

## CHAPEL OF SAINT SEBASTIAN OF VAGOS

1614

The chapel of Saint Sebastian of Vagos dates from 1614, according to the date inscribed on the door, and was probably built to protect worshippers from the epidemics which had been common since the 14th century.

It has a circular floor plan and a pediment with volutes and a cruciform finial, following a stylistic configuration similar to the façade of the parish church of Vagos. In front of the chapel, there is a granite fountain with inscribed decorative elements and a quatrefoil tank, which once stood next to the churchyard of the parish church of Vagos.

Its interior houses a 17th-century limestone altarpiece with an image of St Sebastian in the niche, which was acquired in 2006, the original polychrome limestone image having been stolen in January 2002.

Devotion to St Sebastian is recurrent in Portugal and is of particular importance in farming communities due to his protection against famine, war and plague. This trilogy of fatalities has punctuated life in Portugal since its foundation, from the constant wars to conquer and assert possession of the territory, to the plagues that ravaged the population between the 14th and 16th centuries, and the famine resulting from both these last two factors and bad agricultural years. Near this chapel, there are underground stone graves, discovered when the Viscount of Valdemouro ordered a survey to detect water in the 19th century.

The festival honouring the saint used to be held at the end of October or beginning of November, marking the end of the pilgrimages to Vagos and the surrounding area; however, it is no longer celebrated.