

Vila Franca de Xira became a city in 1984 and belongs to the District of Lisbon. It has around 19 thousand inhabitants and has expanded along Tagus river banks. Since early, communities have established themselves on this local, once there were found many traces from different Pre-historic times. Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, all left their mark on this local. It is still possible to recognize in the city of today, the marks of medieval tracing. *Rua Direita* (actual *Rua Dr. Miguel Bombarda*) was the axis where the side streets left towards *Santa Sofia* valley, Lisbon and *Povos*. This urban mesh includes *Barroca*, *Rua Gomes Freire* and *Rua dos Loureiros*. There is noteworthy the Parish Church (eighteenth century) and *Mártir Santo* Church (sixteenth century), which is today the nucleus of the Municipal Museum.



Conde Ferreira Square

Next to the Parish Church (eighteenth century) is *Conde Ferreira* Square, where lived the representatives of the Order of the Temple/Christ, masters of the town. Probably, it was in this square that the first pillory and the Town Hall were placed. Conde Ferreira (1782-1866), was a merchant, who ordered the construction of 20 primary schools in Portugal.

Misericórdia Square and Church

By license of King D. Sebastião (1561), *Misericórdia* was established on *Espírito Santo* square. In 1563, this institution was responsible for the administration of the former hospital [*Albergaria* (fourteenth/fifteenth century)] which it aggregated to its buildings. The church was founded in the sixteenth century, and it has several religious Works of Art. It also has tiling and canvas of the eighteenth century.



Galache House

Eighteenth century building, which still retains a front on the patio, coated in eighteenth century tile with big ornamental motifs, which frame the building windows. In the center of it, opens a wide squared stone window, also from that period, with curious motifs sculpt in it, simulating rolled curtains.



Chambers' Square - Praça Afonso de Albuquerque

The Chambers' Square, *Praça Afonso de Albuquerque*, is constituted by the Municipal Chamber building, dated 1893, and by eighteenth-nineteenth century buildings. In the center of the square is a pillory of Manueline style, symbol of the municipal autonomy, which was successively remodeled and replaced until, since 1953 is definitely in front of the Chambers' building. It is classified as a national monument.



Municipal Market

Real Estate built in 1929, where previously existed *Quinta do Serrado*. In 1933, the Municipal Chamber deliberated that it would be coated with tile panels of the upper front of the Market corners. These panels supply important data for the ethnographic knowledge of the region (agricultural work scenes, campestrial landscapes and figures with typical costumes), and were produced by artists of the Crockery Factory in Sacavém, between 1930 and 1933.



Campino Monument and Patriarchal Barn

In Rodrigo César Pereira square, one can see the *Campino* monument, inaugurated in 1982. *Campinos* are a typical figure of Ribatejo region, they are rural workers with the specific task to lead the bulls. They do it on horseback and, during festivities, they dress in a characteristics way, with their green beret, which has a red edge, white shirt, red waistcoat, a red ribbon on the waistline, blue pants, white stockings that go all the way to the knees, black shoes with spurs, a jacket and they hold a long rod (*pampilho*), which they use to lead the cattle. There is the Patriarchal Barn, a building of the eighteenth century (1748), erected by the 1st Patriarch of Lisbon, D. Tomás de Almeida.



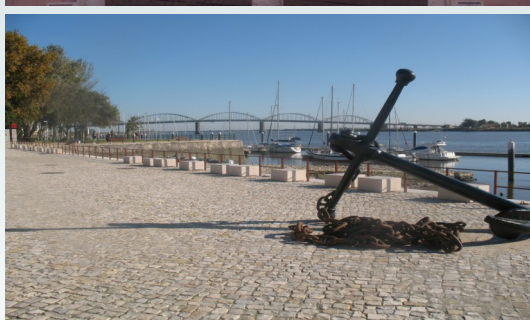
Tile

Vila Franca de Xira is rich in front tile, namely from the first decades of the twentieth century, predominating New Art and Art Deco styles.



Wharf

Mentioned in the new charter of 1510, it kept an important role in the region economy, until the fifty years of the twentieth century. Adjoining to the wharf there is the municipal garden of Vila Franca, where once was a river beach, which was also used to sell fish and melon. Further north is the *avieiros* community of Vila Franca, fishermen who came from Vieira de Leiria region and settled in Tagus river banks.



Railway Station

The railway section between Lisbon and Vala do Carregado, was inaugurated on the 28th October 1856. The building of the railway station is coated with tiles of Jorge Colaço, in 1930, and represent rural scenes and landscapes of Ribatejo, and also with historical evocation.

