



## Santarém

From the Jardim (garden) das Portas do Sol, built where a Moorish castle used to stand and with its gardens surrounded by the city's medieval walls, the view over the river Tagus and vast meadowlands could well be an emblem of this pleasant district capital of the Ribatejo.

Another emblematic sight is the "campinos", the typical herdsmen with colourful clothes that gather here particularly during the bullfight season or in June, when Santarém (pronounced "Santarain") receives the largest agricultural fair of the country.

On the same grounds where the fair is held there are restaurants where you can taste (all year round) some of the gastronomic specialities of the Ribatejo, a region famous for bull and horse breeding.

Santarém can be proud of its past: an important centre during Roman times, it became a stronghold for the Moors and was later favoured by the Portuguese kings for gatherings of the Cortes (parliaments).

In the old town you can visit the Igreja do Seminário, a Baroque church built in 1640 with a painted wooden ceiling and marble and gilt decoration, or the 14th-century Igreja da Graça, with a wonderful window carved from a single stone and which contains the tombstone of Pedro Álvares Cabral, who discovered Brazil.

The Museu Arqueológico is quite interesting, with many fine specimens from the Roman and Moorish periods and the intricately carved tomb of Duarte de Meneses, a brave governor of Portugal in Morocco, which is said to contain all that could be saved after his violent death at the hands of the Arabs: a single tooth.

