

# Castelo de São Jorge

## Castelo de São Jorge



Open 7 days a week, 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 Museum, explore the remains of the Moorish neighbourhood dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century at the Archaeological Site, discover unrivalled views over the city at the Camera Obscura, take a stroll around the gardens and belvederes, go on our guided tours or participate in 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-11<sup>th</sup> 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, and became 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 13<sup>th</sup> century, it was chosen to host many notable Portuguese and foreign figures, as well as to hold festivities and coronations during the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

# Castelo de São Jorge

Archaeological research conducted in several areas in the late 20<sup>th</sup> 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 Museum 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 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.

# Castelo de São Jorge

## | Ruins of the Citadel's Former Royal Palace



This collection of buildings, now housing the Museum, 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> century BC; (2) the remnants of the Moorish-era residential area, from the time of the castle's construction in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century; (3) the ruins of the last palatial residence of the old citadel destroyed by the earthquake of 1755.

# Castelo de São Jorge

## | Museum



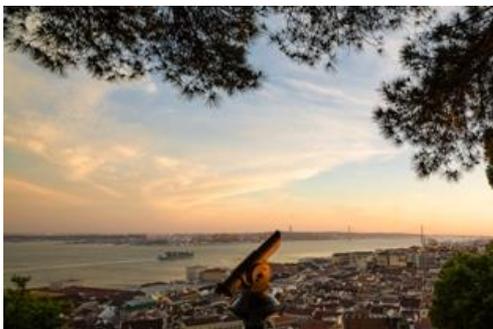
Open to visitors, this collection consists of objects found at the Archaeological Site and provides an introduction to the various cultures and lifestyles (from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 18<sup>th</sup> century), which contributed to the building of the Lisbon we know today, with particular emphasis on the Moorish period from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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 1 pm

### What to see

Castle

Museum

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 - 1 hr | Several languages

No booking required. Admission by order of arrival

For more information contact - [info@castelodesaojorge.pt](mailto:info@castelodesaojorge.pt) | +351 218 800 620

#### Guided Tours Discovering the Castle

11 am, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm (October), 7pm (April to September)

- The Castle and the Royal Palace
- The Castle and the Archaeological Site
- 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

October to March:

10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm

April to September:

10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm, 6pm

Capacity per session 25 people

#### Camera Obscura

October to March: 10am to 2pm

April to September: 10am to 5pm



# Castelo de São Jorge

Capacity per session 20 people  
Subject to weather conditions

## Facilities

Guided Tours  
Restaurant  
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:

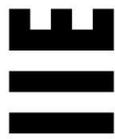
Via Rua da Madalena, take Chão do Loureiro carpark lift (enter on Largo do Caldas and exit on Costa do Castelo), then walk via Costa do Castelo, Rua do Milagre de Santo António, Rua Bartolomeu de Gusmão, Rua do Chão da Feira and up Rua de Santa Cruz do Castelo;  
See route on Google Maps

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



# Castelo de São Jorge

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