

Castelo de São Jorge

Castelo de São Jorge



Open 7 days a week, nowadays Castelo de São Jorge is now a place where you can enjoy our heritage, get to know a little about Lisbon's history at the Permanent Exhibition, explore the remains of the Moorish neighbourhood dating back to the 11th century at the Archaeological Site, discover unrivalled views over the city at the Camera Obscura, take a stroll around the gardens and belvederes, take a break at the Café do Castelo, go on our guided tours, themed tours or other educational activities, or simply enjoy the music, theatre, dancing and conferences on heritage that will brighten up your days at this remarkable monument in Lisbon.

The **Castelo de São Jorge - National Monument** occupies the most privileged area of the old medieval alcáçova (citadel) and consists of the castle, the ruins of the former royal palace, as well as part of a residential neighbourhood which was home to the elite.

The fortification, built by the Moors in the mid-11th century, was the last defensive stronghold of the elite who resided within the citadel: the Moorish governor (whose palace was nearby) and the elite city administrators whose homes are visible today in the Archaeological Site.

After Dom Afonso Henriques conquered Lisbon on 25 October, 1147, to become the first king of Portugal, Castelo de São Jorge began its golden age as a home for the royalty. The old Moorish-period buildings were modified and enlarged to accommodate the king, his court and the bishop, as well as the Royal Archives housed in one of the castle towers. Once the Portuguese kings had transformed the Castelo de São Jorge into a royal palace in the 13th century, it was chosen to host many notable Portuguese and foreign figures, as well as to hold festivities and coronations during the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.

When Portugal became part of the Spanish Crown in 1580, Castelo de São Jorge took on a more important military role which continued until the early 20th century. Some areas were converted, while new ones appeared. However, it was largely after the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 that the most substantial renovation work took place on the old medieval alcáçova, with many new buildings gradually covering over the older ruins. In the 19th century, a military garrison covered the entire area of the present-day National Monument.

The castle and ruins of the former royal palace were rediscovered following major restoration work carried out between 1938 and 1940. Ancient buildings were rescued from amidst the ruins of previous demolition projects. The castle regained its former magnificence and was opened to the public.

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Archaeological research conducted in several areas in the late 20th century was vital in ascertaining the antiquity of the hilltop settlement, as well as confirming the location's invaluable historical importance, justifying the Royal Decree of 1910 which declared Castelo de São Jorge a National Monument.

Visitors can learn more about these past lifestyles from the evidence on display at both the Permanent Exhibition and the Archaeological Site now open for visits.

10 Important Moments of the Castelo de São Jorge

7th - 8th c. B.C. | BEFORE THE CASTLE • The first settlements
11th c. | FOUNDING OF THE CASTLE • The castle and Moorish residential area
12th c. | THE CHRISTIAN RECONQUEST • The transition from the Moorish to Christian world
13th c. | ROYAL RESIDENCE • The castle and the royal palace of the alcáçova
14th c. | ROYAL RESIDENCE • The Torre do Tombo and the Succession Crisis
15th - 16th c. | ROYAL RESIDENCE • Court life and the last king of the castle
17th - 18th c. | FROM ROYAL RESIDENCE TO MILITARY GARRISON
18th c. | 1755 EARTHQUAKE
19th c. | THE CASTLE AS A MILITARY GARRISON
20th c. | THE CASTLE - A NATIONAL MONUMENT • Restoration work from 1938-40

What to see

| Castle



Built in the mid-11th century, during the Moorish period, this fortification is situated on the most inaccessible area at the top of the hill, taking advantage of the natural slopes to the north and west. The purpose of the castle was to house military troops and also, in the case of a siege, the elite who lived in the alcáçova (citadel). Unlike most European castles, it was not intended to perform a residential role. Eleven towers still remain, the most outstanding being the Torre de Menagem (Tower of the Keep), Torre do Haver or do Tombo (Tower of Riches or Tumbling Tower), Torre do Paço (Tower of the Palace), Torre da Cisterna (Tower of the Cistern) and the Torre de São Lourenço (Tower of St. Lawrence) which is located on the hillside. Ruins of older structures and a cistern still remain in the second courtyard. Also found here is a small gate on the northern wall called the Gate of Betrayal which allowed secret messengers to enter or exit when needed. Three sets of steps leading up the sides of the walls provide access to the towers and the ramparts, one in the first courtyard and two in the second.

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| Ruins of the Citadel's Former Royal Palace



This collection of buildings, now housing the Permanent Exhibition, provide the most significant evidence of the former medieval royal residence. The Romantic Garden and patios also display some architectural features that were part of the royal residence. The royal palace suffered heavy damage during the earthquake of 1755. Located at the entrance to the Permanent Exhibition, a reproduction of a 16th century drawing is the best indication of what the Royal Palace and Lisbon looked like before the earthquake.

| Archaeological Site



These archaeological remains present evidence of the three most significant periods in Lisbon's history: (1) the first known settlements dating back to the 7th century BC; (2) the remnants of the Moorish-era residential area, from the time of the castle's construction in the mid-11th century; (3) the ruins of the last palatial residence of the old citadel destroyed by the earthquake of 1755.

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| Permanent Exhibition



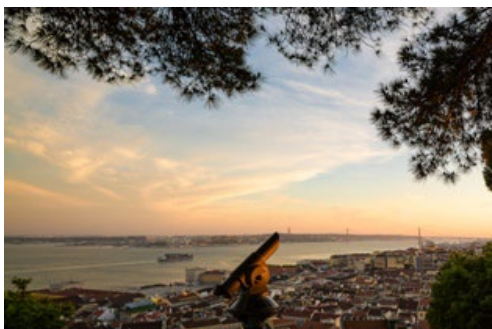
Open to visitors, this collection consists of objects found at the Archaeological Site and provides an introduction to the various cultures and lifestyles (from the 7th century BC to the 18th century), which contributed to the building of the Lisbon we know today, with particular emphasis on the Moorish period from the 11th to 12th centuries.

| Camera Obscura



This camera obscura, an optical system of lenses and mirrors, provides 360° detailed views of the city in real time, including its monuments, most emblematic areas, the river and the bustle of Lisbon itself.

| Viewpoint



Due to its exceptional location, Castelo de São Jorge stands out among Lisbon's viewpoints for its unique and majestic views.



Castelo de São Jorge

More Information

Opening Times

9 am – 9 pm (March to October)

9 am – 6 pm (November to February)

Last admission

30 minutes before closing time

Closed

1 January | 1 May | 24, 25 and 31* December

*31st of December closed from 1pm

What to see

Castle
Permanent Exhibition
Archaeological Site (Restricted access)
Camera Obscura
Viewpoint

Guided Tours - € 4

Tours by experts in history, art history and archaeology

Tour availability must be confirmed every day

Length - 1hr | Several languages (Portuguese, English, Spanish* and Italian*)

*Visits in Spanish and Italian are available by appointment

Advance booking - info@castelodesaojorge.pt | +351 218 800 620

Guided Tours Discovering the Castle - 11.30am, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 7pm*

*from April to September | in October it takes place at 6:00 pm

- The Castle and the Royal Palace
- The Archaeological Site and the Castelo de São Jorge
- The Archaeological Site and the Museum
- Discover the Castle by sunset

Free Guided Tours

Included in the Castelo de São Jorge ticket | Length - 15m | Several languages

Tour availability must be confirmed every day | Admission by order of arrival

Archaeological Site

10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm - from October to

March

10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm, 6pm - from April to

September

Capacity per session 25 people

Camera Obscura

10.00am to 2pm - from October to March

10.00am to 5pm - from April to September



Castelo de São Jorge

Capacity per session 20 people
Subject to weather conditions

Facilities

Guided Tours
Theme Tours
Restaurant (temporarily closed)
2 street food outlets
Shop
Cashpoint (ATM)
Information point
Lost property

Contacts

Castelo de São Jorge, Rua de Santa Cruz do Castelo
1100-129 Lisboa
+351 218 800 620
info@castelodesaojorge.pt
www.castelodesaojorge.pt

Getting here

Bus 37
Tram 12, 28
Metro – Rossio, Martim Moniz and Baixa-Chiado
Train Station - Rossio

Parking

Portas do Sol
Chão do Loureiro

On Foot

Fastest route from Baixa:

Via Rua da Madalena, take Chão do Loureiro carpark lift (enter on Largo do Caldas and exit on Costa do Castelo), then walk via Costa do Castelo, Rua do Milagre de Santo António, Rua Bartolomeu de Gusmão, Rua do Chão da Feira and up Rua de Santa Cruz do Castelo;
See route on Google Maps

OR

Via Rua dos Fanqueiros, take the Castelo Lift (enter on Rua dos Fanqueiros n.º 176, exit on Rua da Madalena) and Chão do Loureiro carpark lift (enter on Largo do Caldas and exit on Costa do Castelo), then walk via Costa do Castelo, Rua do Milagre de Santo António, Rua Bartolomeu de Gusmão, Rua do Chão da Feira and up Rua de Santa Cruz do Castelo;
See route on Google Maps

The main entrance is on Rua de Santa Cruz, 1100-129 Lisboa.

TICKETS

Adults € 15

Concessions

13 – 25 years old € 7,5

Senior > 65 years old € 12,5

Disabled person and Deaf € 12,5

Free

(upon presentation of relevant proof)

Children < 12 years old

Lisbon residents

APAC | APOM | ICOM | ICOMOS

On duty RNAAT-registered tourism professionals upon presentation of relevant identification documents (in accordance with points 7 and 8 of article 5 of decree-law 108/2009)

Members of the press with advance booking

Disabled person's assistant