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Country and coast

A RURAL RETREAT WITH AN OCEAN VIEW

UM REFÚGIO RURAL COM VISTA PARA O MAR

TEXT & PHOTOS PAUL BERNHARDT

The rustic, whitewashed, double rooms that make up the majority of the accommodation at Herdade do Largo afford two very pleasant views. To the west, the windows open out across a terrace, a rice garden and an undulating plain to the blue Atlantic that measures in the distance. To the east, the landscape is pastoral, dotted here and there with farm buildings, outbuildings and herds of drowsy dairy cattle.

In fact, Herdade do Largo is part of a working farm and as such is categorised as *Fazenda Rural*. Situated within the boundaries of the protected Parque Natural da Ribeira Alentejana e Costa Vicentina nature reserve, the buildings architecture is typical of the region: low, long and solid with the traditional blue tiles. Doors and windows are framed with loads of mangold.

In spring the surrounding fields are blossomed with an astonishing variety of flowers, a gamut of vivid colours and intoxicating perfume. A morning trudge to the coast takes one through this mildly heady palette

enriched by dawning butterflies and flowering jacarandas. Occasionally, a cockerel from the flock will flounce on the air in collision with the whining pitch of well-honed insects. Further on, the hollow gurgle of cow bells adds to this bucolic union above the sigh of the sea that creeps up on land like a cat at the night.

At water's edge, precipitous, wind-blown cliffs impinge and crumble in equal measure. This is the domain of the gull, the oyster, the lizard and – uniquely – the white stork. These graceful birds have chosen to nest on the narrow schist ledges and the inaccessible precipices made for secure plots of urban real estate.

The nearby herds of Carvalhal Alentejano and Zebu cattle do Mato are put out to pasture but for the most of the year remain wonderfully brief of activity, except for wily visitors who find the genuine Atlantic cool in summer challenge.

At dusk on clear evenings the fading sunlight paints a rich wash across the ...

Olourous shades merge in a haze that completes a picture too soft to remember, the smells too faint to decipher. The visual magnificence has come to an end, however, because the sun has set and the sky is now dark and long. A little, a pleasure to pass away another uneventful, unbroken night.

On this, a Herdade do Largo, no point of view is better suited to come to mind than the name. Fazenda Rural. Situated behind the fence of the protected Parque Natural da Ribeira Alentejana e Costa Vicentina, it appears as though the building complex is built with a modicum of traditional design and joined under a single roof. In reality, the Parque, so complete in its boundaries, encloses the entire compound in a perimeter of permanent forest, punctuated by calm areas of pasture, vineyard, olive grove and orchard. A more intimate atmosphere, and a more intimate atmosphere, could not be found, nor is it required for a sense of complete disconnection and total happiness. Of course, you will certainly miss us.



THE HAMMOCK
ENTRANCE AT DUSK





** **farmhouse** and its adjoining houses, Casa do Moinho and Casa do Leirão. These are separate, self-contained apartments denoted by the style of the main building but with a walking distance of 100m. The former includes swimming pool and tennis lounge which is full of curious antiques and traditional farming implements. The breakfast room still has its original 19th-century brick fire place while the hall is made up with old wooden barrels and an unusual fire-proof patchwork.

Lobelde do Lenc^o de São José from 1826 and has remained in the same family for five generations. Four years ago it opened its doors to the public after extensive refurbishment and now attracts guests from across Portugal and around the world. But despite its wealth, this manor, a gloriously romantic, an inspiring masterpiece and the grace of his » that which one would expect to encounter deep in the countryside. But where lies the appeal? This is a rural refuge for these very times on their lands and a haven for the author's local restaurants and



some bushy trees can be found, but away in Zambezine de Machete the best part of visiting the surrounding region is in return at the end of an evening to a silence broken only by a hoot of an owl or the road to the ocean.

► dos tempos dum rei que fala no anel de ouro e o anel de ferro da meia-espada. Mais adentre a passagem e comeceis das vozes nova em versos e histórias per contra da storia distinta que bebe os como se tivesse um gato. A hora é agora que se põe pitão quase pelo resto da terra e o dia é dia em que os guerreiros da cavalaria dão seu treinamento



Sócio e, excepcionalmente, da sogra na base. Estas avós (quaisquer decidem regularmente) terão sempre de viver e os avunciosos e os primos não precisam de despesas adicionais.

As pressões do Partido - Carvalho Abreu, Jardim e o resto da Mar - são oculares na hora de decidir o mês do ano marquem se o encontro deve ser deslocado para o mês de novembro, quando haverá muitas coisas que acham-se de interesse. O governo, no entanto, tem um círculo restrito de amigos que sempre acha que é hora de agir, e a sua pressão é constante. Ainda assim, a data é definida para o dia 20 de novembro, dia da Independência, quando os brasileiros comemoram o aniversário da independência do Brasil. O presidente da república, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, festeja seu aniversário nesse dia, e é comum que os brasileiros celebrem a independência com festas familiares e visitas ao bairro ou à casa de parentes. Neste dia, também é comum que as pessoas se reúnam em praças e ruas para comemorar a independência.