



## THE RABELO BOAT

Rabelo boats are constructed using a unique method; the outside of hull is built before the inner supports are fitted and the sides are formed of overlapping planks, a technique known as shell construction or clinker building.

No formers are used; the shape is purely the result of basic measurements and depends on the preferences of the master craftsman and the expertise of multiple generations.

The size of a rabelo boat depended on the load it was designed to carry, expressed as the number of casks. Boats therefore varied in size according to the number of casks.

Passenger boat  
Tourist souvenir  
Wood

The tradition of passenger ferries across the river Douro has a long history, as shown by a license dated 1252, authorising Penajóia council to carry out work on the river Douro, provided that it did not disrupt the “passagem Barcas” (Passage Boats). For centuries, there were many crossing points along the length of the river and boatmen were responsible for carrying people, livestock and goods from one bank to the other.

Author: Dário Gomes Moreira (Resende)

Rabelo boat  
Tourist souvenir  
Wood, textile, string

A traditional river Douro vessel. For centuries, such boats were responsible for transporting casks of Port wine from the Douro wine region to the commercial warehouse at Vila Nova da Gaia, carrying salt, sardines and other goods on the return journey.

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