



# A tourist @ home

**Maria Dias**



**During my last Christmas holidays, I visited Lisbon as a tourist. The city where I was born and lived until I was 19 was always a place to visit family. But, this time, instead of travelling to other European capitals, I decided it was also the perfect place for a tour. And, I am glad I did it!**

Did I make a plan? Yes, a simple and realistic plan to do the things I like to do when I'm travelling. Never to visit an endless number of museums and always be a local with the freedom of a tourist.

Meaning, having the pleasure of walking around with no direction, taking photos, observing people from the esplanade where I am seated and avoiding all non-necessary schedules and obligations.

So, I started my tour in Chiado seated in Brasileira, next to Fernando Pessoa, a Portuguese poet (1888-1935) immortalized in the coffee shop where he wrote many of his poems. Then I took the tram 28 to travel downtown.

I enjoyed seeing the sights and the infinite number of spots that popped up in the city - lovely barber shops, trendy clothing stores and even an exquisite potato shop. Taking a lot of photos. And observing the mix of tourists and locals - so immersed in their lives they didn't notice a gentleman from the 19th century traveling with us.

That day, I had lunch in McDonalds – certainly a common place for most readers but not for me, as I am living In Mozambique.

The next day, I immersed myself in the Quake Museum to see and feel the impact of the extremely violent earthquake that reached Lisbon in 1755. A memorable and unique experience, suitable for almost any age, though the very sensitive or visitors with heart conditions should avoid it.

And finally, a visit to Bairro Alto by night, with friends. I don't dare to recommend one place. That evening, we started by having dinner in A Tasca do Jaime d'Alfama. But there are numerous places offering good food and in almost all of them young voices join the most experienced fadistas to offer the public unique shows. After dinner, we were walking around and I absolutely loved every moment and place.

Lisbon was always praised for its light and beautiful sights, but its enchantments are far beyond its natural or architectural attributes. And, if we are flexible enough, there is a serious risk of falling seriously in love with it.