

### The olive tree of the largo da Oliveira

"At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there was a leafy olive tree beside the old Monastery of "São Torcato", which provided the oil for the lamp that lit the body of the Martyr Saint. Having been uprooted, the tree was brought to Guimarães and, after being planted in front of the main door of the collegiate Church, it dried up; and it was left in that place until 1342, when Pedro Esteves had a cross erected near it that still stands under the "Padrão da Nossa Senhora da Vitória". The cross was erected on the 8<sup>th</sup> September and, three days later, the olive tree flourished again, giving out new buds and lush foliage. The news of the tree flourished again, giving out new buds and lush foliage. The news of this event brought many people to admire the wonder and, as a result, to honour the Virgin who, from that time, became known as "Senhora da Oliveira" Our lady of the Olive Tree. An olive tree was Always present in the square, which then took its name from the tree, protected by a stonewall and iron fencing until it was demolished by an unknown hand on the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1870. (...)

An olive tree grew in the square of the samename for more than 500 years making it such an important symbol of the city that it also gave its name to the Collegiate Church and thenfigure on the city's coat of arms. The Town hall, believing it was carrying out the wishes ofthe people of Guimarães, had an olive tree replanted beside the "Padrão da Nossa Senhora da Vitória" in 1985 – in the place where,once before, there had been one.

In *Tourist Guide* (Cachado, Armino: 1992)



THE CASTLE



PAÇO DOS DUQUES DE BRAGANÇA



Erasmus+ BUILDING A NEW EUROPE AGAINST STEREOTYPES

### Guimarães, the birthplace of the nation



### UNESCO says...

*Guimarães was declared a World Heritage Site because:*

"Guimarães is of considerable universal significance by virtue of the fact that specialized building techniques developed there in the Middle Ages were transmitted to Portuguese colonies in Africa and the New World, becoming their characteristic feature. The early history of Guimarães is closely associated with the establishment of Portuguese national identity and the Portuguese language in the 12th century. An exceptionally well-preserved town, Guimarães illustrates the evolution of particular building types from the medieval settlement to the present-day city, and particularly in the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>."



Guimarães is considered the birthplace of Portugal because Afonso Henriques, who went on to be the first king of Portugal (1143), was born here.

### The historical center

The historical centre in the area that was within the Guimarães city walls, is associated with the formation and identity of Portugal in the 12th century, and was classified a World Heritage site based on the originality and authenticity applied in its restoration.

The city still has a harmonious, well-preserved heritage that is evident in the graceful iron verandas, granite balconies and porticos, mansions, arches connecting the narrow

streets, paving slabs smoothed by time, towers and cloisters.

It is here that the principal monuments related to the founding of the country are located: the **Castle of Guimarães** where Teresa and her son Afonso decided the nation's destiny; The **"Capela de São Miguel"** where it is traditionally believed that Afonso Henriques was baptized; the **"Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Oliveira"** where Portuguese kings so often came to pray, and the **"Monumento ao Fundador"**, the work of the sculptor Soares dos Reis, where on the 24<sup>th</sup> June a floral crown is laid in homage to the father of the nation.

We start from the heart of the city, **Largo da Oliveira**, where you find the Padrão do Salado and the Collegiate Church of Nossa Senhora da Oliveira, which houses the valuable **Alberto Sampaio Museum**, created in 1928 and installed in the cloisters and annexes of the old "Colegiada da Oliveira". There we can find the collections from churches and convents of the Guimarães region.

Passing the **Paços Municipais** (City Hall), crowned with battlements, enter the **Praça de Santiago** which in the Middle Ages welcomed pilgrims bound for Compostela, just as today it welcomes residents and tourists in its restaurants and terraces.

The Convent of Santa Clara, the Casa do Arco and other stately houses are in **Rua da Santa Maria**, which links with the upper city.

### Palace of the Dukes of Bragança and monument to Afonso Henriques

Go up this street or the **Avenida Alberto Sampaio**, bordered by the remains of the ancient wall that continues into the upper city, between the **Palace of the Dukes of Bragança** and the castle. On your way to the castle at the top, you will find this palace, a 15th century monument in which it is possible to see the influence of French seigneurial architecture, the **Monument to King Afonso Henriques**, the Romanesque **Chapel of S. Miguel** and finally the Castle, which dates back to the 10th century and is closely linked to the foundation of Portugal.



Largo da Oliveira/Domus Municipallis