

SEIXAL MUNICIPAL ECOMUSEUM

ECOMUSEUM MARITIME UNIT





The Maritime Unit of the Seixal Municipal Ecomuseum was established and opened to the public in 1984 in Arrentela, on the site of a former boatyard belonging to Sociedade de Reparações e Construções Navais, a boatbuilding and repair company in operation until the late 1970s.

This Ecomuseum Unit offers visitors an insight into the fluvial-maritime culture and heritage of Seixal and the Tagus Estuary, associated with human activities developed in a close relationship with the river and the sea throughout the municipality's history.

Through exhibitions and other activities, the objectives include: conveying the memory of this site, a former naval dockyard on the River Judeu, a Tagus tributary; promoting and interpreting the fluvial and maritime heritage of the Tagus Estuary, especially the nautical heritage; applying and communicating the artisan techniques through the construction of model boats to enhance the nautical heritage of the Tagus Estuary.

The Maritime Unit facilities include a workshop resulting from the 1990s rebuilding of a wooden building on the site of a tool warehouse in the former boatyard. This workshop, originally set up for the artisan construction of miniatures and models of traditional Tagus vessels, was fitted out for naval modelling in the 2000s. This facility also hosts a temporary exhibition program on themes associated with fluvial-maritime heritage.



CONTACTS

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ECOMUSEUM MARITIME UNIT
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OPENING HOURS
Tuesday to Saturday: from 09:30 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 17:00
Closed: Mondays, Sundays and national and local holidays

DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION CENTRE
Reading and consultation room; document copying
OPENING HOURS
Tuesday to Friday: from 10:00 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 17:00
Prior booking required
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EDUCATION SERVICES
Information and booking visits, tours and other activities. In-person service following prior booking via
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Of the human activities developed in the Seixal region down through history, fishing, fluvial transport and boat building especially stand out. Fishing was an important activity, especially between the 17th and mid-20th century. The practice extended throughout the Tagus Estuary, its tidal creeks, inlets and the Palha Sea, as well as the high seas. Throughout that time, Seixal fishermen used diverse means of fishing, adapted to both the species and the environment.

Up until the mid-20th century, the capital's economy and the riverside communities around the Tagus Estuary depended largely on fluvial transport, especially of people and goods. The diversity in the types of boats navigating and working the Tagus reflects this importance which continued until the construction of bridges and the development of overland transport systems. The *barco dos moinhos*, the *bote do pinho*, the *fragata*, the *falua*, the *varino* and *catraio* are among the vessels used for such purposes.

In Seixal, there were various boatyards that played key roles in the construction and, especially, the repair of wooden boats for fishing and fluvial transport on the Tagus. Their presence here stemmed, on the one hand, from the natural and location features, favourable to such activities and, on the other hand, from factors arising from fishing activities and the establishment of industrial units from the late 19th century onwards, the period when the number of boatyards peaked in Seixal.









Seixal Municipality maintains the varino *Amoroso* and the fragata *Baía do Seixal* on sailing on the Tagus. Integrated into the Ecomuseum collection as floating heritage, the maintenance and active use of these boats maintain and transmits the knowledge and techniques of fluvial navigation and artisan boatbuilding.

These vessels were acquired and restored in the early 1980s as part of a nautical heritage conservation process at a time when wooden boats had already lost their role as a means of fluvial transport. Their restoration involved minimal adaptations, striving to preserve the characteristics of the original structures and to thereby maintain the boats as cultural heritage assets in keeping with their historical, symbolical and social value. Following this process, and in keeping with conservation through navigation, they were registered as recreational boats, for cultural purposes, and then redeployed for tours on the Tagus.

Bote de fragata: *Baía do Seixal*
Date of construction/registration: 1895
Function since 1989: excursions on the Tagus Estuary

Varino: *Amoroso*
Date of construction/registration: 1921
Function since 1995: excursions on the Tagus Estuary

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Boats, Memories of the Tagus
Long term exhibition

Since 2005, the programming of the Ecomuseum´s Maritime Unit has included an exhibition dedicated to the boats of the Tagus, evoking naval construction, navigation, transport and fishing alongside defining moments in the history of Seixal and the riverside communities around the Tagus Estuary. This exhibition approaches and present five thematic groups.

1. Boatyard, memory of the place: a three-dimensional representation (diorama) reconstitutes the final phase of activity in the former artisan boatyard in Arrentela between the 1950s and 1970s. This was the location for the construction and repair of wooden boats, such as fragatas and varinos, used for local river traffic and for transporting goods between the two banks of the Tagus River.

2. Territory, Tagus Estuary: setting out the geographic characteristics, the estuary ecosystem, the establishing of communities and the development of economic activities leveraging fluvial-maritime resources.

3. Working on the Tagus: a collection of model boats from the Tagus Estuary portraying the activities each boat type engaged in, as well as their construction typologies, professions, their navigation potential, and the risks faced by many of those who worked on the river.

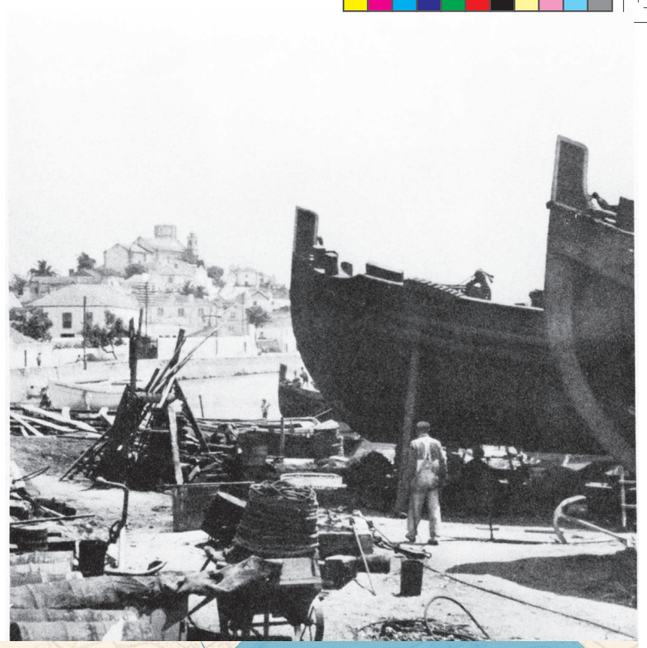
4. Between Bridges: the construction of bridges over the Tagus changed the territory and brought about the decline of fluvial means of transport. The conservation and reusage of the Seixal Municipality boats activate the memories of the Tagus and provides for excursions along the river, viewing its bridges and the other means of transport that came to replace the boats that historically catered for local transportation service needs.

5. Beyond the land: the maritime culture and the riverside communities of the Tagus Estuary, the heirs to multiple cultural experiences, expressed through religious and other festivals and means of artistic expression that project their connections with the Tagus, in the region and beyond.











Fragatas in Seixal
Temporary exhibition

This exhibition features the fragatas, one of a series of different boats used for fluvial transport and of extreme importance to the livelihoods of the settlements located around the Tagus Estuary through to the mid-20th century.

This particularly details the history of one such fragata, the *Cravidão*, with its remains to be found in a tidal zone alongside this Ecomuseum Unit. This highlights various moments in the life of this witness to nautical heritage while also featuring a virtual reconstruction of the boat.





Naval carpenters's tools

1 - Caulking chisel
2 - Caulking chisel
3 - Caulking chisel
4 - Gimlet
5 - Chisel
6 - Clamp
7 - Adz
8 - Caulking-mallet