

Condeixa-a-Nova



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



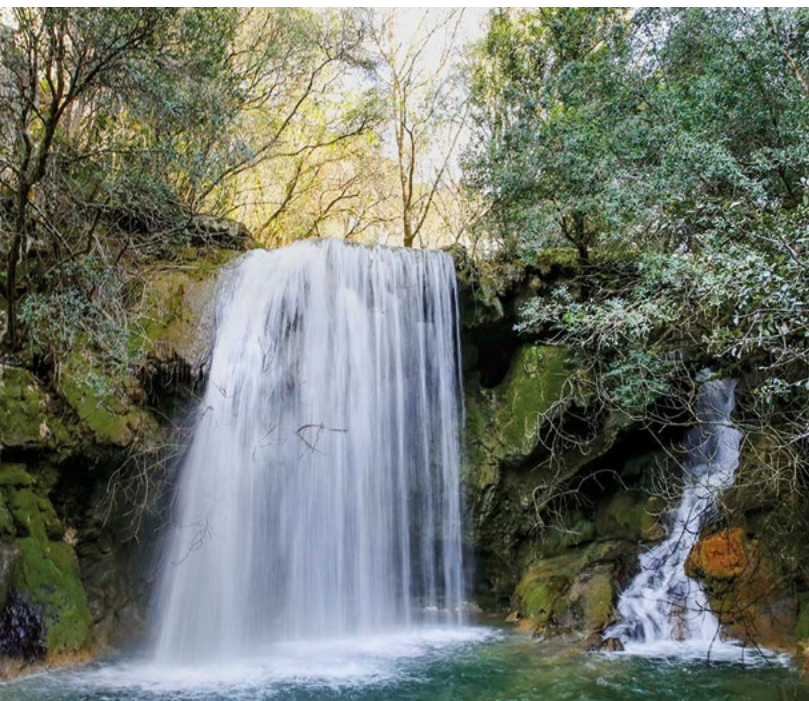
Here the highlight is the archaeological site of the **Roman ruins of Conímbriga**, which is the remains of a Roman city; once an ancient romanised fort, located along the principal road linking Olisipo (Lisbon) and Bracara Augusta (Braga) it was transformed into one of the most important Roman cities 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 **Zam-bujal**, 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.

