

Vairão



Porto



Day

[6]25,5 km
± 6h30

➔ 41°10'4" N 8°37'31" W

Day 6 | CITIES AND TOWNS OF GREATER PORTO

Vairão ➔ Porto

The sixth stage of the Route **begins in Vairão**, at the Monastery of the Holy Saviour and **ends in Porto** by the Cathedral. The terrain is flat, the distance covered 28 km and the maximum altitude 116 m. Although the gradient does not present any major issues, this **stage is essentially an urban walk**, with a medium level of difficulty, whereby it is recommended to be attentive at all times, above all when crossing busy roads.

Over the course of the day you will make your way through the Municipalities of the Porto Metropolitan Region, such as Vila do Conde, Maia, Matosinhos and Porto. The landscape is varied, with **rural and urban areas**. As you advance southwards the population density increases and urban development becomes more noted. Throughout this stage logistical support is available for making short pauses.

During the walk you will see essential elements of **architectural heritage**, which have defined the region's history and development. Churches, monasteries, museums, architectural projects and urban centres preserve and record **the many traces of a lengthy history**, as well as the expressions of the **cultural and artistic creativity** of more recent eras. You will see evidence of an active urban culture.

On leaving Vairão continue for some time through a number of parishes pertaining to the municipality of Vila do Conde. You will pass by the **Entre Douro e Minho Agricultural Museum**, which is dedicated to the landscape and rural life of Minho, and the small **Chapel of Saint Ovidius**.

In **Gião**, the **Parish Church** is worthy of note with its façade clad in tiles. In the churchyard there is a traditional stone cross.

On entering the Municipality of **Maia**, having made your way through the Parish of Moreira, there is the **Monastery of the Divine Saviour of Moreira**, which was built in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with a striking mannerist façade. The chancel has a gilded baroque carved retable, and is clad in blue and yellow patterned tiles.

Inside, there is a baroque carved altar, which is clad in tiles. Following a short stretch on main roads (N13 and N107) take Rua Ponte de Moreira, which crosses the **River Leça**.

Always following in the same direction, and with the same urban cityscape, the route now follows Rua de Araújo, which is in the Municipality of Matosinhos. Along this road you will see the **Parish Church of São Pedro de Araújo**. The façade has baroque features and a large side tower.

Walking along Rua de Gondival, you will enter **Leça do Balio**, whose history is linked to the era of the Christian reconquista and the foundation of Portugal. The **Monastery of the Holy Saviour** is a renowned monument. It is on Rua Santos Lessa, and very close to the bank of the River Leça. To visit it, you will have to veer off the Route and cover an approximate distance of 700m. The complex, which belonged to the Military Hospitaller Order, conserves its church with its three naves and romanesque and gothic architectural elements. It is a fortress-church. In the façade there is a large tower similar to a castle's keep and the church's exterior displays features typical of military architecture. Besides its architectural and artistic value, it is also a historical site associated with key figures from the past. It was here that the marriage of King Fernando and Leonor Teles was held. Nearby is Quinta do Chantre with its 18th century baroque palace, attributed to the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni.

If you visit the Monastery, you should go back to Rua Gondival and continue along it. Enter the city of **Porto** and continue in the same direction.

From Rua do Monte de Burgos continue down Rua do Carvalhido, which leads to Praça do Exército Libertador, where you will find the **Parish Church of Carvalhido**, with its baroque-rococo façade completely clad in blue and white tiles showing narrative scenes and decorative patterns.

Follow Rua 9 de Julho until you reach Largo da Ramada Alta, then continue along Rua Barão de Forester, and finally, take the long Rua de Cedofeita until you reach



Praça de Carlos Alberto. At the intersection with Rua do Carmo note the two baroque churches: **Church do Carmo and the Church of the Third Order of St. Francis**.

You are now in the **city centre**, where there is a rich historic and artistic heritage that grew up over the centuries. Next to the Cordoaria Garden, there is the neoclassical building housing the University Rectory, which was designed in the eighteenth-century by the architect Carlos Cruz Amarante. In front you will see the **Church of the Clerics**, with its monumental baroque tower, which was designed and built in the eighteenth century by the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni.

Continue along the labyrinth of old streets and head up to the **Cathedral Square**, stopping by the **Cathedral**, whose origin dates back to the twelfth century. The monument merits an attentive visit, as does the **Episcopal Palace**.



➔ 41°08'33.7"N 8°36'43.0"W

From the heights of the Cathedral Square you can observe the whole **city spread out along the River Douro**, with its neighbourhoods built on the slopes. The beauty and cultural value of the city are the foundation for the classification of Porto's Historic Centre as a **World Heritage Site**.

