



Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora do Porto de Ave

The Sanctuary of *Nossa Senhora do Porto de Ave* is a religious complex consisting of a church, which includes a popular museum of sacred art, a Via Crucis with chapels dedicated to episodes in the life of the Virgin Mary and other buildings, originally to support pilgrims.

The construction of the place of worship had origins in an image of Our Lady of the Rosary, quite deteriorated, which was kept in the parish church of Taíde until the year of 1730. This sculpture was given to Francisco de Magalhães Machado, a schoolmaster from Porto de Ave. Miraculously, just overnight, it appeared golden and restored. Also, it became associated with the healing of a broken leg of a boy who was playing with his schoolmates in the school playground. In view of these events, the name was changed to Our Lady of Miracles, but it was still kept in a very simple and small chapel.

Motivated by the rapid increase of devotions, a movement of people created the confraternity of *Nossa Senhora de Porto de Ave*, in 1732, and launched the construction of a new chapel. In a short time, the small hermitage was transformed into a large sanctuary of high patrimonial and religious richness which, associated to the volume of visitors, is considered one of the most important Marian Sanctuaries in Portugal.

By Royal decree, issued on 14 April 1874, it was elevated to the category of Royal Shrine.