
Patricia: the fragrant peace of walking between the orange groves of Alentejo

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World Tourism Day 2021 | #TimeToEmbrace #TimeToBe

We are celebrating the World Tourism Day. Over the last years, the tourism industry has seen an enormous expansion and growth, so it's important to underline how openness and inclusion play a crucial role in improving social, cultural and economic relations. Now we would like to let others talk about their life in Portugal.

Meet Patricia, journalist and Wine & Rural Tourism manager in Vilar de Frades, Alentejo.



It is impossible to tell Patricia Lozano 's story without telling a love story.

Patricia, who was born in Mexico, met Pedro, Portuguese, at the age of 22 on a journalism course they both attended in the Netherlands. They started a beautiful relationship of friendship and closeness, but after their studies, both returned to their home countries. We were in the late 70s and, as it happened at the time, long-distance relationships were maintained through letters and telephone. After some time, they each decided to go their own way, as world geography had not been generous with this potential love story.

A few years later, they met again and defy the world atlas: Patricia came to live in Portugal, married Pedro and they had two children. In that first decade, they lived in Lisbon. Patricia managed to lead a smooth career transition: she continued to work as a journalist, now a correspondent in Lisbon, for Mexican television.

“ I used to send news and stories on a daily basis. I was already doing remote work in the 80s – how trendsetter of me! ”

Even without abandoning their journalism careers, they opened the city's first Mexican restaurant.

“ My mother came to spend 9 months here and taught the cooks to make the dishes as authentic as possible. And she taught me too. ”

Patricia committed to learn the Portuguese language. She feels that people look at you differently and will respect you more if you speak the local language well.

“ I thought that learning Portuguese would be very complicated, but it turned out to be easy and fast. ”

Nowadays, Patricia speaks Portuguese without any noticeable accent.



Almost 10 years later, they decided to shut doors at the restaurant and Pedro bought the property of Quinta das Ratoeiras, in Alentejo. It was here, in a space of 40 hectares, with a large vineyard and dozens of fruit trees and land as far as the eye could see, that we met Patricia on a late summer afternoon. The late sun lit the vines and Patricia's face with a reddish hue. The sunset in Alentejo is hard to forget.

“ The easiest thing in all this process and change was falling in love with Portugal. One of the most fascinating things is this variety of climate that does not exist in Mexico. I started to feel at home when I came to live in Alentejo. It had a big positive impact on my life and even on my marriage. After a particularly difficult time in Lisbon, with the all the rush and fast-paced routine of our lives there, moving to Alentejo served as a balm for our lives. I even dare to say that Alentejo came to contribute to me never wanting to leave Portugal again. ”

Initially they always came on weekends and during holidays. She continued to do her reporting over the phone and from a distance and working on the house. But life had improved. We asked the question that everyone wants to know. “ What inspires you in Alentejo, Patricia? ”

“Everything. Look over there. ”

We notice the sun showing a dark orange hue and slowly hiding behind the horizon line.



“ Listen to the sound of nature here. Everywhere I look, I see beauty and I hear peace, I perceive calm. And the smell? It smells wonderfully. When the orange trees are in bloom, I have no greater pleasure than walking, in the morning or at night, through the orange groves, completely imbued with that fragrance. ”

Patricia feels she belongs.

"Completely. I don't want anything else. I ' m very happy. Everything I dreamed of, I have twice as much of it. I'm healthy, I have enjoy, my dreams came true. I just want this to stay that way. Everything ' s alright."

Contrary to what her appearance says, Patricia is 66 years old, 40 of which lived in Portugal. To Patricia, Portugal is destiny fulfilled.



Photos by @nashdoeswork