



## Sardoal

Located between the alluvial plain of the Ribatejo and the harsh scenery of the Beira, Sardoal looks surprisingly like a town of the Alentejo, namely due to its whitewashed houses with blue or yellow trims. Closely knit on a slope, it is surrounded by apparently endless fertile fields.

The town remains unspoiled and is proud of its 16th-century church of St. James and St. Mathew, exhibiting a dramatic thorn-crowned Christ by the Master of Sardoal.

At the main square (Praça da República), the town honours the great 16th-century playwright born there, Gil Vicente, with an 18th-century tile panel on the façade of the Holy Spirit Chapel depicting a scene and verses from his play "Auto da Serra".

At the village of Souto, the Chapel of Our Lady of Furze is said to have been built to lodge a beautiful sculpted image of the Virgin Mary found by two children among the furze-bushes.

Surrounded by great pines offering fresh shadows in Summer, the chapel is the site of a popular pilgrimage in August and, although of no great architectural interest, its age (1139) commands respect.

The county's gastronomy features regional dishes such as braised kid and "migas com entrecosto" (bread dish with spare ribs).

