

## Family activities bring cheer to the parks and monuments of Sintra in February

- “There’s a Donkey Here!” in the D. Fernando II Hunting Grounds
- “Dances with History: King João I – the portrait of Princess Isabel of Avis” in the National Palace of Sintra
- “Families in the Forest” in the Monserrate Farmyard and Hunting Grounds
- “Carnival in the National Palace of Queluz”
- “The King’s Treasure” in the National Palace of Sintra

*Sintra, 15 January 2020* – Right in the midst of winter, the month of February is marked by the cold while the joys of Carnival contribute towards warming the days. In the parks and monuments of Sintra, the agenda both commemorates this festivity and dedicates particular emphasis to entertaining activities for families. Whether celebrating Carnival at the National Palace of Queluz, with an evocation of the Baroque period; enjoying a donkey ride through the Sintra forest; getting involved in a treasure hunt in the National Palace of Sintra are just some of the experiences that this diverse range of heritage sites provides.

On the first day of February, the “**There’s a Donkey Here!**” program takes place in the Donkey Reserve set up in the D. Fernando II Hunting Grounds, **alongside the Convent of Capuchos**. In these sessions, held at **10am, 12pm and 3pm on every Saturday this month**, children and their families gain the chance to learn more about the history and characteristics of these charming animals while simultaneously interacting with them. The session closes with a pleasant walk through the Sintra forest when the children get to ride while the parents lead the donkeys by their reins.

On the following weekend, the **National Palace of Sintra** provides the stage for “**Dances with History: João I – The portrait of Princess Isabel of Avis**”, which is held on **8**

**February at 11am.** In this presentation, the Danças com História association adopts the costumes, dances and sounds of the period to take participants off back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and more specifically to the time when this Palace welcomed a visit by the painter Jan Van Eyck, who travelled there with objective of making the portrait of Isabel, daughter of King João I. In 1428, it was through this oil painting that the powerful Duke of Burgundy first saw his promised bride, who thus went on to become one of the leading ladies of her time. This activity is further enriched with a guided tour of the exhibition circuit.

Whatever the weather might be, on **15 February**, at **11am**, the **Monserate Farmyard and Hunting Grounds** welcomes “**Families in the Forest**”, a program resulting from a partnership between Parques de Sintra and the Bloom Movement with the objective of stimulating a re-connection between children and their families and nature. Playing, running, climbing, making shelters and crafting works of art out of natural materials are some of the activities that enable all participants to deepen their relationships not only with themselves and other people but also with the surrounding natural environment. Simultaneously, this fosters creativity and the acquisition of individual and collective competences.

On **22 February**, Fat Saturday, at **3pm**, the “**Carnival in the Palace of Queluz**” is celebrated with an animated and creative evocation of the Baroque period. Following a mask “workshop”, characters from this period accompany participants in a tour of this Palace with its impressive halls having witnessed the great parties and receptions of the Royal Family before getting actively involved in a performance of 18<sup>th</sup> century music and dance. This activity targets families with children aged over six.

Another family dedicated proposal comes with the “**King’s Treasure**”, which takes place on **23 February**, at **3pm**, in the **National Palace of Sintra**. With its over 700 years of history, this Palace holds many secrets and one of the most amusing ways of discovering them is through this game of clues. In order to encounter the mysterious treasure of the king, everybody gets involved in an emotional adventure, filled with tasks that have to be completed in order to solve the puzzles they contain.

## PROGRAMMING

### **There's a Donkey Here!**

**Every Saturday in February, 10am, 12pm and 3pm, D. Fernando II Hunting Grounds (next to the Convent of the Capuchos)**

Patients, affable and very calm, donkeys make great companions for both the kids and the grown-ups engaging in this extraordinary adventure. Having made the introductions, it's time to tell the history of the many long centuries and learnings of these gentle animals, which neither kick out nor bite (whenever dealt with the respect they deserve), are not nervous (when scared, they stop rather than fleeing like their horse "cousins"), are rather greedy (casting desiring glances towards the hay bales that serve as seating), are strong and yes, are even smart! A walk then follows in the company of these new friends: the children riding and the parents guiding the animals so that everybody may enjoy a pleasant walk through the forest.

- **Suitable for:** families with children aged between 3 and 12

- **Duration:** 90 mins

- **Ticket:** €10/participant

- **Requires pre-booking (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm):**

info@parquesdesintra.pt; +351 21 923 73 00

- **Note:** subject to cancellation in case of adverse meteorological conditions.

### **Feel the Heritage**

**Saturday, 1 February, 2.30pm, Park of Monserrate**

Among the romantic ruins and waterfalls, participants discover the Gardens of Monserrate through the sense of feeling, hearing and smelling. This provides the chance to touch the waterfall in motion, understand the variations in temperature and learn about some botanical species while feeling the exotic textures and smells. In the vicinity of the Palace of Monserrate, this provides the chance to explore all the materials that make up its facades.

- **Suitable for:** targeted at blind or visually impaired visitors

- **Duration:** 90 mins

- **Ticket for registered disabled:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5

- **Regular ticket:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5

- **Requires pre-booking (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm):**

info@parquesdesintra.pt; +351 21 923 73 00

- **Note:** this activity counts on the support of ACAPO – the Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Portugal. We recommend wearing comfortable footwear and clothing appropriate to the prevailing meteorological conditions. Subject to cancellation or adaptation only to the interior of the Palace of Monserrate in case of adverse meteorological conditions.

### **Monserrate Centre of Nature Interpretation**

**Saturday, 8 February, 3pm, Park of Monserrate**

The Monserrate Centre of Nature Interpretation provides a pedagogic visit that opens up an understanding to families of the most important natural values of the Sintra Hills, stimulating their contact with nature, environmental awareness and knowledge about the fauna and flora present in the unique ecosystems that characterise this region.

Through this innovative approach, with recourse to digital tools and didactic materials, visitors are invited to travel back through time and discover the leading episodes defining the geological, cultural and natural history of the Sintra Hills. Subsequently, this embarks on the exploration of the particular features of the riverside ecosystems through recourse to an aquatic terrarium where it is possible to encounter in situ some of their inhabitants. The biology of trees, which it is possible to learn about through a model of a Portuguese oak, broken down into its roots, trunk and foliage, represents another of the highlighted themes. The visit closes with the projecting of profiles of

birds and winged mammals in flight that enables participants in the future to identify these species by their behaviours, their anatomic features and even their respective sounds.

- **Suitable for:** families with children over the age of 6
- **Duration:** 120 mins
- **Ticket:** €8/participant
- **Requires pre-booking:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm)

### **Dances with History: King João I – the portrait of Princess Isabel of Avis**

**Saturday, 8 February, 11am, National Palace of Sintra**

In this presentation, the Danças com História association adopts the costumes, dances and sounds of the period to take participants off back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and more specifically to the time when this Palace welcomed a visit by the painter Jan Van Eyck, who travelled there with objective of making the portrait of Isabel, daughter of King João I. In 1428, it was through this oil painting that the powerful Duke of Burgundy first saw his promised bride, who thus went on to become one of the leading ladies of her time. This activity is further enriched with a guided tour of the exhibition circuit.

- **Suitable for:** families with children over the age of 6
- **Duration/session:** 90 mins/120 mins (30/40 min Dances with History performance + guided tour)
- **Ticket:** €9/participant
- **Information:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm)
- **Requires pre-booking:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm)

### **Gardens of Monserrate without Barriers**

**Saturday, 8 February, 2.30pm, Park of Monserrate**

A visit catering for persons with mobility restrictions who are able to traverse the gardens with autonomy through equipment ensuring they can span the slopes and facilitating the mobility of manual wheelchairs. This includes exploring the Valley of the Ferns, the Garden of Mexico, the Rose Garden, the Lawn and Lakes of the Park of Monserrate.

- **Suitable for:** appropriate for visitors with mobility restrictions
- **Duration:** 90 mins
- **Ticket for registered disabled:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Regular ticket:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Requires pre-booking (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm):** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** visitors may bring their own wheelchairs or use the wheelchairs made available by Parques de Sintra (without any added cost). Open to accompanying carers. The traction equipment adapts to the large majority of wheelchairs. Subject to cancellation or adaptation only to the interior of the Palace of Monserrate in case of adverse meteorological conditions.

### **The Palace of Sintra through other senses**

**Saturday, 15 February, 2.30pm, National Palace of Sintra**

Throughout the museum visit route of the National Palace of Sintra, visitors are invited to perceive this space through sensorial exploration. This favours physically feeling, through touching replicas of some of the most significant pieces as well as hearing to sense the scale of spaces. This experience is led by a specialist guide who, in addition to the historical contents, approaches other themes such as the different phases of construction, the living quarters, the functional zones of the building, the tile manufacturing techniques and the furniture existing.

- **Suitable for:** Blind or visually impaired visitors
- **Duration:** 120 mins
- **Ticket for registered disabled:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Regular ticket:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Requires pre-booking (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm):** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** this activity counts on the support of ACAPO – the Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Portugal. We recommend the wearing of comfortable footwear.

### **From the Park to the Hunting Grounds: Nature in Sintra and Mafra**

#### **Saturday, 15 February, 10am, Monserrate Hunting Grounds, and 2.30pm, Mafra Hunting Grounds**

Joint visit program to Sintra and Mafra, which unveils the diversity of the ecosystems in the Natural Park of Sintra – Cascais – a protected area to which the Monserrate Hunting Grounds belong – and the magnificent historical and indigenous forest that characterises the National Hunting Grounds of Mafra. In the Monserrate Hunting Grounds, the visitor explores the natural history of the Sintra Hills, its unusual microclimate, concepts such as forest food, ecological succession, invasive species, among others. Along the way, visitors will also be surprised by wooden sculptures of the medium and large scale mammals, currently extinct in the Sintra Hills but that, in a recent past, inhabited this landscape. In Mafra, along less trodden footpaths, visitors embark on the discovery of a mature forest that, due to its protected position behind a wall, has been able to guarantee conditions of excellence to vulnerable and where not extinction threatened species that are here able to feed, breed and find shelter.

- **Suitable for:** everybody
- **Duration:** 90 mins in Monserrate, 120 mins in Mafra
- **Ticket:** Adults: €13/participant | Youths and seniors: €11/participant | Families (2 adults + 2 children): €45
- **Requires pre-booking:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm)
- **Note:** staging this activity depends on a minimum number of participants. Subject to cancellation in case of adverse meteorological conditions.

### **Families in the Forest**

#### **Saturday, 15 February, 11am, Farmyard of Monserrate/ Hunting Grounds of Monserrate**

A unique opportunity for families to engage in discovering nature with the time and space to run, climb, play, buildings shelters and giving free rein to creativity through natural materials. Playing, come rain or sunshine, stimulates the acquisition of individual and collective competences, team spirit, complicity and valuing and respecting others as well as for biodiversity. The sessions, implemented jointly by Parques de Sintra and the Bloom Movement, are characterised by their Sharing Nature activities, a learning approach inspired on the Flow Learning methodology that values the application of the entertaining component of games to the activities and workshops held and enabling, through means of playing, the participants to deepen their relationships with their own selves as well as with others and the natural world.

The Bloom Movement ([www.movimentobloom.org.pt](http://www.movimentobloom.org.pt); [www.facebook.com/Movimento.Bloom](https://www.facebook.com/Movimento.Bloom)) is a non-profit environmental association that has managed the Sharing Nature Portugal program since 2012 and with the mission of fostering, encouraging and promoting the conservation of the surrounding environment in conjunction with children and their families through initiatives that seek to strengthen bonds with nature and contribute towards them playing an active role in its conservation.

- **Suitable for:** recommended for families with children aged between 4 and 12
- **Duration:** 120 mins
- **Ticket:** €8/participant

- **Requires pre-booking and prior payment:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm)
- **Note:** Staging this activity depends on a minimum number of participants. We would recommend wearing comfortable clothing that may get dirty and waterproof footwear. Participants should bring a complete change of clothing in a small backpack (including trousers, socks, vest, t-shirt, jumper).

### **Heritage through Sign Language**

#### **Saturday, 22 February, 2.30pm, Park of Monserrate**

A visit to the Gardens and Palace of Monserrate with interpretation in Portuguese Sign Language. The visit to the gardens, one of the most beautiful of creations of Romanticism inspired landscaping in Portugal, which is home to over 3,000 species of plants from distant corners of the world, touring the Valley of Ferns, the Garden of Mexico, the Rose Garden and the lawns before ending in the Palace of Monserrate.

- **Suitable for:** targeting deaf and audibly impaired visitors
- **Duration:** 90 mins
- **Ticket for registered disabled:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Regular ticket:** entrance ticket + guided tour supplement €5
- **Requires pre-booking (working days between 9.30am and 6.30pm):** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** this activity counts on the support and participation of APS – the Portuguese Association of the Deaf. We would recommend wearing comfortable footwear and clothing appropriate to the meteorological conditions. Subject to cancellation or adaptation only to the interior of the Palace of Monserrate in case of adverse meteorological conditions.

### **Carnival in the Palace of Queluz**

#### **Saturday, 22 February, 3pm, National Palace of Queluz**

In a festive environment of great creativity, which takes us back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the celebration of Carnival at the National Palace of Queluz starts off with a mask “workshop” which is followed by the participants, accompanied by figures from this period, getting actively involved in a performance of 18<sup>th</sup> century music and dance in one of the oldest reception halls in this palace.

- **Target:** recommended for families with children aged over six
- **Duration:** 2h
- **Tickets:** €9/participant
- **Requires prior registration and payment:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00 (weekdays between 9.30am and 6.30pm)
- **Note:** The holding of this session depends on a minimum number of participants.

### **Once Upon a Time on the Farmyard**

#### **Saturday, 22 February, 3pm, Farmyard of Monserrate**

Túlio and Tibério are two brothers who work in the Farmyard of Monserrate. One of them, an amateur inventor, creates machines and devices to facilitate work in the field even if not always working well. Hence, he needs some help to care for the animals and tend to the tasks around the farm. The other brother, good natured but rather greedy, tends to kneading and baking the bread so that, at the end of the labours, they may all share the bread accompanied by a refreshing glass of lemonade. The unfurling of this story combines a mystery and clues to solve it, traditional games and as well as two puppets that sow confusion... This is, in sum, a great adventure that involves all participants in an unforgettable tour of the farm.

- **Suitable for:** Families with children aged between 3 and 6
- **Duration:** 90 mins
- **Ticket:** €8/participant





- **Requires pre-booking:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** Staging this visit depends on a minimum number of participants.

### **The King's Treasure**

#### **Sunday, 23 February, 3pm, National Palace of Sintra**

In a palace replete with 700 year of history, packed with secrets to discover, participants are invited to follow clues, solve enigmas and puzzles and complete tasks so that they finally know what is stored as the king's treasure. This is a game of clues that enables the discovery of the history of the National Palace of Sintra in a very different and emotional fashion.

- **Suitable for:** recommended for families with children aged over 8
- **Duration:** 90 mins
- **Ticket:** €9/participant
- **Requires pre-booking:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** Staging this activity depends on a minimum number of participants

### **Horse and pony trekking**

#### **Daily, Park of Pena**

Horse riding in which the visitor tours the routes and paths of the Park of Pena from a new perspective. The horse ride duration may vary between 30 and 90 minutes or from 3 to 6 hours. The longest program includes the scope for visiting other poles under Parques de Sintra management and even booking lunch in some specific place. All the rides and treks are made accompanied by horse handlers who guide the visitors along the routes.

Thinking of a younger audience, Parques de Sintra now also provides an activity that enables the youngest to gain their first riding experience on a pony (trained especially for this purpose) and also accompanied by one of their handlers.

- **Horse trekking:** €15/30 min, €30/90 min, €50/3 hours, €100/6 hours (in addition to the Park of Pena entrance ticket)
- **Pony rides:** €7/15 minutes (in addition to the Park of Pena entrance ticket)
- **Further information and reservations:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** such activities depend on the prevailing meteorological conditions
- **Find out more:** [www.parquesdesintra.pt/experiencias-e-lazer/passeios-a-cavalo/](http://www.parquesdesintra.pt/experiencias-e-lazer/passeios-a-cavalo/)

### **Cart Rides**

#### **Park of Pena**

The Park of Pena cart rides provide a genuine step back in time along the route from the Valley of Lakes and the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, passing through the Farm of Pena and the Garden of the Countess of Edla. This ride may or may not be accompanied by a specialist guide. This takes visitors on a voyage in discovery of the history of this Park and its creators, the botanical and animal species that appear along the route as well as the historical buildings and garden nooks the trajectory contains.

- **Ticket:** €75/60 mins + entrance ticket to the Park of Pena (prior reservation and pre-payment obligatory)
- The cart holds up to 6 adults or 4 adults and 4 children
- Available only via prior reservation as from 1 October and throughout the low season.
- **Further information and reservations:** [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt); +351 21 923 73 00
- **Note:** Undertaking such activities depends on the prevailing meteorological conditions
- **Find out more:** [www.parquesdesintra.pt/experiencias-e-lazer/passeios-de-charrete/](http://www.parquesdesintra.pt/experiencias-e-lazer/passeios-de-charrete/)

### **Equestrian Art Presentations**



**“The Son of the Wind” Gala in homage to the Lusitano horse**  
**Friday, 28 February, 9.30pm, Henrique Calado Riding Ring (Belém, Lisbon)**

**Equestrian Art Mornings**

**From Tuesday to Saturday, between 10am and 1pm**

**(schedule at [www.arteequestre.pt/bilheteira](http://www.arteequestre.pt/bilheteira))**

The Henrique Calado Riding Ring regularly hosts “Equestrian Art Mornings”, an opportunity for behind the scenes insights into the daily EPAE activities.

- **Suitable for:** all ages over six

- **Ticket: Galas - €25 // “Equestrian Art Mornings” – €8**

- **For further information:** [www.arteequestre.pt](http://www.arteequestre.pt) / [info@parquesdesintra.pt](mailto:info@parquesdesintra.pt) / +351 21 923 73 00

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**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:**

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