



PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN OF OUCA

XV Century | XVIII Century | 1977

The Church of St. Martin of Ouca was inaugurated on 14th August 1977 according to a modern design by architect, Pedro Corujo Bernardes on 21st November 1974. As it was impossible to restore the original chapel from the 18th century, which had repurposed an early building which had existed since the 15th century, it was decided a new building should be built.

It has a trapezoidal floor plan, with a covered porch on the façade framing the bell tower and serving as a shelter at the entrance.

The interior space was designed to create an assembly around the altar, in line with post-conciliar guidelines. This, the tabernacle and the baptismal font form a simple and integrated set next to the back wall, decorated with pieces from early 18th century carved altarpieces, a contrast accentuated by the exposed concrete structure of the nave.

In addition to the surviving image of St. Martin in polychrome limestone from the 15th century, its heritage includes the processional images of Senhor dos Passos and Our Lady of Sorrows by the sculptor José Ferreira Thedim, and the previous images of St. Sebastian, Our Lady of the Virtues and St. Thomas.

The parish was established on 8th June 1956, created from the area of the Parish of St. Michael of Soza.

The feast of St. Martin is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of November and the feast of Our Lady of the Virtues and St. Sebastian the Martyr on the 2nd Sunday of August.

Timeline:

1240-10 – Donation by three couples in Ouca to the Church of St. Christopher of Almedina in Coimbra by Canon Gil Martins Digal.

1290 - Ouca is registered in the *Rol das Cavalarias* ("Cavalry List") of Vouga as "Auca".

1448 - Acquisition of Ouca Manor by Diogo de Ataíde of the House of Atouguia and Brites Leitão, founder of the Dominican Convent of Jesus of Aveiro, transferring this large property to the management of the convent house, and where the necessary brick for the convent building was produced.

1479 - Ouca was a former patronage of the *Comenda de Soza* (Order of Saint James), although Ouca Manor belonged to the Convent of Jesus of Aveiro through its donation by its first prioress, Brites Leitão, widow of Diogo de Ataíde of the House of Atouguia. Another chapel dedicated to St. Gundisalvus and St. John the Baptist would be erected on this manor which covered an area of four leagues and had a sea port with a toll in Lobato.

1514-08-12 - Referred to in the Vagos Charter as "*Ouqua*".

1655 – Reference to the Hermitage of Ouca in the parish records of Soza.

1725-12-14 - Reconstruction of the Chapel of Ouca, a work commissioned by Manuel Ribeiro de Salgueiro, which, on this date, had yet to be completed.

1747-09-08 - The chapel was in ruins, with the roof of the chancel "full of holes and the ceiling falling apart, old and rotten". On that date, there was no altar, just a table with a tablecloth and the image of the saint leaning against the wall, without any niche or altarpiece where the priest could celebrate mass. It was therefore roofed, plastered and lined with a wooden altar.

1758 - The parish records of Soza state that in addition to the image of St. Martin, it had an image of Our Lady of the Virtues and St. Sebastian on the altars, with the Brotherhood of Souls.

1799-01-31 - After the work of rebuilding and expanding the Chapel started in 1787, the residents of Ouca asked for an inspection of the chapel and permission to resume worship.

1956-06-08 - Establishment of the Parish of St. Martin of Ouca.

1977-08-14 - Inauguration of the Church of Ouca.

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Portugal, Aveiro, Vagos, Ouca