Amarante

Porto District · Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Amarante is a small town on the Tâmega river in northern Portugal, about 40 minutes by car east of Porto. Its old stone bridge, the church and former monastery of São Gonçalo, and the riverside streets make a compact and photogenic centre.

The town is known for its local saint and for its unusual phallic sweets, which are part of the June festival. It lies on the western side of the Serra do Marão and in the Vinho Verde wine region, so it suits a day trip from Porto or a quiet stay with walks, cycling and wine.

When to visit

Late spring and early summer are the best time: days are warm and the weather is mostly dry. July and August can be very hot. Autumn and winter are mild but wet.

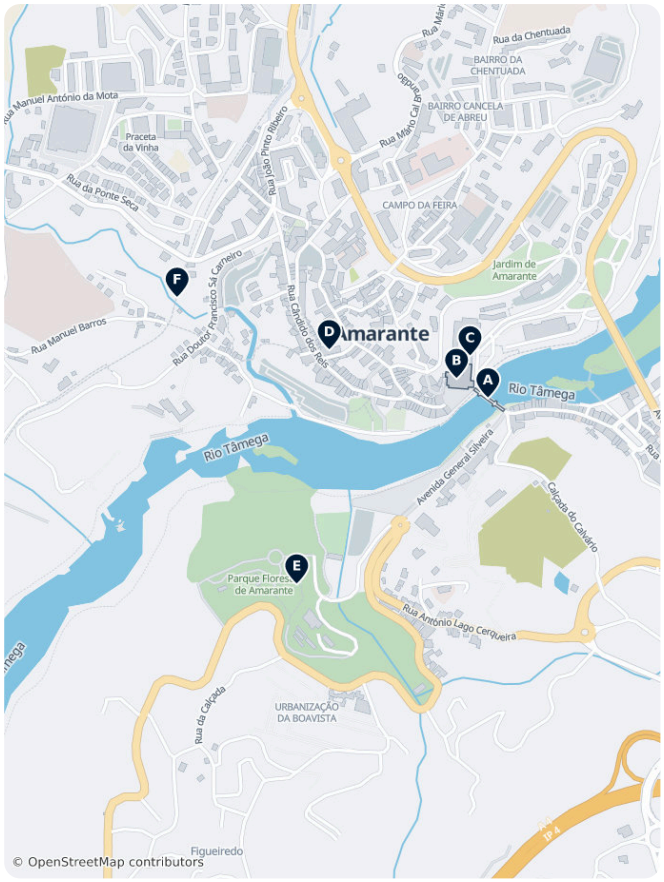
The main event is O Junho, the festival of São Gonçalo, on the first weekend of June. It brings drum parades, folk groups, a procession and fireworks. Book rooms early for that weekend.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for cycling	13° / 17°	6° / 0°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for cycling	15° / 20°	6° / 0°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for cycling	17° / 23°	7° / 2°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 27°	9° / 4°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 31°	11° / 7°	Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	28° / 36°	15° / 10°	Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for sightseeing	32° / 40°	17° / 12°	22 sunny days · Calm winds · Up to 10 days above 35°
August	Poor Poor for sightseeing	33° / 40°	17° / 13°	23 sunny days · Calm winds · Up to 11 days above 35°
September	Good Good for sightseeing	29° / 36°	15° / 11°	Calm winds
October	Good Good for sightseeing	23° / 31°	13° / 8°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Good Good for cycling	17° / 22°	8° / 3°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Good Good for cycling	14° / 18°	6° / 1°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: May, June

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Ponte de São Gonçalo is the symbol of the town. The stone bridge over the Tâmega was built in 1790, after a flood destroyed the older bridge in 1763. In 1809 Portuguese troops held it against French forces during the Peninsular War.
- B Igreja de São Gonçalo honours Saint Gonçalo, the local saint. It stands beside the river and next to the old monastery buildings.
- C Museu Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso is in the former monastery of São Gonçalo. It is named after the modernist painter *Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso* (1887–1918).
- D Igreja de São Pedro is one of several smaller churches within a short walk of the bridge.
- E Parque Florestal de Amarante is a forest park near the centre. It is a quiet place for a short walk.
- F Ecopista do Tâmega is a walking and cycling path on the old railway line. It runs about 39 km north of the town to Arco de Baúlhe, through vineyards and villages.

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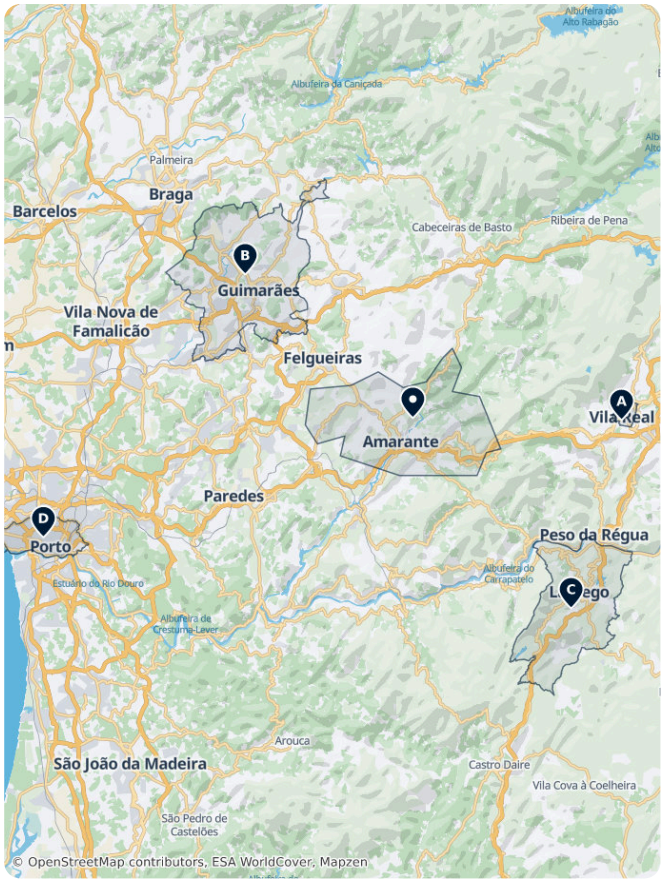
What to experience

- Join O Junho, the São Gonçalo festival, on the first weekend of June. Expect drum groups in the streets, folk dancing, a procession for the saint and fireworks.
- Visit on 10 January, another feast day for São Gonçalo, when the town's traditional sweets are given as gifts.
- Cycle or walk part of the Ecopista do Tâmega through vineyards and villages. Ride out and return the same way.

Day trips

Amarante is a good base for day trips. Travel times are one way and approximate.

- A Vila Real: about 30 minutes by car or bus. A historic town at the foot of the Marão range.
- B Guimarães: about 45 minutes by car. Famous for its medieval centre, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- C Lamego: about 50 minutes by car. A hill town with a large baroque pilgrimage stairway and sparkling wine.
- D Porto: about 1 hour by direct bus. Good for a full day in a big city.



Getting there

- By air: the nearest major airport is Porto (OPO). From the airport, continue by rental car, or go to Porto city and take a bus.
- By bus: direct buses run from Porto to the bus station in Amarante, which is south of the river and served mainly by Rodonorte. The trip takes about 1 hour.
- By train: there is no train to Amarante. The Tâmega railway line closed in 2009.
- By car: the A4 motorway passes next to the town. Porto is about 45 minutes away.

Getting around

- On foot: the old centre and the main sights are close together and easy to cover on foot.
- By bike: the Tâmega Ecopista is a long, mostly traffic-free path for walking and cycling that runs north from the town.
- For visitor and event information, see Câmara Municipal de Amarante.

Driving

- A car is not needed for the town itself, which is best on foot. It is useful for villages, wine estates and the Marão range.
- Tolls: the A4 through the Marão Tunnel towards Vila Real has been toll-free since 1 January 2025. Other motorways, including the approach from Porto, may still charge tolls, so check your route.

Food & drink

Amarante is famous for its doces fálicos, also called bolos de São Gonçalo. These phallic cakes are sold in local bakeries all year and are especially popular around the saint's festivals. Tradition says they are given to single people as a sign of good luck.

Amarante is one of the nine Vinho Verde sub-regions, so look for local Vinho Verde on menus. Restaurants and cafés cluster in the streets around the bridge and along the river.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Caldo Verde
A simple, comforting soup of shredded kale, potato, and slices of chourico sausage.

Francesinha
A hearty Porto specialty: a meat-stuffed sandwich covered in melted cheese and a spiced tomato-beer sauce.

DINNER

Bacalhau
Salt cod, Portugal's national dish, said to be prepared in hundreds of different ways across the country.

Sardinhas Assadas
Charcoal-grilled sardines, especially popular in summer street festivals and along the coast.

Arroz de Marisco
A rich, soupy seafood rice, similar to paella but wetter, packed with shellfish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Pastel de Nata
A small custard tart in flaky pastry, best eaten warm with cinnamon and sugar.

DRINKS

Vinho Verde
A young, light, slightly sparkling white wine from northern Portugal, meant to be drunk within a year of harvest.

Port Wine · Vinho do Porto
A fortified wine from the Douro Valley, aged in cellars around Porto, ranging from sweet ruby to complex aged tawny styles.

Ginjinha · Ginãa
A sweet liqueur made from sour cherries, traditionally served in a small cup, sometimes with a cherry at the bottom.

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Safety & health

Amarante is a small town and feels calm for visitors. Petty theft is uncommon, but keep bags closed and valuables out of sight in crowds, especially during the June festival.

Tap water is safe to drink. Emergency number: 112.

History

The church of São Gonçalo existed by 1279. In the 16th century King *John III* enlarged it and built a large Dominican monastery around it. Today Igreja de São Gonçalo and Museu Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso occupy these buildings.

The medieval bridge over the Tâmega was destroyed by a flood in 1763. The present Ponte de São Gonçalo dates from 1790. In 1809 French forces under *Soult* tried to cross it during the Peninsular War. Portuguese troops under *Francisco da Silveira* held the bridge for about two weeks. The town's coat of arms carries the Order of the Tower and Sword for this resistance.

A railway line, the Tâmega line, served the town from 1909 until its last section closed in 2009. Part of its route is now the Ecopista.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



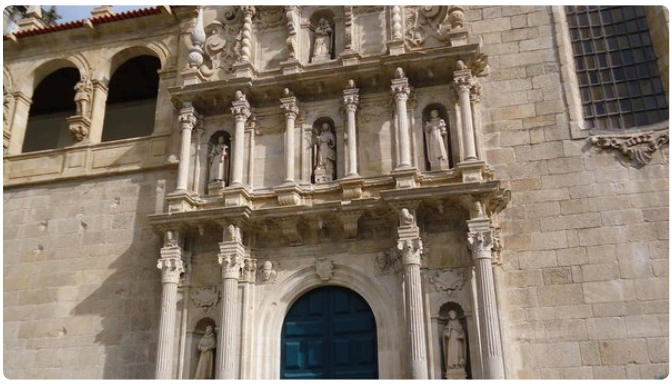
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Portuguese

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Top sights





A Igreja de São Gonçalo

Igreja de São Gonçalo is a church in Amarante, northern Portugal. It is classified as a National Monument.

61 Rua Frei José Amarante, Amarante 4600080, Portugal
(41.26918, -8.07876)



B Ponte de São Gonçalo

Baroque and neoclassical three-arch stone bridge over the Tâmega, rebuilt between 1782 and 1790 and a National Monument since 1910. It is one of the town's emblems, together with the neighbouring church and convent.

142 Rua 31 de Janeiro, Madalena 4600043, Portugal
(41.26885, -8.07806)



C Museu Municipal Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso

Art museum in the former Monastery of São Gonçalo, with collections by artists and writers from Amarante, led by Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso, António Carneiro and Acácio Lino.

Alameda Teixeira de Pascoaes, 4600-011 Amarante (41.26956, -8.07846)

Oct-May Mo–Su	09:30–12:30, 14:00–17:30
Jun-Sep Mo–Su	10:00–12:30, 14:00–18:00

amadeosouza-cardoso.pt, +351 255 420 282



D Serra do Marão

Serra do Marão is the sixth highest mountain range in continental Portugal, rising up to 1415 meters.

(Unnamed Road), 5030, Portugal (41.24846, -7.88698)

valentim.org/cume/3



E Igreja de São Pedro

19 Rua de São Pedro, Amarante 4600065, Portugal (41.26967, -8.08163)



F Parque Florestal de Amarante

(Unnamed Road), Cepelos 4600, Portugal (41.26569, -8.08237)



G Tâmega line

The Tâmega line was a 1,000 mm metre gauge railway line in northern Portugal. It closely followed the course of the Tâmega River.

393 Rua Manuel Barros, Amarante 4600085, Portugal (41.27055, -8.08506)



H Igreja de São Domingos

69 Rua Frei José Amarante, Amarante 4600080, Portugal (41.26902, -8.07926)

DATA SOURCES

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IMAGE CREDITS

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