



# HOSPITAL DE SANTO ANTÓNIO DOS CAPUCHOS



Image: CHULC Archive



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**August 2023**

## THE SANTO ANTÓNIO DOS CAPUCHOS CONVENT

In 1568, the Santo António Province was created in Portugal. Its members were known as “Capuchos” due to the particular shape of their hood. They were a group of Franciscan friars that considered that the rules of the Franciscan Order had relaxed in later years. After several appeals to higher instances, they obtained a certain degree of autonomy that allowed them to return to the original rules of the order.

The fear caused by the Great Plague of 1569, allied with Lisbon’s people devotion for Saint Anthony, created the necessary conditions for the foundation of a religious house for those friars in this city.

Thus, on the 15th of February of 1570, the first stone of the Santo António dos Capuchos Convent was laid.



The building of small dimensions was inaugurated nine years later, becoming the head of the Province. At one time, it included around 20 other convents not only in Portugal but also on several Brazilian states.

From the architectural point of view, the Church in the mannerist style with a single domed nave stands out, as well as a small courtyard with cloisters, around which other convent buildings were organized.

*Saint Anthony preaching to the fishes*

Santo António dos Capuchos Convent Church's Main Altar

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The majority of the tiles found in these spaces date from the first half of the 18th century, being the most noteworthy of attention the panels with scenes from Saint Anthony's life, as well as other Franciscan devotion saints. The cloisters are decorated with tiles depicting "albarradas" from the same epoch.

Inside the conventual fence existed several buildings namely the small chapels of the Via Sacra, depicting the main events of the Passion of Christ, object of great devotion during the Easter weeks. Although affected by the 1755 earthquake, several donations enabled the a speedy reconstruction, concluded in 1758.

In the Pátio do Relógio, on a plinth covered in blue and white tiles from the 1st half of the 18th century, is a Sundial with three quadrants, dating from 1586.

Is the oldest of its kind that is dated, known in Portugal since Roman times.



#### *Sundial*

Pátio do Relógio

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## LISBON'S POOR ASYLUM



In 1834, the dissolution of the religious orders closes down the convent, that was converted into the Asylo de Mendicidade de Lisboa, created in 1836, by initiative of Mouzinho da Silveira, during the reign of Queen Maria II.

In 1854, with the objective of expanding its installations capacity, the asylum acquired the Mello Palace, contiguous to the conventual fence. It is a building from the end of the 17th century, expanded in the 18th century by D. João de Mello e Abreu, Lord of Murça. It was during these renovation works that the still existing tile panels were applied, among which stands out those from the former Dance Hall and the Staircase.

Around 1888/1891, the then asylum's purveyor Alfredo Queiróz Guedes, cleaned up the institution's finances and promoted the construction of new buildings inside de fence of the old convent with the objective of creating several workshops.

In these worked the poor—male and female— supporting the institution's spaces maintenance, but also providing services to the exterior, obtaining income to the asylum.

Commemorative tablet of the Asylo da Mendicidade de Lisboa's foundation

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And since the poor that inhabited the asylum already exceed the 1000 at the time, new buildings to house them were constructed.

Shortly before the establishment of the Portuguese Republic, the asylum was transferred to an Alcobaça's Monastery wing.

The religious complex of the friars remained without a fixed use, fact that led to its fast degradation.



Tile panel from the first half of the 18th century

In one of the halls of the Mello Palace's noble floor

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In 1928, by initiative of the Hospitais Civis de Lisboa's Enfermeiro-Mor (same as CEO), the Navy's Lieutenant-Coronel João Nepumoceno de Freitas, and after adaption works, the former convent began its use as a hospital, function that maintains until today.

During its almost 100 years of existence, several improvements have been made and new buildings have been built in order to upgrade the conditions of its services.

Pioneer in areas such as Haematology, Gastroenterology and Neurology, the Hospital provides care in other relevant specialties as Dermatology, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Anaesthesiology, and a Chronic Pain Unit being the first of its kind in the country.



Commemorative tablet of Hospital de Santo António dos Capuchos's foundation

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## THE AUXÍLIO MATERNA AND THE ESCOLA DE ENFERMAGEM ARTUR RAVARA

In 1931, by initiative of the paediatrician Sara Benoliel, was created the *Auxílio Maternal* (Maternal Assistance). Its objective was to provide care to the children of the female staff of the Hospitais Cívicos de Lisboa, during working hours, but also took care of children of the male staff, that were the primary carers for their kids.

Functioning in an autonomous specifically built building, it had two components: a day care for children up to 3 years old, having the paediatrician Sara Benoliel as the director; and the kindergarten for children from 3 to 7 years old.



Between 1932 and 2007, in another specifically built building inside the hospital's complex functioned the Escola de Enfermagem Artur Ravara. Created in 1918 in the former Hospital de S. Lázaro, it was the first nursing school of the country.

Its origin begins with a nursing course headed by the doctor Artur Ravara between 1886 and 1888 at Hospital Real de S. José.

Sara Benoliel at a party in her honour  
at the Maternal Assistance  
Newspaper "O Século" Archive (1932)

## THE MUSEUM OF PORTUGUESE DERMATOLOGY

### DR. LUIS DE SÁ PENELLA

Inaugurated in 1955 at the former Hospital do Desterro, since 2011 the Portuguese Museum of Dermatology is located at Hospital de Santo António dos Capuchos' Main Hall.

Besides honouring the dermatologist Sá Penella, founder and 1st president of the Portuguese Society of Dermatology and Venereology, the museum preserves a relevant set of wax figures, as well as documents and objects that tell the history of the Portuguese Dermatology.

The main nucleus of the collection is a set of over 250 wax figures, the largest of its kind in Portugal, that reproduces with great realism several pathologies associated with skin and venereal diseases.



Commissioned by initiative of two doctors—Sá Penella and Caeiro Carrasco and executed in the thirties and forties of the 20th century, they follow the example of other European collections of the 19th century for didactic purposes.

Besides several syphilis cases, they depict the diseases as lupus, psoriasis, elephantiasis or severe burns.

**Hospital de Santo António dos Capuchos**

**Alameda de Santo António dos Capuchos, 1169-050 Lisboa**

**Informations and bookings:**

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