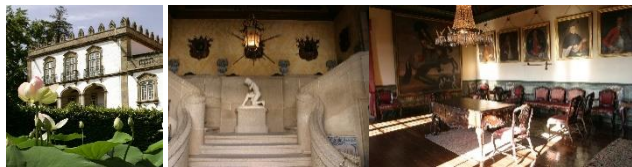


## Casa da Ínsua – Hotel de Charme



### Roteiro Jardins [Gardens Tour]

A walk through the gardens and the estate of the *Casa da Ínsua* offers unique moments in natural backdrops full of history. Below, we outline some of the many possible points of interest on several paths that cross the gardens of the estate.

The **Pátio do Chafariz** [Fountain courtyard] is framed by the many façades of the house, the chapel, and by the arch. In the centre, the 1894 fountain signed by Nicola Bigaglia and D. F. Machado, stands out. The original design of the Fountain (1893) is signed by Nicola Bigaglia and can be seen in the *Corredor das Memórias* [Memory Lane], inside the house. The water used is part of the complex system of springs, underground galleries and aqueducts which feed the entire property, its fountains and water bodies. The century-old plane trees are another of the points of interest of the noteworthy elements in this terrace. The bell tower houses a rare scheme of five overlapping bells, on top of which there is another bell, several centuries old, which dates from the first chapel. On the clock the following Latin inscription reminds that its mission is to invite the churchgoers "to pray, work and rest": "PRECI, LABORI, OTIOQVE EST, HOMO, MVNVS MEVM". Flanking the entrance of the house are two cannons, from 1776 and 1793, with the coat of arms of Queen Maria I of Portugal, on which you can read the inscription "LXª ARCEAL REAL DO EXERCITO". These cannons were used in the battle of Buçaco, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> French Invasion and it is said that the French army itself brought them to Ínsua. On one of the side walls of the North tower of the house, the striking coat of arms of the Albuquerque family is sculpted in stone. In the small garden next to it, there is another work by Nicola Bigaglia, a stone fountain with a dragon fish that spouts water when its tail is pulled. The *fleur de lis*, a symbol predominant in all the decoration of the house, is also present in the fountain, where the following inscription can be read. "SI OVIS SITIT VENIAT AD ME ET BIBAT 1902" [If you're thirsty come to me and drink. 1902]

The **Jardim Francês** [French garden] is thus named for its French-inspired design. It includes the formerly called *Jardim de Baixo* [Lower garden], which was separated from it by the road that passed in front of the main façade of the house. It is divided into two levels with compact boxwoods planted in 1856. Its aesthetic harmony and for the striking geometric shapes, such as spirals, vases and fans should be noted. The location of the central reflection pool is such that it is possible to see the entire house reflected in. Native to India, the exotic and ephemeral lotus flower, which lasts only 48 hours, beautifies the waters of the lake, especially during the months of June and July, when it blooms. Nearby is a magnolia dated from 1842. The scented and centuries-old camellias are also present in this landscaped area.

Continuing on, you can also pass by the **Tanque do Cisne** [Swan Pond], enjoy the magnificent **Jardim de Aromas** [Aromatic herb garden], its flower beds, where an infinite variety of species are born, some rare in Portugal; and visit the **Canteiro das Castas** [Grape variety bed], where you can see the different varieties that are used in making Casa da Ínsua wine. (Cabernet, Touriga, Alfrocheiro, Tinta Roriz, Arinto, Semillon, Encruzado, Sauvignon).

At the end of the **Pérgola do Jardim de Cima** [Pergola from the upper garden] you will find the **Casa da Nora** [Waterwheel house] - later transformed into a pigeon house - and the entrance to the old underground cellar. This junction links up the paths that lead to the **Fonte dos Amores** [Lovers' fountain], to the Rua Camila de Faria, and to the old road, where the **Fonte do Eiteiro** ["Eiteiro" Fountain] pays tribute to the origin of the house, and a round stone table, on which you can read the inscription "SOLITVDINEM QVAERDT QVI VET QVM INNOCENTBUS VIVERE" (Those who seek solitude live with innocence). If you go along the Rua Camila de Faria, you will pass by the **Miradouro** [Viewpoint], the threshing floor, the granary and the ruins of the **Casa Velha** [Old house] (16<sup>th</sup> century), then you will arrive at the **Cruzamento das Quatro Virtudes** [Crossroad of the four virtues] (EMPERANTIA, FORTITUDO, JUSTITIA, PRUDENTIA - Temperance, Strength, Justice and Prudence), on **Rua dos Buxos** [Shrub lane].

Still in the Rua Camila de Faria, going down the stairs, we also find the **Tanque dos Jarros** [Pond of the vases] which owes its name to the decorative stone vases that surround it, where plants brought from Brazil are born. These vases from 1898 are signed by Nicola Bigaglia. Here you can also admire the **Fonte do Leão** [Lion fountain]. Next to it you will see one of the entrances to the intricate and very long network of underground galleries, which are part of the complex water system of the estate. In front of it, there is the entrance to the ruins of the century-old **Fábrica do Gelo** [Ice Factory]. Still today, many people in the surrounding area remember how some of their relatives were cured of serious ailments thanks to the ice that was made here. One of the uses of ice was medicinal and it came from here. It was carried during the night, wrapped in straw and pulled by oxen in carts to the hospital of Viseu.

Further on, where Rua Ignez and Rua Emília converge, we find the **Cascata** [Waterfall], the aqueduct and the **Tanque dos Tijolos** [Brick Pond], where one can't miss the large stone table, also called **Mesa da Cascata** [Waterfall Table], where you can read: "MADE IN 1880". Further down is the **Fonte do Menino** [Kid's fountain], a work of art similar to the **Fonte dos Meninos** in the *Jardim Inglês* [English Garden]. Another area of interest is the **Lago dos Nenúfares** [Waterlily Lake], where there are the ruins of the replica of the **Casa de Chá** [Tea House] and the **Tanque das Lavadeiras** [Laundress Pond].

At the end of Rua Ignez, next to the exterior wall of the estate, there is the **Painel de Santo António** [Saint Anthony Panel]. A monumental tile panel in relief, dedicated to Saint Anthony, where the apparition of the Virgin and the Child Jesus to Saint Anthony is represented. This panel is part of an altar carved in granite, a striking work signed by L. Batistini in 1909.

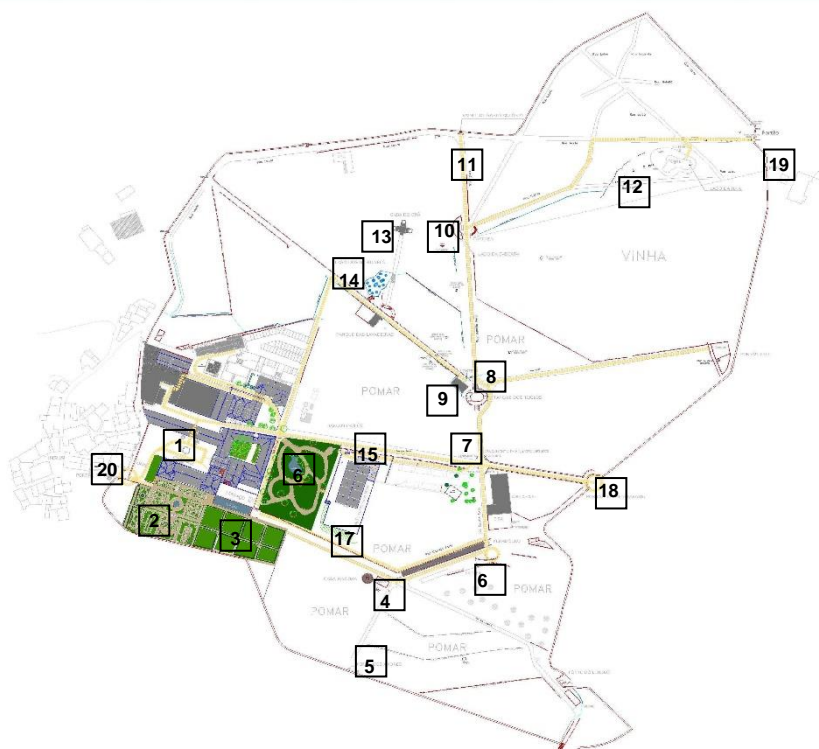
In the extreme north-east, near where Rua Maria and Rua Luíza meet, we find the area of the **Lago da Ilha** [Island Lake], where its unique stone bridge and for the pillories and obelisks should be seen. Nearby, there is also the **conversadeira de azulejos mouriscos** [Moorish blue tile loveseat], on which its construction date is stated: 1901.

On the way back, we can use the main road of the estate, **Rua dos Buxos** [Shrub lane], opened in 1856 and which connects the **Portão da Meia-Laranja** ["Meia laranja" Gate] to the **Jardim Inglês** [English Garden] and to the house, passing by the **Cruzamento das Quatro Virtudes** [Crossroad of the Four Virtues].

The **Jardim Inglês** [English Garden] is a garden filled with multiple areas of shade and sun, providing sights of rare beauty, creating refreshing and soothing breezes which invite you to stroll there. In this space several species brought from Brazil by Luís de Albuquerque grow, such as sequoias and brazilwood, thus called by its reddish colour and which named Brazil, our brother country. The gigantic eucalyptus, which is located in this space next to the **Rua dos Buxos** [Shrub lane] was one of the first of its species to be brought to Portugal by the hand of the Marquis of Pombal. They are striking specimens of more than 50 metres in height that deeply mark this garden. The cedars from Lebanon are also more than two centuries old. Near **Rua dos Buxos** [Shrub lane], on the side that leads to the **Príncipe Beira room**, we can admire the **pedestal of the Fonte dos Meninos** [Kid's fountain] a posthumous work by Nicola Bigaglia (DM / NB 1910). This garden also has a lake and winding paths that allow you to enjoy a quiet walk.

From the long **Pérgola do Jardim de Cima** [Pergola in the Upper Garden] you can enjoy an extraordinary panoramic view or, if you prefer, go down to the **Tanque dos Cisnes** [swan pond] and pass by **Senhora do Popó** (or Totó, as it is called in other regions). This "welcoming image", placed over three sundials, was brought here and is said to have special powers: single men and women who touch its head (popó) will soon cease to be so.

The **Estate's Gates** were also designed by Nicola Bigaglia. The main gates you can visit are the "**Meia Laranja**", which is at the end of **Rua dos Buxos** [Shrub lane] and which overlooks **Largo da Câmara** and the double gate called **Portão da Moita/da Mata**, at the end of **Rua Maria**. The other gates signed by Bigaglia are the "Sereia" gate, also known as the "Sangemil" gate, and the "Castendo" gate. The gate project dates back to 1898 and you can see a photo of this project, where it reads 1905, in the **Corredor da Memória** [Memory Lane]. In that same corridor, the technical drawing of the iron gate is also displayed. Until the late 1920s, the Main Gate of the **Casa da Ínsua**, which opens onto the **Pátio do Chafariz** [Fountain courtyard] and the **Jardim Francês** [French garden], was attached to one of the sides of the main façade of the house, and the main street of Ínsua passed through it. This street separated the house from the gardens, which at that time were called the **Jardins de Baixo** [Lower gardens]. After that date, it was placed in this current position and the passage was closed with an iron gate made in 1931.



- Casa da Ínsua  
Gardens**
1. **Pátio do Chafariz** [Fountain courtyard]
  2. **Jardim Francês** [French garden]
  3. **Jardim dos Aromas e das Flores** [Aromatic herb and flower garden]
  4. **Casa da Nora** [Waterwheel house]
  5. **Fonte dos Amores** [Lovers' fountain]
  6. **Miradouro** [Viewpoint]
  7. **Cruzamento das Quatro Virtudes** [Crossroad of the four virtues]
  8. **Tanque dos Jarros** [Pond of the vases]
  9. **Fábrica do Gelo** [Ice factory]
  10. **Cascata e Tanque dos Tijolos** [Waterfall and Brick Tank]
  11. **Painel de Santo António** [Saint Antony pannel]
  12. **Island**
  13. **Casa de Chá** [Tea House]
  14. **Lago dos Nenúfares** [Waterlily lake]
  15. **Rua dos Buxos** [Boxwood's lane]
  16. **Jardim Inglês** [English garden]
  17. **Pérgola do Jardim de Cima** [Pergola from the upper garden]
  18. **Portão da Meia-Laranja** ["Meia laranja" Gate]
  19. **Portão da Mata ou da Moita** ["Moita" or "Mata" Gate]
  20. **Portão da Ínsua** [Ínsua Gate]