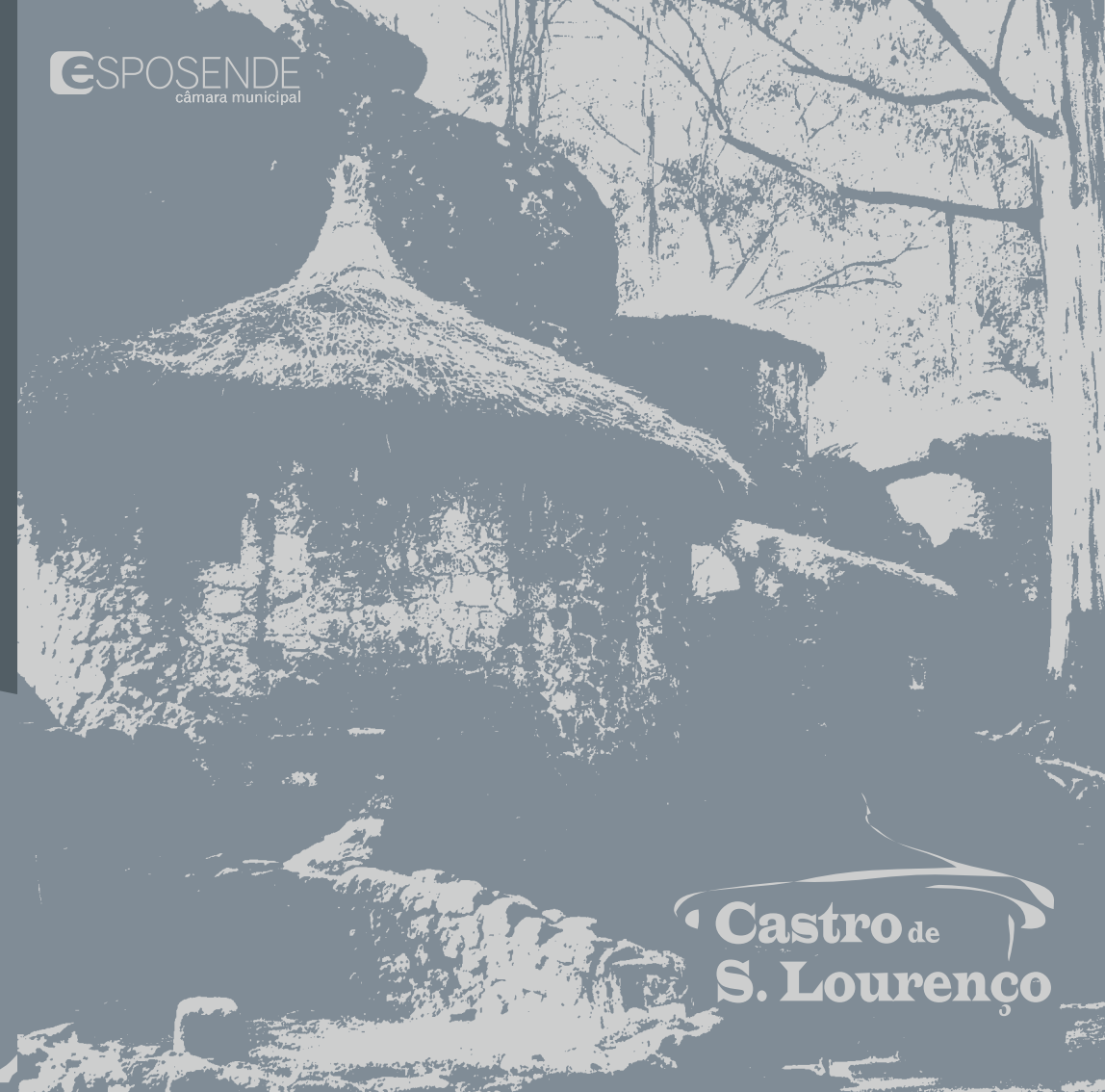


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The first archaeological intervention in the Castro de S. Lourenço was in 1985, due to the destructions caused by the opening of a pathway that gave access to a quarry in 1983.

There are seven castros¹ in the council of Esposende, and Castro of S. Lourenço is the biggest one. Located on a spur of granite, which stands out of the cliff, this place was probably chosen because of its strategical location and the great power and control that it provided over the sea, over the mouth of the Cávado river and over the costal plain that extends itself south over to Terroso and Laúndos hills (Póvoa de Varzim).

From the acropolis you can also see the closest Castros, that are located in Esposende, and the farthest ones, in Viana do Castelo and Barcelos.

S. Lourenço hill was occupied since the Chalcolithic period (3rd millennium BC) and, continuously from the 5th century BC to the 5th/6th century AD. Then it was abandoned for a period of time and once again occupied in the Middle Ages, from the 12th century until the 14th century, with the construction of a small castle.

This Romanized Castro, which is partly excavated, was surrounded by three fortress

¹ CASTRO: a fortified settlement from the pre- roman and roman period.

walls made from soil and stone. The houses were built all over the hill in terraces. The terraces were naturally supported by the cliffs and artificially by walls, which were also used as a defensive structure. In general, habitation areas from the beginning of the Romanisation Period had three buildings surrounded by a flagged floor. This offered inhabitants some comfort and could also be used as a threshing-floor to dry cereals.

The archaeological findings include ceramics produced locally and also imported ceramics, silver coins (denarius) and bronze coins, a bronze chain, a necklace made of glassy paste beads and gold, a roman lead weight of a balance, brooches (fibulas) and glass fragments. As to epigraphy, an ara² dedicated to DEA SANCTA, which was a characteristic Lusitanian divinity that was locally venerated, was found.

In the 90's of the 20th century, the Esposende Town Hall made an urban repair in the S. Lourenço hill. The path that accesses the Chapel was widened and paved and the area around it was restructured. The best solution

2_ARA: a religious artifact; an engraved stone; an altar.



that was found to allow the proper preservation of the archaeological remains and the renovation of the area, was the integration of the round-shaped houses, with or without a porch (which is similar to an entrance hall), in that same road.

A group of habitation areas consisting of five houses which belonged to two separate families were completely rebuilt with stones found at the archaeological interventions. A wooden passage was also built allowing visitors to walk through and observe the structures from an elevated view, this way avoiding any damage to the archaeological remains.

In 2003 began the partial recovery of the third fortress wall, located in Sector D, which was part of the defence system of the Castro.

In addition to the historical and archaeological aspects, S. Lourenço hill possesses a landscape of outstanding beauty. This hill offers you a superb view of the Atlantic and also offers you the chance to look at the sea front where you can see Póvoa de Varzim, the pine-groove of Ofir and also the famous rocks located in the shore of Fão called the 'Cavalos de Fão'. You will also find a calm and relaxing environment.

Legal protection
A place of public interest
Government decree no 1/86 of the 3rd of January

