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Restaurants

When Prince Henry the Navigator was rounding up the cattle in the Douro Valley to feed his men aboard the legendary caravels, he shipped out the juicy steaks and left the tripe behind. The people of Porto responded bravely and began inventing recipes using tripe. To this day they carry the appellation "tripe eaters," and it has become their favorite dish. To sample this specialty, the adventurous can order *tripas à moda do Porto* (tripe stewed with spicy sausage and string beans).

"Porting" & Dining -- Much of the character, architecture, and history of Porto is derived from its wine trade. As such, you'd be well advised to take a morning tour of two or three of the wine lodges of **Vila Nova de Gaia**, learning about the nuances of port and the vast amounts of time and labor that go into it.

And if you happen to be on that side of the river already, consider a lunch at a restaurant that's richly permeated with the old-fashioned mystique of the port industry, **Barão Fladgate**, Rua do Choupelo 250, Vila Nova de Gaia

(tel. **22/374-28-00**; www.tresseculos.pt).

Owned and operated by the Taylor Wine Company, and set within the walled compound the company maintains on a hillside high above the Douro, it's slow, graceful, and much more formal and old-world than any other restaurant in Vila Nova de Gaia. In some ways, it's a gastronomic showcase for the port wine industry and the Taylor Wine Company, in particular.

If you arrive on foot, expect to be seriously winded by the time you reach the restaurant, thanks to the steep uphill climb past forbidding stone walls that line the narrow streets on either side. Once at a table, you'll be offered a glass of Taylor (white port) and then be presented with a list of the company's other products by a formally dressed battalion of waiters. Menu items are strictly Portuguese, including dried cod with fresh cream sauce, pork medallions with caramelized pineapple, and old-fashioned specials including a *cozhinado* (stew) of the day. As you dine, views of Porto, just across the river, spread out across the panorama. Main courses cost 8€ to 15€ (\$10-\$19) each. Meals are served daily 12:30 to 3pm. During the month of August, the restaurant is also open for dinner every Monday to Saturday from 7:30 to 10:30pm. Reservations are required.