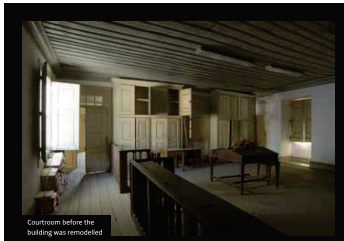
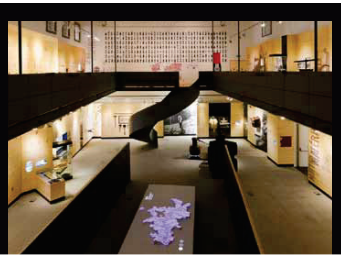


Courtroom before the building was remodelled



Museu do Douro

MUSEU DO DOURO AND THE COMPANY'S HOUSE

THIRD FLOOR

The top floor, in the attic, was aimed to be a chambers area for workers and for those who had to go to Régua to negotiate wine. The dormitories used to be widely occupied in February during the wine annual fair. The space has been refurbished in recent building work and lodges a large part of the museum's office space.

Corridor and room on the third floor before the building was remodelled, now the offices at Museu do Douro

USEFUL INFORMATION

FUNDAÇÃO MUSEU DO DOURO
Rua Marquês de Pombal
5050-282 Peso da Régua
Tel. | 254 310 190
Fax | 254 310 199
Email | geral@museudodouro.pt

GPS Coordinates
Latitude | 41.09'39.5N
Longitude | 7.47'26.100

OPENING TIMES
Winter (november - march)
Tuesdays to Sundays, 10h00 - 18h00
Summer (april - october)
Daily, 10h00 - 18h00
Closed
1 january, 1 may, 25 december

© PHOTOGRAPHY
Centro Português de Fotografia
Egídio Santos
Luís Ferreira Alves
Marco Aurélio Peixoto

Project cofinanced by:

ABOVE
General view of Douro Matéria e Espírito, the permanent exhibition at Museu do Douro

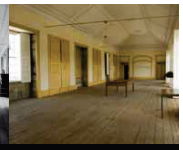
COVER
Museu do Douro

MUSEU DO DOURO AND THE COMPANY'S HOUSE

LEFT
A number of ramps between the house and the small landing stage linked the riverbank and the building.
Building of Real Companhia Velha, now the Museu do Douro

ABOVE
North facade of the building on Rua Marquês de Pombal, in the period of Real Companhia Velha

Tasting room, now the Wine bar



Tasting room before the building was remodelled

BELOW
Metal vats in the central courtyard at Real Companhia Velha

The Company's House, which now houses the Museu do Douro, is one of the most emblematic buildings in the history of the Douro Region. Its construction is directly related to the creation of the General Company of Agriculture and Alto Douro Vines, established in 1756 to differentiate, develop and regulate the production and marketing of Douro wines. As the entity responsible for the administration of the first regulated wine region in the world, the Company had its headquarters built in Régua, a building of monumental scale, revealing its power.

The building was designed to accommodate primarily administrative functions, winemaking and wine storage. It also lodged a court to deal with the cases related to the Company's jurisdiction sphere, and provided temporary housing for employees and winemakers from around the Douro that would travel to Régua to negotiate the wines at the annual fair.

The multidisciplinary vocation of the building gave it its particular characteristics that combine the architectural settings of the farmhouses of the region with Pombal architecture. The architectural structure is defined by a single elongated U-shaped body, with a central courtyard, housing wine storage spaces and two senior administrative spaces in the two lower floors. The facades are marked by symmetry defined by several granite-framed windows, balconies with wrought iron railings and stairs. The set expresses sobriety and functionality as the typical Pombal architecture.

The inscription '1783' on the entrance of the north facade suggests that part of the construction would have been completed by that year, but the major works continued until the nineteenth century. Even after the building was completed, various stages of construction were carried out until the twenty-first century, without significantly altering its original outlines.

The Company lost its monopoly and privileges during the nineteenth century, being abolished in 1863 after the building became property of the *Real Companhia Velha* company that kept the wine storage and administrative offices in the building. In 1997, with the creation of the Museu do Douro, endeavours to acquire the Company's House to accommodate the headquarters of the museum were initiated. The project to renovate and expand the building began in 2007 and was completed in 2008.
The building is undergoing a patrimony classification process.

Building of Real Companhia Velha, now the Museu do Douro

FIRST FLOOR

The main facade naturally faces the river, the principal wine trade route. As the first storey was traditionally reserved for storing wine, a set of interconnecting ramps linked the building down to the riverfront area. It was here that the wine was shipped to Porto and from there to its many export destinations.

There was a large open courtyard in the centre of the building which was later roofed over to serve as storage. When the museum was created this space became one of the main exhibition rooms and currently houses the permanent collection.

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor is the noblest part of the building. Here were the meeting rooms, wine exhibitions, offices, a court and the great hall of the house. The main access was made through the south facade of the two staircases, but also through the north side, in the current Rua Marquês de Pombal, where the higher elevation of the street turns it into a ground floor. On this floor there is a large kitchen, which is currently occupied by the museum's restaurant. On this floor we highlight the main hall and the court. The former was once the wine tasting room, and today it is the wine bar.

The courtroom keeps the original cabinets whose wooden filing cabinets still have the names of the parishes in the region, where the respective processes used to be filed.

Courtroom before the building was remodelled