



16.

TOWER**OF THE
CASTLE
OF AGUIAR
DE SOUSA**Travessa do Castelo
Aguiar de Sousa
Paredes41° 7' 26.054" N
8° 26' 18.768" W

+351 918 116 488



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Public Interest
Monument, 2012

P. 25



Free



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The Tower of the Castle of Aguiar de Sousa stands as very prestigious in the collective memory of the region, not so much by the faint traces of the building that are still preserved, but rather for reasons of symbolic and historical nature.

According to tradition, the Castle was attacked by Almanzor (938-1002), in 995, within the context of the Reconquest wars. It headed a “terra” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] in the process of territorial reorganization that took place in the 11th century, and was also an important “julgado” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] in the 13th century.

The location of what remains from an old fortified structure reveals concerns with the defence of the territory. The Castle of Aguiar de Sousa was hard to access and stood surrounded by higher mountains that allowed concealing it. It was part of a territorial defence network to which the Asturian kings paid special attention.

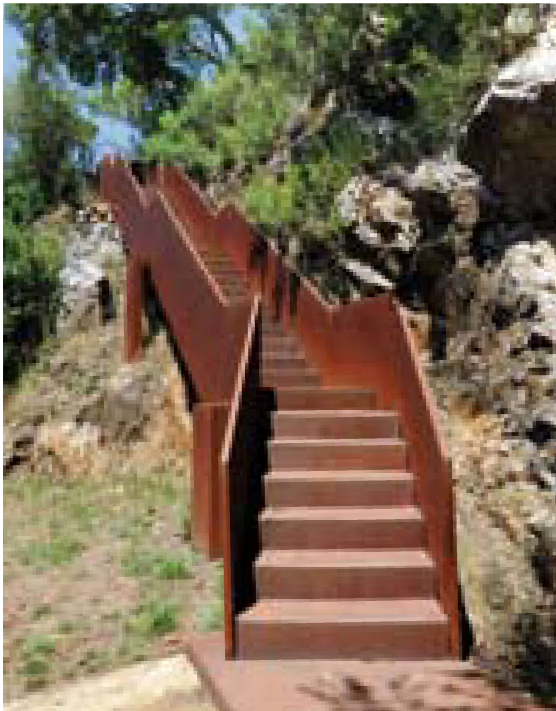
Located within a natural landscape, the Tower’s base reveals a structure with a square plan deviated from the centre of the traces of the oval-shaped defence wall’s outline.



In the 12th century, the Castle of Aguiar probably did not feature this Tower yet, although the existence of a keep inside the upper fortified fence was a common trait in the Romanesque castle. Aguiar de Sousa performed, from a very early stage, an important role in the region as one of the most powerful “julgados” in the Entre-Douro-e-Minho region, enjoying considerable power and wealth.

In the royal inquiries from 1220, the rivers Ferreira and Sousa and their tributaries Eiriz and Mesio bordered the “julgado”.

The territory covered by this “julgado” was rather ample, expanding from Porto to the vicinities of Penafiel, including all the parishes of the current municipality of Paredes (except Recarei) and over 42 parishes of neighbouring municipalities, namely: eight from Gondomar and seven from the municipality of Lousada; 14 parishes from Paços de Ferreira were also part of the territory of the “julgado” of Aguiar de Sousa, except Frazão, Penamaior and Seroa, which belonged to the now extinct municipality of Refoios de Riba d’Ave; the other 13 belonged to the municipality of Aguiar de Sousa, i.e., almost the entire municipality of Paços de Ferreira, together with three parishes from the municipality of Valongo.



THE ROMANESQUE CASTLE

The Romanesque castle is characterised by a fence with a reduced flanking and central tower, the keep, which is the symbol of the castle’s lordship. The fence walls sought mainly to hinder access to the internal area and the consequent attack to the keep that, standing isolated in the middle of the enclosure, was the lord’s temporary residence.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

The archaeological surveys conducted in 2013 in the area surrounding the Tower determined the existence of a medieval necropolis, characterised by graves carved in the rock, as well as the presence of a series of domestic ceramic objects (fragments from amphorae and pans), whose types can be associated with the Roman period. Some pieces from the Castro culture were also collected, such as the typical suspension pots with an inner handle, as well as regular ceramic fragments, which are probably medieval, as a copper coin ("ceitil"), dating back to the 15th-16th centuries.



DON'T MISS OUT

- 3.3 km: Our Lady of Salto Park (p. 258)