

## ÓBIDOS ORIENTEERING GUIDE (EN)

### Introduction: History and Identity

**Óbidos is located in the heart of the Western region of Portugal.** Situated between the mountains and the sea, it's one of the most sought-after places in Central Portugal, and today we'll suggest **everything you can visit in Óbidos**.

Of Roman origin, the village of Óbidos derives from the Latin *Oppidum*, meaning "**fortified city**." Later occupied by Visigoths and Muslims, it was reconquered by the first King of Portugal, Afonso Henriques, in **1148**. Its walls still reveal traces of the ancient peoples who settled here, high on the hill, overlooking the **Óbidos Lagoon** on one side and the **Usseira Aqueduct** on the other.

But there's much more to Óbidos than just monuments. There's a **literary village** to discover, full of color, excitement, and traditions.

The **main street** in Óbidos leads directly from the village gate to the castle. The buildings you encounter preserve the identity of Óbidos, which is considered **one of the best-preserved medieval villages in the world**. The houses in Óbidos are painted yellow, blue, red, and gray. This is where the magic happens, and it's here that we suggest you begin to discover the charms of this village.

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### Part 1: Main Entrance and Historical Landmarks

#### Porta da Vila Challenge

The incredible main entrance to the village of Óbidos instantly takes us back in time. Its **oratory**, with a balcony covered in an 18th-century tile panel figuratively depicting the **Passion of Christ**, enchants us and prepares us for this medieval visit. Here, you can admire the oratory and the inscription dedicated to the patron saint of Óbidos, Our Lady of Sorrows: "Our Lady was conceived without sin."

With a double entrance (common in Portuguese castles), the Porta da Vila allows you access to the citadel. Its roof is painted with a representation of the Crown of Thorns.

1. **[Nº 1] Challenge Question (Observation):** What figure appears before you on the ceiling? a) Sickles; b) Hammer; c) Shovel

#### Óbidos Castle

The village's hallmark is undoubtedly its imposing castle. Considered one of the **Seven Wonders of Portugal**, Óbidos Castle now houses a "**state inn in a historic building**," where we recommend spending a night fit for royalty.

From here, you can see the entire village and its monuments. A landmark of the Christian Reconquest, it underwent several renovations, especially after the 1755 earthquake, and was extensively restored by King Manuel I. It was also crucial during the French invasions, its position significantly contributing to the defeat of the French army.

The centuries-old walls surrounding the citadel offer **2 kilometers of superb views** of the village and surrounding area.

#### Óbidos Pillory Challenge

One of the most enigmatic elements of Óbidos' history is its pillory. Made of granite, it represents municipal power and independence, but also symbolizes the public punishments that occurred there during the Middle

Ages. At the top, on one side, you can see the Portuguese coat of arms, and on the other, a representation of a fishing net, in memory of Prince Afonso (son of Leonor Teles and Fernando), who died in an accident and was found in the nets of local fishermen.

2. **[Nº 2] Challenge Question (Observation):** What phrase appears on the pillory? a) Já lhe disse para procurarem a ginja; b) Já lhe obedece toda a Estremadura - Óbidos; c) Já lhe disse que os gelados também são bons

### **Bougainvillea Challenge**

The village of Óbidos has a new place for relaxation and tranquility: the **Óbidos Swing**. This new swing is located at the '**Miradouro da Serrinha de Cima**' (**Serrinha de Cima Viewpoint**), on Rua do Castelo, within the walled perimeter of Óbidos, offering panoramic views of the village. Enjoy Óbidos from a different, fun perspective!

3. **[Nº 3] Challenge Question (Observation):** Now, follow the main street and look for the largest/biggest bougainvillea. What color is it? a) pink; b) blue; c) white
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## **Part 2: Main Square and Culinary Quest**

### **Church of Santa Maria Challenge**

In the main square, Santa Maria, stands the church of the same name. The **Church of Santa Maria** (where Afonso V and his cousin Isabel were married at the age of 10 and 8 on August 15, 1444) is the village's main religious temple. Of medieval origin and with Visigothic influence, its exterior features a Mannerist style, notable for the image of Our Lady of the Assumption under the main portico. Inside, **17th-century tile panels** stand out, as well as paintings by the 18th-century painter Josefa d'Óbidos. This church houses the tomb of João de Noronha and his wife, Isabel de Sousa, considered one of the earliest examples of Renaissance art in Portugal. The white marble tomb depicts Mary Magdalene and Saint John the Baptist, a composition by the sculptor Nicolau Chanterene.

4. **[Nº 4] Challenge Question (Observation):** What date appears in cast iron on the façade of the Church of Santa Maria? a) 1890; b) 1737; c) 1444

### **The Ginja Challenge**

5. **[Nº 5] Challenge Question (Observation):** Follow the main street again, look for number 113. What is the typical drink of this village? a) vodka; b) beer; c) ginja
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## **Part 3: Castle Wall Challenges (Action & Observation)**

6. **[Nº 6] Challenge (Action):** Go up the street and enter the wall that leads to the back of the castle. Look for a wooden stage and take a "groufie" (group selfie) from the castle.
7. **[Nº 7] Challenge Question (Observation):** Find the northernmost part of the wall and look for the train station. How many windows does the station have? Take the opportunity to admire the views. a) 5; b) 6; c) 7
8. **[Nº 8] Challenge (Action):** Go back carefully (without falling off the wall!) and head towards the "Castle Inn" (*Pousada do Castelo*). Look for a medieval amphitheater. You must film a **30-second choreography** on stage, something about the times of the kings.

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## Part 4: The Inn and Aqueduct

### The Inn & The Swing

9. [Nº 9] **Challenge (Action/Observation):** I heard about the "Pousada do Castelo", and you will find the **Óbidos Swing**. The swing is located at the "Miradouro da Serrinha de Cima," on Rua do Castelo, within the walled perimeter of Óbidos, offering panoramic views of the village. Enjoy the village of Óbidos from a different perspective, **just for two**. Take some pictures of the landscape and observe!

### Usseira Aqueduct

The Usseira Aqueduct was commissioned in the **16th century by Queen Catherine**, constituting the first water supply system for the town. Water would be transported through **3 kilometers of arches**, crossing vineyards and crops, to the **Fonte da Vila** (Fount of the Village), located in front of the Church of Santa Maria.

10. [Nº 10] **Challenge Question (Observation):** After the swing, go up to the "Pousada do Castelo" and, in the square, observe the beautiful windows of the inn. What is the architectural style?  
a) Gothic; b) Manueline; c) Baroque

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## Part 5: Other Points of Interest (Context)

Now go back to the starting point and enjoy some more points of interest.

- **Saint Peter's Church (Igreja de São Pedro):** As you descend back to the citadel, you find Saint Peter's Church. Though rebuilt in the late 16th century, its highlights include the **18th-century gilded altarpiece** and the tomb of the painter Josefa d'Óbidos.
- **Saint James' Church (Igreja de Santiago):** Now the **Great Bookstore of Santiago**, this space is a repurposed building dating back to 1186. It has become a must-see, not only for its history but also for its dynamism and the books it houses.
- **Sanctuary of the Lord Jesus of the Stone (Santuário do Senhor Jesus da Pedra):** This sanctuary owes its name to a legend about a farmer who claims to have been summoned by the stone cross of the temple, whose devotion ended the region's drought. Originating from the 18th century, its imposing cylindrical exterior contrasts with the hexagonal interior.
- **Óbidos Municipal Museum:** This museum boasts a permanent exhibition that allows visitors to journey through the artistic production and religious devotion of the village's history, highlighting a collection of **16th- and 17th-century paintings**, including works by André Reinoso and Josefa d'Óbidos.
- **The Literary Village:** Óbidos is the most literary village in the country, recognized as a **UNESCO Creative City of Literature**. One interesting spot is the **Organic Market Bookstore**, where the shelves are made from recycled fruit crates.

### Annual Events

Any time of year is a good time to visit Óbidos. Its walled streets and medieval castle host international events such as the **International Chocolate Festival** and the **Medieval Market**. **Easter Week, the Literary Festival, and the Óbidos Christmas Village** are also major events that attract thousands of visitors from around the world.