



JAMIE MAKUUCHI & TEAM
PORTO AREA EVENT ORGANISERS



Hi everyone,

We hope you've been having a good winter. With all the wind and rain, we've been spending most of it indoors -- including some great factory tours (see highlights below). Thank you to all of you who joined us!

Our last newsletter was in mid-December, so a belated Happy New Year to all. With sunshine and spring around the corner, we have several fun events planned for the next few months. Plus we have an idea for a July 4 event that we need your feedback on.

See below for details. As always please RSVP by replying to this email.

We hope to see you soon.

All the best,

Jamie, Penelope, and Steve

2026 NEW EVENTS
April - July

APRIL- Event #48
RTE / Beeq Bicycle Factory Tour and Test Ride
Wednesday, April 15 at 2:30pm

We rarely repeat events, so when we do you know they are special. It has been over two years since we held this one, so by popular demand, it is now time to do it again.

Join us for an exclusive opportunity to explore the inner workings of RTE, the largest bicycle manufacturer in Europe! Did you know that Portugal takes the lead in bike manufacturing, surpassing all other European countries?



Come and discover the fascinating world behind the production of bicycles at this renowned manufacturer. During this remarkable tour, not only will you get an inside look at the entire manufacturing process, but you'll also have the chance to test drive a BEEQ, RTE's own electric bike brand.

Please note that this is a special event, as factory tours are typically unavailable to the public. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of RTE and witness the exceptional craftsmanship and innovation that go into every bike. Join us and be part of this unique adventure!

When: Wednesday, April 15, 2:30-4:30pm

Where: Rua Caminho do Senhor 755, 4410-014, Serzedo, Portugal

Cost: Free

How to get there: The factory is about 6 miles south of Porto. There are no convenient bus or metro lines to the factory, so a car or Uber/Lyft will be required.

Details: RSVP is required (reply to this email). More information below.

[BEEQ](#)

[RTE](#)

May - Event #49
Monastery of Leça Do Balio and optional lunch
Wednesday, May 13 at 11:00am



We are excited to offer a tour of the Monastery of Leça do Balio.

A national monument since 1910 — one of the first Portuguese landmarks to receive that honor — the Monastery of Leça do Balio is today the headquarters of the Livraria Lello Foundation and a vibrant cultural hub.

Álvaro Siza Vieira, and landscape architect Sidónio Pardal, preserved its architectural authenticity while integrating new spaces for contemplation, art and culture, including an exhibition center, an ecumenical space, and the Garden of Thought. A tour of the monastery provides a deep dive into Portuguese royal and religious history while offering a unique blend of medieval history and world-class contemporary architecture.

Approximately five miles north of Porto on the banks of the Leça River, the Monastery of Leça do Balio is said to have been built on top of the ruins of a temple dedicated to the Roman god Jupiter. Christian worship on the site is believed to have begun more than 1,000 years ago.

In the 10th century, the Order of St. Benedict opened a home where monks and nuns lived together. About 200 years later, the site was home to the Knights Hospitaller, a Catholic military order that protected pilgrims travelling through Portugal on the nearby Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route. Today the site is still a historically significant landmark on the Portuguese Way (*Caminho Português*) of the Camino de Santiago.

The monastery complex and the neighboring church that stand today largely date back to the 14th century. The Leça do Balio Monastery witnessed a major event in Portuguese history in 1372, when Ferdinand I of Portugal married Leonor Teles de Meneses in a secret wedding ceremony after breaking off his engagement to a Spanish princess - the first marriage in the Portuguese monarchy which was based on romantic love rather than political alliance. Religious orders left the site in 1834, though the church, Santa Maria de Leça do Balio, remains an active place of worship.

When: Wednesday, March 6, 11:00 am

Where: Rua do Mosteiro, 4465-703 Leça do Balio, Portugal

Cost: €10 per adult and €5 per senior (+65) or student.

Lunch Options: For those interested in a sit-down meal after the tour, [Restaurant ORDO](#) is a short walk from the monastery and offers lovely views of the Leça River. You can view their menu and pricing here. Please contact the restaurant directly to book your table.

Alternatively, if the weather is nice, there are several large picnic tables along the riverside path — perfect for anyone who prefers to bring their own lunch and enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

How to get there:

- Bus (see below)
- Train: [Leixões line](#) from Campanhã to Leça do Balio; the monastery is about a 15-minute walk from the Leça do Balio train stop
- Uber/car

Bus

- STCP 505 - Hospital de São João-Mercado de Matosinhos
- Unir 5024 - Casa da Música-Lionesa
- Unir 6003 - Maia (Fórum)—Circular via Lionesa
- Unir 5023 - Matosinhos (Est. Leça do Balio)—Circular via Matosinhos (Câmara) e A4

Details: RSVP is required (reply to this email).

June - Event #50
Tour of the Escola Artística de Soares dos Reis (EASR)
Wednesday June 3 at 2:30pm

Join us for an informative, exclusive look behind the scenes of one of Porto's most prestigious cultural institutions, the Escola Artística de Soares dos Reis (EASR).

Founded in 1884 as the Escola de Desenho Industrial de Faria de Guimarães, this historic institution has evolved through more than 140 years of Portuguese history.



Originally created to provide technical and artistic training to the city's working class, the school survived decades in various locations — including a stint in an old hat factory on Rua da Firmeza — before moving to its current state-of-the-art campus in Bonfim in 2008. Named after the celebrated Portuguese sculptor António Soares dos Reis, the school remains a cornerstone of Porto's specialized artistic education. Today, it is a vibrant hub where the next generation of creators master product design, communication design, audiovisuals, and artistic production.

This tour will offer a glimpse into the school's modern workshops and creative studios, where traditional craftsmanship meets contemporary technology. It's a wonderful opportunity to see how Porto continues to nurture its artistic legacy. [This video](#) provides a brief look into the school's facilities and workshops, helping you visualize the creative environment before our tour.

When: Wednesday June 3, 2:30-3:30pm

Where: Rua do Maj. David Magno 139, 4000-191 Porto

Cost: Free

How to get there: By Metro, the school is a 14-minute walk from the Marques station, 16 minutes from Combatentes and 20 minutes from Campo 24 de Agosto. By bus, it's a block from the stops for the 305, 301, 300 and 404 routes.

Details: RSVP is required. Space is limited to 30 people.

July - Event #51
250th Anniversary of the U.S. Declaration of Independence
Saturday, July 4

We are considering having a big social celebration for this once-in-a-lifetime milestone. No politics, just a party! If you are interested in attending, please let us know. Location and time still TBD based on level of interest.

RECAP

January - Event #45 KYAIA Shoe Factory Tour (Fly London and more) and Factory Outlet Store



A sold-out event despite the pouring rain! We had so many people attend, the tour required two guides. And who knew a brand like Fly London was exclusively designed and made in Portugal? The factory store had amazing deals. I think our group may have broken a record for the most sales in one afternoon.

February - Event #46 Castelbel Factory Tour and Factory Outlet Store



Another sold-out event. Our passionate tour guide brought us into the history, culture and family of this iconic brand sold all over the world. We enjoyed a fascinating tour, and many of us made some great-smelling purchases of soaps, lotions, perfumes, and diffusers.

Please know that if you are ever in other parts of Portugal you are welcome to attend any of the other area events. The groups in the Algarve are very active and have a few social events every month. Check the [events calendar on the Afpop website](#).



IDENTITY ABROAD

Now available in Porto: Background checks and fingerprinting

Founded by Porto-based **afpop** member Nate Wang, a new local company, Identity Abroad, provides digital fingerprinting services, expedited US FBI background checks and Canadian RCMP background checks.

Identity Abroad is the first and only provider in Portugal to use FBI-certified digital live scan equipment with software that provides real-time fingerprint quality checks, allowing them to optimize the likelihood of a successful first-time application.

As expats, they know that obtaining a criminal background check is often a critical requirement as part of the Portuguese immigration process, and that's why they also provide a quality guarantee: if a customer's fingerprints or criminal background check application are rejected due to low quality characteristics, they will reprocess and resubmit at no additional cost.

afpop members receive €10 off fingerprinting or €20 off full-service background checks by presenting proof of active membership at the time of appointment.

For more information or to book an appointment, visit:

[CONNECT - Identity Abroad](#)

We hope to see you soon!

Kind regards,

Jamie Makuuchi & Team

afpop Porto Area Event Organisers

Email: porto@afpop.com

Event photos

I would like to take photographs during the event that we might use in **afpop's** media. Please advise me if you do not wish to be included in any photograph from the event that might be published in UPDATE Magazine or on the **afpop** website/Facebook page. Area photographs will not be used for any other purpose or made available by **afpop** to any other organisation.