

GUIDE

The Northern Route

▲▲▲▲▲ FÁTIMA WALKING ROUTES ▲▲▲▲▲



CENTRO
NACIONAL
DE CULTURA



TURISMO DE
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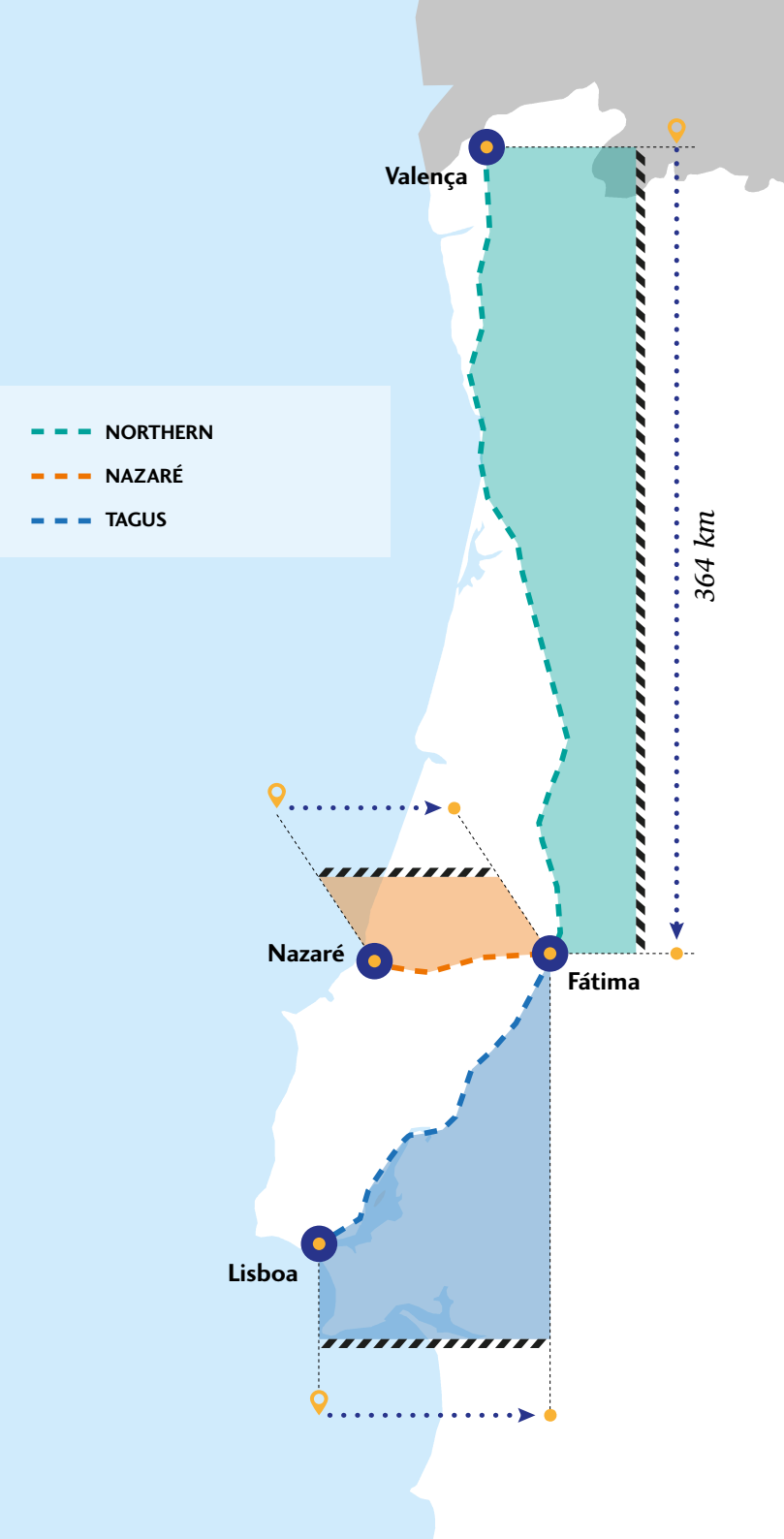


GUIDE

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FÁTIMA WALKING ROUTES is a network of **religious and cultural walking tracks** that depart from different locations and end at the Sanctuary of Fátima. They provide those who follow them with a true “**spiritual encounter**”, in communion with nature and religious and cultural experiences.

Their purpose is to create **safe and pleasant conditions for pilgrims and hikers on their way to the Sanctuary of Fátima**, avoiding roads with heavy traffic in favour of dirt tracks and quiet rural roads. The tracks travel through a variety of landscapes of great natural and cultural interest and cross paths with other walking tracks of national and international importance.

Developed by the Centro Nacional de Cultura, the routes are promoted in partnership with multiple institutions (municipalities, associations, public bodies and civil and religious entities) and with the Sanctuary of Fátima.

The Fátima Walking Route Guides offer complete and attractive information about the walking tracks, with emphasis on landscape, heritage, culture and local points of interest.

Guides for the following **Routes** are available: **The Tagus Route** (between Lisbon and Fátima); **The Nazaré Route** (between Nazaré and Fátima); **The Northern Route** (between Valença and Fátima).

PREPARATION: PLANNING AND ORIENTATION | Before undertaking any of the Fátima Routes, we recommend you use the Guide to get prepared and check the general conditions of each of the Routes and the specific conditions of each daily section. You can adjust the recommended time for each Route and extending it according to your fitness, availability of time and preference.

In addition to track **signage**, it is essential to be acquainted with the detailed **maps** of the Route you want to follow. It is an essential tool along the way. You can find more information at **www.caminhosdefatima.org**

SIGNAGE

Signs guiding pilgrims and hikers along the tracks of the Fátima Walking Routes feature the image and symbols associated with the **Fátima Walking Routes** brand, which is duly registered. The brand's essential visual element is the **holm oak**, the place where the virgin appeared to the young shepherds and a characteristic species of the vegetation and landscape of Fátima. The tree (*Quercus ilex*) marks the Mediterranean landscape in Portugal and is now protected.

Celestial blue is another component of the brand, a colour which incorporates the symbolic religious dimension and the atmosphere experienced on the walking tracks and their surroundings.



Originally designed in 1996, the brand was updated in 2017, maintaining the elements of the holm oak and the blue colour, but adding the religious symbolism of the cross.

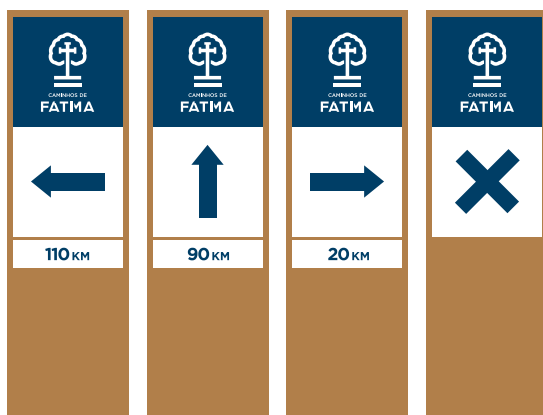
**religião****fátima****caminhos**

Signage along the walking tracks includes the trademark symbols incorporated into the brand's respective image, design and colour. Until extensive signage for all the Fátima Walking Routes is fully installed, however, you may come across the following **elements of signage**:

- the old brand logo with two holm oaks and a walking track leading up to them;



- the updated brand logo with a holm oak wrapped around the cross and walking tracks;

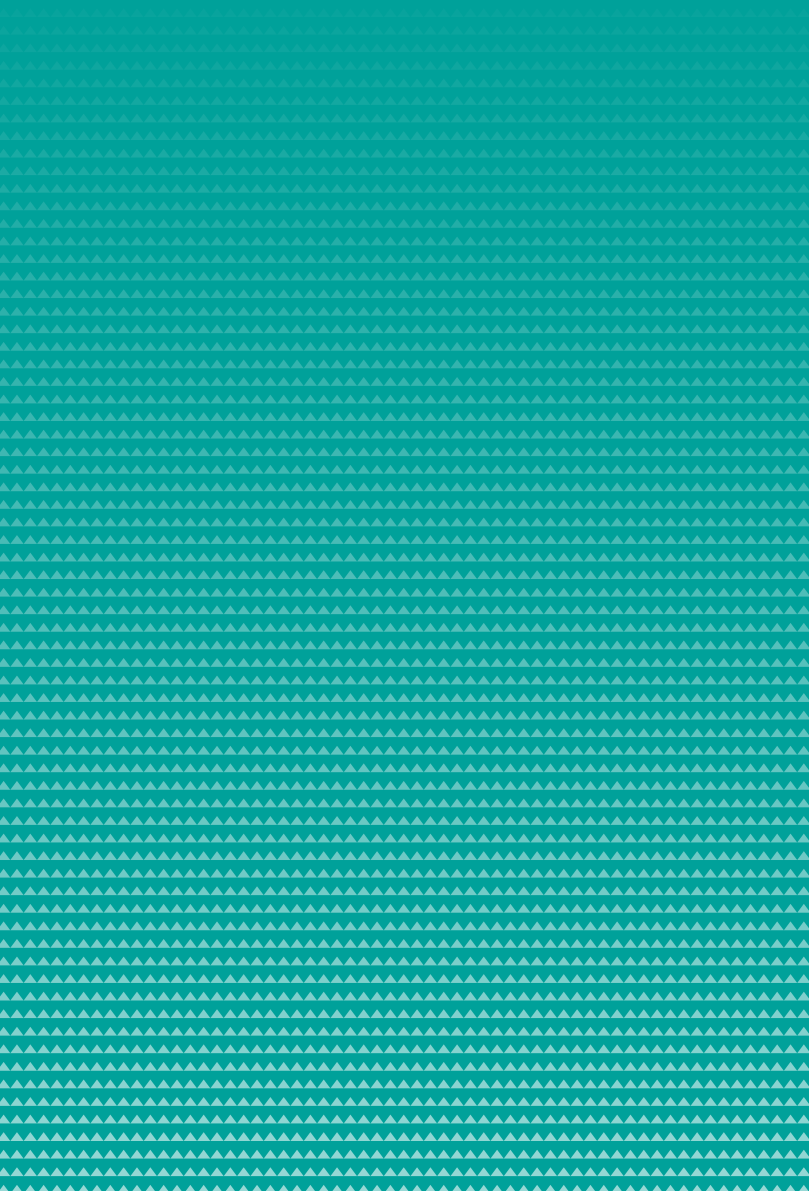


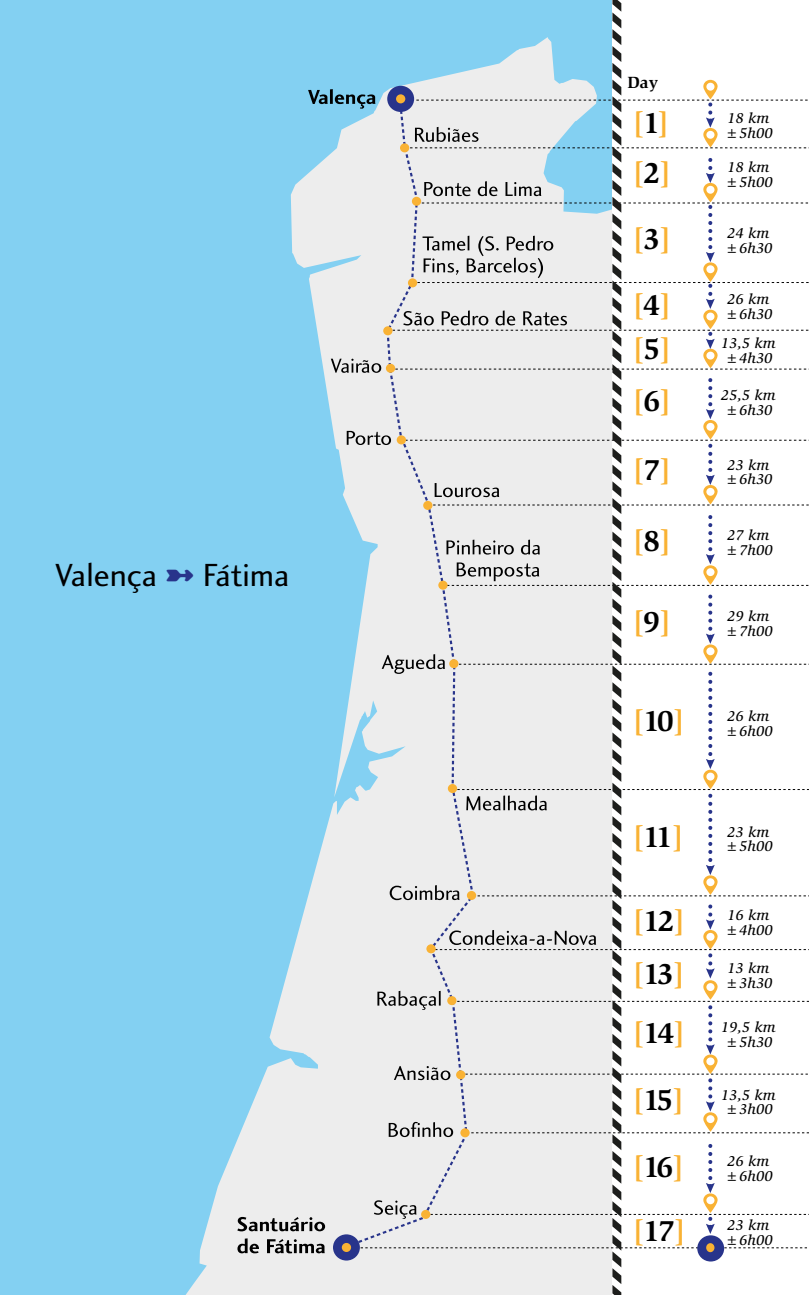
- blue arrows along all paths. These blue arrows are sometimes found alongside yellow arrows or the symbol for the Routes of Santiago (which feature a yellow image of a shell), since part of the Fátima pilgrimage overlaps with the Routes that lead to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain;



- You may also find the phrase “Caminhos de Fátima” on various objects and forms.

Guide





THE NORTHERN ROUTE

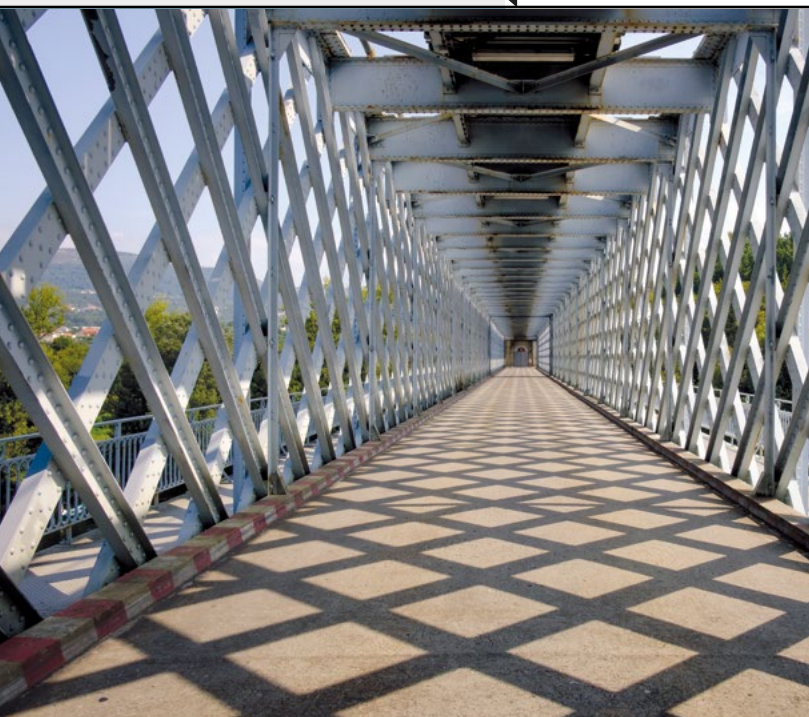
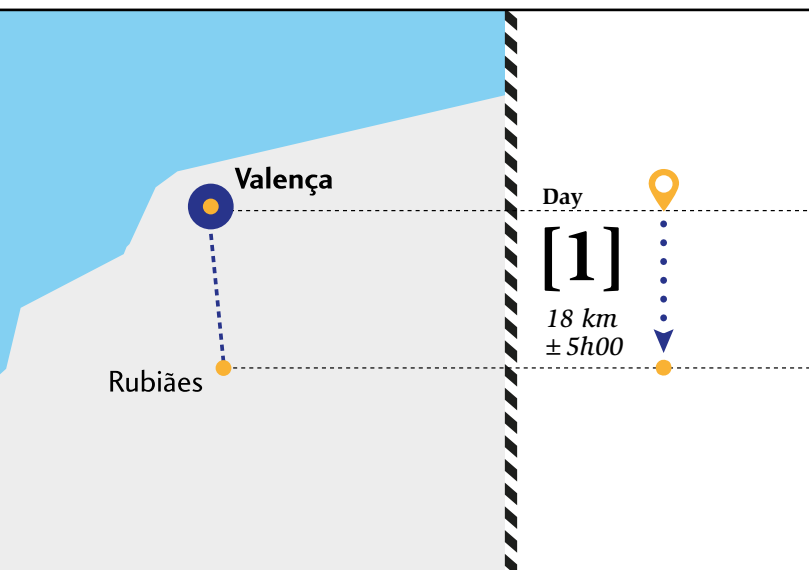
This route covers **Northern and Central Portugal**. It begins in Valença, on the frontier between Portugal and Spain, and ends at the Sanctuary of Fátima. **It runs in a north-south direction**, parallel to the sea, but inland and away from the coast. At various points it approaches the coast, but otherwise it heads inland. The scenery is **rich and varied**, and while the rural and urban landscape gradually changes along the way it is defined by the constant presence of the **rivers and mountains** that delineate this ancestral land, dotted with small **villages, towns and cities**.

The landscape between the Rivers Minho and Douro is verdant and a sea breeze blows across it. Between the Rivers Douro and Mondego the coastal plain strikes a contrast with the mountainous inland terrain. To the south of the River Mondego the landscape undergoes a progressive transformation, eventually reaching the Extremadura Karstic Massif, which encompasses the Aire and Candeeiros mountain ranges.

All along the Route one encounters sites of rural charm, urbanity, tradition and cosmopolitanism. The **natural beauty is outstanding**, and very often exuberant. The region's **cultural heritage**, in all its forms, is a constant presence. The diverse local communities maintain **traditions** that reveal themselves in day-to-day life, and above all during local festivities. The walker will come to know a substantial part of the geography, history and culture of Portugal.

This Route covers **364 Km** and is divided into **17 journeys** or stages, to be covered over the course of 17 days. The distance covered in each daily stage varies. The distances are defined by the terrain covered, as well as the logistical factors of providing support for pilgrims and time for rest and prayer breaks, as well as ensuring one's enjoyment of the landscape and cultural heritage.

A considerable stretch of the Northern Route coincides with the Portuguese Way of St. James.



➔ 42°2'10" N 8°38'48" W

Day 1 | THROUGH THE ALTO MINHO REGION

Valença ➤ Rubiães

The first stage **begins in the city of Valença**, beside the International Bridge over the River Minho and at the start of Avenida de Espanha. **It ends in the village of Rubiães** (Municipality of Paredes de Coura), next to the roman-
esque Church of St. Peter. It covers 18 km and can be
walked in 5 hours. With altitudes ranging from 10 m to
275 m it makes for **an easy, enjoyable day's walking**.
The landscape consists predominantly of **forests and val-
leys with abundant vegetation** and is dotted with villag-
es and hamlets. This is the lush and fertile terrain of the
Alto Minho region, which extends southwards from the
River Minho and is irrigated by its tributaries.

➤ 42°1'57" N 8°38'47" W





➡ 41°56'46" N 8°37'47" W

Over the course of this stage, which passes through the Municipalities of Valença and Paredes de Coura, the **multi-secular cultural heritage** is a constant presence, above all in the form of chapels, churches and monasteries. These granite buildings, which are found in towns and villages, as well as scattered across the landscape, are an architectural testimony to centuries of history, and play a key role in the life of the communities they belong to, in which the sacred and profane are intimately linked. Traditions are brought to life during local festivities, while the region's authentic gastronomy, cooked with ingenuity and art, is a constant feature and underscores how important culinary culture is.

When setting out on this stretch of Portuguese terrain, plan your time in accordance with your motivations and interests.



➡ 40°43'37" N 8°28'37" W

One could walk non-stop, pausing briefly and keeping a steady pace. However, you could also pause at certain points to contemplate aspects of the landscape and discover striking cultural or environmental features, or else simply take a break.

If your pilgrimage begins in Spain, in the region of Galicia, at some point along the Way of Saint James, you will have to plan accordingly to ensure you join the Northern Route, which leads to the Sanctuary of Fátima. From Valença onwards there is a **network of hostels** and other types of accommodation, which are all signposted.

During the initial part of this first stage, the **River Minho is a fundamental element of the landscape and the region's history**. It marks a frontier between two countries. The bridge that crosses it was opened in 1886 to create a rail link between Portugal and the Spanish region of Galicia.

On entering Valença's historic centre, you will see the city's ancient **fortifications** and discover a rich historical and artistic heritage. The medieval fortifications, dating to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were extended and modernised in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, above all during the War of Restoration, with a sophisticated system of bastions, ravelins and moats. Inside this



architectural monument, classified as national heritage, you find the roads, avenues and squares of a lively city.

Leaving the walled-town and following the roads through the outskirts of the town, continue until you reach the EN13 roundabout, where you will gradually leave the traffic behind and, taking rural footpaths combined with just a few roads, make your way to quieter and more peaceful places.

In **Arão**, a village that in the thirteenth century was called Vilar de Lamas and belonged to the Bishopric of Tui, you can see **the Parish Church of the Holy Saviour**, a building with an eighteenth-century baroque façade, crowned with a broken pediment.

As you pass through **Fontoura**, nestled between farmers' fields, the tower of the **Church of St. Michael** is worthy of note. Then, on leaving Fontoura a mountainous region begins and the Route makes its way through rugged and wild, yet also very beautiful countryside.

Continue until **São Bento** (Parish of Cossourado), where you can pause to visit the **Chapel of St. Benedict of the Open Door**, a eighteenth-century building with a side tower and baroque façade.





➔ 41°56'3" N 8°34'52" W

The Route continues to follow farm tracks and gradually approaches **Rubiães**. Prior to entering the village, you cross a **medieval bridge over the River Coura**, a tributary of the Minho river. This Gothic bridge was built during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and is supported by three arches. Here we can observe the landscape and contemplate the past, as this was the route of an ancient Roman road, which from the Middle Ages onwards became part of the Way of Saint James. Sticking to quiet footpaths head into the centre of the village, where a **pilgrims' hostel** (located in an old primary school) and the Church are points of reference.

The **Church of St. Peter** dates back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and it is classified as national heritage. It is a singular example of **Romanesque architecture** with its single nave. On the façade, of particular note is the portal framed by archivolts that spring from columns adorned with sculptures of the Archangel Gabriel and Our Lady, clear allusions to the biblical episode of the Annunciation. The capitals are decorated with animal motifs.

Rubiães



Ponte de Lima

Day

[2]

18 km
± 5h00

➡ 41°53'48" N 8°37'28" W

Day 2 | CHURCHES AND MANOR HOUSES OF THE GREEN LIMA

Rubiães ➤ Ponte de Lima

The second stage of the Route **begins in Rubiães**, at the Church of St. Peter and **ends in the town of Ponte de Lima**, at the Church of St. Anthony of the Old Tower in the Arnado Theme Park. It covers 18 km and can be walked in 5 hours. With altitudes ranging from 10 m to 400 m it crosses a diverse landscape, consisting of **mountains, valleys, forests and plains**, and is criss-crossed by a number of rivers and streams spanned by bridges. It is **a pleasant and calm stage of the Route**, with some very easy sections and just a few steeper ones that require a slower walking pace.

It is the first part of this stage, the Labruja Mountains, which poses a degree of difficulty. Here, the route is a winding one and has a number of climbs that require more energy. As one heads in a southerly direction and draws nearer the final destination, green fertile fields emerge alongside the banks of the River Lima. Amidst this **diversity**, there are always reasons for walking slowly and pausing

➤ 41°53'6" N 8°37'10" W



from time to time, whereby the duration of the walk can be extended in accordance with people's specific interests.

Over the course of this stage, which passes through the Municipalities of Paredes de Coura and Ponte de Lima, the natural setting provides striking **views of impressive beauty**. Likewise, the local customs reflect a profound relationship with ancestral traditions. At every step of the way one encounters expressions of a **multifaceted cultural heritage**, including various stone crosses, memorials and pillories. Of particular relevance are the **baroque manor houses**, large noble residences built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many of which now offer tourist accommodation.

Having left **Rubiães** and following a short stretch along the N201, the Route makes its way through a wooded rural landscape.

In **Aqualonga**, it passes a few metres from the **Parish Church of St. Pelagius** with a traditional façade and bell tower, built and adorned in the baroque manner. Returning to the Route, and slightly further on, the elegant **Chapel of Carvalho** appears on the right, with a bell tower crowning its façade. Then head for Romarigães, where you can bring to mind the writer Aquilino Ribeiro (1885-1963) and his novel entitled *A Casa Grande de Romarigães* (*The Manor House of Romarigães*).

Always following multi-use paths (roads and rural footpaths), the Route enters into the territory of the **Municipality of Ponte de Lima**. Now, you are in midst of the **Labruja mountains**. Here, one has to muster one's strength and reduce the pace.

You will reach the **village of Labruja**, through which flows the river with the same name, a tributary of the River Lima. It is a village with ancient historical roots, as its architectural heritage demonstrates. The **Parish Church**, which has a façade with a side tower and a Baroque broken pediment, emerges from the landscape with a small cluster of simple houses.

In Labruja one can pause, and veer off the route a short distance to discover **the Sanctuary of the Lord of Succour**, a grand baroque building with rococo decoration, it is set in a square with a flight of steps leading up to it. The façade is flanked by two towers and elaborately decorated.



➔ 41°52'15" N 8°36'53" W

The contrast of white and natural granite is typical of Northern Portuguese Baroque architecture, which was influenced by the work of the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni. This monument, which hosts an annual pilgrimage on the first Sunday of July, is classified as national heritage.

The final section of this second stage of the Route crosses farmers' fields and the rural landscape of the parish of **Arcozelo**. Of particular interest in Arcozelo's historic centre is the twelfth-century **Parish Church of St. Marina**, which has a stone façade crowned by a cross. The side tower, along with the majority of the interior decoration, was undertaken in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Following the old rural footpath, which is today called the Rua das Cancelinhas, on the right is the **Pomarchão Manor House** and Estate, with the large house and chapel having been classified as national heritage. It is a noteworthy example of a seventeenth-century tower-house, that was extended in the eighteenth-century, and its façade incorporates a verandah. The Pomarchão Manor House, classified as national heritage, is a classic example of a **baroque manor house**, and today it provides tourist accommodation.

We then reach **Ponte de Lima**. Follow Rua das Tojeiras, and then take Caminho de Oliveirinha, you will then arrive at the historic Arnado Field on the right bank of the River Lima. The **Church of St. Anthony of the Old Tower**, built at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, has an elongated nave and a tower above the altar.

➤ 41°46'10" N 8°35'16" W



It is dedicated to the Virgin and located on a historic terrain or churchyard next to the monumental Roman and medieval bridge that leads to the heart of the town's historic centre.

In addition to the typical **pilgrims' hostel**, in Ponte de Lima there are also other forms of logistical support as may be required. On arriving you may want to have a rest, otherwise you can make the most of both the **rural and urban landscape** wander the streets, visiting the local sights, and savouring the specialities of the **local cuisine**. Plan your visit in accordance with the time available and your spiritual and cultural interests. You can visit the city on the day you arrive, or in the morning, the following day.

The historic town of **Ponte de Lima merits careful attention** in order to appreciate the extraordinary work of art that has been created through the relationship between river and town. Its location at the juncture of ancient Roman roads, that subsequently became medieval ones, gave rise to the first settlement. In 1125, within the context of the Condado Portucalense (the County of Portugal, a vassal region that was the foundation for the Kingdom of Portugal), the Countess Dona Teresa issued



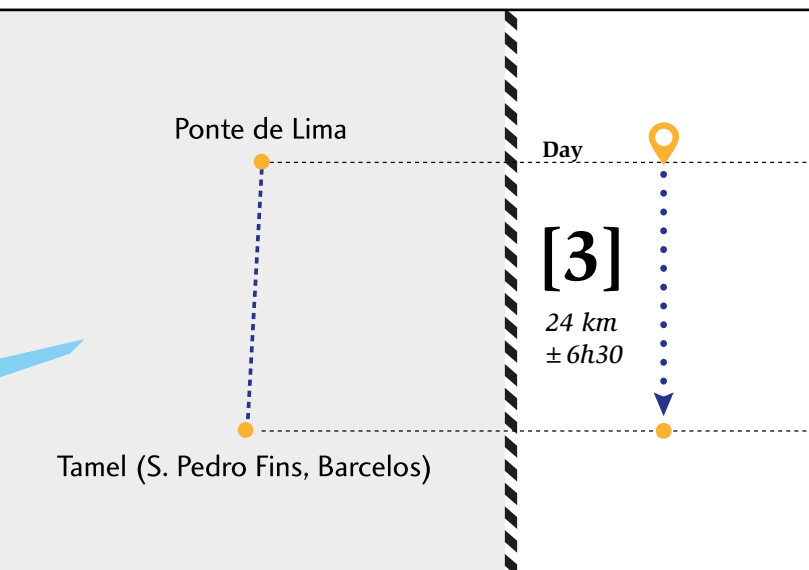
➔ 41°46'10" N 8°35'16" W

a municipal charter to Terra da Ponte, which came to be called Ponte de Lima. In the fourteenth century, King Pedro I ordered for the walls, interspersed with defensive towers, to be built. At that time it had become one of the most important towns in the Lima Valley and a resting point for pilgrims walking the Way of Saint James.

The town's plan and **architecture** adhere to a medieval model, although in the eighteenth century it was given a more monumental Baroque appearance. With regard to religious architecture of particular importance is the romanescque and gothic **Main Church**, the **Church of Misericórdia** – with impressive carving and interior decoration –, the historic **Church of the Third Order of Saint Francis** – an imposing Baroque complex and now the site of the museum – and the aforementioned Church of St. Anthony of the Old Tower. With regard to Ponte de Lima's urban heritage and civil architecture, aside from the town as a whole and the remnants of the walls that protected it, of special importance is **the pillory**, the **Council Chambers**, the **Fountain**, and the aforementioned **bridge over the Lima** (classified as a national monument), and also a number of **noble houses and manor houses** in the town's centre and outlying area. With regard to the town's **rich intangible heritage** we should not forget the **culinary arts** – confectionery, gastronomy and Vinho Verde –, nor the **traditional festivals and local pilgrimages** which above all take place in the summer.

➔ 41°46'9" N 8°35'10" W





Day 3 | HISTORIC PILGRIM ROUTES

Ponte de Lima ➤ Tamel

(S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos)

The third stage of the Route **begins in Ponte de Lima**, at the Church of St. Anthony of the Old Tower in the Arnado Park and **ends in Tamel** (S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos), at the Parish Church. It is 24 km long and has some gentle climbs, with altitudes that vary between 9 m and 194 m. It is between a medium and easy level of difficulty. Essentially it runs through **rural and farming areas**, with the occasional urban settlement. It's a quiet day, providing a **walk full of peace and calm**.

Over the course of the day, the Route passes through the Municipalities of Ponte de Lima and Barcelos, where the route of the Caminho de Fátima meets with historic pilgrimage routes, and in particular that of the Way of Saint James. The region to the south of the River Lima presents a scenery in which geography and history are interwoven. Mankind's **relationship with nature**

➤ 41°43'18" N 8°37'19" W



predominates in the physiognomy of the natural and man-made landscape. Water abounds in the riverside meadows, which are dotted with farming villages.

In the villages, and also along the historic footpaths, there are **historic churches, chapels and monasteries**, where the austerity of the Romanesque, conceived through the efforts of the twelfth and thirteenth-century master builders, coexists alongside the exuberance of the baroque arts, created by the architects and the sculptors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Having left **Ponte de Lima**, the Route runs parallel to the southern bank of the River Lima along a wooded footpath, and then continues along a cyclepath.

Take note of the **Church of Our Lady of Guidance**, which is to be found on your right and has been classified as national heritage. The church, devoted to the Virgin, was built during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at the site of an old leper's hospital by a confraternity formed of tradespeople and other devotees from Ponte Lima, and it was intended to offer support to pilgrims.

➔ 41°40'57" N 8°37'4" W



➡ 41°42'23" N 8°37'25" W



The façade is composed of a galilee decorated with a baroque design that includes a niche containing a sculpture of the virgin. The tower above the altar is also in the baroque style. Inside the decorative programme is worthy of note. It consists of panels of tiles, a carved altar, a painted coffered ceiling and stucco decoration.

Leaving the cycle path, the route veers southwards, leaving behind the riverside meadows. Next you will see the small **Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows**, which with its porch provides welcome shelter to pilgrims and walkers. The local place names remind us that we are following the immemorial Way of Saint James.

Following a predominantly rural route in **Arribão** we will pass by the **Chapel of St. Sebastian** with its traditional porch forming part of the façade. Over the course of the route, historic estates can be seen with their traditional houses or manor houses.

Cross the N204 and enter **Vitorino dos Piães**, where you can see the Parish Church of Saint Andrew. Built upon a small flight of steps, it has a simple façade with a portal crowned by an oculus, and a side tower decorated in a baroque style.

Continue along the narrow footpaths flanked by farmers' fields, and on reaching the stonework **Chapel of St. Sebastian**, once more cross the N204 and continue along Rua do Cambado.

Soon you will find yourself in the Parish of **Balugães**, in the Municipality of Barcelos. Here you can visit the **Parish Church of St. Martin**, with its porch built into the façade, its decorative oculus and small bell tower, which dates back to the twelfth century. If you are interested or motivated, you can take a short detour of around 800 m to visit the **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Aparecida**, one of Northern Portugal's major centres of Marian worship and pilgrimage; its history is linked to the Virgin's appearance to a shepherd.

Leaving the village, make your way through the outlying rural area and cross the bridge over the **River Neiva**, then head on through the pleasant fields along the southern bank, which form part of the **historic Terras do Neiva**.

Having passed Aborim, you will reach **Tamel (S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos)**, where you will find the welcoming **A Recoleta pilgrims' hostel** and further on the **Parish Church of St. Peter**. You can stay overnight at the hostel or continue for another 5 km to Barcelos, where you have various types of accommodation.

➡ 41°36'58" N 8°38'19" W



Tamel (S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos)



São Pedro de Rates

Day

[4]

26,5 km
± 6h30



➔ 41°31'59" N 8°37'7" W

Day 4 | ROMAN ROADS AND MEDIEVAL PATHWAYS

Tamel (S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos)

➔ S. Pedro de Rates

The fourth stage of the Route **begins in Tamel (S. Pedro Fins, Barcelos)**, at the Parish Church, and **ends in Rates** at the Church of St. Peter. It is 26,5 km long. The altitudes range from 15 m to 185 m, whereby it is between an easy and very easy level of difficulty.

During the day you will walk through the Municipalities of Barcelos and Póvoa do Varzim, following, for much of the way, ancient Roman roads and medieval footpaths; these provided the foundation for the settlement of this territory and ensured its connection with the world beyond. Like the previous stage, the majority of the walking follows **local roads and rural footpaths** with fields on either side, and it passes through the villages scattered across the region, as well as historic towns.

We suggest that **you organise your day into two phases**: an initial walk, in the morning, up until you reach the River Cávado, where you can stop in the city of Barcelos; and a second phase of walking from there



➔ 41°27'59" N 8°38'10" W



➔ 41°27'30" N 8°38'38" W

until the end of the day's pilgrimage. The river played a defining role in the configuration of these natural and urban landscapes and today it is a key element in this walk. A stop-off in Barcelos, the city on the river, is recommended. Despite being an urban centre it is peaceful and very beautiful. It offers a striking setting, in which nature and history come together in harmony.

During the course of this stage, you can see a **rich and varied cultural heritage**, formed of churches, chapels, bridges, fountains, stone crosses, memorials and pillories. You can also get to know the **local customs**, which are conserved as part of everyday community life, while they gain greater presence during the celebration of festivals. Do not forget to sample the **gastronomic specialities** that the region offers and that human labour enriches.

Leave Tamel walk in a southerly direction along the same route as the Way of Saint James, which runs in the opposite direction. All around are farmers' fields and patches of woodland. From time to time the villages of the rural parishes in the Municipality of Barcelos are encountered, such as Lijó and Vila Boa, and they offer some logistical support.

On arriving at the outskirts of **Barcelos**, cross the ring road and head for the city centre. There, next to **Largo da Porta Nova**, you will find the **Church of Good Jesus of the Cross**, an eighteenth-century baroque church with a

➡ 41°31'54" N 8°37'9" W



centralised plan, that was designed by the royal architect João Antunes. In front of the church there is a **baroque fountain**, which originally formed part of a convent.

The name Largo da Porta Nova [New Gateway Square] and the evidence provided by the **Medieval Tower**, indicate the historic fourteenth-century wall that protected Barcelos. Enter the noble area of the medieval city, and go on to visit the **Church of St. Francis**, with its gothic portal built into the façade.

Head towards the riverside, where there is a **series of monuments** formed by the **Main Church**, the **Palace of the Counts** of Barcelos and the **Cross** of the Senhor do Galo (literally, the lord of the cockerel); this rich historic and artistic heritage was built during the Middle Ages in the privileged area of this fortified town, which is located on the Way of Saint James; Barcelos has always served as a point of transit and a place to stop for pilgrims. The Main Church, built in the fourteenth-century, has a gothic façade with a portal flanked by buttresses and crowned with an elegant rose window. Inside there are three



naves built in the gothic manner and clad with baroque tiled panels, which date back to the eighteenth-century.

Beside the church is the **Cross of the Senhor do Galo**, which is one of the city's emblematic and historic monuments, and is linked to the devotion to St. James. It combines representations that evoke **memories and legends of the Jacobean tradition**. The sculptural elements depict scenes from the life of Christ, St. Benedict, St. James and Our Lady. As well as other symbolic elements such as the sun and moon, there is the figure of a hanged man. On the base of the cross, below the hanged man there is the figure of a cockerel.

This iconographical motif refers directly to **the legend of the cockerel**, which is based on one of the miracles attributed to St. James. It alludes to a miracle that the saint worked for a young pilgrim, who had been unjustly accused of a crime in a hostel where he had stayed and was to be hung on the public gibbet. One of the most popular versions of this legend states that when the pilgrim's parents travelled to collect the body of their dead son, they found him alive. They went to the judge to request his release, but the magistrate refused to believe them and stated that he would only free him if the cockerel that was going to be served for his lunch crowed once more, which it did.

Transformed over the centuries, **the legend of the cockerel has forged a place in art** through paintings and sculptures in the churches of various European cities built along the Way of Saint James. In Portugal, the depiction of the Cockerel was appropriated both in **popular culture** and **learned art forms**. The local ceramic craftsmanship is rich in terms of chromatic and formal expression. A visit to **Barcelos Pottery Museum** shows the richness and variety of this and other forms of traditional ceramics. Rosa Ramalho, Júlia Cota and many other **craftspeople** have artworks on display in this Museum. You can also find many craftspeople selling their work at the weekly market, which is held every Thursday in the historic Campo da Feira.

Modern and contemporary art have also addressed the theme of the **Barcelos Cockerel**. **Sonia Delaunay** (1886-1979), who sought inspiration in Picasso's cubism, lived in Northern Portugal during the First World War, during which time she was fascinated by light and colour, but also





the vitality and vibrancy of the markets, where the craftspeople sold their work. Delaunay went on to include the representation of the Barcelos Cockerel in her drawings and prints. Likewise, **Tomaz de Mello** (1906-1990) incorporated the iconography of this famed cockerel into some of his work. The contemporary artist **Joana de Vasconcelos** (b. 1971) depicted the subject in one of her key works that presented the Cockerel in a public, urban space.

Cross the **River Cávado**, walking over the fourteenth century **medieval bridge**. In **Barcelinhos**, having crossed the bridge, you can see on your left the **Chapel of Our Lady of the Bridge** surrounded by its covered gallery, whose origin dates back to the fourteenth century.

The Route follows the N306; now with a more sprightly pace, continue on until the village of **Pedra Furada**, where you leave the road and follow rural footpaths and country lanes, which are better suited to a pilgrimage.

We enter the Municipality of Vila do Conde as we make our way through the parish of Rates, the final destination of this stage of the Route. In the village of **Rates**, the main points of interest are the pilgrims' hostel (Rua de Santo António) and the **Parish Church of St. Peter** (Rua Dr. Manuel Monteiro/Largo do Conde D. Henrique). The Church is built in the Romanesque style with three naves. The stone façade reinforced with buttresses has a striking portal and its tympanum, archivolt and capitals are decorated with sculptures.

São Pedro de Rates



Vairão

Day

[5]

13,5 km
± 4h30



➔ 41°25'28" N 8°40'19" W

Day 5 | RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CONDADO PORTUCALENSE

S. Pedro de Rates ➡ Vairão

The fifth stage of the Route **begins in Rates**, at the Parish Church of St. Peter and **ends in Vairão** at the Monastery of the Holy Saviour. It covers 13.5 km and follows an almost flat terrain, with a maximum altitude of 106 m, which can be classified as being between **easy** and very easy. You will be able to walk calmly and devote more attention to the world around you and talk to the people you meet. Likewise, you can recover your energy for the stages to come, which are more demanding.

Over the course of this day, you will pass through two Municipalities, Póvoa do Varzim and Vila do Conde, whose history is profoundly associated with the Condado Portucalense and thereby with the origin and foundation of Portugal. The **verdant landscape** is defined by farmers' fields, in which there is abundant water, and small rural villages are encountered exuding a life of peace. As you walk you are accompanied by the River Ave, which provides a connection between the coast and inland region.



➡ 41°23'30" N 8°40'5" W

The local heritage is formed by **harmonious and well-preserved structures**, which were built on noble estates and monastic land. The local place names conserve the memory of historic figures and events. The local traditions are defined by rituals linked to agriculture and the religious calendar, and **festivities** forge a deep connection between the sacred and profane.

On leaving Rates, following roads and footpaths that make their way through fields and villages you will find yourself in the Parish of **Arcos** in the Municipality of Vila do Conde. On passing the **Parish Church** of São Miguel, located in a churchyard raised up on a flight of steps, note the classical façade with its bell-tower clad in the geometric-patterned tiles. In front there is the **Quinta de S. Miguel de Arcos** manor house with its baroque-style façade.

Following country lanes, flanked by the occasional houses, you draw near to the **River Ave**, where the landscape is sublime. In **Bagunte**, you will cross the river over a medieval bridge, known as the **Ponte de D. Zaimeiro**. It was built over an ancient Roman bridge and the elegance of its round arches are noteworthy. You should also pause to examine the ancient watermills.

➡ 41°21'3" N 8°40'54" W





➔ 41°19'58" N 8°40'8" W

Continuing southwards, slowly make your way along roads with some traffic, and pass through places belonging to the parish of Macieira da Maia. Finally, you will reach **Vairão**, and the **Monastery of the Holy Saviour**, where the **pilgrims' hostel** and the **Parish Church**, which are located in the monastic building, will welcome you.

The **Monastery**, whose origins go back to the period of the Condado Portucalense, was extended over time. It began as a small hermitage in Terras do Ave. In 1126 it became a community of nuns, governed by an Abbess.

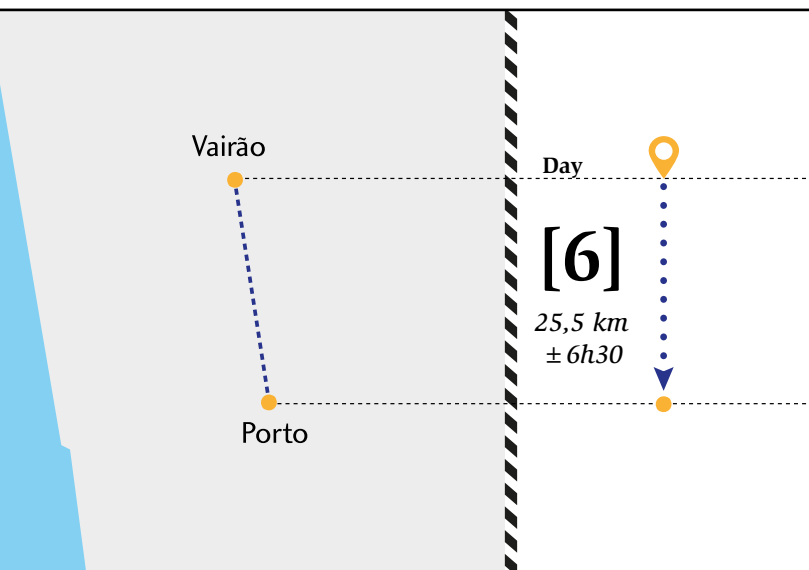
➔ 41°25'24" N 8°40'21" W



In 1141 King Afonso Henriques formally recognised the small hermitage, which adhered to the rule of St. Benedict, and he granted it a Carta de Couto (a form of regal privilege). In the wake of the dissolution of the religious orders in 1834, the monastic community ceased to exist when the last nun died in 1891. The complex was built on a monumental scale. It is an example of monastic religious architecture from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and consists of a church and cloister, as well as outbuildings linked to convent life. Inside the **Church, the Chapel of St. John the Baptist** is worthy of note; it was built in the sixteenth century, with barrel vaults. It is adorned with a mannerist carved retablo from the seventeenth century and clad in patterned tiles.

➔ 41°23'47" N 8°39'59" W





➔ 41°10'4" N 8°37'31" W

Day 6 | CITIES AND TOWNS OF GREATER PORTO

Vairão ➡ Porto

The sixth stage of the Route **begins in Vairão**, at the Monastery of the Holy Saviour and **ends in Porto** by the Cathedral. The terrain is flat, the distance covered 28 km and the maximum altitude 116 m. Although the gradient does not present any major issues, this **stage is essentially an urban walk**, with a medium level of difficulty, whereby it is recommended to be attentive at all times, above all when crossing busy roads.

Over the course of the day you will make your way through the Municipalities of the Porto Metropolitan Region, such as Vila do Conde, Maia, Matosinhos and Porto. The landscape is varied, with **rural and urban areas**. As you advance southwards the population density increases and urban development becomes more noted. Throughout this stage logistical support is available for making short pauses.

During the walk you will see essential elements of **architectural heritage**, which have defined the region's history and development. Churches, monasteries, museums, architectural projects and urban centres preserve and record **the many traces of a lengthy history**, as well as the expressions of the **cultural and artistic creativity** of more recent eras. You will see evidence of an active urban culture.

On leaving Vairão continue for some time through a number of parishes pertaining to the municipality of Vila do Conde. You will pass by the **Entre Douro e Minho Agricultural Museum**, which is dedicated to the landscape and rural life of Minho, and the small **Chapel of Saint Ovidius**.

In **Gião**, the **Parish Church** is worthy of note with its façade clad in tiles. In the churchyard there is a traditional stone cross.

On entering the Municipality of **Maia**, having made your way through the Parish of Moreira, there is the **Monastery of the Divine Saviour of Moreira**, which was built in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with a striking mannerist façade. The chancel has a gilded baroque carved retable, and is clad in blue and yellow patterned tiles.

Inside, there is a baroque carved altar, which is clad in tiles. Following a short stretch on main roads (N13 and N107) take Rua Ponte de Moreira, which crosses the **River Leça**.

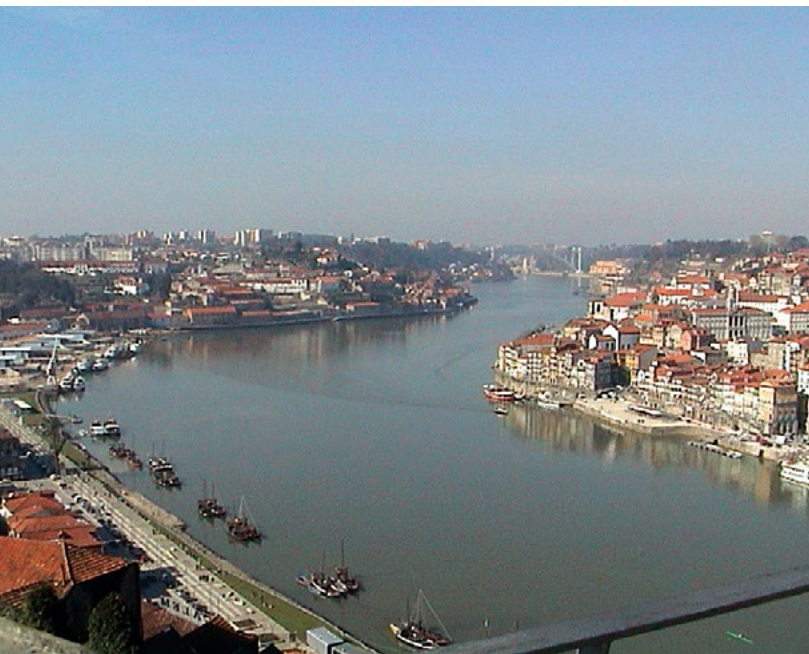
Always following in the same direction, and with the same urban cityscape, the route now follows Rua de Araújo, which is in the Municipality of Matosinhos. Along this road you will see the **Parish Church of São Pedro de Araújo**. The façade has baroque features and a large side tower.

Walking along Rua de Gondival, you will enter **Leça do Balio**, whose history is linked to the era of the Christian reconquista and the foundation of Portugal. The **Monastery of the Holy Saviour** is a renowned monument. It is on Rua Santos Lessa, and very close to the bank of the River Leça. To visit it, you will have to veer off the Route and cover an approximate distance of 700m. The complex, which belonged to the Military Hospitaller Order, conserves its church with its three naves and romanesque and gothic architectural elements. It is a fortress-church. In the façade there is a large tower similar to a castle's keep and the church's exterior displays features typical of military architecture. Besides its architectural and artistic value, it is also a historical site associated with key figures from the past. It was here that the marriage of King Fernando and Leonor Teles was held. Nearby is Quinta do Chantre with its 18th century baroque palace, attributed to the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni.

If you visit the Monastery, you should go back to Rua Gondival and continue along it. Enter the city of **Porto** and continue in the same direction.

From Rua do Monte de Burgos continue down Rua do Carvalhido, which leads to Praça do Exército Libertador, where you will find the **Parish Church of Carvalhido**, with its baroque-rococo façade completely clad in blue and white tiles showing narrative scenes and decorative patterns.

Follow Rua 9 de Julho until you reach Largo da Ramada Alta, then continue along Rua Barão de Forester, and finally, take the long Rua de Cedofeita until you reach



Praça de Carlos Alberto. At the intersection with Rua do Carmo note the two baroque churches: **Church do Carmo and the Church of the Third Order of St. Francis**.

You are now in the **city centre**, where there is a rich historic and artistic heritage that grew up over the centuries. Next to the Cordoaria Garden, there is the neoclassical building housing the University Rectory, which was designed in the eighteenth-century by the architect Carlos Cruz Amarante. In front you will see the **Church of the Clerics**, with its monumental baroque tower, which was designed and built in the eighteenth century by the Italian architect Nicolau Nasoni.

Continue along the labyrinth of old streets and head up to the **Cathedral Square**, stopping by the **Cathedral**, whose origin dates back to the twelfth century. The monument merits an attentive visit, as does the **Episcopal Palace**.



➔ 41°08'33.7"N 8°36'43.0"W

From the heights of the Cathedral Square you can observe the whole **city spread out along the River Douro**, with its neighbourhoods built on the slopes. The beauty and cultural value of the city are the foundation for the classification of Porto's Historic Centre as a **World Heritage Site**.



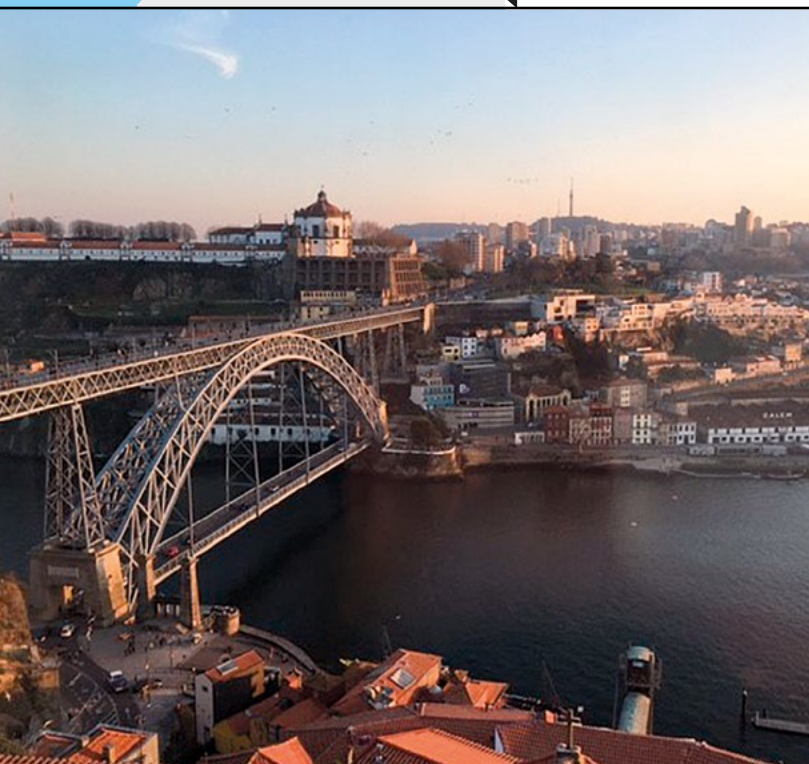
Porto

Day

[7]

23 km
± 6h30

Louroso



Day 7 | CROSSING THE RIVER DOURO

Porto ➡ Lourosa

The Northern Route's seventh stage **begins in Porto** at the Cathedral, and **ends in Lourosa** at the Chapel of St. Michael (also known as the Chapel of the Feira dos Dez) in Largo da Feira dos Dez. This stage is 23 km long, and it can be completed in 6hrs and 30mins. There are barely any difficulties along the way and the altitudes range from 2 to 238 metres; it is an **easy level of difficulty**. The landscape covered is a **diverse one**. At the start it is predominantly an urban landscape, whereby attention and care must be paid to ensure a **pleasant day's walking**.

Over the course of the day, the Route **crosses the River Douro** and passes through the Municipalities of Porto, Gaia and Santa Maria de Feira, which form part of the Metropolitan Area of Porto. Throughout this stage logistical support is available for walkers and pilgrims.

➡ 41°8'33" N 8°36'45" W





➔ 41°8'18" N 8°36'32" W

There are numerous views of striking natural beauty to prompt contemplation. The landscape along **the River Douro** is unforgettable, while crossing the **Negrelos Mountains** is invigorating. The cultural heritage includes **monuments and museums** that attest to the value of history and contemporary developments. In order to visit them we recommend you plan your day so as to allow time for a break to **explore and enjoy the sights**. You can also divide the day into two parts with Grijó as the midway point.

Before leaving the **Cathedral Square**, from the top of the hill that the locals call Cathedral Hill, take note of the **scale of both the natural and urban landscape** along both sides of the river, which was and continues to be a defining element in the geography of the region as well as the country as a whole. Along the northern bank you can see the city of Porto, while along the southern one is the city of Vila Nova de Gaia, or simply, Gaia. The wealth of architecture that makes up Porto's historic centre, the Dom Luís I Bridge and the Monastery of the Serra do Pilar were classified as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1996.

Along both **banks of the Douro**, the historic riverside communities with their architectural heritage linked to **port-life and Porto's wine trade**, have now been restored and today provide a cosmopolitan setting for a range of cultural and leisure activities.

Head down to the Cais da Ribeira and get ready for an unforgettable experience. Cross the river on the pedestrian deck of the ironwork **Dom Luís I Bridge**. It was designed by the German engineer Théophile Seyrig (1843-1923), built by the Belgian company, Societé Willebroeck, and opened in 1886, thereby linking the two banks of the River Douro.

In **Gaia**, take the Avenida da República. The architecture of the **Monastery of the Serra do Pilar**, was built between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries by Augustinian monks. It can be seen on the left up on a hill and can be reached by taking the path leading up to it. The monastery is worth visiting for both its church built on a centralised plan and circular cloister. Furthermore, there is a striking view from the **Serra do Pilar viewpoint**, where the monastery is located. You can see all of Porto as it runs alongside the Douro.

➔ 41°08'33.7"N 8°36'43.0"W



As you make your way along the **Avenida da República**, you will see various examples of Art Nouveau architecture, and in particular the old Barbot House (today the Casa da Cultura) and the Municipal Hall. Nearby you can visit the Teixeira Lopes House-Museum. Originally the residence and studio where the sculptor António Teixeira Lopes (1866-1942) lived and worked, it is today a renowned museum.

From the **Rotunda de Santo Ovídeo**, follow Rua Soares dos Reis and continue until you reach the end of Rua Fonte dos Arrependidos. Then, having crossed the IC2, the Route continues along Rua Alto das Torres and the other roads that lead on from it as you make your way through a much calmer stretch of cityscape.

As you approach the **Negrelos Mountains**, the landscape undergoes a gradual transition with expanses of vegetation and some uphill climbs until you reach the top, where large clumps of pine, oak, chestnut and cork oaks are the predominant feature. A range of regional fauna, including hawks, foxes, rabbits and various types of eagle and owl inhabit this natural setting.

In **Perosinho**, you can visit the **Parish Church** (Rua da Igreja) with its classical façade and side tower adorned with baroque decoration.

Then after Sermonde, you will get to **Grijó**, where you can take a rest at the **Monastery of the Holy Saviour of the World**. On the site of the original tenth-century monastery the community of Hermits of the Order of Saint Augustine built this new monastery. The church and cloister date back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and are examples of mannerist classicism. The church's façade was built on a monumental scale. Inside the church and in the cloister you can see tile decoration and carved altarpieces. Of particular note is the Tomb of Rodrigo Sanches, an illustrious knight, as well as the illegitimate son of King Sancho I and Maria Pais Ribeira, known as the Ribeirinha. It is an exceptional example of gothic tomb design with the recumbent statue lying upon the tomb chest, which is adorned with figurative and naturalistic details.

On leaving the monastery, the Route continues on to the **Senhor do Padrão Memorial**, from where you should follow the Rua do Ermo. On reaching the **Chapel**



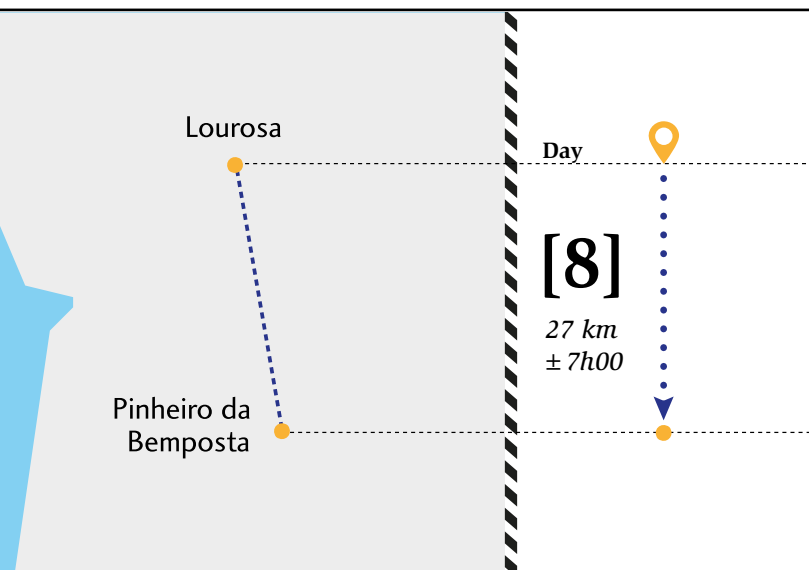
➡ 41°4'14" N 8°35'6" W

of **Saint Rita**, whose façade and tower are clad in tiles, take Rua da Farrapa and continue along the series of roads that follow a historic local path, and lead as far as Rua das Costeiras, from where you head south.

In **Olivães**, you are in the **Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira**. Sticking to the indicated route, you will make your way along narrow local roads, and pass through various **villages belonging to the parishes of Nogueira de Regedoura, Mozelos and Lourosa**.

However, take care with some sections that pass close to large roads with considerable traffic. At the junction with the N316, make your way into a wooded area, where the Route follows Rua da Estrada Romana, whose name recalls the historic Roman road. Take the Estrada Real, and carry on, always in the same direction.

You will reach the city of **Lourosa**. Continue until you reach Rua da Feira dos Dez, where the **Chapel of Sts. Michael and Lucia** marks the end of this day's walk. Also known as the **Chapel of the Feira dos Dez**, this small church has an imposing tower that forms part of its main façade.



➔ 40°54'41" N 8°29'51" W

Day 8 | TRADITION AND INNOVATION

Lourosa ➤ Pinheiro da Bemposta

The eighth day of the Route **begins in Lourosa** at the Chapel of the Feira dos Dez (Chapel of Sts. Michael and Lucia), **and ends in Pinheiro da Bemposta** at the Parish Church (Rua Padre José Mário de Sousa). It is 29 km long and can be completed in around 7hrs. There are barely any difficulties along the way and the altitudes range from 5 to 308 metres; it has a **medium level of difficulty**. The day's walk **covers a varied landscape** consisting of a predominantly rural region with a few cities. Despite being a lengthy stage of the Route it has everything needed to make it a **pleasant walk** and well-suited to a pilgrimage.

Over the course of the day the Route passes through the Municipalities of Santa Maria da Feira, São João da Madeira and Oliveira de Azeméis; a region, which has for many centuries linked **the coast with the inland areas**. The **climate is mild** and the environment offers a setting made up of **gentle slopes** descending into the **valleys** with their fields irrigated by **rivers and streams**.

Throughout this stage, and above all in the centre of the towns and villages, logistical support is available for pilgrims and walkers. The **cultural heritage** conserves the legacy of the past and celebrates contemporary cosmopolitanism and creativity. **Tradition and innovation** exist side by side and interact with each other, thereby demonstrating the specific culture of each place, with its monuments, museums, art galleries, festivals, celebrations and pilgrimages.

Begin your day in **Lourosa** and follow the Rua da Feira dos Dez. Then continue along the **Estrada Real**, which in many places follows the route of the old **Roman Road**, and then follow the local roads. The surroundings are wooded and peaceful, but take care and ensure you walk safely, above all on the sections of the Route used by both pedestrians and cars.

In **Meia Légua**, take Rua Dr. Domingos da Silva Coelho, and then Rua da Fonte do Coelho, and continue for a few metres parallel to the N1.

Then walk down Rua António Nobre and continue along Rua da Banda de Música. You have now reached the town of **Arrifana**, which is still in the Municipality of Vila da Feira.

Soon after you will get to **São João da Madeira**, which is the administrative centre of the Municipality it has given its name to since 1926. The city, which the **River Ul** runs through, was founded in ancient times, but its history is inextricably linked to the nineteenth and twentieth-century industrialisation, when the city's hat and shoe manufacturing industries were set up. As a result it conserves a multifaceted cultural heritage, and its intriguing **industrial heritage** is of particular relevance, and you will see examples of it as you make your way along this stage of the Route. In Rua da Fundação, stop to look at the **Oliva Creative Factory**, a historic factory building that has been converted into a cultural and art centre. Shortly afterwards, the **Hatmaking Museum** is one of the rare museums devoted to the theme of the manufacture of hats and their influence on clothes design and fashion. The city also has a number of delightful parks and gardens. Here you can gather strength by visiting the **Chapel of Our Lady of the**

➔ 40°54'42" N 8°29'50" W



➡ 40°51'28" N 8°29'43" W



Miracles, a Marian temple located in a park with the same name, which is just 100 metres off the Route.

On leaving the city and continuing along the Route, you make your way through a landscape consisting of a combination of urban streets, patches of woodland and small farmers' fields. Not far from the historic **Couto de Cucujães**, in the Municipality of Oliveira de Azeméis, the Route makes it way over the ancient **Roman Bridge** that linked Cucujães and Pica.

Continue on until **Santiago de Riba-Ul**, a historic riverside settlement that grew up on the banks of the River Ul, a tributary of the River Antuã.

You will soon reach **Oliveira de Azeméis**, a city with both a historic heritage and contemporary appeal. In the centre you can see the singular bank **designed by the architect Álvaro Siza Vieira** (b. 1933). Close at hand is the **Casa-Museu Regional**, which is a museum devoted to the municipality's ethnography and history. All along this urban section you will see nineteenth and twentieth-century buildings that recall the era of emigration to Brazil. The Municipal Library, a contemporary building,

is named after the celebrated writer **Ferreira de Castro**, who was from Ossela (a village in this municipality) and author of *A Selva* (The Jungle), a novel which recalls the cultivation of rubber in Amazonia.

Leave the city by taking Rua do Cruzeiro followed by a number of old roads through the city's outskirts, the Route then enters an area of farming land through which flows rivers and streams of the Ul river system. In the Parish of **Macinhata da Seixa**, you will cross the **Senhor da Pedra**, a single span ancient Roman bridge, which was rebuilt in 1746. A number of **alminhas**, small memorials with niches, have been built along the bridge, which mark a place for prayer along the old **Pilgrimage Routes**.

You then pass through the Parish of **Travanca**, which in the twelfth century belonged to the Priory of the Monastery of Grijó.

Continue on until you reach **Pinheiro da Bemposta**, where the **Parish Church**, dedicated to St. Pelagius, is the final destination of this stage. A set of steps lead up to the churchyard, and the church itself is an eighteenth century building with a façade and tower adorned with baroque decorative features. Between 1514 and 1885, this town was the administrative centre for the Municipality, and the **Pillory** and **historic Council Chambers** testify to its past importance.

Pinheiro da
Bemposta



Agueda

Day

[9]

29 km
± 7h00



➔ 40°47'05.9" N 8°30'09" W

Day 9 | THROUGH THE VOUGA MEADOWS

Pinheiro da Bemposta ➡ ➡ Águeda

The ninth day of the Route **begins in Pinheiro da Bemposta**, at the Parish Church (Rua Padre José Mário de Sousa), and **ends in Águeda** at the Parish Church (Largo Dr. António de Mello). This stage is 29 km long, and it can be completed in 7hrs. There are barely any difficulties along the way and the altitudes range from 5 to 181 metres; **it is a medium level of difficulty**. It is a long stage of the Route, but provides the ideal conditions to enjoy a **peaceful and pleasant day's walking**.

You will make your way through the area of the **Vouga river system**, where there is abundant water and verdant fields. The **climate** is mild and the area's proximity to the coast provides a refreshing sea breeze. As a **natural setting it is outstanding**, and the rural landscape is dotted with small villages, towns and historic cities.

Over the course of the day the Route passes through the Municipalities of Oliveira de Azeméis, Albergaria-a-Velha and Águeda. The former belongs to the Metropolitan Area of Porto, while the latter two form part of **Central Portugal's** region of Aveiro. Throughout this stage logistical support is available for walkers and pilgrims.

There is a rich cultural heritage with numerous **monuments, museums, traditions and festivities**. In accordance with your interests and aims, you can pause to visit fascinating places and take part in the many religious and cultural activities that are held throughout the year. You will always find welcoming communities.

The Route **sets out from Pinheiro da Bemposta's church**, and makes its way along quiet roads, that pass through small villages scattered amidst this wooded landscape. The local place names recall the area's history, whose memory is very much alive.

On reaching the Parish **of Branca**, you are now in the Municipality of Albergaria-a-Velha. In the village of **Albergaria-a-Nova**, start to follow the tracks and rural paths leading through the irrigated fields, and you will see the typical **building** of the Vouga railway stop.



➡ 40°47'2" N 8°29'15" W

From there you continue with nature on all sides amidst a **verdant landscape**. From time to time there is the occasional uphill climb, but it makes for peaceful walking. On the left hand side you can see the **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Succour**; this small chapel, surrounded by trees, gives its name to the hill it is located on. Here you can find the **Diocesan House of Our Lady of Succour**, which offers accommodation to pilgrims.

Shortly afterwards you will make your way into the city of **Albergaria-a-Velha**, which is the administrative centre of the municipality. Its history goes back to the Neolithic period, and subsequently the historic network of fortified towns that spanned the Iberian peninsula. The city's name recalls the existence of the medieval hostel that once provided for walkers and pilgrims. On entering the city you will see the **Parish Church**, which was built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and has a classical façade and lateral bell tower. Inside you can see carved baroque retables. Further on, you can see the **Council Chambers**, with their imposing neoclassical façade.

Leave the city by taking the traditional path, which crosses fields and forests, and soon you will make your

➔ 40°47'8" N 8°29'9" W



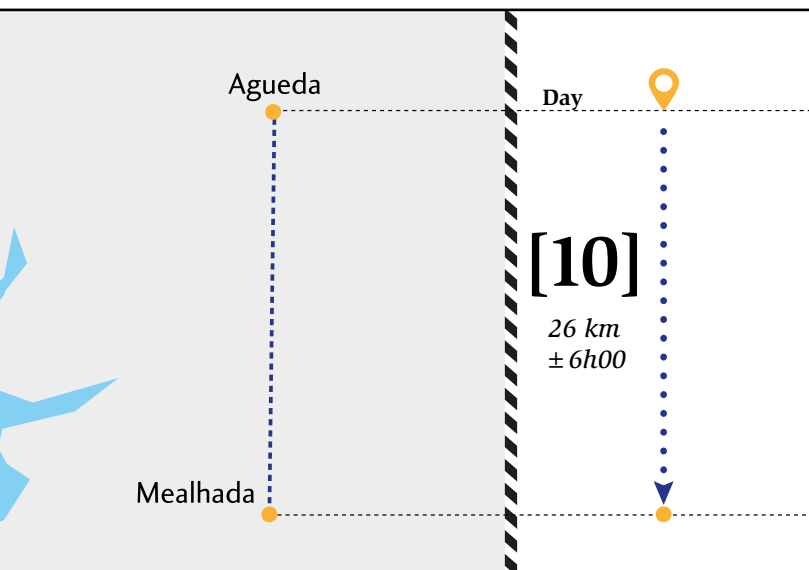


➔ 40°37'58" N 8°28'9" W

way into the Municipality of Águeda. Having passed through various small village and then crossed the bridge over the **River Vouga**, you will reach **Lamas do Vouga**, a historic village on the river.

Continue on, and in **Mourisca do Vouga**, you can see the **Ethnographic Museum of the Vouga Region**, a museum devoted to local history and traditions.

Shortly afterwards you will enter Águeda, a city that slopes down to the River Vouga. Then having passed the **Cais das Laranjeiras Garden**, the Route makes its way into Águeda's historic centre, before reaching the **Parish Church**, where this stage ends. The church, dedicated to Saint Eulalia, dates back to the fourteenth century, but it was remodelled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It has an exuberant baroque façade, with a broken pediment and side tower. Inside, its gilded wooden altarpieces adorned with eighteenth-century sculptures are worthy of note, as is the fourteenth-century gothic baptismal font. During your stay you can visit the **Dionísio Pinheiro Museum**, with its beautiful gardens and interesting painting and decorative arts collection. The city's many cultural events include the **Umbrella Sky Project**, an urban art festival in which coloured umbrellas play a central role.



➔ 40°34'20" N 8°27'1" W

Day 10 | IN THE HEART OF THE BAIRRADA REGION Águeda ➡ Mealhada

The tenth day of the Route **begins in Águeda** at the Parish Church (Largo Dr. António de Mello), and **ends in Mealhada** at the Parish Church (Avenida Comendador Messias Batista). This stage is 26 km long, and it can be completed in around 6hrs. There are barely any difficulties along the way and the altitudes range from 5 to 76 metres. It is **an easy level of difficulty**, and makes its way through a diverse landscape of rural spaces and urban areas, which provide the ideal conditions for a **pleasant day's walking**.

Making its way across Central Portugal, between the Rivers Vouga and Mondego, the Route passes through the Municipalities of Águeda, Anadia and Mealhada. The landscape is defined by **plains and gentle slopes** covered with vines and fruit trees, as well as other crops. Amidst this rural setting there are important villages, towns and historic cities.

You will cross the **Bairrada wine region**, where the diversity and richness of the soil (clay, sand) and the mild climate are ideal for the cultivation of the various grape varieties used to produce the excellent (red, white and sparkling) wines. It is a classified wine producing region and its name “bairrada” alludes to the specific characteristics of the clay soils, which are particularly favourable to vine growing.

There is a rich **cultural heritage** with numerous monuments and cultural events. The **culinary arts** are of particular relevance, and in particular the “Bairrada roast suckling pig” and the excellent wines that go with it.

The **Route leaves** Águeda, and heads down to Praça da República, where you cross the bridge **over the Vouga**. Continue alongside the river, passing by the City Park. Always heading southwards, make your way through the neighbourhoods on the edge of the city, before making your way through leafy areas interspersed with the odd village. You will make your way through the parishes of Recardães, Barró and Aguada de Baixo,



➔ 40°34'20" N 8°26'49" W



➔ 40°29'56" N 8°27'19" W

historic towns that grew up along the old thoroughfares. From time to time you will cross small streams, where there is abundant vegetation.

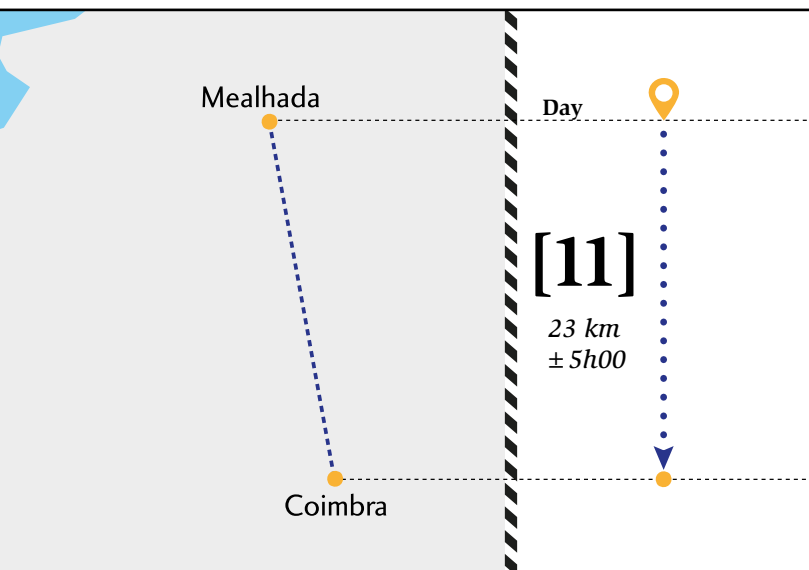
Next you make your way into the **Municipality of Anadia**, in the Parish of **Linhares do Caminho**, where you will see ever more wineries.

Then having crossed the **River Serra**, you will reach the city of **Anadia**, where you skirt around its historic urban centre along a pleasant and shady route. Just a few metres off our route, you can visit the **Bairrada Wine Museum**, devoted to the history and life of this region and its wine. Then having passed the Cinema-Theatre and made your way round the Municipal Stadium, continue along Estrada da Várzea until **Aguim**, a town that was the municipality's administrative centre from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries.

Amidst verdant fields and woods, as well as farmers' fields, continue along the old roads as you pass through small villages. As you head towards **Mealhada**, you will begin to catch a whiff of the delicious traditional gastronomy (the Bairrada roast suckling pig). On entering the city prepare to end the day at the modern **Parish Church**. Ahead of you is the **Cinema-Theatre**, an interesting twentieth-century building, which was designed by the architect Rodrigues Lima and opened in 1940.

➡ 40°24'43" N 8°26'40" W





Day 11 | THE MONDEGO PLAINS

Mealhada ➤ Coimbra

The eleventh day of the Route **begins in Mealhada** at the Parish Church (Avenida Comendador Messias Baptista), and **ends in Coimbra** at the Church of Holy Cross (Praça 8 de Maio). This stage is 23 km long, and it can be completed in around 5hrs. It covers a varied terrain and the altitudes range from 5 to 143 metres. It has an **easy level of difficulty**, and makes its way through a diverse landscape of rural spaces and urban areas, which provide the ideal conditions for a **peaceful day's walking**.

Located in Central Portugal, this region links the districts of Aveiro and Coimbra, and its climate progressively leaves behind any coastal influence as it heads inland. You pass through the Municipalities of Mealhada and Coimbra, where you find historic towns and striking natural and urban landscapes. This is the region of the fertile **Mondego plains**, that spread out alongside this major river and its tributaries, which are the principal elements in this landscape.

The **cultural heritage** is impressive and attractive, characterised by the **antiquity and authenticity**, quantity and diversity of all its features. Simplicity and tradition are encountered alongside grandeur and erudition. Over the course of this day, you can visit monasteries, churches and chapels, as well as museums, gardens and parks, true works of art whose beauty never fails to cause an impression.

The **Route leaves from Mealhada's** Parish Church. Having left the city and made your way through its suburbs, you walk through wooded countryside, and for some time you follow a stream. You then make your way along small municipal roads that pass through villages with a few scattered houses and farmland.

In **Lendiosa**, you will see a **small chapel** with a large window above the portal, and a broken pediment and cross crowning its façade. Then, in **Mala** (a village in the Parish of Casal Comba), you will see, alongside the road, the **Chapel of Our Lady of the Candles** with its small churchyard. The church's façade has baroque



➔ 40°21'37" N 8°27'19" W

features, above all the pediment above the door, the window frames and the pinnacle of the side tower.

The Route then continues along a series of tracks. In the Parish of Barcouço, you will pass through **Sargento Mór** (village of Quinta Branca), where there is the small **Chapel of Our Lady of the Conception**. Make your way along Estrada do Lameirão, and then Rua Chãs and head into **Adões**.

Shortly afterwards, you will find yourselves in the **Municipality of Coimbra**. Head into **Trouxemil** along Rua de Nossa Senhora dos Aflitos. Then continue down Rua da Fonte Grande and Rua das Almas, alongside the **Merendas da Fonte Grande Park**. Continue along Rua do Alto das Maias and then Rua do Calço.

In **Cioga do Monte**, you will see the **New Chapel of Saint Anthony** (Rua de Santo António) and then the **Quinta de Santo António**, a historic manor house that encompasses the **Old Chapel of St. Anthony** (Rua da Rigueira).

Having left the village, make your way through a pleasant area alongside the river with a verdant and

well-irrigated landscape provided by the River Mondego ecosystem. In **Adémia**, you will pass by the **Chapel of St. John the Baptist** (Rua de S. João Batista), a small church with a stone cross built into its façade.

Cross the **River Velho** and follow the river bank along Rua Parcelar do Campo. You have now reached **Coimbra**, the city that was founded and grew up on the banks of the **River Mondego**. Then having made your way round the Train Station (Coimbra B), continue along the edge of the **Choupal National Forest**, where the River Velho flows into the River Mondego.

Head for the city centre along Avenida Fernão de Magalhães, and then take Rua Simões de Castro, Rua do Carmo, and Rua da Sofia. When you get to the Council Chambers you will see Praça 8 de Maio, and then the **Church of the Holy Cross**, where the day's walking ends.

➔ 40°12'21" N 8°25'56" W





➔ 40°12'39" N 8°25'43" W

The Church belongs to the **Monastery of the Holy Cross**, which was founded in the twelfth century for a community of Canons Regular of Saint Augustine. The church's façade has a romanesque structure that corresponds to the era of its foundation, but it has a grandiose and refined manueline portal, which was built in the sixteenth century by the architect Diogo de Castilho and the sculptor Nicolas de Chantereine. Inside there are various manueline and renaissance elements. The whole monastic complex merits a visit including the sacristy, the cloisters and the chapter house.





The exceptional artistic value of this monument is matched by its historical significance. It is a historical site associated with key events and figures from the past. Portugal's first king, Afonso Henriques, is buried in the main chapel, and Saint Anthony lived and studied here; having been born in Lisbon in 1195, and prior to his departure for Italy, where he would die in Padua in 1231.

In accordance with your interests and the time you have available, make sure you explore the city with its monuments, museums, parks and gardens. The **University of Coimbra** conserves a number of historic buildings, art collections and scientific heritage, and is classified as a **World Heritage site**. In what is one of Europe's oldest universities, don't miss the eighteenth-century **Library** and the **Science Museum**.



➔ 40°12'32" N 8°25'40" W

You can also visit the **Old Cathedral** (a twelfth-century Romanesque building), the **New Cathedral** (a seventeenth-century church built by the Jesuits) and the **Machado de Castro National Museum** (art and archaeology collections). Likewise, wander the historic **medieval streets** that wind their way up the hill and soak up the atmosphere of **academic life**, with its traditions and experiences. You will undoubtedly have many reasons to come back both as a pilgrim and a visitor.

➔ 40°12'31" N 8°25'37" W



Coimbra

Condeixa-a-Nova

Day

[12]*16km*
± 4h00

Day 12 | ALONG THE CARMELITE ROUTE

Coimbra ➤ Condeixa-a-Nova

In Coimbra, the **Northern Way joins the Carmelite Route**. This itinerary, designed by Castelos e Muralhas do Mondego and managed by the ACF-Caminhos de Fátima Association, is part of the network of Fátima Routes. It is inspired by the life and work of Sister Lucia, one of the three visionary children of Fatima, who in 1947 joined Carmelo de Santa Teresa in Coimbra and lived there until her death in 2005.

Therefore, the **twelfth day's walking begins in Coimbra**, at the Church of the Holy Cross (Praça 8 de Maio) and, a few metres further on, in the Praça da Portagem, it begins following the Carmelite Route. The day **ends in Condeixa-a-Nova**, at the Main Church (Praça do Município). This stage is 16 km long, and it can be completed in around 4hrs. There are barely any difficulties along the way and the maximum altitude is 180 metres. It has a **medium level of difficulty**, and offers ideal conditions for a **pleasant walk**.

It is located in Portugal's Central region in the **Baixo Mondego** region, which is a transitional zone between the coastal and inland regions. The Route runs through the parishes of the municipalities of Coimbra and Condeixa-a-Nova, an area of **ancient settlements**, where both the natural and human landscape is marked by an **abundance of water**, which irrigates **verdant fields** and **urban gardens**.

The **Cultural Heritage** conserves the memory of the past, yet is enriched by contemporary trends. Over the course of this day the pilgrim-walker will have unique moments for reflection, learning and delight, as the Route passes through urban centres with **historical monuments** (monasteries, churches, chapels, palaces), and also museums and art galleries.

Leaving from Praça 8 de Maio, in front of the **Church of the Holy Cross**, along side which is the historic **Café Santa Cruz** (one of Europe's oldest cafés), the Route follows Rua Visconde da Luz. Then having passed the **Church of St. James** (a romanesque building), continue along Rua Ferreira Borges, where you will see the **Municipal Museum**, housed in the historic Edifício Chiado (an early



twentieth-century example of ironwork architecture). This pedestrian route ends at the **Largo da Portagem** on the banks of the River Mondego. From here on the Route **links up with the Carmelite Route**, which it follows, always keeping to the **appropriate signposts** for the Fátima Routes.

Cross the River Mondego at the **Santa Clara Bridge**. As you make your way through this urban setting and alongside the river, you will pass by the **Portugal dos Pequenitos** theme park (opened in 1940, and created by Bissaya Barreto, a lecturer from the University of Coimbra, and Cassiano Branco, a modernist architect), as well as three historic Franciscan convents, which are important historic and artistic monuments: **the Convent of Saint Francis** (a seventeenth-century building converted into a cultural space), **the Monastery of Santa Clara-a-Velha** (a fourteenth-century Gothic building that contains the tomb of Queen Saint Elizabeth), and the **Monastery of Santa Clara-a-Nova** (a seventeenth-century mannerist building). The Route skirts the beautiful **Gardens of Quinta das Lágrimas**, the site that is traditionally associated with the tragic romance of King Pedro I and Inês de Castro.

Continue along the **Ladeira do Vale do Inferno**, a wooded green space, with a **viewpoint** offering extensive panoramic views of the surrounding region. Continue along the winding roads. At the **Estrada Antiga de Lisboa**, you pass by the **Chapel of the Lord of the Afflicted**, a typical baroque chapel built on a hexagonal plan.

Continue, **always heading straight on**, along Rua La-deira da Paula, Estrada da Chapeleira, Estrada da Ponte and Rua Venda do Cego, where you will pass by a series of warehouses. Carry on along Rua da Mesura, passing the College of the Immaculate Conception, and continue along Rua do Cabo.

You will then get to **Cernache**, a town in the Municipality of Coimbra, which in the sixteenth century served as the municipality's administrative centre. In Rua da Igreja, just a few metres off the marked route, you will find the **Parish Church**: traces of the building's medieval past are noted in the chevet's features, while the façade is built in the classical style and has a renaissance portal, as well as a side tower.

At the end of Rua Álvaro Anes, you will pass the **Chapel of St. Laurence** and continue along Rua do Cubo and then Rua da Cruz. Having crossed the motorway via the bridge, take Rua da Escola, and then carry on along Rua de S. Tomé, Largo da Pela and Rua da Ribeira. Make your way along ever more tree-lined roads, whose names recall the customs of this historic rural region (Rua das Almoinhas e Rua de Baixo).



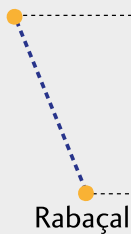
Now in **Condeixa-a-Nova**, make your way through the verdant, pleasant landscape following Rua da Capela, Rua da Calçada, Rua Monsenhor Manuel Paulo and Rua Francisco de Lemos until you arrive in the town centre. The town's history is related to its location amidst **fertile farming land** and the great **abundance of water**, as well as historic **communication routes**. In the twelfth century the Condeixa Estate belonged to Coimbra's Monastery of the Holy Cross. It gained importance in the sixteenth century when King Manuel I passed through the town on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, and he granted a charter to the town in 1514. Much of the **Estrada Real**, which linked Lisbon to Coimbra, followed the historic **Way of Saint James**.

On entering the town centre there are various buildings of historic and artistic value, as well as pleasant **gardens**. In Praça da República, which marks the **end of this day's walking**, you will find the **Main Church** (dedicated to Saint Christina of Bolsena), a building with sixteenth-century roots that conserves a manueline baptismal font and some mannerist retables by the Coimbra School. The Church was enlarged in the eighteenth century with a bell tower and baroque façade.

You can take advantage of the rest of the day to rest or calmly wander the streets of Condeixa, noting the **manor houses** that testify to the important role that the local bourgeoisie and aristocracy played in this town's history. Of particular note, for their size and artistry is the **Figueredos Palace** (Largo Artur Barreto / Praça do Município), an example of sixteenth and seventeenth-century mannerist architecture, and the **Sotto Mayor Palace** (Rua D. Francisco de Lemos) with its exuberant baroque façade.

Don't miss out on discovering other aspects of this town's **cultural heritage**, and in particular the **Fernando Namora House-Museum** (where this writer was born in 1919) and the **PO.RO.S / Portugal Romano em Sicó (Roman Portugal in Sicó)**, a museum and interpretation centre devoted to the history of the Roman era in the Terras de Sicó region; a visit to this museum will stand you in good stead for the predominant theme of the next day's walk.

Condeixa-a-Nova



Rabaçal

Day

[13]

13km
± 3h30



➡ 40°9'25" N 8°26'52" W

Day 13 | MEMORIES OF THE ROMAN ERA

Condeixa-a-Nova ➤ Rabaçal

The thirteenth day of the Route **begins in Condeixa-a-Nova**, at the Main Church (Praça do Município) and **ends in the village of Rabaçal**, at the Main Church (Rua da Igreja). It is a **short and serene day's walk**, well suited to a pilgrimage and its spiritual concerns. It is 13 km long and can be completed in around 3hrs30 mins. With barely any difficulties along the way and a maximum altitude of 180 metres, it makes for **easy walking**, and there are numerous footpaths.

It crosses the Municipalities of Condeixa-a-Nova and Penela and makes its way through the landscape of the **Rabaçal Valley** and the **Rio dos Mouros Canyon**, which both form part of the striking natural environment of the **Sicó Mountains** limestone massif. On the gentle slopes and in the valleys Mediterranean tree species proliferate, in particular oaks, chestnuts, holm oaks and cork oaks. In the fertile and well-irrigated areas the landscape is characterised by **ancient settlements** associated with fortified towns, and above all the Romanisation of the western side of the Iberian peninsula.

Numerous features draw the attention of those who make their way through this territory, where **nature, culture and life** are inextricably linked. The cultural heritage is rich in monuments and traditions, and in particular the traces of the **classical heritage of romanisation**, which go back to the first centuries of the Christian era. We can discover the history, as well as the art and craftsmanship of this **exceptionally valuable heritage**, at archaeological sites, museums and exhibition displays along the route. We will always receive a warm welcome in towns and villages, and we can sample the authentic local gastronomy. The Route leaves from Condeixa-a-Nova following the Estrada Municipal (municipal road) and very soon comes to **Condeixa-a-Velha**. It passes close by the **Main Church** (Rua da Igreja), whose large bell tower, built into the façade, is worthy of note.



➔ 40°5'57" N 8°29'35" W

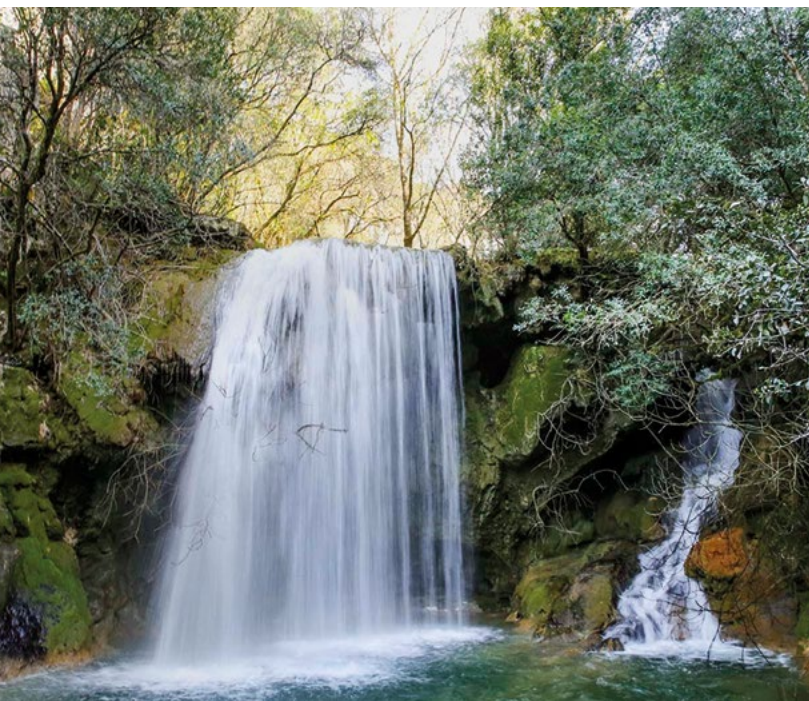
Here the highlight is the archaeological site of the **Roman ruins of Conímbriga**, which is the remains of a Roman city; once an ancient romanised fort, located along the principal road linking Olisipo (Lisbon) and Bracara Augusta (Braga) it was transformed into one of the most important Roman cities of the Iberian Peninsula. At this archaeological site the visitor can observe the city's layout, as well as various buildings, and of especial importance are the residential houses, the mosaic pavements with geometric and figurative decoration, parts of an aqueduct and sections of the city wall. The **Museum** displays a vast collection of items found during the archaeological surveys.

➔ 40°5'58" N 8°29'37" W



From Condeixa-a-Velha onwards, follow the **track** that runs alongside the valley of River Ega, a tributary of the River Mondego, but also known as the **River of the Moors (Rio dos Mouros)**. In late winter and early spring the river is high and fast-flowing and it forms a waterfall. The natural setting is sublime and its peace is reviving. The track continues along the hillside, but not high up, before descending into the valley and moving ever closer to the right bank of the river.

Shortly after a place known as **Poço**, on your left you can see the seventeenth-century **Filipina Bridge**. Just a short distance away is the small village of **Fonte Cober-ta**, which is named after a historic spring that supplied pilgrims and travellers. You are now in the Parish of **Zambujal**, where agriculture and livestock grazing are the traditional activities. Shortly afterwards you come to the centre of this village, consisting of various streets and old houses, which conserve the traditional building methods.





The Route continues through the fields, very often surrounded by bushes and olive groves, in the **Municipality of Penela**. Turning on to Estrada Municipal (municipal road) 563 for a short distance, you will get to **Rabaçal**, a village and parish centre that was formed at the **crossing of ancient Roman roads**. The village's name is derived from the abundance of “rabaça”, a popular name given to a species of watercress that grows wild along the riverbanks. The day ends at the **Parish Church** (Rua da Igreja), an eighteenth-century building with a classical façade and side tower.

In this village pilgrims will find a welcoming community and all the necessary logistical support in terms of accommodation and food. Don't miss out on tasting the celebrated **Rabaçal cheese**, made from the milk of local herds of sheep and goats. To discover more about the history and local culture you can visit **the Space-Museum of the Roman Villa of Rabaçal**, a multi-site museum and interpretation centre for the Roman settlement of this region, which includes items from archaeological sites, such as a major agricultural estate (*a rustic villa*) from the fourth and fifth centuries AD.



Rabaçal



Ansião



Day

[14]*19,5km
± 5h30*

Day 14 | SETTLEMENTS OF THE SICÓ MOUNTAINS

Rabaçal ➔ Ansião

The fourteenth day of the Route **begins in the village of Rabaçal**, at the Main Church (Rua da Igreja), and **ends in the town of Ansião**, at the Parish Church (Rua Conselheiro António José da Silva). It is 19.5 km long and can be completed in around **5hrs 30 mins**. This part of the Route covers a diverse landscape, with altitudes of up to 300m, whereby it may be classified as a **difficult stage**. It is well suited to a **calm pace**, and makes its way through an area imbued with the deep relationship between nature and life. It is ideal for contemplation, in the true sense of spirituality.

The Route passes through the Municipalities of Penela and Ansião and along the extensive Rabaçal Valley. You will see villages that are typical of the **Sicó Mountains**, immersed in the **sublime karst landscape**. Here nature moulds its own history. The scenery is marked by the immensity of the natural spaces, from which emerge **small villages** with fields used for dryland **farming** and expanses of **pasture land** for the traditional herds of sheep and goats.

In this context, the **Natural Heritage** is shaped by the conditions and morphology of the landscape. There are traditional plantations of **vines and olive trees** in the flat valley zones, while the mountains are defined by their characteristic **rock formations**. The **Cultural Heritage** is noteworthy for the antiquity and value of the region's **archaeological sites and historic urban centres**, as well as various ethnographic features. Also of relevance is the **Immaterial Heritage**, associated with the region's **gastronomic culture**, and in particular the wine, confectionery and famous Rabaçal cheese, which is still made according to ancestral and traditional methods.

The Route leaves from Rabaçal and makes its way amidst fields and woods, and for parts of the way along tracks. You can see in the distance, perched high up, the **Castle of Germanelo**. It is located on the site of an ancient fort developed by the Romans, and it was Portugal's

first king, Afonso Henriques, who in 1139 ordered that it should be built to strengthen the Mondego line of defences during the Christian reconquista.

Soon after, in the **Municipality of Ansião**, you pass by **Ribeira de Alcalamouque**, a small village with a traditional chapel with a porch built into its façade. The village's name is derived from an Arabic word meaning castle. From here on the route is always surrounded by nature and offers panoramic vistas across all the surrounding area.

Stop in **Alvorge**, a village on a small hill with traditional domestic architecture, which in the Middle Ages was a Vicariate of the University of Coimbra. A number of historical monuments demonstrate the antiquity of this village, such as the **Main Church**, dedicated to Our Lady of the Conception (a seventeenth-century building with a baroque, carved high altar), the **Misericórdia** building (with its side chapel), and a traditional stone **Cross**.

This village is **in the heart of the Sicó Mountains**, in a medium and low altitude area, where the plant life consists predominantly of Mediterranean species. Walking through this landscape, which is rich in **the colours and aromas of nature**, you find small settlements, nestling



upon the rolling hills and on the sheltered slopes, whose names are associated with ancestral rural tradition. On the outskirts of the villages or along the outlying roads there are **traditional chapels**, many of which have porches for pilgrims to rest in, offering both cool respite from the sun and shelter from rain and wind.

After **Junqueira**, you will come to **Casais da Granja** with its Chapel of St. Anthony. In **Netos**, you will pass by the Chapel of St. Joseph. Near **Areosa**, just a few metres off the Route, in Constantina, you can see the **Chapel of Our Lady of Peace**, a small, seventeenth-century Marian church, which is noteworthy for its large porch that forms part of the façade, as well as the interior decoration with its baroque carved altars and the ceiling paintings in the chancel.

As you draw closer to **Ansião**, and having passed the **Chapel of St. Peter**, cross the **River Nabão** over the historic **Cal Bridge** (built in the seventeenth century). In 1669, **Cosimo III de' Medici**, Grand Duke of Tuscany, travelled this way when he visited Portugal, as is recounted by his chronicler Lorenzo Magalotti in the official account of his journey, and in two drawings by the Florentine painter Pier Maria Baldi (one of Ansião and the other of Fonte Coberta), which are preserved in the Historical Archive of the Laurentian Library in Florence.

The day ends in the town centre at the **Main Church** of Our Lady of the Conception, a building with a simple façade and side tower, while inside there are three naves adorned with baroque decorative elements. Close by you can see the **Chapel of Mercy** with a magnificent baroque portal and a seventeenth-century **Pillory**. Take a moment to sample the local cuisine, which is famous for its traditional confectionery.

Ansião

Day

[15]13,5km
± 3h00

Bofinho



Day 15 | IN THE SHADE OF THE OAK GROVES

Ansião ➡ Bofinho

The fifteenth day of the Route **begins in Ansião**, at the Parish Church (Rua da Igreja), and **ends in the village of Bofinho** (parish of Pelmá), at the Chapel of Saint Anthony (at the junction of Rua da Fonte and Rua da Capela). It is a **short day of walking** covering 13.5 km, which can be completed in 3 hrs. It consists of a combination of local roads and footpaths. It covers a varied terrain with a maximum altitude of 350m, and it is a **medium level of difficulty**.



It crosses the Municipalities of Ansião and Alvaiázere as it makes its way through the **Alvaiázere Mountains**, which is the highest part of the Sicó Karstic Massif. The landscape is characteristic of limestone regions, with subterranean water courses, small hills with panoramic views, slopes sheltered from the wind and lowland plains. The predominant features of this scenery are farmhouses and manor houses, **centuries-old rural settlements** and small villages. The **natural environment is vibrant**, both for its beauty and wealth of fauna and flora.

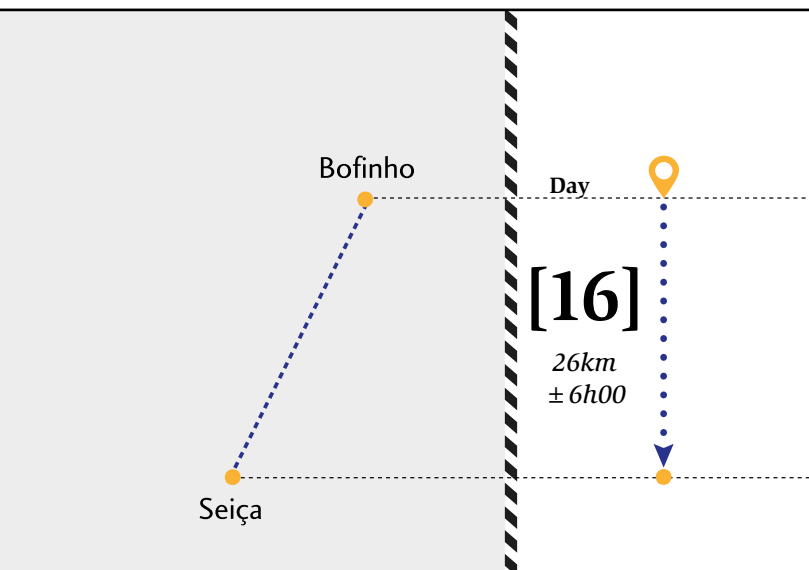
Over the course of the day you can enjoy the natural features to the full and discover the points of interest in each place you visit, both observing and feeling the vitality all around you. Be attentive to the **diversity of the landscape**. At the outset, don't fail to stop at **Nature Reserve**, which conserves the largest Iberian expanse of *Quercus faginea* (better known as Portuguese oak) and where protected species of **wild orchid** flourish. At the end of the walk pause as you cross the **River Nabão**, another significant feature of the natural heritage.



In this region, the **cultural heritage** is also deeply connected with nature and it underscores the relationship between religiosity, history and life. The walker will pass by **churches, small chapels and traditional buildings**. You can sample the specialities of the local **cuisine**, for which olive oil and wild herbs are essential. You will be able to discover the life of communities and the land they live off; they both preserve and value the past and thereby forge the future.

Having left the urban area of Ansião, the Route passes through a mountainous and densely wooded zone. In **Casal Soeiro**, at the base of the mountain range, you will discover the small village of Serra de Alvaíázere. Continue along a series of tracks, and pass through **Venda do Negro**. Continue through the large **Inter-municipal Nature Reserve** of Algarinho – Gramantina – Ariques, which is an area of landscape that includes the largest Iberian expanse of *Quercus fraginea*, or Portuguese Oak. Here, amidst this striking natural landscape, you will pass the small **Chapel of Santiago de Ariques**, from there continue on through the **Couda Valley**.

The day ends in the Parish of Pelmá, in **Bofinho**, at the **Chapel of Saint Anthony** (Rua de Capela). Here you can muster your strength enjoying the genuine ambience of this village surrounded by the Sicó Mountains.



Day 16 | TRADITION AND BIODIVERSITY

Bofinho ➡ Seíça

The sixteenth day of the Route **begins in the village of Bofinho** (parish of Pelmá), at the Chapel of Saint Anthony (at the junction of Rua da Fonte and Rua da Capela) and **ends in Seíça**, at the Main Church (Rua da Igreja). It covers 26 km, which can be completed in around 6 hrs, and consists of a combination of local roads and footpaths. It makes its way through a hilly terrain with climbs of around 200 m, and is a **medium level of difficulty**.

It crossed the Municipalities of Alvaiázere and Ourém and makes its way through a **zone of geographical transition** between the Sicó Mountains Massif and the Estremadura Limestone Massif of the Aire and Candeeiros Mountain Ranges. Diverse forms of agriculture are undertaken on this regions' s gentle slopes, upland plains and irrigated valleys. At the outset of this day's walk we continue close to the **River Nabão**. Within a landscape setting in which the **biodiversity** is wholly apparent, ancient **olive groves** and **centuries-old vines** abound. Over the course of the day, the Route passes through **small, rural villages**, as well as a **number of towns**, noteworthy for their urban nature.

The **Cultural Heritage** is rich and multifaceted. It is imbued with vitality and a **respect for tradition**. The pilgrim-walker can discover **churches and chapels** of striking historical and artistic value, as well as rural **houses, estates** and **presses**, in addition to more humble constructions such as picturesque **fountains** and troughs, historic **windmills** on the hills and small **watermills** along the rivers. You can also sample the **delicious local produce**, such as the maize bread and goat cheese.

Make your way out of **Bofinho along a track** and immerse yourself in nature as you head towards **Olho do Tordo**. The place name refers to the site where the ground water flowing out of the limestone soil forms a fast-flowing river. Along the banks of the river you can find old watermills.

Continue on, surrounded on all sides by **oak and olive trees**, in a setting wholly characteristic of the karstic massif; the **karst pavements** (limestone rock formations) are worthy of note. Thanks to the **biodiversity** of this area the flora is characterised by abundant native species, such as **wild orchids** and **aromatic herbs** (rosemary, thyme, jerusalem sage and broom). There is also a great variety of **fauna** with a wide range of animals, and in particular, birds (thrushes and red-legged partridge), rabbits, hares, boar, foxes and the renowned Schreibers' bent-winged bats that live in rock cavities.

As you draw closer to the **villages in the floodplains**, supplied with abundant water, along the left bank of the River Nabão, you will see 'courelas' (small plots of land) used for traditional agriculture (maize, wheat, potatoes, vegetables). They are especially visible on the outskirts of the village of **Pelmá**.





Cross the **River Nabão** and head into **Freixianda**, in the Municipality of Ourém. The town stretches along the river's right bank, and it is a good place to take a break. The **Main Church** is dedicated to Our Lady of the Purification, and it has a tower in the centre of its façade and inside three naves. In front of the church there is a stone cross. Having crossed the town centre, you come to **Aventeira**, and will pass by the **Chapel of St. Peter**.

Having left Casal do Pinheiro, you once more enter an area of verdant woods, and with nature on all sides continue until you reach **Rio de Couros**, a parish that

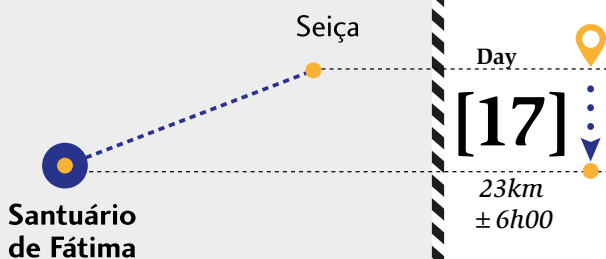
dates back to the eighteenth-century. As you enter the village you will see the **Main Church**, which is an interesting modern building (1964-1967).

The Route continues through fields, skirting the small villages and houses scattered across the parish of Caxarias.

Soon you will reach **Seiça**, where at the **Main Church** (Rua de Igreja) the day's walking ends. The church is dedicated to Our Lady of the Purification and its historic architecture was renovated in the seventeenth century. It has a simple façade with a side bell tower and inside it has a single nave with a chancel where the oldest works of art are conserved; of particular interest is the fourteenth-century wooden sculpture of the Virgin suckling the Christ Child (Madonna Lactans).

This parish created in 1517 provides the necessary logistical support for pilgrims. Flowing through the village is the **Seiça stream**, which runs into the River Nabão. In this river there is a rare species of Brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*). If you wish to find out about the local history, visit the **House-Museum of Seiça**, a local ethnographic museum.





Day 17 | EVOKING OUREANA

Seiça ➤ Sanctuary of Fátima

The seventeenth day of the Route **begins in Seiça**, at the Main Church (Rua da Igreja) and **ends in the Sanctuary of Fátima**, at the Chapel of the Apparitions. It covers 23 km, which can be completed in around 6 hrs. It consists of a **combination** of footpaths, local and municipal roads and short stretches of main road. The landscape is highly varied. It passes through predominantly flat areas, but has some steep sections, with a maximum altitude of 350 m. Therefore, this final day is **difficult**, above all as it demands physical effort, and in addition careful attention when passing through densely populated urban areas (such as the city of Ourém and on reaching Cova da Iria at the outskirts of the Sanctuary) in order to ensure one's personal safety.

This part of the Route makes its way through the Municipality of Ourém in Portugal's Central Region and covers the **mountainous, arid and beautiful terrain of the Aire Mountain Range**. The climate and natural conditions are characteristic of a transitional zone between the Atlantic and Mediterranean environments. **Limestone mountains and rocky slopes** are the predominant features, amidst which you will see **small valleys and caves**. In many senses this is the landscape and habitat that the young shepherds of Fátima knew and lived in. The geological formations and fossils evoke the passing of millions of years, and in this region **nature and life are indissociable**. In addition to the overarching **rural** impression, there are **urban centres** that have developed in order to undertake administrative (Ourém) and religious (Fátima) roles.

The **Cultural Heritage** is rich and varied. A **castle** with its fortifications, as well as **churches, museums** and other monuments are as important as the **historical sites** that evoke the figures and events of the past, above all those related with the apparitions that took place at Fátima. Furthermore, the **Immaterial Heritage** underscores the values associated with the **relationship between cultures, peoples and religions**, which since times long past history has recorded, and tradition conserved and kept alive. The **legend of Oureana** takes us

back to the coexistence and **familiarity between Christians and Muslims** during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as this was a region of **Mozarabic culture**. It is a story of the love between Gonçalo Hermingues, a templar knight and Christian poet, and Fátima, a beautiful Muslim and daughter of the Emir, and how following their marriage she took the Christian name of Oureana. Beyond the historical events and the legend's subsequent development, they are names rooted in the local places names of Ourém and Fátima.

During this final day, the Route makes its way exclusively through the **Municipality of Ourém**, where Geography and History recall bygone eras. Having left Seiça, follow the National Highway for about 1 km and from there take local roads through an area of woods. You will skirt the village of **Coroados**. Continue walking amidst this wooded landscape and make your way into **Vale Travessos**, next to the **Chapel of Our Lady of Livramento** (Largo de Nossa



Senhora do Livramento) and near **Quinta da Casa Velha** (Rua da Escola), a rural space dedicated to the local natural environment. Shortly after having crossed the IC9 by taking the bridge, take Rua das Achadas and then Rua da Fonte do Carriço, where there is a delightful rustic scenery.

As you make your way along Rua das Passadeiras, you steadily enter an urban area. This is the city of **Ourém**, whose name and tradition is associated with the legend of **Oureana**, and which evokes the Mozarabic culture of the Aire Mountain Range during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. The legend was transmitted by oral tradition until the sixteenth-century, when the monk Bernardo de Brito, Chronicler of the Cistercian Order set it down in writing.

Conquered from the Moors in 1136 with the help of the **Templars** and integrated into the Condado Portucalense (County of Portugal), **Ourém became a noble estate**, and was given by the first king of Portugal, Afonso Henriques, to his daughter Teresa, who became the Countess of Flanders and later the Countess of Burgundy. It was Teresa who granted the city its **charter in 1183**. In the fourteenth century, King Fernando I created the **County of Ourém**, which



included estates and properties. Nuno Álvares Pereira was the third Count of Ourém, and this connection to the **House of Bragança** is still maintained today.

The first settlement grew up on the hill site where the **medieval town area** is located today, with its **castle and palace** and the impressive **city walls** that protected the town's inhabitants. As you make your way through the city you can glimpse the **monumental complex** which is classified as a **national monument**, and if you are interested or keen to do so you can climb the hill and get to know one of the most impressive examples of historical and artistic heritage.

As the municipal centre responsible for the Sanctuary of Fátima, Ourém is profoundly linked to the memory of the shepherds of Fátima. At the entrance to the city, on your right, is the **Municipal Cemetery** (Rua de Nossa Senhora de Fátima), where since 2008 the **Jacinta Marto Memorial**, recalls the little shepherdess who was buried there prior to her tomb being transferred to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima at the Sanctuary.

Further along the Route, in the city centre, you will see the **Municipal Museum**, a multi-site museum, which includes the **Administrator's House**, a conserved period





room, where in 1917 the Council Administrator questioned the shepherds. Today it is an exhibition space devoted to the themes related to the experiences of the shepherds and the local historical context. Close by (Praça da República) you will find the **Main Church** or the historic Collegiate Church of Our Lady of Mercies, a monumental complex that includes the tomb of Dom Afonso, Marquis of Valença and 4th Count of Ourém, which is a renowned example of fifteenth-century tomb design.

As you leave the city the Route follows tracks and local roads, and makes its way through fields and villages. You can pause in **Zambujal**, where the Leisure Park offers the chance to muster strength for the uphill climbs to come. As you pass through villages such as **Vale da Perra** and **Alvejar**, you will note the traditional ambience and customs of this area of the Aire mountain range.

Having walked for some time through a setting completely surrounded by woods, you will come to the **Parish Church of Fátima** (Rua do Adro), **where the shepherds were baptised**. It is a church dedicated to Our Lady of

Pleasures, which in the sixteenth century separated from the Collegiate Church of Ourém and was transformed into the Parish Church. It is surrounded by a churchyard and a bell tower has been integrated into the centre of its façade. The chapel with the **baptismal font** is a historical site associated with the shepherds.

Continue on until **Aljustrel**, the historic village, **where the shepherds were born and lived**. Just a few metres off the Route is the **House of Francisco and Jacinta Marto** (Rua dos Pastorinhos), where the visionary brother and sister lived with their family. Today it is a museum space devoted to ethnographic displays. Also in this village, but further away are two sites associated with the apparitions (Loca do Cabeço and Valinhos).

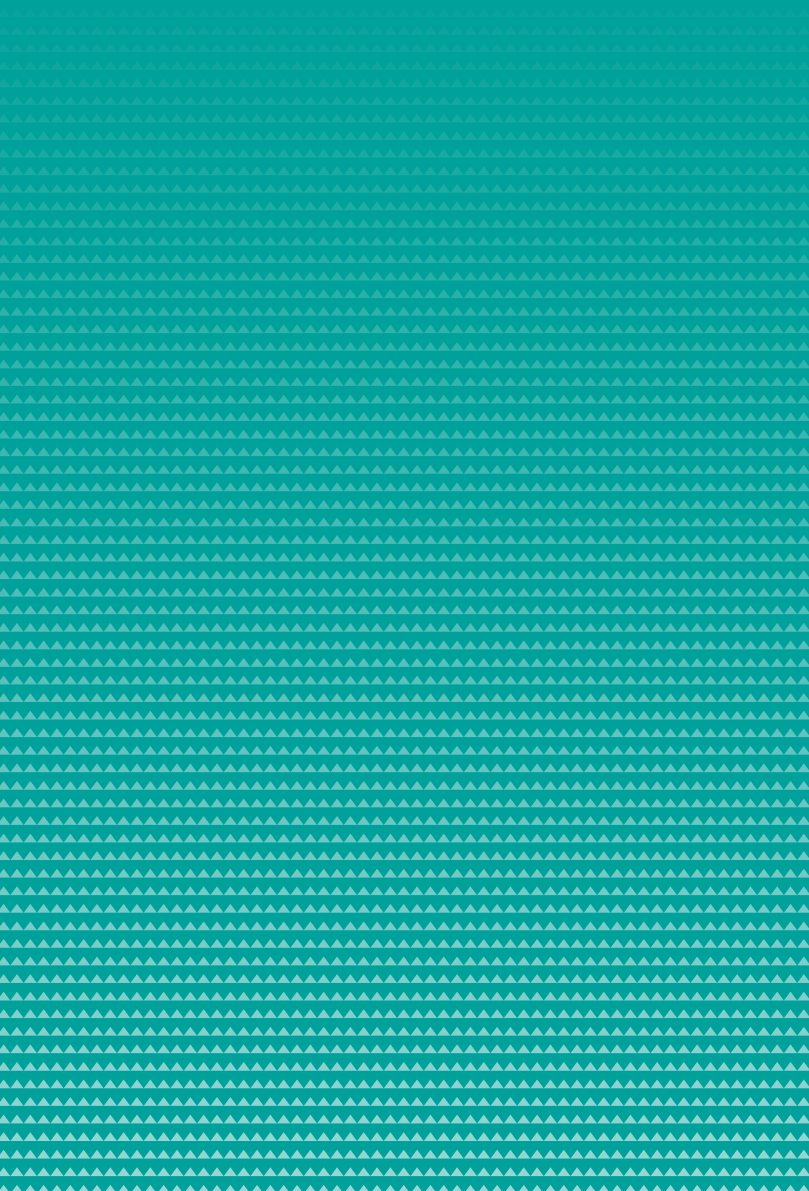
Following the national highway EN317, you approach the **outskirts of the Sanctuary**. Having passed the Roundabout with its **monument to the three shepherds**, continue along the same road, through what is now a pedestrian area.

On arriving at the Basilica of the Holy Trinity, turn right and enter the **Sanctuary of Fátima** and then make your way to the **Chapel of the Apparitions**, where all Routes to Fátima end.



➔ 39°37'53" N 8°40'23" W

The Sanctuary of Fátima





PILGRIMAGE SITE AND ART SPACE

The walking paths and itineraries lead us to **Fátima** in a true spirit of pilgrimage. On arrival at the **Sanctuary**, we encounter an emblematic site where religion and art are intertwined.

The Sanctuary stands on the site of **Cova da Iria**, the location where the Virgin appeared to the three shepherd children in 1917. Around this remote territory populated by olive trees and holm oaks, the sanctuary was erected and the city of Fátima grew, a city whose history is inseparable from the apparitions and the construction of the sanctuary.

HOLM OAK

Located in a limestone massif, Cova da Iria has a wetter climate than the surrounding arid mountain range. These characteristics have allowed Fátima to develop a magnificent natural ambience of trees and plants, a green lung in which the Holm Oaks stand out.

These highly resistant trees adapt to the characteristically rugged landscape of the São Mamede plateau, which is notable for its series of geological depressions. The characteristics of the soil and climate have contributed to the scientific importance of these ancient trees that shape the surrounding landscape, in which they are deeply rooted. With sturdy trunks and broad canopies that pass through a wide spectrum of colours throughout the year, these trees provide a source of endless aesthetic fascination to the region.

It was in this wild and beautiful natural environment that the Virgin appeared to the three young shepherds (Jacinta, Francisco and Lúcia) in one of the holm oaks, in 1917. Preserved from this antique landscape in the area around the sanctuary is a large holm oak, currently located next to the small chapel erected on the site of the apparitions.

A meeting place for pilgrims and visitors and a place of faith, the sanctuary is also a space dedicated to artistic expression.

The **Sanctuary** consists of a series of monumental structures, including the **Chapel of the Apparitions** (built in 1919), the **Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary** and the **Church of the Holy Trinity**.

The **Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima** and the **Church of the Holy Trinity** reflect mutually distinct architectural and aesthetic orientations. Their spatial organisation facing each other across a large plaza creates an enormous space for prayer, where millions of pilgrims gather. Another setting dedicated to prayer and important religious ceremonies, the **Chapel of the Apparitions** stands in a location visible to all assembled pilgrims and is protected by a large covered gallery.



THE CHAPEL OF THE APPARITIONS is the central sacred and congregational space of the Sanctuary of Fátima.

Built in 1919 at the behest of the Virgin Mary in one of her apparitions to the three children, the first Mass was celebrated here in 1921. On 6 March of the following year, it was destroyed by a bomb and then immediately rebuilt. The chapel is a simple building, visually and architecturally designed for the congregation of the faithful and pilgrims around a space of prayer and to provide a visual focus on the site of the apparitions.

In the centre of the chapel, the Virgin of Fátima stands on the site of the holm oak of the apparitions, which was removed branch by branch by believers.

Since the 1980s, the architectural interventions have incorporated a porch structure which protects the chapel and all those who gather there for private and public ceremonies of prayer and faith.

Exquisite **art and architecture** combine to create an atmosphere of sophistication throughout the Sanctuary. Responding to the unique requirements of space, climate and materials, the various artworks serve in particular to reflect and enhance the site's prevailing spiritual ambience.

Designed by Gerardus Samuel van Krieken (1864-1933), the first stone of the **Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary** was laid on 13 May 1928. Its consecration took place on 7 October 1953. The façade of the Basilica is preceded by an imposing staircase that extends in a colonnade, designed by architect António Lino (1909-1961). In their structural form, the Basilica and colonnade merge together to form the ample prayer space, creating an amphitheatre open to the world and for the spiritual advancement and participation of the faithful.

The sculptural elements of the colonnade (executed from 1953 onwards) are the creative expressions of various sculptors, including Álvaro de Brée (1903-1962), António Duarte (1912-1998), Leopoldo de Almeida (1898-1975), Salvador Barata Foyo (1899-1990), Domingos Soares Branco



(1925-2013), Maria Amélia Carvalheira (1904-1998), Sousa Caldas (1894-1965), Vasco Pereira da Conceição (1914-1992), Irene Vilar (1930-2008), José Manuel Mouta Barradas (1960) and Vítor Godinho Marques (1964). The sculpture representing the **Immaculate Heart of Mary** was placed in the centre of the basilica's façade on 13 May 1958 and is a work by the sculptor and Dominican monk Thomas MacGlynn (1906-1977).

The works of art inside the temple are equally representative. The statue of São Domingos de Gusmão is the work of Maria Amélia Carvalheira (1904-1998). Those of St. António Maria Claret and St. John Eudes are the work of Martinho Felix de Brito, while the statue of St. Stephen of Hungary is by António Amaral Paiva. The representation of the shepherds is the work of two contemporary sculptors: José Rodrigues created the representation of St. Francisco Marto and Clara Menéres that of St. Jacinta Marto.



Works notable for their emotional spontaneity and for the coherence of their formal language, the 14 golden bronzes of the **Mysteries of the Rosary** are also the work of Martinho de Brito.

The works of high relief on the vault of the main chapel are by Maximiano Alves (1888-1954), while the stained-glass windows on the lateral altars were developed by João de Sousa Araújo (n. 1929) and present the litany of Our Lady. The 15 mosaic panels are the work of Fred Pittino (1906-1991).

Within the **Sanctuary's** enclosure stands the **Nativity scene**, originally presented in the exterior space in 1999 by the sculptor José Aurélio (1938). The piece is notable for its modern design, charged with symbolism and iconographic references. In the form of a 5-metre-high elongated triangle in stainless steel, it presents an angel with raised wings welcoming and heralding the birth of Jesus.





Inaugurated on 12 October 2007, the **Church of the Holy Trinity** opened a new dialogue of convergence and community, inviting meditation, prayer and communion. Designed by Greek architect Alexandros Tombazis (b. 1939), the church incorporates national and international artistic elements in a considered blending of art and architecture.

The artworks in the new temple were commissioned from a diverse range of renowned contemporary artists. Álvaro Siza-Vieira (b. 1933) painted the tiled panel dedicated to the Apostles Peter and Paul and located on the lower floor of the Church. Pedro Calapez (b. 1953) created





the main portico, while Francisco Providência (b. 1961) is responsible for the names of the Apostles to which the side doors of the temple are dedicated. The Canadian artist Joe Kelly designed the front wall of serigraphed glass in countless languages, while Slovenian artist Ivan Rupnik produced the gold leaf mosaic which adorns the wall of the Presbytery, the New Jerusalem of the *Apocalypse of St. John*. Irish artist Catherine Green conceived the great bronze crucifix suspended over the altar, while Italian artist Benedetto Pietrogrande carved the image of Our Lady in Carrara marble for the Presbytery. Outside, the Cross over the Sanctuary of Fátima was produced by German artist Robert Schad, while the monumental statue of Pope John Paul II is the work of Polish artist Czesław Dżwigaj.



PUBLISHED BY
Centro Nacional de Cultura

PRODUCTION
Centro Nacional de Cultura

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211, 212, 214, 216, 221, 224/225, 226, 228/229]

GRAPHIC DESIGN
José Brandão | Susana Brito [B2 DESIGN]

TRANSLATION
Kennis Translations

PRINTING
Multitipo-Artes Gráficas Lda

CENTRO NACIONAL DE CULTURA CNC ©2023

LEGAL DEPOSIT
459 606/19

ISBN
978-972-8945-10-7

DECEMBER 2023

SUPPORT

Financiado por
TURISMO DE
PORTUGAL 

INFORMATION

CENTRO NACIONAL DE CULTURA

cnc.pt

caminhosdefatima.org

TURISMO DE PORTUGAL

visitportugal.com

pathsoffaith.com

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EMERGENCY NUMBER

112

BACK COVER

Caminho da Manhã

SOPHIA DE MELLO BREYNER ANDRESEN

Poet

english version

in Sophia de Mello Breyner Log Book: Selected Poems,
Translated by Richard Zenith, Manchester, 1997: Carcanet



You take the yellowish dirt road which has almost no shade.
The cicadas will sing the bronze silence. At your right
a whitewashed wall will follow for a time the curve of the
road. (...) And so you'll keep going, feeling the Sun's heavy
hand on your shoulders but led on by a fresh and weightless
light. (...)

SOPHIA DE MELLO BREYNER ANDRESEN, (Poet), *Morning Walk*, 1962