

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

