



Portugal Research Guide

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION UNKNOWN

FamilySearch Indexed Records: Try searching first in indexed records. Try a variety of searches with your ancestor's name, or with parent's names, or just by parent's surnames AND using the option limit locality by the country of Portugal and the name of the state.

Contact Family Members: If you do not have even a minimal amount of information AND have no idea of where and when to look, you need to contact family members who might have that information. This could be older aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION AND NAMES OF PARENTS, SPOUSE, OR CHILDREN ARE KNOWN

Civil registration began about 1832 but was not mandatory until 1911. Its official beginnings were in 1878. Catholic church records are also a good choice as they cover all time periods. If you can find your ancestor in both record types, that is best as you will get more information to advance the pedigree.

FamilySearch Indexed Records: Try searching first in indexed records as described above.

FamilySearch Browsable Images: If there are no results from the previous search for your ancestor or any siblings, you will have to browse images for the locality. On the **Search** page, click the **Continental Europe** portion of the map then select **Portugal** from the list of countries. Select a record collection from **Image-Only Historical Records** and browse the collection page-by-page for your ancestor.

Portuguese Archive Digital Collections: Most of the birth, marriage, and death records stored at Portuguese district and national archives have been digitized and can be browsed page-by-page on each archive's website. Because each archive's website is unique, the website **Tombo.pt/en** was created to facility easy access to each record collection. On the lefthand sidebar on the main page, select the **district**, **municipality**, then **civil parish** where your ancestor lived. The select a record collection to browse from the list of birth, marriage, and death records created in that parish.

FamilySearch Catalog: Not all records for Portugal are online, be sure to check the catalog before giving up on finding records. On the FamilySearch home page, hover over **Search** and select **Catalog**. Type **Portugal**. At the top of the page, click on **Places within Portugal** to narrow your search and select the appropriate region to see what is available.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES

Who to Search For? If you don't know the names of the parents, but you know the name of the spouse and/or the names of some of his children, begin with a marriage search (if they married in Portugal and you know the place). Or begin with a search for the birth/baptism record for one of their children (if you have an approximate birthdate and place).

Surname Peculiarities – In Portuguese culture, the females of the family often took on the mother's surname while the males took on the father's surname. There are exceptions – if one surname was more prominent in society than the other, then it would be used.

FamilySearch Wiki – The Wiki is a research guide and contains many links to help you research better. On the FamilySearch home page, go to **Search** and select **Wiki**. Type **Portugal** and press enter. This page has research tools, website links and general information.

FamilySearch Community: You can get immediate research and handwriting help from a community of researchers through the FamilySearch Communities. Go to <http://community.familysearch.org/> and click **Groups**. Search for **Pesquisa Genealógica** to find the group for Portuguese genealogical research. Although many of the post on this group are in Portuguese, the members will respond to posts in English. On this page, you can post research questions and upload documents to get translation help.

FINDING A LOCALITY

For help locating a place in Portugal, try the following sources:

- Google
- Wikipedia (Portuguese version works the best)
- Try a keyword search in the FamilySearch Catalog for Portugal Gazetteers.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Portugal, Azores, and Madeira Parrochial Records: www.tombo.pt

Portuguese Genealogy and Family History Archives:

www.archives.com/genealogy/family-heritage-portuguese.html

This site has a passenger ship list of Portuguese people who migrated to the United States.

Portugal Genealogy Links: www.genealogylinks.net/europe/portugal/indx.html

Portuguese Genealogy, Doug's Place: www.dholmes.com/rocha1.html

Cyndi's List: www.cyndislist.com/portugal/records/

Portugal Genealogy Links: www.genealogylinks.net/europe/portugal/

Some useful online websites for Portugal can be found in the wiki article: **Portugal Websites** (English Only).