

# Lisbon and Its Motto : A True Cultural Epicenter



*Famous for its beaches, its music and of course Cristiano Ronaldo, Portugal is above all a Mediterranean country whose architecture is one of the most atypical in Europe.*

Indeed, both from a historical and an aesthetic point of views, the Portuguese architecture has been mainly inspired since the 12th century by the Roman, German and Arabic architectural styles. As such, it is very common to see in Lisbon, the capital, as well as in the surrounding towns and villages, notably the facades of buildings entirely decorated with "azulejos". Meaning "small polished stone" (etymologically translated from the Arabic word "al zulaydj"), it was king Manuel I who firstly imported it in Portugal, during the 16th century.

Since then, the Portuguese citizens have become true craftsmen of this specific tiling whose tones and patterns moreover, surround the many buildings of baroque and new-classical styles in pastel colors.

Besides, after a pleasant stroll along the Tagus or "Tejo" in Portuguese, being the river taking its source in Spain, crossing the city and flowing into the Atlantic Ocean, you can then taste the most delicious "pastéis de nata" of the country, at the "Pastéis de Belem" café-pastry shop, in the eponymous district. It is a dessert mainly composed of eggs and cinnamon that you can, at the same place, freely assist to the cooking preparation.

Although (but it has to remain between us), it is highly likely that the pastry shop entrance is camouflaged by a horde of tourists lining up in front of the take-out pastry shop window. However, you should know that you can directly access the tasting rooms by entering through the door, located to the very left of the said window.

Finally, if you want to extend your stay in the capital, you should also think about bringing a pair of sneakers with you. Indeed, in addition to the pretty paved floors of the city, the later is also well known for its seven or eight hills ; the local opinions remain divergent regarding the accurate number of hills. Then, several resplendent panoramas of the city are to be discovered, and in particular from the highest summit : the Miradouro da Senhora do Monte !

Writer and photo's source : CS