

GUIDE

Caminhos de Santiago

Alentejo e Ribatejo

Central
Way

Eastern
Way

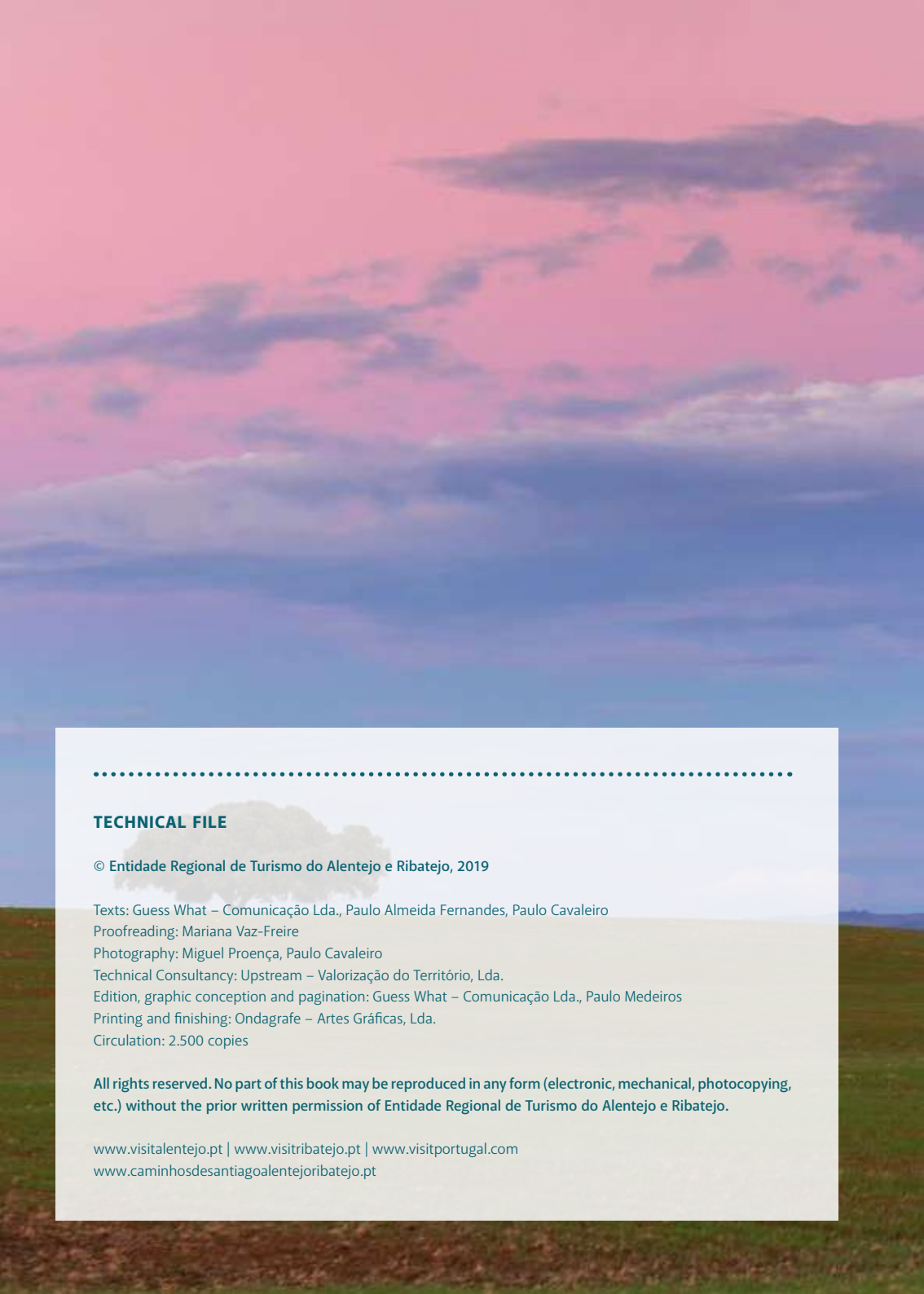


Caminhos
de Santiago

Alentejo e Ribatejo

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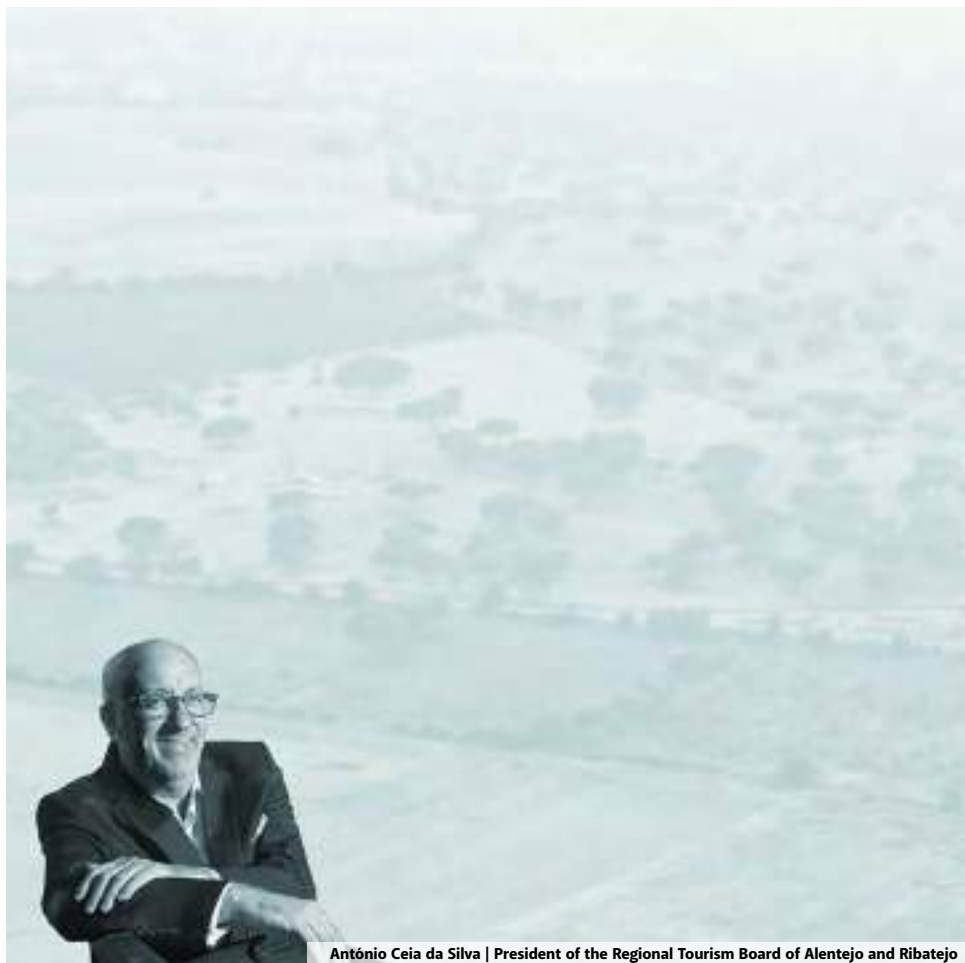
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António Ceia da Silva | President of the Regional Tourism Board of Alentejo and Ribatejo

When we embarked on defining the itineraries for the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo, we believed that rather than just developing a product, we were creating a brand with heart and soul that embraces an entire region.

I myself have already made the journey to Santiago de Compostela on foot, a unique, larger than life experience that belongs to the collective imagination, an inter generational bonding

with our kin that, more than a pilgrimage, is an unforgettable milestone in our lives.

You are warmly invited to join us on this journey through the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo!

In esteemed Pilgrim friendship.

Ceia da Silva



Index

The Order of Santiago	6
Alentejo and Ribatejo	10
Caminhos de Santiago – Alentejo e Ribatejo	12
Before leaving	24
Central Way	29
Stage 1 – Ameixial (Algarve) > Santa Cruz	31
Stage 2 – Santa Cruz > Almodôvar	35
Stage 3 – Almodôvar > Castro Verde	39
Stage 4 – Castro Verde > Messejana	43
Stage 5 – Messejana > Fornalhas Velhas	47
Stage 6 – Fornalhas Velhas > São Domingos	51
Stage 7 – São Domingos > Santiago do Cacém	55
Stage 8 – Santiago do Cacém > Roncão	59
Stage 9 – Roncão > Grândola	63
Stage 10 – Grândola > Alcácer do Sal	67
Stage 11 – Alcácer do Sal > Casebres	71
Stage 12 – Casebres > Vendas Novas	75
Stage 13 – Vendas Novas > Branca	79
Stage 14 – Branca > Santo Estêvão	83
Stage 15 – Santo Estêvão > Samora Correia > Benavente	87
Stage 16 – Benavente > Muge	91
Stage 17 – Muge > Santarém	95
Stage 18 – Santarém > Golegã	99
Stage 19 – Golegã > Tomar (Center)	103

Central Way – via Tagus	107
Stage 1 – Vila Franca de Xira (Lisboa) > Azambuja	109
Stage 2 – Azambuja > Santarém	113
Eastern Way	117
Stage 1 – Alcoutim (Algarve) > Mesquita	119
Stage 2 – Mesquita > Mértola	123
Stage 3 – Mértola > Amendoeira da Serra	127
Stage 4 – Amendoeira da Serra > Cabeça Gorda	131
Stage 5 – Cabeça Gorda > Beja	135
Stage 6 – Beja > Cuba	139
Stage 7 – Cuba > Alvito > Viana do Alentejo	143
Stage 8 – Viana do Alentejo > Évora	147
Stage 9 – Évora > São Miguel de Machede	151
Stage 10 – São Miguel de Machede > Evoramonte	155
Stage 11 – Evoramonte > Estremoz	159
Stage 12 – Estremoz > Sousel	163
Stage 13 – Sousel > Fronteira	167
Stage 14 – Fronteira > Cabeço de Vide	171
Stage 15 – Cabeço de Vide > Alter do Chão	175
Stage 16 – Alter do Chão > Crato	179
Stage 17 – Crato > Alpalhão	183
Stage 18 – Alpalhão > Nisa	187
Stage 19 – Nisa > Vila Velha de Ródão (Center)	191



Santiago Fighting the Moors, main church | Santiago do Cacém

The Order of Santiago



The Order of Santiago conquered much of the present Tagus river's southern Portuguese territory, and was essential in the settlement and socioeconomic planning of Alentejo and Algarve's swaths during the Middle Ages.

The origins of a peninsular military religious order

The Order was born of the crusading fervour that gripped the medieval imagination, buoyed by the conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 and other successful campaigns in the Holy Land. In the 12th century, Muslim strongholds were also being conquered by

Western European kingdoms across the Iberian Peninsula. In the kingdom of Portugal, the Orders of the Templars and Hospitaller Knights were already active, to whom the kings D. Afonso Henriques and D. Sancho I had entrusted the defence of important areas of the country's center. The Order of Santiago was the last to be established, but quickly supplanted the others in scale, dynamism and relevance. The Order wasn't founded with that name. It originated among the friars of Cáceres, consisting of thirteen warrior-priests who came together in the second half of the 12th century whom King





Sacred Art Museum | Grândola



Santiago church | Alcácer do Sal

Fernando II of Leon recognised as a militia in 1170. Some time after, probably in common accord with the archbishop of Santiago de Compostela, or because Santiago (Saint James) the Apostle was the Kingdom of Spain's patron, the friars then adopted the name Order of Santiago. The uniquely peninsular scope of the Order was evident in its statutes: to protect not only the southern borders of the Iberian Peninsula's Christian kingdoms, but also the pilgrims who came to Santiago de Compostela cathedral to worship the apostle's tomb. Its seat was established in Uclés (Cuenca) from 1174 onwards.

The Order of Santiago in Portugal

In Portugal, the oldest documents on the Order of Santiago date back to 1172, the year in which it inherited the territory of Arruda dos Vinhos from King D. Afonso Henriques. In a short space of time, it went south of the Tagus river to actively participate in the kingdom's war efforts. The Order settled in the castle of Palmela in 1186, but the Islamic reconquest of 1191 interrupted the construction of a convent there. The town once again became the Portuguese Santiagan capital until Alcácer do Sal was finally conquered in 1217, and for a

third time from 1482 onwards, a moment when 'land-taking' was a thing of the past and a closer proximity to the court was advisable.

The military influence of the Spatharii dominated the first half of the 13th century. After having conquered the important port of Alcácer do Sal (the main shore base for the Muslim fleet), the Order of Santiago was entrusted with conquering practically the entire south of what today is mainland Portugal, under the command of future Grand Master D. Paio Peres Correia. In just two decades, the Order of Santiago became the most





Azulejo tiles panel – main church of Samora Correia | Benavente

powerful landowner of the kingdom, holding sway over a territory so vast it extended from Samora Correia to Tavira, and from Almada to Aljezur.

To provide support for its manoeuvres in the south, the Order's seat moved to Alcácer do Sal and then Mértola. The true capital was Alcácer do Sal, where the Spatharii built a grand convent, known in medieval literature as the '*meysom d'alcaçar*', next to the castle and mother church. In Mértola, where the Portuguese ancillary's seat was established between 1248 and 1482, the architectural legacy of commander D. João

de Mascarenhas is best-known. In the first half of the 16th century, he was patron for the construction of a grand altarpiece for the main church (originally the mosque) which celebrated the life and legend of the Apostle Santiago.

In the south of the country, the vast quantity of churches dedicated to Santiago came about thanks to the conquests and administration of the Order of Santiago, which also left many further traces such as palaces of its former Commanders, castles preserving the memory of the knights who conquered them, the tombs of celebrated men

of war and religion, works of art sponsored by high-ranking noblemen of the Spatharios hierarchy, structural traces on local toponyms or simple and discreet landmarks in properties. Given the military nature of the campaigns in the Alentejo and Algarve, many artistic commissions portrayed Santiago as a Christian warrior on horseback, showing no mercy to a huddle of terrified foes, which became known as the religious iconography of *Santiago Matamouros* (Saint James the Moor-slayer). In truth, the Order never imposed a single form of representation and Santiago continued to fre-





Keep of Beja Castle

quently be represented as a pilgrim and apostle, with the south of the country revealing the most complete narratives on its life in *azulejo* (tile) panel.

Management and integration into the crown's estate

The Order was presided over by a grand master, elected by 13 knights, in memory of the 12th century founding members. Religious discipline was upheld by a superior religious officer (*prior-mor*), while the management of the commendations was the responsibility of a chief knight commander (*comendador-mor*). The commendation was the ba-

sic constituent of the administrative land management of the Order of Santiago, headed by a main castle. For the same reason, the commanders were also the *alcaldes* of these fortresses. The Order of Santiago in Portugal was runned by the grand master of Uclès until 1452, the year in which the Portuguese ancillary gained autonomy from its Castilian counterpart. During the reign of the King D. João III, from 1551 onwards, the Order was integrated into the crown's estate and was subsequently managed by the Portuguese monarchy.

The cross of the Order of Santiago

The cross used by the friars of Santiago is red and has two sidebars in the shape of fleur-de-lys, while the vertical tail resembles a sword. The banner was white and, besides the cross, it depicted scallop shells, the emblematic symbol of the Jacobean pilgrims.





View over the Tagus from Portas do Sol | Santarém

Alentejo and Ribatejo

*Enjoy all their
intimate charms
at Nature's pace.*

The Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo cross two very distinct territories: different in their customs and traditions, in the way their peoples live, in the colours of their landscapes and the experiences they offer. Although they may differ, they share a distinctive genuineness that makes them unique and differentiates them from all others that help define the country's borders. To travel these Caminhos is to enjoy all their charms at nature's pace.

The Golden Plains

The Alentejo's landscape stretches as far as the eye can see,

where the sun's golden glow blurs with the endless plains, dappled with battlements of whitewashed dwellings. It's a land of quietude, marking the rhythm of its peoples, and the authenticity of its still-intact regional identity. With an unrivalled natural patrimony and terrain, it has embraced a rural way of life, which grants its landscapes distinct and unique characteristics. Once known as the country's "barn", it is Portugal's largest region, a name that not only symbolises its landscapes, but also an ancient way of living. Its uses are also ancestral, from which traditions have arisen, to be savoured at the table, heard





Embroidery and Clay Museum | Nisa



View of Alter Pedroso | Alter do Chão

in the Cante Alentejano, seen in its monuments, its ceramics and tapestries, and celebrated in festivals and religious processions. All of which can be taken home in the form of outstanding products: the richness of the olive grove transformed into exceptional olive oils, the richness of the pastries that satisfy the gluttony, the honey, the smoked ham...

The green of the 'Lezírias'

The plains become lezírias - marshlands of the Ribatejo, expanses of green where once golds reigned. A region that many still refer to as 'Beira do Tejo' (Banks of the Tagus) or 'Borda d'Água'

(River's Edge), for having the Tagus river as its neighbour, the river that crosses and weaves through, making its lands fertile and a constant source of inspiration. Besides the marshes there are moorlands, rice fields that the Tagus bathes more thoroughly, and the neighborhoods, with their golden grains. The lushness of the meadows provide nourishment for livestock and a stage for the 'merry dance' of herds of wild bulls and horses. A region with a culture marked by its traditional costume and by its dances, such as the fandango, already popular on the 18th century among nobles and commoners in fairs

and festivals. In the Ribatejo version it is danced to the sound of accordions, fifes, mouthorgans, harmoniums and clarinets. The figure of the 'Campino' (cattle herder) reigned, dressed in a red waistcoat and green cap. Its cultural heritage includes the *azulejo* tile work, panels of vibrant colour that represent five centuries of history and adorn both exteriors and interiors; the rustic bread, the tomato and the rice, ingredients of a unique cuisine, the art of basketry and the coopers' woodworking, which symbolise the union between Man and Nature.



Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo

Embark on a journey through a land of unique peoples, customs and landscapes.



THE CENTRAL WAY

Journeying on the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo is a promise of adventure, of unexpected discoveries, of a history preserved in people's memories, a story that unfurls at every stop. Journeying on the Ways is to relive that history in the traces that the passing of time failed to erase, it is making the traveller a witness to a narrative revealed in its tangible and intangible heritage, in its lands, towns and curiosities, its cuisine, peoples and customs, those that have gone and those that continue to be, and who by

taking part are unable to resist the enchantments revealed along the way. More than a journey, it is to experience landscapes which, though different, share the fact of being unique, reverberating like echoes in our memory.

To experience the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo is more than a journey, it is an experience like no other, which marks us, and which we treasure. One we will want to repeat.

Flavours and traditions

When we talk about Intangible Cultural Heritage, we mean the

cultural expressions that are part of the social and cultural history of the communities found in the Alentejo and Ribatejo. These can manifest themselves as flavours, the traditions and the life experiences from which they arose, or the handicrafts, the festivals and religious processions, art and customs. It is a rich heritage, at once diverse and authentic, that the visitor encounters on these Ways, a journey forged on the contact with manifestations of a symbolic value that is recognised worldwide, which grants us an experience both stimulating and memorable.





Mértola



Beja Regional Museum



The Alentejo and Ribatejo's intangible cultural heritage has on four separate occasions been recognised by UNESCO, which included them on a comprehensive list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, that travellers can see for themselves by taking these Ways. Such as 'Cante Alentejano', the traditional Alentejo song, which needs no introduction. A kind of musical expression which, more than simply music, is a sharing of feelings, from nostalgic saudade (missing something or someone) to love, where irony and humour are also present, and where voices come together in

melancholic harmony, drawing in all those who listen.

Found across almost the entire Alentejo, this art form is most typical of the districts of Serpa and Beja.

From cowbells to falconry

Most common in the district of Alcáçovas in Viana do Alentejo, cowbells are still being produced, or more accurately manufactured, an art UNESCO felt deserving of the status of intangible heritage, in recognition of the precariousness and challenges it faces to keep going versus encroaching globalisation.

Used to warn us of approaching cattle, this rural melody refuses to be silenced by the brute force of modernity, intent on rendering it obsolete.

In the Ribatejo, the beating heart of the art of falconry is found in Salvaterra de Magos, taking us back to a time when the Portuguese royal family used to spend long periods hunting there.

Opening onto the natural habitat of the Tejo estuary, here we now find an educational and environmental interpretation centre, besides the 'river museum' Cais da Vala.

Hewn from clay, the figurative





Professor Joaquim Vermelho Municipal Museum, Estremoz



Santiago Church | Alcácer do Sal



Marvão

ceramics of Estremoz also earned the recognition of UNESCO first as national intangible cultural heritage and subsequently of Humanity. A technique that stretches back more than 300 years, many are the handmade clay figures to have emerged from the kiln to be colourfully decorated, and so it continues today. We can see them for ourselves in Estremoz, either at the Municipal Museum or at the shops and ateliers that sell them.

Festivals, Fairs and Processions

The festive calendar of the

Alentejo and Ribatejo is rich. Rich in things to do, in music and in local colour. The streets spruced up and decorated for the occasion, stages readied to welcome the music that plays such an integral part, the Ways grant visitors an opportunity to enjoy festive traditions that astonish for their sheer diversity and scale, and which involve and mobilise entire communities, through traditional dances starting with the fandangos of the Ribatejo and Alentejo, and the characteristic skirts and puppetry of the Alentejo. Take for example the Feira de São João (St John Festival) in Évora,

which is 500 years old, the procession of the Romaria a Nossa Senhora da Graça in Nisa, or the Golegã Horse Fair that goes back to the 16th century.

Castles, Museums and a Wealth of Nature

More than just rest stops, the different stages of the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo e Ribatejo are opportunities to discover towns and cities, the secrets they hide, the architecture, museums and their history. At each stop, take the opportunity to visit its points of interest. The dilemma is which to choose.





Santa Cruz, Almodôvar



Marvão



Alcácer do Sal

No Alentejo

The Central Way passes through Santa Cruz, where the Parish Church, built in the 16th century, is home to a rather unusual icon of Jesus in the Garden, where one can see represented the sweat turning into blood. Further ahead, in the medieval town of Almodôvar, the riverine landscape invites us to savour the crystal-clear waters of Ribeira do Vascão, stream located within the Special Protected Area of the Guadiana valley, dotted with watermills and weirs. If you pay close attention, with a little luck you may spot a few rare wildlife

specimens.

In the town, the Museum of Southern Writing (Escrita do Sudoeste) reveals to us the immense archaeological richness

of the district and, in particular, the singular destiny of a people which invented its own written language between the 7th and 5th centuries BC.

Because the Ways to Santiago are much more than simply hiking trips, the dam of Campilhas, built in 1954 in Santiago de Cacém, offers the chance to try out all kinds of non-motorised water sports and recreational fishing.

The Way continues, passing through Alcácer do Sal, which has one of the most important examples of Renaissance architecture in the country: Capela das Onze Mil Virgens (the Chapel of the Eleven Thousand Virgins). In white marble, with a dome covered in translucent jasper that captures the sun's rays, colour bathes the sculpted forms, attributed to António Rodrigues, an architect during the reign of King D. Sebastião, who was influenced by the Italian master Michelangelo. A city where one can also learn about the Lenda da Costureirinha (Legend of the





Castro Verde Windmill



Santiago do Cacém Municipal Museum



Bones Chapel | Évora

Little Seamstress), told over much of the Baixo (Low) Alentejo region, where many are those who claim to have heard the sound of a sewing machine that never stops. According to legend it is seamstress who sews for all eternity, after having made a wedding dress for her daughter who died before the marriage.

Journeying through Ribatejo

For nature lovers, the journey through Benavente is a chance to do some serious birdwatching and in the meadow and wheat fields see scarcer, less common

species that typically make their home in such habitats. The alluvial valleys that open onto the Tagus, Sorraia and Almansor rivers are like genuine islands interspersed among the characteristic dryness of the highlands. The shore lands that embraces the Tagus and all waterlogged areas offer far greater biodiversity, where European migrating waterfowl and others from southern climes can be spotted, such as the Black-winged stilt and reed warbler.

In Santarém, Misericórdia church, built in the mid-16th century (1559) is worth a visit.

This is a perfect example of a hall church with three naves and rib-vaulted ceilings illuminated by six rectangular windows. Within is found the shallow grave of Nuno Velho Pereira, one of the most significant figures of the period of Portuguese imperial expansion, a captain of India and a patron of the almshouses of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia. There one can also see a pipe organ from 1818 that was restored in 2008.

It is here in the Ribatejan capital that the gateway of Porta de Santiago is found, the main entrance to Santarém castle, where one can see a coat of





Nossa Senhora d'Aires Sanctuary | Viana do Alentejo



Santa Cruz Parish Church | Pombalinho



Escaroupim | Muge



Ancient Castle of Messejana

arms of the Fernandinos of Portugal, as well as the Portas do Sol, nowadays a panoramic viewpoint built on city walls with three turrets.

The Ways, just like history itself, are full of tales that are yet to be confirmed and since became legend, such as that of Torre das Cabaças tower, which tells that during the reign of King D. Manuel, since Santarém was lacking a clock tower, the monarch was asked to make this a reality. A sum was donated to pay for its construction, which eight local councilmen were nominated to 'oversee'. But once it was complete, rather

than being satisfied with the result, the king was sorely displeased, considering the public money poorly spent. And so, at the tower's summit on the iron structure supporting the bell, the King ordered 8 'cabaças', or gourds, to be placed there, symbolising the heads of the 8 men responsible for its construction.

As the Central Way draws to a close, we arrive to Golegã, a place to stop and rest ever since the nation's early days, where once there was an inn belonging to a woman from Galicia, known as Venda Galega, which later gave its name to the town. A

land of knights and their steeds, the Equuspolis Cultural Centre with its equestrian library is worth a look, as is the Fórum Manuel Fernandes or the Mestre Martins Correia Municipal Museum.

THE EASTERN WAY

History is also written on buildings

Not far from where we set off, the Eastern Way takes us to Mértola, where the castle is practically a mustsee.

Founded on far more ancient





Roman bridge | Almodóvar



Palafitte port of Carrasqueira | Alcácer do Sal

structures, it was built in Christian times, its keep going up in 1292 by order of Dom João Fernandes, Master of the Order of Santiago. It is an archaeologically rich site and a prime location to look over the city and its surroundings.

Further ahead, Beja reveals itself to be a wonderful place to observe nature, above all the birdlife, its county lines serving as the place of 'pilgrimage' for about two hundred species. The opportunities for birdwatching are substantial, species such as the osprey, scrub robin or black-bellied sandgrouse gracing the most attentive with their

presence.

Through its Azulejo pannels, a legacy of five centuries of tile painting that also tells the history of the city, Beja offers us flashes of colour, indoors and out.

A homage to the art of working in clay awaits the visitor in Évora, in the form of an actual village going by the name of Aldeia da Terra (Earth Village), considered by many as the funniest in Portugal.

This 3D cartoon strip is a marvel of well-observed, irreverent good humour.

Not to be missed is Igreja de São Tiago (St James Church), rebuilt

in the 17th century but which still has traces of the Manueline period, such as the battlements of the south wing. With a single nave, the domed roof greets us with magnificent frescos, painted with sacred and profane decorative motifs.

Évora has a lot to offer its visitors, such as Praça do Giraldo square, baptised in homage to Geraldo Galdes the Fearless, to whom the reconquest in 1165 of Évora from the Moors is attributed.

Baptised the 'white city' of the Alentejo, Estremoz has its own 16th century church, the Igreja de Santiago, which is known to have existed since the reign of





Cante Alentejano (UNESCO)



Santa Maria da Alcáçova Church | Santarém



The Almendres Cromlech | Évora



Frayões Metello House | Grândola

D. Afonso III (1245-1279, and celebrated for its bell tower, triangular marble gable with a cross, the 18th century picture window and over the doorway, the cross of the Order of Avis. The medieval castle in the centre of town stands out for its keep that is 27 metres high, one of the best preserved in the whole country. In 1336, this became the last resting place of Queen Santa Isabel, who died in her chambers there.

In Crato, Mosteiro de Flor da Rosa monastery is one of the most original and intriguing Gothic buildings in the country, now home to a Pousada hotel.

Dating from 1356, this monument consists of three separate structures: the church-fort in the Gothic style, a Gothic castellated palace and convent priories. Meanwhile Crato, influenced in days of yore by the presence of Megalithic shepherds and their habits and culture, also reveals traces of other stories in its dolmens, or antas. As a matter of fact, in this municipality alone over 70 have been documented, most prominent of all being the dolmens found at Anta do Tapadão and Anta do Crato, designated national monuments.

As we come to the end of the Eastern Way, there's still time to visit Nisa, with its 17th century pillory, which looks today much as it did then; the shrine of Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Graça, famous for its religious procession which takes places every Easter, or the traditional red clay ceramics, pitchers and jars decorated with small white stone flower motifs.

Along the Tagus river

When leaving Lisbon on the Central Way, we embark passing through Vila Nova da Rainha, the setting chosen for the wedding of the royals D. Nuno Álvares





Wayside cross in Viana do Alentejo castle



Sulfúrea Thermal Baths | Cabeço de Vide



São Miguel de Machede

Pereira with D. Leonor de Alvim, celebrated on 15 August 1376. Further ahead, in the Ribatejo town of Azambuja stands the church of the brotherhood of Senhor Jesus da Misericórdia de Azambuja, designated a monument of national interest. According to history, it was at the turn of the 18th century that the confreres of Espírito Santo (Holy Spirit) founded there a brotherhood and medieval hospice, with the aim of helping pilgrims, passers-by and the poor patients. Or we can contemplate the small islands emerging from the river, which are home to eagles, egrets,

wild ducks, choughs and many other animals. The Way also passes through Cartaxo which has been, throughout history, an important waypoint to the interior of the country, either by river (the Tagus) or land, and opens onto the magnificent plateau of Santarém.

REGIONAL CUISINE

The culinary richness of the Alentejo and Ribatejo needs no introduction. Here, words cannot do justice to the feast that awaits, failing to adequately express the emotions it inspires in us. Our passage through these ports of call always

implies another journey, that of the taste buds. Even so, it is by using words that we shall try to explain the best these regions have to offer.

Bread and wine on the table

Traditionally, bread and wine are essential on a Portuguese table. And whether we take the Central or Eastern Ways, good wines and wonderful breads are guaranteed wherever the traveller goes in the Alentejo, in what is one of the main winemaking regions in the country. The combination of different grapes, rooted in the





warm earth, has resulted in a variety of wines, from whites to reds, that make it difficult to take your pick. So, there's no better reason to taste it, raise a glass and make a toast that is celebrated as far as the Ribatejo, a land of wines whose origins are lost in time and are inextricably linked to the nation's identity. Thanks to a diverse range of soils and climates, which ends up being reflected inside the bottle, the god's nectar lives up to its promise.

On a full stomach

Simplicity is the key to the Alentejo cuisine. It is reflected

in the ingredients, harvested from a region which has long enchanted us with its flavours, and has resulted in a knowledge passed from generation to generation, constantly reinventing itself without ever losing its identity.

All begins with the appetisers, the fresh, cured goat and sheep cheeses with an unmistakable flavour and smell; the Alentejo *presunto* (ham), the *paio do cachaço* (pork neck sausage), the *farinheira* (a sausage with flour and spices), *linguiça*, *morçela* and *painho*...

But that is just for starters. The bread, which never leaves

the table, becomes the main attraction in dishes such as *Açorda à Alentejana* and the *Migas*, and is the perfect companion for the *Sopa de Cação* (dogfish soup), *Sopa de Tomate* or the *Ensopado de Borrego* (lamb stew). Also on the menu is the lamb or pork *Sarapatel*, partridge or freshwater fish, from lamprey to carp, grilled or fried, and always seasoned with aromatic spices redolent of the smells of the Alentejo.

As for the Ribatejo, the menu is no less impressive or easier to choose from.

Let's begin with the appetisers,





the barbecued pork *chouriço*, the winecured sausages, the black pudding (*morcela*) and *farinheira*, the cured goat, sheep and cow-milk cheeses that tantalise the taste buds. Following we have *Sopa da Pedra* ('Stone' soup, but these days served without), *Feijão com Couves* (bean stew with cabbage) and also the *Sopa de Peixe*, or fish soup. Next is the *Magusto com Bacalhau Assado* (oven-roasted cod with cornbread mash), the mullet of the *Fataça na Telha*, eel à Ribatejana, the roast lamb, fava beans with *chouriço* or the *Isacas com Elas*, strips of fried liver with

boiled potatoes. Whoever passes through the Alentejo or the Ribatejo knows it's also bound to be a sweet experience. The reason for this is the honey, varying from place to place but always sweet, and a repertoire of cake making across both regions inherited from the nuns. Eggs, sugar and almonds are blended together in perfect harmony to whet the appetite, in Ribatejo cakes and pastries such as the *Queijinhos do Céu*, *Pão de Ló*, *Sopa Dourada*, *Manjar Celeste* or *Pampilhos* or the *Pastéis de Santa Clara*, *Bolo Podre*, *Tibornas Doces*, *Pão de*

Rala and *Sericaia* of the Alentejo. Closer to the coast, menus give off a tang of the sea thanks to the *Açorda de Marisco* (a seafood bread stew), *Feijoada de Búzios* (bean stew with whelks) or *Mariscos* (shellfish), and the *Arroz de Lapas* (rice with goose barnacles), and lest we forget, *Salada de Choco* or *Ovas* (cuttlefish or roe salad) and *Polvo à Pescador* - freshly-fished octopus.





Before leaving

prepare your trip thoroughly

The Caminhos do Alentejo e Ribatejo are about 30 days away from Santiago de Compostela, which is why you need to be **physically prepared** for a challenging itinerary. Making the journey is always a pleasant surprise, but it is vital to be in good shape to ensure your days are comfortable, and to awaken the spirit to a more absorbing experience.

Plan the distance you intend to cover each day, studying the Guide and any other information that may be available on the Internet. Familiarise yourself with where assistance is available, the places with cafés and restaurants, and ensure accommodation at the start and end of each stage is available.

It is recommended to do some **training** before embarking on this journey, so you are absolutely clear about your physical capacities. Long stages impact the following days and insufficient physical preparation can lead to muscular pain which will only get worse as the body is subjected to further exertion.

Choose **walking shoes** you have already worn in, not too tight and which your feet are used to wearing. You can only make the journey if you have healthy feet.



Pack only the essentials.

The first days of your trek will soon reveal how superfluous certain items are. As a rule, try to ensure your backpack weighs no more than 10% of your body weight and comes with handy compartments: one for documents, credit/debit card and phone charger; another for a first aid kit; a third for some food. Don't forget to take a waterproof raincoat that fits over your backpack and flip-flops for showering if you intend to stay in hostels. Also essential is a water container suitable for the difficulty of the

journey's stages. On the Ways, it is important to ration water carefully, for many stages do not have any assistance points and take place under adverse high temperatures.

Make an informed decision as to which **time of year** suits you best for making your pilgrimage. To avoid the heat of the south and interior of Portugal, the months of March, April, May, September and October are advised, but bear in mind that some months see more rain than others, the closer you get to Compostela.





CODE OF CONDUCT

All who take part in the Caminhos de Santiago Alentejo and Ribatejo should bear the following code of conduct in mind.

A significant part of the recommended itinerary routes cross private properties, to which their owners have permitted access. For this reason:

- Respect private property;
- Leave all gates as you found them. If they were closed, make sure you have closed them properly;
- Only follow the marked ways;
- Be polite with locals. All routes cross areas that are relatively environmentally sensitive, namely as regards

the conservation of flora, fauna and vegetation;

- Avoid making unnecessary noise;
- Observe wildlife at a safe distance;
- Do not damage or collect samples of plants or rocks;
- Do not drop litter and leave no trace behind you. The itineraries permit interaction with agrosystems where farming, fishing or forest activities take place, and are important to preserve. Carelessness or a failure to follow recommended actions may have serious consequences.
- Don't light fires and think twice before discarding cigarette butts.

- Be careful around livestock. Although they are docile, they do not like it when strangers approach their young.



On urban parts of the journey, the signs are specifically meant for pedestrians. Other means of transport such as bicycles, should respect official traffic signage.



The definitive tracings of many stages may have undergone changes after the publication of this roadmap. Before leaving, it is essential that you check the correct itinerary on the site www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejo.ribatejo.pt



	Credencial do Peregrino/ Pilgrim Passport /Certificat du Pélerin/Pilgerausweis		Posto de Turismo/Tourism Office/Oficina de Turismo/ Office du Tourisme/ Tourismusbüro		Barco/Boat/Barca/Bateau/Schiff
	Fácil/Easy/Fácil/Facile/Leicht		Correios/Post Office/Oficina de Correos/Bureau de Poste/ Postamt		Comboio/Train/Tren/Train/Zug
	Difícil/Hard/Difícil/Difficile/ Schwierig		Centro de Saúde-Hospital/ Health Center-Hospital/Centro de Salud-Hospital/Centre Médical-Hôpital/Ärztzentrum- Krankenhaus		Assistência Bikes/Bike Repair/ Réparation Vélo/Fahrrad Reparatur
	Albergue/Hostel/Albergue/ Auberge/Hostel		Farmácia/Pharmacy/Farmácia/ Pharmacie/Apotheke		Miradouros-Paisagem/ Lookouts-Scenery/Mirador- Paisaje/Belvédère-Paysage/ Aussichtspunkt-Landschaft
	Hotel		Balneário Público/Public Shower/Duchas Públicas/ Douches Publiques/Öffentliche Dusche		Biodiversidade-Natureza/ Biodiversity-Nature/ Biodiversidad-Naturaleza/ Biodiversité-Nature/ Biodiversität-Natur
	Turismo Rural/Rural B&B/ Turismo Rural/Tourisme Rural/ Agrotourismus		Museu/Museum/Museo/ Musée/Museum		Vinicultura-Adegas/Viticulture- Wineries/Vinicultura-Bodega/ Viticulture-Cave/Weinbau- Weinkellerei
	Camping Pousada da Juventude/ Camping Youth Hostel/Camping Albergue Juvenil/Camping Auberge de Jeunesse/Camping Jugendherberge		Igreja/Church/Iglesia/Église/ Kirche		Praias Fluviais-Piscinas/Fluvial Beaches-Swimming Pools/ Playa de Río-Piscina/Plage Fluviale-Piscine/flussstrände- Schwimmbad
	Restauração/Restaurante/ Restaurant		Edifícios Histórico-Arqueologia/ Historical Building-Archiology/ Edificio Histórico-Arqueología/ Monument Historique- Archéologie/historische Gebäude-Archäologie		Entidades Públicas/Public Entities/Organismo Público/ Organisme Public/öffentliche ämter
	Supermercado/Supermarket/ Supermercado/Supermarché/ Supermarkt		Taxi		
	Café/Coffee Shop/Cafetería/ Café/Café		Autocarro/Bus/Autobus		
	Banco-ATM/Bank-Cash Dispenser/Banco-Cajero automático/Banque-Guichet Automatique/Geldautomat				

SOS - ☎ 112  - ☎ 117

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

www.visitalentejo.pt | www.visitribatejo.pt | www.visitportugal.com

The Itineraries

Two Paths to take full of countless pleasant surprises.



Central Path

440 km

Stages

1. Ameixial (Algarve) ➤ Santa Cruz
2. Santa Cruz ➤ Almodôvar
3. Almodôvar ➤ Castro Verde
4. Castro Verde ➤ Messejana
5. Messejana ➤ Fornalhas Velhas
6. Fornalhas Velhas ➤ São Domingos
7. São Domingos ➤ Santiago do Cacém
8. Santiago do Cacém ➤ Roncão
9. Roncão ➤ Grândola
10. Grândola ➤ Alcácer do Sal
11. Alcácer do Sal ➤ Casebres
12. Casebres ➤ Vendas Novas
13. Vendas Novas ➤ Branca
14. Branca ➤ Santo Estêvão
15. Sto Estêvão ➤ Samora Correia
➤ Benavente
16. Benavente ➤ Muge
17. Muge ➤ Santarém
18. Santarém ➤ Golegã
19. Golegã ➤ Tomar (Center)

Central Path via Tagus

40 km

Stages

1. Alverca (Lisboa) ➤ Azambuja
2. Azambuja ➤ Santarém

Central Path via Atlantic

110 km

Stages*

1. Castro Verde ➤ Ourique
2. Ourique ➤ Cercal
3. Cercal ➤ Santiago do Cacém

* Digital format only.

Eastern Path

383 km

Stages

1. Alcoutim (Algarve) ➤ Mesquita
2. Mesquita ➤ Mértola
3. Mértola ➤ Amendoeira da Serra
4. Amendoeira da Serra ➤ Cabeça Gorda
5. Cabeça Gorda ➤ Beja
6. Beja ➤ Cuba
7. Cuba ➤ Alvito ➤ Viana do Alentejo
8. Viana do Alentejo ➤ Évora
9. Évora ➤ São Miguel de Machede
10. São Miguel de Machede ➤ Evoramonte
11. Evoramonte ➤ Estremoz
12. Estremoz ➤ Sousel
13. Sousel ➤ Fronteira
14. Fronteira ➤ Cabeço de Vide
15. Cabeço de Vide ➤ Alter do Chão
16. Alter do Chão ➤ Crato
17. Crato ➤ Alpalhão
18. Alpalhão ➤ Nisa
19. Nisa ➤ Vila Velha de Rodão (Center)

Raia's Path

310 km

Stages (Municipalities)*

1. Mértola ➤ Serpa
2. Serpa ➤ Moura
3. Moura ➤ Mourão
4. Mourão ➤ Reguengos de Monsaraz
5. Reguengos de Monsaraz ➤ Alandroal
6. Alandroal ➤ Vila Viçosa
7. Vila Viçosa ➤ Elvas
8. Elvas ➤ Campo Maior
9. Campo Maior ➤ Arronches
10. Arronches ➤ Portalegre
11. Portalegre ➤ Marvão
12. Marvão ➤ Castelo de Vide
13. Castelo de Vide ➤ Alpalhão

* Digital format only.



- CENTRAL PATH
- CENTRAL PATH via Tagus
- CENTRAL PATH via Atlantic
- EASTERN PATH
- RAIAS PATH
- CONNECTION ALGARVE - ALENTEJO
- CONNECTION ALENTEJO/RIBATEJO - CENTER
- ... ROTA VICENTINA - Historical path
- ROTA VICENTINA - Modern path
- ✈ AIRPORT
- 🚆 TRAIN
- 🚌 BUS via Lisbon
- 🚌 BUS via Faro and Tavira
- + PILGRIM PASSPORT

WAYS GUIDE

Caminhos de Santiago

Alentejo e Ribatejo

Central
Way

Eastern
Way



Ameixial (Algarve) ► Santa Cruz

1

"... the traces identified witness the transit of pilgrims through the old roman route which crosses the Serra do Caldeirão in Santa Cruz de Almodôvar; formerly one of the most used routes in the connection between Algarve and Alentejo, from where arrived, in 1249, D. Afonso III, at the head of his army, to conquer Faro and Albufeira." (José António Falcão, "O Caminho e o Culto de Santiago no Alentejo Meridional", in No Caminho sob as Estrelas – Santiago e a Peregrinação a Compostela, pp. 97-141)

Coming from Ameixial (Algarve), we enter Alentejo via overlying Ribeira do Vascão, a reverse route of the one once used by the Grandmaster Paio Peres Correia and his Knights of Santiago, integrated in the host of D. Afonso III, to conquer central Algarve.

Not only a strategic region for its importance as a place of passage between the Algarve and Alentejo, it was also the place where the terrible Remexido set the last bastion of King Miguel's guerrilla, which followed the civil war in the mid 19th century, leaving a trail of terror and violence that contributed to the exodus of populations.

With the "weight" of History hidden in each step of the Way, we leave behind the biggest slopes of Serra do Caldeirão and



On the way to Santa Cruz

we discover the valley of Ribeira do Vascão, a well-kept affluent of the Guadiana river, exuberant in biodiversity and freshness, even in Summer, inviting you to take a desirable break on the hidden pebble beaches.

On the way to Monte Branco, we witness the transition from the Mediterranean scrubland landscape, typical from Caldeirão, to the cork and holm oak forest, with some disperse olive groves, foreseeing the next wavy plain of Alentejo. A small orchard gave us the oranges that Mr. Diamantino and his wife, D. Maria José,

offered to us, with the modesty and satisfaction of those who live from earth's generosity, which has been providing for their subsistence for more than 80 years. The public fountains of Monte Branco remind us to refill the canteens before getting back on the Way in the direction of Santa Cruz, more exposed and dry at that time.

Three kilometers later, "fitted" on the landscape in an unusual place, the magnificent Igreja de Santa Cruz appears, bounded to the commendation of Mértola by the Order of Santiago. As



mentioned by José António Falcão, the grandeur of the church, rare in rural parishes, denotes its influence as a pilgrimage pole. The pilgrims' houses were contiguous and they would also go to an alleged sacred fountain that flows from a cliff nearby.

The whole is complete with the ruins of the chapels of São Bento and Nossa Senhora da Lapa... and with the "hole" in a slab nearby, which the people believe to heal headaches!...

Santa Cruz

This stage ends in the village of Santa Cruz, the first village of the Central Way in Alentejo, around 15 km after exiting Ameixial. The visitor's accommodation is provided in social infrastructures managed by the Parish Council, which should be previously contacted for proper reservation, as well as a deserved visit to the church.

The civil parish of Santa Cruz, in the municipality of Almodôvar, with an area of 123,82 km² and around 650 inhabitants (data

from 2011), is the first village of the Central Way of the Caminho de Santiago Alentejo and Ribatejo.

Church of Santa Cruz

The construction of this Manueline church is credited to the patronage by the family of D. Fernão Mascarenhas, a noble who received the commendations of the Order of Santiago in Mértola and Almodôvar in the transition to the 16th century. The coat of arms of Dona Violante Henriques, wife of D. Fernão Mascarenhas, is stored in the main chapel, framed by a Renaissance sgraffito. The church was bounded to the Order of Santiago since the beginning, as we can see by the cross in the main façade, above the temple's access portal, in the first keystone of the main chapel, which includes the cross with the two scallops, and the emblem of Santiago in the vestry's washbasin.



and also...

Spring Festival

The arrival of Spring is celebrated in Santa Cruz in March, at the Centro Cultural de Santa Cruz – Almodôvar.



Choral Group "As Mondadeiras"

This group was born from the creation of the ethnographic parade held on

S. John's day in 1999, and its name came up because in ancient times the monda (weeding in Portuguese) was a job frequently done by the women of Santa Cruz parish.

Founded in June 23, 1999, this group is composed of more than ten elements and its hymn is "*Nós somos as mondadeiras*" ("We are the mowers").

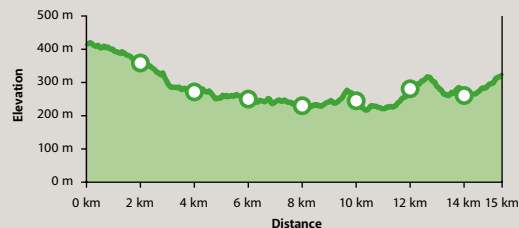
They already hold a vast repertoire, with some preference for the music linked to Almodôvar's district, to country life and *Cante ao Menino* (typical singing style from Alentejo).

Ameixial (Algarve) ► Santa Cruz

1



Distance 15 km
Maximum altitude 421 m
Cumulative increase 434 m
Cumulative descent -534 m
Duration 3h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



The Alentejo begins at the Ribeira do Vascão stream, but the traveler will probably come from the Algarve, specifically from the village of Ameixial, where ends the previous stage of those who took the Path from Faro.

From here, the route stretches along pleasant trails between the successive hills until Ribeira do Vascão. We pass through the village of Revezes and continue along the valley to the old water mill called Cascalheira, for a total of about ten kilometers.

Once we have dipped our feet in the stream or crossed the pedestrian bridge next to the mill, we continue straight through the Vascão valley until we reach the site of Monte Branco, where the friendly resident couple always welcomes the visitors!

Alternatively, you can arrive there in other ways:

- Leaving Ameixial, where the previous stage, coming from Faro, ends, the route extends in easy trails to the valley of Ribeira do Vascão, passing through Revezes village and continuing to Cascalheira mill, for a total of about ten kilometers;

- By the municipal road 1029, which connects Ameixial to Revezes, proceeding on a trail from there, intersecting with the Caminho Algarvio that will follow for three kilometers until the entrance to the Alentejo;

- Coming from the north, by the road that leaves the village of Santa Cruz in the direction of Alcoutim, Martim Longo and Cachoupo, taking the right on a nearby crossroad and following the signs of Cerro das Águias and Monte Branco do Vascão, on a dirt road. Arriving at Monte, the road gives easy access to the trail's beginning at the Ribeira do Vascão.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Santa Cruz Parish Council
+351 963 713 025
- São Barnabé Parish Council
+351 286 463 134

SUPPORT

- CTT – Santa Cruz Post Office
- Boerderij Vakantie Portugal
+351 962 344 843
- Santa Cruz: Café Colmeia do Vicente

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Santa Cruz Parish Church
- Vascão Stream

HEALTH

- Dogueno Health Center (Santa Cruz)
+351 286 454 108

WARNINGS

In Santa Cruz village there is no commerce to supply the traveler, and the only local coffee shop (A Colmeia do Vicente, D. Paula, Phone No.. 965 836 403) should be contacted before the start of the day so that they can be prepared to serve meals to those who will spend the night there. Prior contact is also essential with the parish council, Junta de Freguesia (Phone No. 286 453 119, from 8.30am to 4.30pm, or President of the parish council, Mr. Eduardo Gonçalves, Phone No. 963713025), so that you can arrange accommodation and any other support you may need. All the usual resources for supply and continuation of the trip can only be found at the end of the next stage, in Almodôvar.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 GNR - Almodôvar Territorial Station:
 +351 286 660 051

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt



CODE OF CONDUCT

Do not leave the marked and signaled route. Do not approach cliffs. Pay attention to the markings. Do not dispose of organic or inorganic waste during the trail, take a bag for this purpose. If you see garbage, collect it, help us to keep the Paths clean. Beware of livestock, don't bother the animals. Leave Nature intact. Do not collect plants, animals or rocks. Avoid making noise. Respect private property, close gates and barriers. Don't light fires and be careful with cigarettes. Do not vandalize the Paths signage.



In urban areas of the route, the signage marks are for pedestrians only. Other means, such as cycling, should respect traffic signs.



SANTA CRUZ

● Monte da Romba

EM506

● Dogueno

N2

TR

MONTE BRANCO VASCÃO

MONTE NOVO

● CORVOS

Rio Vascão

EM

● Refeições

AMEIXIAL

EM

● Azinhal dos Mouros

EM503

● Corte João Marques

EM504

EM

Ribeira da Corte

N

0 1 2 km

Santa Cruz ► Almodôvar

2

When we leave Santa Cruz the landscape changes. In front of us lies now, far out of sight, the soft relief of the undulating plain of Baixo (Low) Alentejo. The views widen and a quiet stage is foreseen, conducive to contemplation.

Extensive crops are found in non-fenced properties, as rarely seen in the Alentejo, framed by magnificent secular holm-oaks, cork-oaks and tame pine plantations. Throughout the four seasons the landscape takes on different shades, during spring it explodes in a profusion of colors, of flowering herbs and shrubs, and in the autumn it is no less impressive when, just after the first rains, a vivid green cover appears on the thick red earth. It is also the domain of grazing, where the so-called "Campos de Ourique" begin, which welcomed the ancestral annual transhumance, traveling hundreds of kilometers from Serra da Estrela. We often cross with flocks of curious sheep, whose calves approach without fear, to the traveler's delight.

the middle of the last century, Almodôvar was an important commercial warehouse and a center of artisans, dedicated to an immense variety of arts and crafts, where the cobblers dominated (see the huge sculpture in homage to the cobbler by Aureliano Aguiar, in the Rotunda do Sapateiro roundabout).

In the origin (1239), the forest of Almodôvar was the western limit of the possessions that the

Order of Santiago had in Mértola. The village only had regional centrality from 1285, date of the first charter of Almodôvar, donated by King D. Dinis. From 1297, the town was integrated into the Order of Santiago, which established a commendation here until the end of the 18th century. Land of viola campaniça (guitar) and cante alentejano (local singing style), Almodôvar is still a center of traditional footwear manufacture.



Cobres bridge and well

It is possible that the bridge has a Roman origin since Almodôvar was implanted in the proximity of an old imperial road that linked Alcácer do Sal to the Algarve. The current configuration of the bridge is medieval, as indicated by its structure. The first reference is from 1375 and, until the road uprising in the 19th century, it was the departing point from Almodôvar to the south and arrival point for those coming from the Algarve or from Mértola. The access to the center would follow the current Rua da Ponte Romana.

Almodôvar

This second stage ends in Almodôvar, village, and county, which offers numerous cultural, gastronomic and tourist attractions in general. Due to its strategic location between the Alentejo and the Algarve, until



Convent of Nossa Senhora da Assunção

The Franciscan monastery of Our Lady of Assumption had its origin in a small hermitage, which already existed in 1630. Half a century later, by the patronage of Fernando Guerreiro, a man of local prestige who was buried in a flat grave in front of the main altar of the convent church, the constitution of a convent was promoted, the only in the history of Almodôvar.



Main Church of Santo Ildefonso

The Main Church of St Ildephonse already existed in 1320, but the present majestic church-hall look dates from a complete reconstruction, which took place at the end of the 16th century under the design of the royal architect Nicolau de Frias. The commission was from the Order of Santiago, whose local commander in 1592, D. Diogo de Castro, ordered the work to be completed.

Main Church of Rosário

An outwardly modest building, its interior is a real catalog of devotions, considering the quantity and quality of the mural painting which, at the beginning of the 18th century, was applied to the side walls. Among the many saints represented, a painting depicting Santiago as Matamouros (Moor-Slayer) stands out: on horseback, with his drawn sword and shield with the Order of Santiago cross, fighting the infidels without mercy.



and also...

Medieval Market of Almodôvar – April

FACAL (Arts and Culture Fair) – July

Mushroom and Arbutus Fair – November

Southwest Writing Museum

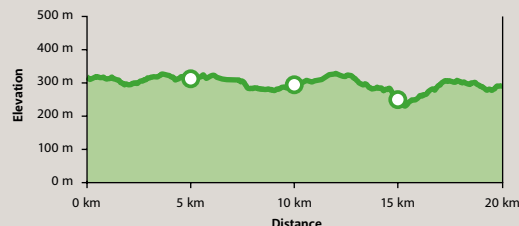
The Southwest Writing Museum reflects the starting point for the understanding of history and shows the ancestral way used to communicate by the inhabitants of this territory for more than 2500 years. The exhibition presents, in a didactic, functional and aesthetic way, the evolution of spelling and written

knowledge, where it is possible to contemplate stone steles engraved with the oldest writing of the Iberian Peninsula.





Distance 20 km
Maximum altitude 331 m
Cumulative increase 372 m
Cumulative descent -399 m
Duration 5h00m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Few farms and hills of stone and mud, some in complete ruin, attest to the dispersed human occupation, especially for agricultural support of the owners and workers living in Almodôvar and other surrounding villages. In the "Dadorde" area we discovered that it was after all the place of the Quinta "Da Ordem" (of Santiago), now partially recovered for leisure accommodation. Recently, a metallic wayside cross was found there, where probably many other historical remains have yet to be discovered, and was rebuilt.

About halfway through the stage, we pass at Monte João Dias, where the few residents welcome us with sympathy and share with us the little they have at their disposal. From now on we follow an old road, now reopened until we cross the river and travel another 3 km to the village of Guedelhas for a coffee or something more substantial.

After Guedelhas, the Path intersects with the only stretch of road (2 km) of the stage and then turns right onto the new rural path towards Monte de Pero Guerreiro (the

toponymy revealing the historical roots). Then, from hill to hill, including a "molha-pês" (foot-wet), if there is enough water, in the crossing of the Oeiras stream (Moinho do José Caetano), we get close to Almodôvar. Turning a final hill, Almodôvar appears as a shining white oasis, set in the valley of the Ribeira de Cobres, and as we go down we accelerate our enthusiastic pace with the prospect of a tastier meal or a more comfortable sleep than those we've had in the last two days.

The Path leads to road 267 and is signposted to follow on the left, entering the village by the new bridge over the Ribeira de Cobres and following until the Igreja Matriz de Almodôvar (Main Church). However, if you want to have the experience of crossing the old bridge (medieval but built on the site of another one of Roman origin), you should turn right and left again at about 100 meters. Once you have crossed the bridge, you will have no difficulty in finding your way to the Igreja Matriz.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Almodôvar City Council
+351 286 660 600
- Almodôvar e Graça de Padrões
Parish Councils
+351 286 662 563

SUPPORT

- CTT – Almodôvar Post Office
- Tourism Office and Internet Space

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Convent
- Santo Ildefonso Main Church
- Nossa Senhora do Rosário Parish Church
- Santa Cruz Parish Church
- Southwestern Writing Museum
- Severo Portela Municipal Museum
- Manuel Vicente Guerreiro Ethnographic and Archeological Museum

WARNINGS

Between Santa Cruz and Almodôvar, you won't find any supply or support point, with the exception of the hospitality of the Monte João Dias residents and Café Sequeira in Guedelhas (Tel. 286 662 430). So you should go prepared with whatever you think is convenient for the stage extension. The coffee shop can prepare meals if previously indicated.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Almodôvar Fire Department: +351 286 660 140
 GNR – Almodôvar Territorial Station:
 +351 286 660 051

HEALTH

- Almodôvar Health Center
+351 286 660 200
- Pharmacy

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt



CODE OF CONDUCT

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Senhora da Graça de Padrões

São Pedro de Solis

Monte da Romba

SANTA CRUZ

Dogueno

Revezes

ALMODÔVAR

Ribeira de Córtes

Rio Vascão

0 2 4 km



Almodôvar ► Castro Verde

3



On the way to Castro Verde

Castro Verde was originally a small village in the immense fields of Ourique, as this part of Baixo (Low) Alentejo was known in the 13th century. The strategic location on the regional road network led to its elevation as a municipality and as a commendation of the Order of Santiago.

It was also the destination of the transhumance from distant places, such as Serra da Estrela, and considerable herds living in the vast plain extending to the south of the village of Entradas would arrive seasonally to the region. In the 16th century, the Order of Santiago was the largest owner of the urban center, since the large barn where King D. Sebastião was lodged in 1573 was attached to the houses of this Order. Land of miners and agricultural and breeding workers, Castro Verde is the hometown of the main group of cante alentejano, the Ganhões, formed in 1972 by former workers in the wheat plains.



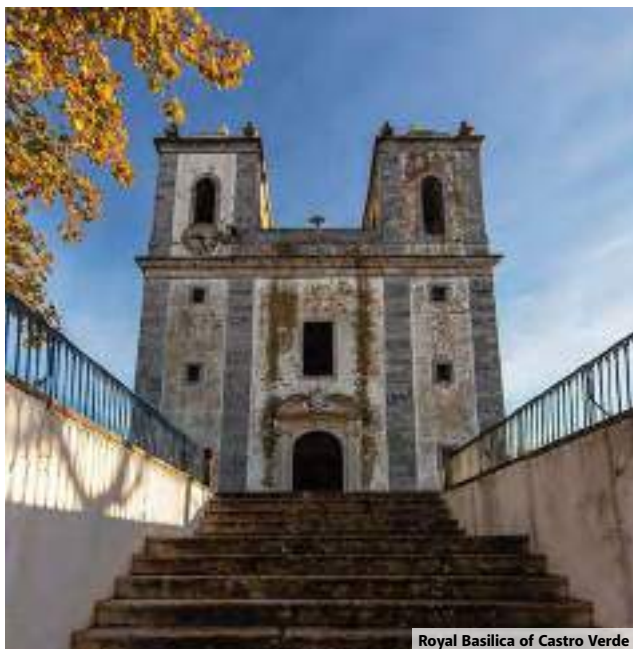
Chapel of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios

Initially consecrated to the Wounds of the Redeemer, the church became known as Our Lady of Remedies, due to miracles operated by an image of the Virgin offered in 1630 by a faithful devotee. The primitive construction of the building is legendarily related to a vow made by D. Afonso Henriques after the victory in the battle of Ourique, reason why the paintings that decorate the ship, authored by the painter Diogo Magina, portray the successes of the first Portuguese king in that battle.

We can feel the presence of the Order of Santiago in the royal basilica of Castro Verde. built in 1718, it replaced the local parish church and is a magnificent baroque monument from the time of D. João V. One of the most important azulejo (typical Portuguese tiles) collections of Alentejo is conserved in its interior, signed by the master P.M.P. from Lisbon and dated



c. 1730. The nave panels were dedicated to the events of the Battle of Ourique (July 25, 1139). And, although the exact location of this battle is unknown, a strongly rooted tradition situates it in São Pedro das Cabeças, southeast of Castro Verde. For D. Afonso Henriques' victory over an army of five Moorish chiefs, the main military success that contributed to the independence of the kingdom of Portugal, the apparition of Christ to the future Portuguese monarch on the eve of the battle was essential. The episode is depicted in the ceiling of the basilica nave.



Royal Basilica of Castro Verde

The six lateral compositions of the chancel portray episodes of Santiago's life, finally concluding the relationship between the success of Ourique and the day the battle took place: July 25, 1139, St James' day. Found in the village of Casével, this medieval head-reliquary was part of the treasure of the Byzantine princess Vataça de Lascaris, the handmaiden of Queen Isabel de Aragão and lady of Santiago do Cacém, where she also promoted important works. Probably of Aragonese manufacture, it was used for the cult until the end of the 17th century, when the reliquary was still transported to the fields of Casével, to bless the cattle concentrated in the immense pastures.



Obelisk allusive to the Battle of Ourique

Raised in 1792 by the then royal ombudsman of the region of Castro Verde, the obelisk shows the effigy of the queen D. Maria I and an inscription referring to the apparition of Christ to D. Afonso Henriques on Battle of Ourique. The monument was destroyed by a cyclone in 1804 and was only reinstated in the space facing the City Council of Castro Verde in 1960.

and also...

Castro Festivities – June

Castro Fair

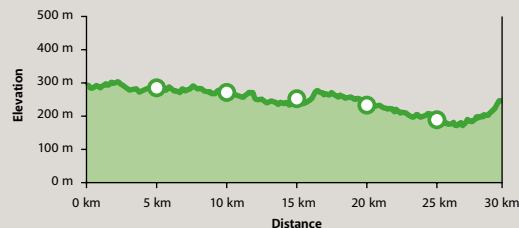
It was instituted by Filipe II in 1620 and soon became one of the most important events of the social,

economic and cultural life of the county of Castro Verde. The tradition here is still the same and the fair takes place every October, according to the popular saying "As sure as the Feira de Castro."

Almodôvar ➤ Castro Verde



Distance 30 km
Maximum altitude 303 m
Cumulative increase 476 m
Cumulative descent -519 m
Duration 8h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



From Praceta do Poço de Beja square, we leave Almodôvar through the Antiga Estrada de Ourique (Old Ourique Road). The asphalt doesn't last long, giving way to the macadam at the intersection to access Monte Fernão Dias, which is worth a visit if there is time. We follow the Path for another 3 km and stay parallel to Corte Zorrinha, a small cluster of houses. But the stage is long, 30 km, a respectable distance that doesn't augur well for an easy day. So, we'll have to focus on reaching Castro Verde or, alternatively, decide since now to calmly enjoy the experiences offered by the Path and spend the night in the village of Rosário, at half distance. Mountains in ruins and others in activity arise in an extensive, rural landscape without any shade points, where cereal fields coexist with olive groves, scattered holm oak and cork oak forests, pastures, and even vineyards. The village of A-dos-Neves appears in the perfect time, either for a light rest or even to cool off on hotter days.

After 3.5 km, we arrive in Rosário, already in the municipality of Castro Verde. We follow Rua do Lavadouro, cross the N2 national road

and, through the cemetery street, we head to Castro Verde on a track road. We flank the old manganese and iron mines of Ferragudo but, with the construction of a private house on the site, this important mining point goes unnoticed to those who aren't aware of its existence.

We walk down the hill towards the railway line, which we pass through in an uneven tunnel. Always accompanied by sheep flocks, we arrive at Monte da Filipeja, where we should know about the possibility of meeting some shepherd dogs at large. We turn to the right, pass the lock gate and we keep on opening and closing wire gates that are essential to condition the herds' movements and ensure the pastures rotation.

We cross the stream over a passageway in solid stone slabs and follow the olive grove to the rural road that will take us to one of the Castro Verde entrances. In between, on the left, we note an old property, the "Horta da Ordem" (Order's Garden), which proudly displays the initial "S" of Santiago at the

front gate. Through Rua do Cemitério, we turn to the right on the roundabout and walk up Rua dos Ciprestes. Then we follow Rua Dr. António Francisco Colaço, continuing to the left through

Rua D. Afonso Henriques. The stage ends in front of the Igreja das Chagas do Salvador (Church of the Savior's Wounds), next to which the Tourism Office is located.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Castro Verde City Council
+351 286 320 700
- Rosário Parish Council

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Táxis
- Supermarket

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Misericórdia Church
- Casével Main Church
- Chagas do Salvador/Nossa Senhora dos Remédios Church
- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Royal Basilica
- São Pedro das Cabeças Hermitage

- São Miguel Casével Hermitage
- São Sebastião Hermitage
- Obelisk in memory of the Battle of Ourique

HEALTH

- Castro Verde Health Center
+351 286 320 140
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Castro Verde Fire Department:
 +351 286 320 020
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 286 320 080

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt

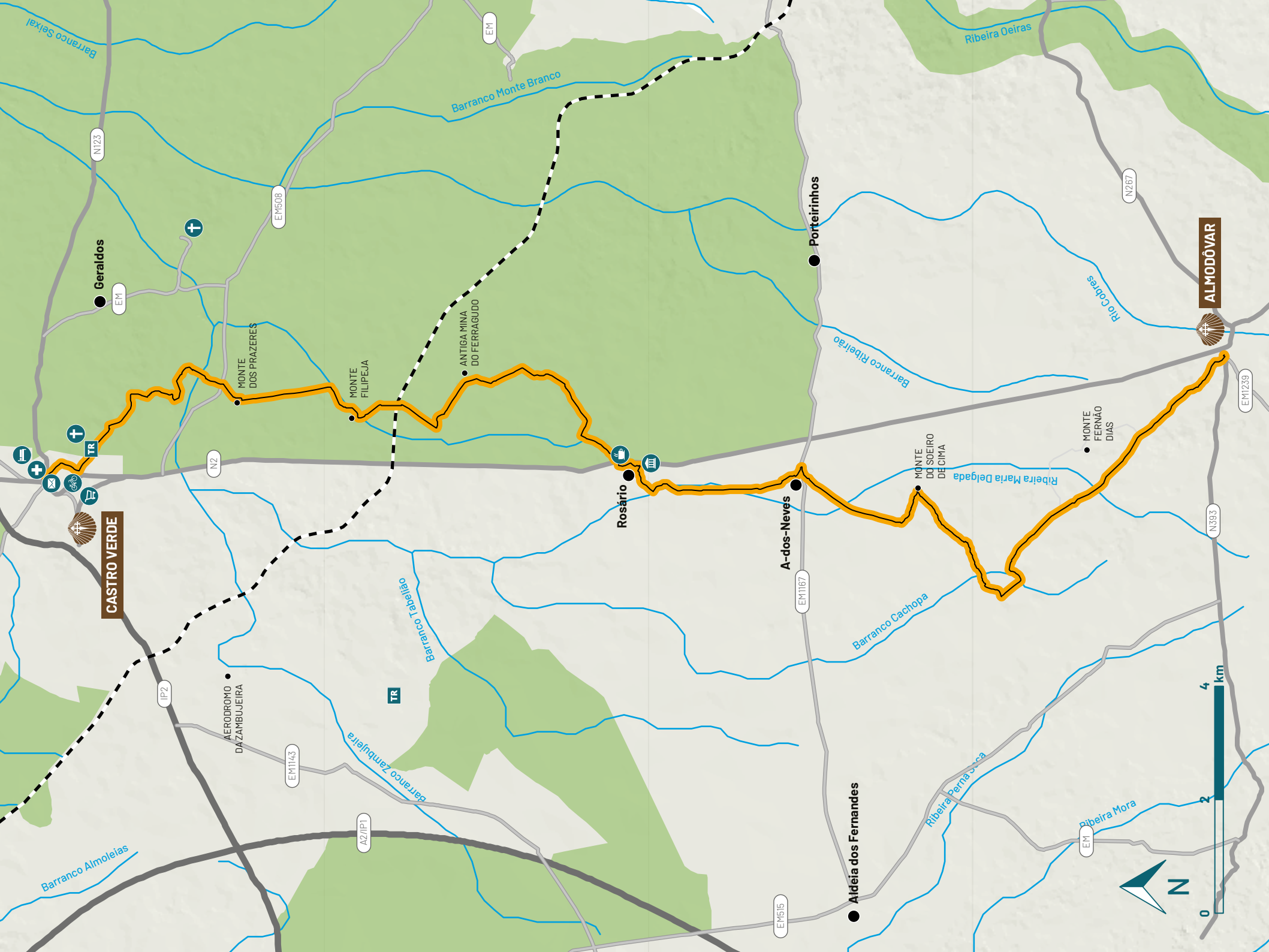


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Castro Verde ► Messejana

4

In one of the poems from his work *Ode to Alentejo*, Miguel Torga wrote "*Alentejo, Alentejo, Vastness of Portugal, Future, Continental! Plowed land that I see, being sea but without salt*". This "sea" may well be the immense territory named "Campo Branco", called "de Ourique" in the 16th and 17th centuries when it was the destination for the winter pastures of the big flocks coming from Serra da Estrela, and therefore the phenomenon of transhumance strongly marked the county. This region is the most important cereal-growing area of Portugal, resulting from the extensive cultivation of cereals, and the existence of

many species of birds with unfavorable conservation status depends on it. It is the particular case of the bustard, the heaviest bird of the European continent, whose observation, especially in the months of March and April, moves thousands of people every year to the Environmental Education Center of Vale Gonçalves, a farm acquired by the NGO Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (League for Nature's Protection).

Messejana is our destination. There we find the ruins of a castle, evoking the importance of this old medieval county, which was the seat of the Order of Santiago

commendation since, at least, the reign of D. Dinis. The locality has its origin in the Arabic word *masjanâ*, which means prison or imprisonment. A Christian Gothic castle, which was built around 1288, succeeded the fortified redoubt built by the Muslims. The village had been conquered by the troops of D. Sancho II in 1235. Located at the highest point of the village, of this former fortress only remains part of the tower used to defend the access to the enclosure. Implanted on the slopes of the castle, now in a slightly peripheral position in relation to the village, the current configuration of the Igreja de Nossa Senhora dos



Ancient Castle of Messejana





View of Messejana

Remédios dates back to an extensive renovation in the 18th century. Despite being discreet, it is a compact and vertical church, worthy of a seat of commendation from Santiago of the south of the country.

Contrary to the ruined medieval nucleus, the Praça 1.º de Julho

square concentrates the main buildings of the village. The pillory illustrates the importance of the locality in the 16th century when it received a new charter from D. Manuel I in 1512. The Igreja da Misericórdia was built in 1570, and inside it subsistsna Mannerist painting representing the Pentecost, the moment

when the apostles gained the ability to speak the various languages of the earth, essential knowledge for the sermons they subsequently undertook. The clock tower is annexed to the former City Council and marked, for centuries, the daily life of the local inhabitants with the sound of its bell.

and also...

Annual Fair – June

Nossa Senhora da Assunção Fair – August

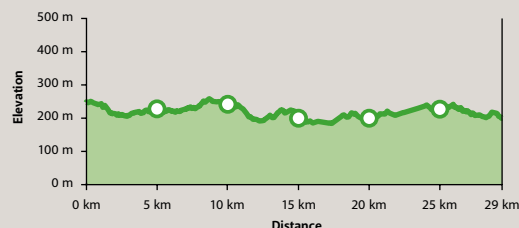
Ethnographic Museum of Messejana

Located in one of the oldest buildings of Messejana, in the historical center of the village, the Ethnographic Museum can be considered the lounge of this land. It has 12 rooms reproducing an old sale, a classroom and several dependencies of typical Alentejo houses, from the most modest to the most well-to-do. It also exhibits objects such as the pitchers of Francisco Bartolomeu, the last water-bearer of Messejana.





Distance 29 km
Maximum altitude 256 m
Cumulative increase 382 m
Cumulative descent -430 m
Duration 8h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



glued to the interior of the silver, an authentic human skull. At the time, the local people remembered the ancestral memories and had no doubt that it was the holy head of São Fabião (St Fabian), the Pope martyred in the 3rd century by the Empire of Rome, which for centuries remained in the church of Casével and was venerated for the powers attributed to it in protecting the cattle.

After lunch, we continue our journey towards the old Casével railway station, on a practically deserted rural road. From now on we have 10 km of rural roads until Messejana, almost always between property fences, without any relevant stories. At some point we'll find the national road 263 but, immediately, we make the shift to the left in the direction of Monte das Muralhas, passing all the gates interposed to us. Finally, we cross a viaduct over the motorway and see the village of Messejana. We arrive at the central square and are welcomed by the church of Misericórdia, one of 11 churches that the village used to have. The Praça de Touros (bullring) is on the right, behind the houses. The bullfighting was already traditional in 1573, when D. Sebastião

We pass the village of Almeirim and travel about 1 km by road before turning to a dirt track on the left, where the sign indicates the Herdade de S. Miguel. Before that, we also pass a green gate that gives access to the path leading to Fonte dos Milagres, whose waters, for public use, are credited with exceptional benefits. We surround the estate, passing by a rural dam and enter Casével, passing the roundabout that bears an original metallic sculpture in honor of *Cante Alentejano*, and turning right onto Rua de Castro Verde. We can't miss the opportunity to visit the main church, built on another older temple. Here, a strange silver relic was found, representing a head of human scale, but carrying inside,

was here, three bullfights being held in four days. On the top, the main church and the ruins of the castle, built in 1288, persist, but now only with vestiges of a tower wall. It's time to go to

the Junta de Freguesia (Parish Council), also in the central square, to find out what Messejana reserves for us.

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

 Messejana Parish Council
+351 284 655 148

 Aljustrel City Council
+351 284 600 070

- € Bank/Cash Dispenser
- ✉ CTT Messejana Post Office
- 🛒 Supermarket
- TR Quinta da Cerca +351 936 119 626
- TR Casa das Romãs +351 932 950 028

- Nossa Senhora da Assunção Hermitage
- Santa Maria Main Church
- Misericórdia Church
- Town's Pylory

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Messejana ► Fornalhas Velhas

5



Messejana

The village of Fornalhas Velhas, located in the fertile fields of Vale de Santiago, between the rivers Sado and Campilhas, was, as the name suggests, the property of the Order of Santiago. Besides, it belongs to the Vale de Santiago, a town that owes its name to the fact that this stretch of territory, initially linked to Santiago do Cacém, was also owned by the Order of Santiago.

Vale de Santiago is a Portuguese parish in the municipality of Odemira, with an area of 59.24 km² and about 551 inhabitants.

Being an old village, Vale de Santiago presents a beautiful route of narrow, whitewashed streets, keeping its traditional architecture intact.



Monte Novo das Fornalhas





The Igreja de Santa Catarina deserves a visit, as well as the fountain of Nossa Senhora da Luz. Another site of this commune worth mentioning is the hill of Columbais, where it is said that Christopher Columbus was born.

Monte da Comuna is also noteworthy, where a group of anarchists, led by António Gonçalves Correia, created the so-called "Comuna da Luz", which led to the uprising of the rural workers of Vale de Santiago in the crisis of 1918. "Comuna da Luz" is also

associated with the death of Sidónio Pais. The assassin of the then President-King was José Júlio da Costa, an agrarian from Garvão, who served as a mediator between the authorities and the rioters of Vale de Santiago.

St Catherine is the patron saint of the parish, honored at the religious festival of November 25. The annual fair of Santiago de Chile is held on the last Saturday of August and on the first Sunday of September in Fornalhas Velhas.

Just like the village, the old castle illustrates the former uses of Ribeira de Campilhas valley, promoted by the Order of Santiago. In this place, a rudimentary military structure was erected, of which no traces remain. The toponym ensures the antiquity of the place, now transformed into an agricultural farm, and its relevance as a dominant point on that affluent of the Sado river.

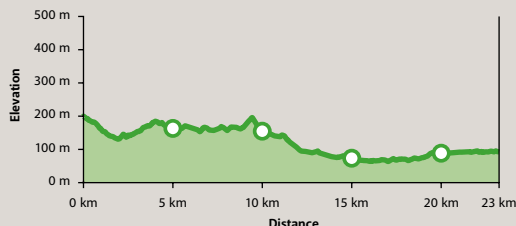


Messejana ► Fornalhas Velhas

5



Distance 23 km
Maximum altitude 198 m
Cumulative increase 290 m
Cumulative descent -397 m
Duration 5h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Before leaving for today's stage, we should check the availability of accommodation and food in Fornalhas Velhas, since this village where we plan to end the day is not yet prepared to receive many travelers simultaneously.

We leave Messejana through the back of Quinta da Cerca, entering immediately after a dirt track towards Aguentinha do Campo, a hill with agricultural activity, rural tourism services, and equestrian activities. Beside it is the Herdade de Buena Madre, where mineral waters, much appreciated in the region, used to emerge.

Wavy lands, with cistus, olive groves, and diverse cultures, but always with dominant cork oak forest. Here and there other hills, a dam, horses, cattle, and in 7.5 km we reach the village of Elvas. Time for a coffee and we continue up the hill towards Monte do Cerro, from where you can enjoy a beautiful view over the green valleys, created by the streams descending from the plateau. We will follow this descent and then pass over the

irrigation channel of Alto Sado, already in the municipality of Ourique.

Through the tunnel under the IC1 road, we advance towards Torre Vã, where we are surprised by the silhouette of an old building of great dimensions, surrounded by several others of farm and housing use. This estate was a place of great importance in Roman times. Traces of an old villa and a dam have been found here.

Shortly after Torre Vã, we are on the Sado riverbed, which we cross to the other bank, closer to the railway line, which we will also cross using the viaduct. Soon after, we enter, on the right, on a side road and walk about 6 km through cultivated fields and pastures until we reach the village of Fornalhas Velhas, in the municipality of Odemira.

We enter through Rua 25 de Abril directly to the crossroad where we find Café O Jorge, and ask for the installations of the Centro Sócio-cultural or for Monte do Marmeleirinho, the only places with accommodation prepared for travelers.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES



Vale Santiago Parish Council
 +351 283 691 327

SUPPORT



Herdade do Marmeleiro
 +351 934 533 485

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117

WARNINGS

For questions related to accommodation, please contact the parish council.

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

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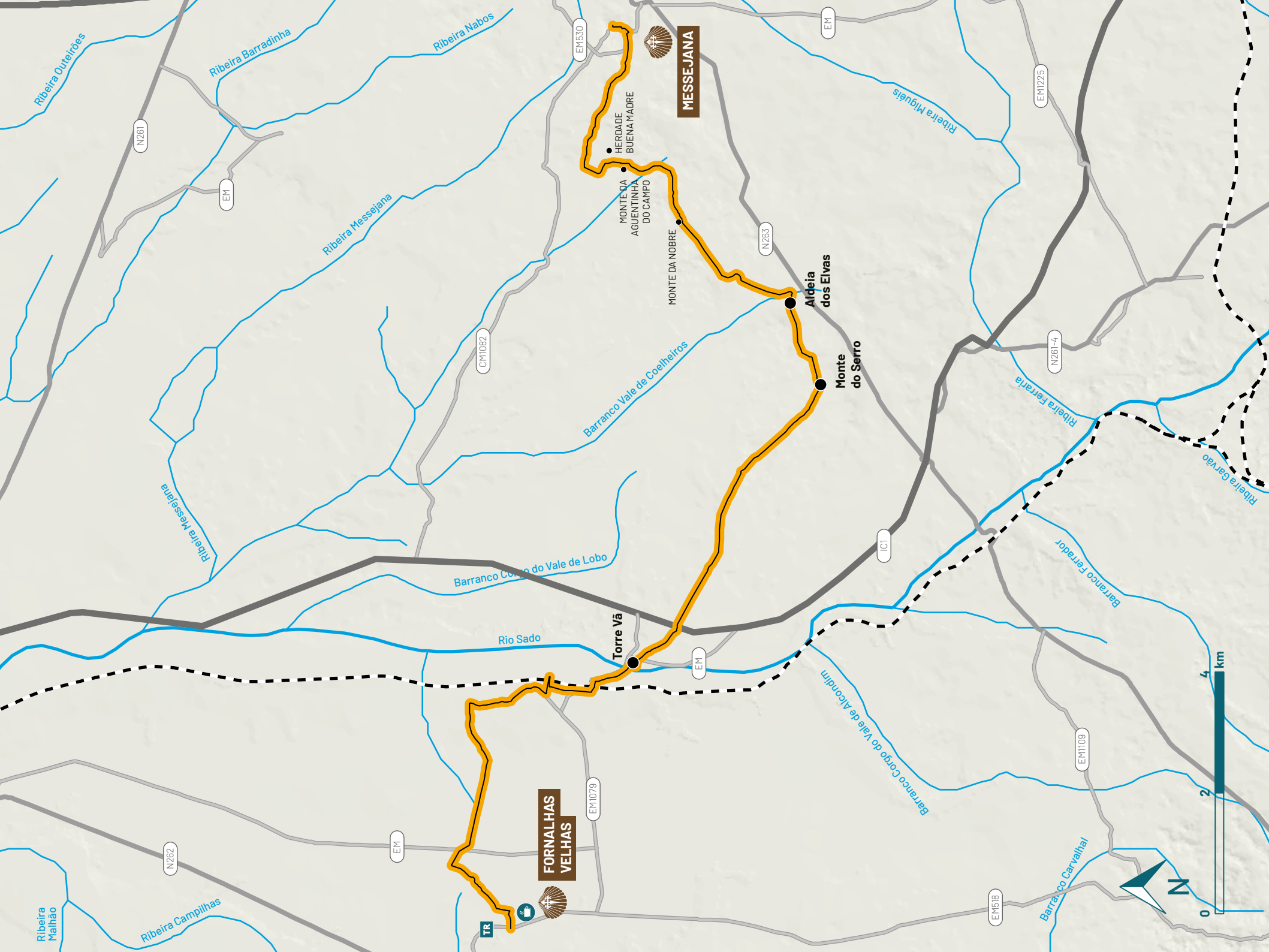


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Fornalhas Velhas ► São Domingos

6

We evoke the history of Vale de Santiago, which tells us that during the crisis of 1918, the rural workers of the region united in rebellion and began the first anarchist commune there. They became vegetarians and naturists, devoted to agriculture and shoemaking. However, it didn't last long, as they were subjected to police persecution and repression, and accused of encouraging the rural strikes that occurred after that.

Much older is the parish church of São Domingos, built in the late Middle Age, when the village was a chaplaincy of the Order of Santiago, but preserving still a holy water sink from the Manueline era. A simple temple, typical of rural and peripheral territory, its construction was determined by functional values, enriched in the 17th and 18th centuries with altars and devotional images, and later, a bell tower in the 20th century.

As it suggests, São Domingos got its name from a saint. An old legend tells that some local inhabitants used to worship an image of St Dominic, in an undetermined place on the south side of São Domingos stream. As they wanted to build a chapel on the opposite side of the margin, they would bring the image to the desired place, but the next morning the image insisted on miraculously appearing in the original place. That's why both



Arriving to São Domingos



the church and the village have the present implantation.

In São Domingos there is also the old grinding mill of José Mateus Vilhena, built in 1925,

which ceased activity in 1982. After a period of decadence, the monumental ensemble was used for local accommodation. Part of the project was converted into the Museu da Farinha

(Flour Museum), which opened its doors in 2014 and restores much of the industrial material previously used in the factory.



Fonte Cerne Dam (Serne)

With an area of 105 hectares, the dam of Fonte Cerne was designed in 1973 and built in 1977, to exploit the flow of the Vale Diogo stream. The embankment wall has a height of 18 meters. It is a secondary dam, with a local irrigation system, although today it is more suited for leisure zone.

and also...

Farinha Museum

Opened in 2014, the Flour Museum presents an element of the rural and industrial heritage that is striking for the Alentejo region. It is located in the old Grinding Factory, which worked until 1982 and where

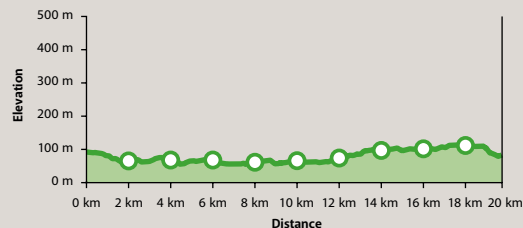
you can see part of its equipment, most of it built in wood. From the harvest to the bread, this museum depicts the cycle of this food, which is part of the base of the Portuguese diet.

Fornalhas Velhas ► São Domingos

6



Distance 20 km
Maximum altitude 110 m
Cumulative increase 214 m
Cumulative descent -223 m
Duration 5h00m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



We proceed until the end of Rua 25 de Abril and continue straight ahead, on a dirt track flanked by eucalyptus trees that ensure the shade. Following the signs, we enter through a metallic gate in the beautiful property of Monte Novo das Fornalhas and go down the hill overlooking a dam on the right side. We pass over a stream and do not give in to the immense mud that accumulates next to the ETAR (Wastewater Treatment Plant). Less than 1 km later, between flocks of sheep and cultivated plots, we arrive at a road (N262).

We turn left and then right, pass the uncharacteristic place of Castelo Velho, location of ancient fortified prehistoric settlements, where later was installed a small rural castle of the Islamic Period, which the Order of Santiago took advantage of. Towers, hills and castles were very common in the territory of Odemira, for defense during the endless wars and alternate conquests of bastions, from the 8th to the 12th century, in this border area between the territories of Portuguese Muslims and Christians. Once again we curve to the right, to another asphalted branch, which passes the macadam

road a little further on, as soon as we enter the municipality of Santiago do Cacém.

The large road allows us to have good panoramic views of the entire surrounding region, particularly when we approach the Monte dos Alhos dam, where we watch the virtuous aerial dances of thousands of birds from different species. On the north side of the dam, there is also a vast plantation of stone pines on a bright green carpet, which adds a beautiful frame to this unexpected corner. We pass over the dam wall and find a curve on an asphalt road, surrounding the installations of Monte dos Alhos, on which we take the route on the left. After 2.5 kms, we turn left again to follow through Foros da Casa Nova. We take a break at the coffee shop A Paragem, the only one in the village that also prepares lunches, which comes in handy!...

With the stomach ready for the last effort until São Domingos, we enter through lands where the agricultural activity has lost space, mainly giving place to the eucalyptus, cork oak, and holm oak forests, more or less

organized, along the 6 km that separate us from the stage end. We cross the village towards the Junta de Freguesia (Parish Council), located in the same square, Largo 25 de Abril, as the old and simple church that exists there, and where we consider today's route to be finished. Here, in São Domingos, we visit the Museu da Farinha (Flour

Museum), located at Rua 1º de Maio. Situated in an old milling factory, it exposes most of the industrial material used in the factory, which closed in 1982. In the main church, built when the town belonged to the Order of Santiago, we discovered a Manueline baptismal font.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

 São Domingos and Vale de Água Parish Councils +351 269 903 158

SUPPORT

-  Bank/Cash Dispenser
-  São Domingos Post Office
– Papelaria Joaninha (stationery shop)
-  Supermarket
-  Public Shower
-  Monte da Garrocheirinha
+351 269 909 213/+351 937 755 990
-  Monte Xisto Hotel Rural ****
+351 269 900 040/+351 939 221 386

POINTS OF INTEREST

-  Campilhas Dam
-  São Domingos Church
-  Flour Museum

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117

WARNINGS

For questions related to accommodation, please contact the parish council.

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São Domingos ► Santiago do Cacém

7

Donated to the Order of Santiago by D. Sancho I, in 1186, Santiago do Cacém was the first advanced point of the Spatharii in the south of the country, at the time when the castle of Palmela was the headquarters of the Order. The village, which had been conquered in 1158, fell into Muslim hands at the end of the 12th century. It only became Portuguese definitive possession in 1217, after the conquest of Alcácer do Sal. In 1310, the village was donated to a handmaiden of the queen D. Isabel of Aragon, Vataça Lascaris, a Byzantine princess exiled in Aragon. She accompanied the queen to Portugal when she married D. Dinis. Already widowed, D. Vataça lived in Santiago do

Cacém between 1317 and 1332.

The ruins of her former palace are still visible inside the castle, but it is in the main church that remains the most important vestiges of her action as a donor of a village that had strong devotional connections to the apostle Santiago. In the lower zone of the village, there was a hospital of the Espírito Santo that served travelers and pilgrims who made a stop in the village.

The main church of Santiago do Cacém was quite modified by an intervention carried out between 1796 and 1830, following the damage caused by the earthquake of 1755. Despite that, it conserves

a considerable part of the medieval work commissioned by D. Vataça de Lascaris, around 1315. A monumental temple, with three naves and an old staggered chevet, the main entrance was initially turned inwards the castle, functioning as a private chapel of the village grantees, who had their palace in the fortress. It was only at the beginning of the 19th century that the main façade of the old chapel have been implanted. This reinforced the status of the temple as the village's parish church, more easily connected to the population center that was developing on the slopes of the castle. Among the many subjects of interest of this construction is the representation, in a column,



Main Church of Santiago do Cacém



of a human figure who seems to represent the apostle with staff, while a bust drinking from a gourd, symbol of the Jacobean pilgrims, remains apart.

In this church, we can also find the Panel of Santiago Matamouros. Greatest work of the medieval art and one of the oldest representations of St James the Moor-slayer in Portuguese art, this grandiose altarpiece must have been commissioned around 1330 by D. Vataça de Lascaris, for the main chapel of the parish church of Santiago do Cacém. The apostle, with the standard of the Order of Santiago, rides triumphantly over a host of Muslims. Some are crushed, others try to flee, others still draft a defensive attempt, unbelieving at the supremacy of such a valiant Christian warrior. There is also a medieval relic of Santo Lenho, brought by D. Vataça of Lascaris from her Byzantine domains. There are reports that other relics in possession of that princess would have been deposited under the pillars as the church was being built.

Before 1755, the church had already been greatly benefited.

By 1530, under the patronage of Alonso Peres Pantoja, at the time alcalde of Santiago do Cacém, the chapel had been covered with a stone vault, whose keystones were decorated with scallops, crosses of the Order of Santiago

and cross-shaped staves. Four of these keystones were preserved in the post-earthquake campaign of 1755 and are now applied to the churchyard walls and the staircase giving access to the temple.



Roman ruins of Miróbriga

Interpreted by some as a shrine, identified by others as an urban center, it is known that Miróbriga was inhabited since at least the Iron Age until the 4th century AD. C., increasing more during the Roman period. Located in an area of enhanced visibility, it allowed the control of a vast region and its wealth, namely agricultural and mineral resources. About 1 km away from the archaeological site are the ruins of the racecourse, which was used for car races pulled by two or four horses. Currently, the site has a Reception and Interpretation Center, where there is a permanent exhibition about this place, classified as Property of Public Interest since 1940.

and also...

Monte Fair – August/September

Santiago, Agribusiness and Horse Fair – May

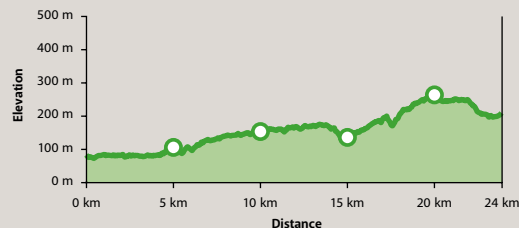
Santiago Cake and Santiaguinhos

In its genesis, the Cake of Santiago is a convent dessert of Galicia (Spain) which presumably was disseminated over time by the Ways that, since the Middle Ages, linked the pilgrims to Santiago

de Compostela to venerate the Apostle St James. It maintains in its base the use of eggs and almond, however, it suffers (in this region) small changes, namely the use of pumpkin-Gila jam and, depending on the taste the person who does it, the use of cocoa/chocolate in its confection.



S. Domingos ► Santiago do Cacém

**Distance** 24 km**Maximum altitude** 261 m**Cumulative increase** 483 m**Cumulative descent** -363m**Duration** 6h45m**Difficulty (0-5)** 4

We are about to face one of the most demanding stages of the Path, not only for its total length (24 km) or for any special technical difficulty, but for the simple fact that it has to be walked in total isolation, without any support resource for almost 21 km, until we reach Aldeia dos Chãos. In spite of this, the Path remains always parallel and at a comfortable distance from the national road N261 (about 2 km), which allows an "escape" in case of any difficulty. In case of need, we can also approach some inhabited hills, such as Taboeira or the hamlets of Paiol de Santiago.

The exit from São Domingos is initially made by road, walking down to the intersection with the national road N261. We walk on it about 500 meters before deviating to the left, to the sand trail that will accompany, for 4 km, the irrigation channel winding, parallel to São Domingos stream bed. After deviating from the canal, through hills and valleys, almost always in the domain of the holm oak and cork oak forests, we continue through the middle of nature. We will finally see somebody when we pass by the hamlets

of Paiol de Santiago, after covering 17km of today's stage. This is the refuge of the wild boar, the common genet and even the majestic Iberian lynx, some say.

We head towards Aldeia de Chãos, a little over 3 km away, where we enter the main street and finally stop for some refreshing moments, but without cooling down, as Santiago do Cacém is already nearby. From Aldeia dos Chãos we leave by dirt road to the N261 and, already at the roundabout, we choose to go straight ahead, walking down to the village entrance. Here, we pass very close to the Roman village of Miróbriga ruins. We meet the national road N120 in the next roundabout and continue straight ahead through the main axis of the city until we find the City Council building, on the left. The stage ends in the municipal garden in front of it. In Santiago do Cacém, twinned with Santiago de Compostela, the Order and the "matamouros" apostle are omnipresent in the city's past. The tourism services will provide several references for your visit, so it is not necessary to mention them here. However, we cannot fail to highlight the impact of the

contemplation of the stone panel displayed in the main church, representing Saint-James the

Moor-Slayer holding the standard of the Order and riding over a host of Muslims.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- São Francisco da Serra Parish Council
+351 269 471 126
- Santiago do Cacém, Santa Cruz and São Bartolomeu da Serra Parish Councils
+351 269 818 740

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Quinta do Chafariz Tourism Office
+351 269 826 696
- Historic Center Tourism Office
+351 269 825 382

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Civil parish of Santiago do Cacém
- São Bartolomeu Church
- Santiago do Cacém Main Church (National Monument)

- Santiago do Cacém Castle
- Quintinha Municipal Mill
- Altura do Chapéu Fora
- Santiago do Cacém Castle
- Loreto Convent
- Miróbriga Roman Ruins
- Ruins of Convent Nossa Senhora do Loreto
- Santiago do Cacém Municipal Museum
- Natural Reserve of Lagoa de Santo André
- Sado river

HEALTH

- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Santiago do Cacém Fire Department:
+351 269 810 490
GNR – Santiago do Cacém Territorial Station:
+351 269 249 200

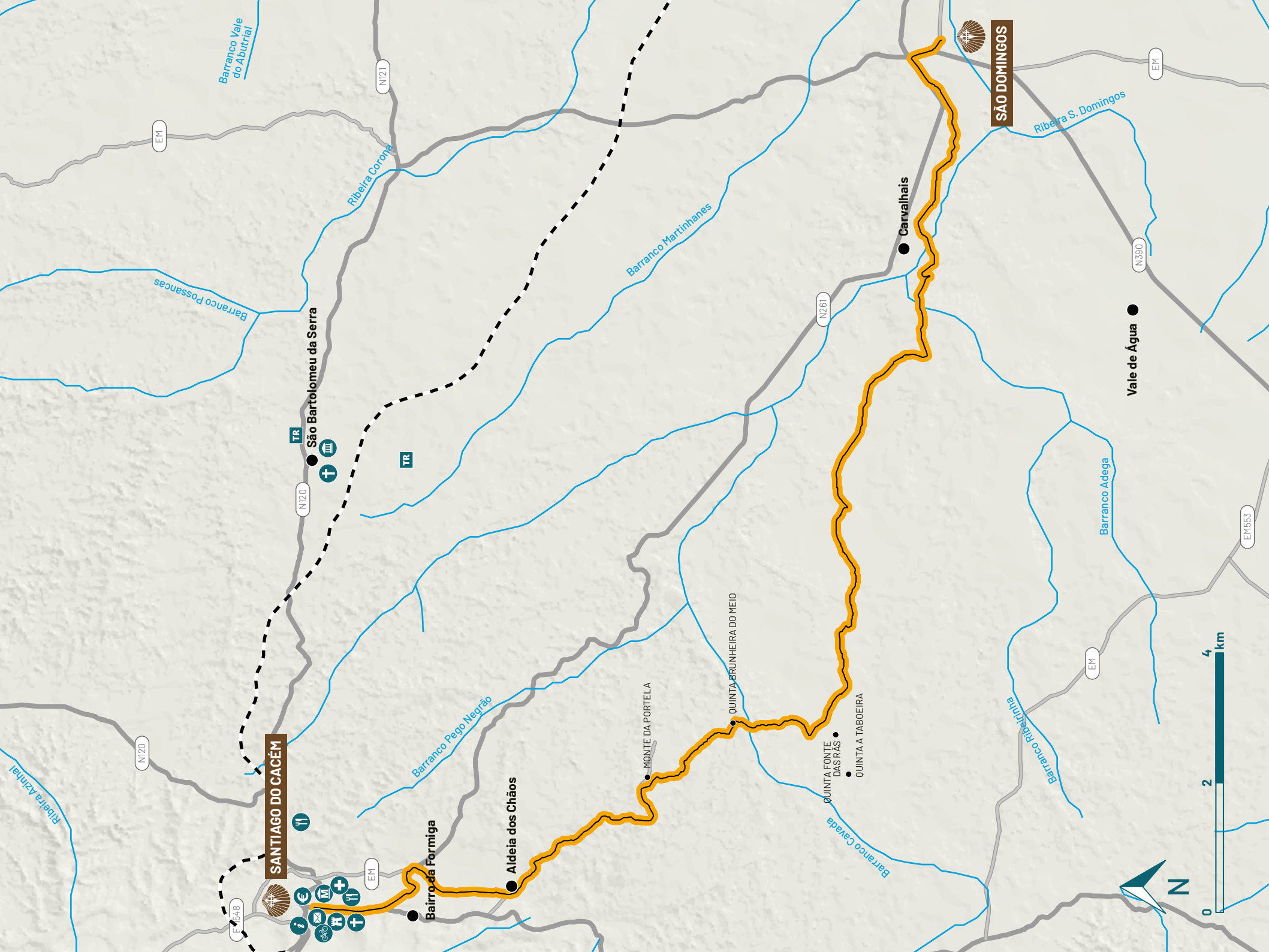
www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejo.ribatejo.pt

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

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Santiago do Cacém ► Roncão

8



Roncão

Currently belonging to the civil parish of S. Francisco da Serra, the settlement of the village of Roncão, and all the parish dates back to the medieval period and is due to the Order of Santiago de Espada (St James with Sword). The Igreja de São Bartolomeu da Serra church lies nearby, built in the 14th century and greatly restored at the end of the 18th century, as attested by an inscription engraved on a column pinnacle. At that time, the local parish priest ordered the drafting of a new chancel, a new altarpiece, and a bell tower. The origin of the temple must coincide with the reign



Church of São Bartolomeu da Serra

of D. Pedro I, a monarch who had St Bartholomew as patron saint. He was also connected to the construction of the castle

of Sines, in whose municipality there is also a church of São Bartolomeu. From the temple subsists the gothic image of



the apostle Bartholomew in limestone, probably from the region of Évora. Here, André Luís Beltrão, a friar of Santiago who died in 1649, was buried in a shallow grave. The churchyard wayside cross still preserves a scallop, symbol of the tutelage of this locality by the Order of Santiago.

The railway station of São Bartolomeu da Serra is also worth visiting. From the 19th century onwards, the construction of an extension between Sines and the

Cruz de João Mendes

Land of cork production, the locality is implanted on the road that linked Santiago do Cacém and Grândola, almost halfway. It is possible that its foundation is associated with a way cross, in a route heading to the highest point of Serra de Grândola, that didn't cross the locality near São Francisco da Serra.

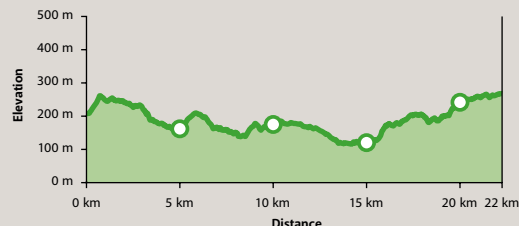
southern line (along the Sado river valley) was planned. The works started in 1919, but the first section was only completed in 1927 when the station of São Bartolomeu da Serra was

inaugurated. The railway arrived in Santiago do Cacém in 1934 and in Sines two years later. The station was disabled for passengers in 1990.





Distance 22 km
Maximum altitude 270 m
Cumulative increase 567 m
Cumulative descent -500 m
Duration 6h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



Further on, we travel a short stretch of 400 meters on the busy N120 national road, from which we turn right on the only dirt road, with the mountain ranges of Grândola and Cercal on the horizon. After 1.5 km, we find a geodesic marker and turn left for a steep descent to the tight valley of a stream, on whose banks we will follow another 1.5 km. It is an area of dense cork and holm oak forest, very fresh and of great natural beauty. We will end up deviating to the left, going up the hill and reaching a macadam road, which will take us through ridges and valleys of a pleasant rural atmosphere until the railway line.

Crossing it on the existing pedestrian walkway, we quickly reach the village of S. Bartolomeu da Serra through Avenida 25 de Abril. On the right, we find the beautiful train station of São Bartolomeu da Serra, from 1932, with yellow tones and decorated with azulejo tiles. In S. Bartolomeu we replenish our energy, with two grocery stores and two coffee shops to choose from, and we take the opportunity to visit the church of São Bartolomeu da Serra, where we can see an image of the apostle

Once we start the stage in front of the City Council building, we head to the city's exit, passing Largo 25 de Abril and going up Rua de Lisboa until the next roundabout. There, we find a yellow building crossed by a tunnel showing a pedestrian path. We find out it's the old Estrada Real (Royal Road) that gives access to the top of the Ermida de S. Sebastião (St Sebastian's Hermitage). We admire the view for a moment and descend again to the Pati to discover "Delícias para Ti" (Delicacies for You)!.... In this traditional atelier of cakes and biscuits, the artisan Cristina Gomes produces the famous cake "Bolo de Santiago".

Saint Bartholomew. It is worth remembering that, until the end of the stage in Roncão (almost 11 km), we will not find any other point of support on the Path, except for an emergency, at the Hotel Rural do Monte da Ameira.

Every year in mid-July, the village becomes enlivened with the organization the Festival Nacional de Folclore, with ethnographic parades and the participation of various Portuguese choirs and "ranchos" (folkloric groups), among them the local Rancho Folclórico Ninho de Uma Aldeia. We head north and quickly exit the N121 national road, turning left on the dirt track, next to a white house with an interesting "algarvian" style chimney. We pass a rural tourism center and cross with a wide road that we'll follow to the left, going down to the beautiful valley of the Ribeira

de Corona. Passing the stream by a recent bridge, we turn left and continue to follow it until we are forced to pass it by ford, after which, at the fork, we choose the path to the right.

In the middle of abandoned hills and narrow leafy valleys, we continue along the marked trail, totally immersed in nature, until we reach the village of Roncão, where we meet the N120 national road. We turn left, walking a few meters along the road, and we finish the stage in front of Solar dos Leitões. In this manor, as in the whole village, the “Leitão Assado” (roasted suckling pig) is a central dish. We spend the night in one of the existing local accommodations, in case you haven't preferred to stay in the field, enjoying the excellent conditions of Monte da Ameira.

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

 Santiago do Cacém, Santa Cruz and
São Bartolomeu da Serra Parish Councils
+351 269 818 740

 Solar dos Leitões

 Vivenda Palheiras +351 917 225 150

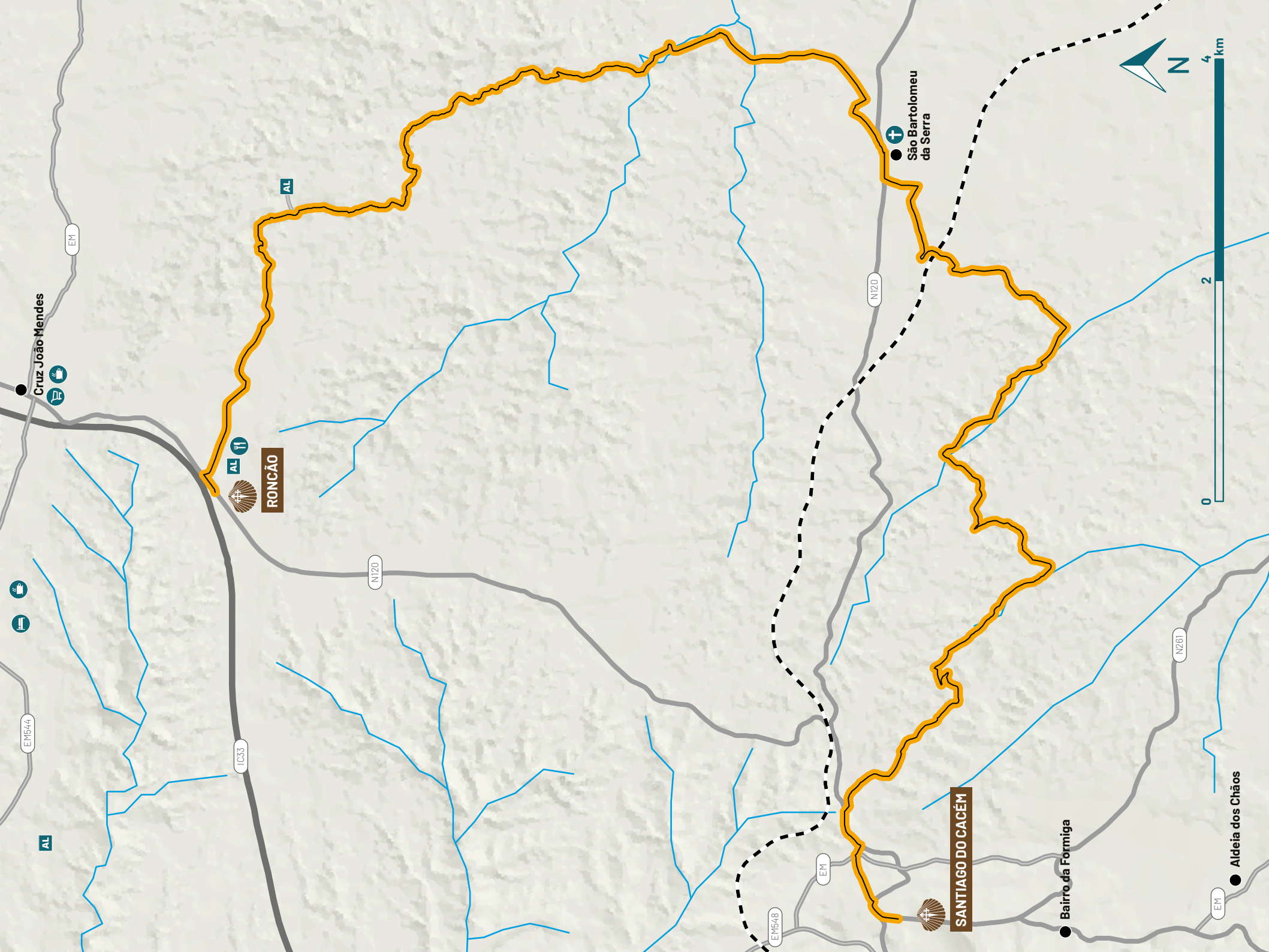
 Monte Nature +351 968 094 007

✚ São Bartolomeu Church

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Roncão ► Grândola

9

In this village, immortalized by the poet and singer Zeca Afonso in the song *Grândola Vila Morena*, which served as a symbolic hymn during the revolution of April 25, 1974, we can still visit the main church. But, if the weather is good, the best will be to enjoy and take a leap down to the Atlantic coast for a refreshing dip, a fantastic sunset and a nice meal of fresh fish.

Otherwise, you can still enjoy the gastronomic offer of the village, whose regional sweets include the Bolo das Rosas (Roses Cake) and the Alcomonias. Amazing delights! At the end of August, the village hosts the great Feira de Agosto, the largest fair in the coast of Alentejo, with handicrafts, small taverns and a festival dedicated to horse riding. On the side of the Tourism Office building, a sculpture evokes D. Jorge de Lencastre, Prince of the Kingdom and Master of the Order of Santiago, who assigned a charter to Grândola in the 16th century. He is using a coat of arms that, besides the spatharii cross of the Order, bears the boar which is at the origin of the legend of the village name's foundation, originally "Grandolha".

In the village, the main church is also worth visiting. It was built in the first decades of the 16th century, after a visit to the village by D. Jorge de Lencastre, at the

time master and visitor of the Order of Santiago. The interior was enriched in the baroque period with gilded wood altarpieces of remarkable quality, and the Order of Santiago's cross is displayed on the triumphal arch.

In 1513, the same D. Jorge de Lencastre, master of the Order of Santiago, visited the Igreja de Santa Margarida da Serra, which he found very damaged. The temple as it is known today is the result of a great reform

Fountain of Santa Margarida da Serra

Built in 1843, as indicated by the inscription on the pediment, this fountain was an essential point of support for travelers between Grândola and Santiago do Cacém, through Grândola mountain range.



Main Church of Grândola



accomplished in the 17th century, which privileged an austere and simple logic. Its porch certainly housed some travelers in transit through Grândola mountain range. Inside, the pulpit main face was decorated with the cross of the Order.

which ended the authoritarian regime of the Estado Novo. It also paved the way for the end of the colonial war and the establishment of a transition period for a democratic regime. In the square stands a memorial by the artist Bartolomeu Cid dos

Santos that includes a pavement with the shape of a carnation. In the memorial are also inscribed the verses of the song *Grândola Vila Morena*, by Zeca Afonso, which soon became one of the hymns of the Revolution and the following period.

Built in the 18th century, the building of the former Paços do Concelho de Grândola (Town Hall) is a typical local civilian equipment of that period, composed of two floors with a bell tower. Two prisons were operating on the lower floor; while the conference rooms of the county council and court were on the upper floor. Deactivated in the 20th century, it serves other purposes today but remains as a patrimonial piece of greater autarchic relevance to the village. Grândola has, of course, its Praça da Liberdade (Square of Liberty). Inaugurated on April 25, 2012, it illustrates the importance of the village in the Revolution of April 25, 1974, also called "Carnation Revolution",

Pego da Moura Dam

Recognized at the beginning of the 20th century as a Roman dam, it must have been built in two phases, between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD. C. The retaining wall is about 40 meters long, by almost 3 meters wide, which allowed to define a dam with a capacity of more than 2 km.



Sacred Art Museum

and also...

August Fair – August

Freedom Race – April

Festivities in Honor of Nossa Sr.^a da Penha – May

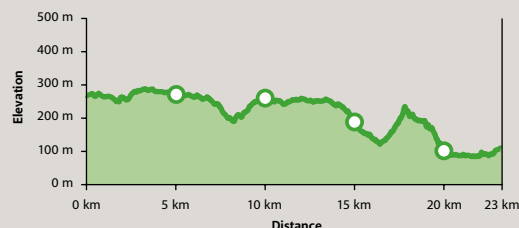
April 25th Memorial

Composed of an elliptical wall, a large blue carnation, whose stem goes to the base of the monument, as if it was breaking through the soil, is painted in the central circle. At the bottom of the circle is a rectangle with the names of many of the Captains of April who participated in the Revolution, while on the sidewalls you can see the music score and lyrics of *Grândola, Vila Morena* song.





Distance 23 km
Maximum altitude 287 m
Cumulative increase 471 m
Cumulative descent -635 m
Duration 6h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



We escape the national road N120, looking for a passage on the right under the motorway IC33, on a side street that will take us to the village of Cruz de João Mendes. We pass through the center of the village and look for the exit through the wide macadam road of Rua da Eira, which follows the unfinished work of a motorway. We leave this road 2.5 km later, turning left into an abandoned concrete tunnel, seeping into the heart of the Grândola mountain range.

We walk isolated in the middle of nature, between the vegetation that thickens and where the cork oak dominates, although the true genocide that is reaching this emblematic tree becomes evident. With redoubled attention to signage, so that we don't get lost, we end up on a hill that, further ahead, where it crosses the road, is identified by a sign as Corte Esporão. We continue to the left, on the road, until we find the N120 road, which "picks us up" again there. Several signs indicate the directions of the pedestrian routes and the GR11-E9, but it is the workshop of the locksmith Frank Peters, right in front, that attracts our attention.

With our backpack heavier with some iron items, we re-enter the N120 for a few moments until entering the village of Santa Maria da Serra. We look for lunch and, to "digest", we visit the village, starting with the House Museum Manuel Chainho. Then, the church of Santa Margarida da Serra renovated in the 20th century but already described as "badly damaged and in such a way that no mass should be said in it" in 1513. Next to the church, we climb the viewpoint staircase, which offers us a magnificent view of the village and the mountains.

Next to the coffee shop Triunfo, we follow the road that gives access to several farms and rural tourism at km 2. But it is another kilometer ahead, right in front of an inhabited hill, that we must pay attention to curve to the right, descending an inclined path, with poor condition, through dense vegetation, that accompanies the valley formed by the water line.

We are once again immersed in the bucolic scenery of Grândola mountain range and, after many curves and counter-curves, we

arrive at the Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora da Penha de França, at the top of an elevation. We reject the road leading there and we go down the trail on the left, which leads us to the valley of Grândola stream, which we follow until the N120

blocks our passage. We climb the pedestrian aerial passage to overcome the IC1 and enter in Grândola, first by Rua das Pontes and then by Rua Vasco da Gama, until the square where the Tourism Office is located.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

City Council
+351 269 750 429

SUPPORT

CTT Post Office
 Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Tourism Office +351 269 750 429

POINTS OF INTEREST

Nossa Senhora da Penha Hermitage
 Main Church
 São Sebastião Church (Sacred Art Museum)
 Museum Nucleus of São Pedro Church and Collection
 Sacred Art Museum
 D. Jorge Square

Frayões Metello House
 Monument to Liberty
 Pego da Moura Dam
 Eco-park Montinho da Ribeira

HEALTH

Grândola Health Center
+351 269 450 200
 Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Grândola Fire department:
+351 269 498 450
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 269 242 600

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt

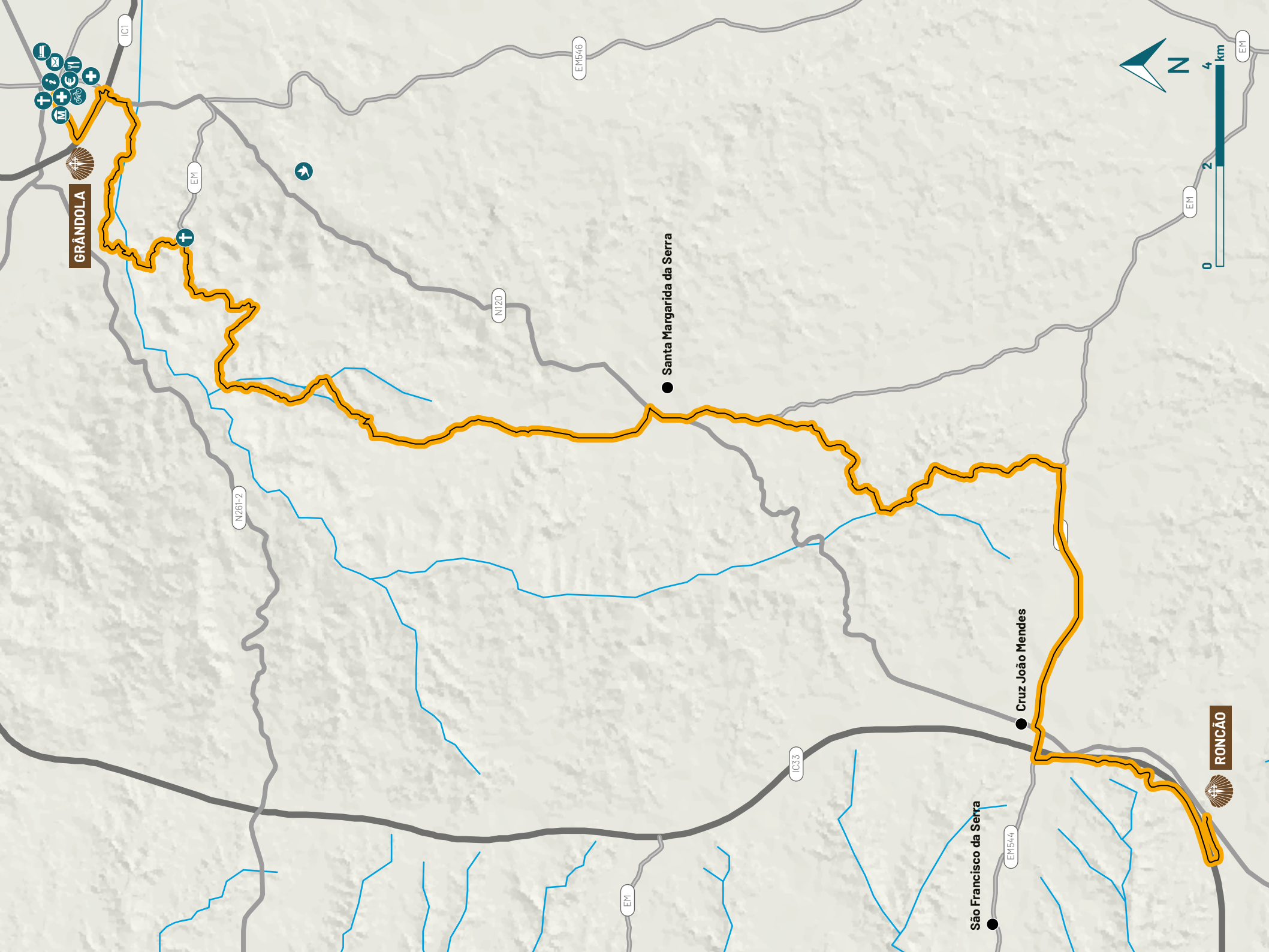


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GRÂNDOLA

● Santa Margarida da Serra

● Cruz João Mendes

● São Francisco da Serra

RONÇÃO

Grândola ► Alcácer do Sal

10

After crossing the river Sado by boat, travelers arriving in Alcácer do Sal would face the narrow line of land between the river and the castle. The strategic relevance of Alcácer's cliff led to the submission of the locality to the Order of Santiago before 1172 and again in 1217, after the definitive conquest by the Portuguese troops. Between that date and 1235, Alcácer do Sal became the headquarters of the santiagouists in Portugal and, in the following centuries, it was the headquarters structure of the Portuguese spatharii.

In Alcácer do Sal, much of the rich patrimony is associated with this presence as is the case of the friars of Santiago convent,

Main Church of Alcácer do Sal

Built in the 13th century, it is the oldest church of Alcácer do Sal, and its portals are still connoted with Romanesque aesthetics. The main façade also preserves an insignia of the Order of Santiago, made up of the spatharian cross accompanied by two scallops, the gourd, and the staff, symbols of the Jacobean pilgrims. In the interior, the late Gothic image of the apostle is preserved, offered to the chapel of Santiago of the friars of Santiago's palace, by master D. Jorge de Lencastre, after 1512.

known as meysom d'alcaçar. It was built and benefited in the medieval period and then totally refurbished from 1573, the year in which the structure was adapted to another convent, this time of Aracoeli. The spatharii house had a dormitory, a palace for the knights, a nursing ward, a registry office, a hostel, a cloister and a large zone of silos, in addition

to numerous domestic and support areas. There was also a chapel dedicated to St James, a religious space that also served for the friars' meetings. It still exists, integrated into Pousada de Alcácer hotel.

The most monumental church of Alcácer do Sal, Igreja de Santiago, was built by D. João V at the



Alcácer do Sal



height of Baroque times. In the interior, we are impressed by the blue and white azulejos covering the nave walls, dating from the 20s and 30s of the 18th century and attributed to António de Oliveira Bernardes. There are 14 panels that constitute the most complete Jacobean cycle in tiles, portraying scenes of St James' apostolic mission in the Iberian Peninsula. In the 80s of the 18th century, the main chapel walls also received azulejo panels illustrating three scenes of the earth and celestial life of Order of Santiago's friars. In the first panel, Christ gives the spatharii habit to a knight, represented with some companions, preparing to fight the infidels. The third panel reveals this same knight, already deceased, to be received by the Holy Trinity. The altarpiece also contains a representation of Santiago Matamouros, an 18th-century painting attributed to Pedro Alexandrino, in which the apostle crushes his enemies under the admired gaze of two Christian soldiers.

Another church, of Nosso Senhor dos Mártires (Our Lord of Martyrs), was of great importance to the



Church of Santiago

Jacobean friars. Probably built in the 13th century, several private funeral chapels were associated with it in the following times. The oldest is the one of the treasury, annexed to the main chapel, but the most monumental date from the 30s and is known as the Capela dos Mestres (Masters Chapel) because it was designed to receive the masters of the Order of Santiago's burials. The most recent date from the 15th century and is known as Capela de Maria de Resende. The church also exhibits a very

deteriorated mural painting with the representation of Santiago Matamouros and the shrine's backyard, a rural area for vines cultivation, locally known as "A Peregrina" (The Pilgrim). The church was the object of important pilgrimages, to the point of having houses for pilgrims, who still exist on the southern side of the temple.

and also...

October's New Fair – October

Senhor dos Mártires Festival – September

Sado Flavours Festival

In July, Alcácer do Sal is the scene of the Sado Flavours Festival festival that combines gastronomy with a

pilgrimage and procession on the river Sado, in honor of Nossa Senhora do Castelo. Maritime delicacies, river shrimp sale, concerts, and dances on the southern shore, delight the visitors.

Grândola ► Alcácer do Sal



Distance 33 km

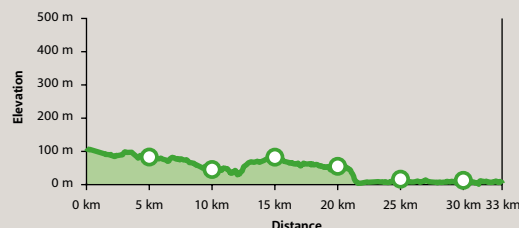
Maximum altitude 107 m

Cumulative increase 307 m

Cumulative descent -412 m

Duration 8h15m

Difficulty (0-5) 3



Today we will perform the most extensive stage of the Central Path in Alentejo and Ribatejo, 33 km, but the previous days have already prepared us for this challenge. In any case, you will always have the option of interrupting the trip in the village of Vale de Guiso, after traveling 21 km from Grândola. However, we advise you to call in advance the Baracinha establishment, the only one in that village that can give you the support you need, as well as guaranteeing you the short river crossing of the Sado river, which is essential to continue the route to Alcácer do Sal.

We leave Grândola by going down the long Avenida Jorge Nunes to the railway station and, crossing the line, we turn left towards Aldeia do Futuro. We pass the small village and we continue along long stretches of road that becomes more and more sandy, with Vale do Guiso as destination. The landscape, first a rural mosaic of small farms with diverse cultures, changes to a typical pastureland hill accompanied by some pine forests. We cross the first stream at the on a small weir, before crossing the viaduct over the A2 motorway

after 5.5 km. The vegetation thickens with the accompaniment of successive streams and the trail becomes less monotonous, but even so, there are no major reasons worth mentioning, with the exception of the sand that hampers our progress. We can enjoy watching the birds among the riparian vegetation until we see the small village of Vale do Guiso, where we are welcomed by the isolated and grandiose Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Monte. We enter this 16th-century baroque church, to admire the carvings, paintings and the work of blue and white *azulejos*, portraying the life of Our Lady. With an adventurous spirit, we scare away some storks as we climb the stairs of the bell tower. The eyes explore the landscape over the village of Arêz and the famous rice paddies that accompany the river Sado.

We go down to the river and have lunch just nearby, where we consider continuing to Alcácer do Sal or staying at this same place in Guiso... Deciding to continue the Path, we ask Mr. Baracinha to transport us on the short river crossing. On the other side of the bank,

WARNINGS



Before leaving Grândola, we advise you to call the establishment Baracinha, the only in the village that can guarantee the short river crossing of the river Sado, indispensable to continue the Path until Alcácer do Sal. For an alternative passage see www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

between the rice paddies, mountains and dams, we follow 8.5 km until we reach the premises of Herdade da Barrosinha. This estate produces good wines and olive oils, and through its land, we find wild boars, woodcocks and partridges, which can be served to us in the property's restaurant. We leave Barrosinha to Alcácer do Sal along the N5 national road, passing under

the A2 motorway viaduct and, through Rua da Foz, we continue along the marginal road until Largo Luís de Camões. There, we find the kiosk where is installed the local Tourism Office, to help us in what we need for today. Just next door we can find the metal bridge over the Sado, a copy of Gustave Eiffel's style that has served the inhabitants of Alcácer since 1945.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Alcácer do Sal City Council
+351 265 601 040

SUPPORT

Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Supermarket
 O Baracinha +351 265 637 158

POINTS OF INTEREST

Santo António Church and 11 Mil Virgens Chapel
 Senhor dos Mártires Sanctuary

Santiago Church
 Santa Maria do Castelo Church
 Nossa Senhora de Aracoelli Convent and Church
 Alcácer do Sal Castle

HEALTH

Alcácer do Sal Health Center
+351 265 610 500
 Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Grândola Fire department:
+351 269 498 450
GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 269 242 600

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

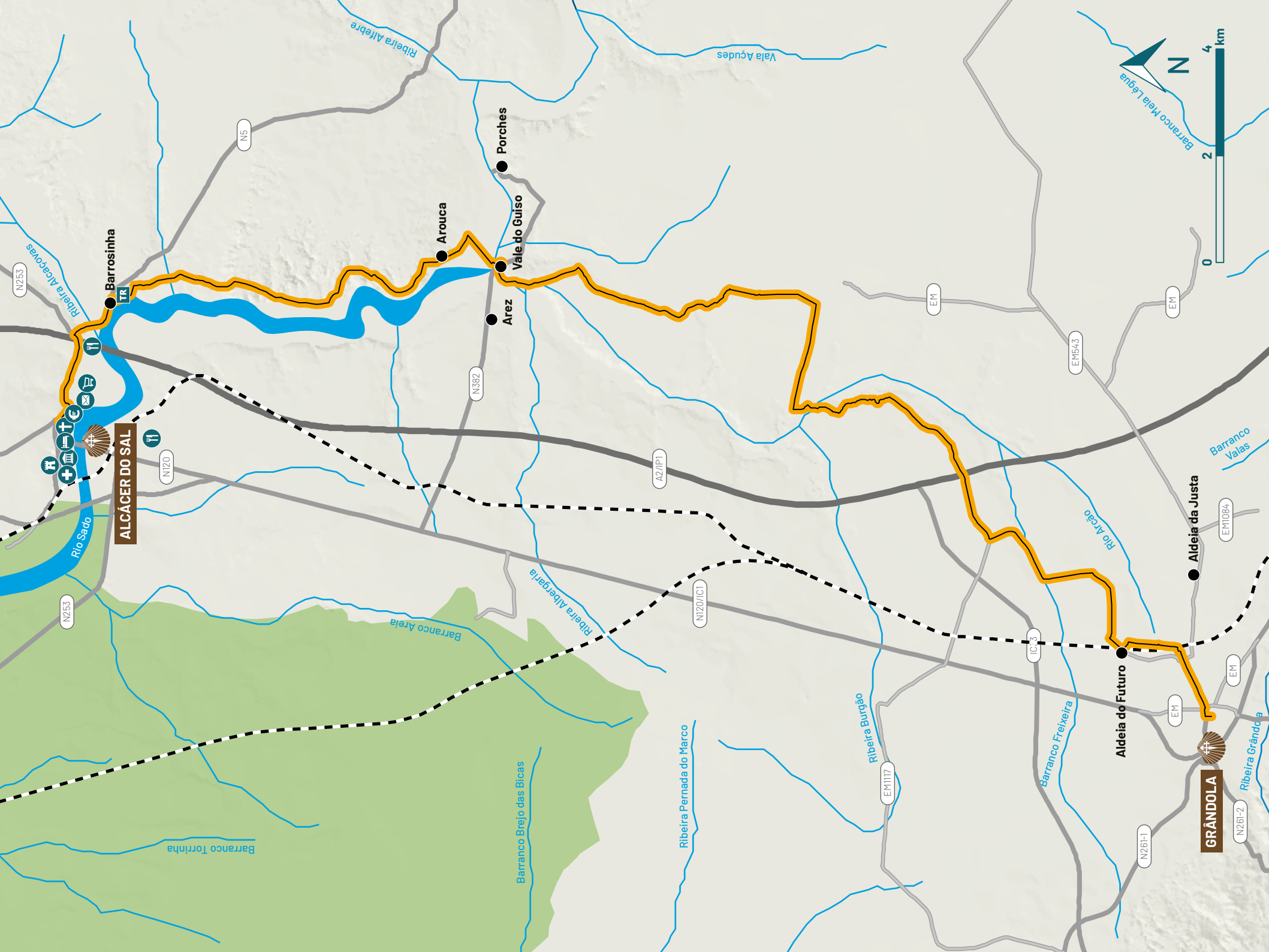


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Alcácer do Sal ► Casebres

11



On the way to Casebres

The human presence in the area that today composes the civil parish of São Martinho, whose headquarters is today located in the village of Casebres, dates back to the mid- Prehistory.

However, it was only after the final conquest of Alcácer do Sal that the region and the most important toponyms began to appear in the historical documentation, serving nowadays as a reference and geographical orientation for those living in and visiting this territory.

In a brief chronological overview, considering that during the millennia of the Pre and Protohistory a large part of the population was reduced and

mostly nomadic, it is only since the Roman Period, or in the last 2000 years, that we have witnessed a more consistent human setting in this region, which defines the space extending north of Alcácer do Sal.

At that time, this vast territory belonged to the Roman city of Salácia (current Alcácer do Sal), administrative practice and cultural bond that would remain during the five centuries of the following period, that correspond to the Islamic occupation of this region of Baixo (Low) Sado.

By the time of the war to reconquest this territory to the kingdom of Portugal, almost always under the initiative of

the powerful Order of Santiago, king D. Sancho II gave autonomy to Cabrela, until then one of the castles Alcácer municipality, in the 20s of the 13th century.

Despite this creation of a new centrality at the expense of Alcácer do Sal, both municipalities continued to belong to the powerful Order of Santiago at the administrative level, having to share, in the spiritual level, some aspects and tithes with the Bishopric and Archbishopric of Évora.

In terms of documentary records, we have in the 13th century, in a period of a few decades after the definitive conquest of Alcácer (1217), the existence of Comenda de Bemposta. It was donated by



the Order of Santiago to Maria Martins Navarra and yielded 100 pounds.

Shortly afterward, appears the reference to St Martin, patron saint and toponym of the commune and the river that crosses its territory.

For centuries, the main church was located on the site called "Freguesia" (Parish) and is today, by virtue of the administrative arrangements of the 19th century, in the nearby town of Montemor-o-Novo. The earliest parish books date from 1651.

As a final note, some elements of historical nature regarding the church, hermitage, and hospice of Nossa Senhora da Serrinha, which is nowadays the most important religious monument of the commune. It is the only known hermitage that the Order of the Calced Carmelites had in the municipality of Alcácer do Sal, as well as in the territory of the Order of Santiago. There are some documental evidences that suggest the existence of this hermitage in 1594. Although, we only have certainties for 1729, at which time this hermitage is

referred for the first time, based on known documents.

The current church, hospice and attached houses, whose works began in 1739, were born of the pious initiative of Francisco de Matos, from Alcácer, and his family.

All this religious space was ceded to a religious community of the Order of the Calced Carmelites and Third Parties. The Main Church of São Martinho was deactivated at a date, still undetermined, in the mid-19th or 20th century.

On December 8, 1966, the headquarters of São Martinho's parish moved to the village of Casebres.

In Casebres, as in the rest of the Alentejo, the occupations are essentially agricultural, such as cork harvesting, tomato and pine nuts collection, eucalyptus planting and cutting, tree extraction, among other agricultural and forestry works.

Some of the older people, especially men, perform work related to livestock, shepherding,

milking and shearing. A small percentage of the population works in factories or in services existing in the adjacent municipalities.

This area's gastronomy benefits from the richness of the Alentejo cuisine condiments. The Ensopado de Borrego (Lamb stew), the Açorda de Alho (Garlic bread soup), and the Migas (Breadcrumbs) with entrecote are particularly appreciated. The artisanal confectionery, such as the *pinhoadas*, the pine and honey cakes, the pine cups, and the honey cakes, is based on the ingredients offered by the region.

Although there are no organized touristic structures, this civil parish gathers tourists in its outdoor events, balls and popular festivals. Also of tourist interest, we suggest the reservoirs of Bemposta and Azenha Pintada, perfect for fishing and picnics lovers.

The village of Casebres, within its quietness and typical Alentejo characteristics, is an ideal location for those who seek this region's calm and serenity.

and also...

Religious festivities in honnor of São Martinho – May

São João Festivities – June

Joy Festival – August

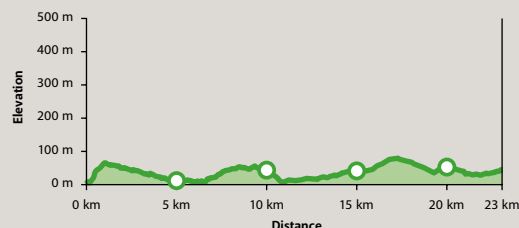
Christmas "midnight"

On this "Midnight" of Christmas, young people leave their home and occupy the abandoned hills, taking with them turkey, drinks, and seasonings to make a recipe. The tradition, unique in the country, is repeated in Casebres every year.

Alcácer do Sal ► Casebres



Distance 23 km
Maximum altitude 86 km
Cumulative increase 342 km
Cumulative descent -304 km
Duration 5h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



The exit of Alcácer do Sal towards north seems a difficult task for those who travel by foot or bicycle. "Surrounded" by a motorway (A2) and a highway (IC1), on which the north exit's road (N5) converges, and enclosed by extensive private properties that fill the spaces between these roads, there are no safe mobility solutions for the more sustainable forms of travel, which are walking and cycling.

Even so, the defined itinerary minimizes those impacts. It begins with the crossing of Avenida dos Aviadores (N5) to the east, continuing through Avenida dos Clérigos until Bairro do Venâncio. At the end of the avenue, we detour to the left, to a dirt track, until the next intersection.

We open and close the access gate to the land in front, where the progression will be hampered by the amount of loose sand. We follow the fence on the right until we find the viaduct passing over the A2.

We get into the cork and holm oak forest, to reach the entrance gate of Herdade de Vale de Reis, with a large photoelectric power station on our right side.

After passing the wicket door, we walk straight ahead until we find on the left the descent to the facilities of the estate, a future rural hotel just over 1 km away. From here we climb the church hill, bypassing it on the left. We continue through the dense and beautiful cork oak forest for 5.5 km, to the wicket door that allows us to leave the estate and access the municipal road that will lead us to Casebres.

From now on, we face the remaining 7.5 km with tranquility and without much effort, along a road practically flat and without traffic, with biodiversity as a company.

We advance between the Jardim Municipal (Municipal Garden) tables and benches and continue through the Largo José Afonso. We notice the calm and serenity of this village typical of Alentejo. The inhabitants subsist on the cattle, cork harvesting, tomato and pine cone harvesting, eucalyptus plantation and cutting, among other agricultural works. In November, Saint Martin's Day is celebrated with dances, roasted chestnuts and "água-pé" (piquette). We also visit

the parish church of São Martinho, Priory of the Order of Santiago, which established an agricultural estate here. They are waiting for us in the Parish Council...

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

 Parish Council
+351 265 649 124

SUPPORT

-  Bank/Cash Dispenser
-  Café Batista
-  Café/Restaurante Sabores d'Campo

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117

WARNINGS

For questions related to accommodation, please contact the parish council.

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejo.ribeiro.pt

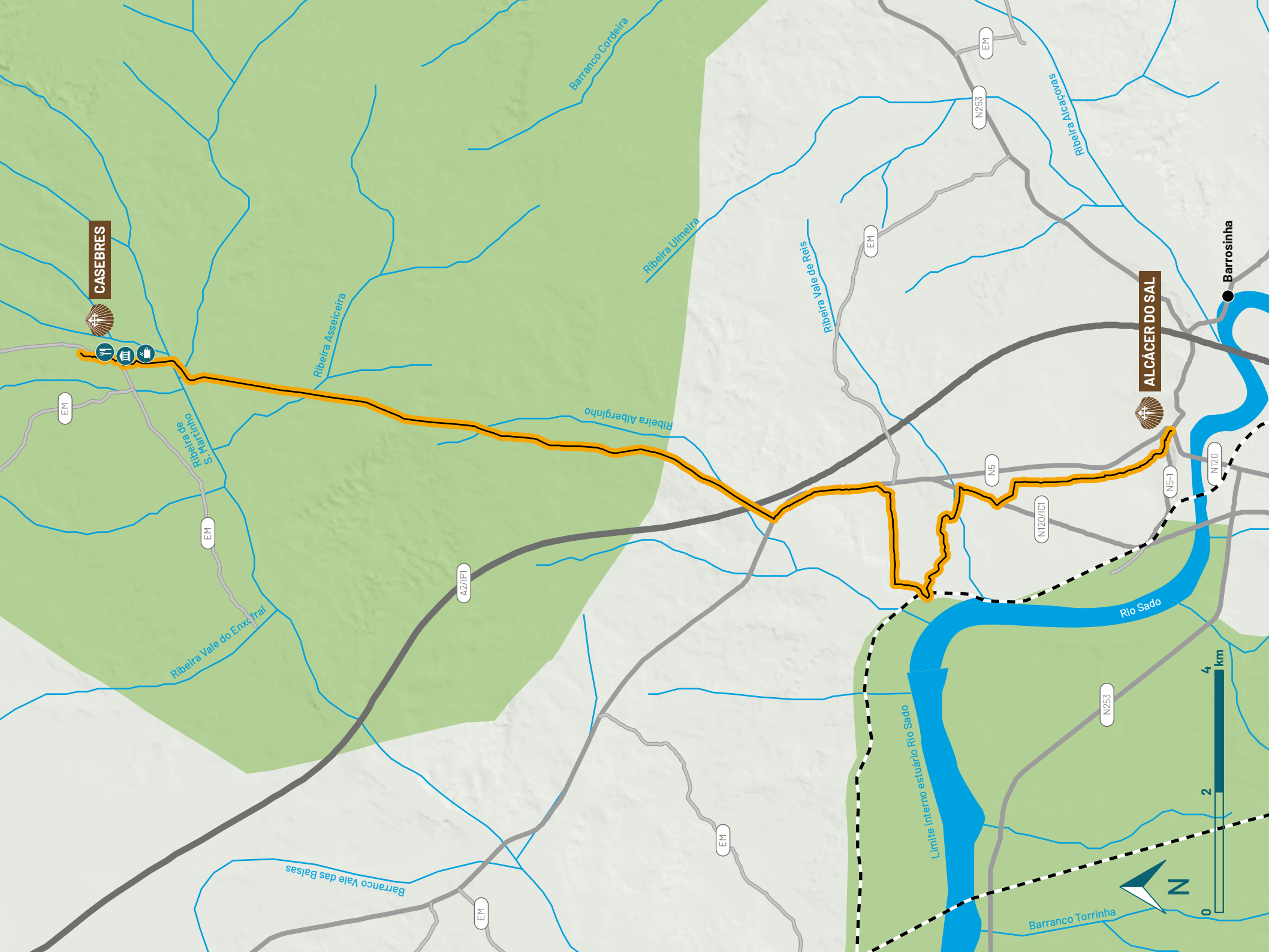


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CASEBRES

ALCÁCER DO SAL

Barrosinha

Barranco Cordelira

Ribeira Umeira

Ribeira Alcacovas

Ribeira Asseiceira

Ribeira Alberghinho

Ribeira Vale de Reis

Ribeira Vale do Enxifral

Barranco Vale das Balsas

Barranco Torrinha

Rio Sado

Limite interno estuário Rio Sado

N

0 2 4 km

Casebres ► Vendas Novas

12

With Vendas Novas as a destination, the Way leads us to cross Cabrela. Because of its strategic relevance, it was donated to the Order of Santiago before 1220, to be an intermediate post between the peninsula of Setúbal and Alentejo. We can find there the main church, whose current configuration is the result of a 17th-century construction that replaced the temple of medieval origin, presumably located in a nearby site known as Outeiro da Igreja. In the main façade, a discrete artistic composition integrates the Order of Santiago cross and the door bears the year of 1704, possibly the date in which the works were finalized. In the interior, stands the late-

baroque altarpiece of gilded wood carvings, from c. 1790, as well as two Gothic images of St Margaret and St Sebastian, coming from ancient village chapels.

Vendas Novas Municipality

In 1526, D. João III ordered the opening of a road between Aldeia Galega do Ribatejo (now Montijo) and Montemor-o-Novo, to serve the postal mail. A hostel was built in the place where Vendas Novas came to be born. The royal fountain occupies a peripheral area of Vendas Nova's urban perimeter

and was commissioned by King D. João V in 1728 to serve the workers who built the royal palace, as it appears that the ephemeral quarter where these workers lived was structured in its surroundings. One of its tanks served as a public washhouse.

The name of the city probably finds its origin on the structures built there, inns or "Vendas" (shops) that were called "Novas" (new) for being of recent construction.

In Vendas Novas, you can find the Palácio das Passagens. As the name implies, it was built in record time to house King João V and its extensive court for only two nights, on their "passage" to



5th Artillery Regiment



the border of Caia to exchange the princesses. D. Bárbara would meet the future husband, the Spanish King Fernando VI, while D. Mariana Vitória, the bride of Prince José, would enter the country. The place chosen had already a small palace, ordered

in the 16th century, but it was considered too small and unworthy of a royal entourage. In less than a year, 2000 workers built the new palace, which had three bodies, organized from a central royal entrance with a staircase. On top were the

king and queen chambers, and there was still a chapel, now transformed into a worship place of the infantry military regiment. This military unit was installed in the ancient palace from 1857.



Royal Chapel of Palácio das Passagens

The Palace of Passages' Royal Chapel was built by D. João V in 1728 to offer spiritual comfort to the royal family and guests during their stay in Palácio das Passagens. The Royal Chapel, now Capela da Escola Prática de Artilharia (Chapel of the Artillery Academy), presents a simple layout, who is thought to be of the architect Custódio Vieira. The main façade reveals a small niche with an image of St Anthony composed in the interior of a single nave, a baptistery, a royal oratory, the sacristy, and the main altar, with João V style paintings in the background. In the altar, the image of Our Lady of Conception, from the end of the 17th century, stands side by side with that of St Barbara, brought when the chapel was passed to the army's dominance.

and also...

Bifana Fair – May

Municipality Festivities – September

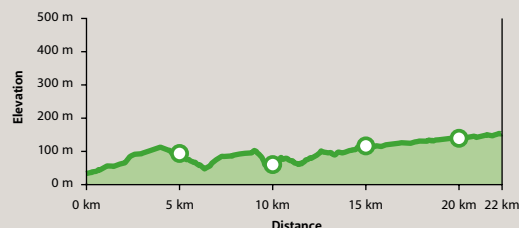
Bifanas from Vendas Novas

These marinated pork sandwiches are the gastronomic ex-libris of the area, a brand image that puts together all the Alentejo cuisine rooted in the municipality but stands out for its special recipe, with a secret sauce.





Distance 22 km
Maximum altitude 150 m
Cumulative increase 409 km
Cumulative descent -295 km
Duration 5h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



From Largo da Igreja we cross Casebres until Rua da Maforinha, which takes us to the village periphery. Along 3.5 km we walk through a dense eucalyptus plantation, cyclically devastated for paper pulp production, so we can both walk under good shade or a blazing sun.

We then enter into extensive pine forest where in some times of the year we can see groups of people collecting pine cones to remove the pine nuts, and other resins, with multiple industrial and consumer applications. We access the road to pass the bridge over the Marateca stream and we don't come back to the forest. The missing 3 km are completed through an almost deserted road until we enter Herdade da Palhavã, which we'll cross to reach Vendas Novas town. However, considering the fatigue and time of the day, we decide to continue straight ahead another 1 km until Cabrela for a break and a "bifana" (pork sandwich)! We complement it with a Filhós de Cabrela, a traditional sweet from the village, nowadays appreciated in all coastal Alentejo.

Before returning to the Path, we learn a bit more about Cabrela's past, as we discover on the mother church's main façade a small image of the spatharios cross, also evident in the locality's blazon. We return to the entrance of the Herdade da Palhavã and follow a 3 km stretch of trodden sand, crossing cork and holm oak forests, some creeks and herds pastures. We leave Herdade da Palhavã through another gate on the opposite side, and after 5.5 km we cross the viaduct over the A6 motorway and sight Vendas Novas already nearby.

We walk another 3 km in macadam until we reach Estrada da Afeiteira, which leads us to the urban nucleus of Vendas Novas through Avenida 25 de Abril. We pass a replica of a windmill that should house the Tourism Office but, once it is closed, we continue to the City Council, in Avenida da República, via Rua António Coelho de Oliveira, where we finished today's stage.

Vendas Novas is a young and "practical" city, with no great traces of beauty or patrimonial wealth. In the 18th century, it was still a mere

hamlet originated by a "Venda" (Sale), i.e., a small area of commerce for muleteers and travelers, which was only significantly boosted by effect of the Palácio das Passagens construction (where were based the Artillery's Militar Regiment No. 5 and the Museum of Artillery Academy No. 5).

Its gastronomy is also "practical" as, perhaps due to the high proportion of the military population and industrial workers, it is focused on the famous Bifanas de Vendas Novas (sandwiches of pork meat) and various soups.

To accompany, the wines produced in the region, which are gaining space and recognition, so it is worth to visit a winery and be inebriated with their particular aromas. In Vendas Novas we also take the opportunity to visit the Queijaria das Romãs, with a long history of artisan production of fresh cheese, cottage cheese and, for connoisseurs, the "almece", a traditional Alentejo product, resulting from the whey curd of sheep cheese.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Vendas Novas City Council
+351 265 807 700

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Vendas Novas Tourism Office
- Supermarket

HEALTH

- Vendas Novas Health Center
+351 265 809 000
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Fire department: +351 265 807 170
 GNR – Vendas Novas Territorial Station:
 +351 265 809 780

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
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VENDAS NOVAS

Cabrela

CASEBRES

N

0 2 4 km

Vendas Novas ► Branca

13



The village of Branca belongs to the municipality of Coruche, the tenth-largest in the country, calling itself the "World Capital of Cork". It is from here that 10% of Portugal's cork is extracted and 5 million cork stoppers leave every day. More than half of Coruche is a mixed forest of cork oak and pine trees, ensuring not only the quality of cork, timber and pine nuts but also the ecosystem and pastures suitable for wild cattle farms.

Branca's toponym is related to a lady named Branca (White) who owned a farmstead in this zone. This estate, formed by bush and grove, was sold by forums, and each plot was measured 11,150 m², and the payment of

the parcels was made in crops produced there.

The village has grown with agricultural works on the plain, near a road and close to the place where there was an hostel. In the immediate vicinity, Herdade das Figueiras estate was one of the largest rural employers of the 19th century.

Branca's settlement developed rapidly, giving rise to a dense cluster, at the time where the settlement model used to include a road close to a hostel.

Here, we find the Apeadeiro de Lavre, built between 1902 and 1904. This railway halt served the line of Vendas Novas, by the time

the monarch D. Carlos I ordered the building of Vidigal palace. In 2012, the line ceased passenger transport.

We also find the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Branca, a small church of recent construction with a single nave, practically in the center of the locality.

One of the many attractions of this commune is the Herdade das Figueiras property and its chapel. In 1949, Gustavo Matos Sequeira included it in the Artistic Inventory of Portugal: *"A rustic house and property, in Coruche moorland, belonged to Mr. Jorge Machado Castelo Branco (Figueira). Center of a typical*





cluster, in the style of the regional housing centers. Next to the Herdade is a hermitage dedicated to St Mary."

Long before the commune's creation in 1984, the greatest efforts were made in this direction, as there was already a very important population core

in the mid-20th century. Several important farming estates are located in Branca, of which stand out: Herdade das Figueiras, Monte da Pestana, Monte dos Pelados, Monte da Torre, Monte da Água Boa, Monte das Mestras, Monte da Abrunheira, and Monte do Trozoito.

Tourism

Branca is a place to feel. It is not enough to talk about it, tell its history or describe its landscape. A mystery surrounds the landscape, the land's cultivation and the secular wisdom of its inhabitants, whose hospitality and sympathy are recognized. From gastronomy to handicraft, as well as the strong rooting of its traditions, are many of the reasons to delight us with a walk on this land.

The civil parish of Branca enjoys a privileged location in terms of tourist attractions, due to its natural landscapes, its fauna and flora, and to the fact that it is very close to the Sorraia River.

It enjoys a rich traditional culture, transmitted orally through generations and diverging through the ages. Branca's civil parish is very proud of its architectural heritage, namely the main church, venerating Our Lady of the Conception, the private Chapel of Herdade das Figueiras, as well as several manor houses.

and also...

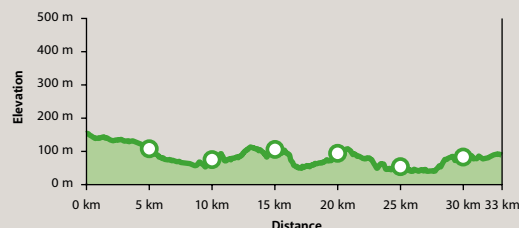
Branca's Culture and Sports Week – April

Festival in Honnor of Nossa Senhora da Conceição – August

Vendas Novas ► Branca



Distance 33 km
Maximum altitude 150 m
Cumulative increase 430 km
Cumulative descent -488 km
Duration 8h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



The Alentejo song says: "I just came back from the fields, I've already eaten/Today I'm going for a walk/I'm going to the "sale", I have a drink/I come back early in the morning". And we also came to Vendas Novas, and now return to the Path early in the morning! But not without first supplying ourselves with an appetizing bifana for noon, as we won't find any restaurant in today's stage until the village of Branca. If we come in November, with some luck we'll be able to see the Mostra das Sopas (Soups Show), and add to our backpack a typical Alentejo "sopa de entulho"(meat and vegetable waste soup) or a homemade broth.

visitors. A few kilometers further on, next to the white gate with a yellow stripe, we turn right onto the sand path and cross the Ribeira de Canha stream. We continue 5 kms up a slight hill, through a cork oak forest, until we pass the train line very carefully, next to the Monte da Sesmaria Nova.

We follow the Path towards Monte de Frades, a farm in the valley of Ribeira de Lavre. We cross the estate through the middle of the rice fields to the bridge leading us to the other bank of the stream, where we detour to the left.

From where we are, we follow Avenida da República (coincident with the national road N4), to the west and, at the second roundabout, we turn right under the railway line, and at the next roundabout to the left, to Estrada de Canha. A long stretch of road awaits us along the N251-1, almost 9 km, through an authentic avenue of wild pine trees that accompany us along the entire length of the route. We pass Palácio do Vidigal on the left, ordered by the king D. Carlos I, which is now a private property closed to

We go around an airstrip, hidden within the forest, for 6 km on a sandy path between pine and cork oak forest, crossing once again the railway line at the Lavre's train halt, closed to passengers since 2012. We continue along the Herdade do Aszeiro road, passing through the middle of Monte da Torre, following the Lavre stream to Monte de Pelados. Here we move away from the Ribeira towards the north, in the direction of Branca civil parish, along the Caminho dos Pelados.

We cross the road (EN251) and enter an area of plotted land, with many villas preceding the arrival to the main cluster of the small village

of Branca, on the Estrada dos Alemães road, in front of the Parish Council, where today's journey ends.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Branca Parish Council
+351 243 606 116

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Coruche Tourism Office
+351 243 619 072
- Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Branca Parish Social Center
- Tasca das Madrinhas
- Café Restaurant O Pintor
- Desigual Café/Pastry/Ice cream store

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Church

HEALTH

- Health Center +351 243 610 500
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Canha Fire Department:
 +351 265 897 117
 GNR Canha – National Republican Guard:
 +351 265 897 860

WARNINGS

For questions related to accommodation, please contact the parish council.

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www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejoalentejoribatejo.pt

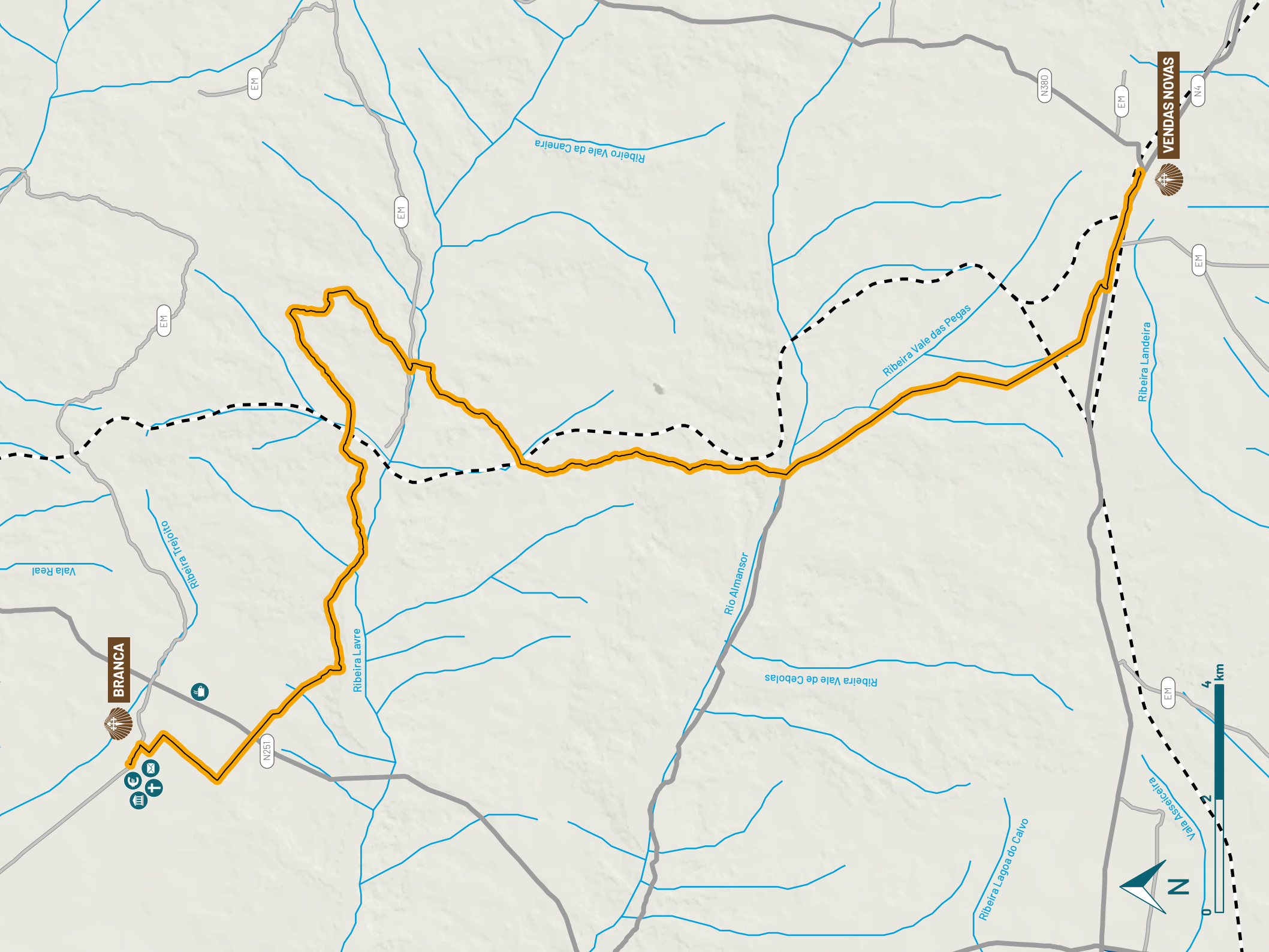


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Branca ► Santo Estêvão

14



Santo Estêvão is a rural commune located 16 km from Benavente (County seat), with a total area of 62.41 km² and around 2000 inhabitants, according to the 2011 Census. The territory, besides the urban agglomerate, comprises many areas of cultivation and pasture and is located on the right bank of the river Almansor. The site of Foros de Almada, an integral part of the commune, is 5 km from the village.

Known over the years not only by the current toponym but also by Santo Estêvão da Ribeira and Aldeia de Santo Estêvão da Ribeira de Canha, it owes these names to the proximity of the river Almansor also called, at this crossing point, Ribeira de Santo Estêvão or Ribeira de Canha.

Several archaeological finds, discovered in the area delimited

by the parish, point to the human presence in this region since prehistoric times. However, the earliest reference to this small urban center dates back to the 14th century:

The Inventário dos bens móveis e imóveis da Ordem de Avis (Inventory of movable and immovable property of the Order of Avis) dated 1364, refers to the herdades of Ribeira de Canha, among which the following is designated: "*Item outra coirela acima de San Stevã que parte cõ Roi Gile cõ Domingos Bugalho e seus ereos*". Therefore, in this year there was already a chapel with Saint Stephen as a patron, although without certainties on its pastor. In the text of the Torre do Tombo of the same Order, made in 1561, one may conclude that, by this time, the hermitage already had its own pastor and "eighteen patrons".

Saint Stephen is the patron saint of the parish, which adopted the same toponym. Stephen, a Jewish deacon who spoke Greek, was the first Christian martyr. Excellent preacher, he was the object of great opposition and hostility, being at the end denounced and accused of blasphemy in the Sanhedrin (the supreme assembly of Jerusalem). He was taken out of the city and stoned to death.

The village

A moorland area composed of hills and valleys, some farms and an enviable forest mantle rich in cork oak. But, it's in its population that lies the greatest wealth. Simple, honest and hardworking people who, for generations, dedicated themselves to work in the fields, on behalf of the



considerable agricultural and livestock farms in the region. Monte do Zambujeiro, Monte dos Condes, Monte de Almada, Mata do Duque (Cadaval), Monte da Quinta and Monte do Termo should have a particular highlight. Rich in crop fields mainly of wheat and rice, and pastures dominated by cattle, horses, and pigs. Casa Cadaval, Manuel Luís Anastácio, and Anacleto de Moura were dedicated to the creation of brave cattle, also used in agricultural works.

At the beginning of the 60s of the 20th century, the Equipagem de Santo Huberto (Saint Hubert's Crew), dedicated to equestrian activities, settled in the village with a particular interest in fox hunting on horseback, with packs of trained dogs. The excellent natural conditions for the exercise of this sport brought to the region many national and foreign practitioners, enthusiasts of this modality.

The village is rich in biodiversity and stands out for the abundance of storks. It is integrated (together with the municipalities of Benavente and Samora Correia) in the Natural Reserve of Tejo's Estuary, one of

the wetlands of excellence for the stationing of migratory birds from Europe.

Over the years, the people of Santo Estevão have always been party lovers, whether it is religious or profane. The processions in honor of Our Lady of Conception and Saint Stephen, patron saint of the parish, outstand. The annual calendar is generous in cultural,

sporting and recreational activities, which involve not only its inhabitants but many visitors from the nearest localities.

The municipality is equipped with several collective facilities, namely: a community meeting house, a daycare center for the elderly with home support, a gymnastic sports pavilion, a kindergarten, pre-school and 1st Cycle, among others.



Parish Church

Overlooking the river Almansor (also known as Ribeira de Santo Estêvão), the Parish Church must have its origins in the 14th century, when the locality is mentioned for the first time. In the 18th century, the parish priest was a member of the Order of São Bento de Avis (St Benedict of Avis), an institution that held rights over the locality since, at least, the 16th century. The church is a simple temple of a single nave that evokes the antiquity and relevance of the locality in this interior territory stretch.

and also...

Santo Estêvão Festivities – August

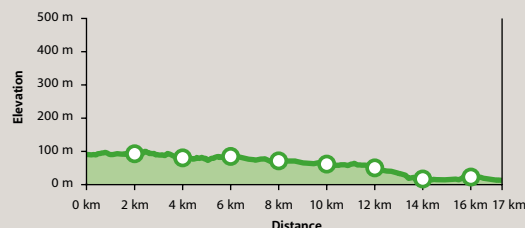
Special Protection Area for the Birdlife of Ribeira de Santo Estêvão

Covering the entire river valley, which includes the Site of Ornithological Interest, the Special Protection Area for the Birdlife of Ribeira de Santo Estêvão is an area of alluvial soils, occupied by rice fields, a network

of channels skirted by tábua, surrounded by an area covered with cork oak, together with meadow pine. There also subsists a small palustrine area of the paul type, composed of a dense patch of willows and tábua. Vulnerable biotope (paul), important feeding area for *Limosa limosa* during winter (rice fields).



Distance 17 km
Maximum altitude 96 km
Cumulative increase 156 km
Cumulative descent -233 km
Duration 4h00m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



Some important agricultural properties are located on this moorland in Coruche, where the origin of the most Portuguese dish, Cozido à Portuguesa, is legitimately claimed. A place where different cabbages, sausages and vegetables are produced, the ingredients of this wonderful stew. At the end we can't forgetting the typical desert Arroz Doce (sweet rice).

From the asphalt of Estrada dos Alemães, we head to Branca's exit. After 3.5 km, the road bifurcates and becomes now a sandy macadam, which we follow in the right lane.

Over the next 7 km, large enclosed estates succeed each other on both sides of the road, with extensive forestry explorations of little landscape interest. The route can become a bit tedious, but the fire prevention and traveler's safety require it.

500 m before we reach the N119 road, we turn left and proceed, still by macadam, until we enter into Mata do Duque forest, where

luxurious villas have been installed. At the end of the road, we turn right to the tarmac road, and further on we cross the N119, next to Almansor riverbed. After 1.3 km, through the cultivated moorland and pastures, we come across Lusitano crossbreed horses, from Herdade do Zambujeiro. In the Coudelaria António Guerriero's equestrian training center, there are coupling classes with sport horses.

We follow 2,7 km till the center of Santo Estêvão civil parish, near the municipal market. The name of this locality comes from the first Christian martyr, the Jewish deacon Stephen. With convicted opinions and attempts to convert to Christianity, he was accused of blasphemy and sentenced to a violent death, just outside the village.

Full of history and traces of ancient defensive fortifications, possibly from Roman times, this village belonged to the Order of Avis in the 16th century. As usual, we go to the local parish council in order to collect the necessary information for our stay.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Santo Estêvão Parish Council
+351 263 949 216

SUPPORT

CTT Post Office
 Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Supermarket

TAXI Santo Estêvão +351 917 323 679

AL Monte de São José

AL Hospedaria

TR Monte dos Duques Hotel

POINTS OF INTEREST

Santo Estêvão Church
 Santo Estêvão Village
 Ribeira de Santo Estêvão
 Special Protection Area for the Birds

HEALTH

Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Benavente Fire Department
 (Santo Estêvão section): +351 263 516 122

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt

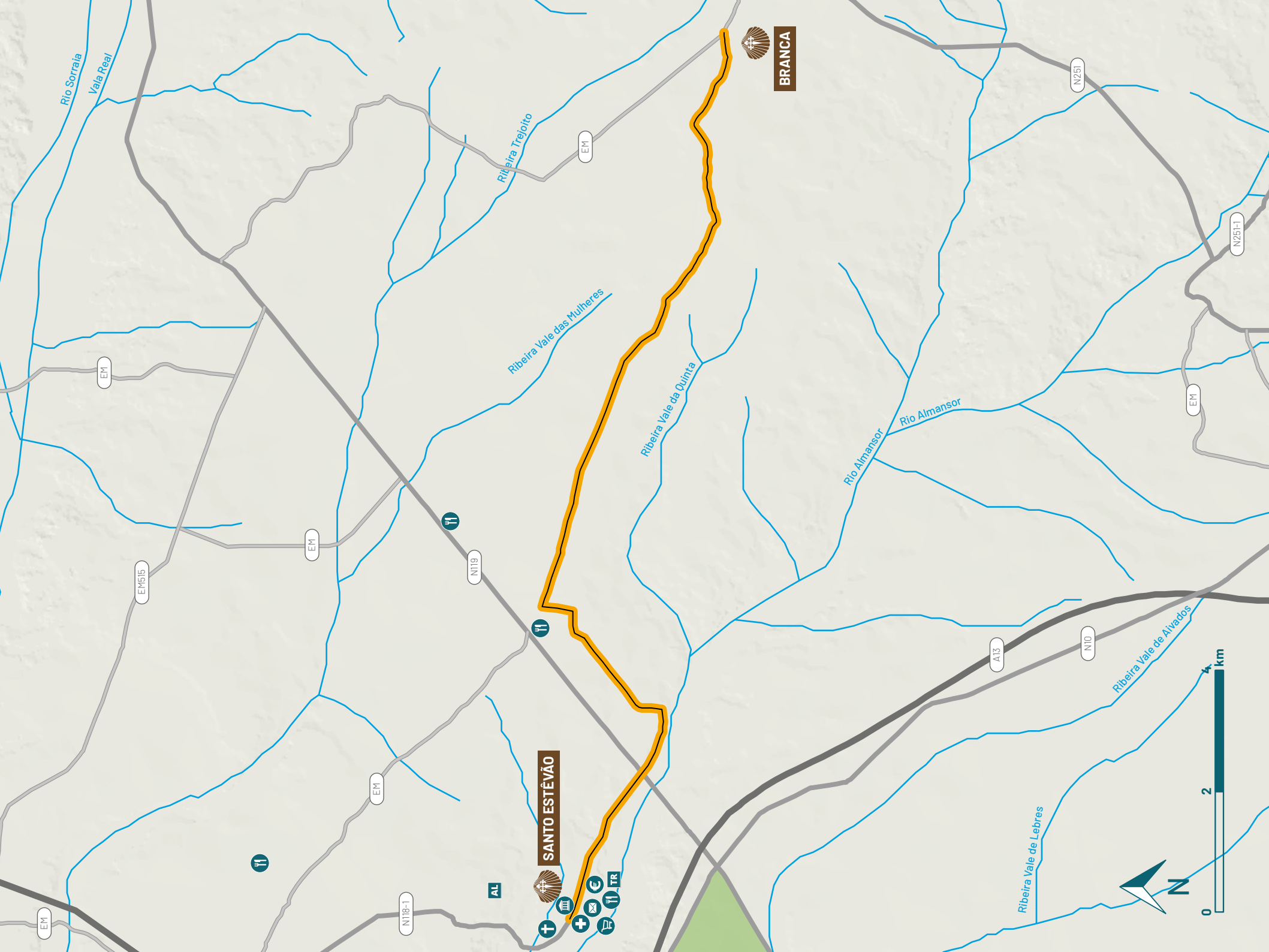


CODE OF CONDUCT

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Santo Estêvão ► Samora Correia

► Benavente

15

Samora Correia owes its name to D. Paio Peres Correia, conqueror of much of southern Portugal in the first half of the 13th century and Grand Master of the Order of Santiago.

The locality was a Santiago commendation since, at least, 1270. The configuration of the main church is the result of a great reconstruction campaign, begun in 1718 and completed very quickly. The interior was coated with azulejos dated from c. 1724 and attributed to the Lisbon Master PMP. These tiles are one of the most complete iconographic projects dedicated to the life and apostolic legend of St James in the Iberian Peninsula, pilgrim and preacher who baptized his tormentor Josiah, converted Hermogenes, and defeated a group of masons who built a church (probably a pagan temple) contrary to the Church norms.

The fountain of Santiago evokes the vanished Igreja de Santiago church, destroyed by the earthquake of 1909, that used to mark the village riverside front for centuries. The fountain was built in 1967 and has a niche with an image of St James on the main face, and the rear face is decorated with a commemorative inscription of the building and a cross of the Order of Santiago.



Main Church of Samora Correia

Municipality Fountain

Possibly dating from the time of the village foundation, this fountain of Medieval construction was the object of several renovations. Despite that, it still preserves its original pointed arch that used to give access to a vaulted brick construction. In the 18th century, it was said that its waters were indicated for eye treatments.



In the village, there is also the Misericórdia de Samora Correia, which originates from an ancient chapel of Espírito Santo (Holy Spirit), possibly built in the transition to the 16th century. The church's current feature is the result of a deep reconstructive campaign

completed in the 18th century. The main altarpiece dates from this period, integrating a painting with the theme of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to St Elizabeth (because visiting the sick is a mercy work), the throne of the Confraria do Espírito Santo's brothers, who continued

to manage the institution, and wooden sculpture of Our Lady of Mercy. The Misericórdia had an attached hospital, which is still recognizable in the surrounding architectural complex, and used to serve as a support for travelers passing by the village.



Municipal Museum of Benavente

Gathering a range of reference collections in the area of agricultural machinery, costume, photography, ceramics, and traditional crafts, the Municipal Museum was inaugurated in July 1980, housing a vast ethnographic collection gathered over some 40 years. It is housed in a former 18th century dwelling house and has a museological archive of twenty thousand pieces.

and also...

Procession to São Baco, Convent of Jericó – May

Coutada Velha's Festival – June

Festival in Honor of N.ª Sr.ª da Paz – August

Annual Fair and "Taverns" – September

"Carolino" Rice Festival

In May, Benavente celebrates the "carolino" rice of Ribatejo marchlands, in a festival where the

gastronomy has, of course, a prominent place. At Praça do Arroz you can attend showcookings and tastings, and try out the many different dishes that share the main ingredient: the rice. Apart from the festival area, there are several restaurants that include at least one dish with "carolino" rice on the menu.



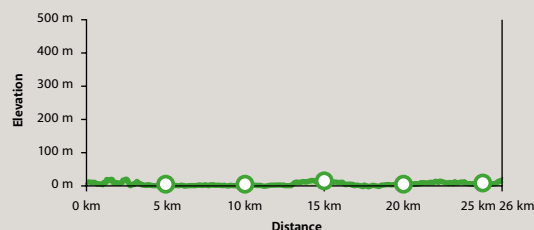
Santo Estêvão ► Samora Correia

► Benavente

15



Distance 26 km
Maximum altitude 22 km
Cumulative increase 211 km
Cumulative descent -209 km
Duration 6h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



We finish reinforcing our supplies in the small Mercado de Santo Estêvão market, in the central street, as we have ahead a quest of 15 km until Samora Correia, through the middle of the endless marsh of the Almansor river. If a hot day is foreseeable, it is advisable to do this stage in the early morning. The temperature can reach unbearable levels, and the only shadow we will find will be the one projected by the motorway viaduct under which we'll have to pass.

At the end of the street is the old church Igreja de Santo Estêvão. Before arriving there, next to the wall of a white and blue manor house, we cross the indicated door and access the dirt track of Monte Novo de Santo Estêvão property, crossing the river. We follow the Path to the right, passing through the estate's agricultural facilities, until we find a wicket door on the property's fence, giving access to the domains of Companhia das Lezírias. From here there is no doubt. We must continue straight ahead on the main road, through the middle of the partially flooded marsh, with the exclusive company of flocks of a diversity of birds. Somewhere,

hidden in the middle of the vegetation of a strategic hill on the left bank, is the Fortim de S. João Baptista de Belmonte blockhouse, an outpost of the Knights of Santiago, dated 1207.

Finally, the marsh curves to the right and the Path too, going straight to the street that accesses the suburbs of Samora Correia, an old and prosperous village and hunting area for the nobility, dedicated to D. Paio Peres Correia, Grand Master of the Order of Santiago. We walk along the Estrada do Brejo and, after Rua do Trabalho, we find the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Oliveira church, where we admire the iconography, the frescoes and azulejo panels dedicated to Saint James' life in Portugal. In the same square of Portuguese cobbled pavement is the old Palácio do Infantado, from the 17th century which, after being burnt, was adapted into a museum and library.

We leave the city through Rua do Povo Livre and, in the end, we continue on the left until we reach the Sorraia riverbank, which we'll follow until Benavente, arriving

by the north entrance, at Rua Dr. Manuel Velho Cabral Calheiros. On the left, we discover traces of the walls that used to protect the village from the river floods, and the Cruz do Calvário (Calvary's Cross), from 1644. A few meters

ahead, we discover a niche with the image of Santiago and the Order's Cross, in the Fountain of Santiago. We finish this stage in the square of the Municipality of Benavente, next to which are the Tourism services.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Benavente City Council
+351 263 519 600

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- TAXI Samora Correia +351 963 053 622
- TAXI Benavente +351 963 050 030
- Supermarket
- Restaurant Boa Viagem, Samora Correia
- Restaurant O Lagar, Samora Correia
- Restaurant Montagreste, Benavente

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Samora Correia Main Church
- Misericórdia de Benavente church
- Jericó Convent, Benavente

- Infantado Palace, Samora Correia
- Concelho Fountain, Samora Correia
- Calvary Wayside Cross, Benavente
- Benavente Pillory
- Benavente Agricultural Museum Nucleus
- Fields/Wheat Fields Biotop
- Montados de Quercíneas (Plantations)
- Alluvial Valleys
- Stone Pine Zones

HEALTH

- Benavente Health Center +351 263 516 775
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Benavente Fire Department:
 +351 263 519 790
 Samora Correia Fire Department:
 +351 263 651 122
 GNR Samora Correia – National Republican
 Guard: +351 263 650 020

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt



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BENAVENTE

Samora Correia

SANTO ESTÊVÃO

HERDADE MONTE
NOVO DA RIBEIRA

Rio Sorraia

Ribeira Trejoito

Rio Almansor

Ribeira Vale Cobrão

Rio Lagos

N

0 1.5 3 km

Benavente ► Muge

16



Credits: José Júlio Cachado

The Way to Muge passes through Salvaterra de Magos where, among the obligations of its new residents, awarded with a charter by D. Dinis in 1295, was to build a main church. The building was the object of several modernizing campaigns, one of which was in the 16th century, period to which belongs the baptismal font. Damaged by the earthquake of 1755, the reconstruction project of Igreja Matriz de São Paulo integrated azulejo tiles from Lisbon workshops and paintings by the artist Bento Coelho da Silveira. It is a monumental church whose façade was designed to contain

two towers that were never built. The tube organ, authored by the most famous organ builder of the time, António Machado and Cerveira, dates from 1825.

Here you can also find the royal palace, of medieval origin, whose Hall was known to have hosted the ceremony of the marriage contract signature between the Infanta D. Beatriz, daughter of D. Fernando I, and King D. João I of Castile, an event that precipitated the revolution of 1383-85. The whole was rebuilt at the beginning of the 16th century by Prince D. Luís, who is credited with the patronage of

the Renaissance palatine chapel, enlarged by Filipe I and D. João V. Fairly damaged by fires and demolitions in the 19th century, there only remains a pale image of the splendor the palace used to have, especially in the height of baroque time, when he had an opera house where many shows were performed.

Muge was an important site during the Roman period, mainly because of the proximity of Sabugueiro fluvial port, to which a uilla was associated.

The bridge is composed of a large, perfectly round arch, joined



by two other arches, probably built in medieval times. It was an important point of passage for those who were going to the province capital, Scallabis (Santarém).

It was in Paço de Muge that King D. Manuel, in 1496, decreed the expulsion edict of Jewish and

Muslim minorities. A locality that belonged to the Dukes of Cadaval, where they built their palace. We can also find here the main church, built at the end of the 13th century by the patron saint of Salvaterra de Magos, and held for centuries by the monastery of Alcobaça. The ensemble evolved into a Baroque temple,

as the local Council obliged the monastery to rebuild the building from 1712 presenting a ruin menace. It is a temple of notable urbanistic impact, with a large and monumental façade, to which corresponds an interior of a single nave with two side chapels, where the altarpieces in Joanine wood carving stand out.



Escaroupim

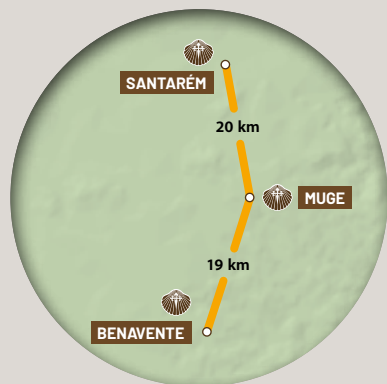
A fishing village by excellence, it was formed in the 30s of the 20th century by fishermen from Vieira beach in Marinha Grande, who took advantage of winter to transfer the fishing activity to the river Tejo. With seasonal use, the village is made up of rudimentary wooden constructions settled in stakes on the river, which guaranteed them protection against floods. Beyond these constructive aspects, the village is distinguished by the gaudy color of the boats and houses.

and also...

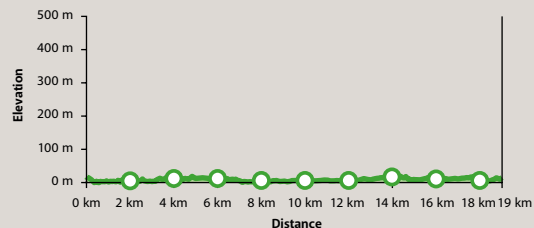
Festivities in Honor of Mártir São Sebastião – August Muge's Pottery

Archaeological excavations have discovered traces of a Roman pottery furnace in Muge. Since then, the potter's wheel didn't stop. In the typical Muge pottery, everything is executed as in the past: the potter hands knead the clay which, after being molded, is dried and cooked in a wood-fired oven.

Sometimes the potters paint the pottery pieces, but the most common in Muge is the glazed clay. Pieces such as water containers, vases, pots, jars, and jugs emerge from the potter's wheel. In spite of its antiquity, the pottery of Muge continues to develop thanks to the potters' effort and commitment, contributing to the maintenance of the clay work tradition with their art.



Distance 19 km
Maximum altitude 19 km
Cumulative increase 182 km
Cumulative descent -185 km
Duration 4h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



We return to Praça do Município to begin today's stage and head towards the river on Rua Dr. Ruy Azevedo, along the pleasant garden Jardim da Fateixa, on the Sorraia riverbanks. We cross the river over the white pedestrian bridge, on the right, and continue along the trail in the strip that separates the cultivated lands. We pass under the viaduct of the N118 national road and continue the path through the fields.

Still avoiding the busy and narrow N118 road, we get into the side fields, which may be submerged, thus forcing us to go up back to the road. In any case, 1 km ahead we'll have to do it, in a dangerous intersection, following on the left through the secondary road to Salvaterra de Magos. If we would choose the right we would find Aldeia do Peixe, about 5 km beside the Sorraia river, a place with many records of the "avieiros" fishermen culture.

At the end of the Estrada do Convento, we enter the village through Rua do Tejo where, right at the entrance, we find the Falcoaria Real (Royal Falconry). If you have time, watch a demonstration of this art, in the sessions

that take place regularly. Continuing along Rua do Tejo, we observe a small "marina" and, on the right, we also find the Capela Real (Royal Chapel), from the 17th century, with renovation works during the Rococo period.

We pass the bridge over the Vala Real (Royal Valley), which was used to the transport of goods and for the royal family's boat when they visited this locality. Soon we arrive at the junction that indicates the picturesque village of Escaroupim to the left. Here, we take a break to visit the museum, the stilts port and the old "avieira" houses, preserved in their original state for the tourists.

We leave Escaroupim still on Rua do Tejo, which bifurcates a little further on. We follow the road on the left that takes us to the campsite and continues on a pleasant and fresh path for 4 km through the Escaroupim Forest until a level crossing. Shortly after, we arrive at a crossroad where, turning left, we could go to Ponte Rainha D. Amélia bridge over the Tejo and, from there, intersect with the Path to Santiago coming from Lisbon, by the Tejo river northern bank.

Since this is not our option, we move on to the entrance of Muge, looking for the Parish Council street, where we rush to ask for directions about the available accommodation, which is not abundant around here. As we explore the village, we can find the Roman bridge of Muge in the

north, with 400 m of extension, which served part of the Roman road that used to connect the Alentejo to Santarém. Before the day ends, we rest at Casa Cadaval, an estate with 400 years of history.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Muge Parish Council
+351 243 581 130

SUPPORT

CTT Post Office
 Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Escaroupim Camping
+351 263 595 484

POINTS OF INTEREST

Nossa Senhora da Conceição Church
 Nossa Senhora da Glória Chapel
 Muge Roman Bridge

Duke's Palace - Cadaval House
 Muge Shell-middens
 Rainha D. Amélia Railway Bridge
 Muge Pottery

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117

WARNINGS

For questions related to accommodation, please contact the parish council.

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejoeribatejo.pt



CODE OF CONDUCT

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PORTO DE MUGE

MUGE

SALVATERRA DE MAGOS

BENAVENTE

ESCAROUGEM

VALADA

REGUENGO

ALDEIA DA PALHOTA

Ribeira Magos

Rio Tago

Rio Tejo

Serra da

N

1,5

3

0

km

Muge ► Santarém

17



Cathedral of Santarém



Church of Graça | Santarém



Tomb of Pedro Álvares Cabral

In the commune of Almeirim, before arriving at Ribeira de Santarém, the Igreja de Santa Marta, in Benfica do Ribatejo, inspires a visit. It was built in the 18th century as a chapel of Quinta de Santa Marta, an extensive agricultural estate that dominated the region since the late Middle Ages. The ensemble was fully restored in the late 20th century, as attested by the commemorative inscription placed on the main façade.

Gate of Santiago

It was the main door of Santarém castle, for that reason called "Porta da Alcáçova", whose first mention dates from 1249. The present designation derives from the invocation of the church where the sidewalk connecting the plateau's spur of the plateau to the river used to pass. Until the 16th century, it also served as access to the village, through a way considered unrecoverable in 1797. In it, one can see a "Fernandinos de Portugal" coat of arms that documents the town walls reinforcement. There is also no memory remain of the Hospital de Jesus Cristo, which was located in this pathway and allowed the support of pilgrims and travelers who came to the city. It is currently crossed by the numerous pilgrims of the Way to Santiago.





Alcorce Brigde

Built between the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 14th century, the Alcorce bridge was the main city exit to the north, towards Tomar and Coimbra, crossing the Vala de Alcorce or Palhais, a small affluent of Tagus river. Endowed with four round arches, it also exhibits a structure with two rampant hauls, as was frequent in the Romanesque bridges. In front of the bridge, on the side of Ribeira de Santarém, is the fountain of Palhais, the last source for those who left Santarém towards north.



Church of Santa Maria da Alcáçova

This church, the religious seat of the power established by the Order of the Temple in the city after the conquest of 1147, was built around 1154 and instituted as a royal chapel by D. Afonso Henriques. Three years later, it was constituted as collegiate and enjoyed of ample protagonism in Middle Age. The current church, where Roman capitals have been reused as a mark of the temple's prestige and antiquity, is the result of a campaign of the first decades of the 18th century. The campaign was sponsored by D. Rodrigo Teles de Meneses, descending from a family with great tradition in the city.

and also...

Santarém Municipal Festivities – March

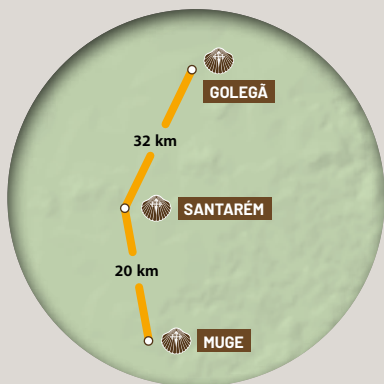
Santarém's National Gastronomy Festival – October

Agriculture National Fair/Ribatejo's Fair

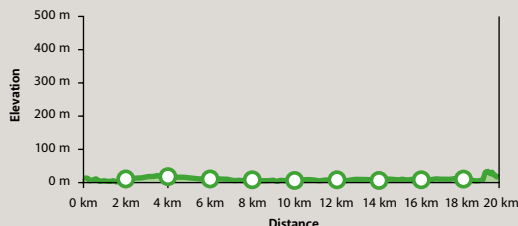
It is the biggest tourist attraction in the country, considered one of the most important of Europe, in

the agriculture area, and takes place during the month of June. It is known for its rich ethnographic values, patented at the International Folkloric Festival, bull races, *campinos* (cattle herders) races, halter games, bullfights, equestrian competitions, and horse raids, among others.





Distance 20 km
Maximum altitude 37 km
Cumulative increase 127 km
Cumulative descent -123 km
Duration 4h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



Leaving from the Parish Council, we turn left to Rua Almirante Reis, accompanying the building of Casa Cadaval. We have the Roman bridge in front of us, but we don't cross it, continuing instead to the right under the viaduct of the N114 national road, until we find another bridge over which we cross the Muge stream.

Archaeological sites with large accumulations of shells, animal remains and hundreds of human skeletons of a species not yet fully identified, which have lived here for about 5 thousand years, the Concheiros de Muge, were discovered along this stream. These are the most famous and rich places of Portuguese prehistory. At the Concheiro da Moita do Sebastião, for example, we can find traces of circular huts of logs and clay, silos on the ground to preserve food, and graves ritualized with ochre and stones under their heads.

Through a path of fine sand, first, and then through a narrow rural road, we advance through the immense cultivated or fallow areas that lead to Benfica do Ribatejo. Nearby, the vineyard becomes predominant, in a

region whose wines have been increasingly recognized and the main wineries (to visit!) already assume high levels of production and quality.

We enter Rua Direita towards the village center, former land of fishermen, now "just" of "campinos" (bull herdsman), full of courage and dressed up, with the red hat, while dancing the Ribatejo fandango. We leave the village also through Rua Direita again. At the crossroad to Cortiços we turn left and continue along the Vala de Alpiarça. We pass under the motorway viaduct and turn left again to cross Quinta do Casal Monteiro. We take the opportunity to have lunch and enjoy a degustation of the region's wines with an appropriate setting.

After 3.5 km, we enter the village of Tapada. By asphalt, we follow and climb a path to meet the N114 again. We now cross the Ponte D. Luís over the Tejo, which in 1881 was the third largest bridge in Europe. On the opposite bank, on the right, we head to Santarém stream, to avoid walking up to the city now, which we'll try to visit later.

We enter this old port of fluvial commerce following the road N365 sidewalk, crossing the railway line and finishing the stage in the local Parish Council, which is eager to welcome us. Behind us, we leave Igreja de Santa Cruz, a beautiful Gothic church from the mid-19th

century, that used to serve the local population, which grew a lot between 1218 and 1260. At that time, the bustling village was a building site to support the construction of large monasteries in the region.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Câmara Municipal de Santarém,
Divisão de Turismo +351 243 304 258

SUPPORT

CTT Post Office
 Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Tourism Office +351 243 304 437

POINTS OF INTEREST

Alcáçova Church
 Vale Figueira Main Church
 Misericórdia Church
 Santa Maria de Marvila Church
 Santarém Cathedral
 Diocesano Museum of Santarém

Junqueira Fountain
 Alcorce Bridge
 São Tiago Gate
 Cabaças Tower
 Portas do Sol Belvedere Garden

HEALTH

Santarém Hospital
+ 351 243 300 200
 Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Santarém Fire Department:
+351 243 377 900
 Santarém Fire Department:
+351 243 333 122
 GNR – Santarém Territorial Station:
+351 243 300 070
 PSP – Public Security Polic: +351 243 322 022

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

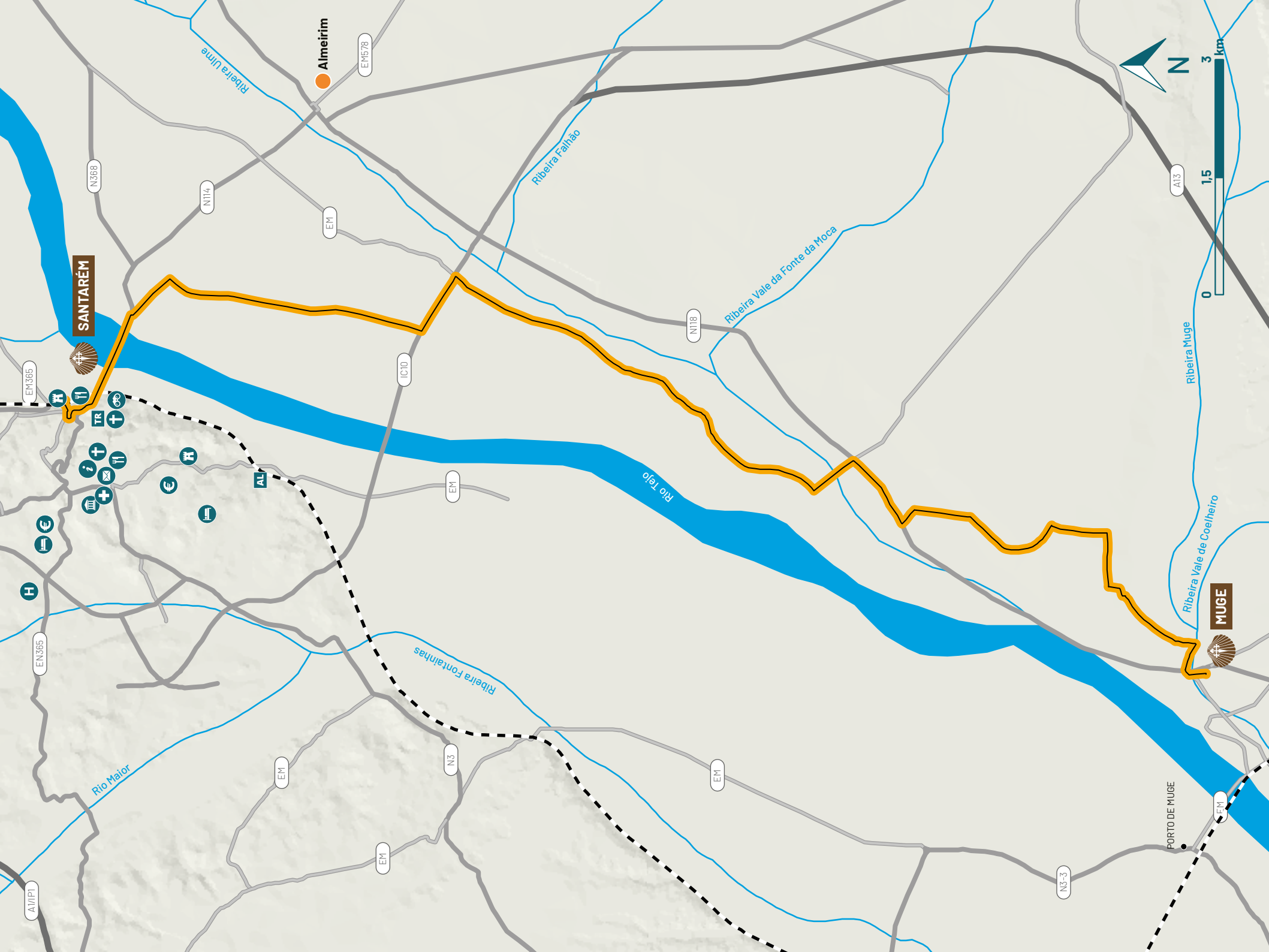


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Santarém ► Golegã

18

José Saramago, after the journey that gave origin to the work *Viagem a Portugal*, said that *"the end of one trip is just the beginning of another. It is necessary to see what has not been seen, to see again what has already been seen, to see in spring what was seen in summer, to see by day what was seen at night ... We must return to the steps that were given, to repeat them, and to chart new ways"*. He would speak in a figurative sense and it would seem to refer to the Ways of Santiago. There are no records that he has followed it but that, coincidentally, the Way crosses Azinhaga, the village where José Saramago was born in 1922.

Azinhaga

"In the midst of night peace, among the high branches of the tree, a star appeared to me, and then, slowly, it was hiding behind a leaf, and, while I was looking in another direction, like a river running silently through the sky concave, came the opalescent clarity of the Milky Way, the Way of Santiago, as we still called it in the village."

Signed by the sculptor Arnaldo Ferreira and dated 2009, the bronze statue of José Saramago evokes the figure of the only Portuguese writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (1998), who was born in Azinhaga and

spent part of his youth there. In the central square of the village, José Saramago (1922-2010) is sitting on a bench, as if observing the life of the locality that unfolds under his watchful eye.

The passage through Azinhaga can be enriched with the visit to the ruins of Capela de S. Sebastião. In 1570, raging the plague, the

inhabitants of Azinhaga erected a chapel dedicated to São Sebastião, patron saint against that epidemic. Much modified in the 19th century, it is currently in ruins. The Capela de São José, dated from the 17th century, has the peculiarity of keeping its original bell, bearing the name of its promoter (Gaspar Serrão, 1634), possibly an important



Chapel of São José - Azinhaga



inhabitant of Azinhaga who lived in the palace fronting the temple, known today as Solar da Família Serrão de Faria. Also, the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Conceição, the main church of Azinhaga, is a place of obligatory visit. Documented since 1297, the church still preserves the medieval coverings of the apse. At the end of the 16th century, the temple was substantially transformed by the Order of Christ, who established a commendation here. The building has gained monumentality, as well as the elegant interior with thin arches in the naves and a coffered cover in the main chapel. Until the end of the 18th century, the church was enriched with artistic and devotional elements, of which the polychrome carved altarpieces stand out.

Golegã

An obligatory point of passage for those who crossed the north of the Lezíria Ribatejana (Ribatejo marshland). An ancient tradition admits that the origin of Golegã was an hostel for travelers and pilgrims, served by the chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Albergaria. In the 17th century,

the local Misericórdia heritage was built around a hostel that existed in the vicinity of St Joseph's church. The Igreja Matriz da Golegã is one of the most important Manueline churches and seat of the Order of Christ local Commendation. Golegã's main church was built around 1501, probably by the architect Boytac (Boitaca), the first author

of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos in Lisbon. The current feature of the temple is the result of a profound restoration carried out in the 20th century, when gilded woodwork altarpieces were removed, which had enriched the church in baroque times, and azulejo panels from the Convento da Graça, in Santarém, were introduced.



House-Studio of José Relvas

This chalet was the residence, laboratory, and studio of photographer José Relvas, built between 1871 and 1875, and completely restored between 2002 and 2007. It is a singular house-museum that evokes the importance of the photographic work of its promoter, but also his eclectic postmedieval and "post-manueline" taste. On the second floor, the photography studio privileged the use of iron and glass, whose light was controlled by mechanical processes for window darkening.

and also...

Expo Égua – May

Olé Golegã – September

National Horse Fair

Feira da Golegã was born in the middle of the 18th century, known until 1972 as Feira de S. Martinho, date from which it became the National Horse Fair. Here,

all the breeders are introduced and the best-thoroughbred horses are sold to the whole world. Golegã has long become the Capital of the Horse. In November it presents, through rallies, raids, equestrian games and exhibitions, exemplars of one of the most beautiful animals in the world: the horse.





Distance 32 km

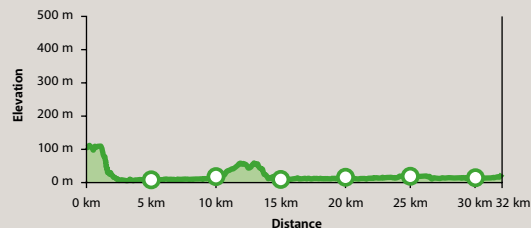
Maximum altitude 111 km

Cumulative increase 204 km

Cumulative descent -287 km

Duration 8h00m

Difficulty (0-5) 3



Before heading to the next stage of the Paths of Santiago, Golegã, we must convince ourselves to leave behind the beautiful panoramic balcony of the Portas do Sol, with the viewpoint integrated into the old walls of Santarém, facing the river Tejo and the vast fields of Ribatejo.

We proceed to the hidden Porta de Santiago gate, near the Igreja da Alcáçova church, and descend the slope towards the Tejo, along the Santiago sidewalk, with some degree of difficulty. In the riverside neighborhood of Ribeira de Santarém, where the railway station is located, we find the Igreja de Santa Iria church, which displays a wooden sculpture of a black Christ crucified but only nailed to the cross by one arm.

After crossing the small medieval bridge of Alcorce, we meet again the fertile fields of Tejo's marshlands, in a succession of extensive farms, ditches and streams that lend a bucolic and muddy rural scenery to our progress along the Path.

It is an equally extensive and flat stage, like the previous one, with no difficulties worthy of note, that crosses the Vale de Figueira and Azinhaga villages. "Galega" (Galician) would be the name given to an existing "Venda"

(Sale) in the place where the village was born, and the name Golegã resulted from "Venda da Galega" (Galician Sale). At that time, the site was highly frequented by travelers going from Santarém to the north, namely by the Roman road that connected Lisbon to Braga, through Tomar. Maybe that's why the horse has assumed a central role, along with the wine and the bulls.

In November, the most important National Horse Fair in the country attracts thousands of visitors who come to toast to São Martinho with chestnuts and "água-pé" (Piquette).

The stage ends next to the Main Church, adorned with a richly sculpted Manueline doorway, in front of which the old Estrada Real (Royal Road) between Lisbon and Porto used to pass. Behind it is the Tourism Office, where you can find out about the various options for your stay, which are expanded every year with new offers of hostels and other accommodation units specially prepared for pilgrims and travelers to Compostela.

If you feel like, don't miss to visit the Photography Museum Casa José Relvas, with a studio unique in the world, from the very beginning of image capture, and the Cultural Center Equuspolis, where it's all about horses.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Golegã City Council
+351 249 979 050
- Azinhaga Parish Council
+351 249 957 140
- Golegã Parish Council
+351 249 976 279
- Pombalinho Parish Council
+351 249 459 401
- Pombalinho Community Meeting House
+351 243 459 120
- Azinhaga Holy House of Mercy
+351 249 957 129
- Golegã Holy House of Mercy
+351 249 979 110

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Golegã Tourism Office
- Taxis Golegã +351 249 976 459
- Golegã Camping

POINTS OF INTEREST

- São José Chapel
- Azinhaga Main Church
- Golegã Main Church– Nossa Senhora da Conceição
- Pombalinho Main Church
- Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve
- Quinta da Cardiga
- Carlos Relvas Studio-House
- EquusPolis – Martins Correia Municipal Museum
- José Saramago Foundation
- Typewriter Municipal Museum
- Rural Museum
- Museological Nucleus of the Portuguese Centre for Geo-History and Prehistory

HEALTH

- Golegã Health Center
+351 249 979 180
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Golegã Fire Department:
+351 249 979 070
GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 249 979 030

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

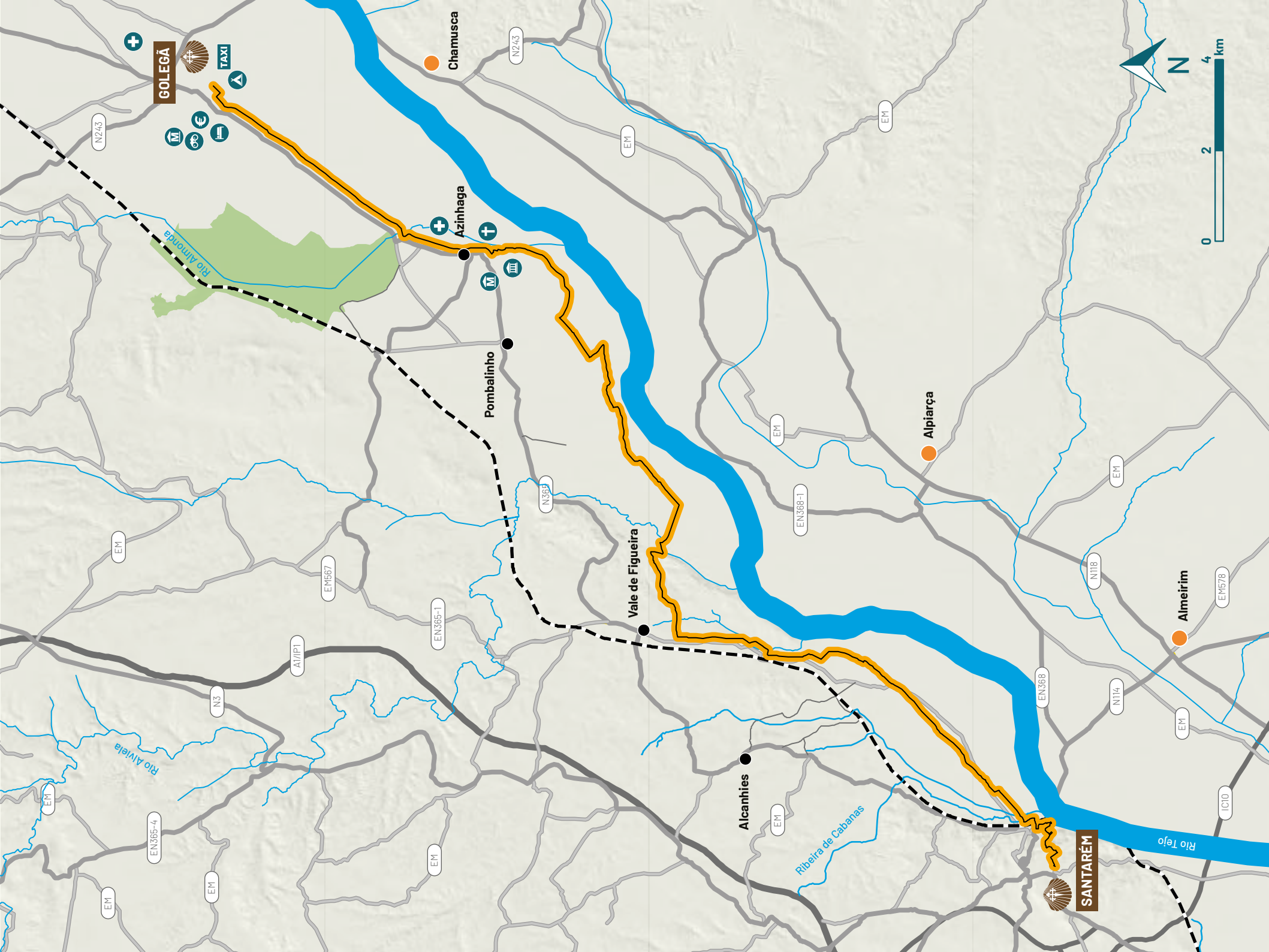


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Golegã ➤ Tomar (Center)

19

Golegã is a village of the Way, not only in the literal sense but mainly because, everywhere we look, we find evidence of the presence and passage of the travelers going to Santiago de Compostela. Being a smaller and quieter village than Santarém, it facilitates the relations between people of different nationalities and generations who arrive at a continuous rhythm, so services targeted to pilgrims appeared. Additionally, the rural and picturesque atmosphere, the friendliness of the people and, of course, the good gastronomic offer. We feel good in Golegã!

Integrated on D. Afonso Henriques' donations to the Order of the Temple in 1169, Quinta da Cardiga had its own commander since the 14th century, which confirms the locality importance as part of the possessions of the Order of Christ. The current configuration of the palace dates back to a profound renovation carried out by Friar António de Lisboa, that preserved the tower of the

old Templar castle. The works continued between 1592 and 1617, in the time of his nephew, Friar Pedro Moniz.



Quinta da Cardiga

e também...

Templar Festival – July

Visitable Collection - Museum of Matches

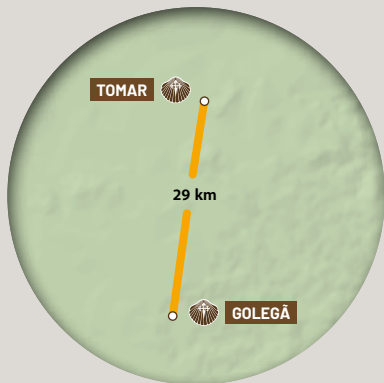
The Museum of Matches is a collection of 60,000 boxes, labels, and matchboxes, donated by Aquiles da Mota to the Council in 1980, conserved in the

Convento de S. Francisco. The collection was born with an exchange of boxes between Mota Lima and an American lady during a sea voyage, on their way to London for the ceremony of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation.

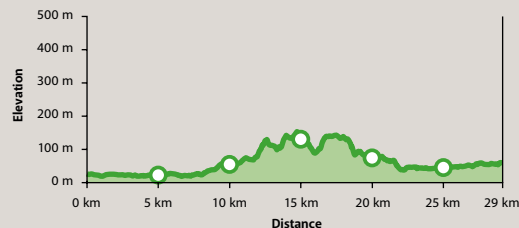




Golegã ➤ Tomar (Center)



Distance 29 km
Maximum altitude 150 m
Cumulative increase 389 m
Cumulative descent -355 m
Duration 7h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Today's stage is a "frontier" one, which means that it connects the Ribatejo region with the central region of Portugal, ending in the city of Tomar, after about 30 km of journey. Leaving the natural border of the Tejo river in Vila Nova da Barquinha, almost everything is gradually changing, but that's already another part of the Path...

To leave Golegã, we cross the village along Rua D. Afonso Henriques, followed by Rua Dr. Branco, to the outskirts of the city. We cross the national road N243 and take the sand path straight ahead until it ends in a narrow rural road. We turn left and face a few flat kilometers flanked by extensive cornfields and plantations that take advantage of the fertile land on this Tejo riverbank.

Before arriving to Quinta da Cardiga, the small village of São Caetano welcomes us with some places that deserve our brief passage, including a hostel for pilgrims and the Ermida de São Caetano hermitage. Donated to the Order of the Knights Templar by D. Afonso Henriques, later transferred to

the possession of the Order of Christ, the historic Quinta da Cardiga still belongs to the imaginary of the population and those who visit it, with a halo of a certain mysticism. It is one of the most impressive properties in the country, unfortunately in an advanced state of degradation. However we can still see the gardens and horticultural gardens, the palace, the chapel and the cloister, the barn and stables and even an old press. We can also admire the Christ's Cross on the façade of the main house and the tower of the old Templar castle. It was one of the guard posts of the Order's militia, and a vital strategic place for the Knights Templar.

We cross the leafy avenue that follows the palace façade to a small bridge over a polluted stream, where the asphalt ends. From now on, we continue the Path to the north, to the village of Pedregoso, the final point of the Caminho de Santiago Central in the Alentejo and Ribatejo. Next, we enter the municipality of Vila Nova da Barquinha and the central region of Portugal. Have a good Path!

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Tomar City Council
+351 249 329 800

SUPPORT

Tourism Office +351 249 329 823

HEALTH

Hospital
+351 249 320 100

Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Tomar Fire Department:
 +351 249 329 140
 GNR – Tomar Territorial Station:
 +351 249 320 060
 PSP Tomar – Public Security Police:
 +351 249 328 040
 Tomar Civil Protection: +351 249 324 030

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WAYS GUIDE

Caminhos de Santiago

Alentejo e Ribatejo

Central – via Tagus
Way

Eastern
Way



Vila Franca de Xira (Lisboa) ►

Azambuja

1

The origin of Azambuja possibly dates back to the 3rd century BC, when the Romans invaded the Iberian Peninsula. At the time, they called it *Oleastrum* (olive tree oil), probably for being very rich in olive oil and having a strong production of it.

Later, inhabited by the Arabs, it was named Azzabuja, meaning wild olive grove, which leads us to think that perhaps the "Roman" olive trees no longer existed.

In 1147, Azambuja was reconquered to the Arabs by D. Afonso Henriques, who gave it to D. Childre Rolim as a reward for his heroism and for deviating himself from the Crusade to the Holy Land to help him in the Siege of Lisbon. D. Childre Rolim populated it and named it Vila Franca. However, the village lost its name after a short time. D. Childre or D. Xira (as he was also known) was later the founder of Vila Franca de Xira and, after moving to the new site, with the purpose of construction and settlement, the village had to resort to the old name attributed by the Arabs, becoming known as Azambuja.

The village of Azambuja was granted a charter by D. Sancho I in 1200, confirmed by D. Afonso II in 1218. In 1513 it had a new charter passed by D. Manuel.



Main Church of Azambuja

The church was built in the middle of the 16th century, a period to which correspond the main and lateral portals, both Mannerists. The main chapel, especially its vault, still recalls Manueine influences, with broad ribs and keystones. The church has the particularity of having the south lateral portal more monumental than the western since it's the one facing the main square of the village. The essence of its filling dates from a period of about 100 years, between the end of the 16th century and the end of the following century. The Tree of Jesse, placed in the altarpiece of Our Lady of the Rosary, dates from 1595. The canvas referring to the Calvário (Calvary) is attributed to the workshop of the painter André Reinoso. Also worthy of note is the 17th-century azulejo flooring and the proto-baroque altarpiece dating from 1686 and done by the engraver Manuel da Fonseca.

Since the beginning of your journey, in Vila Nova da Rainha, you must have noticed a profusion of blue arrows alongside the yellow ones that signal the Caminho de Santiago. And, when you find the first signpost of the Way you will notice that there is also another mark, the Caminho de Fátima, here the one of Tejo. In fact, up to Santarém, the pilgrims' journey to the Santuário de Fátima coincides with the one to Santiago. So, you will certainly have fellow Way travelers, particularly in May and October, during which, on the 13th of each of these months, the most important celebrations take place.



In 1531, due to an earthquake of great magnitude, Vila de Azambuja was badly damaged. Azambuja is connected to the Tejo by means of the so-called Vala Real de Azambuja, a ditch which comprises an extension of 26 km, built by Marquês de Pombal in 1748 with the purpose of irrigating fields.

In the south, the countryside is characterized by the fertile and verdant plains of the Lezírias (marshlands), by the horses and herds of wild cattle, which leads Azambuja to be closely linked to the world of bullfighting - the "Festa Brava". In the north, the dominant economic activity is agriculture: intensive and family-oriented polyculture.

In addition to the great importance of the primary sector in the commune's development of the county, Azambuja has become heavily industrialized. Benefiting from its exceptional location and excellent accessibility, namely the A1 and the railways, it has attracted investment from accredited companies, both

nationally and internationally, social development of the region, which foster the economic and mainly through job creation.



Palace of Obras Novas/Vala Real

Parish Church of Santa Marta – Vila Nova da Rainha

The legend says that it was in this church that D. Nuno Álvares Pereira married Leonor de Alvim on August 15, 1376. The church must date from the 13th century, at the time in which the village began to gain importance in the royal itineraries from Lisbon to the north. The current temple is the result of a reconstruction carried out in the Baroque period, possibly following the earthquake of 1755, as the main façade denounces. In the interior, the long blue and white azulejo cycle, from the second half of the 18th century, depicting scenes from the life and legend of Santa Marta, stands out.

and also...

ÁVINHO – Wine and Taverns Festival – April

Snail Festival – June

Centennial May Fair

The May Fair is the great banner of Azambuja's identity and visibility. Fruit of a persistent socioeconomic rebirth and a constant socio-cultural re-creation, the Fair is recognized as the most popular of Ribatejo for

its popular involvement.

The event is the cultural celebration of a community and people who has Tauromachy inscribed in its identity and cultural matrix. It is now a place and moment of conviviality and sociability, annually shared by Azambuja with thousands of visitors.



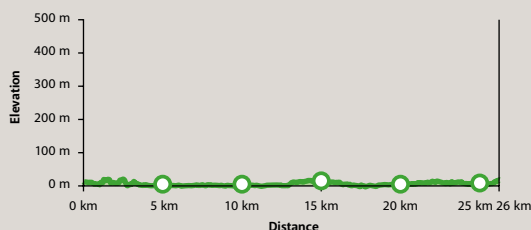
Vila Franca de Xira (Lisboa) ➤

Azambuja

1



Distance 26 km
Maximum altitude 22 km
Cumulative increase 211 km
Cumulative descent -209 km
Duration 6h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



"The Tejo unites different feelings, as if it wanted to be the elder of a large family that everyone admires and respects." (Francisco Hipólito Raposo, "Ribatejo")

The Tejo is also the link that unites the regions of Lisbon and Ribatejo, guiding us along the Lezírias do Tejo (Tagus marshlands) to the small town of Vila Nova da Rainha, which is "da Rainha" (of the Queen) because it was in Santa Marta Main Church that king D. Nuno Álvares Pereira, the Countable, who was largely responsible for the independence of the Portuguese Kingdom, got married in the 14th century.

We pass the only bridge over two rivers (Ota and Alenquer) in Portugal and enter the village at lunchtime, where the perfect symbiosis between the marshland and the Tejo river takes the form of a typical "Caldeirada à Fragateiro" (fish dish), accompanied by good bread and wine. But we mainly remember a surprising and unique Chèvre cheese, produced nearby in the village of Maçussa!

We leave the village crossing the busy road N3 towards the railway halt and, following the

Avenida Gago Coutinho, we see on the left the wide terrain where the national aviation cradle was once located, inaugurated in 1915. In this Aviation School of Vila Nova da Rainha, Sacadura Cabral was a pilot instructor and later, in 1922 together with Gago Coutinho, he would make the first air crossing of the South Atlantic to Brazil!

After the railway station, with the city of Azambuja on the horizon, we follow the railway line, an occasion to enjoy the Tejo alluvial valleys, and the abundant bird life with the Stork and the famous Royal Heron well represented.

The trail that takes us to Azambuja ends by passing under the railway viaduct and we return to the N3 road, arriving right at the southern entrance of Azambuja, a city with centuries of history. Turn left at the intersection and follow Avenida de Valverde.

It was here that the Comendadeira do Mosteiro (Monastery Commander) de Santos da Ordem de Santiago da Espada, built the Igreja da Confraria de Nossa Senhora do Paraíso church, in 1555.

This stage finishes in the Praça do Município, an ample square topped by the church of the patron

saint Nossa Senhora da Assunção, where the most diverse local festivities take place.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Azambuja City Council
+351 263 400 400
- Azambuja Parish Council
+351 263 402 647
- Vila Nova da Rainha Parish Council
+351 263 853 360
- Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Azambuja
+351 263 418 602

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Tourism Office +351 263 400 476
- TAXI Táxis

POINTS OF INTEREST

- São Sebastião Chapel
- Senhor Jesus da Misericórdia Church
- Santa Maria das Virtudes Church and Convent

- Nossa Senhora da Assunção de Azambuja Main Church
- Sebastião Mateus Arenque Municipal Museum
- Azambuja Library
- Industrial Chimney in the Urban Garden
- Aviation Panels, Vila Nova da Rainha
- Azambuja Pillory
- Azambuja Landmark
- Lezíria Ribatejana (Marshland)
- Tagus River
- Vala Real

HEALTH

- Azambuja Health Center
+351 263 407 600
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Azambuja Fire Department:
 +351 263 401 144
 GNR – Azambuja Territorial Station:
 +351 263 418 841
 Vila Nova da Rainha Civil Protection:
 +351 263 403 720

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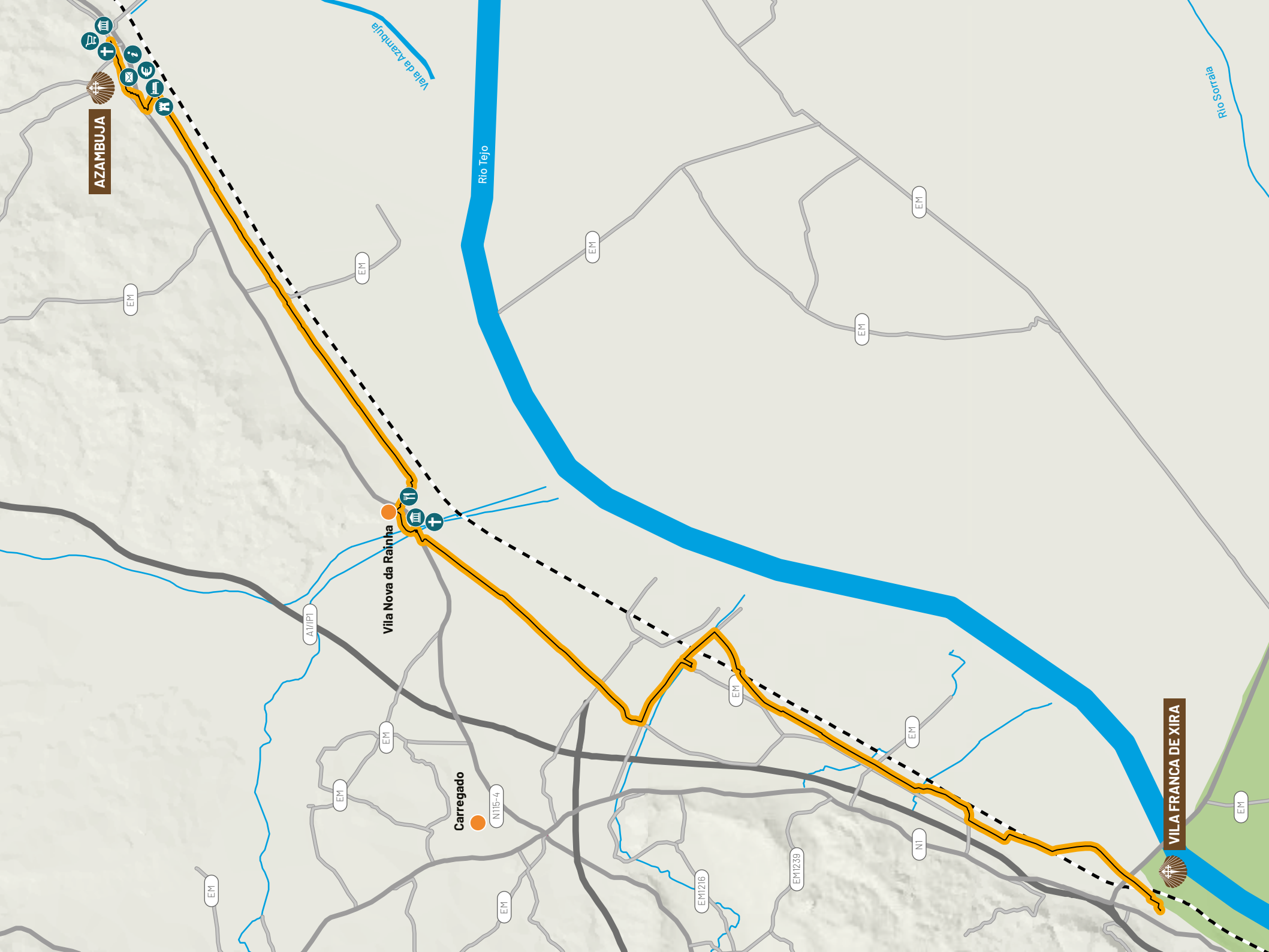
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Rio Sorocaba

Rio Tejo

Rio da Azambuja

AZAMBUJA

Vila Nova da Rainha

Carregado

VILA FRANCA DE XIRA

EM

EM

EM

EM

EM

AV/PI

EM

EM

EM

EM

NT15-4

EM1216

EM1239

NI

EM

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Azambuja ► Santarém

2

In Santarém, a city of great importance to the Order of Santiago, you must visit the Marvila Church, built by the Templars in 1147, with rents offered by the Bishop of Lisbon. Enriched in the 17th century by D. Manuel, its walls are a testimonial of azulejo panels decorative art. Take time to admire the symbolic-cultural richness, the armillary sphere, the Christ cross, the fleurs-de-lys, and the heraldic weapons.

On the way to the top of the hill, we enter the citadel protected by the Muralha (Wall), through Porta de Santiago (Santiago Gate), used by thousands of pilgrims. Here you can observe the “Fernandinos of Portugal” coat of arms, which documents the reinforcement of the village walls. Already at the top, visit the

"Avieira" Culture

In the middle of the 19th century, fishermen from the north fled the harsh conditions of the sea and moved to the Tejo and Sado areas, settling on their riverbanks, which provided them with fish all year round. The particular way of life of these populations, the palafitte houses and docks, and the typical boats, the bateiras, are testimonies that you can still find and visit in this part of the Way, first in Avieira Porto da Palha village, and more to the north, 1 km after the entrance of Reguengo, in the village of Palhota.

Igreja de Santa Maria da Alcáçova church which, after the conquest of Santarém to the Moors by D. Afonso Henriques, was founded by the Templar Knights, masters of Santarém's ecclesiastic, in 1154.

Finally, stop to visit the museum of Torre do Relógio (Clock Tower) and discover the 8 calabashes, or gourds, associated with the

king's legend. By necessity, the village asked the king a Clock Tower. During its construction, the king, who already suspected that public monies were being mismanaged, was very displeased during his visit. Thus it is said that the king had eight calabashes placed, symbolizing the hollow head of the work's architects, to the shame of the village.



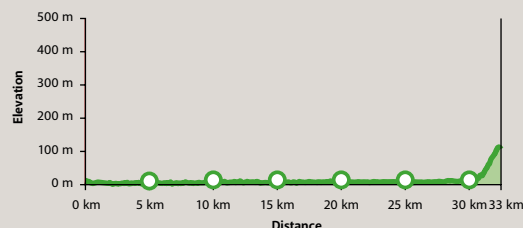
Church of Santa Maria de Marvila | Santarém







Distance 33 km
Maximum altitude 110 m
Cumulative increase 262 m
Cumulative descent -162 m
Duration 8h00m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



To leave Azambuja, we overcome again the unavoidable barrier of the railway line. We get immediately into the immensity of the marshland, following the road for 1.5 km until we reach Vala Real, where we deviate to the left and follow the main canal, and then a secondary canal, on your right.

If you come with time, in the place before the road exit follow instead the detour to the right through the cultivated fields, and discover this section of Vala Real until its mouth (about 3.5 km), a canal with a total length of 26 km built at the behest of Marquês de Pombal, in the 18th century. Near the mouth, be sure to appreciate the natural charm of the surrounding flora and fauna and find the Palácio da Rainha. Although it is in an advanced state of degradation, it was a landmark at the end of the 18th century, functioning as a warehouse and hostel to support the group of steam boats that circulated in the Tejo.

We come back to the previous point and, at the end of the secondary canal, we reach again the almost deserted road, through

which we follow, among cultivated fields to lose sight, until Aldeia do Reguengo.

As a curiosity, we suggest here a detour of 1 km towards the river Tejo, to the site of Palhota, where there are important records of the so-called "Avieira Culture", candidate for National Heritage (see box).

From Reguengo to Valada, we walk 2 km without history, but we advise you to stop and recover your energy in this small but typical Ribatejo village.

Head to Rua da Cova da Onça, along the dyke on the Tejo riverbanks until Porto de Muge, an old resort in Roman times. From here you have the option to take the additional 2.5 km road to Muge and pass over the century-old Rainha D. Amélia bridge over the Tejo.

Before proceeding to Santarém, make sure you have all the supplies and water needed, because you won't find other support points until the end of this stage. Entering through Rua do Sabugueiro, you now have about 10 km of dirt track ahead, before reaching the tarmac

road that passes under a viaduct and flanks the airfield, then passing through the village of Onias, already in the city vicinity. On your left you will now have to face the final ascent of the Calçada da Junqueira sidewalk which, on hot days, turns out to be a real ordeal! Maybe that's why, almost 200 years ago, someone wanted to ease the pilgrims suffering and ordered the construction

of a fountain in the middle of the arduous climb. The water is unsuitable for drinking, but the tanks refresh our sore feet and soul...

We finally enter Santarém and head for Largo Cândido dos Reis square. In front of the mall you will find an interpretative panel that marks the place where the Paths of Santiago and Fátima split.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Câmara Municipal de Santarém,
Divisão de Turismo +351 243 304 258

SUPPORT

CTT Post Office
 Bank/Cash Dispenser
 Tourism Office +351 243 304 437

POINTS OF INTEREST

Alcáçova Church
 Vale Figueira Main Church
 Misericórdia Church
 Santa Maria de Marvila Church
 Santarém Cathedral
 Diocesano Museum of Santarém

Junqueira Fountain
 Alcorce Bridge
 São Tiago Gate
 Cabaças Tower
 Portas do Sol Belvedere Garden

HEALTH

Santarém Hospital
+ 351 243 300 200
 Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Santarém Fire Department:
+351 243 377 900
 Santarém Fire Department:
+351 243 333 122
 GNR – Santarém Territorial Station:
+351 243 300 070
 PSP – Public Security Polic: +351 243 322 022

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

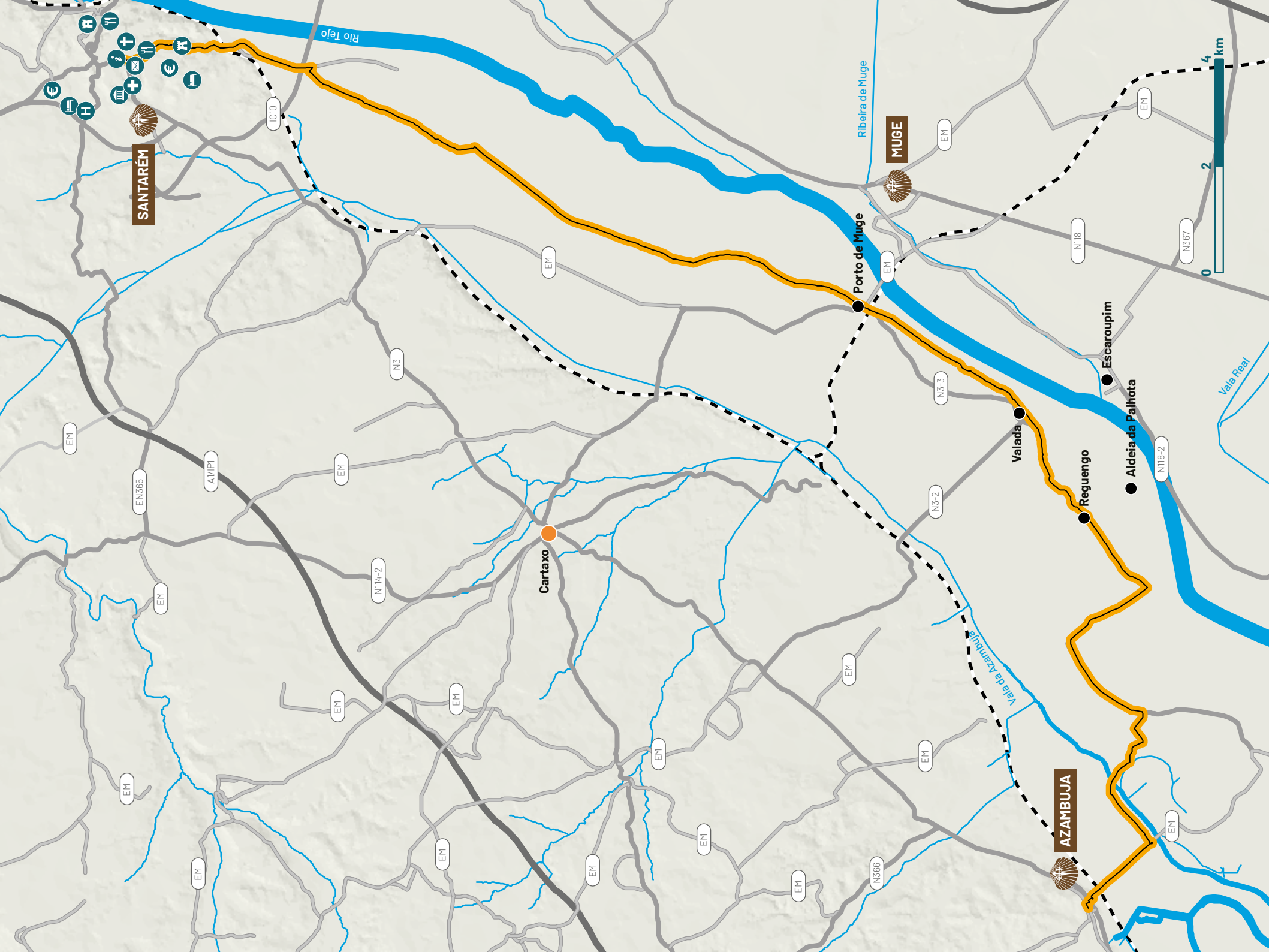


CODE OF CONDUCT

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WAYS GUIDE

Caminhos de Santiago

Alentejo e Ribatejo

Central
Way

Eastern
Way



Alcoutim (Algarve) ► Mesquita

1



Coming from Alcoutim, we "navigate" the Guadiana river always along the Portuguese margin, following the signs of route GR15, until we reach the stream Ribeira do Vascão, already with the accumulated fatigue of some kilometers through the Algarve mountains. The passage of Vascão Stream is made in the marked area, assuming that the water level is shallow, as it almost always is, except in the periods of heavy rains.

River of Vascão

The Ribeira do Vascão is an affluent of the Guadiana river and is one of the few watercourses still practically wild in the south of the country. It ranges about 70 Kms in schistous terrain, from Cerro do Zebro, at more than 500 m of altitude, to Guadiana's mouth, at 10 m altitude. It is possible that the name comes from the Arabic word basqa, which means "stony zone".



Mesquita

Mesquita is located at a strategic point, a natural access road to the Guadiana river. There used to be one of the main natural barriers to larger boats, which at that time moored at the local port and made their trade.

Different people and different products were found here, making the river a great highway of commercial traffic at that time.



Hermitage of Nossa Senhora das Neves

In the locality of Mesquita, municipality of Mértola, this hermitage of Our Lady of the Snow rises on top of a hill whose construction dates back to the time before the reconquest. From the 8th and 9th centuries onward, the first signs of sacralization are evident. A marble column on the site shows the date of its construction. Despite its sacralization, there are archaeological remains in Mértola's archaeological field that point out that this place would also have been a Paleo-Christian mosque at the time. The first information dates back to 1515, by a visitor from the Order of Santiago. This church, which had some importance in terms of its assets, was not known until today. It is known from its description that there were three altars, one dedicated to S. Bento (St Benedict), another dedicated to S. Bartolomeu (St Bartholomew) and the main altar dedicated to Nossa Senhora das Flores (Our Lady of the Flowers), the patron saint of the hermitage. Later, this church would be consecrated to Nossa Senhora das Neves (Our Lady of the Snow), and even today we can see its image in the center of the main altar, dated from the 19th century.

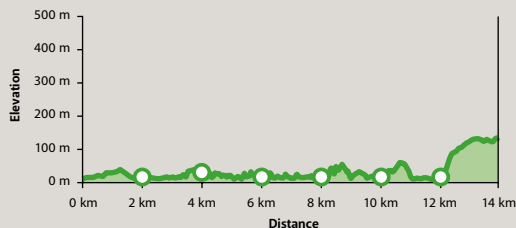


Alcoutim (Algarve) ► Mesquita

1



Distance 14 km
Maximum altitude 134 m
Cumulative increase 658 m
Cumulative descent -536 m
Duration 3h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Already on the Alentejo side, we are greeted with a very steep ascent, inevitable to conquer the deep stream valley, until we reach the plateau. We stop there to observe a beautiful 360° panoramic view, covering the undulating landscape of successive hills that spread to lose sight.

The trail to the village of Mesquita continues through multicoloured fields, flanked by ancient walls and circular stone fences that testify to the activity of grazing or ancient undetermined occupations. We are in the extreme southwest of the territory, in a deserted area where, even today, little is known about the history of its human occupation.

About 2 km later, we glimpse the Ermida de Nossa Senhora das Neves chapel, on a small ridge on the right and, soon after, the old and

genuine village of Mesquita. In this picturesque village, the few dozens of residents, united around a project of common interest, have taken up the challenge of rehabilitating several houses and establishments, with the sole aim of providing support and shelter to future travellers on the Path to Santiago.

Mesquita is, in the Caminho de Santiago Nascente do Alentejo (Alentejo Eastern Path to Santiago), the emblematic example of the strength and hope that the Path to Santiago is capable of instilling in people, removing them from isolation and promoting local development. When you arrive at the new tavern of the town square (which should already be functioning), or the building of the Sociedade Recreativa Mesquitense, drink to the health of this small community that has united and worked for your comfort and support on the Path. Well done!

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Mértola City Council
+351 286 610 109
- Espírito Santo Parish Council
+351 286 675 250

SUPPORT

- TAXI** Táxis
- Pilgrim Public Showers
+351 964 879 133
- Camping
+351 964 879 133
- AL** Hostel Nossa Senhora das Neves
+351 964 879 133
- Snack Bar Valadas

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Mértola Fire Department:
 +351 286 610 010
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 286 612 127
 Mértola Civil Protection: +351 286 610 100

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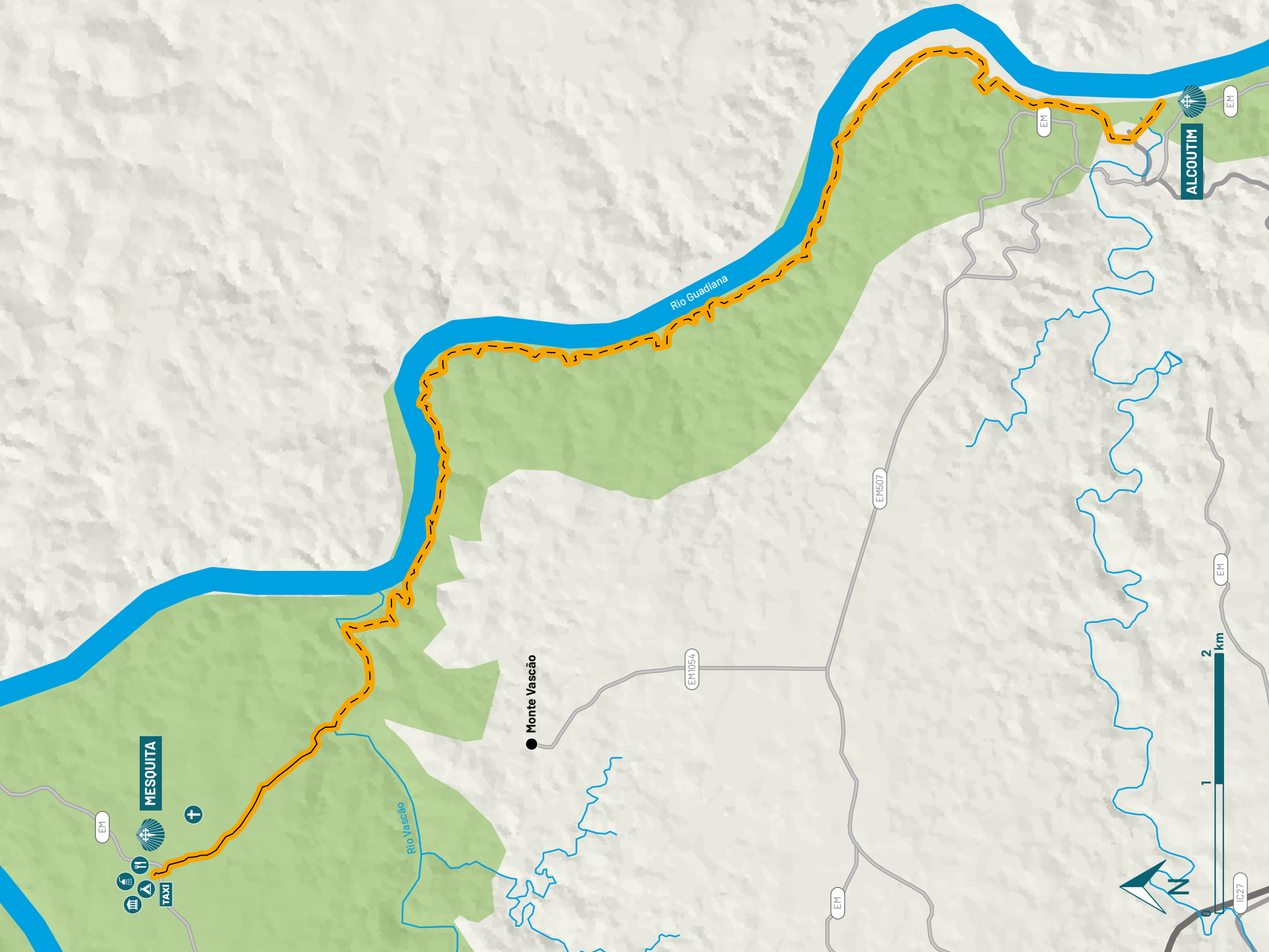


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Mesquita ➤ Mértola

2

We leave the village within the ancient stone walls that already then led people to Mértola. We enter the protected area of the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana and, further away from the Algarve, we follow the Way to the north, towards the

deep Alentejo. Here, the green of the juniper scrublands and the singular holm oak forest are worth notice. In spring, the centenary blossomed tamarisk trees add some yellow and pink to it. We breathe the fresh air and go on our way!

Mértola

Mértola was the Portuguese headquarters of the Order of Santiago since 1248 (ten years after the conquest of the city by the spatharii and 1482. In fact, it enjoyed the status of seat only until 1316, as after the conquest of the Algarve, the Santiagan preferred to reinforce the heritage they held in Alcácer do Sal, although the "capital" was still in Mértola. The Order left deep marks on the city's history and heritage, with special mention to the construction of the church of Santiago (today the sacred art nucleus of the municipal museum) and the artistic patronage of the Mascarenhas family, the town's spathari commanders.



Main Church of Mértola

The former mosque of Mértola is the most relevant monument of the locality. It dates back to the second half of the 19th century and was built using Roman and later elements. Even today, two Islamic capitals from the 19th century are still preserved, reused from another mosque that existed in the city. In the origin, the mosque was bigger than the current temple, and still preserves four horseshoe arches and the mihrab, a niche oriented to Mecca to where the believers direct their prayers. With the conquest by the order of Santiago, the new lords transformed the mosque into a church and imposed its symbol on the façade. Inside, the current appearance of the roof, in a vault dates back to the Manueline era, replacing the previous wooden solution. The temple was then reduced to four sections instead of the original six. A new main portal was built, already Renaissance and designed by the sculptor André Pilarte, at the time established in the eastern Algarve. The promoter of these works was the commander D. João de Mascarenhas, whose memory was immortalized in a corbel of the interior, which contains a human bust and the inscription "IOANE".

The portal of the church of Misericórdia/Núcleo de Arte Sacra (former Igreja de Santiago) dates back to 1558, the approximate period of temple's construction and for the creation of the Misericórdia de Mértola. The church has, however, a previous origin. A visit that took place in 1565 clarifies that it had been dedicated to Santiago until the residents instituted the Misericórdia there. It was the closest church to the city's medieval port, which was accessed through the Porta da Ribeira gate. The current feature of the temple dates back to a renovation carried out in the 16th century and its adaptation to the museum





Castle of Mértola

Enjoying a privileged strategic position, at the confluence of the Oeiras stream with the Guadiana river, the castle of Mértola played an essential role in the Middle Ages, both on the Muslim and Christian sides. The origins, however, seem to be Roman, when a first defensive stronghold was defined. In Islamic times, the city was the most important river port of the Guadiana, where men and cargoes between Mérida and the Atlantic Ocean, used to pass. The Islamic occupation was growing from the 19th century onwards to the point where Mértola was the capital of a small independent kingdom in the 30s and 40s of the 11th century and again in the mid 12th century. Integrated into the Almohad block at the end of that century, it was subject to great improvements, as shown by the elbow entry of the fortress, typical of Muslim defensive systems. The city was conquered by the Knights of the Order of Santiago in 1238. Soon after, recognizing the relevance of the city as a point of support for the conquests of the Algarve, the spathari installed here its seat, a statute that lasted until 1316. D. Paio Peres Correia, master of the Order of Santiago, passed a charter to the town in 1254. And it was another master, D. João Fernandes, who, around 1292, promoted the construction of the castle's keep, still remaining today and rising to almost 30 meters high.

nucleus of sacred art occurred in the 90s of the 20th century when the multi-centered museum of Mértola was established.

The former church of Santiago's altarpiece,, dated from the end of the 19th century and attributed to the painter Júlio Dinis de Carvo, is another work of art that evokes the figure of Santiago as Matamouros (The Moor-slayer). The apostle is mounted on a white horse and has his sword drawn, while he holds the Order of Santiago's banner with his other hand, in a composition model that is often repeated. Commander D. João Mascarenhas commissioned a large altarpiece for the main church in 1532. The works took a long time and, in 1554, it was already placed on the north side of the church, but still lacked the color application. The main panel is dedicated to the Calvário (Calvary), but the predella contains the representation of Santiago Matamouros, again on horseback, with sword and banner of the Order in his hands, attacking a group of infidels, one of them wearing a turban. The second panel of this altarpiece is also preserved, dedicated to the Pentecost, and where the figure of Santiago also stands out, with the pilgrim's attributes.

and also...

Islamic Festival – May

Mértola Municipality Festivities – June

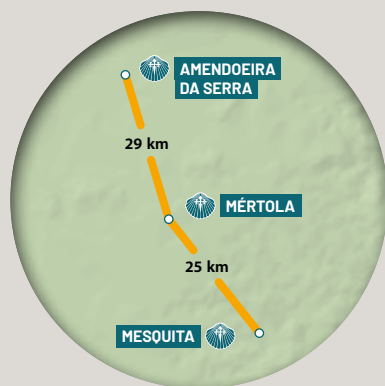
Hunting Fair – October

Birdwatching

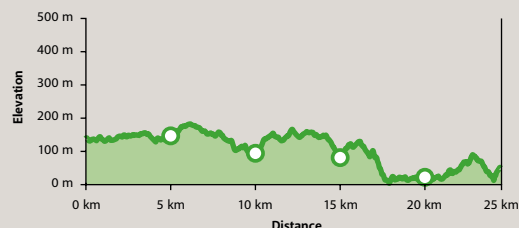
The Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana/Casa (House) do Lanternim is the local entity responsible for the

management of the Natural Park area, providing binding opinions on many aspects of tourist activity. Its headquarters are also an important source of information on the nature tourism activities and territory natural resources/values.





Distance 25 km
Maximum altitude 182 m
Cumulative increase 636 m
Cumulative descent -724 m
Duration 6h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



of vineyards, always bordering the Guadiana. Already outside the Herdade, we continue to follow the river, in a path also marked with the pedestrian trail "PR1" signs, then climbing between hills to reach Poço dos Dois Irmãos well, just before the junction with the tarmac road (IC27). We continue along the IC27 with some caution, because the traffic here is already significant, and the berms are narrow. After 1.7 km, we are at the gates of this town-museum of Mértola.

We cross the bridge, where the currents of the Ribeira de Oeiras stream bubble up. We go up the slope on the right, along the south wall, bypassing the protected citadel inside the fortification.

From Lombardos we travel 1,5 km by dirt track to a wide viewpoint over the majestic Guadiana river. We walk down a steep stream to the banks of "Rio dos Patos" (Duck River) and, if we go carefully, apart from those we see a whole universe of birds that make the delights of birdwatching lovers. We are at the mouth of a stream whose flows rise and fall daily, according to the Guadiana tides. On the left, we find a bridge and a dam that allow us to cross it and access Herdade da Bombeira. We follow the path along 18 ha

Almost in the centre of the village, we head down an alley, on the left, to the Tourism Office. Here, it is imperative to seek all available information, as you will not want to follow the Path without having the opportunity to know in depth all that this ancient Order of Santiago seat has to reveal and can't be described here. In Mértola you will feel well and be well served.

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

-  Mértola City Council
+351 286 610 109
-  Mértola Parish Council
+351 286 612 420
-  Espírito Santo Parish Council
+351 286 675 250

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Mértola Tourism Info Point
+351 286 610 109
- Táxis

POINTS OF INTEREST

-  São Miguel do Pinheiro Parish Council
-  Espírito Santo Parish Council
-  Heritage circuit and Mértola Museum
-  Mértola Historic and Cultural Heritage: Order of Santiago
-  Salvador Hermitage, Mosteiro Museological Nucleus

- ICNF - Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana/
Casa do Lanternim – Seat of PNVG
- Vale do Guadiana Natural Park
- Pulo do lobo
- Guadiana River

HEALTH

-  Mértola Health Center
+351 286 610 900
-  Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Mértola Fire Department: +351 286 610 010
GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 286 612 127
Mértola Civil Protection: +351 286 610 100

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www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

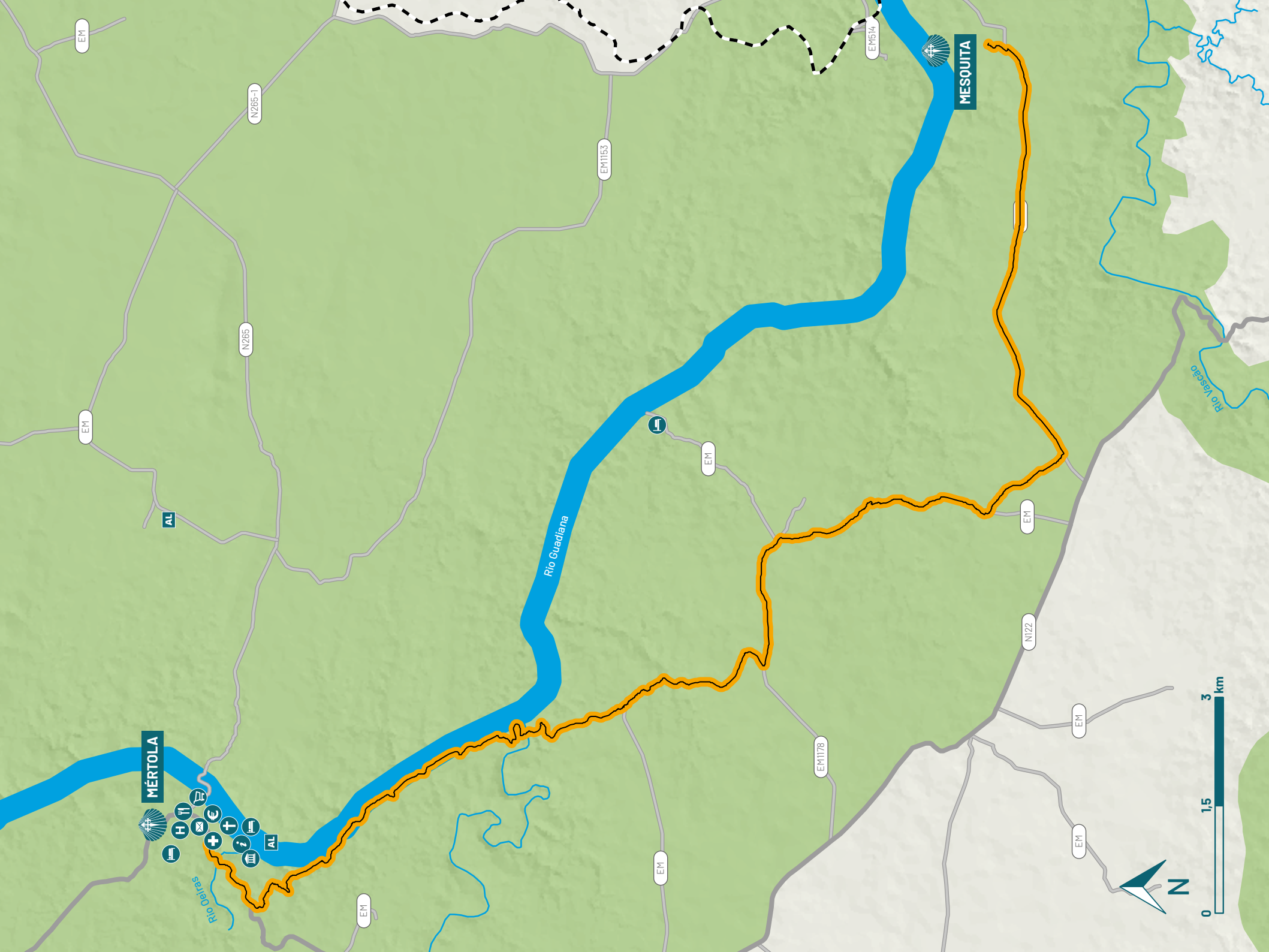


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Mértola ► Amendoeira da Serra

3



In a region where hunting is the dominant activity with centuries of history, as in the entire municipality of Mértola, the wealth of fauna resources in Amendoeira da Serra is great. This is particularly emphasized during the Feira da Caça (Hunting Fair), in October.

Here, we breathe history and, on the way there, we go through the Via Romana XXII (Roman Road), through the forest of stone pines that accompany us. The Road belonged to the

Church of Mosteiro

Occupied since the Roman era, this small town preserves one of the oldest churches in the country, built in the Visigothic period to house a family-type monastery. It also preserves the essential part of the temple, with a vaulted main chapel and a unique nave. More recently, the complex has been adapted to residential and agricultural functions, which is why its transformation into a museum has privileged a collection of agricultural tools rescued in the locality.

Itinerarium Antonini Augusti, the register of the Roman Empire stations and roads. Although it has progressively lost its route

in successive private game reserves, from time to time it is still possible to discover some original sections.



The Municipality of Mértola is one of the main territories of Portugal's hunting activity, and the one, among all through which the Way passes, where hunting takes prominence at all levels. Whenever you observe a signboard with the sign reproduced here (regardless of the text written on it), you will be in a hunting zone. In the period between the beginning of October and the end of December (or until the end of February, in some cases), you will often hear shots along the Way. This has led to the need to adapt the route in order to ensure the safety of travelers at any time of the year, requiring a greater length of road travel than it would be desirable. That's why we highlight the need not to make detours or other incursions into hunting grounds during the period mentioned above.

The Iberian lynx is the most threatened carnivorous mammal in Europe and the most threatened feline in the world, due to the small number of animals and populations existing in nature and its limited area of distribution. The reintroduction of the Iberian lynx into Portugal began in 2015, and between 2015 and 2017, 27 animals were released in Vale do Guadiana as part of the LIFE Iberlynce project, whose goal is to recover the historical distribution of the species. The harmonious coexistence of human activities and the viability of this wild cat in the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana has not been easy, with frequent reports of road kills and other causes. Knowing and respecting the Iberian lynx and its habitat is, therefore, an essential aspect for environmental citizenship and an important contribution to its conservation and recovery of the species.

Landscape Interpretation Center of Amendoeira da Serra

Established in environmentally sensitive territory, the Interpretation Center for Amendoeira da Serra Landscape has information on the flora and fauna of the region, as well as on the human use of the Guadiana river and human occupation in the vast area, now almost desert, between Mértola and Beja.

and also...

Ethnobotanist Festival Pulo do Lobo – May Hermitage of Salvador, current museum nucleus of Mosteiro

The small town of Mosteiro is located on the way to Pulo do Lobo, near Amendoeira da Serra. At one of its edges, slightly far away, there is a building that, due to its architectural characteristics, can be identified as a small cult building. In ancient times this place was a villa or mansion, and later, with the adoption of Christianity as the official religion, it was adapted into a family-type monastery. The hermitage of S. Salvador is probably a 17th-century construction and

was already unoccupied in the 19th century.

The importance of this building's conservation led to the development of a recovery and enhancement project that culminated, in 2012, with its integration into the Museum of Mértola. The adaptation into the museum nucleus includes a set of contents and exhibition solutions that allow the visitor to fully understand the site. On the other hand, through the exhibition of agricultural tools offered by local inhabitants, it is also possible to connect the people, creating identity ties and promoting the collective memory preservation.

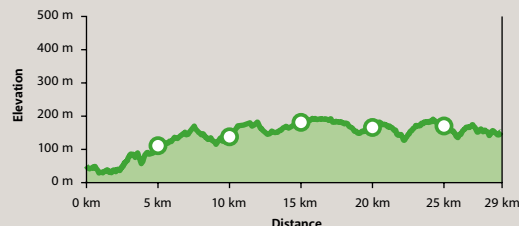


Mértola ► Amendoeira da Serra

3



Distance 29 km
Maximum altitude 197 m
Cumulative increase 682 m
Cumulative descent -586 m
Duration 8h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



The beginning of the stage is signposted in the center of the village but, in fact, you can leave from any place as long as you head to the big north roundabout, which distributes the traffic on the national roads to Beja and Serpa.

We pass the roundabout, with the sculpture symbolizing a gateway into the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana. We take the direction of the Azenha do Guadiana watermill - which you should not miss - and, at the end of the street, we enter the dirt track. Back on the road (first to IC27), after a bifurcation, a secondary road takes us to Corte Gafo de Cima, in a course of almost 10 km on the asphalt sideways. But don't be discouraged! We follow the secondary road between undulating hills, in a protected area of the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana, where the almost extinct Iberian lynx is still trying to be preserved. Urban noises fade away and the sounds of nature and rural life predominate. It is impossible not to notice the replacement of the riparian landscape by that of the large cereal steppes. In spring, we are not the only ones to be attracted by the sweet smell of

rosemary and cistus. Among holm oaks, cork oaks and many sheep herds, we discover another gold product of the region, the honey.

We continue towards Corte Gafo de Cima, a typical Moorish village of Baixo (Low) Alentejo, where most of the houses are still built in "taipa" (adobe and wood), as shown by the memorial right at the entrance to the village. On the left we can see the Capela de São Bento, from the 16th century. At the request of the inhabitants, the Order of Santiago authorised the construction of this humble chapel in order to avoid the long journey to Mértola.

Before leaving, heat up with a glass of "hidromel" (mead) and try the local sweets, the delicious "costas" or "nogados". After Corte de Gafe de Cima, we proceed to the Monastery. The landscape "absorbs us", simultaneously inhospitable and beautiful, and awakens a mixture of emotions that hang between fascination and anxiety... Since we feel so irrelevant, we just want to disconnect... We continue with the taste of a "sea" of hills

of continuous fields, painted with magnificent holm-oaks, passing through few "hills" in remote places, to the quiet village of Mosteiro, where we find one of the oldest churches in Portugal, built in the Visigothic period. We have a cup of coffee in the small tavern of the Centro Recreativo (Recreation Centre) and go down to the asphalted road, where we retake the Path in

the direction of Amendoeira da Serra. After 2.5 km we arrive at the intersection with the road that took us to Corte Gafo de Cima and ends here. Dona Maria Oriette is already waiting for us at the cafe-restaurant of Centro Recreativo e Cultural de Amendoeira da Serra and we have a bed prepared at the Centro de Acolhimento (Reception Centre).

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Mértola City Council
+351 286 610 109

SUPPORT

Táxis

Cafe/Restaurant Centro Recreativo e Cultural de Amendoeira da Serra

Cafe Centro Recreativo e Cultural de Mosteiro +351 286 998 247

Centro de Acolhimento da Amendoeira da Serra +351 286 610 000

Monte do Vento +351 286 610 000

POINTS OF INTEREST

Salvador Hermitage, Mosteiro Museological Nucleus

HEALTH

Mértola Health Center
+351 286 610 900

Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Mértola Fire Department: +351 286 610 010
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 286 612 127
 Mértola Civil Protection: +351 286 610 100

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Amend. da Serra ► Cabeça Gorda

4

The origins of Cabeça Gorda village, by now in the municipality of Beja, are unknown. However, there are historical data showing that its creation was much earlier than Portugal's birth, probably during the Arab occupation, which began in the year 711 AD.

Created under the name of Nossa Senhora da Conceição (Our Lady of Conception) da Rocha, it is today known as Cabeça Gorda (Fat Head), a popular name that is believed to be associated with its toponymy: "cabeça" (head) deriving from "Cabeço", that means hill, and "Gorda" (large) because of its width. And the village, located at the highest point of the region, is, in fact, placed on a "large hill".



Main Church of Cabeça Gorda

A relatively modest temple commissioned by the Order of Santiago, whose cross is still part of the parish council coat of arms. The building has a current layout that should date back to the 16th century, when one of the two towers that flank the main façade was erected. The second tower was erected in 1913 at the time when the church was also enlarged.



On the way to Cabeça Gorda



The village is defined by a typical Alentejo landscape of montado (mix of holm oak and cork oak forest), especially the red of the clay soils that accompany the traveler along the road. The traces of the Order of Santiago are also found in the village coat

of arms, which has the Order's red cross in the middle of two green moons. Between Cabeça Gorda and the "twin" village of Salvada, just two kilometers away, much of the history of the Islamic period and the subsequent reconquer took place here, in the

suburbs of Beja. A history that left its traces, engraved in the names of the streets, such as Rua da Estalagem (Inn Road), reminding us that, once upon a time, Cabeça Gorda was a place of travelers assistance.



and also...

"Silarca" Mushroom Festival – March

Anniversary of the Commune – April

MTB event Terras de Mato – May

Cultural Week – July/August

Festivities in Honor of São Luís – August

Biological Park of Cabeça Gorda

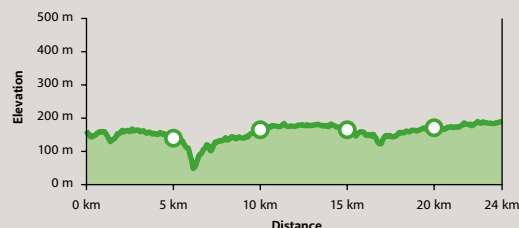
The Centro de Interpretação dos Recursos Naturais (Interpretation Center of Natural Resources) is located in the Perímetro Florestal de Cabeça Gorda e da Salvada Biopark, a property of 324.8 ha under the responsibility of the civil parishes Parish with the same name. With the time this space, like much of the

Alentejo, was occupied by cereal crops and intensive grazing, causing an increasing soil impoverishment. In order to reverse this situation, the project for afforestation of the Perimeter was approved in 1958, and it is today completely afforested, with the most dominant species being the cork oak and eucalyptus. The project's main goal is to enhance and promote the environmental and rural heritage of the Cabeça Gorda and Salvada Forest Perimeter, qualifying this area as a reference for cultural, educational and leisure activities in rural and natural areas.





Distance 24 km
Maximum altitude 190 m
Cumulative increase 415 m
Cumulative descent -388 m
Duration 6h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



Leaving Amendoeira da Serra, we return to the previous day intersection and, turning right, we enter a wide road, which we follow for a few kilometers, until a deviation to the left in full descent that might go unnoticed. We are at the northern limit of the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana.

With Serpa mountain range on the right in the horizon, we pass the ford over the stream Ribeira de Terges which, in some rainy periods of the year, may bring water flows that blocks the river passage. At these times, we won't explore the slippery banks looking for alternative passages, but should rather ask for support in Amendoeira da Serra so they can transport us to an alternative path or even directly to the village of Cabeça Gorda.

We are already in Beja municipality, outside the protected area of the Natural Park. We follow successive hills for 8 km, stopping from time to time to enjoy the holm oak forests, the delicate yellow-flowered narcissus, *Narcissus cavanillesii*, or the purple thistle, *Centaurea coutinhoi*, which are both protected.

In a crossroad already with asphalt road, we chose the direction of Vale de Russins village, the only point of support of this stage, so we choose to rest here. We get some supplies at the grocery store of D. Elisete Ramos, have a coffee at Taberna Romão and we keep in memory the conversations and glances exchanged with these few inhabitants, whose eyes shine again with the new "life" brought to the village by the Path of Santiago.

We move in the direction of Cabeça Gorda by dirt track. We find several estates and their flocks, and we are even surprised with a Chinese gate on our right, right in the middle of nowhere, witnessing for sure the eastern origin of its owner.

We continue through the middle of an extensive forest perimeter of stone pine. We enter the village of Cabeça Gorda, leave the stone path and enter the paved street João Martins Gonçalves. At the end, before reaching Praça de Magalhães Lima square, we see the Main Church. It's a modest temple with expansions dating back to the 19th century, ordered by the Order of Santiago.

We can see that no one dares to circulate in the streets at the peak of the heat. At the end of the afternoon, through the streets of the village we discover some regional handicrafts.

In March, all the attention turns to a much appreciated delicacy, the Silarca mushroom. The Festival lasts three days and is dedicated entirely to the region and the *Amanita ponderosa*. In addition to the exhibition of regional products and

gastronomic shows, we can see the inhabitants of Cabeça Gorda and its surroundings, in the art of harvesting this natural resource, in Portugal's emblematic ecosystem.

We conclude the journey in the main square of the village, heading to the local parish council that will guide us to the available local accommodation.

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

-  Beja City Council
+351 284 311 800
-  Cabeça Gorda Parish Council
+351 284 947 294
-  Salvada Parish Council
+351 284 947 114

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Monte da Corte Ligeira

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ✚ Cabeça Gorda Parish Council
- ✚ Moinho de Vento Park
- ✚ Cabeça Gorda Biological Park

HEALTH

-  Salvada Health Extension
+351 284 947 275
-  Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Beja Fire Department: +351 284 311 660
GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 284 947 113
Beja Civil Protection: +351 284 313 050

www.visitalentejo.pt
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www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

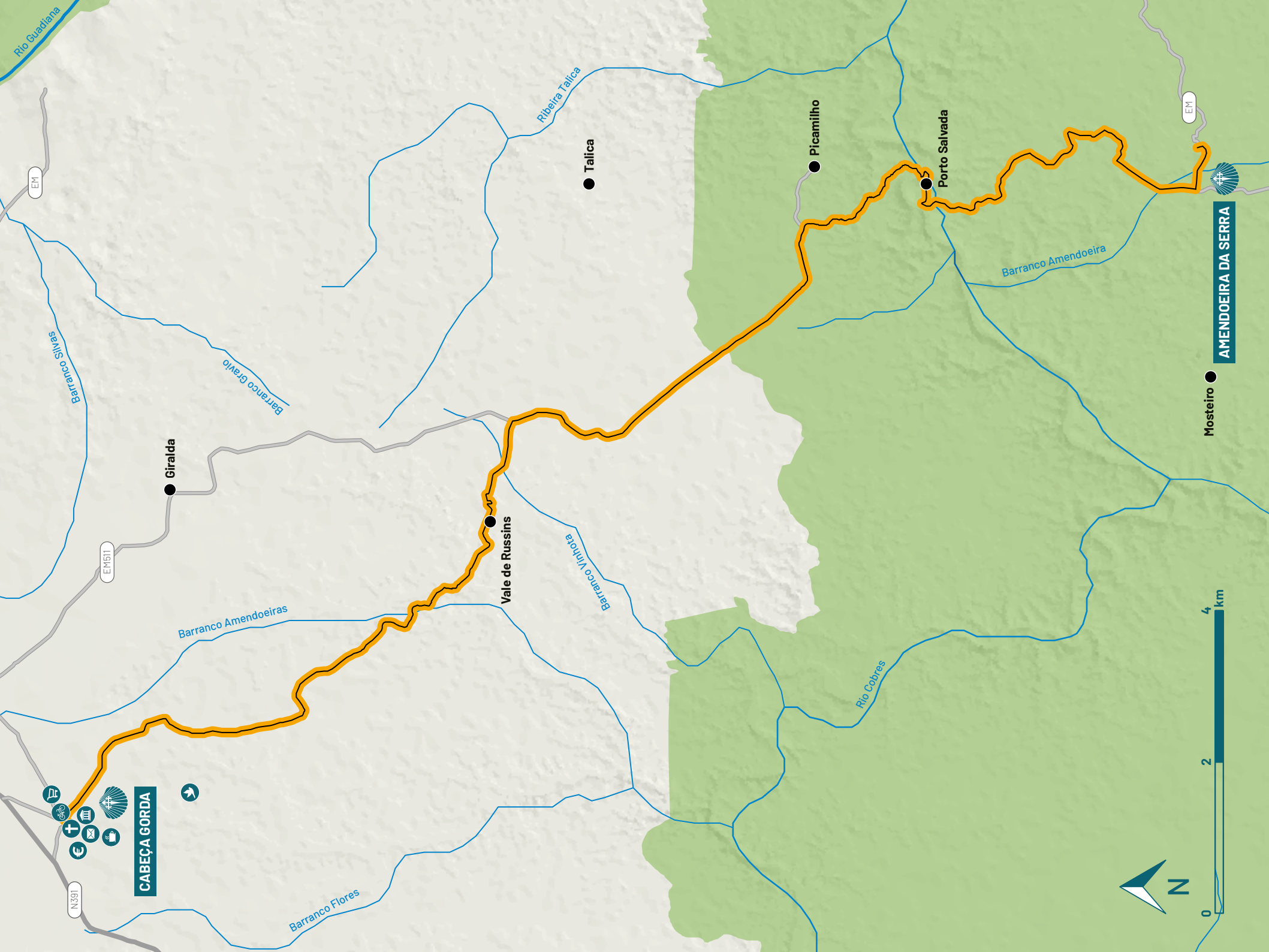


CODE OF CONDUCT

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Rio Guadiana

Ribeira Talica

Talica

Picamilho

Porto Salvada

Barranco Amendoieira

AMENDEIRA DA SERRA

Mosteiro

Giralda

Vale de Russins

Barranco Vinhota

Barranco Amendoieiras

Rio Cobre

Barranco Flores

CABEÇA GORDA



Cabeça Gorda ► Beja

5

It is a short and relatively flat stage until Beja, the capital of Baixo (Low) Alentejo. This will allow us to dedicate some time to discover its immense heritage and culture wealth and to recover from the greatest effort of the previous days. We are in the middle of the plains of Beja's rich red lands, which have been disputed over the centuries by the various peoples who have occupied them. So don't be surprised if, along the Way, you find a team of archaeologists revealing more traces of Neolithic, Islamic or Roman

people's occupations, with many stories and legends associated. Capital of the District, Beja, known as Pax Julia - as it was here that Júlio César formalized peace with the Lusitanos in the 1st century BC -, was definitively conquered between 1232 and 1234, but, at that time, the territory of the Pax Julia's old diocese was divided in the dioceses of Évora and Badajoz. The first conquest occurred in 1162, but it was only in the first half of the following century that the city became definitively a Portuguese possession.

The traces of the Order of Santiago are clearly visible on the azulejo tiles with the scallop,



Castle of Beja's Door



Castle of Beja



until we reach the city's largest silhouette, the keep of Beja's Castle, where the Tourism Office is installed. The original structure of the castle is very old, but the most significant enlargements and restorations date from the 14th century. The works were ordered by King D. Fernando to the commanders and masters of the Order of Santiago in 1372. The imposing keep, which still

distinguishes Beja's contours today as it rises to a height of 40 meters, dates back to the end of the reign of D. Dinis. Due to the presence of a battlement with machicolations on the terrace, it is similar to the imposing keep of Estremoz castle.

Beja's citadel had also two doors and a pentagonal perimeter, in which the Governor's House was

built. The whole was articulated with a more complex system of urban walls, with 40 turrets and 7 doors, some of which should accompany the layout of the late Roman wall (as can be seen in the Portas de Avis gates).

Just below it, in Largo São Tiago square, is the Church of Santiago, which has played the Cathedral's role since 1925.



Church of Santiago/Cathedral of Beja

The first mention of the Church of Santiago dates back to the 14th century and it is uncertain if it was built following the city conquest. The building was greatly modified at the end of the 16th century. Master Jorge Rodrigues, at the service of the Archbishop of Évora, rebuilt the temple and gave it its current appearance, following the model of the Mannerist churches in Alentejo. The restoration of the diocese took place in 1770 and its first bishop was nominated, Fr. Manuel do Cenáculo, who came to live in the city from 1777. It was only in 1925 that the old Igreja de Santiago took on the role of Cathedral, and many works were carried out to adapt it to the needs of a cathedral.

and also...

OVibeja – April/May

International Cartoon Festival – May

Palavras Andarilhas – September

Southern Experiences (Vinipax/Olivipax/BejaGourmet/BejaBrava/BejaKids) – October

Biodiversity Point

A great diversity of reptiles and amphibians will make the herpetologists delight. Some species of great interest occur in the area of the Municipality of Beja, such as the false smooth snake (*Macroprotodon cucullatus*) or the Bedriaga's skink (*Chalcites bedriagai*).

Although at low densities, it will be possible to observe the rare Mediterranean gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*) and the European pond tortoise (*Emys orbicularis*).

Among the amphibians, the Iberian parsley frog (*Pelodytes ibericus*) and the Iberian midwife toads (*Alytes cisternasii*) are worthy of note. There is also an enormous diversity of insects, as the region's Mediterranean climate is conducive to outbreaks throughout practically the whole year, offering endless possibilities for nature photography in the discipline of macro photography.



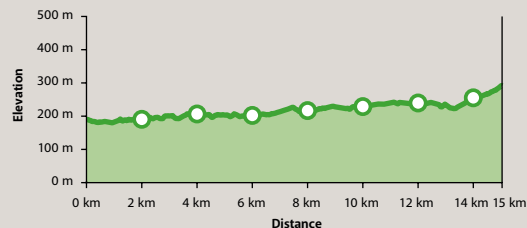
Cabeça Gorda ► Beja

stage

5



Distance 15 km
Maximum altitude 289 m
Cumulative increase 208 m
Cumulative descent -109 m
Duration 3h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



We leave Cabeça Gorda and turn right, through Rua Machado dos Santos, until its end, and then flank the Laverda warehouse building on the left. Shortly after, we arrive at a crossroad with an asphalted road, which we cross and go straight ahead by the dirt road.

After some 5 km, we find on the right the hill of Herdade dos Falcões. Next to that property, the road bifurcates and we have to pay attention to follow the path on the right. It is certain that the Path is well marked but, especially for those who go faster, by mountain bike, the natural tendency would be to go to the left... We continue 1 km slightly up until the end of the road, at a crossroad, and then we descend to the left and, just below, next to the stream, we enter a narrow passage on the right, at the end of the fence. We are in a "barranco" (a word commonly used here to designate the valleys of the small streams), called Vale de Mértola, along which is another infinite plantation of perfectly aligned olive trees. We wander through the plantation, for 2 km,

until we reach cultivated fields from where we can see Beja in all its magnitude.

Shortly after, we arrive at the district capital, Beja, and follow the signs to Rua de Beja, which crosses the small Bairro de São João. On the right, it is impossible to miss the amphitheatre with the large tank, to supply the rides, the wash house and several water spouts, which were very frequented by watermen in the 19th and 20th centuries. Called "Tanque dos Cavalos" (Horse Tank), it was the meeting point for riders who, in celebration of Saint John, made a pilgrimage known as "Cavalgada" (horse ride). It included banquets and live music, and was forbidden in 1835 due to the violence of the equestrian games.

The Path continues straight along Rua Bento Jesus Caraça, which can only be done on foot or by bicycle. We enter Beja, a city full of traditions and student life.

Please choose from the many available accommodation options, and then take the opportunity to taste the region's delicacies.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Santa Cruz Parish Council
+351 963 713 025
- Santiago and São João Batista Parish Councils +351 284 313 100
- Salvador and Santa Maria Parish Councils +351 284 313 100

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Posto de Informação Turística de Beja
- Beja Camping

TAXI Táxis

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Beja Castle
- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Convent/Beja Regional Museum
- São Francisco Convent
- Misericórdia/Nossa Senhora da Piedade Hospitals
- Misericórdia Church

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- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Church (Santa Maria da Salvada)
- Santo Amaro Church/Visigothic Nucleus of Beja Regional Museum
- Santiago Church/Beja Cathedral
- Passos de Beja (Religious procession)
- Terres and Cobres Stream
- Guadiana River
- Sítio Guadiana (Site)

HEALTH

- Hospital José Joaquim Fernandes
+351 284 310 200 / +351 284 322 134
- Health Center
+351 284 310 200
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Beja Fire Department: +351 284 311 660
 Portuguese Red Cross: +351 284 322 484
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 284 310 770
 PSP – Public Security Police:
 +351 284 313 150
 Beja Civil Protection: +351 284 313 050

CODE OF CONDUCT

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CABEÇA GORDA

2 km

N

1

0

• HERDADE DOS FALCÕES

• Santa Clara de Louredo

• Padrão

BEJA

Ribeira Carreira

Ribeira Quintos

Barranco Horta do Almada



Pure and hard plain, without shadows, some horses grazing, some olive trees lined up and a few planes taking off from the aerodrome, which aims to be an international airport. Beja serves as a starting point for another stage, which ends in Cuba, a town with several attractions. Right from the start, in the square where the Tourism Office is located, we discover the controversial statue of Cristóvão Colombo, by sculptor Alberto Trindade, which was inaugurated in 2006 and weighs one and a half tons. According to historical research, Cuba was the birthplace and baptism of Salvador Fernandes Zarco, the illegitimate son of a nobleman from Beja. He adopted the Spanish name of Cristóvão Colon to serve, at the behest of the Portuguese king, as a spy in the Spanish court. The plot - described in an exhibition at the Tourism Office - is complex but

credible, and explains, among other "coincidences", why the famous discoverer gave the name of Cuba to the island he arrived in the Caribbean,

in addition to other names of Alentejo origin that he used in other "baptisms".

Cuba has other charms, such as the fountain and public



Tavern traditions

The village of Cuba has the largest set of traditional taverns in the Alentejo, spaces where the oldest traditions, consumption habits, amphora wine, spontaneous cante alentejano and the ways of socializing are a source of pride and cultural affirmation of its inhabitants. Discovering these taverns is an unforgettable experience, especially in the era of new wine, a life lesson based on the wisdom of the plain men.



washhouse, built in the 20th century, which served those arriving in Cuba coming from Beja, even establishing itself as a social complex of great importance. The current configuration of the fountain dates back to 1923, according to the inscription on the gable, the only more monumental part,

marked by three openings, the central one wider and framing four spouts in the shape of a lion. The wash house is located behind the fountain and attached to the "mãe de água" (wellhead).

Probably founded in the 16th century, the essence of the Quinta and chapel of São Pedro

(St Peter) dates back to the next century when the chapel became a local pilgrimage destination. The late baroque appearance of the main façade was conferred in a campaign of works carried out around 1804. It's a building of remarkable scenographic impact, with a front preceded by a galilee and flanked by two slender towers. Pilgrim houses were attached to the church. Of medieval origin, the chapel was completely reformulated from 1572, the year in which the Monastery of São Vicente de Fora, in Lisbon, signed a contract with the master mason Manuel Gonçalves. The result was a majestic temple, of great dimensions, with the main façade flanked by two grandiose staggered towers. The interior has a unique vaulted nave, reinforced by buttresses, and profusely decorated with polychrome azulejo tiles dating back to 1665. The main altarpiece is from the first half of the 18th century, with rococo additions. In 2003, the sacristy was transformed into a museum space to house the church's treasure.



Roman Bridge Vila Ruiva

Located in the old Roman road *Ebora a Pax Julia*, which passed through Vila Ruiva and on the bed of the river Odivelas, this Roman bridge is situated about 3 km from the village. Based on granite bollards and brick archery which seems loose, although it is from Roman times, he may have undergone Visigothic and Arab reconstructions. It consists of 26 arches, interspersed by perfect semi-circular eyebolts, and is 120 meters long, with a maximum width of 5 meters.

and also...

Gastronomic Fair of Vila Alva – August

Festivities of N.ª Sr.ª da Rocha (Cuba) – August

Festivities of Santa Maria (Vila Ruiva) – August

Festivities of São Luís (Faro do Alentejo) – August

Cuba's Annual Fair – September

Roman Dam

Near the junction of the roads of Cuba / Vila Alva / Vila Ruiva, on the left of who goes to Vila Alva a few meters from the hermitage, today called Nossa Senhora da

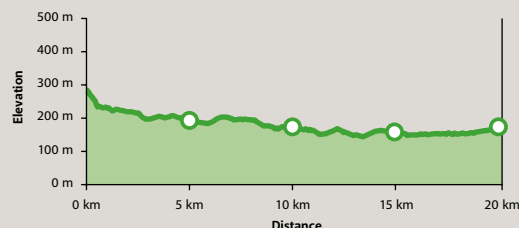
Represa (Our Lady of the Dam), appears a thick wall, in opus incertum with an east-west orientation.

The popular tradition believes that it was the foundations of a large church that would have been built in honor of Nossa Senhora da Represa. Its construction was never concluded, by the preference that the image of Nossa Senhora da Represa would have shown for the church of S. Caetano, built a few meters away.





Distance 20 km
Maximum altitude 284 m
Cumulative increase 145 m
Cumulative descent -249 m
Duration 4h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



We had time to explore Beja, so we can start our journey just outside the city, crossing the railway line at the opening of the fence next to Rua da Lavoura. From there, we follow the typical stone alleys and pass through the Arco da Porta de Avis (Gate Arch). As a curiosity, the stones of the door arch were lost after its demolition, in 1893, to be found 40 years later, serving as tables at the local market fishmonger's shop.

Guided by the azulejo tiles on the buildings walls, we go to the crossing point of the "railroad" already mentioned above. From here, we follow on the left, on an asphalted road, towards the village of São Matias, 6 km away, almost in a straight line. On the way, the tarmac gives way to the dirt track that we walk until we reach a crossroads where we choose to turn left.

We sight the first houses of São Matias village, where we enter through Rua Alferes Borges dos Reis, after crossing the national road N18. We're about halfway through the route, so we suggest you to take a break for

lunch at the only local restaurant on the roadside. Next to Largo da Igreja square, we can visit the church Igreja de São Matias, built in the 16th century, with two columns of gilded wood carving and a folk character altarpiece.

We leave the village on the rural road that flows off the coast, to the north, towards Cuba. We arrive there by crossing the Bairro Novo da Bica neighborhood and the large roundabout, heading to Rua 1.º de Maio. 250 m ahead, we turn right to Rua de Serpa Pinto, and rush straight ahead until we reach the Tourism Office at Largo Cristovão Colon. We came fast to arrive in time to visit the most famous artisan shoemaker in Alentejo, the charismatic Mário Grilo, and take the foot mould for our next genuine Alentejo boots!

In Cuba, we still take time to discover the unmissable Rota das Tabernas (Tavern Route), going in and out of old and traditional taverns between a good chat, regional snacks and successive "copos de três" (glasses of three)...

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Cuba City Council
+351 284 419 900
- Vila Ruiva Parish Council
+351 284 495 178

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Tourism Office
+351 284 419 903/+351 963 709 475
- Táxi Manuel José Quaresma Esteves
+351 966 144 656/+351 284 412 295

POINTS OF INTEREST

- House of the Writer Fialho de Almeida
- António Bicho Museum, known as "Museu Caluta"
- São Vicente de Cuba Main Church's Treasure Museum
- São Vicente de Cuba Main Church
- Carmo Church and Ashram
- São Pedro Church
- Nossa Sra. da Conceição da Rocha Church

- São Sebastião Church
- São Luís de Faro do Alentejo Main Church
- Nossa Senhora da Encarnação Main Church
- Nossa Senhora da Visitação or Nossa Senhora do Outeiro Church
- Misericórdia Church– Vila Alva
- Nosso Senhor dos Passos Chapel – Vila Alva
- Papa São Sixto Hermitage
- Nossa Senhora da Represa Hermitage
- Santo António Hermitage
- Quinta da Esperança or Quinta do Conde
- Relógio Borrvalho Eco-Palace
- Dolmens – Vila Alva
- Roman Bridge
- Albergaria dos Fusos Dam

HEALTH

- Cuba Health Center – +351 284 419 080
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Cuba Fire Department: +351 284 419 060
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 284 249 217

CODE OF CONDUCT

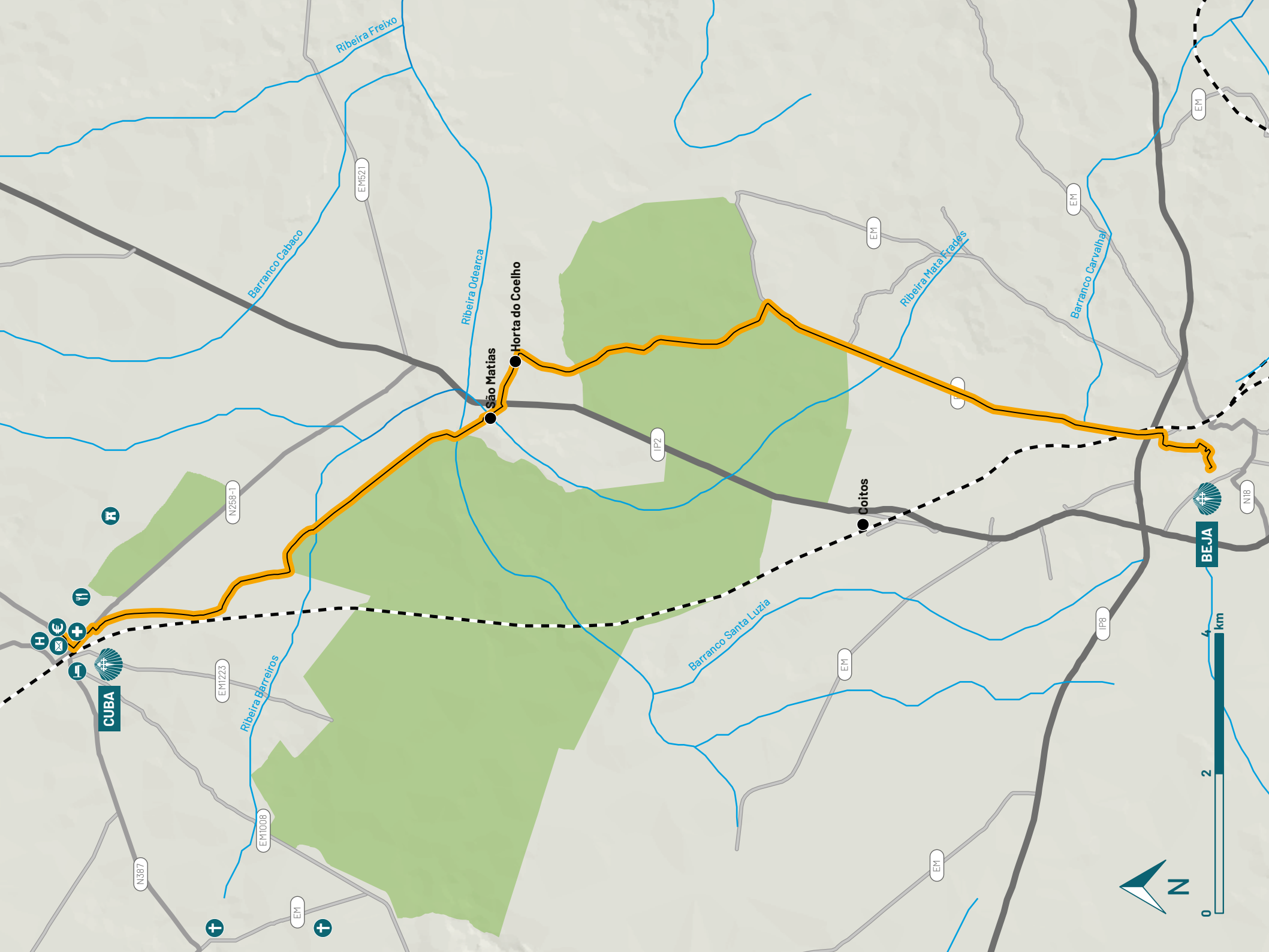
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Cuba ► Alvito ► Viana do Alentejo**7**

When you arrive to Viana do Alentejo, you can't miss the panoramic view of the 13th century fortress, where you can see the church of Nossa Senhora d'Aires, the place where one of the main Alentejo pilgrimages of the Alentejo is celebrated, during Feira D'Aires. The majestic main church is protected by the wall, with an imposing marble portal, and through which you can climb to the roof to see closely the bronze bell in the Misericórdia tower.

The Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora d'Aires is one of the most emblematic Baroque shrines of pilgrimage in Alentejo, and originated in the 15th century (from the miraculous appearance of an image of Our Lady inside a clay pot to a farmer in the region), but became famous in the Baroque period when, the plague spreading in Évora, the city inhabitants promised to Our Lady d'Aires they would build a grandiose edifice in case the plague came to an end.

From 1744, the ancient building was demolished and the majestic and scenic sanctuary that still exists today was built. The great influx of pilgrims and the free market granted by royal charter in 1751 contributed greatly to the sanctuary's grandiosity. The works continued for the second half of the 18th century, and were only finished in 1804. The main façade is the most monumental part, with its central body widely decorated, flanked by two towers, already



Church of Nossa Senhora d'Aires





Castle of Alvito

The most outstanding patrimonial element of Alvito has its origin in the 13th century and in the figure of the lord of the village, Estêvão Anes. The current feature of the monument is the result of a reconstruction carried out from 1481, by João Fernandes da Silveira, chancellor major and vedor of the farm of D. João II. The works started in 1494 and were completed 10 years later. The keep is an impressive Manueline scenic piece, with its Mudéjar-style windows. The chapel of the palace dates back to 1548 and new works were carried out in the 17th century.

rococo style. We do not leave this village without taking a souvenir that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the "Arte Chocalheira". Produced with love by the local

master rattlemen, the rattles still serve their purpose today, locating cattle in pastures, a kind of ancestral GPS.



Castle of Viana do Alentejo

The walled system of Viana do Alentejo has its origin in the decision of King D. Dinis who, in 1313, ordered the construction of a fence torn by three doors. It is not known if the works have been totally carried out, because the whole has undergone a reconstruction at the end of the Middle Ages. The result was a fortress full of exoticism, proper of the Mudéjar taste of the time. It is pentagonal in shape, with angles reinforced by cylindrical towers topped by large crowns, the largest of which, fitted with bell rings, over the keep. The walled enclosure was used for the construction of the main church, the Misericórdia church and the City Hall, which transformed the castle into a very little military stronghold.

and also...

Spring Festival – June

Aires Fair – September

Saints Fair (Alvito) – Novembro

Rattle Fair

The annual fair of Alcáçovas, also called "Rattle Fair", is held at Largo da Gamita on the fourth Sunday of July. Since the 18th century, the town of Alcáçovas

has been distinguished by the manufacture and commercialization of rattles, transforming these simple utilitarian objects into artistic and decorative pieces. The Alcáçovas Fair is an open-air old fair, with about two hundred years, where were commercialized several articles, namely, rattles.

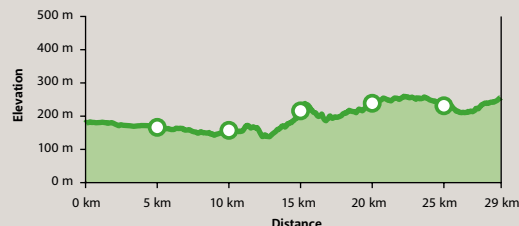


Cuba ➤ Alvito ➤ Viana do Alentejo

7



Distance 29 km
Maximum altitude 276 m
Cumulative increase 502 m
Cumulative descent -429 m
Duration 8h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



We began this stage at Rua de Serpa Pinto, next to the statue of Christopher Columbus. At the end of the street, at the roundabout, we follow on the right at Estrada da Circunvalação to the village exit. On the dirt track, we'll go straight ahead, for 2,1 km. Unfortunately, it is not possible to follow the old Roman Way, which is now crossed by private estates. At the junction, we turn left another 2,4 km. After the houses, the Path is made on the left, where at the end we find a regional road. We follow short meters to the right, to enter the first path on the left roadside.

We advance without detours until we see an irrigation channel, which we cross on a small bridge. We continue straight ahead 4.8 km, choosing the left of the main path, at the only intersection. We've spotted a hermitage on the road 258-1. It is close to the Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Represa that we take a short break. We take advantage, and by a detour of 200 m, in Cuba's direction, we visit the ruins of the ancient Roman dam. An ancient reservoir where you can still observe the solidity and functionality characteristic of Roman architecture.

We return to the Path, with more energies to do the 2 km until Vila Ruiva. We enter the south side by the N258 and get to know the small village, its friendly inhabitants and its long history. We continue towards the sign that indicates Alvito. Before leaving, we stock up and taste the famous coffee "com cheirinho" (with a little smell), the regional brandy, at the Central Café of Vila Ruiva.

We do this part of the Path by the national road 258-1, for more 4.7 km, and we cross the bridge over Odivelas Stream. After the bridge, we go up on the left to the dirt road, where we pass under the bridge and follow 1.3 km. Then, on the right, we follow a dirt track until we reach Alvito.

We continue on Rua do Espírito Santo, admire the grandiose Alvito Castle, and on Rua das Fábricas we leave the village, between green fields and olive trees. We turn on the first on the right and follow the dirt track for 5.6 km. We arrive to Água de Peixe by tarmac road, where we find the Solar de Água de Peixe, a noble house with a 15th century chapel, of Mudéjar style. We continue the Path on

the right, where the tarmac gives way to the dirt track, that after 5.1 km takes us to Viana do Alentejo, at the foot of the mountain range. We

walk the N257 and Rua da Amendoeira and get to this old town.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Viana do Alentejo City Council
+351 266 930 010
- Aguiar Parish Council
+351 266 930 863
- Viana do Alentejo Parish Council
+351 266 953 317
- Alvito City Council
+351 284 480 800

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Tourism Office
+351 266 930 010
- Táxis

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Nossa Senhora da Assunção Main Church
- Nossa Senhora D'Aires Sanctuary
- Zambujeiro Dolmen

- Viana do Alentejo Castle
- Nossa Senhora da Piedade Hermitage
- Senhor Jesus do Cruzeiro Hermitage
- Cruz Fountain
- Nossa Senhora D'Aires Fountain
- Escudeiros Fountain
- Traditional Pottery
- Manueline Gates in the Old Center

HEALTH

- Viana do Alentejo Health Center
+351 266 930 050
- Health Center (Aguiar)
+351 266 791 278
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Viana do Alentejo Fire Department:
 +351 266 953 123
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 266 953 126
 Municipal Service of Civil Protection:
 +351 967 259 905 (24h)

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www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

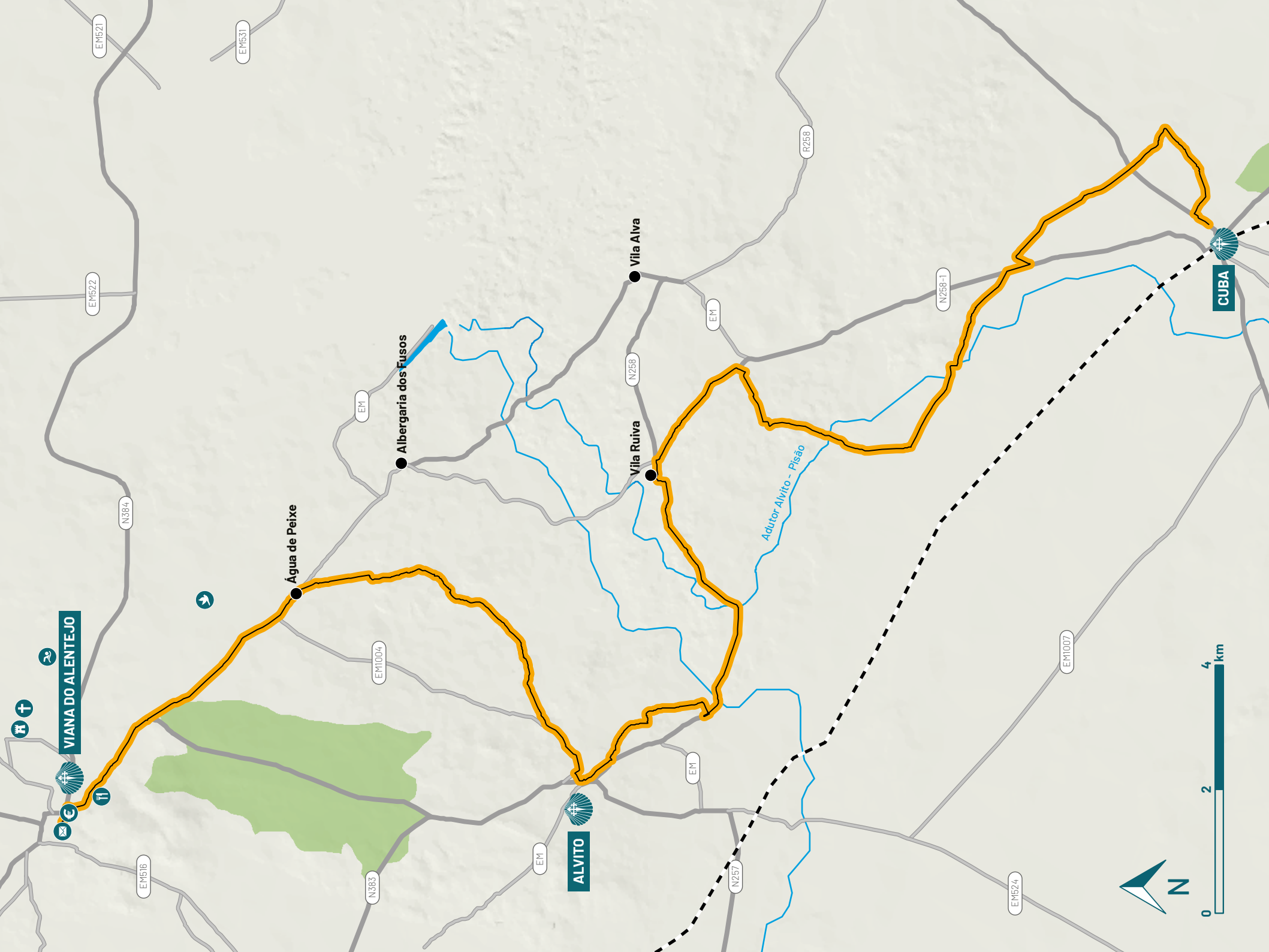


CODE OF CONDUCT

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Viana do Alentejo ► Évora

8

There is not enough space here to describe the many obligatory visits that the fascinating Évora offers us: the Cathedral, the countless churches, the Roman temple, the University, the genuine and ancient alleys, the convents and megalithic monuments in the vicinity, the Capela dos Ossos (Bones Chapel) in the Church of São. Francisco, where the message on the door is a reminder of the timeless human frailty: "We bones who



Church of Graça



Church of Santo Antão (gothic altar pediment)

One of the most monumental churches in Évora was finished in the time of cardinal D. Henrique. The scenic and austere Mannerist church-salon was started in 1557, according to the architect Miguel de Arruda's project. The temple was completed in 1563, but an earthquake, five years later, required some restoration works, with the whole finished in 1570, the year in which the cardinal D. Henrique also promoted the construction of the fountain of Praça do Giraldo square. Most of the contents date back to the 17th and 18th centuries, with the exception of the alabaster altar pediment, where the Apostolate (and Santiago among the apostles) was depicted, one of the few works of Evora sculpture of the 15th century that are still preserved.





Cathedral of Évora

The main portal of Évora's Cathedral, built in the 30s of the 14th century by a company of sculptors, which probably included the famous master Pero, was commissioned by Bishop D. Pedro Martínez. It is the most important monumental portal of Portuguese art of the 14th century, representing Saint Peter and Saint Paul accompanied by the apostles, including St. James Major, the first on the north side of the door, represented with the shoulder bag, decorated with the scallop.

are here, waiting for yours"... Without forgetting the Church of São Tiago, which for more than 700 years has exhibited on the top of its pediment the apostle Santiago on horseback, fighting the Moors. The magnificent interior is covered with *azulejo* murals and paintings from more recent times, enhanced with a beautiful golden carved altarpiece in the main chapel.



Giraldo Square

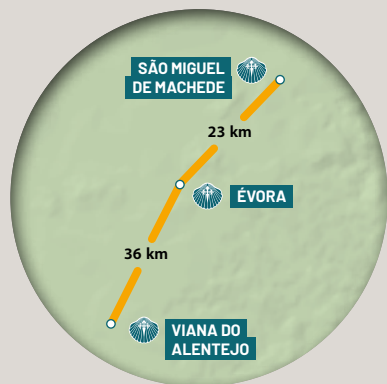
and also...

São João Fair

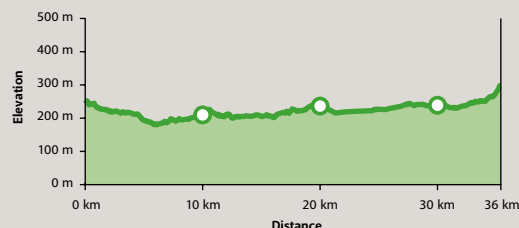
The Saint John's Fair has existed under this name since 1569, but other fairs were already held at the Rossio de São Brás in Évora: Feira de Santiago (1275), Feira Franqueada (since 1286), Feira dos Pucarinhos ou das Candeias (1525), Feira dos Estudantes (1569), Feira dos Ramos (1839), Feira Nova de São Cipriano (since 1900). The first Feira de São João was held in the largest open space in Évora, the Rossio de São Brás, on June 24, 1569. Years later, in 1574, D. Sebastião's license was created, which regulated that the fair would always take place in the space where it still takes place today. At that time, as still a little bit today, the Fair was composed of merchants' tents and crafts, such as gold and silver goldsmiths,

silk merchants, candle-makers, boilermakers, leather tanners, colored cloth merchants, crockery potters, spinners, shoemakers, weavers, etc. With the passing of time, although the popular character has not changed, the Feira de São João de Évora has undergone some changes. During the Estado Novo (New State), after 1940, it served to reinforce the Portuguese culture, with the costume parades and other manifestations that would transmit the idea of a united, even imperial, homeland. After the 25th of April 1974, the fair was modernized, and the economic activities started to be highlighted. The importance of the São João Fair for Évora has been such that, in the middle of the 20th century, the municipal holiday was fixed on June 29th (Saint Peter's Day).





Distance 36 km
Maximum altitude 292 m
Cumulative increase 365 m
Cumulative descent -326 m
Duration 8h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Every silver lining has a cloud! And when you leave Viana, there is the certainty that you either hate or love this "queen stage". But the arrival in Évora is a great and abundant reward, a solemn moment of ecstasy, almost as if we were already staring in front of the apostle's cathedral...

We travel under ten kilometers without history to the quiet village of Aguiar. In days of extreme heat, prudence advises that we recover here, enjoying a long provincial gazpacho, followed by any traditional delicacy that accentuates laziness and encourages you to put your boots away for today... The ancients suggested it by leaving the imposing Anta de Aguiar dolmen beside the Path, for an improvised backrest. In a fiercer way, or in cooler weather, we follow the ancient Roman military route, from the Emperor Antonino Pio's itinerary, which connected *Ebora Liberalitas Julia* (Évora) to *Pax Julia* (Beja), and we see the Camoeira redoubt, a fortified manor house from the 15th century, allegedly built by a relative of the distinguished Luís Vaz

de Camões. A little further north there used to be the Camoeira Port, known for the road that crossed it, nicknamed "Diabos" (Devils), which belonged to Adriano's empire. With attention, it is still possible to discover a granite column more than 2 meters long, the former stepping stone to cross the Xarrama River.

From here to Évora the journey will be severe and lonely, in which the monotony of yellowness of the stubble is barely broken by the abundant ruminants and by the migrant storks who settled permanently in the plain, fed by the ponds of the indolent river Xarrama. The Path leads us to the famous Giraldo Square, in honour of the legendary robber Geraldo Sem Pavor (Without Fear), who redeemed himself before D. Afonso Henriques when he conquered Évora from the Moors, a heroic feat forever immortalized in the city's coat of arms. At the Tourism Office we take care of the well-deserved rest and we collect itinerary to guide us in the discovery of this city, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Évora City Council
+351 266 777 000
- Évora Parish Councils (São Mamede, Sé, São Pedro and Santo Antão)
+351 266 707 792

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Évora Tourism Office
+351 266 777 071
- TAXI Táxis

POINTS OF INTEREST

- † São Bento de Castris Monastery
- † Remédios Monastery
- † Évora Cathedral
- † Nossa Senhora da Cabeça Chapel
- † São Brás Church
- † Santo Antão Church
- † São Francisco Church and Ossos Chapel
- † São Mamede Church
- † São Tiago Church

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- † Misericórdia Church
- † Nossa Senhora das Mercês Church
- † Água da Prata Aqueduct
- † D. Isabel Roman Arch
- † Almendres Cromlech
- † Cordovil House
- † Colored Houses
- † Praça do Giraldo Fountain
- † Domus
- † Nossa Senhora do Ó Hermitage
- † Playroom and Toy Museum
- † Scale House
- † Évora Roman Temple

HEALTH

- H Espírito Santo de Évora Hospital
+351 266 740 100
- + Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 266 748 400
 PSP – Public Security Police: +351 266 760 450
 Évora Civil Protection: +351 800 206 405

CODE OF CONDUCT

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Évora ► São Miguel de Machede

9



Évora is one of the cities with the richest historical past in the world. We could stay there, or come back a hundred times and, as Raul Proença says (in *Guia de Portugal*), we would always find "(...) towers that rise up, walls that crush us, crossroads that make us perplexed, façades that advance or retract, slopes, kinks, niches, small chests, counters, watercolor sections, (...)".

Therefore, we progressed through the streets and narrow alleys to the busiest roads leading us to the outskirts of the city, with the promise of returning soon. We leave Évora through the Estrada dos Aliados (Allies Road), to "conquer" Evoramonte, inspired by the legendary character of the knight matamouros (Moor-slayer) Geraldo "Sem

Pavor" (Without fear), who appears on Évora's coat of arms just like Santiago in many other cities. But first, we pass through Azarujá, where we find the Palácio dos Condes da Azarujinha (Palace of the Counts of Azarujinha), a title created by D. Carlos I in 1890, to honor António Augusto de Frei-

tas, a native of Marinha Grande, who enriched himself in the glass business and embarked on a political career in the regenerating field. His connection to the Alentejo is justified by the fact that he was a great entrepreneur in the cork business, and even ended up dividing his large prop-

Church of Nossa Senhora de Machede

In the old parish of São Miguel de Machede, we can find the church of Our Lady with the same name. Built in the 16th century, it is another austere and monumental Mannerist church of Alentejo. In baroque times, it was the object of great renovation, and practically all the artistic contents of the interior as well as the dynamic appearance of the towers of the main façade, date from that time. In 1758, the church of Nossa Senhora da Natividade (Our Lady of the Nativity) de Machede had three altars. In addition to the main altarpiece, dedicated to the patron saint, there was another dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary) and a third one to the blessed souls of the Purgatory.



erty into different plots of land for the benefit of the local population. It's an eclectic building, characterized by turrets, terraces and lowered spans, in the style of the wealthy residential architecture of the end of the 19th century.

In the possession of important members of the Alentejo nobility, Azaruja must have promoted the construction of its pillory in the 18th century, long after the great pillories outbreak in the country, which was coincident with the charters concession by D. Manuel I. The current location was conferred already in the 20th century, when the small surrounding garden was benefited. It's an elaborate pillory, with a hexagonal column and a conical pine-

shaped finishing, probably the noble hunting area and not with only which is associated with a municipal autonomy.



Church of São Miguel de Machede

The church was built in the second half of the 16th century. In 1758, the church had five altars. In addition to the main altarpiece dedicated to São Miguel, there were altarpieces dedicated to São Pedro (St Peter), Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Our Lady of the Rosary), and Santo António (St Anthony).

Hermitage of Nossa Senhora do Monte do Carmo

This hermitage of Our Lady is actually a baroque shrine of regional pilgrimage, which reached its peak in the 19th century. The origins, however, are earlier and point to a hermitage inhabited by hermits before the mid-18th century. The present sanctuary was started in 1757, by the initiative of D. Frei Miguel de Távora, Archbishop of Évora. Inside this small and octagonal temple, marked by altars of rococo wood carving, there is an impressive repository of ex-vows painted in different types of material, from wax to leather, but there are also achievements with human hair and reptile skin. As a pilgrimage destination, the sanctuary has a caretaker's house and two inns (large and small). An important part of this heritage is now a hotel.

and also...

Festivities of São Miguel Machede – August

Know-How Fairs – September

Ponto&Alto Festival

The Festival de Cante Alentejano de São Miguel de Machede takes place in September and aims to contribute to the enrichment of the traditional songbook, encouraging the emergence of new trends, giving an opportunity for the recognition of talents identified with the Cante Alentejano, in safeguarding

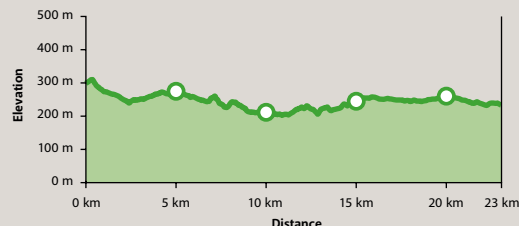
this Intangible Heritage of Humanity, recognized by UNESCO.

An initiative by the Grupo de Cantadeiras de São Miguel de Machede and the Grupo de Cantadores "Os Marchantes", in partnership with the Party Planning Committee and the Parish Council of São Miguel de Machede, and all the other local institutions and companies.





Distance 23 km
Maximum altitude 306 m
Cumulative increase 339 m
Cumulative descent -398 m
Duration 6h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



which justifies the anomalous number of coffee shops in Largo da Casa do Povo square. We take Rua 25 de Abril on the left, but just 100 metres ahead we turn and descend Rua do Depósito. At the bend we leave the tarmac and continue along the dirt road on the right, until we are immersed in another extensive olive grove that we cross to the estate's edge.

We continue through successive hills and "courelas" (small cultivation plots), in a more undulating landscape, with some ravines and an immense quantity of different species birds, and even a splendid vineyard where a flock of goats also grazes. We are in the property of Casa Relvas, and it is worth suggesting a slight detour for a visit to the modern cellar, easily seen on our left, in where you can taste the wines and other local products.

We are in the vicinities of São Miguel de Machede, so, with or without a detour, we enter the village soon after and finish the stage in Praça da República square, next to the parish church of the patron Saint Michael the Archangel. If you haven't done

so before, it's time to start thinking about getting accommodation by asking the parish council or one of the restaurants in the area, where you can't miss the delicacy of "bochechas de porco

com migas" (pork cheeks with crumbs). If you have some free time, take the opportunity to visit Monte do Álamo and its winery, located near this village.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

 Évora City Council
+351 266 777 000

 São Miguel de Machede Parish Council
+351 266 987 186

SUPPORT

 CTT Post Office

TAXI Táxis Fonte Boa +351 266 987 171

 Adega do Miguel +351 968 782 475

 Café Central +351 266 743 279

 Snack Bar Varanda +351 266 987 227

POINTS OF INTEREST

 Nossa Senhora de Machede Church

 São Miguel de Machede Church

HEALTH

Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
Fire Department: +351 266 702 122
PSP – Public Security Police: +351 266 760 450
GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 266 987 123
GNR – Évora Territorial Station:
+351 266 748 400

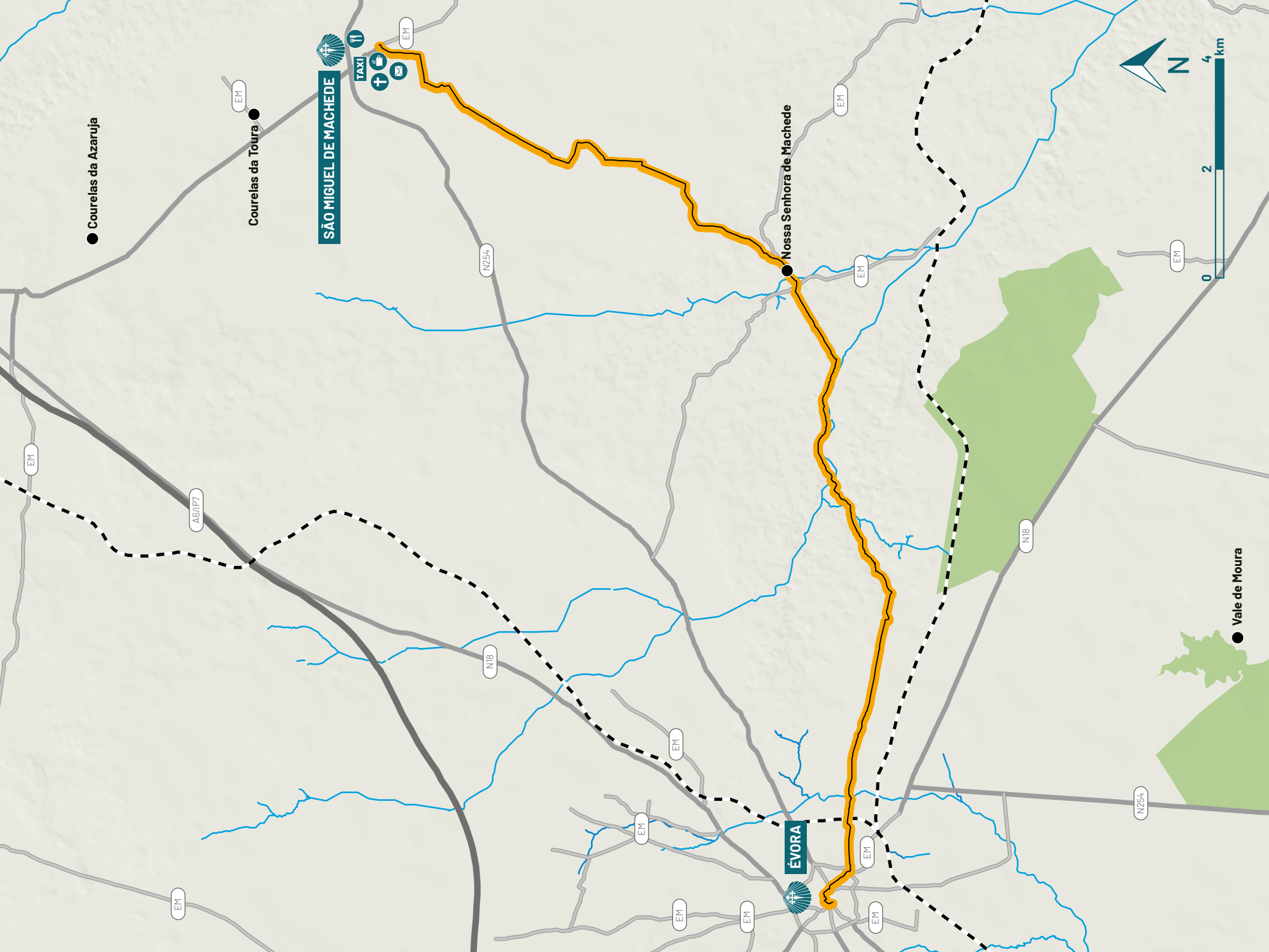
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● Coureiras da Azaruja

● Coureiras da Toura

SÃO MIGUEL DE MACHEDE

ÉVORA

● Nossa Senhora de Machede

● Vale de Moura

S. Miguel de Machede ► Evoramonte

10



Castle of Evoramonte

The walled perimeter of Evoramonte Castle dates back to the beginning of the 14th century when D. Dinis ordered the town fortification. From there, the panorama is grandiose and stern, with a vast and imperturbable horizon that takes our breath away. Today, Evoramonte is the seat of the European Network of Sites of Peace, a network of places in Europe where peace treaties or capitulations were signed, represented by public and private institutions, in order to work together to build a culture of peace and promote these places based on their Common Historical Heritage - the PEACE. In the time of D. João I, the castle became the property of D.

Nuno Álvares Pereira and, about a century later, a formidable palace was built, marked by four cylindrical towers that define a quadrangular perimeter. The work, of clear Italian influence, was conducted by the architect Francisco de Arruda in 1531.

It's history who makes the village. A history that is visible in the Igreja de São Pedro (St Peter) de Fora which, as the name indicates, was (still is) outside ("fora") of Evoramonte. The temple is of medieval origin (as can be seen from the double arch window that still tears in the back wall of the main chapel), but it was partly destroyed by the earthquake

of 1531, which led to an almost complete reconstruction of the whole. The main chapel was under construction in 1577, as was the main altarpiece, one of the most important Mannerist altarpieces in the Alentejo. Inside, the altarpieces of the chapel Santíssimo Nome de Jesus (Holy Name of Jesus), from the beginning of the 17th century, and the one of Santo António (St Anthony), already fully baroque, from the mid-18th century, are also noteworthy. The primary school, which adjoins the southern façade of the church, was built in 1878. The entrance to the temple is preceded by a small porch in the shape of a temple, and the front





Arriving to Evoramonte

is crowned by an image of São Pedro, probably executed in the first half of the 16th century.

Only a pale image of what the pillory of Evoramonte might have been that evoked the autonomy of the county remains. It was broken on an uncertain date of the 19th century, and the parts ended up being lost, except for a parallelepiped plinth on which the column was based, and some stem elements, now integrated into the bell tower of the Igreja de Santa Maria (St Mary's Church). Evoramonte was awarded a charter in 1248 and received a new charter from D. Manuel I in 1516. In 1855, with its integration in the municipality of Estremoz, the pillory ended up being demolished and never rebuilt again.

Still on the urban perimeter of Evoramonte, the church of Misericórdia (Mercy) stands out, as well as a church with porches, of the village's heritage. The origin of the temple dates back to 1527, the year from which local Misericórdia is documented. At the main altar, there is an ara stone that bears the date of 1575, the approximate year to date the construction works of the temple. Everything indicates that it was always a Misericórdia of few resources, which didn't have a hospital in the 19th century. Even so, it was the object of a relevant artistic filling, such as the azulejo tiles attributed to the workshop of Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes and the two sets of processional flags, one from the mid-17th century and the other from the middle of the following century.



Hermitage of São Sebastião

The Ermida de São Sebastião (Hermitage of St Sebastian), located next to the road that connects the low village to Evoramonte Castle, evidences a construction contemporary of almost all the extra-mural chapels that can be found in the parish. With a square main chapel and a hemispherical dome, this is also the oldest element of this historic building. Situated near the castle's gate Porta de São Sebastião, the chapel has undergone an important reform in 1779. Also of note here are the wall paintings and sgraffitos of the main chapel vault where, according to Túlio Espanca, crosses of the Order of Malta, along with other motifs, may appear.

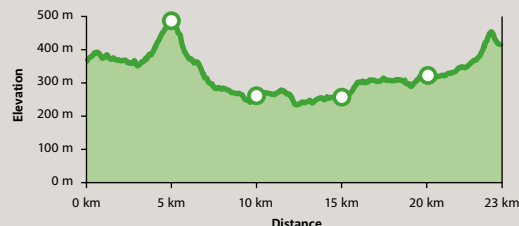


S. Miguel de Machede ► Evoramonte

10



Distance 23 km
Maximum altitude 363 m
Cumulative increase 419 m
Cumulative descent -288 m
Duration 5h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



We bypass Praça da República square on the right, going down to the cobbled lane of Rua dos Castelos. After walking over the dry stream, we access a vacant field and, ahead, we have the national road N254 on an elevated platform, which we have to pass through a low tunnel that forces us to bend our back.

Already on the other side, we continue through the midst of sheep flocks surprised to see us there. We open and close successive braided wire gates, walking 2 km through the middle of the cork and holm oak forest until a vast water plan opens in front of us. Not one but two, because we also find another small dam on the right. We turn left and we follow the larger dam bank until Courelas da Toura, with lots of shade and fresh air.

We cross beautiful vineyards and cultivated fields until we see the asphalt again, confluent on one side with the Paço da Quinta and on the right with the hermitage of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios, surrounded by homemade vegetable gardens, with an unusual wayside cross on a whitewashed pedestal, closer to the road. Until Azaruja we'll walk another 4.5

km, first on the road to the sign that indicates Monte Branco on the right. Then, by the dirt road that conducts us through successive small agricultural properties (courelas), until another asphalted street, that leads us to the entrance of Azaruja by Rua das Courelas, ending near the Praça de Touros (Bullring).

400 m to the left is the Palácio dos Condes da Azarujinha, an imposing palace of neoclassical architecture, which is not open to visitors. We walk up to Largo da Igreja square and from there, on a wide macadam road, we follow the indications to the hermitage of Nossa Senhora do Carmo, on the left.

Before the hermitage, we turn right through a gate and proceed inside the cork and holm oak forest, ever more dense for 6 km without seeing a soul. After some gates and some dry streams, the landscape opens and we cross through the middle of chickens and sheep, in a small degraded hill, guarded by some fiercer and, fortunately, trapped dogs.... The environment is still rural, along a narrow paved road that ends up intersecting the national road N18, at the entrance of Evoramonte, next to the gas station.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Estremoz City Council
+351 268 339 200
- Evoramonte Parish Council
+351 268 950 200

SUPPORT

- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Evoramonte Parish +351 266 467 203
- Camping Site
+ 268 959 283 / 936 799 249
- Supermarket

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Evoramonte Castle
- El-Rei Fountain/Santo Estêvão Fountain (Evoramonte)
- São Marcos Hermitage
- São Lourenço Hermitage
- Santa Margarida Hermitage
- Santo Estêvão Hermitage
- São Sebastião Hermitage

- São Brás Hermitage
- Public Cistern
- Evoramonte Pillory
- Evoramonte Convention House
- Former Council House
- Evoramonte Common Barn
- Misericórdia de Evoramonte Church
- São Pedro Church (Evoramonte)
- Nossa Senhora da Conceição Church (Evoramonte)
- Santa Rita de Cássia Church

HEALTH

- Estremoz Health Center
+351 268 337 700

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Estremoz Fire Department:
 +351 268 337 360
 Estremoz Civil Protection: +351 268 080 250
 GNR – Estremoz Territorial Station:
 +351 268 322 804
 PSP – Public Security Police: +351 268 338 470

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www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt

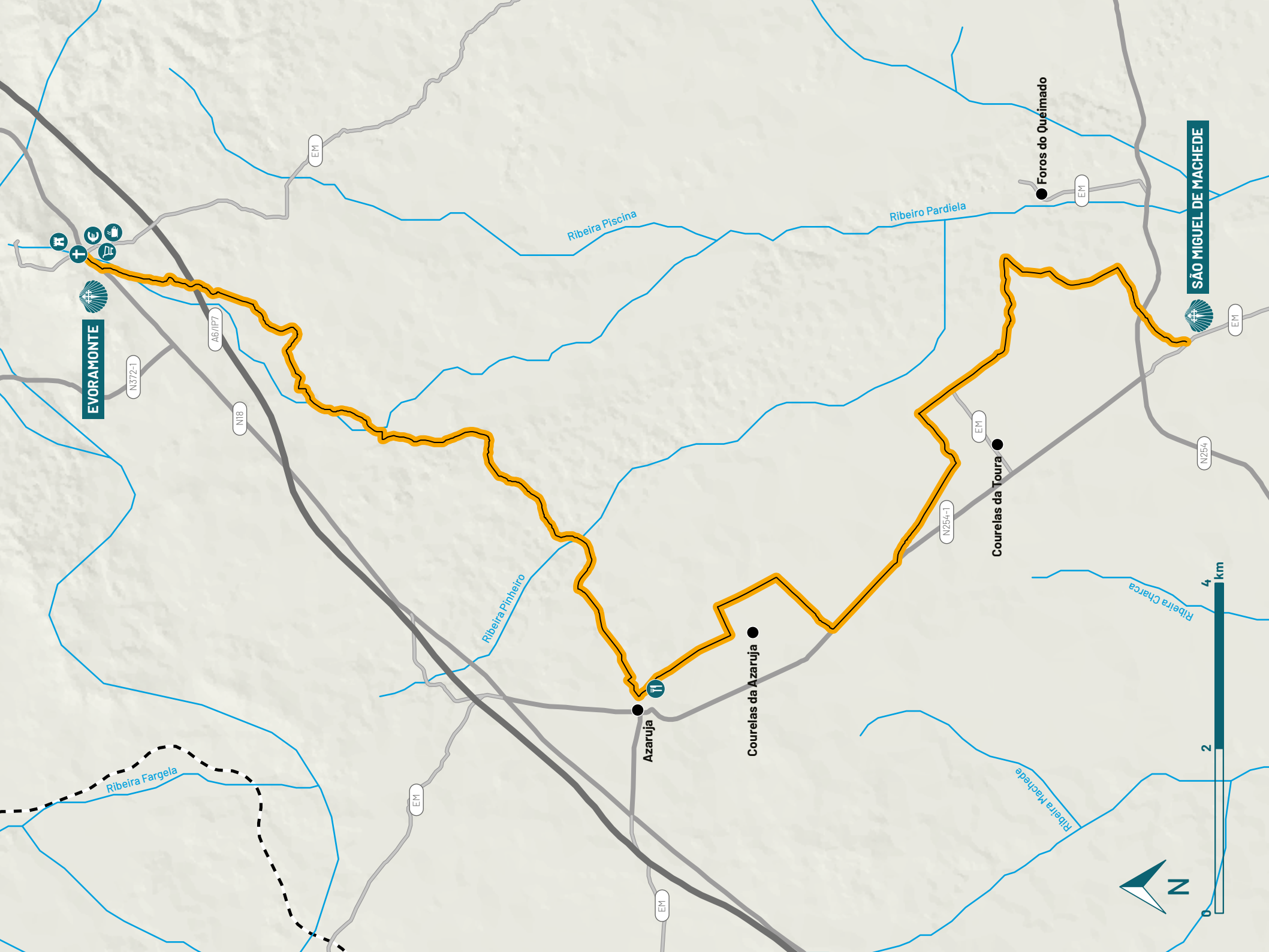


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Evoramonte ► Estremoz

11



Castle of Estremoz

Until Estremoz we will have another journey of long intimacy with the cork oak and holm oak forest, winding through the dark green of the plantations and the buildings of the scarce estates. It is essential to prepare ourselves, both in terms of physical supply and mental robustness, because it is not foreseeable that we will find any kind of support on the Way.

In the city, the religious presence is quite profuse, with the presence of the Church and its religious orders, with convents, churches, chapels, and hermitages spread throughout the commune. An example of this is the Igreja de Santiago de Estremoz church, founded in the reign of D. Afonso III. Its edification, on the north-western edge of the perimeter wall, and in a land that would be

called "the Loureiro", meant the constitution of an element on the definition of Estremoz urbanism and unification of a neighborhood called "Santiago". Despite the great transformations the temple underwent, especially in the 17th century, it is still possible to see the Order of Avis cross on the main façade.

In the municipal museum, we quickly put aside the external attractions so that, in the words of José Saramago, "(...) we can marvel, at will, at the clay dolls that have taken their name from Estremoz. To marvel, he says, and there's no better term. (...) The traveler doesn't know where to look (...)". And he finishes

Palace of the Court

Attached to the castle and the royal palace, this building dates back to the time of D. Dinis and is contemporary with the construction of the castle's keep, since Master Anton's signature is exhibited in both monuments. The palace is preceded by a galilé of five spans, which was initially covered by a wooden ceiling, however replaced by the current vault of crossed ogives, in the reign of D. Manuel I. In the center, a pointed portal surmounted by a sculptural frame with the insignia of D. Afonso IV (the monarch who supposedly finished the set) allows access to the audience hall, a space of trapezoidal plant covered by a Manueline octagonal vault.



inventing "To Estremoz you will go, its dolls you will see, your soul you will save" (in *Viagem a Portugal*).

The city also reveals the statue of Rainha Santa Isabel (Holy Queen Elizabeth), by the sculptor Martins Correia, which evokes the importance of D. Isabel of Aragon for Estremoz. The Queen, D. Dinis' wife, elected Estremoz as her place of residence for long periods and died here on July 4, 1336. She was herself a pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela in 1325, shortly after the death of D. Dinis, and there are still signs that point to a second pilgrimage in 1335. The list of miracles attributed to her was approved by Leon X in 1516, and the queen was canonized in 1625.

Integrated into the Pousada de Estremoz hotel, the Rainha Santa Isabel Chapel also evokes the importance of the Queen's memory in Estremoz history. The oratory was built in 1659 by Queen D. Luísa de Gusmão, but the whole is, however, worth the magnificent works carried out on the initiative of D. João V, between the 20s and 30s of the 18th century, which gave the

temple its appearance of total art. Oil paintings attributed to André Gonçalves and *azulejo* panels by Teotónio dos Santos illustrate the miracles of St Elizabeth of Aragon. The importance of the Holy Queen for Estremoz population

was also witnessed by the 1808 inscription accompanying the chapel's marble choir, in which the inhabitants of Estremoz thank her divine intervention for the protection granted during the French invasions.



Professor Joaquim Vermelho Municipal Museum

The building construction dates back to the 13th/14th century and it underwent renovations in the following centuries. You can visit there the permanent exhibition, which is divided into two floors and located at the top of the popular art collections (horn, cork, and wood) by artisans such as Mestre Rolo, José Vinagre, or Joaquim Velhinho. The reconstitution of an Alentejo House from the end of the 19th century is also presented, and on the ground floor, the Estremoz figurative and local pottery collections from the last two decades of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

and also...

Traditional Fair of Estremoz – May

Rainha Santa Isabel Festival – July

Traditional Fair of Santiago – July

Festivities of Exaltação de Santa Cruz – September

Festivities of N. Sr.^a dos Mártires – September

Estremoz Dolls

The production of clay figures, commonly known as "Estremoz Dolls", is an art with more than three

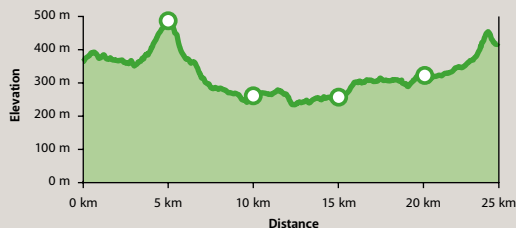
centuries and is part of the cultural identity of this commune. More than one hundred different figures are inventoried and new themes are invented every day, always related to the daily life of the Alentejo people, in their rural and urban living. The skillful hands that work with clay give life to the emblematic figures that, with their bright colors and unique shapes, enchant those who pass through here.



Evoramonte ➤ Estremoz



Distance 25 km
Maximum altitude 493 m
Cumulative increase 662 m
Cumulative descent -608 m
Duration 7h00m
Difficulty (0-5) 4



Back to the central square, we cross the road and enter Rua das Correias, following the signs that indicate Ermida de S. Brás immediately to the left. We go up until we find the gate of Monte da Alagoinha, and then access, on the left, a dirt track to Herdade da Junceira, along 6 km.

In the middle of the cork oak forest, we see the marks of the periodic harvests of the valuable cork, transformed into stoppers, "cocharros" (sort of spoon to drink water from the fountain, typical from Alentejo) and many other items.

From the nearby Herdade da Defesa we continue along the trail between the cork oak forest and across the plateau, now also with aligned olive groves and vineyards. The estates Herdade da Junceira and Herdade da Defesa are reference areas for hunters, but now the land is fenced to protect cattle and crops, and we are forced to deviate and enter the road (N381), near a viaduct over the Tera stream, fortunately with little traffic. Along the way, the landscape looks like a mosaic, where the yellow of the stubble alternates

with the reddish vineyards in the autumn period. After almost 3 km, in front of a farm with an atypical circular house, we detour to the left, to the dirt track. Further on we see the motorway and pass through the lower tunnel, always following the macadamia road until a junction.

On the right we see Estremoz in the horizon! Another passage through the motorway, now on a viaduct and, straight ahead, we reach the bustling intersection of the N4 national road. We walk 150 m on the left side of the road and, very carefully, cross the N4 to the other side, next to the white house with blue stripes on the corner. We can see the continuation of our way up to the walls of Estremoz.

After a slight ascent, we reached the bastion wall and penetrated this fortification through the Porta de Évora gate. On the right, we continue the stone path, next to the wall, and enter the Castle through Rua do Arco de Santarém. Inside the wall of the citadel we go to the Municipal Museum for information.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Estremoz City Council
+351 268 339 200
- Estremoz Parish Councils
(Santa Maria and Santo André)
+351 268 323 577

SUPPORT

- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- CTT Post Office
- Tourism Office/Casa de Estremoz
+351 268 339 227
- Santo André de Estremoz
Parish Social Center +351 268 324 842
- Supermarket

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Prof. Joaquim Vermelho
Municipal Museum
- Marqueses de Praia e Monforte Palace
- Estremoz Castle
- "Bonecos de Estremoz"
Clay Pottery Figurines
- Living Science Center

- Gadanha Lake
- Former Council House/Alcaide-Mor House
- Santiago Neighborhood
- Rainha Santa Isabel Chapel
- Santiago Church
- Santa Maria Church
- São Francisco Church
- Montado Alentejano
(Typical Alentejo Cork and Holm Oak forest)
- Serra d'Ossa (Mountain Range)
- Vineyards

HEALTH

- Estremoz Health Center
+351 268 337 700
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Estremoz Fire Department:
 +351 268 337 360
 Estremoz Civil Protection: +351 268 080 250
 GNR – Estremoz National Republican Guard:
 +351 268 322 804
 PSP – Public Security Police: +351 268 338 470

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

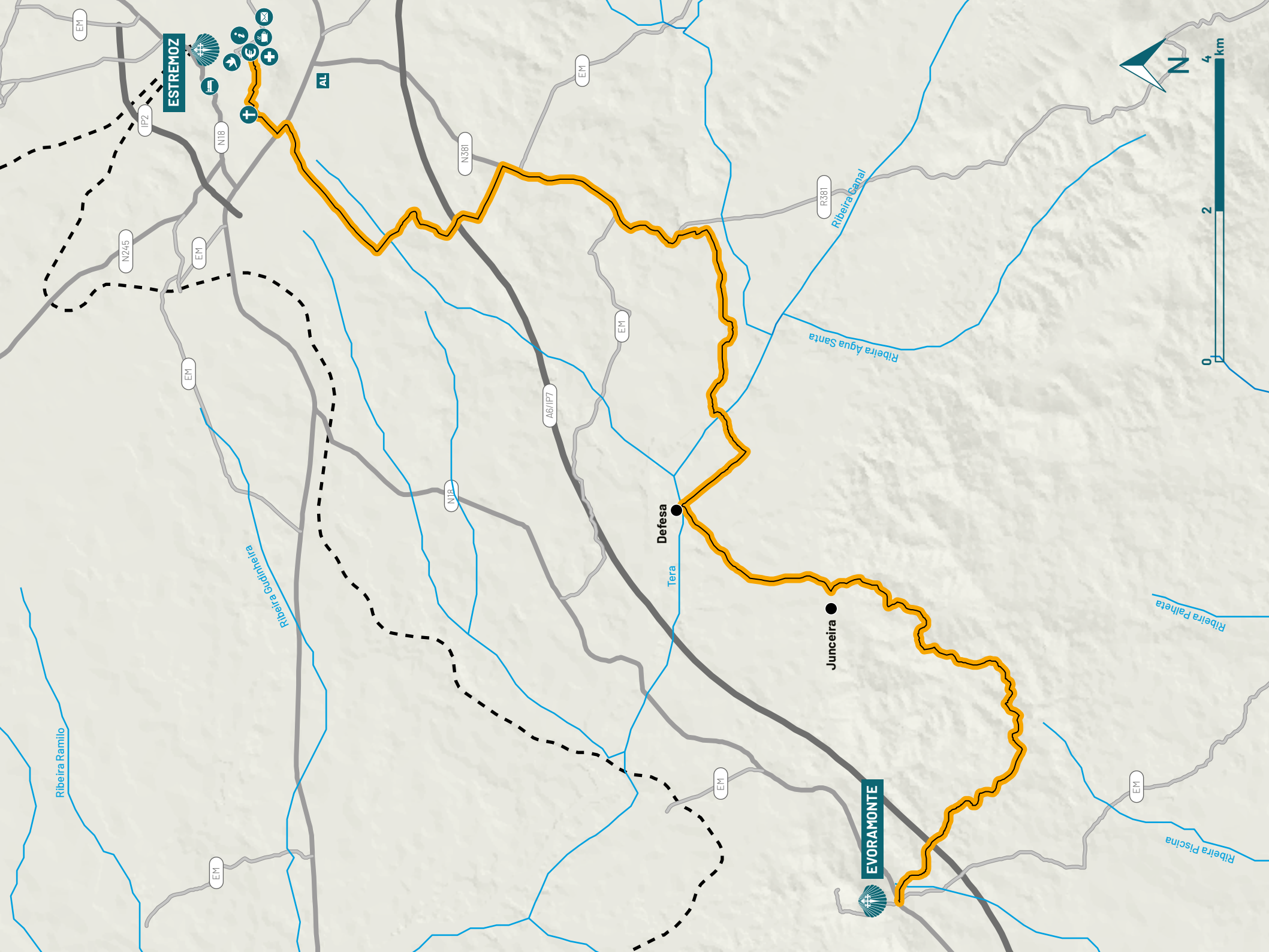


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Estremoz ► Sousel

12



Museum of Christs

A village of great historical interest of the Middle Ages, Sousel is a true municipality with history, the same that helps to explain the origins of its name, shrouded in great controversy. For many, the origin is in the phrase pronounced by D. Nuno Álvares Pereira, the kingdom's constable at the time of D. João I - "Ora Sus a Ell" - in 1834, in prayer during the battle to defend against the Castilians. For others, the name comes from the fennel Seseli, which grows wild in the local fields.

Documented since the mid-13th century, the tradition pointing to D. Nuno Álvares Pereira as the founder of the locality is nevertheless fictitious. The town became the county seat in the 17th century, date of the pillory construction whose current

location does not correspond to the original. It intended to slightly imitate the Manueline pillories, through an octagonal shaft, rings, with a pine cone-shaped end. It is known that, in 1940, the pillory of Sousel was dismantled and was later rebuilt, reusing original elements.

According to legend, Sousel was once plagued by a major epidemic. The population, desperate, prayed to St Sebastian and, soon after, the epidemic ceased. Grateful, the inhabitants of Sousel built a chapel in honor of St Sebastian and the image of the saint became the dominant figure in the municipal heraldry. Even today, in the hall of the city council, there is a bas-relief with St Sebastian figure, and the main celebration was also celebrated on January 20, the saint day. This

historical background has been lost since long ago, and even the municipal heraldry has changed. But the discreet Capela de São Sebastião, far from the historic center and composed only of a single nave and main chapel, remains an identity element of Sousel's heritage.

D. Nuno is once again mentioned when we refer to Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Ourada, which, according to tradition, was built in the exact place where Nuno Álvares Pereira would have gathered in prayer, before the Atoleiros Battle, held near Sousel, as indicated by an inscription from the 17th century. Another tradition admits that Sousel's foundation was due to D. João I's Constable, a fact that doesn't correspond to reality, but was portrayed in



the azulejo cycle applied to the nave of the church. The temple is still of Gothic construction, but from this first foundational only remains part of the choir's vault. The temple's current appearance dates back to an extensive renovation carried out in the 18th century, from which the main altarpiece, the marble pulpit and, in particular, the blue and white azulejo panels are also due.



Pillory of Sousel



Ancient Monastery of St Paul's Hermits

The convent of Santo António was founded in 1605, from a hermitage dedicated to that saint, which was managed by a local confraternity. The monks of Azambujeira Convent (Avis), in the meantime closed by order of the General Chapter of the Order of St. Paul, moved there. The current complex dates back to a reform carried out in the first half of the 18th century when not only a new church was conceived, but also the temple was filled with gilded wood carvings, mural paintings, and azulejo tiles, thus contributing to one of the most important elements of the built heritage of Sousel. The main chapel's *azulejo* panels depicting episodes of the life of St Paul Hermit stand out.

and also...

Mediterranean Flavours Festival – May

Cattle Benediction and White Cake Feast – May

Festivities in Honor of Nossa Sr.^a da Orada – August
Museum of Christs

The purpose of the Christs Museum Project is to study, research, document, conserve, interpret and disseminate the collection of sacred art that is part of its archive. Its mission is to cover scientific, cultural, educational and recreational objectives, aiming at the democratization of culture, the promotion of

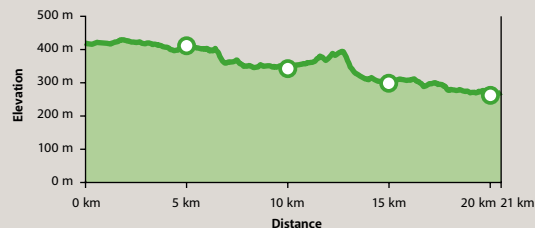
citizenship and the development of society.

The museological project is based on the collection of Christ images, consisting of 1486 pieces, mostly crucifixes of the most varied types, origins, and epochs. This collection was acquired by the Municipality of Sousel, on February 19, 1990, to the Lobo family, heirs of the late Venceslau Lobo, from Borba. Over the years, the collection was grouped by the antique dealer himself and exhibited to the public in a warehouse in Borba, which he called "Museu dos Cristos".





Distance 21 km
Maximum altitude 430 m
Cumulative increase 224 m
Cumulative descent -370 m
Duration 5h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



The reference point for the exit of Estremoz is the way behind the supermarket, located next to the last roundabout on road N18/IP2 towards Portalegre. However, before that, it is worth visiting the Palácio da Quinta D. Maria, producer of the wines with the same name, with access on the left, just before the roundabout.

We enter looking for history and flavors, and we won't be disappointed. After 2 km, we access the road that comes from Quinta D. Maria and pass by Monte da Granja, a welcoming rural tourism area. A few hundred metres ahead, we detour to the side road on the left, up to the old railway line, which we will meet several times during today's stage. One day, which we hope will come soon, this line may be transformed into an ecopath that will have the best route between Estremoz and Sousel.

We continue to the Silveirona site, turning left towards Monte do Marmeleiro, indicated by the sign. The road covers 4 km and ends at the edge of small hills, turning right to

climb the mountain, already in a dirt track. At the top, we have a good panoramic view of the surrounding region, after which we continue down the northern slope towards the Cardeal site, a town near the border separating the Central Alentejo from the region we are heading towards, the municipality of Sousel, already in Alto (High) Alentejo.

Through hills and farms, we progress in the valley until we reach Sousel, where we enter through Rua do Parreiral. To note, as a curiosity about Santiago, on Rua de São Pedro we find a house in an advanced state of degradation that has on its façade two scallops topped by two swords or staves, in a style similar to that also found in Salamanca. It is commonly said that it is an old hostel designed to receive pilgrims.

The stage was short so, at the Tourism Office, we try to collect all the interest information that allows us to enjoy Sousel resources, and use the opportunity to discover its heritage.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Sousel City Council
+351 268 550 100
- Sousel Parish Council
+351 268 551 220

SUPPORT

- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Sousel Tourism Office
- TAXI** Táxis José Delfino Lda +351 268 539 231

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Sousel Pillory
- Santo António Convent Church, also called Paulistas Convent Church Sousel
- Sousel Main Church
- Nossa Senhora da Orada Church
- Camões Tower, aqueduct and tanks

HEALTH

- Health Center/Hospital
+351 268 550 160
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Fire Department: +351 268 550 030
 GNR Sousel – National Republican Guard:
 +351 268 554 229

www.visitalentejo.pt
www.visitribatejo.pt
www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

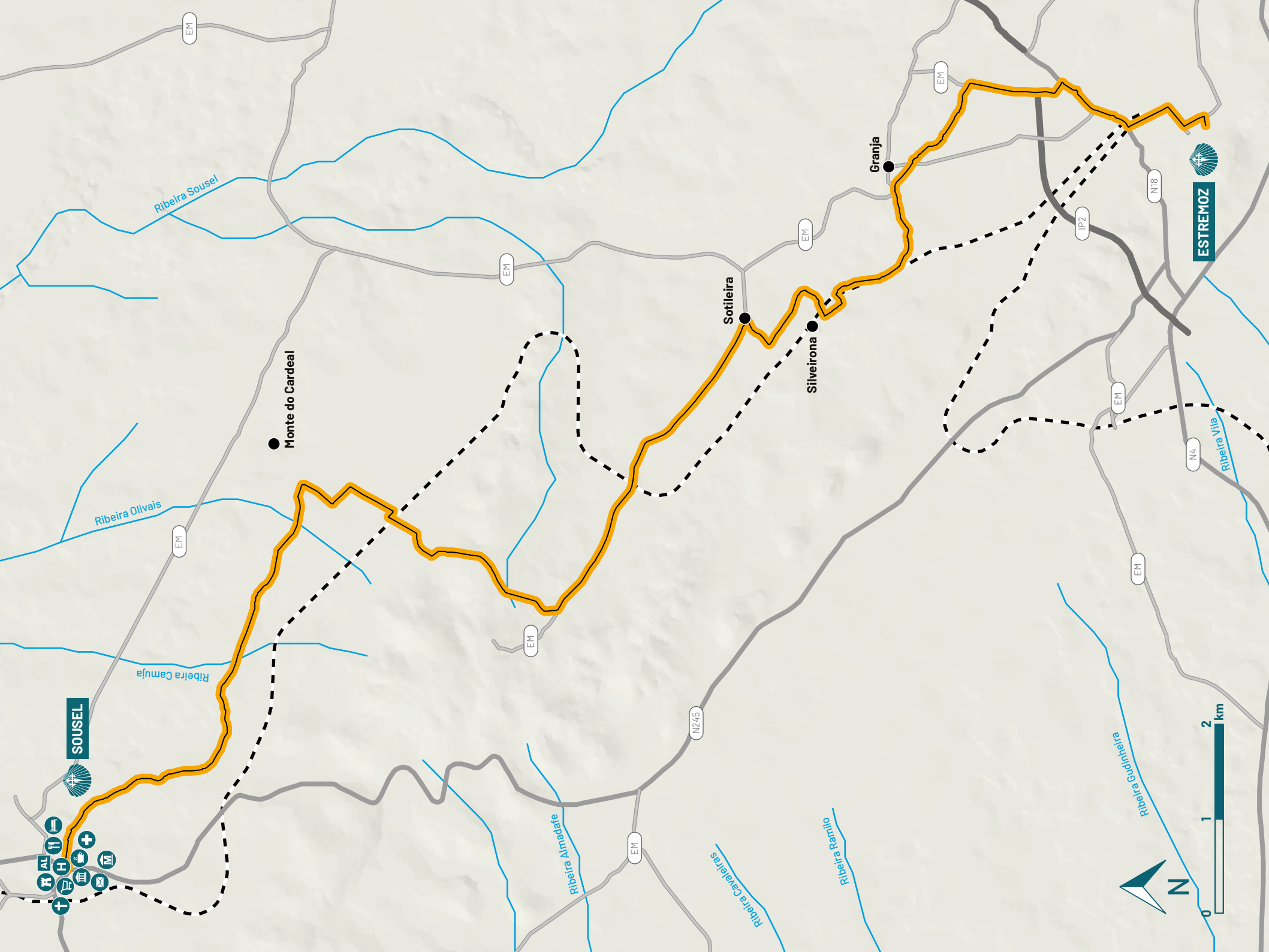


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Sousel ► Fronteira

13

On the way to Fronteira, an Alentejo village whose vestiges of human occupation date back to more than 10,000 years ago, we can find other vestiges, these from a less distant past. In 1384, when Portuguese independence was threatened by the siege of the king of Castela and by a Castilian invasion of the Alentejo, Nuno Álvares Pereira, at the service of the future King D. João I, gathered an army of just over 1500 men, 300 lancers,

and 100 archers. The battle took place in the marshy site of Atoleiros, where the Portuguese troops adopted the square tactic and thus managed to supplant an army composed of three times more soldiers. The Castilian cavalry, defeated by the Portuguese lancers, began to disperse and abandon the battle, ending it with a victory for the Portuguese side, which prepared other important battles in the following months. There is a

memorial in the place where the battle took place, inaugurated on April 6, 1979.

At the village entrance, the fountain of São João has served travelers and pilgrims since at least the 17th century. Its current configuration dates back to two campaigns separated from each other for almost two centuries. The first one took place in Baroque times when the main backboard was defined, with an interrupted and dynamic pediment and a coat-of-arms. The tank on the right side also provided with a pediment, has a simpler design, with a flat backboard and less prominent pediment. In the 20th century, the main segment of the fountain was enriched with patterned tiles, and the granite guards that separate the space between the fountain and the tarred road were defined.

The village of Fronteira was possibly founded in 1226 by D. Fernando Monteiro, master of Avis. More concrete data point to a royal intervention of D. Dinis in 1290. It is certain that the locality received a new charter from D. Manuel I in 1512, the same date of the pillory construction pillory, a patrimonial element that symbolized the municipal autonomy. The pillory is implanted in a quadrangular socle of three steps and is formed by an octagonal shaft with a



Pillory of Fronteira





Church and Hospital of Misericórdia

The church and hospital of Misericórdia constitute a particularly harmonious monumental ensemble in Fronteira. The church was completed in 1583 and, from that Mannerist period, dates the main portal, in strict austerity, and the padded corners of the main façade. In the 18th century, the ensemble was greatly enriched, especially in its devotional elements. So a new main altarpiece of gilded wood carvings was built, and a new configuration was given to the finish of the façade in a counter-curved profile already rococo. The scenographic painting involving the triumphal arch, in shades of blue and white that frames the painting from Calvary in the center, was done, and the registrars' gallery was built in marble. The hospital is annexed to the church through the north side.

capital decorated with spheres, and a semi-spherical pine cone edge. The pillory was dismantled in 1865, by order of the City Council, and the elements remained in the custody of a private. It was only in the decade of the 30s of the 20th century that the pillory was reassembled, according to its description in the Livro do Tombo dos Bens do Concelho de Fronteira.

In 1571, King D. Sebastião ordered the enlargement of Fronteira main church, located in the castle courtyard. The Commander of Fronteira chose to build a new temple, and the works began in 1576, with master António Góis in charge of the works. The campaign was very quick and was practically finished in 1594, resulting in a large building, "salon-church" type, with a monumental façade flanked by two double bell towers. The artistic pieces date back generically to the 18th century, such as the main altarpiece, in black and white Estremoz marble, or the image of Our Lady of Atalaia, the church's main patron saint.

and also...

Medieval Fair and Historical Recreation of the Battle of Atoleiros

In April, Fronteira celebrates the anniversary of the Battle of Atoleiros with a medieval fair, traveling back to the 19th century.

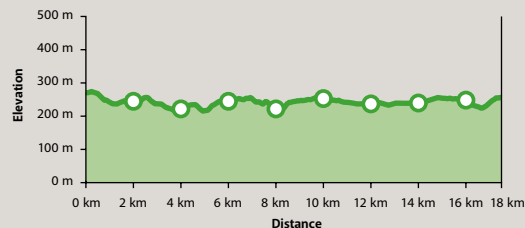
Balloon Flights Festival – November

24 Hours Off-Road – Fronteira

This is one of the most emblematic events on the off-road circuit in Portugal. It has been held annually at the end of November, since 1998. An endurance race, which took on the national off-road big venue status, closing the season of this sport.



Distance 18 km
Maximum altitude 274 m
Cumulative increase 199 m
Cumulative descent -213 m
Duration 4h30m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



We take again the Path to Fronteira, going down Rua Fonte do Rodrigo and then turning left to the Galvão neighborhood. The land is reddish, and in the landscape, unsurprisingly, large extensions of cork and holm oak forest, olive groves and cereal fields persist.

We follow the green plains for 7 km and, when we reach the road to Santo Amaro, we find the village of Fronteira on our left. The railway line keeps on accompanying us and, in this stage, we reward it by following "over" it on the long 4.5 km straight line that precedes the arrival at Fronteira, through the field where the Batalha dos Atoleiros battle took place, in 1384, held in defense of the national territory against the Castilians. It is also said that the Castilian cavalry suffered high losses, contrary to the Portuguese forces, among which not a single death has occurred, even during the hand-to-hand combat! This legend was very important due to the great weight of religion in the Middle Ages, and means a proof of God's support.

Already off the train line, we cross the N243 road, continuing along the side road until we find the N245, which leads to Rua de São João.

Then, on Rua da Lagoa, we head for the church of Nossa Senhora da Atalaia, famous for its altars decorated with wooden images representing Our Lady of Atalaia, St Anne, St Michael and St Anthony. We also witness the local richness, through the dawn-pink and black marble, present in the main altarpiece, a valuable Portuguese roch, still extracted today in the quarries of the Estremoz region.

Straight ahead we climb Rua de Santa Maria to the City Council of Fronteira, where we'll find the necessary information to plan our stay. Not to be missed, close by, is the river beach of Ribeira Grande and its ecotourism centre and, on the way, the church of Senhora da Vila Velha, on a hill that is believed to be the birthplace of the village.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Fronteira City Council
+351 245 600 070
- Fronteira Parish Council
+351 245 604 291

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- TAXI Frontaxis
- Supermarket
- Monte dos Aroeirais +351 245 605 149
- Segredo D' Alecrim +351 926 796 161
- Hostel a Estalagem +351 245 604 480

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Battle of Atoleiros Interpretation Center
- Atalaia de Malhada de Penas, Ribeira da Chaminé
- Clock Tower
- Nossa Senhora da Vila Velha Church
- Misericórdia Church

- Senhor dos Mártires Church
- Nossa Senhora da Atalaia Fronteira Main Church
- Ribeira Grande

HEALTH

- Fronteira Health Center
+351 245 600 010
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Fronteira Fire Department: +351 245 604 500
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 245 604 135

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www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt

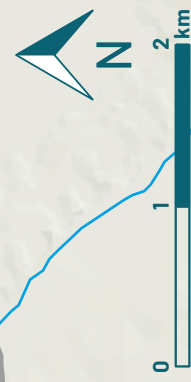
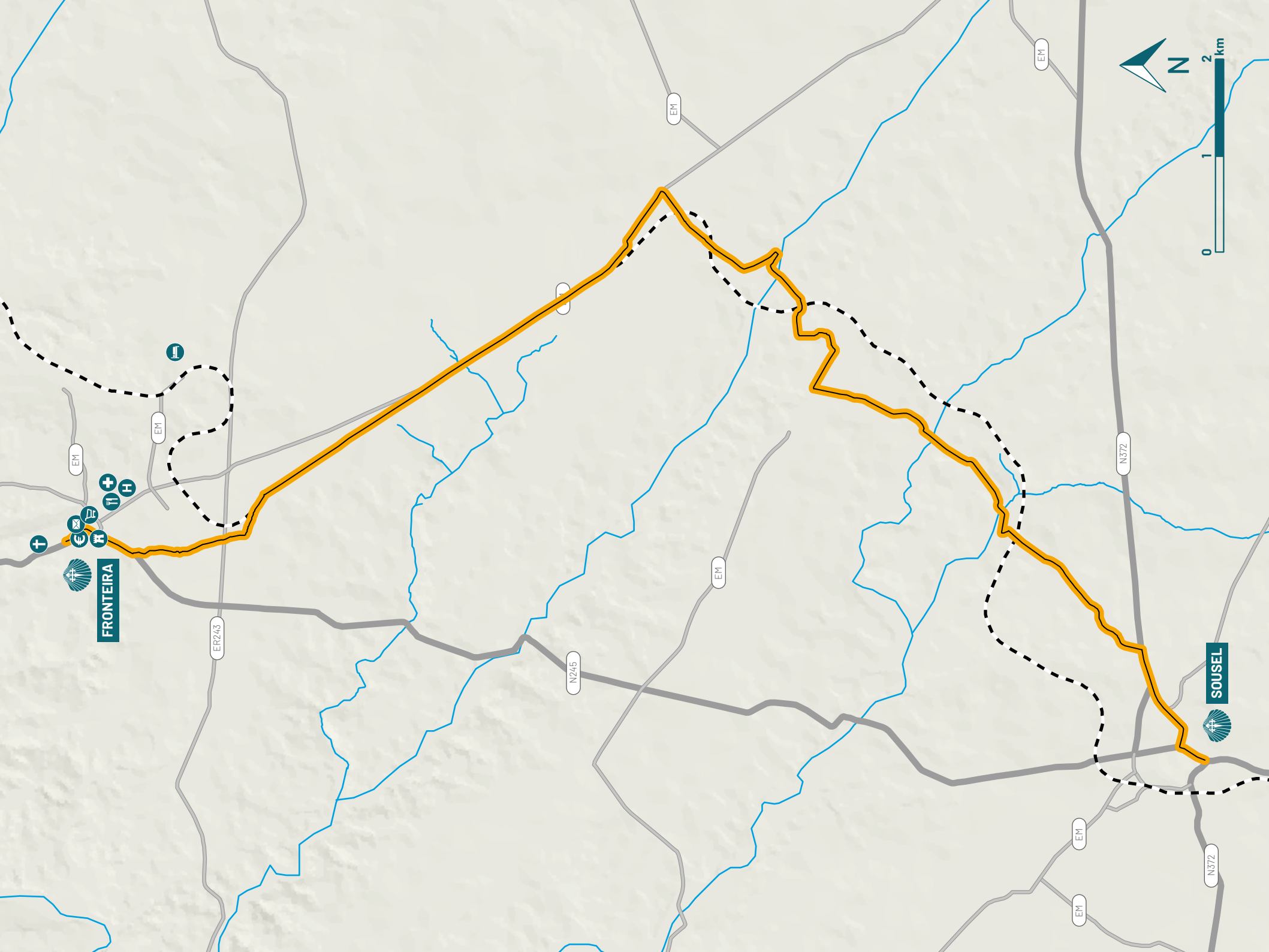


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FRONTEIRA

SOUSEL

EM

EM

N372

N245

ER243

EM

N372

EM

EM

EM

EM



Fronteira ► Cabeço de Vide

14

According to legend, it was at the head ("Cabeço") of a hill that the survivors of the plague that followed a Saracen attack took refuge and, recovering their health, from then on they called it "Cabeço de Vida" (Head of Life). Cabeço de Vide is our next destination, where the Roman settlement overlapped the previous occupations, known since the Neolithic period, and left a strong influence in the region. There used to pass a subsidiary road of the important road that connected Lisbon to Mérida and served the Sulfúrea thermal springs, where ruins of a bathhouse were found as well as many other archaeological vestiges of that period.

More recently, NASA researchers have also visited this valley, when it was discovered that the unusual pH (11.5) of the hyper alkaline waters of this site indicated hydrogeological conditions very similar to those of the geology detected on Mars!



Sulfúrea Thermal Station

Cabeço de Vide became an autonomous town by charter passed by D. Manuel I in 1512. The pillory, symbol of municipal autonomy, dates back to that time. It is a simple and rustic heritage element, with an octagonal shaft and a conical edge in the shape of a pine cone. In the capital are two small relief shields, symbolizing the alliance between the crown weapons and

those of the county. The pillory should occupy the place for which it was designed, in front of the former city hall and jailhouse, in the vicinity of the castle.

Although the reasons that led to its construction are unknown, the castle should date from an advanced era in the Middle Ages, presumably the 14th century. The main portal opened on the

south façade, bears the cross of the Order of Avis. Inside, there are still housing structures, a cistern and a well, which attests to the occupation of the enclosure interior during the late Middle Ages. It was probably at this time that the castle was involved in a barbican, the last stage of the fortress's constitution before it lost its usefulness in the face of the fire weapons war



that triumphed in the Iberian Peninsula from the 17th century onward.

In this quiet village of ancient cobbled streets and medieval houses, we find the Capela do Calvário (Chapel of the Calvary). A curious circular temple, built at an undetermined moment of the 16th or 18th century. It is possible that its construction has been determined by a regional pilgrimage to Calvary site, but, in 1758, this tradition had already been lost. At that time, the chapel had no festivities and belonged to the Order of Avis. Inside, the dome painted in celestial blue and the painting depicting the Calvary stand out. We also discover the Igreja de Nossa Senhora das Candeias church, which already existed in 1538, when the parish priest was Pedro Leborato, a professed member of the Order of Avis. The temple, although somewhat simple, has elements from the 16th century, specifically the main portal which is of straight lintel topped by two small pinnacles at the ends and axis cross. The interior is of a unique nave, but widening in chapels near its head. The altarpieces are late baroque and profusely polychromed, the main altarpiece being opened by a large throne with the image of the patron saint.

Church of Espírito Santo

A vague tradition indicates that the Church of the Holy Spirit already existed in 1211, which is doubtful. The monument was completely rebuilt in the mid-16th century, according to a Mudejar style Manueline project, as can be seen in the battlements that overlook the temple's façades. The main doorway, in a perfectly shaped round arch, is already part of the transition to Renaissance style. The interior has a single nave covered with a ribbed vault, and the main altarpiece dates back to the 19th century. In the churchyard, we can see a 16th-century wayside cross, contemporary of the temple's construction, crowned by a cross in which the Crucified Christ and Our Lady of Pity were portrayed, the ensemble being topped by a Holy Spirit dove.



Chapel of Senhora dos Anjos

and also...

Summer Feast of Cabeço de Vide – July Sulfúrea Thermal Baths of Cabeço de Vide

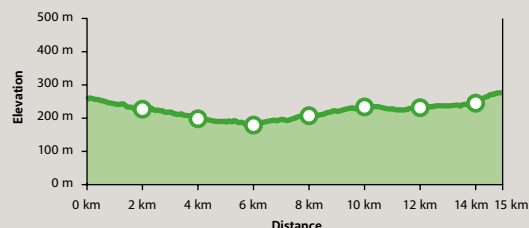
Known since the Roman occupation, the Sulfúrea Thermal Baths are today an important therapeutic

and leisure center, framed in a beautiful garden, in the Alentejo landscape. Its waters are indicated for osteoarticular and rheumatic, upper and lower respiratory, allergic and skin diseases.





Difficulty (0-5) 2



At the end of the avenue, we enter the ecopath, on the left, next to the old barrier station that used to close the Estrada de Santo Amaro road when the train was passing. We leave the city for the countryside and circulate quietly next to successive hills, as if by train. Between the olive trees, cereals and streams, the Path leads us to the bridge over

Otherwise, or if we prefer to discover the leafy village of Cabeço de Vide first, we go

up Rua da Associação and, just after the Praça de Touros (Bullring), turn right until the wide Avenida da Libertação. Determined to explore all corners of the village, we go up the avenue until the Parish Council, about halfway, on the left side. Already with a full sackcloth and after

walking all the alleys, we descend through Rua do Santo Mártir and then through a narrow rural alleyway to the site of the thermal baths. Before the day is over, we still bathe in these waters, unique in the country, a moment appreciated by that part of us that, literally, is closer to the Path!

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

 Cabeço de Vide Parish Council
+351 245 634 206

- Frontaxis
- Supermarket
- Forja Bar

- ✚ Espírito Santo Church
- ✚ Cabeço de Vide Main Church
or Nossa Senhora das Candeias
de Cabeço de Vide Church
- 🏰 Cabeço de Vide Fortress and Fort

-  Cabeço de Vide Clock Tower
-  Cabeço de Vide Castle
-  Cabeço de Vide Wayside cross

- Health Centre
- Pharmacy

Emergency: 112
Forest Fires: 117
GNR Cabeço de Vide – National Republican
Guard: +351 245 634 103

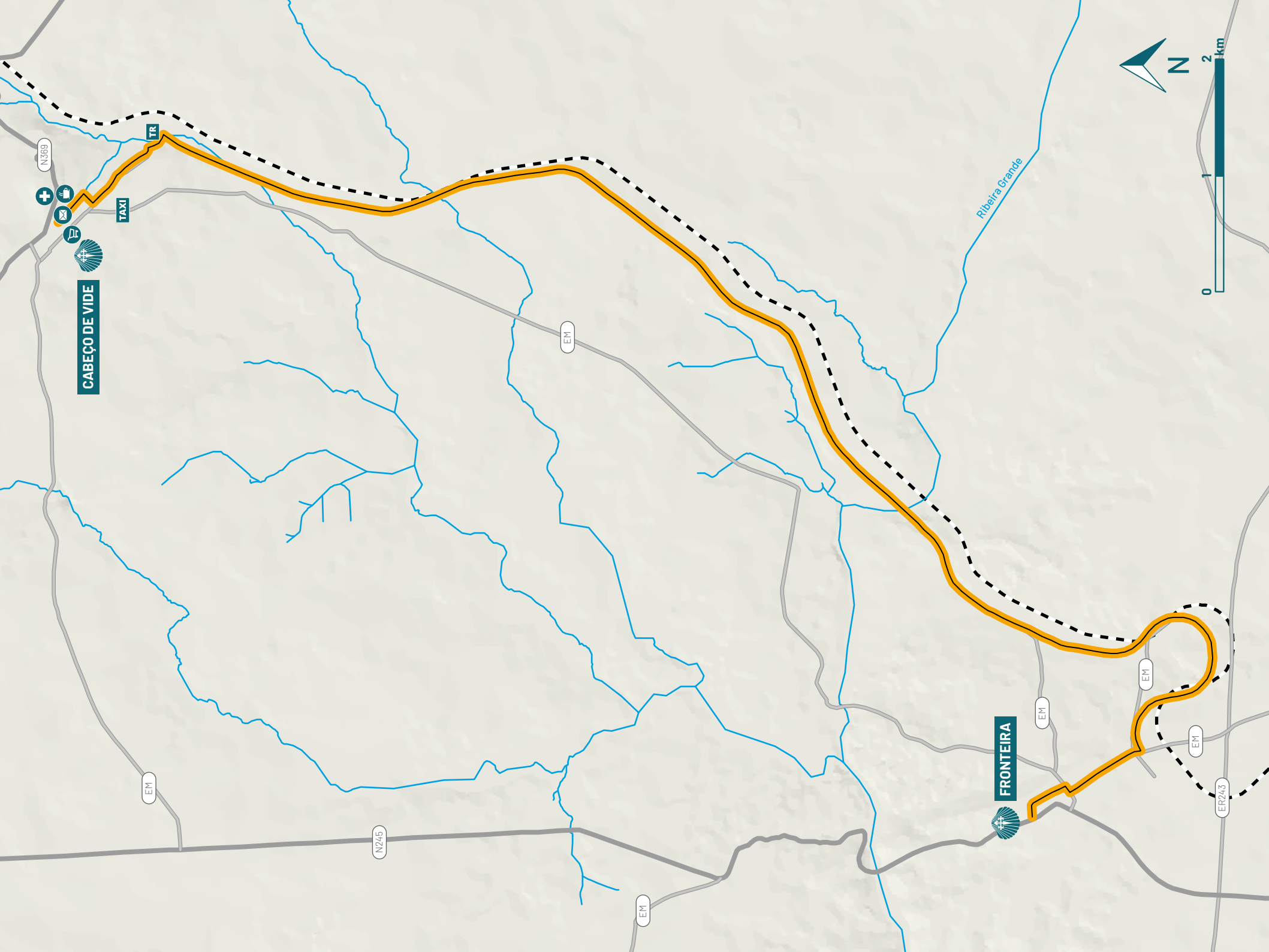
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CABEÇO DE VIDE

FRONTEIRA

Ribeira Grande

0 1 2 km

N

Cabeço de Vide ► Alter do Chão

15



Castle of Alter do Chão

On the way to Alter do Chão we pass by Alter Pedroso, which was granted a charter in 1216. The castle was probably erected from that date, possibly on the initiative of the Order of Avis, in whose possessions the town was established. The evolution of the works in the following decades is unknown, except that, in 1662, in the midst of the war between Portugal and Spain, the fortress was totally depleted and was devastated by the invading troops. Very little remains of the fortification, limited to traces of the wall, which formed an originally elliptical perimeter, and the main access door to the interior, of Gothic profile. Inside

the enclosure, there are also remains of a primitive church dedicated to St Benedict, whose image can now be found in the church of Nossa Senhora das Neves. There is also a cistern, certainly medieval, and the local cemetery, which was deactivated in the 19th century, and must have been built over the medieval parish necropolis.

Already in Alter do Chão, founded as a municipality in 1232 during the reign of D. Sancho II, we find the Chafariz dos Bonecos, built 1799 by the initiative of the local Council, which also promoted the arrival of the water to the tank. It is a

fountain with a monumental backboard, tripartite, with a central axis in two different registers, the upper one well decorated with cartouches including allusive inscriptions to the construction, and a rococo style medallion, with the effigy of the prince regent D. João (future D. João VI). The first Franciscan friars arrived to Alter do Chão in 1614 and occupied what was to become the convent of Santo António in 1617, after the monastery was founded by D. Teodósio II, Duke of Bragança. The convent grew in importance and heritage and has been the object of grandiose works in the 19th century. At that time,



convent wings were added, devotional elements were renewed inside the church and the chapel of Senhor dos Passos was inaugurated. The church has a single nave, preceded by a closed narthex and a monumental façade of three registers, the last of which is purely decorative and designed to reinforce the verticality of the frontage. Inside, the main altarpiece stands out, in white and black marble. After the extinction of religious orders in 1834, the convent was sold by public auction and housed a factory. Today, it is converted into a hotel unit.



Church of Nossa Senhora das Neves

Build in the 19th century on a salient rocky outcrop, the church was substantially transformed in the 17th and 18th centuries. The main façade is austere, with a round-arched doorway perfectly overlaid by a vertical window, while on the south side stands a robust bell tower. The interior is of a unique nave, and coffered ceiling. The main altarpiece is still from the end of the 17th century, while the lateral altarpieces, which flank the triumphal arch, are already from the following century.

and also...

São Marcos Fair – April

Summer Festivities – August

**Interpretative Center of the Archeological Station
of Alter do Chão**

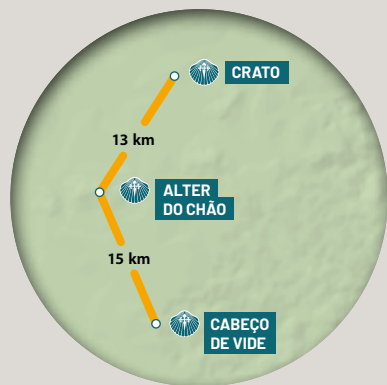
The Interpretative Center of the Archaeological Station

of Alter do Chão was inaugurated in May 2010 and is an exhibition space for the material collected during the archaeological intervention made under the recovery project and other interventions.

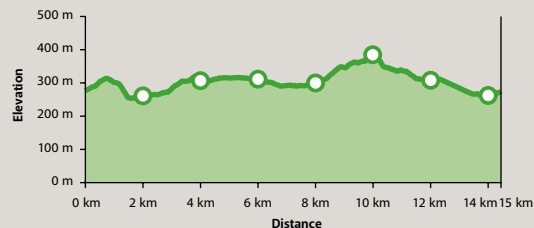
Cabeço de Vide ➤ Alter do Chão

stage

15



Distance 15 km
Maximum altitude 389 m
Cumulative increase 242 m
Cumulative descent -246 m
Duration 3h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



Today's stage is only apparently "shorter" and easier, but will be about 13 km by rougher terrains. Neither will we have any supply point, with the exception of water and toilet available in Alter Pedroso. However, it is a course with other natural nuances. We eat and sleep in Termas da Sulfúrea hot springs, at the exit of which we cross the road and turn to the left, in an asphalted street, deviating again to the left, on a dirt track.

We cross a gate that gives us access to the domains of Monte das Ferrarias estate and, straight ahead, we arrive to its facilities. We cross through the middle without reacting to some dogs and, shortly after, we leave the estate and enter the municipality of Alter do Chão. After a kilometre of stone pine forest, we turn right into a cereal field, in which the Path is barely defined. At the end, a wicket door allows us to access the next terrain and, leaning against the fence, we turn left until we cross an insignificant stream. We are walking through a scattered cork and holm oak forest, when dozens of cattle slowly move in front of us. We know they are meek... except when the females feel their young at risk! Walking

slowly, in silence and without sudden gestures is the correct posture. And, if a more curious calf comes to us, we must stop until the audacity passes. The Path now crosses a plain where we are forced to wait for the herd to let us continue, and then we go up the hill to the farm's private road, which we cross. After passing the gate through a side wicket door, we leave the property directly to the centre of this quiet village, through Rua do Forno. We pass the church, but can't leave the village through Estrada da Fonte road without first going up to the old castle and chapel ruins.

We discover the geodesic landmark and climb, according to the sign indicating "miradouro" (viewpoint). With Alter Pedroso on our back, we start the descent through the asphalt of Estrada da Fonte but, as soon as the indicator sign is presented, we turn right to the "anta" (dolmen) of Alter Pedroso. Further on, we find the prehistoric dolmen, the hill ruins and a left-hand gate on the fence, which gives access to the road that passes on the northside of Monte dos Tapadões. Just over one kilometre more to the village, where we enter by the road next to the cemetery.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Alter do Chão City Council
+351 245 619 160

Alter do Chão Parish Council
+351 245 612 385

SUPPORT

Bank/Cash Dispenser

CTT Post Office

Tourism Office +351 245 610 004

TÁXI Táxi

POINTS OF INTEREST

Santo António Convent Church

Senhor Jesus do Outeiro Church

São Francisco Church

Misericórdia Chapel and Hospital

Santana Chapel

Quinta do Pião Roman Village

Barreto Caldeira Square

Late Necropolis

Álamo House and Gardens

Coudelaria de Alter: Casas Altas (Stud-farm)

Seda Castle Walls' Ruins

Heritage Club

Vila Formosa Roman Bridge

Alter Pedroso Castle Traces

Medusa House (Alter do Chão Archeological Station)

Alter do Chão Castle

HEALTH

Alter do Chão Health Center
+351 245 619 160

Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112

Forest Fires: 117

Alter do Chão Fire Department: +351 245 612 314

GNR – National Republican Guard:
+351 245 612 162

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejoeribatejo.pt



CODE OF CONDUCT

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ALTER DO CHÃO

Alter Pedroso

Monte das Ferrarias

CABEÇO DE VIDE



Alter do Chão ► Crato

16



Grão Prior balcony

The ancient *Ucrate* was taken to the Moors in the 12th century and donated to the Order of the Hospitaller Knights of Malta soon after. The Cross of Malta is omnipresent here, attesting to the town's importance in the medieval period of the Grand Priory of Crato, which incorporated an extensive region that today reaches part of the central region of Portugal.

The village of Crato was conquered by Portuguese troops in the 12th century, but

it was only after the donation to the Order of the Hospital, in 1232, that the settlement of the locality and region was uprooted. The castle must have been built between that date and 1270, the year in which the town received a charter from the Hospitallers. The importance of Crato to the order determined many more works in the fortress, to house the priory (constituted in 1340) and, soon after, the headquarters of the order itself, a status it enjoyed from 1350 onwards. In the second half of the 14th

century, the works continued including a ditch and a barbican. In the 15th century, Crato's castle was the scene of a remarkable episode of the war between the regent D. Pedro and his nephew, future D. Afonso V: the prior of the Order of the Hospital housed the widowed queen D. Leonor de Aragão, and the regent D. Pedro, in reprisal, ordered the destruction of the fortress. The strategic relevance of the village determined the castle's adjustment to a star fort, from 1642, but the works were not



yet finished twenty years later when the village was besieged and razed by D. João de Áustria. For this reason, apart from the ruins of towers, a cistern, and the arches of the governor's house, very little remains of the castle.

In the Order of the Hospital's possession, the town of Ucrate saw the birth of its main church in the mid-13th century, as can be seen from an inscription located in the temple nave, bearing the date of 1287. The current building is, however, the result of a major renovation carried out in the mid-15th century. At that time, the prior Friar Vasco de Ataíde ordered the reconstruction of the church, which acquired a body of three ships. A century later, it was the turn of Infante D. Luís to sponsor the construction of a new main chapel, in a campaign that extended through the main façade, as witnessed by the main Renaissance portal that includes the Ataíde e Melo family shield. Inside stand out the body vaulting, done in 1891, the main chapel coffered ceiling, with paintings allusive to the Order of the Hospital, and the blue and white azulejos, with representations of the Virgin Life, dated mid-18th century.

In this town, the railway station began operating in 1863 and



Municipal Museum of Crato

In the historical area of Crato, housed in an 18th-century palace that, for its beauty, has a permanent exhibition on the region history (from the first prehistoric occupations to the Baroque period), the Municipal Museum of Crato is a recent space, inaugurated in 2000 and divided into three floors. At the entrance, the visitor can discover the traces of the megalithic and Roman periods. The first floor offers a room dedicated to the Order of Malta and a collection from the Monastery of Santa Maria de Flor da Rosa. On the upper floor, you can discover an ethnographic exhibition dedicated to the agricultural and industrial activities of Crato's municipality, with vestiges of traditions that still remain today, and a room for temporary exhibitions.

was a stopping point in the connection between Abrantes and Elvas (today between Entroncamento and Badajoz). The Eastern Line, as it became known, has long been under threat of closure to passenger traffic.

and also...

Crato Festival

Every year, at the end of August, the Festival do Crato takes thousands of people to this historic village of Alentejo.

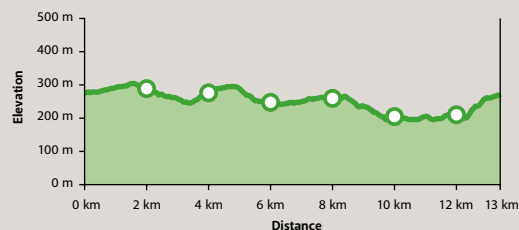
In addition to the musical shows, there is also the Feira de Artesanato e Gastronomia (Crafts and Gastronomy Fair), which is one more reason to get to know the best things that this region has to offer.

Alter do Chão ► Crato

16



Distance 13 km
Maximum altitude 306 m
Cumulative increase 218 m
Cumulative descent -221 m
Duration 3h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



We wouldn't want to miss the opportunity to visit one of the most famous stud farms in Europe, about 4 km from Alter do Chão, so we take advantage of the morning to do so. On our way back, we enjoy a gluttonous Fatia da China ("Slice of China", sweet bread slices) in a local pastry and leave the "Abelterium", Roman name of the village, for less than a kilometre, until the trail ends on national road N245, without sidewalks and some traffic. Carefully, we travel about 2 km of asphalt to the IC13 junction and cross the roundabouts as quickly as possible.

We continue on the other side, still on the road but more at peace, almost without traffic, even if with some effort due to the ascent of São Lourenço hill. On the way, the old "parallels" of black stone that paved the old Portuguese roads replace the asphalt, and from afar we can see Crato, our destination. We start to descend and shortly ahead we find a sign indicating a deviation to the left, the path of Murtal, which we follow along the fence. On the left, at the top of the hill and next to a holm oak tree, we discover the

location of the Anta do Crato dolmen, also locally known as Anta do Couto dos Andreiros. There are also many other dolmens we could refer in this region rich in megalithic heritage.

We arrive then at a eucalyptus forest that accompanies us until we cross the ford of a stream (Linhais), right next to the railway bridge. We will then follow its line on a narrow path until we cross it. A little further on, the Path enters a shaded area along the Seda stream and surprises us with the medieval Ponte Velha do Prado bridge. Further on, we find our well-known N245 but, instead of following it, we curve to a trail on the left, which leads us to the Roman bridge of Chocanal. We face the steep ascent, with a high factory chimney as a reference, and return to the N245, just off the Portas de Seda do Crato square.

We continue to walk up Rua de Santa Maria, we pass the main church and, before turning left, we can see the ruins of the old castle on the right. We arrived at the Praça do Município square, the end of today's stage.

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Crato City Council
+351 245 990 110
- Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Crato
+351 245 990 070

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- Tourism Office
+351 245 997 341
- TAXI** Táxis +351 245 996 375
- Supermarket

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Municipal Museum
- Padre Belo House Museum
- Railway Station
- Bica Fountain – Vale do Peso
- Grand Prior's Balcony
- Nova Fountain – Vale do Peso
- Chocanal Bridge

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www.caminhosdesantiagoolentejoribatejo.pt



- Santa Maria de Flor da Rosa Monastery
- Parish Church – Vale do Peso
- Crato Main Church
or Nossa Senhora da Conceição
- Flor da Rosa Parish Church
- Nossa Senhora do Bom Sucesso Chapel

HEALTH

- Health Center +351 245 990 090
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

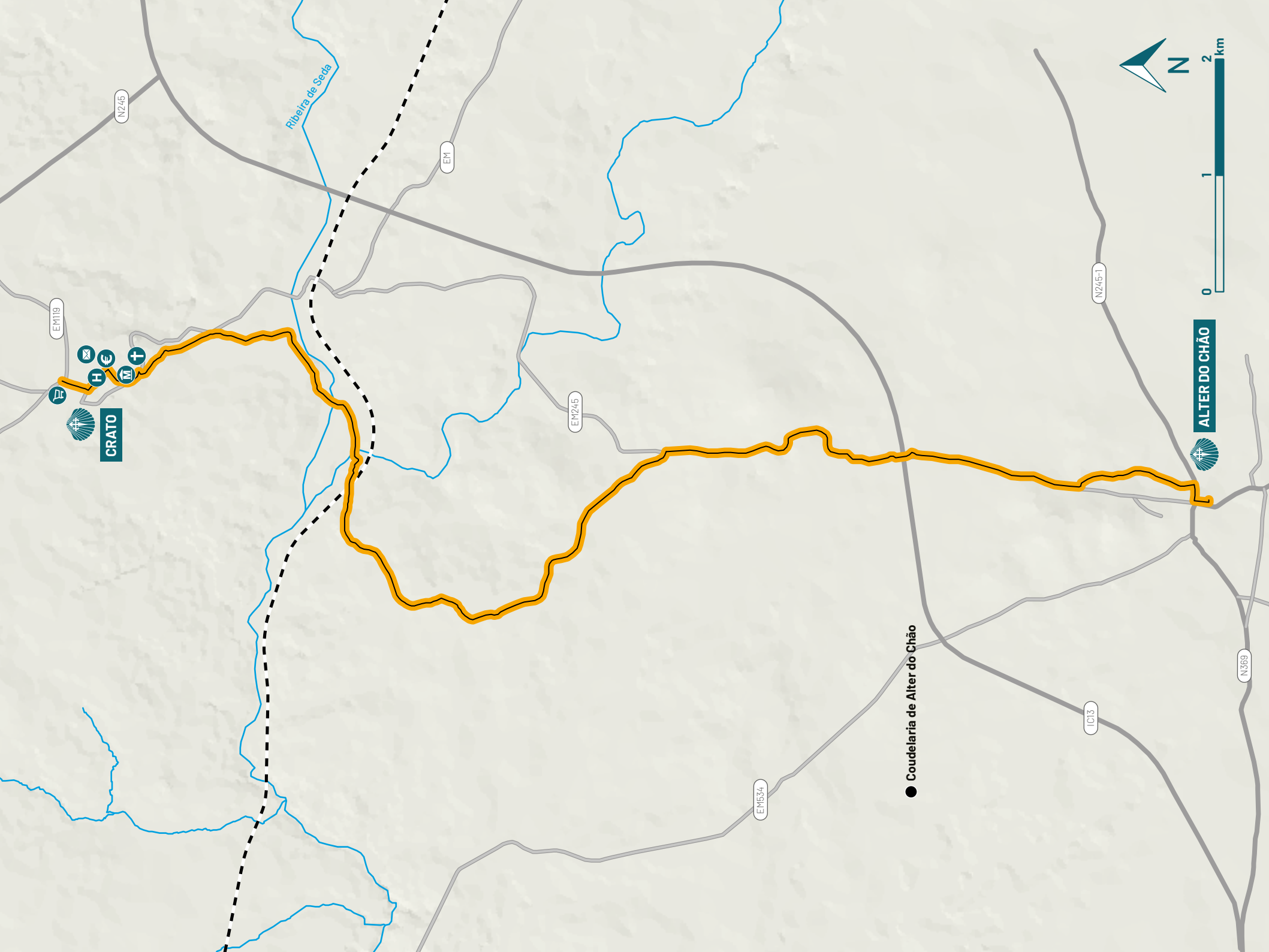
Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Crato Fire Department: +351 245 990 030
 GNR Crato – National Republican Guard:
 +351 245 996 275

CODE OF CONDUCT

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ALTER DO CHÃO

● Coudelaria de Alter do Chão

CRATO

Ribeira de Seda

Crato ➤ Alpalhão

17

This stage begins in the village of Crato, having the Mosteiro de Flor da Rosa as a reference, the most important Portuguese medieval church-fortress, designed to house the seat of the Order of the Hospital in the country, and to which a monastery and a palace were associated.

Alpalhão

Alpalhão is a small village in the municipality of Nisa, situated on the plain between the mountain range of São Mamede and the river Tejo, which integrated the domains of the Order of the Templars. It is known for the benefits of its thermal waters (a few kilometers away, in Termas

da Fadagosa hot springs), the quality of its traditional cheese and for its craftworks.

The Bienal da Pedra (Stone Biennial) initiative also took advantage of the region's blue granite to leave numerous sculptures scattered throughout the town, including an intriguing finger pointing to the sky, "Dedo de Deus" (God's Finger), in the churchyard of the main church.

In this picturesque village, which encompasses an enviable heritage, we find the Capela do Calvário (Calvary Chapel). The 16th-century wayside cross evokes the funerary scopes, not only for presenting Christ crucified on one side, but also for the circular enclosure to which it is associated, recalling the layout of the Holy Sepulchre. The other side of the wayside cross shows St John the Evangelist supporting the Virgin. The whole also has a chapel that is implanted on a granite outcrop.



Monastery of Flor da Rosa

Founded by D. Dinis around 1300, Alpalhão Castle reflects the royal authority in an area traditionally dominated by military orders: that of the Hospital, to the south (Flor da Rosa), and that of the Temple, to the north (Nisa). The Knights Templar established a commendation in the village, which passed to the Order of Christ in the 14th century. The fortified complex received a great reform between 1492 and 1511, at the time of Commander Fernão da Silva. With signs of abandonment in the 18th century, the fortress was already badly ruined in 1874, and only a few traces remain today.

According to an inscription on the bell tower, the Igreja da Misericórdia church was built in 1511 and is located at the beginning of Rua da Carreira, the main artery for those who arrive at the village from the south side. The main chapel still preserves the original Manueline vaulting, with the Order of Christ cross at its closure. In the 18th century, the religious ensemble was



aesthetically updated, including the sacristy washbasin, dating from 1759.

By its turn, the main church, dedicated to Our Lady of Grace, has medieval origins but its current appearance is the result of a reform carried out during the Baroque era. Inside, stands out the altar consecrated to Our Lady of Candles and the image of the patron saint on the main altar.

Castle of Alpalhão

Founded by D. Dinis around 1300, Alpalhão Castle reflects the royal authority in an area traditionally dominated by military orders: that of the Hospital, to the south (Flor da Rosa), and that of the Temple, to the north (Nisa). The Knights Templar established a commendation in the village, which passed to the Order of Christ in the 14th century. The fortified complex received a great reform between 1492 and 1511, at the time of Commander Fernão da Silva. With signs of abandonment in the 18th century, the fortress was already badly ruined in 1874, and only a few traces remain today.



and also...

Alpalhão Sausages Fair – March

Summer Festivities – August

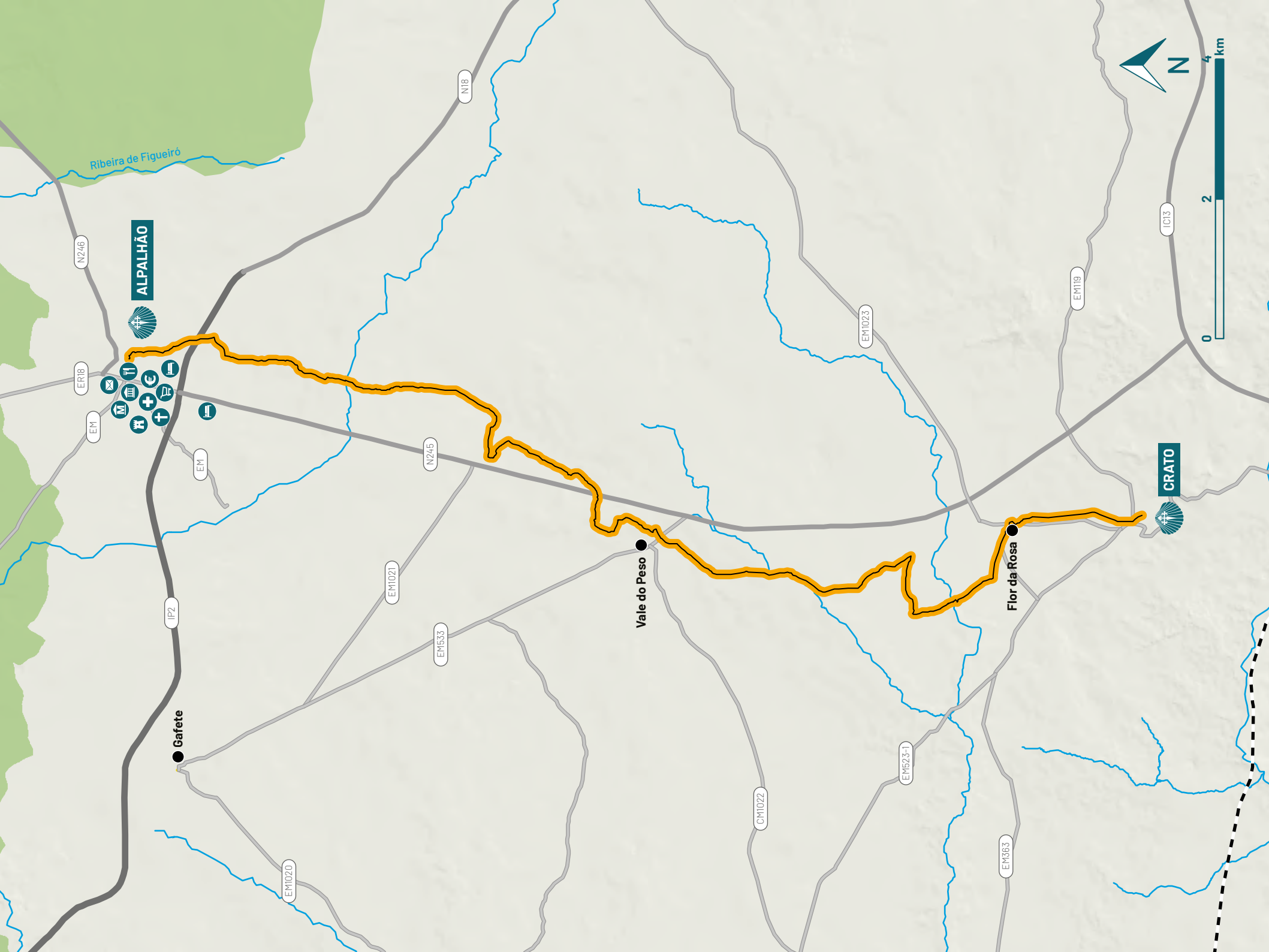
Toy House

The Toy House, which gathers more than two hundred old toys made of wire, stone or rags and porcelain dolls, is located in the old jailhouse, in the building next to the Parish Council.

Each toy has a history and its own file that informs about the date and the person who offered it. It also relates and describes the children's games in which it

was used, thus providing not one, but many "travels" back to childhood.





ALPALHÃO

CRATO

Flor da Rosa

Vale do Peso

Gafete

Ribeira de Figueiró

Alpalhão ➤ Nisa

18



Nisa's Pottery

The Açafa estate, where Nisa would be born, was donated to the Order of the Temple by D. Sancho I. Around 1290, D. Dinis ordered the refounding of the village of Nisa in the Azambujal valley, a few kilometers south of Old Nisa. The construction of the village's defensive fence dates back to the end of the 13th century. The works were directed by Lourenço Martins, master of the Order of the Temple, who erected a quadrangular fence, reinforced by towers. This defensive system was the object of several renovation campaigns in 1343, 1512 and 1646. On the latter date, in the context of the war with Spain, the second line of walls was erected covering the

town outskirts, thus creating the two common yards (inside and outside), which still characterize Nisa's urbanism today. Part of the Porta de Santiago gate, which was arch-shaped and flanked by two quadrangular towers, is still preserved, and the cult of the apostle remains in the toponym Rua de Santiago, on the north side of the village.

Nisa used to have a hostel for travelers, sick persons and pilgrims since 1218, founded by the master of the Order of the Temple, D. Pedro Alvitis. After the extinction of the Knights Templar, the hostel was managed by a local confraternity until it was

integrated into the Misericórdia's heritage.

Misericórdia was founded in 1520 and began to manage all the assets of that medieval hostel. The church dates back to the beginning of the 16th century, according to a simple and, above all, functional model. The main portal is not subject to this rule, as it is highly decorated and part of the Renaissance form: it is inscribed in a frame, flanked by columns, and has Italian motifs, called "grotesques". It's one of the most emblematic portals of the village. The inner space of the church is relatively small and consists of a nave and main



chapel. The side walls include tribunes for the Brothers of Misericórdia, wooden balconies that allowed the registrars to

comfortably attend the religious services. The main chapel was greatly enriched in 1791, thus presenting an artistic heritage

of Rococo style, especially its main altarpiece, of white and polychrome wood, with a central tribune.



Chapel of Santo António

At the entrance to the village of Nisa, the Chapel of St Anthony was built in the 15th century but has undergone many changes over the centuries. It preserves the quadrangular narthex, accessible by a pointed arch, in which travelers of all kinds were welcomed. Inside, the ribbed vault, from Gothic times, whose closure bears the cross of the Order of Malta, is also preserved. The access to the temple itself dates back to the 17th century, as well as some artistic stuffing. In 1892, the churchyard was afforested, and in 1908 the chapel floor was replaced. The churchyard hosts many festivities, especially on 13 June, St Anthony's day, but also in September, when the "Cavalhadas" were celebrated, a noisy pilgrimage made on horseback recreating the fights between the Christians and the Moors, promoted by the "almocreves" (muleteers), and ending in a great feast.

and also...

January Fair – January

Nisa Festival – August

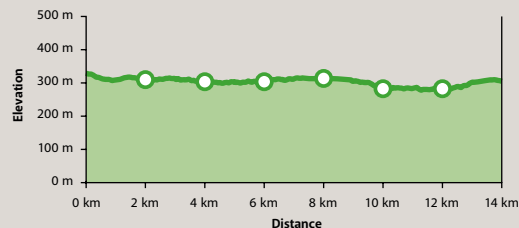
Nisa's Pottery

Exhibited in the Museu do Bordado e do Barro (Embroidery and Clay Museum), the potteries of Nisa are still maintained by the hands of three artisans. Today we can appreciate vases decorated with inlaid stone designs, which were used to conserve freshwater and suitable for transport through the houses.





Distance 14 km
Maximum altitude 327 m
Cumulative increase 95,6 m
Cumulative descent -118 m
Duration 3h15m
Difficulty (0-5) 2



We start the path in Largo do Adro square, with the main church in a prominent position, and the “God’s Finger” sculpture indicating the Path. We continue along the Rua de Santo António cobblestone, and at the next crossroad, near the water spout, we cross the street and continue to the one on the right. At the end, we turn left and start the dirt track on the right, already at the exit of Alpalhão.

We walk over a plain formed almost 300 million years ago. Here, the famous biotitic granite of the region rules, the “Blue of Alpalhão”, applied on the buildings façades and funerary monuments, which we can see in some nearby quarries.

We walk several kilometres alongside the Figueiró stream. Many peoples left its traces around this territory, from the Neolithic menhirs, dolmens and tombs to the important Arab and Roman roads. Without any safer alternative, we enter the N18 national road and, after 1.6 km, we turn to the left, through a pleasant rural path that goes through the middle of holm oaks and olive groves. With

Nisa at our doorstep, we cross once again the Figueiró stream, passing through the old granite colts, just before reaching Santo António chapel. We enter Nisa by Fonte da Cruz square, with an old wayside cross that gives it its name, and we follow the signs to the large square where the tourism office is located.

We explore the town with good appetite, and here it is essential to taste two products on a good bread from Alentejo: the Queijo Mestiço de Tolosa and the Queijo de Nisa cheeses! The latter, from the Merina Branca sheep breed, is still handmade. To accompany, we have a delicious Sopa de Cachola (Soup of pork blood and guts) or the traditional Feijão das Festas (Tomato and bean stew).

In July, we can watch a performance of the folkloric group Rancho Folclórico das Saias Bordadas da Falagueira, with colorful clothes, rich in embroideries that are an art on the brink of extinction.

We also visit the ruins of the castle, which include the tower walls, door and dungeon,

built by the Knights Templars in the 13th century. And it is said that Vasco da Gama, the

famous discoverer of the Maritime Way to India, lived here...

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

Nisa City Council
+351 245 410 000

SUPPORT

- Bank/Cash Dispenser
- CTT Post Office
- Nisa Parish
- Tourism Office +351 245 997 341
- Supermarket

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Misericórdia Church
- Santo António Church
- Espírito Santo Church
- Main Church
- Mártir Santo Chapel
- São Tiago Street

- Ruins of São Tiago Church
- Village Gate
- Montalvão Gate
- Figueiró Stream
- Vereda da Sardinheira (Footpath)

HEALTH

- Health Center +351 245 410 160
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 Nisa Fire Department: +351 245 412 303
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 245 410 116

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www.caminhosdesantiago.alentejo.ribeiro.pt

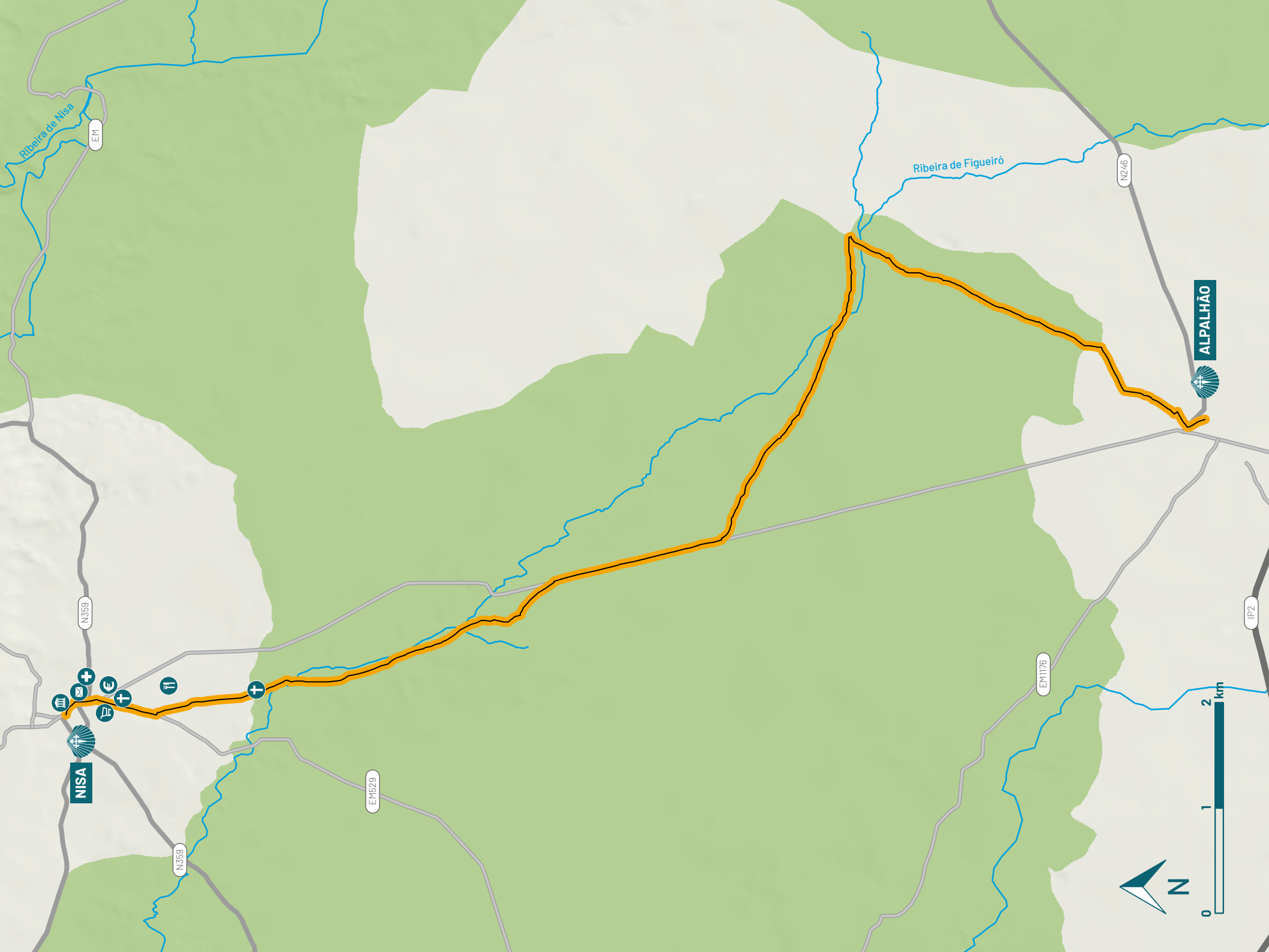


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Ribeira da Nisa

Ribeira de Figueiró

NISA

ALPALHÃO



Nisa ► Vila Velha de Ródão (Center)

19

The vestiges of the past of Ródão are old, very old, mainly of geological nature, dated about 600 million years. Schist and quartzite rocks, fossils of trilobites and bivalves, are a testimony to an ancient sea that used to arrive until there. But there are many more traces of history, from different eras and peoples, from the Romans to the Muslims. On the way to Vila Velha de Ródão, it is also possible to see traces of the Order of Santiago's contributions, in the part of the Porta de Santiago gate that is still preserved, with its arch pointed and flanked by two quadrangular towers. As we pass the street named Santiago, we can see that the connection to the apostle persists. There are also records of the Igreja de S. Tiago, once the second parish of the village, from where an image of St James the Moor-slayer was preserved and moved to the Ermida de Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres, from where it disappeared long ago.

In the chapel of São Lourenço, located by the tarred road on

the way to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Grace, there is a straight lintel portal entirely formed in brick. It is a halt temple on the local pilgrimage that used connect Nisa to the sanctuary. Its current configuration dates back to a major renovation completed in 2005. Inside, the image of the patron saint is located in a niche on the back wall of the narrow main chapel.

In the place where the first village of Nisa was built, before it was relocated by D. Dinis in 1290, and where a protohistoric settlement used to be, was erected the sanctuary of Our Lady of

Grace. Several chapels and vestiges of other constructions remain here, among wayside crosses and fountains. It is a densely Christianised territory, typical of a local pilgrimage destination, strongly sought after for centuries, and which attracted many donations. The hermitages of the Fiéis de Deus, Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres (the oldest, still from the late Middle Ages), and of Nossa Senhora da Graça are the epicenter of this devotional center, to which are added four fountains and a wayside cross. The site is also linked to the medieval bridge of Nossa Senhora da Graça, over the Nisa stream.



and also...

Cherry Festival – June

Fish Soup Festival – September

All-saints day Fair – November

Tejo's Flavours Fair

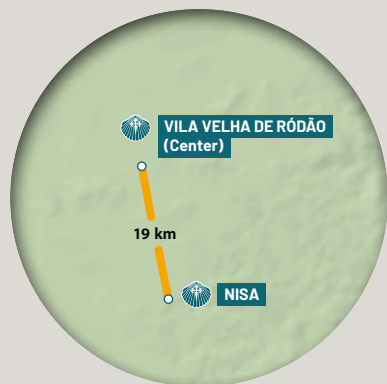
In June, and with the aim of showing the best of what is produced in the region, the Tagus Flavours Fair celebrates the river that flows through the village, presenting several activities associated with it.



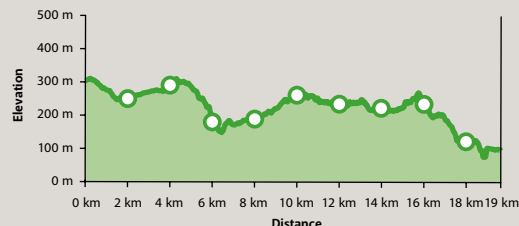


Nisa ► Vila Velha de Ródão (Center)

19



Distance 19 km
Maximum altitude 308 m
Cumulative increase 473 m
Cumulative descent -666 m
Duration 4h45m
Difficulty (0-5) 3



We prepare to fill the canteens in Praça da República square, when we notice a nearby panel that describes the unusual group of fountains existing in Nisa. We take advantage of the dawn of the day and go through the Roteiro das Fontes (Fountains Route), in which stands out the Fonte da Pipa, from 1706, still intact in its original place and below the ground level.

We leave Nisa through Praça do Município square, crossing the arch underneath the building and, after the Museu do Bordado e do Barro (Embroidery and Clay Museum), we continue in front of the municipal road M526, towards Senhora da Graça sanctuary. It's not easy to get lost in the Path, with so many arrows and signs guiding us. We walk a little more than 3 km and pass by a wayside cross, allegedly erected at the entrance to the place where Nisa "Velha" (Old Nisa) was originally located.

The Path continues to the left, but here we suggest a 500 m detour to the Ermida da Senhora da Graça chapel, where there used to be a temple of the Order of the Knights Templar. We take the opportunity to relax with the magnificent view from

the Cabecinho viewpoint, which allows us to see the mountain ranges of S. Mamede and Estrela, the highest point in mainland Portugal. We return to the trail and change the asphalt for green hills and fields. After 2.6 km, we find Porto das Carretas, a cement pier that replaces old stone colts, where we cross the Nisa stream, if the water level allows it...

After this "walk", we return to the road to find the village of Pé da Serra. At the foot of S. Miguel mountain range, this village stands out for its white houses and peacefulness, where all the more "experienced" inhabitants have a tradition of wearing berets that "work both for the sun and the rain". We take this opportunity to rest for a while, as this is the only village and point of support in all of today's stage!

We continue on dirt roads along the mountain range, between the holm oaks and pine trees, which thickens with the height. We walk easily, without steep slopes, always through the valley of S. Miguel mountain range. On the other side, in the old Roman gold sky-open mine of Conhal do Arneiro, the Romans used to collect gold using the erosive force of water.

Between olive trees, we now see a picturesque and unique landscape. It covers 60 hectares of white, pink and grey, in the form of round stones of various sizes. About 7 km later, already on a progressive ascent, we cross the N18 national road and climb to the top of the mountain range. We come across the Tejo surrounding the Talhadas mountain range and, soon next, Vila Velha de Ródão, the end of today's stage and the

Caminho de Santiago Nascente in the Alentejo (Eastern Path to Santiago in Alentejo).

We cross the granite pillars on the bridge that is part of the first road revolution in the country, and enjoy the wonderful view that reaches Ródão Gates. In spring, we often see here the griffon vulture and the discreet Bonelli's eagle, showing their majestic planar as if to greet us and wish us a.... Safe Path!

TIPS

Always carry water, supplies, sunscreen, a hat, waterproof, comfortable shoes, and a map.

PUBLIC ENTITIES

- Vila Velha de Ródão City Council
+351 272 540 300
- Vila Velha de Ródão Parish Council
+351 272 541 011

SUPPORT

- CTT Post Office
- Táxi

HEALTH

- Vila Velha de Ródão Health Center
+351 272 540 210
- Pharmacy

USEFUL CONTACTS

Emergency: 112
 Forest Fires: 117
 GNR – National Republican Guard:
 +351 272 549 050
 Fire Department: +351 272 541 022

www.visitalentejo.pt

www.visitribatejo.pt

www.caminhosdesantiagoalentejoribatejo.pt

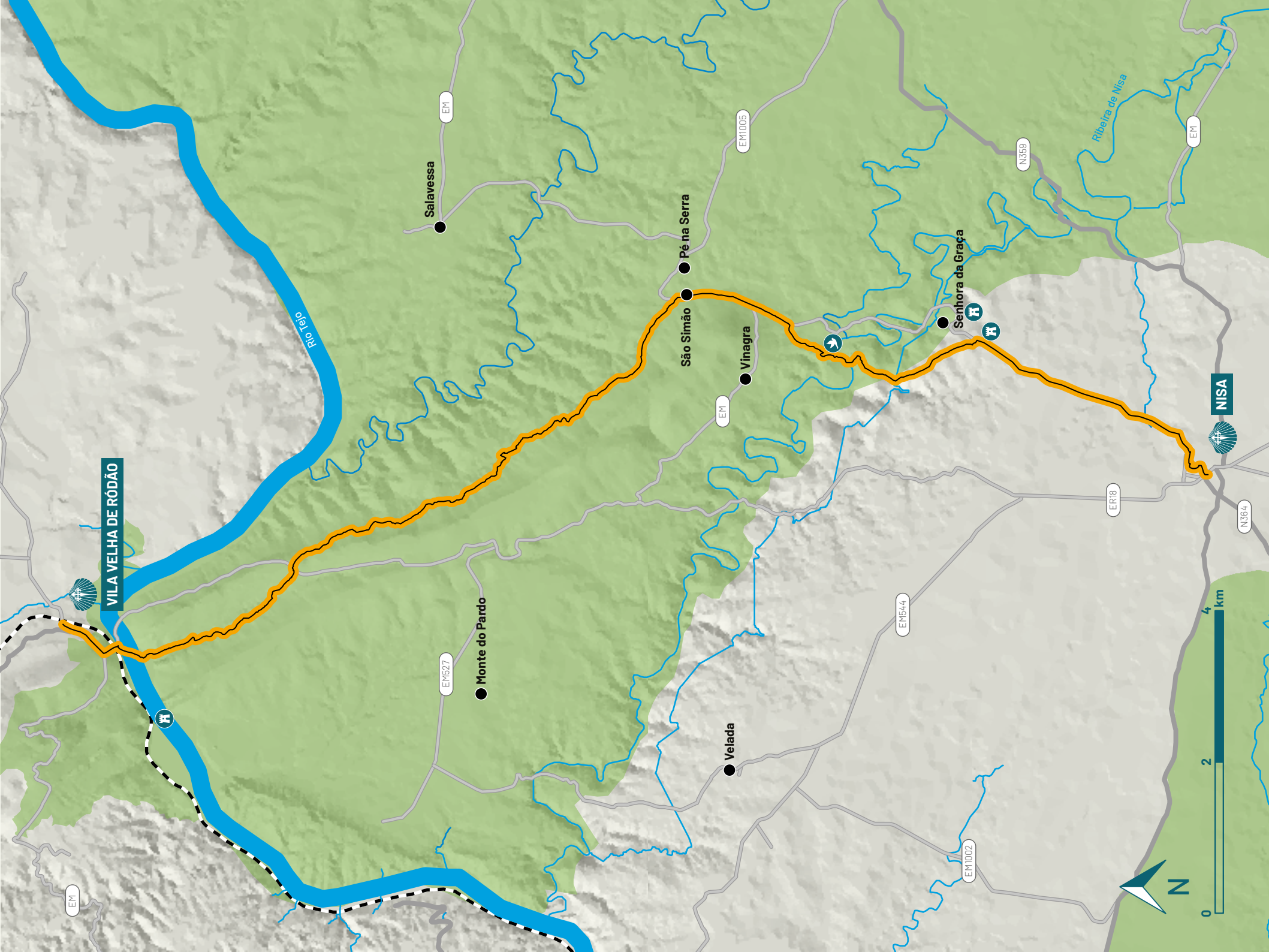


CODE OF CONDUCT

Do not leave the marked and signaled route. Do not approach cliffs. Pay attention to the markings. Do not dispose of organic or inorganic waste during the trail, take a bag for this purpose. If you see garbage, collect it, help us to keep the Paths clean. Beware of livestock, don't bother the animals. Leave Nature intact. Do not collect plants, animals or rocks. Avoid making noise. Respect private property, close gates and barriers. Don't light fires and be careful with cigarettes. Do not vandalize the Paths signage.



In urban areas of the route, the signage marks are for pedestrians only. Other means, such as cycling, should respect traffic signs.





Co-financed by:

