

## Casa da Ínsua – Hotel de Charme



### Roteiro Palácio [Palace Tour]

The present *Casa da Ínsua* was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (around 1780) on the site of the original house, keeping the terrace and the chapel. The appointment of Luís de Albuquerque to the position of Governor and Captain General of the State of Cuiabá and Mato Grosso, in Brazil, made the construction of *Casa da Ínsua* as we know it today possible. During his stay in Brazil, Luis de Albuquerque sent precise instructions on the construction to his brother, who had stayed in Ínsua, thus managing to build one of the most beautiful houses in our country.

The ***Casa da Ínsua – Hotel de Charme*** has three large functional areas: the space where the rooms are located, the restaurant and the events area; the gardens and green spaces; the agriculture area, with orchards, vineyards and buildings for making wine, cheese and other products of the estate.

1. In the core hotel area, the **Palácio**, the **Claustro**, the **Ala do Arco** and the **Chapel** are the most prominent:
  - i) The **Palácio**, framed by its two towers, includes the entrance, the reception, some lodging rooms, the historic rooms and the terrace. The rooms, the gym and the spa are located on floor 0;
  - ii) The **Claustro** includes also lodging rooms, houses, the restaurant, the bar and the patio;
  - iii) The **Ala do Arco** houses lodging rooms on the 1st floor and multi-purpose rooms on the floor 0.These areas are complemented by other areas on the estate such as *Casa da Quinta* [Estate house], *Casa do Pomar* [Orchard house], *Alpendre do Lagar* [Porch by the Grape stomping tank] and *Salão Príncipe da Beira* [Prince of Beira Room]
2. The gardens include the *Jardim Francês* [French Garden] located in front of the House, and the *Jardim Inglês* [English Garden], next to the *Claustro*.  
The *Jardim de Aromas* [Aromatic herb garden], the *Canteiro das Castas* [Grape variety bed] and the various green areas are the perfect excuse to enjoy such special contact with nature. Strolling through the various streets and paths of the gardens, the *Rua dos Buchos* [Shrub lane] stands out, dating back to 1856, surprising in its magnificent details, such as the *Painel de Santo António* [San Antonio panel], the Waterfall, the *Casa da Nora* [Waterwheel house], the *Fonte dos Amores* [Lovers' fountain], the *Tanque dos Tijolos* [Brick pond], the island, the *Conversadeira do Painel Mourisco* [Moorish blue tile loveseat], *Lago dos Jarros* [Pond of vases], *Fonte do Leão* [Lion Fountain], the ruins of the Ice Factory, among many other points of interest.
3. On the Estate we can visit the Winery and taste the exclusive *Casa da Ínsua* wine, or enter the cheese factory or the sheepfold. In these areas we can closely observe the production of traditional products of the region, such as *Serra da Estrela* cheese, olive oil or jams, made with fruit from our orchards, especially with the *Bravo de Esmolfe* apple, exclusive to this region. On the estate, you can also discover sheep grazing or be in touch with traditional country activities, or simply discover quiet corners where you can enjoy contact with nature.

The *Casa da Ínsua* is full of memories of Portuguese history and culture from the last three centuries. Experiencing these places is a real pilgrimage to the heart of Portugal. The possibilities and the themes are so diverse that we are only suggesting some of the points that you can enjoy as a hotel guest:

#### **Pátio do Chafariz [Fountain courtyard]**

Granite fountain from 1894 designed by the architect Nicola Bigaglia (1841-1908) and completed by the master Duarte Ferreira Machado. The Chapel, which was originally dedicated to Our Lady Mother of God, is today dedicated to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. At the altar, Saint Francis Xavier (patron saint of the discoveries, buried in Goa) and Saint Theotonius (patron of the diocese of Viseu and the first Portuguese saint, contemporary of King Alfonso I of Portugal). Inside, we can see tile panels installed in 1901 - works by Leopoldo Luigi Batistini (Ancona 1865 - Lisbon 1936), which evoke the Birth and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Bell tower with Clock and overlapping bells (PRECI, LABORI OTIOQVE EST, HOMO, MVNVS MEVM - "My task is to call men to pray, to work and to leisure").

Cannons dated back to 1776 and 1793 (*LXª Arsenal Real do Exército*) which were used in the Battle of Buçaco during the 3<sup>rd</sup> French Invasion.

#### **Entrance to the Palácio**

The main door of the house preserves the manufacturer's plate -Yale - and the automatic closing mechanism, from different dates. It was operated with an extraordinary pendulum system. On it, we can read the following inscription "NE FERMER PAS LA PORTE LE BLOUNT S'EN CHARGERÁ" (don't close the door, the automatic system will take care of it)

Staircase, statue and information table (VITA HONESTA / FACULTAS CERTA / DOMUS QUIETA / DONA CAELESTIA [Virtuous Life, Right amount of Abundance, Quiet Home, Heavenly Gifts]) - Castilian weapons, artefacts and equipment for hunting and fishing that belonged to the 18<sup>th</sup> century Indians of the Amazon. - Wooden ceiling with the coat of arms

of the families Albuquerque, Pereira and Mello. - 18<sup>th</sup> century tile panels (European cities and places) Italian marble busts and statues. The central heating is from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and used preferably grape or olive pomace as fuel.

#### **Recepção / Sala dos Azulejos [Parador Reception - Tiles Room]**

Fireplace built according to a project drawn up by Nicola Bigaglia (VTILE DVLCI [Useful and pleasant]) and fleur-de-lis tile panel by Leopoldo Luigi Batistini, from 1902, and 18<sup>th</sup> century tile panels (European cities and places)  
Wallpaper assigned to Z. Zuber (1827). Plaster ceiling imitating wood

#### **Sala Chinesa [Chinese Room]**

The walls are decorated with hand-painted rice paper panels and Chinese-inspired furniture assembled in Portugal.  
Mechanical Samurai (he moved his arm and struck the person closest to him with the cane in his hand).

#### **Sala dos Retratos [Portraits Room]**

Collection of portraits of Luís de Albuquerque and family. - Trompe-l'oeil ceiling decorated with classical mythology motifs.

18<sup>th</sup> century furniture - 3-seater armchair signed with inscription "**Master Balthasar - 1780 - made in Ínsua**", with a set of chairs and a table. Master Balthazar, was cabinetmaker of Marquês de Pombal at the time.

#### **Salão Nobre / Sala Bigaglia [Noble room - Bigaglia room]**

Ceiling painted with the 4 seasons and the 12 months of the year.

Fireplace from 1899 by Nicolla Bigaglia (VITA HONESTA / FACULTAS CERTA / DOMUS QUIETA / DONA CAELESTIA [Virtuous Life, Right amount of Abundance, Quiet Home, Heavenly Gifts]). Floor from 1905 designed by Marques and Nicola Bigaglia with artistic insets of 14 different types of wood set around a central flower made from an ancient tree trunk. A table where the types of wood used are identified: boxwood; chestnut tree; cedar tree; acacia; sycamore, olive tree; red beech; maclura; loquat tree; walnut tree; bird cherry tree; strawberry tree; mulberry bush and mimosa.

#### **SALA DO TELEFONE [Telephone Room]**

Floor with geometric effects

#### **Sala das Camélias/Sala de Jantar [Camellias Room/Dining Room]**

Fireplace from 1897 by Nicola Bigaglia (QUER DE INVERNO / QUER DE VERÃO / O LUME FEZ / FEIÇÃO [whether winter or summer, the fire is always lit])

#### **Panoramic Terrace**

Blue tile mural from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Coat of arms in the *Jardim Inglês* [English garden] stairs, Sundials and Cannons/Mortars

Stone pavement and catacombs prior to the current *Casa da Ínsua*.

#### **Hall do Torreão Sul [South Tower Hall]**

The central heating is from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and used preferably grape or olive pomace as fuel. It included a system for heating dishes

#### **CORREDOR DAS MEMÓRIAS [Memory lane]**

Old pictures of the *Casa da Ínsua*. Door and bell tower projects  
Service ladder / Tool cabinet.

#### **Salinha Zuber [Zuber Room]**

Wallpaper assigned to Z. Zuber 1827, painting by J. M. Gué

#### **Sala do Pêndulo [Pendulum Room]**

Weights and pendulum of the bell tower clock.

Miniature reproduction of the ship *Santíssimo Coração de Jesus - a Águia*, used by Luís de Albuquerque on his return from Brazil and which would also be the one chosen by Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira for his *Viagem Philosophica*.

Access to the choir of the chapel (upper and lower area), Access to the sacristy and access to the clock and the bells

#### **Copa Antiga / Cozinha de Dentro (Branca) / Cozinha de Fora (Granito) [Pantry / White kitchen / Outdoor kitchen (granite)]**

Knife sharpener / Mechanical corkscrew

Wood stove and collection of tin utensils from Casa da Ínsua

Pulley for pots / Medieval table / Bench with folding divider.

#### **Casa da Ínsua Restaurant and Bell Tower Bar**

Garden of the restaurant with cannons from 1796 and 1797 (*LXª Arsenal Real do Exército*) and fountain.

#### **Claustro**

Cannons from 1796 and 1797 (*LXª Arsenal Real do Exército*)

Stone coat of arms and inscription at the stone entrance of the 17<sup>th</sup> century chapel, where you can read:

"Diogo de Albuquerque e sua esposa D. Escolástica Toscano instituíram esta capella em 21 de Outubro de 1668" - [Diogo de Albuquerque and his wife, Escolástica Toscano, founded this chapel on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 1668].