



Velada Hydroelectric Plant



> **Highlights**

NATURE: along the Tagus River, you can fish for barbel, boce, carp, black bass, eel, dace and perch. The avifauna here consists of species such as the grey heron, the black stork, the red kite, the osprey, the black vulture, the eagle owl, the cormorant and the griffon vulture. The landscape is dominated by cork oak, holm oak, olive, maritime pine, eucalyptus, alder, white and black poplar, as well as by the rockrose, broom, lavender, juniper, the strawberry tree, heather and rosemary. The banks of Tagus abound with reeds, white and common willows, poplar and ash.

HERITAGE: Velada Hydroelectric Plant.

HANDICRAFT: stoned pottery; embroidery and stitched from Nisa; bobbin lace; tatting; felt appliqué and pulled thread hems.

GASTRONOMY: *cachola* rice from Alpalhão; *febras da mata*; *sarapatel* soup; *afogado* soup; potato crumbs; *papa ratos*; *maranhos*; *pezinhos* with tomato sauce; *feijões das festas*; lamprey rice; river fish soup. Sweets (*cavacas*, *dormidos cakes*, *esquecidos*, *nisas*, *barquinhos*). *Mestiço* cheese from Tolosa (Protected Geographical Indication); Nisa cheese (Protected Origin Designation); sausages from Alpalhão.

> **Recommended season**

This walking path can be done throughout the year. Nevertheless, users must be aware of high temperatures during summer time and some slippery points during winter and rainy days.

> **Trail signage**

® FCMP

right way



wrong way



turn left



turn right



> **Place of Interest**

VELADA HYDROELECTRIC PLANT

The Velada Hydroelectric Plant began operating in 1935 and was built by the Hydroelectric of Alto Alentejo, the company responsible for six other units: Póvoa and Meadas, Bruceira and Foz (located on the Nisa River), Cabeço Monteiro (Ponsul River), Pracana (Ocreza River) and Belver (Tagus river). At present, the Velada Hydroelectric Plant is part of the Hidrotejo - Hydroelectric of Tagus, belonging to the EDP Group, which comprises the units of Belver, Póvoa and Meadas, Bruceira and Caldeirão (Almonda River).

> **Walking code**

Follow sign-posted trails only. / Respect private property. / Avoid making unnecessary noise. / Do not disturb the animals. / Do not collect or damage plants or rocks. / Do not litter and leave no trace of your visit. / Do not light fire and do not throw cigarettes on the ground. / Be kind to local people. / Beware of cattle. Although gentle, they do not like strangers approaching their young. / Leave the gates as you found them. If they are closed, be sure they remain well shut.

> **Useful contacts**

- Town Hall of Nisa: +351 - 245 410 000
- Nisa Tourist Office: +351 - 245 410 000 - extension 353
- SOS Emergency: 112
- SOS Forest: 117
- Medical Center: +351 - 245 410 160
- Anti-Poisoning Information: +351 - 217 950 143
- GNR (Republican National Guard): +351 - 245 410 116
- Fire Department: +351 - 245 412 303
- Village Hall of São Matias: +351 - 245 469 226

Promotor:



Walking path registered and approved by:



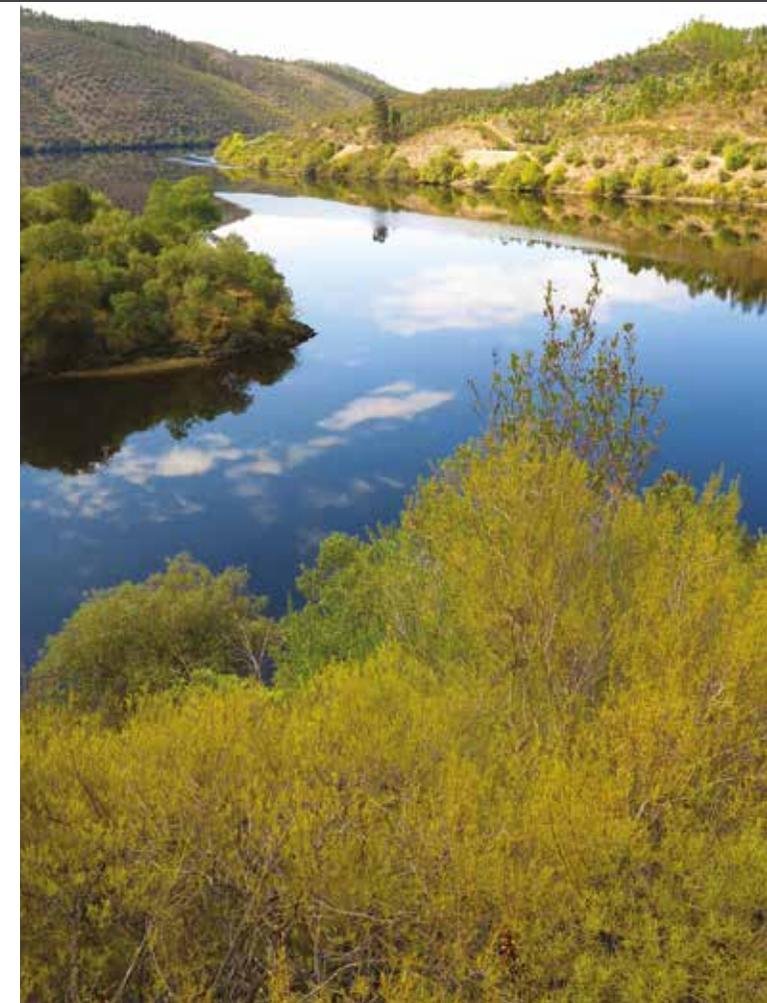
Partner institution:



Co-financing:



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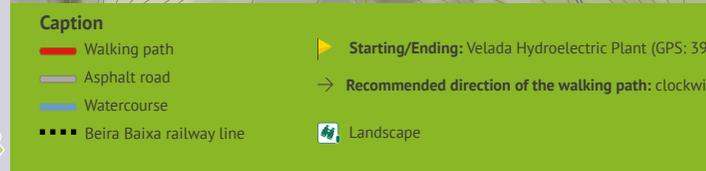
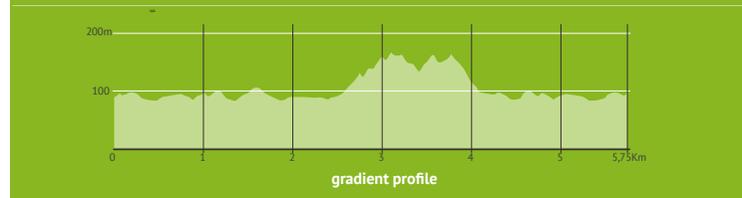


> Walking path description



Fishing vessels of the Tagus River.

The walking path begins at the Velada Hydroelectric Plant. The first metres follow along the Nisa River, until the path passes next to a watermill. Ahead, cross the pontoon of the dam and follow the dirt trail that goes along the right bank of the river towards the mouth of the Tagus. As the pathway meanders through the terrain where rockroses abound, you find olive trees in terraces, once an important source of income. With the eucalyptus forest getting denser, the most demanding point in the path occurs in the climb to the top of the hill, where there is an excellent lookout over the Nisa River and the Tagus River. In front, the line of Beira Baixa marks the landscape at a prime location for birdwatching. After a few metres, there is a descent through eucalyptus and rockroses, culminating at the pontoon linking the two banks of the Nisa River, waters that invite us to take a break to eat lunch or to fish. The path ends at the Velada Hydroelectric Plant where you can quench your thirst from a fountain with excellent fresh water.



> Places of Interest

- 1 Velada Hydroelectric Plant
- 2 Dam / Watermill
- 3 Electric Central from the river mouth / pontoon of the dam
- 4 Mouth of Nisa River



There are 116.114ha of great diversity of habitats, some of them priorities. The geomorphology and microclimate favour the southern limit of distribution for many species and plant communities of more Atlantic preferences, as occurs on the northern and western slopes, where the presence of the Pyrenean oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*) stands out. The regions facing the east, further south, have more Mediterranean influence and hence are the domain of the cork oak and holm oak. This Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has important watercourses related to the conservation of the saramugo (*Anaocypris hispanica*) and the rare and threatened river-mussel (*Unio crassus*). Here also is the most important cave in the country and one of the most important in Europe that serves as a shelter for breeding and hibernation of colonies of several species of bats.