

Piconha Castle



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Located in the middle of Raia Seca (dry border) in the so-called "Outeiro da Almena", in the parish of Randín, the remains of a fortress that served as the head of the "Terras da Piconha", defending the Couto Misto itself, emerge monumentally. Currently, only the pillars and the cistern of what must once have been a true defensive ensemble remain visible.

Strategically located, at 932 meters of altitude, was this old castle that was owned by Portugal. In addition to defending the Couto Misto, from there they controlled the town of Tourém and the Privileged Path that connected them.

Ordered to be built by Alfonso III of León (10th century), it was Sancho I of Portugal who granted a forum to San Paio de Picoña, with the category of village. The fortress was destroyed by Castile in the 14th century, but it would soon be rebuilt by João de Portugal, and donated to D. Afonso, the future Duke of Bragança. Destroyed again in the Portuguese Restoration War (17th century) Already in 1864, thanks to the Treaty of Lisbon, the Couto Misto and the term of Piconha passed to the Spanish side of history.

We know since the 16th century (document commissioned by D. Manuel de Portugal) that, in the design of the 56 Portuguese castles, this fortress appears, with a tribute tower and a wooden bridge supported on the rock of the mountain, as access.

Recently, the Municipality of Calvos de Randín and the Asociación Amigos do Couto Misto promoted the project to recover and enhance the resources of the Couto Mixto and the environment, focusing mainly on the medieval archaeological heritage and the Piconha site, cataloguing, adapting and identifying everything related to the territory where he settled. The remains and different sectors of the castle were also delimited (rooms, stairs, cistern); to the identification of cave engravings, pottery remains, a coin (13th-14th centuries) and even a crossbow point.

Location

Piconha Castle

Coordinates:

41.893428630314524, -7.865180681411255



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The castle disappeared more than 3 centuries ago, but it still survives in popular memory through oral tradition, as attested by a legend collected in Rubiás, a village belonging to Couto Misto:

There, coming here from Randin, there is a hill called A Piconha, where there was a castle. That place was where people said that the king who was here, or the chief, had been exiled. Upstairs, just above, there is a stone sink or bathtub, said to be where the king washed.

Gallery



Information of interest

Access to the site is free of charge but must be done on foot following the directions of a route marked for that purpose. That is why it is recommended to take into account the characteristics of the terrain and the weather of the day. More information can be requested by calling 0034 988 434 000.

Bibliography

Vía Lethes: A Picoña, a antiga fortaleza do Couto Mixto.