



SILVES MEDIEVAL FAIR 10 TO 20 AUGUST 2023 THE MOSQUE, SYMBOL, AND POWER



EXPERIÊNCIA MEDIEVAL UMA VERDADEIRA VIAGEM NO TEMPO

Take a 'journey back in time' and experience an evening as a character from the 18th Medieval Fair of Silves.

The program includes:

Elegant attire | Welcome in a special area
Medieval hairstyle (for ladies) | Participation in the procession through the streets of Almedina and Arrabalde | Prestigious location for observing the War Games | Banquet (inspired by Muslim cuisine) | Prime location for viewing the show 'Nights of the Orient' at the Alcazar of the Vizier (Castle).

The MEDIEVAL EXPERIENCE takes place on August 12, 16, 18, and 20, and requires prior reservation, limited to 15 participants per day.

Reservations and information:
secretariado.fms@cm-silves.pt
Come and be a part of this story!



DAILY EVENTS

MEDIEVAL FAIR OPENING NIGHT
6.00 pm

PROCESSION THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE MEDINA
AND OUTSKIRTS

BLESSING OF THE MOSQUE BY THE IMAM
6.15 pm
Al-Mut'amid Square

RECEPTION BY THE VIZIER
6.30 pm
Gates of the Medina

CALL TO PRAYER BY AL-MUEZZIN
6.50 pm
Cathedral (former mosque)



WAR GAMES
YAHYA IBN BAKR IBN ZADLAF AGAINST THE Umayyads
Sessions at 8.00 pm and 10.30 pm
Al-Mut'amid Square



ORIENTAL NIGHTS
AT THE VIZIER ALCAZAR
10.30 pm Castle
Music | Dance | Fire

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THE MOSQUE, SYMBOL AND POWER

At the western end of the immense **Umayyad** Empire, a small urban area was growing in size and prestige. It was located at the top of a hill bathed to the south by a river whose calm waters were conducive to port activity, so ancient that it is lost in the memory of time. It is said that in the distant past, but very close by, on the neighbouring hill on the side facing the setting sun, a bronze coin was struck, depicting an ear of corn and a horse on one side and the word **CILPES** on the other. The coin would have been used to exchange goods transported by the seafaring peoples carried by the rising winds. More than seven hundred years later, the inhabitants of this ancient and circumscribed area moved on to **Madinat Xilb**, an emerging and promising area, where military contingents and populations from the Far East had more recently settled.

The governor of the province in which it is located, named **Ocsónoba**, whose capital was a very ancient city of the same name, rebelled against the Umayyad power based in Cordoba and transferred the capital of this territory to the promising Xilb. Its strategic position, the proximity to the sea via river Arade, the fertile land bordering the river and the forest resources provided by the mountain range to the north provided excellent conditions for its defence and prosperity.

Yahya Ibn Bakr Ibn **Zadlaf**, the governor, was a recent Muslim convert who had allied himself with other **Muladi** insurgents disgusted by the unequal treatment meted out by the Umayyad power to long-standing Muslims who had distanced themselves from the power of Cordoba. However, back then, as the independent **Emir Abdallah** had taken power, Yahya's authority over the province of Ocsónoba was recognised as legitimate, allowing the territory to enjoy a degree of peace. The governor took advantage of this situation to organise the city, erecting its defences and a greater mosque.

At the top of the hill, construction began on the walls of the citadel to protect the palace of the **Banu** Yahya Bakr and house their small military contingent. Halfway up the hill, the walls were built to protect the houses of the many families who quickly settled there. Access to the interior was through a gate to the south, next to which was the **maqbara**. A little below the citadel and clearly visible in the landscape, Yahya ordered the construction of a large mosque, correctly oriented towards the **Kaaba**, with a high minaret for the call to prayer and a space for the **Madrassa**, where everyone had to go to learn the word of the Prophet **Muhammad**.

The construction of the mosque was a task **Zadlaf** undertook personally, as his status as head of the community and spiritual leader gave him a moral obligation to provide

Muslims with a common space for prayer, just as it would become the emblem of his power over the city and its vast territory.

To mark this act of piety, the governor had already commissioned a stonemason to engrave a commemorative stone on the door of the mosque. Hence, Yahya was demonstrating his sincere religiosity and hoped to be rewarded with the opening of the gates of paradise and access to his well-deserved eternal abode.

Furthermore, as the construction work was nearing completion and the great mosque was about to open its doors to worshippers, the venerable local **vizier** hastened to appoint the mosque's officials so that it could be operational: the Imam and the Muezzin, who would perform the daily religious services and the call to prayer. The **Jaṭīb**, who would be in charge of the Friday prayer, the **Muftí** and the **Al-Faqhí** who would interpret and apply the Sharia (Islamic law), and, the Ulama, scholars who would be responsible for transmitting all the knowledge.

With the walls erected, the community's security would be ensured, making it the visible expression of a strong territory. Moreover, with the building of the mosque, the symbolic manifestation of the new religion would be evident. The start of the Islamisation of an area that would become one of the greatest political and cultural centres of **Gharb al-Andalus**, the Xilb.

GLOSSARY

Umayyads = dynasty of emirs who ruled the Islamic empire between 661 and 750, settled in Cordoba and dominated the Iberian peninsula between 756 and 1031 | **CILPES** = name of Silves in the Iron Age (?) | **Madinat** = town | **Xilb** = Silves in the Islamic period | **Ocsónoba** = Faro in the Islamic period | **Zadlaf** = Zadulfo, Mozarabic Visigoth name | **Muladies** = Christians who converted to Islam | **Emir** = prince or head of state, title of Arabic origin | **Abdallah** = 7th Umayyad emir (888-912) | **Banu** = family | **Maqbara** = necropolis, cemetery | **Kaaba** = cubic-shaped building at the centre of the Al-Haram mosque in Mecca, considered to be the holiest site in Islam | **Madrassa** = school for teaching the Quran | **Muhammad** = prophet who transmitted the divine message | **Vizier** = high-ranking political advisor or minister | **Gharb al-Andalus** = westernmost territory of the Umayyad empire, Portugal during the Moorish period and part of present-day Andalusia.

*This account is based on historical facts that have been handed down to us through historical sources and archaeological research, but some aspects are merely conjectural, although plausible.

MEDIEVAL FAIR MAP

- SECRETARIAT
- WARDROBE
- KIDS' XILB (PLAYGROUND)
- MOSQUE
- WAR GAMES
- BERBER CAMP
- ENTERTAINMENT
- CASTLE SHOW, EASTERN NIGHTS
- MEDIEVAL JAVERNS
- MEDIEVAL EXPERIENCE MEETING POINT
- TICKET OFFICE
- DOOR WITH TICKETS SALES
- DOOR
- 1ST AID POST
- MERCHANDISE STORE
- CAR PARK
- CAR PARK DISABLED
- WC
- WC DISABLED
- FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ABC
- FIRE EXTINGUISHERS WATER
- MEETING PLACE
- EVACUATION ROUTE
- DAE
- PERIMETER



TICKETS

ORIENTAL NIGHTS
EUR 5.00 (SHOW ONLY)
EUR 6.00 (INCL. ENTRANCE TO THE FAIR)

WAR GAMES
EUR 5.00 (SHOW ONLY)
EUR 6.00 (INCL. ENTRANCE TO THE FAIR)

DAILY TICKETS
EUR 2.00
EUR 4.00 WITH CUP
(FREE TO CHILDREN UP TO 1.30M OR 9 YEARS FOR ONLINE TICKETS)

GROUP TICKETS
5 TICKETS - EUR 8.00

DAY PASS WRISTBANDS
EUR 4.00 (PRE-SALE UNTIL AUGUST 9TH)
EUR 5.00 (DURING SILVES MEDIEVAL FAIR)

MEDIEVAL COSTUME RENTAL
ADULTS - EUR 3.00
CHILDREN - EUR 2.00

MEDIEVAL EXPERIENCE
ADULTS - EUR 60.00
CHILDREN (UP TO 10 Y.O.) - EUR 30.00

INFORMATION

- ✦ No cheque or credit/debit card payments
- ✦ No ticket or wristband may be exchanged or returned
- ✦ If you wish to have an invoice issued with your taxpayer number, please request so before the purchase
- ✦ Please check all your tickets upon purchase, as we cannot be held liable if you fail to do so
- ✦ The wristband is only valid when worn around the wrist. Wristbands are personal and non-transferable
- ✦ Fair costumes can be rented at the cloakrooms
- ✦ The fair's programme is subject to changes in case of any unforeseen event
- ✦ In case a show is cancelled, you can watch another show on any of the following evenings. Tickets must be changed at the ticket office by 6 pm on the same evening of the event. You can also request a refund, in case of cancellations
- ✦ You agree to have your voice and image recorded, reproduced, published and identified when entering any spaces of the venue, by any media available, including social networks, for marketing or promotional purposes, free of charge
- ✦ When you purchase any tickets or wristbands you agree to all the abovementioned terms and conditions

ENTERTAINMENT AND PERFORMERS

ORIENTAL NIGHTS AT THE VIZIER ALCAZAR
Sufi Soul Ensemble

WAR GAMES
Cavaleiros do Tempo (Time Knights)

DANCE
Alius Vetus, Arakisati, Arabian, Emad Selim, Vadath Ensemble, Vert'icalia

MUSIC
Al-Folk, Arabian, Cornalusa, Eduardo Ramos, Helena Madeira, La Giostra, Zukra

STREET THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE
Animamundy, Contos e Fábulas, Luis Manhita, Malatish, Os Mercadores de Histórias, Satori, Somnium, Teatro Depressa, Tent'Arte

SCENIC DESIGN
Mosque - Tent'Arte, Luis Manhita
Arts and Crafts - Criseya
Campsite - Caravana Berbere

BERBER CAMPSITE

Al-Mut'amid Square

Coming from the Atlas Mountains, the Berber caravan travelled many kilometres, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and is now in Garb Al-Andalus. Travelling along the banks of the River Arade, they could not resist the charms of the majestic town of Xilb and set up camp at the tip of the eastern Arrabalde (outskirts), where they will stay for around eleven days.

In their tents, we will be able to see an array of objects that form part of the daily life and experiences of this nomadic group who make travelling and trading their way of life.

These include merchants of exotic products, blacksmiths, carpenters and potters, the indispensable calligrapher and two musicians, transported on camels and accompanied by a falcon and a Saluki dog, crucial in the hunts that ensure the caravan's subsistence.

18TH SILVES MEDIEVAL FAIR OPENING TIMES
Opens at 6.00 pm
Closes at 1.00 am