# The Algarve

Cyneticum, Hispania Ulterior, Lusitania, Al Gharb al Andalus

The Algarve region represents the first modern civilisations of Portugal. Ancient Celts settled also in Lacobriga (Lagos) in 1899 BC. Coastal Ports were established by the Phoenicians after Cadiz was settled in 1000 BC, in Portimao, Tavira, Lagos and even as far as Lisbon. The Greek Cynetes or Conii were established in Algarve by the 6th. Century, giving the region the name Cyneticum. When the Kingdom of Portugal was formed in 1139, Algarve was its own nominal kingdom unil 1910.

## Conii/Cynetes - Cyneticum

The capital of the Conii was Conistorgis, (probably means "City of the Conii"). Pax Julia (Beja) is possibly founded over the ruins of Conistorgis. Other Conii towns (Oppida) included Ipses (Alvor), Cilpe (Silves), Ossonoba (near Faro), Balsa (Santa Luzia – Tavira), Baesuris (Castro Marim; Iberian-type mint: Baesuri) and Myrtilis (Mértola).

#### Phoenicians/Carthaginians

A powerful urban aristocracy of Phoenician and Turdetanian or Turduli colonists dominated all the trade, fishing, and shipbuilding in these same coastal settlements from the 4th Century BC, until the Carthaginians occupied the Cyneticum and founded the Punic colonies of Portus Hannibalis (near Alvor) and Portus Magonis (Portimão) in 550 BC. Lagos was established in the 3rd Century by Celtic tribes from the north.



# Roman Algarve - Lusitania, part of Hispania Ulterior

The Algarve region came under Roman control after Fabius Maximus Servilianus defeated the Lusitanians and the Turduli during the Lusitanian War, and was absorbed into the Roman Republic in the second century BC. "Cyneticum" became integrated into Hispania Ulterior and into Lusitania afterwards, being under Roman influence for around 600 years (from 200 BC till 410 AD), and thus adopted Latin as the official language, as well as Roman cultural, political, architectural, religious and economic principles. Importantly, they brought vines and fruit trees to Portugal...

As a passageway between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean, connecting countless Roman ports to several provinces (in Hispania, Gaul and Britannia), the region experienced a great level of prosperity. There was an expansion of trading and commercial capabilities, mainly from the production and commercialization of highly sought olive oil and garum, both Roman staples and sought throughout the Roman empire. It was shipped from Lagos and Balsa (Tavira).

Castro Marim, Tavira/Balsa, Sao Bras, Vilamoura, Lagos, Estoi, Portimao/Alvor, Olhao. all have Roman remains. The main Roman route south from Evora, via Beja and Mertola, followed the Guardiana river to Baesuris (Castro Marim) and its major salt flats.

The coastal route was – Baesuris, Balsa, Ossonoba, Cilpes, Portus Magonis, Ipses, Lacobriga, known topday as Castro Marim, Tavira, Faro, Silves, Portimao, Alvor, Lagos.

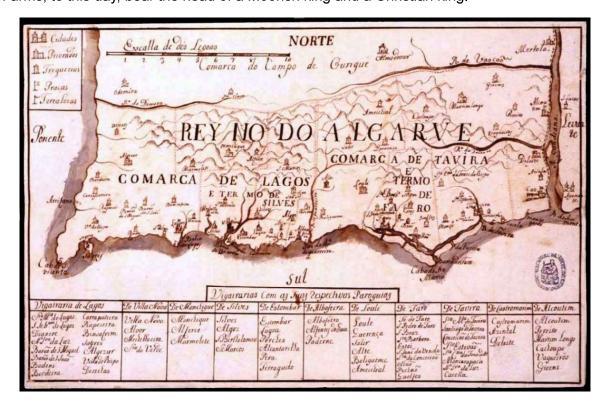
#### Post-Roman / Pre-Moor Algarve

The Algarve region came under Visigoth control around 500, conquered by the Byzantines 552 – 571, then recaptured and held until 711.

#### **Moorish Algarve**

The Moors conquered Lagos in 716 (renamed Zawaia). Santa Maria (Faraon, settlement of the knights), or Ossonoba, now Faro, was the fortified capital, before Silves became the capital (9-12th Century). The Portuguese Reconquista pushed the Moors south to the Algarve in the 12th Century, Silves and Tavira captured in 1241, and finally the whole of Algarve was captured in 1249 with the fall of Faro. During the conquest of Silves in 1189, Sancho I first used the title "King of Algarve" and "King or Portugal and Silves". King

Afonso III referred to himself thereafter as the King of Portugal and the Algarve. Most Algarve town/village coats of arms, to this day, bear the head of a Moorish king and a Christian king.



### Middle Ages

Disputes with Castile about the conquest of Algarve ended after Afonso 's marriage to Beatrice of Castile – in 1267 the Treaty of Badajoz defined the Guadiana river as the border between Portugal and Castile. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Century King Joao I sailed his fleet of 45,000 men from Tavira to conquer Ceuta, paving the way for African exploration and enriching Portugal with gold and slaves. Thereafter his son Henry the Navigator based himself near Lagos and conducted the martitime expeditions to establish the colonies of the Portuguese empire. Prince Henry also set up his school of navigation at Sagres Point (a disputed issue) Trade flourished in Lagos and is became the capital of Algarve in 1577 until the Lisbon earthquake in 1755.

The earthquake and ensuing tsunami heavily damaged most of Algarve, except Faro, which was protected by the sandy banks of the Ria Formosa lagoon. Waves were as high as the top of the city walls in Lagos.

#### **Modern Times**

The Civil War (1828-1834) fought between supporters of Miguel I and Pedro IV, resulted in an exodus of people from inner Algarve to the coasts. An anti-liberal, Remexido, fought in the inlands, and attacked coastal cities. Battles were fought at Cape St Vicente and Sant'Ana. In 1836, Miguel I, defeated and living in exile, named Remexido the Governor of the Kingdom of Algarve. He was captured in 1838 and shot in Faro after a trial.

Algarve prospered as the center of the cork industry, a major export (Portugal is the world's largest producer). Based in Sao Bras da Alportel (80+ factories) and to a lesser extent Silves, this industry has now moved to he centre and north of Portugal. The first canned fish factory was based in Villa real de Santo Antonio, and Algarve's fishing industry also thrived as a result.

In the 1950's the Mediterranean Basin developed tourist hotspots, and with air travel more accessible, Agarve further prospered.