

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.