41°28'52.38" N 8°15'32.35" W  
time: 2h30  
organisation: Grupo Folclórico de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 919 065 945  
e-mail: [gfstorcato@sapo.pt](mailto:gfstorcato@sapo.pt)

### Fest' in Folk Corredoura – The Dancing World in Guimarães

From the 1st Monday in August to the following Sunday  
The Grupo Folclórico de Corredoura organises a bold and innovative annual folklore festival, combining world cultures with a new focus on countries from "every part of the world", with initiatives in multiple spaces and street parades with a fusion of different colours, music and cultures. Admission is free.

location: various venues (consult the programme)  
time: 2h30  
organisation: Grupo Folclórico da Corredoura  
phone: (+351) 914 535 867  
e-mail: [festinfolkcorredoura@gmail.com](mailto:festinfolkcorredoura@gmail.com); [gfcorredoura@gmail.com](mailto:gfcorredoura@gmail.com)  
[www.gfcorredoura.org](http://www.gfcorredoura.org)

## ORGANISED TOURS AND CIRCUITS

### Religious Architecture and Sacred Art – Guimarães and São Torcato

The fervent devotion which marks the life of these people is stamped on the landscape. Visit to the main religious buildings of the village of São Torcato and Guimarães.

duration: 1 day with lunch in a local restaurant  
min. and max. no. of persons: 2 to 13 persons in fly&drive

### São Torcato – Guided Visit to the Basílica

A visit to the Basílica of São Torcato with stories of the life of the Martyr, Saint Torcato, and the surrounding area – Terreiro and Parque do Lago.

duration: 60 min  
min. and max. no. of persons: 2 to 13 persons  
includes: transport from and returning to Guimarães

### Sacred Guimarães – A guided visit to the religious attractions of Guimarães

Visits to the Basílica of São Torcato and the Penha Sanctuary. As well as the presentation of all of the churches of the Historic Centre.

duration: 8h  
min. and max. no. of persons: 2 to 13 persons

information for all visits  
languages: Portuguese, English, French and Spanish  
bookings at least 48 hours in advance, with special conditions for groups  
meeting point: Largo República do Brasil, no. 33 (in the centre of Guimarães)

Portugal Autêntico  
phone: (+351) 916 255 220  
e-mail: [info@portugalautentico.pt](mailto:info@portugalautentico.pt)  
[www.portugalautentico.pt](http://www.portugalautentico.pt)

### Guimarães and the Surrounding Hills

A tour in a 4x4, through the main hills around Guimarães and its surroundings. Visit to the Hill of São Bento das Pêras, the Penha mountain, the Hill of Santa Marinha and a visit to the Basílica of São Torcato.

duration: 3 to 4 hours  
min. and max. no. of persons: 3 to 7 persons  
Languages: Portuguese, English, Spanish and French

Possibility of completing the tour with a guided visit to the city of Guimarães with a local guide  
meeting point: Largo do Toural

Léguas Tantas  
phone: (+351) 928 094 003  
e-mail: [geral@leguastantas.com](mailto:geral@leguastantas.com)  
[www.leguastantas.com](http://www.leguastantas.com)

### A Ride in a UTV Side by Side

A ride in a four-by-four off-road Polaris RZR 570 vehicle. Route from Fafe to Guimarães and back (passing through São Torcato, with a stop to visit the Basílica).

Duration: 10h  
min. and max. no. of persons: 1 to 4 UTV Side by Sides (each UTV seats 2)  
languages: Portuguese, English and French  
includes: personal safety equipment, guide, lunch and personal insurance for this activity.

meeting point: pick-up and drop-off at the accommodation unit or at the Camp Site of the Queimadela Reservoir in Fafe.

Foxtrot Aventura  
phone: (+351) 253 504 049 / 253 172 560 / 930 514 891  
e-mail: [foxtrotaventura@gmail.com](mailto:foxtrotaventura@gmail.com)  
[www.foxtrotaventura.pt](http://www.foxtrotaventura.pt)



## BASÍLICA OF SÃO TORCATO

The Basilica of São Torcato is an imposing presence in the centre of the village. Its construction was based on a design by the Russian architect, Ludwig Bohnstedt from 1868. He was born in St. Petersburg and was a Professor of the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy of Fine Art before moving to Gotha in Prussia, where he was living when he won the competition. Bohnstedt added to the initial design of the architect, Barros de Lima, with construction beginning in 1825. The Brotherhood was later to alter its topology once again through the architect, José Marques da Silva (1894). The construction had begun in the 19th century and continued throughout the 20th century, the building being completed with an official ceremony on 25th October 2015. The temple has been built in a clear mixture of styles: with gothic elements, some of which suggest a Roman influence, and others in the Renaissance or classical style. The Basilica has an extraordinary carrillon composed of 14 bells which can produce many different liturgical melodies. Inside the Basilica, faithful pilgrims venerate the pure body of the first martyr of Iberian Christianity, which rests in the mausoleum of the main chapel of the Basilica. Devotion to the Saint was early to transform this location into one of the largest centres of pilgrimage in the north of the country. His Holiness Pope Francisco raised this Sanctuary to the status of Minor Basilica on 27th February 2020. Next to the Basilica is a museum of the Brotherhood of São Torcato which displays a collection representing its history, tradition and construction.

services held everyday  
9h00– 2h00 / 13h30–18h00  
visits in Portuguese by appointment  
min. and max. no. of persons: 2 to 15 persons

Irmandade de São Torcato  
phone: (+351) 253 551150  
e-mail: irmandadestorcato@gmail.com



## CAPELA DA FONTE DO SANTO

Saint Torcato was driven by the ideals of the Christian re-conquest of the 8th and 9th centuries, and left with 27 companions to face the Muslim army which was invading the Iberian Peninsula. Moved by his unwavering faith, Saint Torcato confronted General Muça, the enemy, with the following words: "I will face my enemy either to win with persuasion or to die with the flock of Jesus Christ". Muça was made furious by those words and dealt Saint Torcato a death blow, while the sectarian barbarians did the same to his faithful and inseparable companions. He was made a martyr in São Torcato, where his holy body was later found. A fountain sprang up with the clearest water on the spot where he proved his faith in heroic martyrdom, and has been conserved until today. Its water has always been used for healing by pilgrim believers. There a small hermitage was built which used to be known as São Torcato o Velho, but is now called Capela da Fonte do Santo.

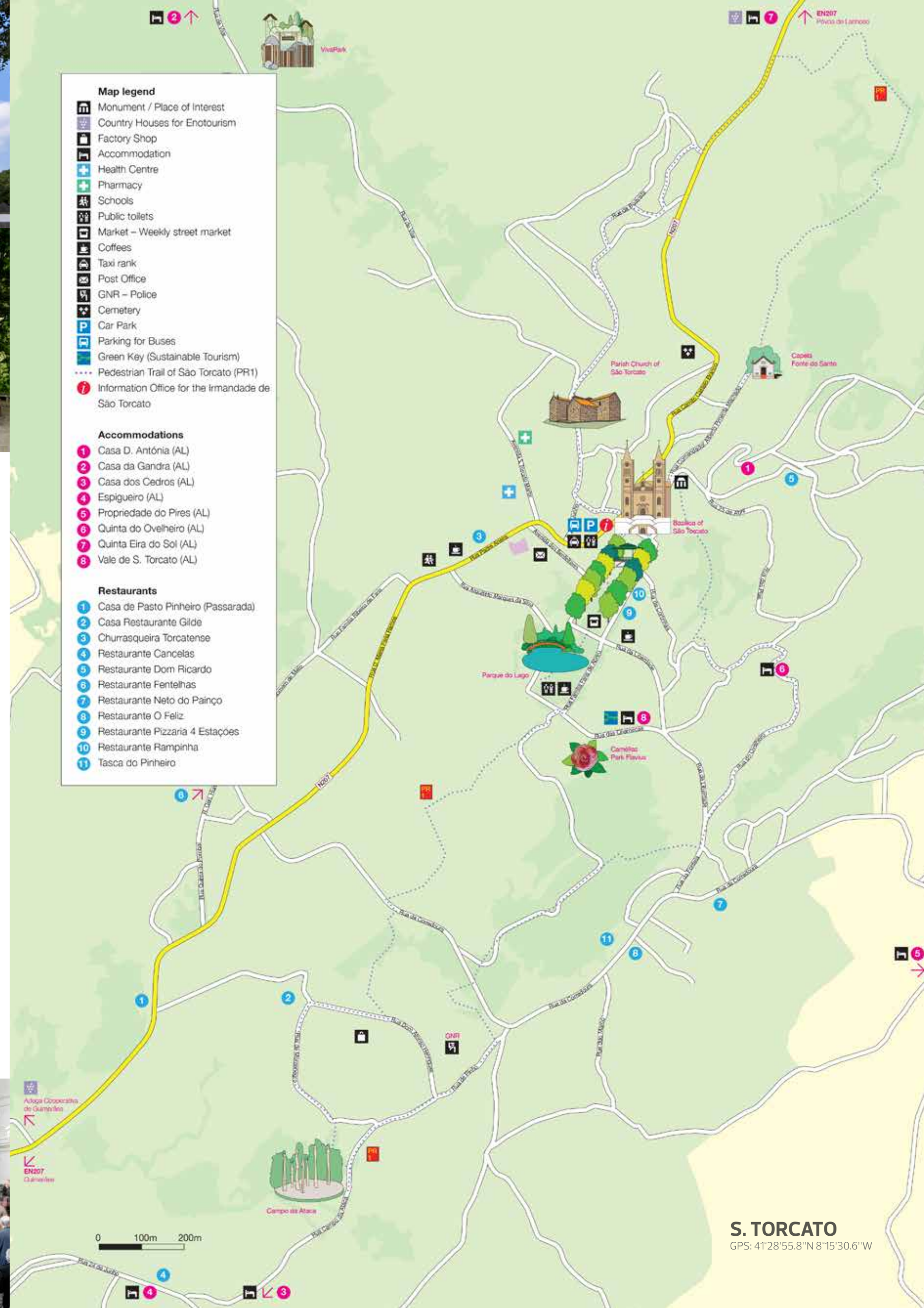
GPS: 41°29'9.456"N 8°15'17.928"W



## THE VILLAGE OF SÃO TORCATO

The village of São Torcato is 5 Km from Guimarães, in a predominantly rural territory rich in cultural and natural heritage. A stop here is a must for visitors to Guimarães. You can find rural and religious traditions and customs which are manifested in annual festivities and events, and internationally famous folkloric groups. Working with linen has always been important for farming and handicrafts, which can still be seen today in the locally made costumes worn by the folkloric groups. Agriculture has an essential role here, with farmers selling local produce from their land in the weekly market, but also with younger farmers working to produce new cultivation techniques of the quality demanded by the public today.

The village of São Torcato owes its name to the saint who was born in Toledo (Spain) in the 7th century. Saint Torcato was the Bishop of Braga, Oporto and Dume, and the last bishop resident in Braga until the raising of the archdiocese in 1070. Due to the Muslim invasion, his successors established themselves in Lugo, Galicia. São Torcato has always been a pretext for constant visits and pilgrimages by thousands of people throughout the year. These pilgrims come from many different places in every continent of the world, as can be seen in the registration book of the



## PARISH CHURCH OF SÃO TORCATO

The church of São Torcato is a Roman temple and the product of various phases of construction over almost four centuries (from the 10th to the 13th century), but is interesting because of its pre-Roman remains. The archaeological digs of the 1980s dated its occupation from the beginning of the middle ages, and uncovered very important pre-Roman remains, defining this monument as one of the most symbolic examples of Visigoth art in the north of the country. The most important remains are the limestone friezes decorating the interior of the main chapel. Carefully decorated with tangent circles and quatrefoils, which are one of the main elements characterising the complex artistic reality of the 10th century, they also show a direct relationship with the homogeneous Asturian style (with which its promoters were ideologically connected), and also attest to the vitality of a channel of north-south influence stylistically relating to geometrical pieces identified in Tomar and Lisbon. Two aximezes (double windows with horse-shoe arches) are part of the location's pre-Roman remains. Other elements such as a vegetal capital and a lipsanotheca (a small wooden box for relics), also of Asturian origin, make the little Chapel of São Torcato an obligatory visit for the appreciation of high medieval art in the Portuguese territory. It reaffirms the connection between the Christian north and the Muslim south, which was not always in the constant antagonism that history has so often suggested – but in a progressive cultural and artistic relationship.

visits in portuguese by appointment:  
phone: (+351) 962 521637 / 925 448 998  
min and max of person: 2 a 10 persons  
GPS: 41°29'2.22"N 8°15'34.056"W



## CAMPO DA ATACA

The Campo da Ataca is located near of the centre of the village. It can be visited on leaving Guimarães in the direction of São Torcato or by following the Walking Trail which passes through there. According to the tradition of many generations, it was in São Torcato, on 24th June 1128, that the Battle of São Mamede began and where D. Afonso Henriques conquered the chief of the Portucalense county, initiating the political process of Portuguese independence by preventing the attempted conquest of the Galician hegemony. It is significant that the name is "Campo da Ataca" – or field of the attack – a very suggestive warlike designation. The current artistic-monumental arrangement celebrating this event was inaugurated in 1996.

Admission is free  
GPS: 41°28'7.752"N 8°16'3.324"W

## CONTACTS / USEFUL INFORMATION

**SOS Medical Emergency**  
phone: 112  
**Health Centre**  
phone: (+351) 253 551372  
**Republican National Guard (Police)**  
phone: (+351) 253 422 570  
**Voluntary Fire Brigade**  
phone: (+351) 253 515 444  
**São Torcato Parish Council**  
phone: (+351) 253 551857  
**São Torcato Brotherhood**  
phone: (+351) 253 551150  
**Information Office of the Basilica of São Torcato**  
phone: (+351) 253 551150  
e-mail: geral@irmandadesaatorcato.pt  
**Taxis**  
phone: (+351) 253 525 252  
**Market/Weekly Street Market**  
saturday mornings