Parques de Sintra undertakes conservation and restoration work on the Ambassadors Room

- Project intervention seeks to enhance the conservation and restoration of the entirety of this room
- Actions governed by the strict application of the best conservation and restoration practices
- Work due for completion in the summer of 2018
- Room remains “open for works”

**Sintra, 18 December 2017** - Parques de Sintra is now undertaking conservation and restoration work on the Ambassadors Room in the National Palace of Queluz. The work, which aims to treat all of the existing features and materials in this space, comes with a budget of €180,000 and is due for completion in summer 2018.

The intervention spans the treatment of the structural and painted woods, the surfaces finished in smooth painted canvases and in figurative painted canvases; the gilded features in relief, mirrors and glasses; the stone pavement and the wooden flooring and as well as the lighting set made up of the wall-mounted chandeliers and the three larger, central chandeliers.

The scope of this project also foresees recovery work to the roofing zone as well as the renovation of some infrastructures, in particular the modernisation of the energy, telecommunications, lighting and fire detection systems and expanding the video surveillance system and all to bring about greater security, energy efficiency and the aesthetic appropriateness of this built heritage environment.

We would furthermore highlight that, duly taking into account the preservation of this patrimonial property of such great value, this intervention project meets the highest standards of scientific and technical rigour alongside the application of the best practices in effect both nationally and internationally for the field of conservation and restoration.

In keeping with the different and varied specialist artistic fields present in this room,
Parques de Sintra also made recourse to the services of the José de Figueiredo Laboratory, part of the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage, for specific support in defining the work required by the features in canvas, wood and the painted glasses with figurative features.

According to the “Open for Works” company policy, a circulation tunnel has been installed with acrylic windows to enable visitors to view the ongoing conservation and restoration work.

**Ambassadors Room**

Initially known as the Rich Tent, the Room of Columns and Serenades, and the Gallery, this area became known as the Room of Carvings and the Ambassadors Room after 1794.

Its construction began in 1754 according to a design by the architect Jean-Baptiste Robillion and with the collaboration of the French Jacques Antoine Colin, sculptor, and Jean François Cragnier, joiner, and the Portuguese Bruno José do Vale and Francisco de Melo, who painted the ceiling and coving with allegorical motifs and *Chinoiserie*.

The painting in the central panel, of great scenographic impact, portrays the royal family attending a serenim (serenade). This is a replica of an original canvas attributed to the Italian painter Giovanni Berardi, completed in 1762 but which was lost in the 1934 fire that particularly damaged this section of the palace.

This is the area of the Palace that best conveys the influence of *Chinoiserie* style decoration, so much the fashion in the second half of the 18th century. The existence of two throne canopies, defined by the mirrored columns, stems from the ceremonies at which the monarchs would be accompanied by the Princes of Brazil, the title bestowed upon prince-heirs.

Since 1794, the period when Queluz became the permanent residence of the Royal Family, through to 1807, the year of their departure for Brazil, this room served for the Prince Regent and the Hand Kissing ceremony alongside audiences with diplomats and foreign ministers and hence the reason it became known as the Ambassadors Room.
About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua

Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is an entirely state owned company founded in 2000 in order to meet the challenges arising out of the UNESCO classification of the Sintra Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage site. The entity does not resort to the State Budget and the restoration and maintenance of the heritage in its care are ensured by the revenues resulting from sales at its ticket offices, stores, cafeterias and the rental of facilities for the hosting of events. In 2016, the sites managed by PSML (the Park and National Palace of Pena, the National Palaces of Sintra and Queluz, the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, the Moorish Castle, the Palace and Gardens of Monserrate, the Convent of the Capuchos and the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art) welcomed 2,625,011 visits, around 83% of whom were international in origin. In 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, PSML was distinguished with the World Travel Award for the “World's Leading Conservation Company”.

The PSML shareholders are the General Directorate of the Treasury and Finance (representing the Portuguese state), the Portuguese Institute of Nature and Forestry Conservation, the Portuguese Tourism Board and Sintra Municipal Council.

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