

algarve.
europe's
most famous
secret

lagoa

municipality

2013 - 3rd Edition

lagoa

A turquoise sea bounded by ochre cliffs and soft, sandy beaches; bunches of grapes ripening beneath the hot summer sun; the shapes, colours and designs of ceramics that belong to a tradition, centuries old: such are the attractions of Lagoa and its surroundings, along with the colourful fishing port of Ferragudo, the romantic chapel of Nossa Senhora da Rocha perched high above the sea, and the fascinating rock formations of Algar Seco.

HISTORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAGOA

It is not known when Lagoa was founded, and it was only after 1773, when it was elevated to the status of a town, that its history was first documented, but it is known that Estômbar and Porches were important centres in the Islamic and medieval periods and that Ferragudo had defensive ramparts.

Fishing and the fish canning industry breathed life and prosperity into Lagoa at the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th. Nowadays Lagoa is at the forefront of the modern Algarve, its economic success based on tourism and a growing range of industries and businesses.

VISITING LAGOA

A hill rises above the flat lands where, tradition has it, there was a lagoon in the past. At the top, the tower of a church is visible, above a labyrinth of streets of whitewashed houses. This is Lagoa, where Manueline doorways, windows edged in blue and the imposing tower of the convent create a feeling that time has stopped and evoke ways of life now long-forgotten.



Lagoa - LC

HISTORICAL CENTRE

The town grew up around its main church. There is still a feeling of the past in the streets of white houses where, here and there, it is possible to spot a chimney with the delicate decorative filigree typical of the Algarve. The winding streets are dotted with altars marking the Stations of the Cross used in the old Holy Week ceremonies, and more than a dozen Manueline doorways and windows (16th century).

CONVENT OF SÃO JOSÉ (ST. JOSEPH)

Built at the beginning of the 18th century in a sober, rural style, it has been rebuilt and repaired on many occasions since. It boasts a chapel with carved altars from the former Chapel of the Compromisso Marítimo (Maritime Agreement) in Lagos, and an 18th century depiction of São José (St. Joseph) with the Infant Jesus. There is an interesting belvedere tower with an arch over the street. At the entrance to the monastery there is a “foundling wheel”, which was once used for receiving abandoned children. The cloister is plain, with four arcades and a cistern in the centre. In the garden there is a menhir from Porches (5,000 to 4,000 B.C.).



Convent of São José - LC

MAIN CHURCH

All that remains of the place of worship-built in the 16th century is a Manueline doorway to the bell tower. The current building dates from the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, and has an attractive Baroque façade with neo-classical elements. The church has three naves, and the chief point of interest on the inside is the altarpiece on the main altar, with a perfect 18th century representation of Nossa Senhora da Luz (Our Lady of Light), the church’s patron saint, attributed to the sculptor Machado de Castro, and a São Sebastião (St. Sebastian). On the other altars, in the upper choir and in the registry a large number of statues and reliquaries from the 17th and 18th centuries are to be found, including an interesting Baby Jesus lying on a wooden bed in the “rocaille” style (end of the 18th century). The sacristy houses a magnificent chest in Brazilian wood, valuable religious objects (an 18th century silver incense boat and other items) and stones from the original Manueline building found in the church.



Main Church - LC



Lagoa - LC

MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH

Plain-fronted and small in size, this church has a carved main altar dating from the 18th century, with a statue of the crucifixion (17th century) and two other statues from the 18th century. The walls are covered in patterned tiles dating from the end of the 17th century.

getting to know lagoa municipality

ESTÔMBAR

An urban centre defended by a castle during the Arab period, it had a thriving economy based on salt production and trade along the Arade river. It was the birthplace of the Muslim poet Ibne-Ammar (11th century) and also the homeland of the guerrilla leader Remexido (1796-1838), who for many years struck fear into the heart of all in the Algarve. The historical centre retains the charm of a typical Algarve town, and has some interesting chimneys.

CHURCH OF SÃO TIAGO (ST. JAMES) 04

Built in the 16th century, it was extensively rebuilt in the 18th century. Its façade shows the influence of the "rocaille" style, with two towers and a Manueline doorway (16th century). There is another Manueline doorway on the south façade. The interior has three naves with three chapels at the apse end. Two interesting and rare columns survive from the original Manueline church, with sculpted shafts depicting scenes from everyday life. Other interesting features include: a valuable series of figurative tile panels from the 18th century, the arch of the chancel (Ascension), the tympanum (Resurrection), the chancel (São Tiago - St. James - fighting the Moors, the battle of Lepanto and scenes from the Gospels) and side chapels. There are gilded carved altarpieces in the chancel and other chapels. There is an important collection of 17th and 18th century statues on the altars and high choir, including an Indo-Portuguese Crucifixion in ivory (17th century) and a São Manuel (St. Manuel) (16th century). The Chapel of Senhor Jesus Crucificado (Lord Jesus Crucified) (16th century) contains Renaissance medallions of São Pedro (St. Peter) and São Paulo (St. Paul).

MISERICÓRDIA CHURCH

One of the first founded in Portugal, it had a working hospital as early as 1531. Its façade and interior are plain. 18th century main altar and statues. There are other places of interest nearby which are worth a visit.

SÍTIO DAS FONTES

This peaceful spot, located on a branch of the Arade river, consists of an eco-museum (an old mill, miller's house and waterwheel), an environmental education area and a leisure area with a picnic park and an open-air auditorium.

IBNE-AMMAR'S CAVE

Situated near the Arade river. Archaeological remains from the Calcolithic period and Bronze Age have been found here.

PARCHEL MONASTERY 05

Near Calvário. Founded in the 17th century, it was not rebuilt after the earthquake of 1755. Remains of murals and tiles are to be seen, along with tombs and monks' cells. A Roman archaeological site has been set up nearby.

CHAPEL OF SANTO ANTÓNIO (ST. ANTHONY) 06

Located on a hill in the vicinity of Mexilhoeira da Carregação, it has an excellent view over the Arade river.

FERRAGUDO

A fishing village since time immemorial (there were Roman salting tanks next to the Fort of São João de Arade) it had defensive walls in the Middle Ages, remains of which are still visible today.

It has preserved its original character, with rows of houses cascading down to the river, crowned by the outline of the church high on the hill, and pretty streets of whitewashed walls and roofs intersected by decorated chimneys.

CHURCH OF NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO (OUR LADY OF THE CONCEPTION) 07

The architecture of this building is typical of a country church. The 14th century altars display a noteworthy array of 17th and 18th century statues. In the sacristy there is a two-sided representation of Our Lady and Christ on the Cross, possibly from the 15th century, and a 16th century São Sebastião (St. Sebastian). There is a collection of sailors' and fishermen's "ex-votos", painted in a "naïf" style and depicting the miracles performed by the church's patron saint. There are small panels of figurative tiles inside and outside the church (18th century). From the churchyard there is a magnificent view of the sea, the Arade river and the city of Portimão.

FORT OF SÃO JOÃO DE ARADE 08

Together with the fortress of Santa Catarina on the other side, this fort constituted the main defence of the Arade estuary. It began life as a lookout tower in the 15th century and was extended in the 17th and 18th centuries. A great deal of work was done at the beginning of the 20th century to turn it into a home, on the initiative of the poet Coelho Carvalho, and it is to this that it owes its current romantic appearance. It is now private property.

Along the coast, where tiny beaches of great beauty are tucked away between looming cliffs, the remains of two medieval watchtowers, which were once used to give warning of attacks by pirates and corsairs, can be seen at Ponte da Atalaia and Quinta da Torre.



Fort of S. João do Arade - VC



Sra. da Rocha - HR



Main Church of S. Tiago - VC

PORCHES

There was at one time an old Roman and medieval settlement known as Porches Velhos, which was possibly the origin of what is now a typical Algarve village perched on a hill. In one of its narrow streets a chimney of monumental proportions, two storeys high, is to be found, and this has become a symbol of the village as a whole.

MAIN CHURCH 09

The church was built in the 19th century on the site of an earlier building dating from the 16th century, of which the chancel remains, clad in 18th century tiles, with a ribbed vault. The altarpiece in the chancel is carved and gilded, with statues (18th century). Among the religious artefacts is a monstrance in gilded copper.

CHAPEL OF NOSSA SENHORA DA ROCHA (OUR LADY OF THE ROCK) 10

Built on a narrow tongue of rock extending into the sea, its origins are lost in time. One of the capitals of the narthex is Visigothic in origin (6th/ 8th centuries) and the chapel incorporates stones from earlier Roman/medieval buildings located in the surrounding area. Its architectural structure is very interesting and it is topped with an octagonal cupola. Inside there is a valuable statue of the patron saint (Virgin and Child) from the 16th century.

The chapel used to be surrounded by an old coastal defence fort (built in the 15th century) which was destroyed by the earthquake of 1755. Some way further off are to be found the ruins of the Roman dam of Ponte dos Mouros.

CARVOEIRO

It is many years since the fishermen used to set off in their boats for the tuna nets from Carvoeiro beach, ready for the fight with the big fish trapped there.

However, the houses still cling to the hillside overlooking the beach. But today's Carvoeiro is also an international tourist resort. Perched on the top of a cliff are the vestiges of the walls of the fort of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of the Conception) (17th century). Inside the fort lies the chapel of Nossa Senhora da Encarnação (Our Lady of the Incarnation), revered by fishermen.

Nearby are the rock formations of Algar Seco, strange shapes and profiles sculpted by the wind and sea, and the romantic "Lovers' Balcony". On days when the tide is high, the sea turns the many fissures and hollows into booming organ pipes.

A naval battle took place off Cape Carvoeiro in 1554. A Portuguese flotilla attacked the Turkish corsair Xaramet, who was ravaging the Algarve coast, and destroyed his fleet.



WATER SPORTS

The many beaches of the Lagoa area are ideal places to windsurf, sail, dive, water-ski and surf. For exciting, active holidays.



THE PLEASURES OF SUN AND SEA

Viewed from the sea, the coast is a series of brightly coloured cliffs, strangely shaped outcrops and caves, whose almost unreal beauty is set off by the clarity of the waters. Between the rocks, long stretches of sand alternate with tiny coves that can only be reached by boat.

Angrinha and Praia Grande

Two beaches near Ferragudo separated by the Fort of São João de Arade. On Angrinha beach there are facilities for windsurfing and canoeing.



Pintadinho

A small beach where the water is calm.

Caneiros

Situated between cliffs of great beauty. Opposite, the colourful rock of Leixão das Gaivotas. Very tranquil.



Carvoeiro

The charm of a fishermen's beach and a small bay with crystal clear water. A cosmopolitan tourist centre. Boats can be hired to visit caves and isolated beaches.

Vale de Centeanes

Located between rocks and cliffs. Good conditions for surfing.

Carvalho

Stretch of sand between ochre cliffs. Peaceful. Tourist facilities.



Benagil

Charming beach next to a pretty fishing village. It is possible to hire boats to get to isolated beaches.

Marinha and Albandeira

Small beaches which can be reached along the coast by way of rocks and natural tunnels. Little visited and quiet.



Praia Nova and Nossa Senhora da Rocha

Two beaches separated by the spur of rock on which stands the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Rocha, but connected by a tunnel. It is possible to hire boats to explore the coast or get to isolated beaches.

Cova Redonda

Small and charming beach between cliffs. Tourist facilities.

POPULAR CRAFTS

In Lagoa, crafts means ceramics, so strong is the tradition of pottery and so many the techniques used to work, decorate and fire clay.

Dominated by turquoises and blues, which recall the sea, the charm of pottery from Lagoa lies in its colours and its shapes.

Other crafts are also to be found in Lagoa and the surrounding area.

These include the construction of miniature fishing boats and decorated Algarve carts, needlework, embroidered linen, dried flower arrangements, basketwork chairs, wool and cloth dolls, miniatures made with shells, paintings on textiles, tapestry, wrought iron work and, as found throughout the Algarve, delicate woven rush work, left in its natural tone or tinted with vegetable colours: baskets, small bags, mats etc.



FOOD AND WINE

There is a very old tradition of growing vines in the Algarve and it continued even during the centuries of Moorish occupation. It is no surprise then that this region produces good wines and that Lagoa, with its sandy soils and particular ecosystem, is at the heart of wine production. The white and red wines of Lagoa are fragrant, light and smooth. Sweet and dry aperitif wines are also made from local grape varieties.

But man does not live by wine alone. And so Lagoa offers not only the simple delights of grilled sardines, but mouth-watering fish soups flavoured with bay-leaves, fish stews, marinated horse mackerel, white beans with whelks, "papas de milho" made from maize flour served with cockles or sardines, baked octopus and such enchanting local meat dishes as ox tail with chickpeas and Moorish lamb, reminders of a heritage that has never been forgotten. In the realm of cakes and sweets, Lagoa offers the typical "morgadinhos" of the Algarve - almond paste in the shape of animals, flowers and other objects, puddings made with juicy Algarve oranges, pumpkin cake and almond-flavoured "florados".



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Data sheet

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