

The Musuem | Museu de Olaria



The *Museu de Olaria* (Pottery Museum) is located in the city of Barcelos in the Northwest of Portugal, near from the two greatest cities of this region Braga (15 Km) and from Porto (50 Km).

Born in a region of strong ceramic traditions was created in 1963, to house a valuable collection donated by the Barcelos' ethnographer Joaquim Selles Paes de Villas Boas. This collection was composed of approximately 700 pieces which are representative of the most significant work by the pottery houses of Barcelos in the 1940's. Selles Paes added some clay artefacts as well as other objects of ethnographical value, like working tools from different regions, such as Vilar de Nantes and Bisalhães (District of Vila Real), Pampilhosa (District Coimbra), as well as other places.

It was initially named *Museu de Cerâmica Regional* (Museum of Regional Ceramics) and later has its name been changed to *Museu de Regional de Cerâmica Portuguesa* (Museum of Regional Portuguese Ceramics), for its collection is recognised as part of the national pottery tradition.

As the exhibitions eventually outgrew the former facilities, a new space was necessary for the achievement of the project's goals. So in 1982 the City Hall of Barcelos re-located the museum to his permanent place, in a Seventeenth Century building the Casa dos Mendanhas Benevides Curn (House of Mendanha Benevides Curn) an wealthy family from Barcelos.

In 1899, this building was sold to the *Companhia de Jesus* (Jesuits), whose assets were confiscated by the Portuguese State in 1910. From that year on, and until 1950, it was used by the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (National Republican Guard). In 1963, the City Hall bought and turned it into the Barcelos' Industrial and Commercial School. In 1994, the estate was redone to suit the museum's needs. Nevertheless, to preserve the historical and architectural heritage of the city, the original design was maintained. It took just under a year to complete the work and on the 29th of July 1995 the museum opened to the public. Finally, in 2010, the museum was temporarily relocated on the

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City's Stadium. On this time, works were conducted on the permanent facilities in order to remodeling and benefit the space to fulfill the actual museum requirements. After a short period of more than 3 years and with a new look, combining history and contemporary, the Museu da Olaria reopened doors of the permanent facilities to the public.

The Museu da Olaria currently holds nearly 10.000 objects, not only from region of Barcelos but also from other regions of Portugal and other Portuguese-speaking countries, namely, Brazil, Angola and Timor, and other countries such as Spain, Chile and Algeria. The assets are essentially ethnographic and representative of the pottery production industry. At the same time this institution holds glazed-earthenware pieces, glazed-tiles and archaeological ceramics as well as some work tools and artifacts.

The collection of Portuguese pottery is composed of black crockery, opaque red crockery, red glazed crockery and *figurado* (symbolic figurines made of clay). Each of these groups is divided according to their geographic area, production centre and figure typology. The north region is the most represented, although other production centres in Portugal are represented. Chronologically, most of the Pottery Museum's assets were made and used by the end of the Nineteenth Century and throughout the Twentieth Century.

These assets are the result of the purchase of private and antiquarian collections, donations, and field-work carried out in both extinct and in danger of extinction pottery centres, as well as centres which are still working. This heritage is the living proof of tradition and cultural heritage.

Main Rooms and Spaces - 1st Floor | Museu de Olaria



Main entrance / Reception of the Pottery Museum.



Hall of the Pottery Museum.



Chapel hall / Temporary exhibitions of the Pottery Museum.

Main Rooms and Spaces - 1st Floor | Museu de Olaria



Room Temporary exhibitions of the Pottery Museum.



Documentation Center of the Pottery Museum.



Reservations / Collection of the Pottery Museum.

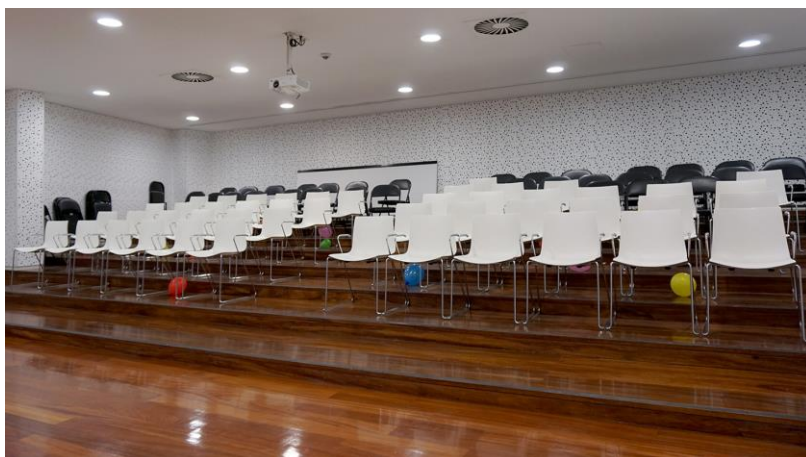
Main Rooms and Spaces - 2nd and 3rd Floors | Museu de Olaria



Room of the permanent exhibition (Pottery of the North of Portugal) of the Pottery Museum.



Hall of temporary exhibitions (Generation Mystery) of the Pottery Museum.



The Multimedia room of the Pottery Museum.

Main Rooms and Spaces - 1st Floor | Museu de Olaria



Workshops - Educational and Animation Service of the Pottery Museum.



Exhibition rooms of the Pottery Museum.