

## IGARASSU HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Museu Histórico de Igarassu (MHI) began to take shape in 1954, the year of commemorations for the three hundredth anniversary of the Restoration against Dutch rule, with the opening of the Restoration Gallery on the ground floor of the Emperor's House by the Instituto Histórico de Igarassu.

The museum's archive grew through donations by private individuals, and in 1955 more objects were donated upon the creation of the Nazaré Gallery and the Sacred Father Machado Gallery. In 1956, because of the state of disrepair that the Emperor's House found itself in, both the Instituto Histórico and the museum relocated, temporarily, to the building of the City Chambers and Jail. In 1958, the Instituto Histórico acquired the building located on 18 Barbosa Lima Street, and ordered its immediate restoration and adaption, thus making it the headquarters of the institution and its museum in the same year.

In 1972, the municipality of Igarassu assumed responsibility for the conservation and maintenance of MHI, which was expanded, installing a meeting room and the library of the Instituto Histórico in the neighbouring building. In 1983, the MHI began housing a series of documents belonging to the Registry Office that are important to the history of Igarassu, and, a few years later, in 1985, aiming to preserve and catalogue them, the Department of Historical Research was created – the DPH (Departamento de Pesquisa Histórica), which today houses documents from the registry office that stretch over an 18.5 metre linear area.



Rua Barbosa Lima, nº 18, Centro, Igarassu – PE

OPENING HOURS Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm  
Sat to Sun, 9am to 12am

TICKETS R\$ 4 (full price) and R\$ 2 (half price).  
Free admission: people living in Igarassu, people aged more than 60 years and people with disabilities.

INFORMATION +55 81 3543.0596



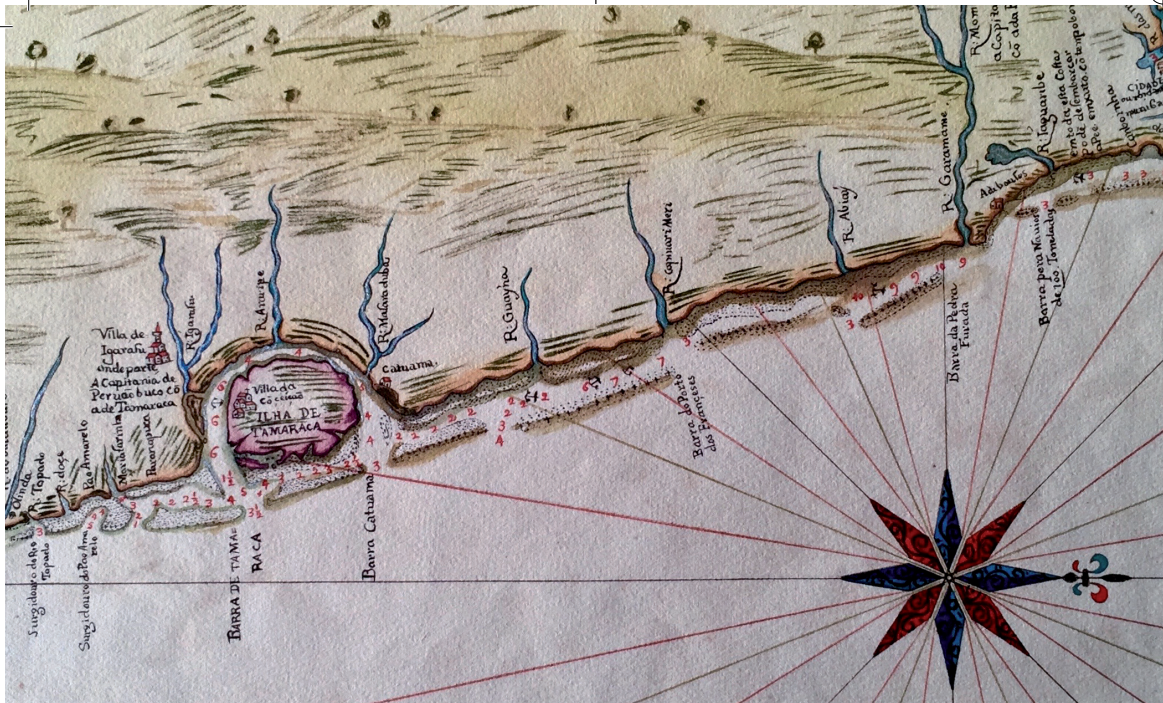
MUSEU HISTÓRICO  
DE IGARASSU

Currently, the Museu Histórico de Igarassu occupies three rammed earth houses from the 18th century, uniting a valuable collection of more than 500 items both in its technical reserve and on show, with an emphasis on sacred, numismatic, furniture and weaponry pieces. In 2018, the project to regenerate the space was completed, aiming to attend to both tourists and local visitors, with support from the Tourism Development Programme (Prodetur) and funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).



*Igarassu*, 1647  
Engraving from the book *History of Events  
During Eight Years in Brazil*  
Frans Post | Gaspar Barléus

ACERVO INSTITUTO RICARDO BRENNAND, RECIFE, PERNAMBUCO, BRASIL



**Map of the North coast of Pernambuco up to Paraíba, 1642 (detail)**

João Teixeira  
 FACSIMILE REPRODUCTION OF ORIGINAL FROM AJUDA LIBRARY, LISBON, BELONGING TO THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT AT UFPE



**The Siege of Igarassu, 1557**  
 Engraving from the book *Two trips to Brazil*  
 Theodor de Bry | Hans Staden

## BIG CANOE!

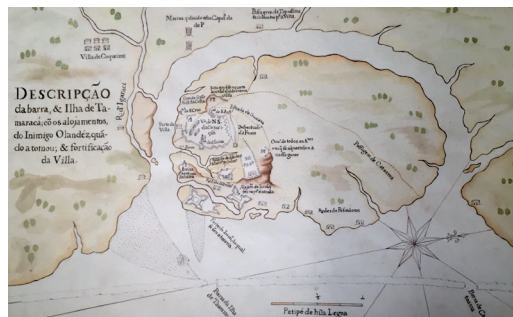
Igarassu is a word originating from the native Tupi language: *igara* means canoe; and *assu* means big. It may have been an exclamation of surprise from indians when faced with the huge Portuguese galleons: “big canoe!”, the expression of two opposite visions of the world that entered conflict, from a native indian world that was starting to fall into collapse. The name Igarassu may even be derived from three words, meaning “river of large birds”, in allusion to the ships that would enter the port of Sítio dos Marcos:

**Hi or Ig, water or river**  
**guara, aquatic bird**  
**açu, large**

**Description of the bar and island of Tamaracá with the location of the Dutch enemies, when it was taken and fortification of the village, 1642**

João Teixeira

FACSIMILE REPRODUCTION OF ORIGINAL FROM AJUDA LIBRARY, LISBON, BELONGING TO THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT AT UFPE



## SÍTIO DOS MARCOS

On this map, you can see the locations of the landmarks and the representation of two stone shields marking the limit of the Captaincies of Pernambuco and Itamaracá. One of the most important points of contact between the Portuguese and the natives, the Sítio dos Marcos, located in the so-called southern bar of the Santa Cruz channel, is where the Portuguese began their long process of adapting to the new land. The Dutch ransacked the village, the second most important of the captaincy of Itamaracá, on the 1st of May, 1632.

## THE FOUNDATION OF IGARASSU

This engraving is the oldest known image of Igarassu, which can be found in the book *Two trips to Brazil*, by the German Hans Staden, with illustrations by Theodor de Bry. In it the constructive style of the old continent can already be seen on South American lands: to facilitate defence from possible attacks, the city should be built on a hill. On the back of the hill, in a north/south sense, the first buildings that mark the city limits are built, and which correspond to São Francisco and Direita da Misericórdia roads. They were the axis from which all others began, including the Livramento Hill, which led to the warehouse on the banks of the São Domingos River. Beside them at this point is the road that led to the Engenho Velho sugar mill by the falls of the Arrombados Stream. The settlement was elevated to the category of village in 1564, which created executive, legislative and judicial powers and endowed the locality with political, administrative and economic autonomy.

## THE SUGAR MILLS AND THE SLAVE QUARTERS

Around 64 sugarcane mills were installed in the territory of Igarassu during the three and a half centuries of Brazilian slavery. Of a rural and strongly patriarchal nature, they had both economic and military functions. The first known sugar mill in Igarassu was Engenho Capitão, and Sugar mills with names in the native Tupi language – such as Gongagary, Araripe and Inhamã – were not uncommon in the region. At the end of the 17th century, the Monjope had numerous slaves and was the most famous sugarcane mill owned by the Jesuits in Pernambuco.

In an objectifying discourse, slaves were called “living breath,” “parts from Guinea,” “parts from Africa,” or “living ebony”. The room now occupied by the directors of the Museu Histórico de Igarassu functioned as a slave quarters with a lowered ceiling, and is a space of memory to reflect on the racial inequality of the present.



**The “Big House” of the Monjope Sugar Mill, s.d.**  
 Mendel  
 Photography  
 MUSEU DA CIDADE DO RECIFE