



Exterior (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)

Case Study

Casa da Lata

1. Introduction

Casa Lata offers a distinctive and inviting accommodation experience with its main house boasting 14 bedrooms, and a second charming house “Casa do Garrafas” resulting in an overall capacity for 36 guests. Casa da Lata has always been linked to the production of Vinho Verde (green wine). Today, it is José Costa and his daughter Margarida who bring this family business to life.

The genesis of Casa Lata is intertwined with the restoration of the property that once belonged to their uncles, the Pereira Lata family. In a heartfelt tribute, José and Margarida dedicate this project to the memory of their ancestors, aiming to preserve and celebrate the rich history of the Pereira Lata lineage.

It has the history of a Minho farmhouse where its people were dedicated to agriculture, livestock, vines and wine. The physical remnants of this heritage endure in the form of the granary, wine press, alembic, and an array of agricultural tools that still grace the landscape. These artefacts serve as poignant landmarks, immortalising the activities that once defined life on the farm.

The decoration and furnishings are in keeping with the atmosphere of yesteryear, now adapted into a games room and bar, where you can still see a stone wine press once used to make wine. In this traditional environment there is now a modern winery where Terras de Amares wines are produced, from the indigenous grape varieties of the Vinho Verde region, between the Cávado River and the Homem River.

NAME OF THE BUSINESS

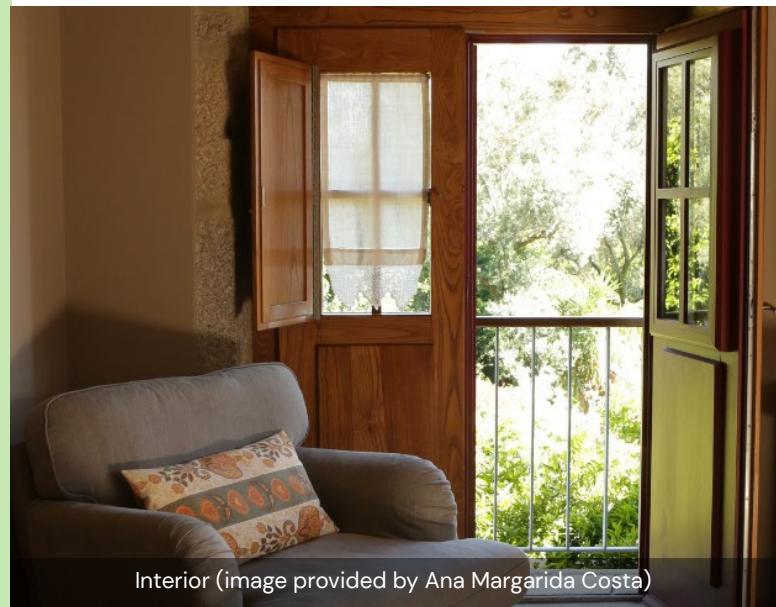
Casa da Lata – Agroturismo e Enoturismo

LOCATION

Carrazedo – Amares – Braga

2. About the agrotourism

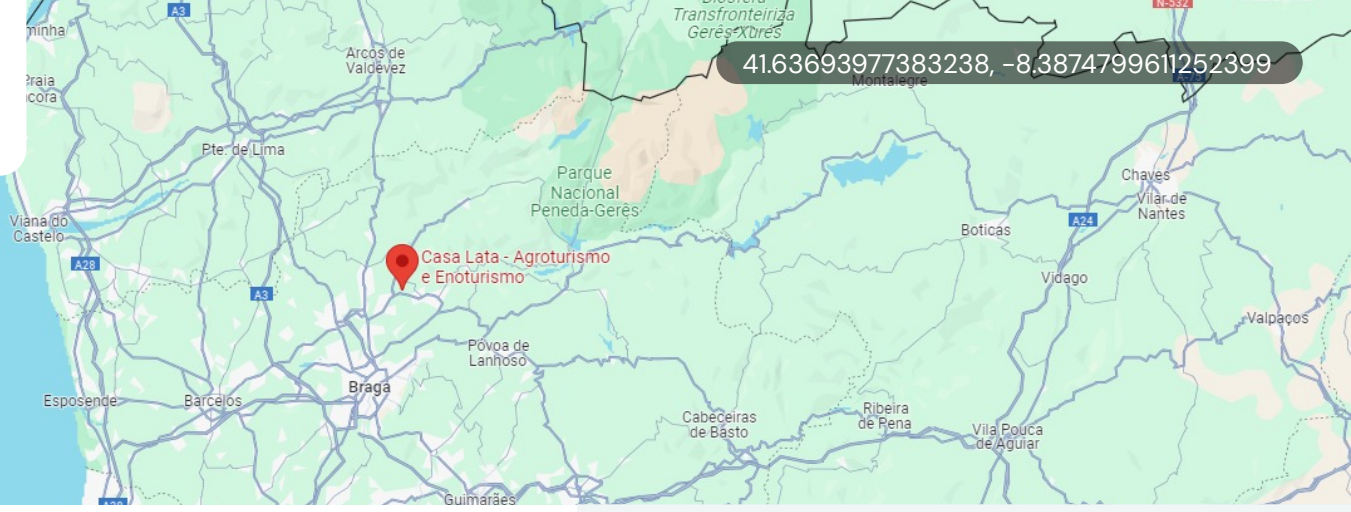
Located in the heart of the Minho region, Casa Lata is part of a 3.6-hectare rural estate in Amares, between Braga and the Peneda Gerês National Park in northern Portugal.



Interior (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)



41.63693977383238, -8.3874799611252399



When did the agrotourism business start?

This project began with the reconstruction of a typical Minho house. The project began to be idealised in 1999, but the reconstruction only started in 2009, in 2013 part of it was finished and in 2014 the final part was done. This business has been open since July 2013.

Number of workers

4 full-time staff (2 employees and the owners, Margarida and José Costa)

Some tourist data from the agrotourism

Casa Lata offers a distinctive and inviting accommodation experience with its main house boasting 14 bedrooms, each accommodating up to 2 people, resulting in an overall capacity for 28 guests, with the flexibility for an extra bed or cot if needed. Guests can also enjoy communal areas such as a lounge, a games room with billiards and board games, a seasonal outdoor swimming pool, and numerous green spaces.

Adjacent to the main house, they have "Casa do Garrafas" residence, a fully equipped house capable of accommodating up to 8 people (4 adults and 4 children), as it has two bedrooms with double beds and en-suite bathrooms, a sofa bed for two people and a divan with two single beds for children. It also has a shared bathroom, a living room, free Wi-Fi, a glazed balcony, a dining area, and a kitchenette. It has a garden and a private pool as well.

Breakfast is offered (except in the villa) and a welcome drink, as well as a guided tour of the winery. Meal service is available on request, as are other services like electric bike hire, wine tastings with tours and picnics.

In 2022 there were a total of 1282 guests (average age 50 and the most common nationalities: Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and from the US) and 3006 overnight stays.

At the moment, they don't have a specific program for the grape harvest, but guests can follow the arrival of the grapes at the winery and learn about the whole process until they are transformed into wine.



Living room – old wine cellar (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)



Classic double room 2 (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)



Leisure area by the pool (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)

About commercialisation

Accommodation services are sold via email, telephone, social media, own website and online sales channels (e.g. Airbnb, Booking, Expedia...). Most bookings are direct and the main sales channel is Booking. They have a PMS (Property Management System) to manage bookings and a Channel manager to sell online on the various channels and to manage availability in real time. Wine is sold by resellers, but mostly on their premises.

About advertising

Advertising is done through various channels:

- Own website: <https://casalata.pt/>
- Hotéis de Campo magazine, with special "Long Weekend Coming" campaign.
- National Geographic traveller Magazine, Fall 2023.
- Facebook https://www.facebook.com/casalataagroturismo/?locale=pt_PT
- Instagram https://www.instagram.com/casa_lata_agroturismo/
- Promotional video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrN_HlyKfSQ



Gaming room (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)

About starting up the business

With 3,6 hectares of land, wine production had been the source of income of the previous generations of this family.

The initiation of this project marked a deliberate effort to revive and reconstruct the rich heritage handed down by their family. Facilitated by funding from PRODER (Rural Development Program), this ambitious undertaking aimed to breathe new life into the familial legacy.

None of the current owners (Margarida's parents) have any training in tourism, except for a short course

the owner took during the project. Management started out as a very familiar and spontaneous affair.

At the moment it's Margarida who manages the whole business. Margarida has a degree in management, a master's degree in Hotel Management – Commercial Management and Marketing, and a postgraduate qualification in Wine Tourism.

In addition, in 2019 she did an extracurricular internship at the Hotel Monverde Wine Experience, which she considered as a wonderful experience that gave her a lot of knowledge.

About managing an agrotourism business

Agrotourism businesses in Portugal consist of two separate activities/sectors, tourism and agriculture. As such, the two businesses operating in this establishment are: rural tourism (Casa Lata) and wine production (Terradamares – Sociedade de Vinhos Lda). Both activities account for more than 75 percent of the family’s income.



Own wine – Terras de Amares (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)

Looking forward, the family envisions a strategic expansion of wine tourism, particularly during the low season. This forward-thinking approach aligns with the broader trend in the industry, leveraging the potential for year-round engagement and positioning the establishment to cater to a diverse range of visitors.



Loureiro (Terras de Amares) wine tasting (image provided by Ana Margarida Costa)

Advice for new entrepreneurs

“Always do the best you know without ever having high expectations of achieving good results, because sometimes results take time to appear, but they are worth the effort. If we work with pleasure and dedication, the results and feedback from our clients will motivate us to do more and better.”

–Margarida Costa

“There are always discouraging moments, but at that point we need to have a strategy so that we don’t give up. Don’t be afraid to question and ask for help. Don’t copy the work of others but adapt ideas to the reality of your company and your context of space and environment.”

–Margarida Costa

“Be genuine and sincere.
Create empathy.”

–Margarida Costa