



Alentejo region: PORTUGAL

中世に思いを馳せるポルトガル城塞都市めぐり



In Alentejo, it's still possible to visit a royal horse farm, be awed by blue-tiled Gothic



ポルトガル人は大航海時代の16世紀半ば、初めて日本を訪れたヨーロッパ人と言われています。中国に向かっていったアントニオ・ダ・モタラの3人が、種子島に漂着したそうです。

今回の旅の筆者は、この当時のポルトガルの暮らしを知りたいという思いを胸に、中世からの町並みが残る同国中部・アレンテージョ地方の北東地域を訪れました。

スペイン国境に近いこの内陸地域は、昔からムーア人やイスラム教徒、スペイン人など様々な民族の侵攻にさらされたため、城壁で囲まれた町が作られました。13世紀に壁でぐるりと囲まれた村マルヴァオンや、カステロ・デ・ヴィデなど、中世そのままの石造りの建物が並び、小さな町や村が点在しています。

筆者は、古城のてっぺんから大地を見渡し、戦いを繰り返した中世の騎士の思いや、中世ポルトガルの人々の暮

らしを感じ取ったようです。

ポルトガル王家とこの地域の関係は深く、王族の種馬「ルシターノ」を生育するために、18世紀の王がつくった牧場があります。ルシターノは、ポルトガルの古称「ルジタニア」に由来しており、同国の象徴的な存在だそうです。この牧場には、訓練されたタカもたくさんいて、しゃれた皮の帽子をかぶっています。実は興奮させないための目隠しだとのこと。

またコルクの生産が盛んで、平野部にはコルク樫畑が広がります。肥沃(ひよく)な大地に恵まれ、ワインとチーズ、羊などの郷土料理も自慢です。

ポルトガル人は、日本に天ぷらの原型となった料理を伝えたと言われています。筆者が出会ったシェフからは、「徳川家康將軍は赤ダイの天ぷらを食べた食中毒で死んだっていうけど、本当かい？」なんて質問まで飛び出しました。ちょっと驚きますね。(森)

By Joseph A. Lieberman
Photojournalist

Looking down from the top of a castle tower, the world looks very different. Of course, that's how it was designed to be. At one time, what soldiers and kings on top of castle towers could see coming in the distance might determine the fate of a nation.

At least, that's how it was in Portugal's south-central Alentejo region, where a series of lofty citadels offers panoramic vistas of the once-hostile Spanish frontier. Today, the so-called "Castle Route" is still dotted with fortified hilltops that enclose feudal villages. I went there hoping to get a glimpse of life around the time early Portuguese explorers were first setting foot in Japan.

Within these walled communities, not a lot has changed since then.

churches, or wander through the world's largest cork forest.

The horses, called Lusitanos, represent a regal breed of stallions. Claudia Marques supervises the stables, museum and coach house at *Coudelaria Nacional de Alter Real*, as the stud farm is called in Portuguese.

"King D. João V founded this farm in 1748 to insure a supply of purebred Lusitanos for the royal riding school," Marques said. "Lusitania was the ancient name for Portugal, so the horses became a symbol of the nation."

Stable attendants cared for the stallions as if the animals were royalty, and trainers gave the horses lessons in a covered riding ground. In the falconry, there were eagles, owls, and of course, lots of trained falcons with fancy leather hoods covering their eyes.

"The hoods are to keep them



docile,” Marques explained. “They react nervously to visual stimuli, so if they cannot see anything, they don’t get alarmed.”

世界のコルクの半分以上を生産

Alentejo is also home to cork forests that produce more than half the world’s supply. Aurora DiMelo, a woman living in the village of Amieira do Tejo, has tended the nearby cork trees since she was a child.

“Cork’s been used for centuries to seal the richness of fine wines,” DiMelo said. “It’s environmentally friendly, biodegradable, and the only tree that can regenerate its outer bark. We strip off the bark every nine years, and then it grows back again.”

With so much cork, Portuguese winemakers have no shortage of stoppers. Good wines deserve good food, and this region is famous for its luscious cheeses, roast lamb, and *sericaia*, a dessert made with eggs, milk, cinnamon and sugar.

Paulo Costa, executive chef at the charming Hotel Lusitano in the village of Golegã, explained how Por-

tugal has influenced Japanese cuisine since 1542.

“As the first Europeans in Japan, Portuguese explorers and missionaries introduced ‘pan’ (bread) and tempura,” he said. “I heard that Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu loved this, but unfortunately died from food poisoning after eating red snapper tempura. Is that true?”

I told him historical data is not always precise. In fact, history is changing even now in the Alentejo. What were once the ruins of abandoned manor houses, warehouses and desecrated churches have today been resurrected as bistros, nightclubs and boutique hotels.

In the town of Crato, for example, a former monastery and palace called Flor da Rosa has been converted into a *pousada*, or historic inn. In the ancient market city of Santarém, a guide named Guiomar Frago told me how the Convent of São Francisco survived two huge earthquakes and an 1834 change in government that drastically reduced religious authority. Today, the convent is a museum, but Santarém’s Church of Marvila is

still a place of worship, beautified by interior walls covered with 17th-century blue-and-gold tiles.

In some cases, an artisan becomes a living treasure. José Antonio Louro preserves the craft of Nisa pottery, while his assistant Maria Antonia imbeds beaded surface ornamentations into each clay pot. And while a few medieval buildings in places such as Portalegre have become specialized art centers, the entire walled villages of Marvão and Castelo de Vide are themselves living museums. Marvão has the largest feudal fortress in the region, and Castelo de Vide is known for its ruined castle and ancient Jewish quarter.

All these locations contain architectural and cultural reminders of ancient conquests by Carthaginians, Romans and Moors. In the past, each of these groups held power in Portugal until another wave of invaders or revolutionaries drove them out. Their influences are still felt, but today Portugal has its own very unique identity, dramatically on display in the Alentejo region.

- 1 白壁と赤茶色の屋根の家が並ぶカステロ・デ・ヴィデの町
- 2 サンタレムの古いカトリック教会
- 3 サンタレムの教会。青と金色の壁模様が見事だ
- 4 王家の馬ルシターノの牧場で飼育されているタカ。おしゃれな皮製の目隠し帽を被って、なんだか得意げ
- 5 世界で使われるコルクの半分を生産しているという、アレンテージョのコルクの木
- 6 サン・マメーテ山脈の山の頂にちよこんと載

- 7 アミエイラ・ド・テージョの町並み。さんさんと降り注ぐ太陽が白壁に反射してまぶしい
- 8 牧場の古い建物の前を走り去る馬たち
- 9 ドアの色も洗濯物もカラフルで可愛いらしいポルタレグレの民家
- 10 たっぷりと羊肉をつかったアレンテージョ地方の料理

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