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A Taste of Portugal's Sweet History!

I'm sure we have all enjoyed one here in Portugal with a milky coffee or indeed back home, but do you know the history behind of Portugal's most famous pastries ?

Since 1837, Pastéis de Belém has been crafting its world-renowned custard tarts using a secret recipe that dates back to the 19th century. Originating in Lisbon's Jerónimos Monastery, these pastries have become a cherished symbol of Portugal's rich culinary heritage.

The recipe, passed down unchanged for generations, ensures every bite delivers the authentic flavour that has captivated locals and visitors alike. Pastéis de Belém preserves this essence of history, offering a delicious connection to the past.



A Tradition Born of Change

In 1834, following Portugal's Liberal Revolution of 1820, the Jerónimos Monastery was closed, forcing the clergy and workers to leave. To sustain themselves, one former resident began selling custard tarts at a nearby shop, soon dubbed "Pastéis de Belém."

“This recipe has been made here since 1837,” says Miguel Clarinha, co-owner of the bakery. “Back then, this was a small trading shop, much like a convenience store, located where our front counter stands today. Behind it was a sugar refinery, which provided the facilities to bake these pastries. What began as a modest venture became history.”

Though the sugar refinery is long gone, the bakery remains a family-run establishment nearly two centuries later. Co-owned by Miguel and his cousin Penelope, it has grown significantly. “We’ve expanded from a small counter to a space with nearly 300 seats, two counters, and over 200 staff,” Miguel explains. “But the one thing that has never changed is the original recipe from the Monastery. Every tart is still handmade, one by one.”



A Family Legacy

Today, the bakery sells an astonishing 25,000 pastries daily, yet it stays grounded in tradition. “Our mission is to preserve the original recipe, the handmade process, and the history behind Pastéis de Belém,” Miguel shares.

Though the bakery has evolved, its co-owners prioritize maintaining quality over expansion. “We’ve focused on improving both customer spaces and production areas,” Miguel explains. “Our priority is ensuring the bakery is ready for the future while upholding good working conditions for our staff. We won’t sacrifice quality for profit.”

For now, Miguel and Penelope have no plans to open additional locations. “This bakery is a part of Lisbon’s cultural fabric,” Miguel says. “Expanding is secondary to preserving the integrity of what we do here.”



Baking a Legacy

The bakery's timeless success lies in its secret recipe, entrusted to just five master pastry chefs. "Every new chef is someone who has worked here for years and earned our trust. It's a family tradition," Miguel reveals.

Beyond baking, Miguel values the sense of community. "It's about more than pastries—it's about the people who make them and the history they represent. We strive to create not just a great customer experience but a special place to work," he says.

More than a family business, **Pastéis de Belém** is a cultural treasure intertwined with Portugal's identity. "This bakery doesn't belong to us; it belongs to the city, the country, and everyone who visits," Miguel reflects. "Our custard tarts are unlike anything else in the world."



Plan Your Visit

To experience these iconic pastries yourself, visit Pastéis de Belém, located just a short walk from the Belém train station. Alongside your pastry indulgence, explore nearby landmarks like the Belém Tower, Discoveries Monument, Jerónimos Monastery, and Belém Palace.

Take a journey into Portugal's culinary and cultural heritage—one delicious bite at a time.

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Testimonial Of The Week



Assessed and understood our needs and were fast and responsive when the right property came up which led to a smooth and professional transaction. We are now happy owners!

Delphine and Jonathan - Vila Sol



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