

LOVING



Seduced by sardines, cobblestone streets, and the sadness of fado

By Joe Ray
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

I knew for years before I arrived that I would fall in love with this city. What I hadn't counted on was falling for the sardine lady.

PORTUGAL

The love story began in 1994 with "Lisbon Story," German director Wim Wenders's ode to the city, its gentle people, trademark fado music, cobblestone streets and tiled facades, and the tiny, heartbreakingly cute yellow trolleys that make their way up and down its seven hills. Leaving modern Europe and the languages he knows behind, the film's protagonist enters the city with his heart and his senses wide open.

I vow to do the same and discover people who are Portugal's living soul, conscious of the need to preserve their heritage and constantly redefining themselves using a sage mix of beauty and sadness, with both the past and hopes for the future as guides.

"There are people who pass through life," says Regina Ferreira, who runs the Conserveira de Lisboa (The Lisbon Cannery), "and then there are people who have life pass through them." Lisbon is gifted with a bumper crop of the latter.

I meet Ferreira, whom the French might gently refer to as une dame d'un certain âge, without looking for her. Guided only by good fortune, I wander in front of her store, a Lisbon landmark since 1930, tucked into a corner of the grid-like center of town known as the Baixa. Sitting on a wooden bench beneath a wall of boxes of sardine tins, I realize I'm in trouble when we compare the goose bumps on our arms talking about singer Jacques Brel.

Ferreira explains how for decades her father and her husband ran the company, creating products that eventually outlasted the long reign of dictator António de Oliveira Salazar (1932-68). She left her job with the state and took over the cannery after the death of her husband in 2004.

"Working can be like mental prostitu-

LISBON, Page M6



PHOTOS BY JOE RAY/FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

An eléctrico passes Sé de Lisboa cathedral. In the Baixa district, soaring near São Jorge castle (upper right).

LISBON

TAMPA

Come for the game, stay for the fun in the cities by the bay



PATRICIA BORNS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Raymond James Stadium, home of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, University of South Florida Bulls, and the Outback Bowl, will host Super Bowl XLIII.

By Patricia Borns
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

In the imaginations of Super Bowl marketers lives a place called Tampa Bay. In reality, the blue expanse is Florida's largest open-water estuary, whose five bridges connect a lively, at times fractious bunch of sun-washed cities and towns. Take the cultural textures and working-port ethos of Tampa, add the wide streets and casual glam of St. Petersburg, and mix with 12 densely packed, barrier island beach colonies strung along Gulf Boulevard for 26 miles — now, where did you say you were staying for the big game on Feb. 1?

Recently we checked into a boutique hotel bargain, the mission-styled Ponce de Leon, a short stroll from St. Peters-

burg's Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club. With leafy pocket parks, elegant museums, and enough brick streets to fill a dozen Beacon Hills, this is a city to love.

On Friday night we stood in line for a veranda table at the next-door tapas restaurant, Ceviche, and within a dozen blocks found a party for every mood. Jazz notes floated from the martini bar beneath the neon sign of the former Detroit Hotel, the city's most historic building. Veteran patrons hunched over the bar at Mastry's downing nonsense drinks amid marvels of taxidermy. The dress code turned gothic and ages dropped 20 years as we followed drum kit rolls to Jannus Landing, while the night's best music — a drum trio and trombone — was played on the 2d Street sidewalk for tips.

Ducking into a 1st Avenue alley, we

TAMPA BAY, Page M4

INSIDE

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EXPLORE NEW ENGLAND

MAINE On a frozen river, chasing smelts. **M8** **STARGAZING** Where to scope the heavens. **M8**