The National Palace of Pena unveils new museographic content

- Original furniture returns to the Smoking Room
- Dining Room and Pantry present “A Table for King Carlos I and Queen Amélia”
- Complete restoration of the chambers of King Carlos I

Sintra, 18 December 2019 – The year of 2019 closes with a range of new content on display along the exhibition route through the National Palace of Pena. Recently completed, the new museography of the Smoking Room features the return of the original furniture that had been removed back in 1939 and thus, for the first time in 80 years, enabling visitors to come into contact with the appearance this room had displayed during the times of Ferdinand II, the monarch responsible for the construction of this Palace. In the Dining Room and Pantry, there is the first ever reconstruction of palace life during the reign of King Carlos I and Queen Amélia with a particular emphasis on the table displaying the configuration and the objects deployed in this period. The chambers of King Carlos I – his Office, Bedroom and Bathroom – have been subject to a complete restoration and their pieces organised in accordance with the layout there in the final years of the monarchy.

At the end of eight decades, the furniture Ferdinand II acquired in 1866 from the Lisbon manufacturer Barbosa e Costa makes its return to its place in the now restored Smoking Room. The new museographic layout both enables insights into and triggers our imagination as regards the way in which this room, decorated according to the concepts of symmetry, beauty, informality, comfort and functionality, was actually used by the king and his guests. The set of furniture, all in oak, was restored and upholstered on cotton fabrics that reconstitutes the original textile and also applied for the curtains. At that time, this material, with its floral and bird motifs, invoked the oriental imaginary despite being produced in Europe. The divans with their cushions invite their users to recline and with the smoking chairs, without any arms, designed to be sat on in an unconventional fashion: their users would sit with their legs extending outwards on either side of the chair back that would then serve to support the elbows rather than the back. The armrests of
all pieces contain small, zinc-lined drawers to serve as ashtrays. As a set, the Smoking Room is thoroughly representative of the decorative taste applied by Ferdinand II in the Palace of Pena during the 1860s.

In the **Dining Room and Scullery**, the historical reconstruction work focused on the appearance of these rooms during the reign of Carlos I and Amélia, the generation that inhabited the Palace between 1890 and 1910. The table, a central feature in this area, is on display adorned by three Chinese porcelain baskets embellished with flowers, similar to the regular practices of those times. The porcelain services on display, personalised with the royal crown, was commissioned in Limoges (Haviland) during their reign. The crystal Baccarat glasses date to the same period. The table is set for the “Russian style” services in which the plates were prepared on the adjoining carving tables and individually served to each guest in keeping with the habits of that period. For this type of service, it was common to provide a menu to inform on the succession of dishes being served. As such, the table is completed by a reproduction of the menu for the supper served in the Palace on 20 July 1900.

The restoration works undertaken in the **chambers** occupied by **King Carlos I** during his stays in the Palace of Pena have now also been completed. The intervention, spanning the Office, the Bedroom and the Bathroom, not only covered the wall, ceiling and floor finishings but also all of the works of art and furniture and coming to a conclusion with the reconstitution of the upholstery and the curtains. In the king’s Office, all of the pieces were laid out according to the information gathered from the historical inventories of the Palace and as confirmed by period photographs of the monarchy and thereby ensuring the greatest possible accuracy to the appearance of this room from the period when in use by the Royal Family. The Bedroom evokes the appearance of a chamber designed for a Royal sleep and features diverse pieces that belonged to the collections of Carlos I held by the Palace of Necessidades in Lisbon. This space also hosts two oil and one pastel painting by the monarch that, alongside the unfinished canvases in his Office, are representative of his pictorial works.
These interventions reflect total investment of around 178,000 euros that includes not only the restoration of the spaces in question but also a general review of the infrastructure networks so as to guarantee the best conditions for security and the conservation of heritage, especially through improving the lighting and fire detection systems. The global project that has been implemented throughout the interiors of the National Palace of Pena held the core objective of the historical reconstruction of the domestic environments that best reflect the daily lives of the Royal Family in this monument. All work has been carried out based on both documental and iconographic sources. In parallel, they are accompanied by thorough historical research and only put into practice through the collaboration of renowned masters and producers in both the national and international markets.

– end –

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 2018, 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 around 3.5 million visits, around 86% of whom were international in origin. In 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, 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.

Media contacts:
Comunicação Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
E-mail: comunicacao@parquesdesintra.pt
Tel: +351 21 923 73 00