

CHAVES: THE IBERIAN CENTRE OF SMOKED HAMS AND SPAS



It may not be the most famous place in Portugal, yet Chaves, a northern town of around 45.000, certainly has a number of things to offer which its fiercest rivals cannot. Its location is quite favourable, just a two-hour drive from Braga and Porto and very close to the Spanish Verin. To add to the advantages of visiting Chaves, the very reasonable prices should be mentioned. Indeed, Portugal is not known anyway as the most expensive EU country, far from it, yet the hotel prices in Chaves are superb. It is possible to pay in Chaves a price for a four-star hotel the same as for a dormitory in Germany or Holland.

In terms of what Chaves can offer as specialities, look no further than the famous presuntos, or smoked hams. The whole area, of which Chaves is the regional capital, is famous for smoked versions of pork, particularly the sausages.

As far as sightseeing is concerned, Chaves has a plethora of attractions on offer, many of them coming from the Roman period. These include the Roman Bridge of 180 AD, the medieval quarter, of which there are many in the area, the Chaves castle and the 17th century fort. All of these attractions are set in the background or foreground of the River Tamega. Let's not forget about the 14th century ruins which are still on view in Chaves and attract a number of historians on an annual basis.

Staying on the subject of water, Chaves is renowned for its spas. Flocks of tourists come to Portugal, particularly Chaves, in order to visit the large number of spas for curative purposes. Many of the Chaves spas have the capacity to focus on special parts of the body, something which very few areas of the region, or indeed Europe, can boast about.

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