



ALENTEJO
TRANSALENTEJO
**WALKING
TRAILS**
ALQUEVA



ALENTEJO PORTUGAL
TRANSALENTEJO
WALKING
TRAILS
ALQUEVA



INDEX

English

06 How to use the Guide / Useful Information

07 How to Use Maps / Signage / Suggestions of conduct and safety

06 The Fantastic Serra d'Ossa Borba

*Distance 17,3km; Duration 6/7h;
Degree of difficulty High.*

10 Hermits of the Serra d'Ossa Redondo

*Distance 22,7km; Duration 7h;
Degree of difficulty High.*

14 Conquest of Terena Alandroal

*Distance 15,2km; Duration 4h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

18 Writings in Stone and Lime Reguengos de Monsaraz

*Distance 13km; Duration 3/4h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

22 Accross the living heritage of Mourão Mourão

*Distance 8,3km; Duration 2h30m;
Degree of difficulty Low.*

26 From Amieira to Alqueva, with the Lake at your Feet Portel

*Distance 17km; Duration 6h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

30 Route of Água de Moura Moura

*Distance 8,5km; Duration 3h;
Degree of difficulty Low.*

34 From Serra Colorada to Cerro do Calvário Barrancos

*Distance 17km.; Duration 5/6h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

38 Watermills and Fortresses of Guadiana Beja

*Distance 15km; Duration 4/5h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

42 Trail of Azenha da Ordem (watermill) Serpa

*Distance 13,5km; Duration 3/4h;
Degree of difficulty Average.*

46 Around the Cork Plantation (Montado) Mértola

*Distance 14,5km; Duration 4/5h;
Degree of difficulty Low.*

Portuguese

FACTSHEET

Editing: Entidade Regional de Turismo do Alentejo - ERT

Author of the route: Município de Borba, Município do Alandroal, Município do Redondo, Município de Reguengos de Monsaraz, Município de Mourão, Município de Portel, Município de Moura, Município de Barrancos, Município de Beja, Município de Serpa e Associação de Defesa do Património de Mértola (ADPM), Município de Mértola

**Technical coordination, texts
and photographs:** SAL

Graphic design, printing

and translation: Heranças do Alentejo

Circulation

Legal deposit

ISBN



BORBA

The Fantastic Serra d'Ossa

REDONDO

Hermits of the Serra d'Ossa

ALANDROAL

Conquest of Terena

REGUENGOS DE MONSARAZ

Writings in Stone and Lime

MOURÃO

Across the Living Heritage of Mourão

PORTEL

From Amieira to Alqueva, with the Lake at your Feet

MOURA

Route of Água de Moura

BARRANCOS

From Serra Colorada to Cerro do Calvário

BEJA

Watermills and Fortresses of Guadiana

SERPA

Trail of Azenha da Ordem (watermill)

MÉRTOLA

Around the Cork Plantation (Montado)

FRAMING

The Alentejo is a vast territory, situated to the South of Portugal, corresponding to about one third of the land area of the country. It offers diversified landscapes, where you can find different types of terrain, vegetation and immense natural and cultural heritage. Cities, towns and villages in the Alentejo, as well as rural areas, have excellent conservation and authenticity, making this area a destination of choice for those who enjoy hiking.

DESCRIPTION

The TransAlentejo Guide is the organization of a set of eleven walking trails structured in the area of influence of the Alqueva Lake and Guadiana River, in areas of special protection in terms of the by-laws of nature conservation. The trails presented here were chosen from among the several ones that each represented county has on its territory, each of which have been duly recognized and undergone an exhaustive survey of the main points of interest.

With this guide, a new territory in Alentejo is opened to the organized practice of Hiking in a coherent manner and with a common reason: the Alqueva Lake, its tributaries and the Guadiana River after the dam that gives its name to the lake. From Serra d'ossa, where the Ribeira de

Luçefécit (stream) rises, to the Tapada Grande in the São Domingos Mine, you can find a common reason in the coastal scenarios that, in recent years, have shaped the landscape in this region.

You can use this guide for your personal leisure, whether hiking alone, or with your family or friends, through the different paths that are properly studied, mapped and signposted. For professional use or that of tourist nature hiking organizations, this guide is the starting point to a territory that has a lot to offer in terms of group programs, whereby you should contact the Entidade Regional de Turismo Alentejo/Ribatejo (Alentejo/Ribatejo Regional Tourist Entity), the Associação Heranças do Alentejo (Heritage of Alentejo Association) or the Serviços de Turismo Municipal (Municipal Tourist Office).

USEFUL CONTACTS

Incêndios Florestais: + 351 117

SOS Emergência: +351 112

Ambiente e Território: +351 808 200 520

Consulta e download do Guia Transalentejo e dos Mapas dos Percursos:

www.visitalentejo.pt/transalentejo

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/Transalentejo.Alqueva

info@transalentejo-alqueva.pt

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

To walk each of the trails featured on the TransAlentejo Guide you have a wide range of supports.

- The guide has a detailed description of each trail with a summary presentation of five of the points of interest that you can find in the path.
- For each trail there is a map edited by the Instituto Geográfico do Exército (Army Geographic Institute), with a plan of the trails and all points of interest marked on it.

- On the field you have signage according to the markings approved by the Federação de Campismo e Montanhismo de Portugal (Camping and Mountaineering Federation of Portugal), according to the scheme presented.

The trails have one, and only one, direction, corresponding to the order of the points of interest. The signs on the field can be seen in both directions, simply to allow a safe return in case you need to turn back.



SIGNAGE



Right Way



Wrong Way



Turn Left



Turn Right



SUGGESTIONS OF CONDUCT AND SAFETY

- Go on your tour as a group. If you are walking alone, leave behind the information on the trails you are going to take.
- In organized tours, always observe the indications of guides.
 - Choose the area of your tour for spending the night, taking your meals and shopping. Greet and mingle with the locals.
 - Use suitable clothing and footwear. Take sufficient water and food for the day, as well as means of communication and a first-aid kit.
 - Take only the marked trails and respect private and public property. Leave the gates as found when you pass them.
 - Avoid mineral or vegetable sampling and the disturbance of wildlife and livestock, keeping as far as possible.
 - Use caution when crossing hazardous locations. When in doubt, go back.
 - Take the utmost care when crossing roads, streets and railway lines.
 - Respect the surrounding nature. Avoid using shocking colours and making unnecessary noises.
 - Take your garbage and place it in the appropriate containers at the site where you purchased the goods that gave rise to this garbage.
 - Do not make fire. Avoid smoking or do it only at the stops.

THE FANTASTIC SERRA D'OSSA

RIO DE MOINHOS – SERRA D'OSSA, BORBA

Borba is a gateway to the region of marble, the “white gold” of the Alentejo, but it is also here, very close to Rio de Moinhos, that the fantastic Serra d'Ossa rises in the middle of the plain where the Ribeira de Lucefécit springs and where you have a view as far as the eye can see, making this territory a compelling destination for those who enjoy wide horizons.

From the Church of São Tiago of Rio de Moinhos, go down and take the road of São Gregório, following the indications “Serra d'Ossa”. Make a small detour to visit the Chapel and Village of São Gregório and return to the original path. Keep following the road until you cross the Ribeira de Lucefécit, after which it turns left. Follow the dirt road to the right and begin a gentle climb. After about 500 metres, make a detour from the main path to one less visible to the left and continue to climb, keeping always to the left and close to the fence. Walk by a small dam docked in the valley and follow the footpath that runs beside the ruins of the Monte das Hortas. At the end of the footpath there is a fountain and the route to take is located just before, on the right, by a steep water line. At the top, continue to your right

until you find a crossroad of several paths to follow in the North direction. Inside the eucalyptus forest, keep following the hillside for about two miles and at the end turn left, reversing the direction, so as to access, through a wide firebreak, the geodesic landmark Carneira. From this location, keep following the firebreak at the top of the mountain for about three and a half kilometres, admiring the landscape at your feet. Take care going down the first firebreak on the left, which leads to Monte da Defesa de Baixo. Turn left at the dirt road, passing the Monte da Defesa de Cima until you reach the bridge of Ribeira de Lucefécit. From this point, follow the road of São Gregório in the opposite direction from the one you took, until you reach the starting point.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



POINTS OF INTEREST

CHAPEL AND VILLAGE OF SÃO GREGÓRIO

The set of the rural chapel associated with a set of houses is not a very common situation and might have been the way to create income for the conservation of the chapel, likely to have been built during the 15th century. Its oracle is São Gregório Magno, Pope of the 6th century who, in the form of dialogue, Christianized many of the pagan cults, as would be the case of the Endovelicus cult that stretched along the Ribeira de Lucefécit that flows close by.



**PR 1
BRB**

Route: The Fantastic Serra d'Ossa

Location: Rio de Moinhos – Serra d'Ossa, Borba

Distance: 17,3km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 428m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 275m Máx 530 m

Approximate duration: 6:00h a 7:00h

Degree of difficulty: High

Height differences: Várias subidas exigentes e uma descida muito inclinada.

Departure and arrival point:

Igreja de São Tiago de Rio de Moinhos

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N38°46'16" W07°30'11"

Parking: There is parking on site

Useful Contacts: Município de Borba

Tlf. +351 268 891 630 - gap@cm-borba.pt



VINHAS DE BORBA (VINES)

In Borba, in 1955, the first winery of the Alentejo region was founded, thereby creating an incentive for the planting of vines and wine production, very scarce in this country at the time. After more than 30 years of hard work, the Alentejo Wines began to conquer the taste of consumers, being today a national and international reference. Thus the Borba territory's brand image is the vast fields planted with vines, from which the much appreciated nectar originates.

THE FANTASTIC SERRA D'OSSA

POINTS OF INTEREST

RIBEIRA DE LUCEFÉCIT (STREAM)

Its source is at the foot of the Serra d'Ossa, fed by the hydrological network of its strands. Along its path, it takes on different tributaries, becoming a stream of appreciable dimensions when, at a distance of about 35 km, in Terena, it turns into a reservoir by artificial impoundment. Downstream it becomes a tributary of Rio Guadiana, forming part of the Lago Alqueva reservoir. Its name might have pre-Christian origins and may be associated with cults to the God Endovelicus.



EUCALYPTUS FOREST

Eucalyptus is a hardwood tree from Australia, which was introduced into Portugal in the late 19th century for draining wetlands and for decorative purposes. Its great capacity for rapid growth and production of wood made it very important for the industry of paper pulp production. Frowned upon by many people, the eucalyptus has a great number of advantages, such as being a great captor of carbon dioxide and a breaking element in typically impermeable soils.

SERRA D'OSSA

It is the highest elevation of Central Alentejo with an altitude of about 650 metres and 26 km in length, in the direction NW-SE. It is a ridge with several parallel wrinkles that became famous for the continued presence, for several centuries, of Christian hermit monks. In former times it is likely to have been the site of pre-Christian cults, possibly a local shelter to those who resisted the colonization and Roman occupation.





HERMITS OF THE SERRA D'OSSA

ALDEIA DA SERRA - SERRA D'OSSA, REDONDO

From Redondo you can see the Serra d'Ossa which, to the southwest, offers a good forest of cork oaks and holm oaks that extends to the fields at its base, providing an excellent alternative to the many eucalyptus trees that populate it. Here you can also find the religious monuments that characterized the eremitic vocation of this site.

Leave the Largo da Aldeia da Serra towards the South, along the side of the road until you leave the town. After passing the entrance to Herdade de Água D'Alte, turn left towards Monte Cabaço and then take a little detour to return to this site. Turn right and immediately left, climbing a little for a short visit to the Anta da Candeeira (dolmen). Go back to the original path, and move on through Monte Novo Palheirinho. Do not turn to any side path until you see Monte Abraão on your right, just below, where you must turn left as you start to see a cliff of tailings followed by a lake on the right. Always follow the path within the eucalyptus forest until you reach an open valley, where you should take the path to your left, which passes right next to Monte da Quinta. Keep going straight ahead until you see on the Monte Virgem church on the right, perched on some prominent cliffs. Spot the abandoned house and go around its left on a path of tight turns until you find a steep climb to the right which you should take, and keep going until you find Cruzeiro. When you reach the road, you will have access to the Monte Virgem chapel, through a

path that will take you there and back to this spot. Go back to Cruzeiro and follow the path ahead of you, then to the right. Always follow that path on the middle of the hillside, passing over the convent of São Paulo, leaving the São Cornelho rock to your right. Reach the access path to the top of São Gens, the ridge of Serra d'ossa, on a new journey - there and back. Go around the top and down the slope until you reach highway 381. Turn left and about fifty metres ahead, take the right path, which follows on through the middle of the hillside, until you find a steep descent to the left. Halfway down the hill, turn right and meander towards Cova do Bento, an area of lush greenery. Then proceed until you find a path on a sharp slope, leading you close to a dam. Take the path after the water line and follow through to highway 381, which you shall cross through the underground passageway for cattle. Turn right and take the path carved into the rocks, alongside the fence of the convent itself. Further ahead you will find the imposing ruins of an old mill and then re-enter the asphalt road turning left towards the centre of Aldeia da Serra.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 4
RDD**

Route: Hermits of the Serra d'Ossa
Location: Aldeia da Serra, Serra d'Ossa
Distance: 22.7km
Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 795m
Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres
Mín 299m Máx 650m
Approximate duration: 7:00h
Degree of difficulty: High
Height differences: Várias subidas e descidas acentuadas
Departure and arrival point:
Praça Central da Aldeia da Serra
GPS coordinates of the departure point:
N38°42'43" W07°34'01"
Parking: There is parking on site
Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk
Tlf. +351 266 909 100 - geral@cm-redondo.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

ANTA DA CANDEEIRA (DOLMEN)

A megalithic monument of funerary use, from the Neolithic period - about 4500 to 5000 years old. It has an original window-shaped hole, opened in unidentified times when the place had a different use to the original one, probably related to some hermitic use. This monument was visited, since the late 19th century, by great European archaeologists, such as Émile Cartailhac, Vere Gordon Childe and José Leite de Vasconcelos.



CHURCH OF MONTE DA VIRGEM

A temple dedicated to Virgin Mary, situated on a rocky spur above a deep valley. Presumably the original building is from the 15th century, having been a parish in the 16th century, renovated up to the present day. To its side you will find a small cemetery still in use. Slightly above this church there is a small hermitage, most certainly used by the extinct ancient monastic community of the Serra.

HERMITS OF THE SERRA D'OSSA

POINTS OF INTEREST

CONVENT OF SÃO PAULO

Founded in 1182 by Hermit Monks of the Order of São Paulo as a place of seclusion and meditation. The Order was always very protected by the Portuguese Crown, having had an important function of settlement and protection of this site. Here, several Noblemen and Portuguese monarchs were housed, which justifies the important housing estate. It is currently a private property and the space has been turned into a tourist unit.



ALTO DE SÃO GENS

The highest point of Serra de Ossa, with an altitude of 650 metres, where the ruins of a small chapel dedicated to Saint Gens lie. In Alto de São Gens you will get to know an important settlement of the Bronze and Iron ages, around 3000 years old. This site and the existing remains were associated by the monks of the Congregation of São Paulo to the Monte de Venus, where Viriato took refuge and where he took off for the battle against the Romans.

FORESTS OF CORK OAKS AND HOLM OAKS

The forests of cork and holm oaks have a very delicate balance and exist only in the South of the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa. The cork oaks are producers of cork and make Portugal the main exporter in the world, being the country with the world's largest cork oak extension: about 35% of the global area. Holm oaks are producers of tasty acorn, the staple food of the Alentejo montado pig. These forests are protected by law and their growth is encouraged.





CONQUEST OF TERENA

TERENA, ALANDROAL

The village of Terena, situated in the territory of Alandroal, is one of the best kept secrets of the Alentejo. It's as though time stopped, as if wanting to leave an imprint of a very important historic past, as evidenced by the testimony of so many times and so many civilizations, highlighting the best heritage of the pre-Christian God Endovelicus and the strategic position of the border with Spain, with a vital need for defence and settlement.

Leave Largo do Castelo (the castle's square), passing in front of the clock tower and pillory. Follow through the village of Terena, passing by the São Pedro church toward the entrance of the cemetery. Turn right and walk down the street toward the national highway 255 to then turn left, circling its curb until you reach the first turn, where you will take a dirt path that follows straight through Horta do Professor. Make the gentle climb all the way to the top, passing a cattle gate with a metal grid on the floor, until you reach a crossroad in the middle of the terrain. Turn right at a tight angle and then through the forests of cork trees, on the dirt path, which at one point makes a left turn followed by another to the right. Go straight through the terrain, passing through another cattle gate until you reach the paved municipal road where you must turn left and follow through the curb for about one kilometre, to then re-enter the forest, near the entrance to Monte da Coutada, where you will see a large cork oak. Head north,

through the cork and holm oaks followed by extensive farmlands and small vegetable gardens. See the Albufeira de Lucefécit (reservoir) and take a left toward its dam, passing over two water-retaining walls. Walk along the wall of the dam and go see the unloading systems, where you have an excellent view over the water body, with the Terena Castle as backdrop. Go back to the path of access to the national road. Take a detour to the left, by the side of the road followed by a dirt path, to see the old bridge of Terena and then turn back, passing along the electrical substation. You can take the left, between the vineyard and the road. After the Ribeira da Cruz Bridge, turn left and follow the irrigation channel to see the Fortress Temple of Nossa Senhora da Boa Nova to the right, where you must turn into. Visit the Sanctuary and ask that it be opened, at the house opposite to it. Follow the paved road, passing the Cruzeiros, and after a gentle climb you will reach the cemetery and enter the village of Terena to return to the starting point.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 3
ADL**

Route: Conquest of Terena

Location: Terena, Alandroal

Distance: 15,2km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 124m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 175m Máx 257m

Approximate duration: 4:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average

Height differences: Com pouco significado

Departure and arrival point:

Largo da Porta do Castelo de Terena

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N38°37'16" W07°24'26"

Parking: Junto ao Cemitério de Terena

N38°37'07" W07°24'27", e subir a pé pela

Vila Medieval até à Porta do Castelo.

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 268 440 045

pturismo.adl.dsscd@cm-alandroal.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

TERENA CASTLE

The earliest references to Terena date back to 1262 when the charter was issued by the Royal Knight Gil Martins, at which time the construction of the castle and settlement of the place began. Of enormous strategic importance in the backfield with Castile, it underwent improvement and expansion works for several years, having suffered much damage with the earthquake of 1755. In the 20th century, new works resulted in the current romantic image of an abandoned medieval castle.



TERENA VILLAGE

It was born around the fortification, when the walls of the castle could no longer support more inhabitants. Its position at the top of the hill dominated by the fortress granted it a somewhat defensive position. One assumes there might have been a prior settlement of the Roman period in the vicinity of the temple to the God Endovelicus, destroyed during the Muslim invasions, giving rise to a new settlement with the possible designation Talanna, resulting in the name Terena.

CONQUEST OF TERENA

POINTS OF INTEREST

LUCEFÉCIT DAM

An artificial water damming system, consisting of riprap stone and two containment dikes, whose construction ended in 1982. Elevated to 23 metres from the level of the river, with a crowning of 285 meters long by 8 metres wide, it occupies approximately 170 acres of flooded area and serves the irrigation cultures, of which the most important is corn, in a total of 1400 hectares of irrigated agriculture.



TERENA BRIDGE

The ancient place of passage of the Lucefécit River, it probably served since the 16th century as the road link from Alandroal to Terena and connection to Spain. It is impressive for its robustness and extension, supported by six perfect round arches and buttresses on the pillars, both upstream and downstream. The high deck in the centre allows the perfect run-off of waters, from both the rain and floods. It became free of traffic with the construction of modern means of communication.

FORTRESS TEMPLE OF NOSSA SENHORA DA BOA NOVA

The temple that lasted to the present day is a jewel of medieval architecture from the 14th century, with the characteristics of a fortress temple, with a cruciform plan, a powerful outer structure and a simple Gothic-like interior. Several subsequent introductions adorn the interior of the Church, with an emphasis on the frescoes in the presbytery with the Kings of Portugal from the first dynasty and scenes from the Apocalypse of St. John, and a set of barely artistic paintings of Saints of popular devotion, made in the late 19th century.





WRITINGS IN STONE AND LIME

MONSARAZ, REGUENGOS DE MONSARAZ

Being in Monsaraz is almost like touching the sky. High on top of its more than three hundred metre altitude, it dominates the surrounding plain and ensures the best views of Lake Alqueva, which almost reaches the base of its rock mass. A location of great landscapes, this village was throughout time chosen by different peoples as a place of dwelling and defence, giving rise to a walled set that marks the skyline and defines the history of the region.

Exit Monsaraz through the door of the village, in the North, and down the right, around the first wall towards the Ermida de São Bento (chapel). Go round the Estalagem de Monsaraz (inn) and climb down the slope towards Ferragudo and toward the Orada Convent. In the vicinity, you will see the Xerez Cromlech, where you will head north through the rural road that passes next to the Roman bridge of Pêga. Follow towards the Aldeia do Outeiro (village) and cross the settlement until you reach the tight curve of the national road 1125, to then follow the path towards the west, where you can see the Serra da Barrada on the right. Pass by the Outeiro Menhir, go up toward the village of Barrada, cross the road and walk down

the rural road to the Monte Saraz accommodation. Turn right and immediately left. Pass South of Horta of Reboredo and keep going until you reach a crossing with the Estrada Real (road). Here you can go straight ahead to see the Belhoa Menhir, there and back, to then go South taking the Estrada Real (road) which leads up to the village of Telheiro with its impressive fountain. Take the hill that lies between the old school and the guard station. Go up the hill until you find the entrance to Monsaraz. When the time comes to visit the narrow streets, don't miss the Castle: walk along its walls and return to the village, getting to know all its corners.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 1
RMZ**

Route: Writings in Stone and Lime

Location: Monsaraz

Distance: 13km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 177m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:
Mín 183m Máx 306m

Approximate duration: 3:00h a 4:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average

Height differences: Acentuados na descida e subida a Monsaraz. Sem significado no restante percurso.

Departure and arrival point:
Ermida de São João Batista, Monsaraz

GPS coordinates of the departure point:
N38°26'38" W07°22'46"

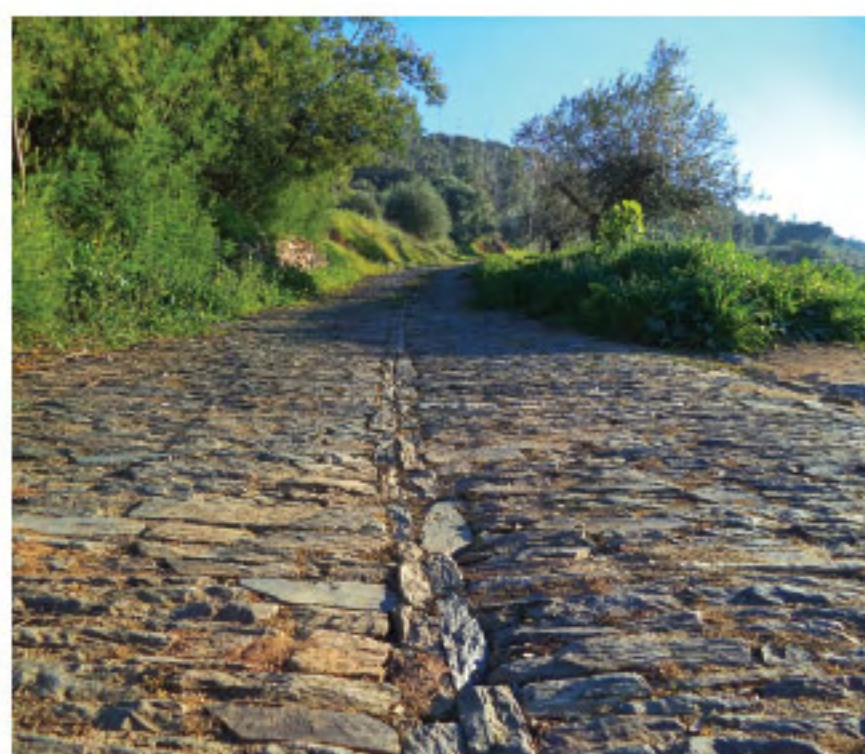
Parking: Lado de fora da muralha

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk
Tlf. +351 266 508 052
turismo@cm-reguengos-monsaraz.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

VILLAGE OF MONSARAZ

It was conquered for the first time from the Moors in 1167 by Fearless Geraldo. Monsaraz witnessed, in the following centuries, the growth of its walls under the aegis of Kings Dom Afonso III, Dom Dinis and Dom Fernando. It was also during this period that the main religious and administrative buildings of the "montesarense" village were built. Its defensive shape underwent drastic changes over the course of the 17th century, with the construction of new Vauban-type ravelins, which allowed a more effective defence against artillery weapons of modern armies.



HISTORICAL SLOPES OF ACCESS TO MONSARAZ

To reach the doors of the stronghold walls of the village of Monsaraz, one had to cross the steep slopes surrounding its hillsides. Built stone by stone, they provided excellent flooring and today hold the testimony of many climbs and descents and a rigorous control of the arrival of foreigners and goods. They continue to be privileged points of access for those who wish to have a view of the best surrounding landscapes.

WRITINGS IN STONE AND LIME POINTS OF INTEREST

XEREZ CROMLECH

A megalithic set, about 5 to 6 millennia old, made up of 55 small granite blocks of phallic or rounded shapes, arranged in a square around a huge 4-metre high stone weighing about 7 tons, decorated with dimples. Its primary use is linked to worshipping fertility and the unknown, which would translate into atmospheric phenomena. This monument was removed from its original location by means of the flooding of the Alqueva reservoir.



OUTEIRO MENHIR

Also known as Penedo Comprido, it probably originated approximately six thousand years ago, in the megalithic period of the region. It rises five metres and sixty centimetres from the ground and weighs about 8 tons, resembling a notoriously phallic form represented in a relief in the shape of a crozier. It was discovered, studied and raised off the ground at the end of the 1960s, being considered one of the most imposing menhirs across Europe.

SPRING AND FOUNTAIN OF TELHEIRO

The fountain bears a headstone that places its origin in 1422, having been ordered by the Lord of these lands, proprietor of the House of Bragança, having undergone various works throughout the years, including that of the 15 imposing merlons. The baroque fountain was built in the first half of the 17th century and stands out for its domed central tower, flanked by walls complemented by winding pediments and pinnacles at the vertices. Above the access door to the interior you have the municipal coat of arms.





ACROSS THE LIVING HERITAGE OF MOURÃO

MOURÃO

The town of Mourão is a real treasure on the edge of Lake Alqueva. Strongly marked by the Guadiana River, today it has an idyllic setting with waters as far as the eye can see and old paths and roads immersing themselves in the placid blue of the calm waters. The hills and old walls now make amazing cut-outs for walking and discovering new landscapes at every moment, topped off by a beautifully preserved historic centre and a castle that takes us back in time.

Start next to the Tourist Office of Mourão, at Largo de São Bento and climb up the Estrada da Barca (road), turning at the top toward Rua Frei António das Chagas (street) until you reach the Castle, which you must visit. Exit the Castle and go round the outer walls to the North and, on this side, turn right, by the old moat. Follow a trail between walls, towards the Hermitage of São Sebastião. Go round the Chapel and down a bit and then take the opposite direction on a wide curve to the left, taking the path between walls, parallel to the water line. Keep going until you reach the old paved road and turn left by the old Estrada da Barca (road) until you find another perpendicular path where you will turn right. Go down between the walls through the path that further ahead turns into a dirt road. Follow straight ahead, cross another old paved road

and keep going until you reach the end of a small peninsula. Here, the paths to follow always depend on the water level. When you get to the end, turn left following the borderline until you reach the old road again, next to a house. Follow the road to the right and turn into the first turn to your left after the quarry. Climb between the walls until you reach the Estrada da Barca (road) and go down toward the tourist office. Pass the urban route, following the Praça da República (square), pass in front of the Church of São Francisco, turn right by Rua João José Vasconcelos Rosado (street) and Rua da Pedreira (street) to the end and turn right again, into Rua da Lapa (street), then turn right to Rua Dr. Silvestre Vasconcelos Rosado (street) and follow the Rua do Norte (street), Rua 9 de Abril (street) and again Praça da República (square), where your tour ends.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 1
MOU**

Route: Across the living heritage of Mourão

Location: Mourão

Distance: 8,3km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 155m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 150m Máx 211m

Approximate duration: 2:30h

Degree of difficulty: Low

Height differences: Subidas e descidas pouco acentuadas

Departure and arrival point: Posto de Turismo de Mourão, Lg Portas de São Bento

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N38°22'58" W07°20'43"

Parking: No parque de estacionamento no local

Useful Contacts: Município de Mourão

Tlf. +351 266 560 010 - postoturismo@cm-mourao.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

MOURÃO CASTLE

The hill where it is housed has been the scene of several disputes, but it is never referred to in the conquests of D. Afonso Henriques. It received its Charter in 1226 and during dozens of years it lived in strife between Portugal and Spain. The Mourão square joins the Castilian cause in 1580 and, after 1640, is the scene of several battles between the Spanish and Portuguese, resulting in great renovation works starting 1662, conferring it the star outline of a 17th century fortress.



HERMITAGE OF SÃO SEBASTIÃO

A small rural Chapel of thick walls and buttresses located halfway between the Mourão Castle and Porto do Guadiana, built in the late 15th century. Its Oracle - São Sebastião - and location indicate that it was the first point of passage of visitors to Mourão, who crossed the Guadiana. Due to its location and ease of access it has often been used for keeping artillery in attacks on the northern flank of the Mourão Castle.

ACROSS THE LIVING HERITAGE OF MOURÃO

POINTS OF INTEREST

PATHS BETWEEN WALLS

An ancient public network of paths divided and gave access to small properties, thereby evidencing a smallholdings policy around Mourão, which demonstrates an effort of settlement through the delivery of small parcels of land to those who settled here. Having been abandoned for a long time, after the opening of new roads, they are now exceptionally used for discovering cultural values, almost lost in time and history.

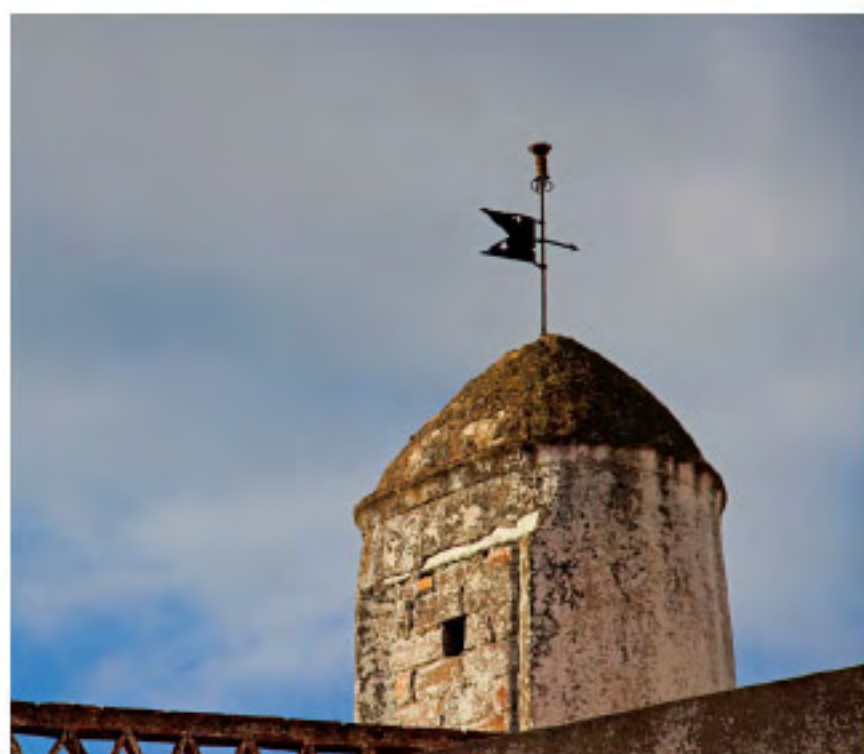


ALQUEVA LAKE

The largest artificial lake in Europe, with 250 km² and a perimeter of 1100Km of banks, is the result of the filling of the Alqueva Dam, designed in the 1940's and finally completed in 2002. This is a venture that aims to endow the Alentejo territory with a huge water capacity and consequent irrigated agricultural development as well as a huge potential for implementing tourism projects, especially nature tourism.

HISTORIC CENTRE OF MOURÃO

In addition to the religious heritage, the profusion of large cylindrical chimneys spread all over the village is noteworthy. Often referred to as Arab heritage, it is not represented in ancient engravings, whereby they are likely to have been the work of a skilled 19th-century local master stonemason who began to build them oversized, creating the repeating process as an affirmation of social status.





FROM AMIEIRA TO ALQUEVA, WITH THE LAKE AT YOUR FEET

AMIEIRA VILLAGE TO ALQUEVA VILLAGE, PORTEL

The village of Amieira and the village of Alqueva are two of the most emblematic riverside villages of Lake Alqueva, standing a few meters of its banks. Around them, the fields stretch to the horizon, being cut as the lake's banks changing according with the rise or fall of the water level. These are the open fields where, when walking, one can feel the true sense of freedom.

Given the linear typology of this route, you should provide for the return: you can request transportation by taxi, available from Portel. Start your tour at the Cais Fluvial (River Dock) in the village of Amieira and walk around the wooden walkway. Enter the village and at the Largo do Jogo da Bola (square), turn right, into the old road that is now submersed in water. Before that, turn left and follow the dirt track, passing along the old stables and onto the tight curve to the left, leading back to the village. In the village of Amieira, cross the Nora Park, take the Rua do Chafariz (fountain street) and pass the chapel of São Romão and the main village square, Largo 1º de Maio. Pass along the Beco do Castelo (alley of the castle) and exit toward the roundabout to the Bullring. Take the access road to Amieira Marina and, if you wish, make a round trip

detour to visit this site. Back at the place where you made the detour, take the rural path that follows the edge of the reservoir. After Horto do Balanco and Horto do Zambujeiro, where the road makes a tight curve to the right, keep going until you reach the end of this small peninsula to visit the Antas de Torrejona (dolmens), right next to the banks. Go back to the main path and start climbing the slope. At the first crossroads take the left and further ahead continue to the right, where you will find a cattle gate that should open and close. Start going down along the river's meanders without ever leaving the main path, which can be identified by the type of floor. Finally, cross the Ribeira de Codis bridge and reach the Alqueva village that gives its name to the Dam and all of this territory. End the route at the Parish Church of St. Lawrence.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



POINTS OF INTEREST

ALQUEVA LAKE

The largest artificial lake in Europe, with 250 km² and a perimeter of 1100km of banks, is the result of the filling of the Alqueva Dam, designed in the 1940's and finally completed in 2002. This is a venture that aims to endow the Alentejo territory with a huge water capacity and consequent irrigated agricultural development as well as a huge potential for implementing tourism projects, especially nature tourism.



PR 1
PRL

Route: From Amieira to Alqueva, with the Lake at your Feet

Location: Aldeia da Amieira até Aldeia de Alqueva

Distance: 17km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 234m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres

Mín 138m Máx 195m

Approximate duration: 6:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average

Height differences: Subidas e descidas pouco acentuadas

Departure point: Cais Fluvial da Aldeia da Amieira

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N38°17'35" W07°33'37"

Parking: No local há estacionamento.

Arrival point: Largo da Igreja, Aldeia de Alqueva

GPS coordinates of the arrival point:

N38°12'58" W07°32'17"

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 266 619 032 - turismo@mail.cm-portel.pt



VILLAGE OF AMIEIRA

One of the riverine villages of Alqueva Lake, which is already mentioned in documents from the 13th century - possibly due to the site itself and not so much for the settlement. In the 18th century, the parish was far from the current village and had no houses around it, today being called Aldeia dos Barbudos. For the modest heritage of the village, everything suggests that the genesis of the village was the settling - in a place well stocked with water - of several families who worked in the fields and farms around the site.

AMIEIRA A ALQUEVA COM O LAGO A SEUS PÉS

POINTS OF INTEREST

AMIEIRA MARINA

This is the pioneer and privileged space of use of the body of water created by the filling of the Alqueva Dam. It has a complete offering of tourism services, with emphasis on the boat houses that depart from here to go on daytrips, providing on-board accommodation in perfect autonomy. It is also possible to go on guided cruises, canoeing and other water sports. Animation services are complemented with a cafeteria and an excellent panoramic restaurant.



ANTAS DA TORREJONA (DOLMENS)

At a current location of great scenic beauty, you have these two archaeological remains from the Neolithic, which at the time served as funerary monuments to local populations, where you can see the rocks of vertical support as well as the hallway. Currently much destroyed by the passage of time and various desecrations, they show the importance of human settlement in this territory and provide a historical tribute to our ancestors.

ALQUEVA VILLAGE

There are historical references to this village since the end of the 13th century, and its name derives from the toponym Alqueive, meaning fallow fields or deserts, which was quite accurate given the water shortage in this location, the typology of the soils and the high temperatures in summertime. With the construction of the Dam in its proximity, the village gained not only greater access to the water that can change its agricultural paradigm, but also the fame for its name being the same as the one that baptizes the biggest artificial lake in Europe.





ROUTE OF ÁGUA DE MOURA

MOURA

In Moura we find the soul of several centuries of history and stories. Starting with the legend of Moura Salúquia, who threw herself from the tower when she becomes aware of the cloaked attack of the Christians after ambushing her loved one. The territory, which today borders the Guadiana river right after the Alqueva Dam, was strategic in all struggles for Christianization, as well as those of restoration and liberal wars. The landscape is marked by the famous olive groves, which produce the olives that give rise to the finest olive oils.

Start at the Moura Castle. You may start by visiting it and then down the access ramp. Turn left toward the Dr. Santiago garden. Visit the Igreja de São João Batista (Church of St. John the Baptist) and admire the monumental Fonte das Três Bicas (fountain of the three waterspouts), in carved marble. Visit the garden where the old bath is located and admire the fabulous landscape. Go down and around the municipal swimming pools, and by the curb of national highway 255 to then pass by the Bica do Leão (spout), recessed in the defensive bulwark of Santa Catarina. A little further ahead you will find the Bica do Moscão (spout) around whose left you will go, down toward Ribeira de Brenhas (river), passing over the bridge. Keep going straight ahead along the rural path. When you arrive at the crossing, go straight ahead and then return to this same point and

head Northwest, taking a path that will be on your right on the way back. Keep following the rural path, admiring the fantastic and well-kept olive groves. At the end you will find Atalaia do Porto Mourão (watchtower), guarding the river Ardila, and slightly to the right are some testimonies of the ancient river crossing done by "barca" (boat). Go back the same way to the aforementioned crossing and turn right. Walk around the top of the gallows, watching out for the detour that you will take to the right through the middle of the olive grove, until you are close to the Horta da Vargem. When you reach the main road, turn left and return to the south toward Moura, crossing the Ribeira de Brenhas again. Follow the road until you find Av. do Carmo and then Praça Sacadura Cabral (square) which will take you back to the starting point.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



PR 2
MRA

Route: Route of Água de Moura

Location: Moura

Distance: 8,5km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 168m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 100m Máx 184m

Approximate duration: 3:00h

Degree of difficulty: Low

Height differences: Uma subida pouco acentuado no final

Departure and arrival point: Posto de Turismo no Castelo de Moura. No exterior do Castelo de Moura, fora do horário de abertura ao público.

GPS coordinates of the departure point:
N38°08'36" W07°27'02"

Parking: Deve estacionar dentro da cidade.

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 285 251 375 - moura.turismo@cm-moura.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

CITY OF MOURA

Moura holds within itself three thousand years of history, which are a reflection of the importance of this site, marked by the influence of the peoples who left their imprint here. The water, the fertility of the fields and the ore, motivated human fixation for this site. For its strategic position in a high point along the rivers Ardila and Guadiana, it was an important settlement since prehistoric times, with the implantation of the Roman city of Arucci or Nova Civitas Aruccitana and, centuries later, of the Moorish town of Al-Manijah.



MOURA CASTLE

Situated in the heart of the historic centre, the Castle had an intense human occupation since the Iron Age, where the existence of three water springs on its inside is thought to have contributed to this settling of population. During the Muslim rule, this place experienced an imposing Islamic fortification and was the stage of fierce fights between Christians and Muslims to which the legend of Moura Salúquia is witness. It is today one of the main poles of tourist attraction of the city.

ROUTE OF ÁGUA DE MOURA

POINTS OF INTEREST

BATHS AND GARDEN

The former "bath house", located in the Dr. Santiago Garden since at least 1837, was no more than six bath tubs sheltered by a shed that gave rise to a new spa in 1900. The baths were created in return for the commercialisation of water known as "Água de Castelo". At the same time, Hotel das Termas was built and the resting area that corresponds to the garden that is contiguous to it was improved.



ATALAIA DE PORTO MOURÃO (WATCHTOWER)

Situated on the Estate bearing the same name, this watchtower was used for supervising the roads on the north side, accesses of Mourão and Amareleja. Communication was facilitated not only with the castle, but also with the watchtower of Alvarinho. Of all the watchtowers, this was the one located at the lowest point, at just 80 metres, on the banks of the river Ardila. It might have also been a toll, as the crossing of the river was possible at this location.

OLIVE GROVE

The region is extremely rich in traditional products, with the "Azeite de Moura" olive oil assuming particular importance. This olive oil comes from large patches of ancient olive groves with samples of substantial dimensions and shapes, where you can also see the generational renewal of these trees. These olive groves are currently equipped with modern controlled irrigation systems, ensuring better productivity of the farm.





FROM SERRA COLORADA TO CERRO DO CALVÁRIO

BARRANCOS

The village of Barrancos and the surrounding territory are locations with a magic that is difficult to put in words. Located at the eastern end of the Alentejo, right next to the border line, this location keeps within itself a centrality ensured by its strategic geographic position and temperance of the folk who have always known how to live in apparently distant locations. The history of Barrancos and its people is the perfect blend between two neighbouring peoples with common traditions.

Leave the Miradouro garden and take the Rua 1º de Dezembro street and the Rua das Forças Armadas street to the Praça da Liberdade square. Climb through the streets of the village toward the cemetery and go round its left side, then go straight ahead toward the border line. Go past the strongholds with the olive trees and small vegetable gardens and you will see several boundary stones. At the end of the descent, make sure you follow the most ancient access road to the border, on the right, a little below the current road. Spot the tiny adobe house - a former Portuguese border post - and keep going through the slightly hidden cobblestone. Pass the border landmark 983 on the right, enter a few metres into Spain, turning immediately to the left, and cross the road bridge. Climb up the national road, passing by the Lancheira fountain, to the most recent but disabled border post. Exit the road to the right, climbing a steep forest firebreak until you reach the path at the top of Serra Colorada. Once at the top, take a left and enjoy the magnificent landscape. Cross the road 1024 while moving forward. You can take a detour, there and back, to the right, taking the road, to see the landscape north of the territory. On the original path, keep going until you find a very tight curve to the left at the end of the descending part and follow a path

between trees until you reach the fountain. Take to the curb of road 1023 heading north for about a kilometre until Ribeira de Murtega (river). Here you can take an optional route, there and back, crossing the Ponte da Russiana bridge, also known as Ponte da Pipa, climbing the right bank of the river up to the mouth of Ribeira do Cadaval river in order to visit the mill and bridge bearing the same name. On the original route, after the bridge, go past the Pipa fountain and mill and climb through a small footpath next to the miller's house until you reach the dirt road at the top of the hill, taking the right side until you're back on the paved road where you will walk about eight hundred metres to then turn right, passing by the only vineyard in the region. Pass by the abandoned Mina de Minancos mine and take the wide curve, to then continue south towards the industrial area. Cross the national highway 254 and climb up the path toward the Cerro do Calvário hill and turn left until you get to the paved path, taking the right side. Pass the Fonte das Bicas fountain and after crossing the road, proceed straight ahead. Make sure you take the left turn to the somewhat steep stone path, which leads to the cemetery that you must go round on the left side, followed by an old road between walls, taking the Travessa da Preguiçosa until your reach the heart of Barrancos.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 1
BRC**

Route: From Serra Colorada to Cerro do Calvário

Location: Barrancos

Distance: 17km, including deviations

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 472m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 201m Máx 381m

Approximate duration: 5:00h a 6:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average +

Height differences: Duas subidas acentuadas, uma subida suave e longa, uma descida acentuada.

Departure and arrival point:

Exterior do Jardim do Miradouro, Barrancos

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N38°07'59" W06°58'33"

Parking: There are few places

parking next to the starting point.

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 285 950 641 - cmb.turismo@cm-barrancos.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

BARRANCOS VILLAGE

The original settlement of the territory was concentrated in Noudar, inside its castle, located 10 km to the North: a site conquered from the Moors in 1167. The hill that today presents the white village would have been a sort of a distant village, which from 1825 began to gain a life of its own with the extinction of the village of Noudar. Located just a few metres from the border with Spain, the village of Barrancos maintains a singular identity, well characterized by the "Barranquenho": a dialect of its own.



BORDER POSTS

In the vicinity of Barrancos stands the ruin of the oldest post, made of adobe and of reduced dimensions, close to the border landmark 983. This has been replaced by another building on the new road, near the Fonte da Lancheira fountain that was demolished, and further up the road we have a modern building, the last post in operation. From 1991 onwards, border formalities were abolished for people, so the customs posts lost their functional importance.

FROM SERRA COLORADA TO CERRO DO CALVÁRIO

POINTS OF INTEREST

SERRA COLORADA

This important Paleozoic elevation was formed by the Hercínica Orogeny, with deformities that occurred over 300 million years ago due to tectonic movements of the Earth's crust. It has very ancient rocks which feature shales in the colours red, yellow, green and blue, where the predominant minerals are muscovite and biotite micas. Its commercial exploitation began in the 19th century, having experienced great growth between the 1980's and mid-2000.



PIPA FOUNTAIN AND PIPA WATER MILL

A place of great natural beauty where, from within the mountains, springs a natural water vein all throughout the year and is used as drinking water by many local residents. An image of Santa Barbara was placed in this water fountain to protect from the thunderstorms the washerwomen who once went to wash their clothes at Fontanário da Pipa.

INDUSTRIAL AREA OF BARRANCOS

Marked essentially by the manufacturing of Alentejo pork, also known as black pork, it produces the most prized smoked hams and cold cured sausages, without the use of a smokehouse. The Alentejo pig, that feeds on holm oak acorn and grows freely in the countryside, provides high-quality meat and a delicious taste. The famous "PDO smoked ham of Barrancos" is born here, thereby giving the village the name of "Capital of Smoked Ham".





WATERMILLS AND FORTRESSES OF GUADIANA

QUINTOS, BEJA

Quintos is a small town situated on the Eastern border of the municipality of Beja, where the river Guadiana ensures borders with the neighbouring municipality of Serpa. A long time ago, the fields of cereals covered this territory almost entirely and the Guadiana watermills ground the grain produced there, now being ancestral testimonials stopped in time. Rural reality shows signs of profound change to the irrigation system with the arrival of water from Lake Alqueva.

Starting at the Largo da Ponte (square), in Quintos, head East along the river, taking the road that becomes a rural path. Take the direction of Monte da Gravia dos Pisões where you will turn right near the fountain. Behold, we are in the middle of fertile ground where irrigation prevails thanks to water arriving underground from the Alqueva Lake. About a thousand and two hundred metres ahead, take the tight turn to the left, crossing over the ruins of what was once the important Monte da Gravia do Meio, after which you will start going down the Barranco da Gravia to cross its line of water which, in times of rain, involves crossing the ford. Climb the South face of the ravine, passing next to the Monte do Telheirinho (hill), turn left and follow the municipal road 1067 for just over two kilometres, where you

will again turn left towards Azenha do Vau, next to the Guadiana River, about one and a half kilometres away. On this path, to the right, you will see the Fonte do Vau de Baixo (fountain). Visit the watermill, this one and others, with extreme care not to slip or fall into the river. Get back on track to continue up the river, finding next to it the Fortim do Vau (fortress), a curious defensive construction, with no doors or windows, which was the ancient border control as well as the crossing point which took place here by "barca" (boat). A little further ahead lies the Azenha de Quilos (watermill). Follow up the river to see the Azenha dos Machados (watermill), turning right before it for a long climb toward Monte da Gravia dos Pisões. From here, take the same route back to the starting point.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



PR 1
BJA

Route: Watermills and Fortresses of Guadiana

Location: Quintos, Beja

Distance: 15km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 291m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 50m Máx 158m

Approximate duration: entre 04:00h a 05:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average

Height differences: Uma subida longa.

Departure and arrival point:

Largo da Ponte, Quintos, Beja

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N37°57'46" W07°42'21"

Parking: There is parking on site.

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 284 311 913 - turismo@cm-beja.pt

União de Freguesias de Salvada e Quintos:

Tlf. +351 284 947 114 - ufsalvadaquintos@gmail.com

POINTS OF INTEREST

QUINTOS VILLAGE

It is situated at the Eastern end of the municipality of Beja, with about 250 inhabitants, bordering the River Guadiana. There are no certainties as to the name Quintos, which may be associated with the duty paid for these lands to the Casa do Infantado (house), which had possession of them in the 17th century, or by its geographical position which was the place of several disputes, both between Christians and Moors and between the Spanish and the Portuguese, being colloquially referred to as "the fifth (quintos) of hell".



AGRICULTURAL CROPS

The fields that lie along the route feature extensive agricultural crops which, after years of dry farming, where cereal fields were implanted, finally became varied cultures of irrigation secured by the water from the Alqueva Lake, providing new sceneries to the territory. Agricultural activity was a factor for the settling and development of populations since the times of the Roman villas that were the origin of the current Montes Alentejanos (Alentejo Hills).

WATERMILLS AND FORTRESSES OF GUADIANA

POINTS OF INTEREST

GUADIANA RIVER

Its name comes from the combination of the Roman words "anas", meaning "of the duck", or "ana", meaning "river", with the Arabic word "uádi" (wadi), which also means "river". It is one of the most important rivers of the Iberian Peninsula, rising in Spain at 1700 metres above sea level, flowing into the Atlantic Ocean after travelling more than 800 km. Its catchment area is essential to the irrigation of vast territories in both countries, feeding the Alqueva Dam which results in the largest artificial lake in Europe.



AZENHAS DO GUADIANA (WATERMILLS)

"Azenhas" are cereal mills where the driving force is ensured by the passage of water from the river. They are complex systems involving great engineering works for impoundment and conduction of water bodies; rotating machinery and power transmission; and finally, powerful grinding stones for crushing cereal. They were usually private activities where the effort and skill of the miller were essential to the success of the activity.

FORTIM DO VAU (VAU FORTRESS)

A curious-looking fortress, for it is a stronghold that is completely closed, with the side facing the river upstream, shaped like the bow of a ship so as to withstand the frequent floods of the river Guadiana. It was built by D. João IV after the restoration of independence, as a checkpoint for crossing the Guadiana river, which was done by "vau" (ford) and "barca" (boat) in that exact location. This fortification was part of a defence system in the old border line, of which little is known.





TRAIL OF AZENHA DA ORDEM (WATERMILL)

SERPA

In Serpa we find a territory historically marked by the direct relation with the river Guadiana and geographical location on the border with Spain. It is the Alentejo of large agricultural fields and rural estates, which were once considered the breadbasket of Portugal, such was the quantity of grain then produced, which fed the watermills of Guadiana, the great road of the South of the country, where they would be wisely transformed into valuable flour.

From the garden in front of the movie theatre, head North and turn into Rua da Abegoaria (street) leading you out of the urban centre, passing by the municipal sports hall. Cross the outer ring and enter the dirt road toward the Guadiana. Proceed straight ahead, crossing vast farmlands, and pass along the water collection of Horta dos Banhos, located in the place where an important Roman villa once existed, as confirmed by archaeological prospecting. After passing Monte da Caldeira and Monte da Repoila, start down by the new scenario of olive groves and cork oaks that will lead you to the abandoned

Horto do Lala and Horto do José Garcia (vegetable gardens), where you can already spot the Guadiana river. Once by the river, continue to the left along a rural path that runs alongside its course towards Azenha da Ordem (watermill), a grinding mill in an excellent state of conservation. From the river, start a long and gentle climb through the fields of cork oak, passing the Monte de Melrinhas and Monte do Gago, returning to the agricultural landscape. Continue through the road that enters Serpa by the Eira de São Pedro, with the chapel of this saint welcoming you.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



**PR 1
SRP**

Route: Trail of Azenha da Ordem (watermill)

Location: Serpa

Distance: 13,5km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 190m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 51m Máx 204m

Approximate duration: 3:00h a 4:00h

Degree of difficulty: Average

Height differences: Uma descida e uma subida suaves, mas longas.

Departure and arrival point:

Jardim fronteiro ao cineteatro

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N37°56'32" W07°36'06"

Parking: There is parking on site.

Useful Contacts: Tourism Desk

Tlf. +351 284 544 727 - turismo@cm-serpa.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

CITY OF SERPA

The first charter that Serpa received dates back to 1281, still under Spanish rule, having received the first Portuguese charter in 1295, by the hand of D. Dinis. Located roughly halfway on the route between Seville-Lisbon, the town had a gradual growth, thanks to agriculture, cattle breeding and trade, being an important trading centre during the 16th and 17th centuries when it achieved the title of "Notable Town". Nowadays the City of Serpa is a tourist destination on the rise.



AGRICULTURAL FIELDS

The territory of this area of the Alentejo is marked by extensive agricultural fields which, in the mid-twentieth century, received a strong increase of cereal culture through the so-called "wheat campaign". They are currently occupied by modern irrigated crops, thanks to irrigation systems provided by water from the Alqueva Reservoir. These fields receive different cultures throughout the year, which alter the landscape on a regular basis.

TRAIL OF AZENHA DA ORDEM (WATERMILL) POINTS OF INTEREST

“MONTADO” OF HOLM OAK AND CORK OAK

A “montado” is an ecosystem created by man, which is characteristic of the Alentejo. They are forests of Cork Oaks and Holm Oaks with a very delicate balance, existing only in the South of the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa. Portugal has the largest area of Cork Oaks in the world, with approximately 35% of the global area, from which it extracts cork, being the world’s largest exporter. Holm oaks are producers of tasty acorns, the staple food of the Alentejo montado pig.



GUADIANA RIVER

Its name comes from the combination of the Roman words “anas”, meaning “of the duck”, or “ana”, meaning “river”, with the Arabic word “uádi” (wadi), which also means “river”. It is one of the most important rivers of the Iberian Peninsula, rising in Spain at 1700 metres above sea level, flowing into the Atlantic Ocean after travelling more than 800 km. Its catchment area is essential to the irrigation of vast territories in both countries, feeding the Alqueva Dam which results in the largest artificial lake in Europe.

AZENHA DA ORDEM

“Azenhas” are cereal mills where the driving force is ensured by the passage of water from the river. They are complex systems involving great engineering works for impoundment and conduction of water bodies; rotating machinery and power transmission; and finally, powerful grinding stones for crushing cereal. They were usually private activities where the effort and skill of the miller were essential to the success of the activity.





AROUND THE CORK PLANTATION (MONTADO)

SÃO DOMINGOS MINE, MÉRTOLA

The São Domingos mine contains a unique knowledge mystical and life force, where, through the mining activity, a very particular form of social organization was built. In contrast with the aridity of the mining area, we can find the relaxing green landscape of Tapada Grande, the gentle fields of grain and flowers, the carob plantations, the majestic stone peaks and the abandoned hills of the Alentejo, built in rammed earth and adobe, which take us back to ancestral knowledge.

Exit the door of Hotel da Mina de São Domingos and cross the road toward the wall of the Tapada Grande Dam. Take to the left of the wall and go up the hill that lies at its end, taking a slight descent followed by another climb to reach the new dirt road that exits the highway at this location. Follow straight ahead through the dirt road, admiring the fields of carob trees and the imposing hills topped by quartzite rocks, until you reach the Monte do Guizo, where you can rest and have a drink of water. Go back a little and turn left - heading

northeast -, passing next to a huge lake and several Alentejo pig farms, toward the Monte Vale Travesso, which is completely in ruins. Take a moment to admire these ruins with their typical construction in rammed earth and adobe. Follow the path to the East, through the undergrowth and the "montado", in order to cross the Cabeça de Aires River where the Tapada Grande reservoir begins. Go around the reservoir from the top, until you reach the river beach and finally enter the Mina de São Domingos village, worth a visit.



FACTSHEET OF THE ROUTE



PR 4
MTL

Route: Around the Cork Plantation (Montado)

Location: Mértola

Distance: 14,5km

Altitude differences accumulated in metres: 145m

Minimum and maximum altitudes in metres:

Mín 133m Máx 195m

Approximate duration: 4:00h a 5:00h

Degree of difficulty: Low

Height differences: A slight increase

Departure and arrival point:

The Hotel Domingos Mine, Mértola

GPS coordinates of the departure point:

N37°40'13" W07°30'07"

Parking: There is parking on site

Useful Contacts: Município de Mértola

Tlf. +351 286 610 100 - geral@cm-mertola.pt

Tourism Desk:

Tlf. +351 286 610 109 - turismo@cm-mertola.pt

POINTS OF INTEREST

SÃO DOMINGOS MINE

Mining in the region was prior to the Roman period, which at that time experienced some growth. The implementation of a modern mine at this location, until then deserted, occurred in 1858 at the initiative of the English company "Barry & Mason", and was active until 1965. This was the exploration of a subvertical niche of complex sulphides, which drew about 25 million tonnes of ore for the use of sulphur, copper, zinc, tin, silver and gold.



CAROB PLANTATION

The carob tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*) is an evergreen tree originated from Mesopotamia, with great diffusion throughout the Mediterranean basin. Its dark (when ripe) pod-shaped fruit is of enormous commercial value, for the flour produced from the ground and toasted pulp, which is very rich in sugar and an excellent chocolate substitute. From its seeds, a starch rich in complex carbohydrates - with high qualities of thickener, stabilizer and emulsifier - is extracted.

AROUND THE CORK PLANTATION (MONTADO)

POINTS OF INTEREST

QUARTZITE HILLS OF GUIZO

The skyline is marked by two natural hills where rocky outcrops of quartzite nature – resulting from deep magmatic hills in the past - stand out at the top. The visible chaos of blocks is due to the continued exposure to erosive atmospheric elements that have deepened the joints resulting from the expansion of the rock mass. Its sides and bases are occupied by farms.



CONSTRUCTION IN RAMMED EARTH AND ADOBE

The ruins of Monte do Vale Travesso demonstrate quite well the construction system in rammed earth and adobe. It is the creation of walls using wet soil, mixed with small stones and straw, being well beaten and stuffed into wooden boxes set up as side boards or by overlapping bricks also made of mud and dried in the sun. After drying, the walls are sealed with several coats of whitewash, applied regularly.

TAPADA GRANDE

A dam built in 1882 with overlapping concrete blocks and a height of 18 metres, with a capacity of 5 million cubic metres. It served as impoundment of water for human use of the population of the mine and for the industrial activity. During the time of mining exploration it was a leisure area for English families residing in the location. From 2001 onwards it became one of the most popular river beaches in Alentejo.







**TRANS
ALEN
TEJO**



**WALKING
TOURS
ALQUEVA**
ALENTEJO • PORTUGAL

TRANS
ALEN
TEJO



TRANS
ALEN
TEJO

TRANS
ALEN
TEJO



TRANS
ALEN
TEJO