

During a bus trip with a tour group through Northern Portugal in June 2003, I could not resist looking for postage label automats in the towns that we visited. I have found three types of automats: the Amiel with a value imprint of 19 mm wide (*Pic. # 1*), the SMD 16 mm wide (*Pic. # 2*) and the Newvision 13 mm wide (*Pic. # 3*).



*Pic. # 1: 19mm*



*Pic. # 2 : 16mm*



*Pic. # 3 : 13mm*

Almost all automats produced the type of labels with the logo of the European Soccer Championship 2004, which was to be held in Portugal. Some automats still had the old blue labels with the yellow Euro-symbol. Automats are located at the airports of Lisbon and Porto. During city walks in Porto and Coimbra, I found several automats in post offices, on squares or in busy shopping streets. Also in smaller towns like Amarante, Braga, Espinho and Guimaraes I found automats. Only one or two were out of service, but the others worked well: no jammed label paper or misprints. This provided not much of an adventure.

This was generously compensated by a wild variety of receipts from the automats. Portugal turned out to be a true Dorado for receipt specialists.

In my collection I already had an **Amiel** receipt from August 2002 with a blank reverse side. Now I obtained an Amiel receipt with a light red CORREIOS logo at Lisbon airport (*Pic. # 4*). In Braga the automat produced an Amiel receipt with a deep red logo (*Pic. # 5*) and upside down print.



*Pic. #4:  
Receipt Lissabon*



*Pic. # 5 :  
Receipt Braga*

Also I already had a **Newvision** receipt from September 2002 from Porto airport with the text Designação Quantia on it (*Pic. # 6*). In June 2003 I took a receipt from exactly the same automat, but now the text Designação Quantia appeared twice on it (*Pic. # 7*).



*Pic. #6: 1x Designação 2002.*



*Pic.#7: 2x Designação 2003.*



*Pic.#8:main postofficePorto*

The Newvision automat on a little square in Porto town produced receipts with the automat number ST00000000.

Also of interest were the receipts from a Newvision automat with connected wage in the main post office in Porto. These receipts show three differences compared to the normal Newvision receipts. The automat number is not composed of the letters ST followed by 8 digits, but STMM followed by 6 digits. Furthermore the date is not 07-06-2003, but 2003/06/07. Finally the text “Produtos” does not show on the normal receipts (*Pic. # 8*).

The **SMD** receipts from an automat elsewhere in Porto had a light red logo, whilst in Coimbra the logo was dark red. The SMD in Amarante surprisingly printed the year 2203 on the receipts.

The tour leader and the group had never heard of this strange hobby. They sympathised with me though. After each excursion in a little town, they asked me if I had found something of interest. There were even rumors that my wife and I skipped the warm, one hour boat trip on the Douro river because there was no label automat on the boat.

Two findings deserve special attention. The first one concerned receipts at the end of the tape in Guimaraes. Though the end markings were not that distinct, they still could be recognised by the red shades on the reverse side of the receipt, as well as by an irregularity in the print of the CORREIOS logo (*Pic. # 9*). After the last receipt had come out, the automat still kept functioning: it produced labels without receipts.

*Pic. # 9*



The second finding concerned the return money in Espinho. If the automat has no change in stock, it produces a NOTA DE CREDITO instead (*Pic. # 10*), followed by the requested label and the receipt (RECIBO). The nota de credito and the receipt have consecutive numbers. In turn for the nota de credito the change is handed back in any post office in Portugal. When I was at the automat, an elderly Portugese man sat next to it at a little folding table, selling lottery tickets (very popular in Portugal and Spain). Using many words, he tried to convince me to go into the post office and collect the money for the nota de credito. He did not understand that I did not want to do that, but –on the contrary- that I took out even more of these nota's de credito from the automat. Discouraged by so much ignorance of that Dutch tourist he finally settled behind his folding table again.

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| CTT - Correios de Portugal S.A.<br>Rua de S. Jose' nº20 - 1150 LISBOA<br>Nº Pessoa Colectiva : 500077568<br>Capital Social: Euro 533 800 274-97<br>Inscrita CRC Lisboa com o nº1697 |                |
| Nº da maquina :   | 00310018       |
| NOTA DE CREDITO Nº  | 3333335788     |
| Data: 05/06/2007  | Hora: 17:16:39 |
| Designação  | Quantia        |
| Selos nao fornecidos  | €80,00 EUR     |
| LUA: Isento-Artigo-9 nº24/25  |                |
| PARA SER REEMBOLSADO DESTA<br>IMPORTANCIA POR FAVOR DIRIJA-SE<br>A UMA ESTACAO DE CORREIOS  |                |
| PROCESSADO POR COMPUTADOR   |                |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| CTT - Correios de Portugal S.A.<br>Rua de S. Jose' nº20 - 1150 LISBOA<br>Nº Pessoa Colectiva : 500077568<br>Capital Social: Euro 533 800 274-97<br>Inscrita CRC Lisboa com o nº1697 |                |
| Nº da maquina :   | 00310018       |
| RECIBO Nº   | 3333335788     |
| Data: 05/06/2007  | Hora: 17:16:39 |
| Nome:   |                |
| Morada:   |                |
| Nº Contribuinte:  |                |
| Designação  | Quantia        |
| Selos   | 0,47 EUR       |
| LUA: Isento-Artigo-9 nº24/25  |                |
| PROCESSADO POR COMPUTADOR   |                |

These nota's de credito are very similar to the Dutch STORINGSBONNEN (malfunction receipts) from the Nagler automats which have been in operation from March 1997 until September 1999. They can also be obtained from the German Sielaff automats (they are called ERSATZBELEGE), when there is a malfunction or when the label roll is finished.

All in all useful experiences and pleasure can be combined very easily during a trip in Portugal. On search for automats one finds unexpectedly nice spots in the towns away from the regular tourist routes. The extraordinary heritage in the cities and the beauty of the countryside really top off this philatelic adventure.

■ Hens A. Wolf, 1 July 2003