Hands On Learning
with Reading Museum Service

PORTUGUESE FISHING BOAT G7

Like many countries with a coastline, fishing is an important part of life in Portugal. Many towns and villages have been built around a harbour or beach from where fishing boats can be launched.



Nazaré, just north of Lisbon, is an example of a town centred around its fishing tradition.

The boat in this box is most likely modelled on the brightly coloured boats of Nazaré with their high pointed prows, based on a Phoenician design. The Phoenicians were ancient seafaring people who travelled the Mediterranean trading goods and settling in new areas, including Portugal. Fishermen believe that the watchful eye painted on some prows detects the two most important things - a shoal of fish or bad weather. The eye is also thought to keep away evil spirits. This practice can be seen in other countries in the Mediterranean, such as Malta. The eyes are painted on either side of the prow of the model.





Nazaré Beach



Nazare is also known for its traditional costume, worn by the fishermen and their wives. For the men this consists of a black woollen cap, tartan shirt and trousers with a black belt wrapped around the waist. For the women, black scarves tied around the head, embroidered aprons and flannel skirts. Although today these costumes are rarely worn everyday, many people keep tradition alive by dressing up for carnivals and celebrations. It is still possible to see older members of the community wearing traditional clothing whilst they dry their fish on racks in the sun along the seafront.

The name of boat is painted on the side, although it is difficult to identify the letters. What do you think the name might be?

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Portugal is renowned for its delicious, nutritious seafood cuisine. Popular catches include squid, crab, shrimp, lobster, hake, sea bass and octopus.

The most commonly caught fish is cod, although it is seldom eaten fresh. It is normally dried and salted, which in Portuguese is called bacalhau, and used in a variety of dishes. In fact, it is said that there are 365 ways to use bacalhau - one for each day of the year!

Here are a few:



Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá (cod and potato casserole)



Bacalhau à Brás (Thin strips of cod with potatoes, eggs and onions).



Bolinhos de Bacalhau (fish balls)

Sardines are also extremely popular and are usually eaten grilled, like those in the picture on the right. In Portuguese this is called *sardinhas assadas*. Sardines have many health benefits. They are an oily fish, which means that they are rich in Omega-3, which helps to keep the heart and brain healthy. Sardines are also a good source of vitamin D and calcium.



Try *caldeirada* for a variety of fish and shellfish stewed with potatoes, tomatoes and onion:

