



Montado of cork oak

> Place of Interest

CORK OAK FOREST

The cork oak (*Quercus suber*) is designated as the national tree. We are in a region where the soil and the climate favour their growth and development. So here we find a dense forest of adult cork oaks, some of a remarkable size, whose trunks and foliage appear like columns and arches of an imaginary "green cathedral", with the canopy forming a cover that protects us from the sun and rain. The numbers painted on the trunks indicate the digits of units of the year in which the cork was removed the last time.

PR1
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WALKING PATH OF ESPERANÇA



> Highlights

NATURE: the magnificent *montados* of this path provide refuge for several species of bats - Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*) and Geoffrey's bat (*Myotis emarginatus*) - as well as for the cerambyx longicorn (*Cerambyx cerdo*). Birds: nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*), blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), short-toed eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) and common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*).

HANDICRAFT: oxcarts and agricultural equipment miniatures; wickerwork (baskets).

GASTRONOMY: *presinhas* from the bowl; gazpacho rich and poor; traditional sausages; lamb stew; *coscorões* (a Christmas sweet).

> Recommended season

This walking path can be done throughout the year. Nevertheless, users must be aware of high temperatures during summer time.

> Trail signage

®FCMP

right way



wrong way



turn left



turn right



> 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 Arronches: +351 245 580 080

Municipal Tourist Office: +351 245 580 085

SOS Emergency: 112

SOS Forest: 117

Medical Center: +351 245 589 100

Anti-Poisoning Information: +351 217 950 143

GNR (Republican National Guard): +351 245 580 020

Fire Department: +351 245 583 274

Village Hall of Esperança: +351 245 561 118

Promotor:



Walking path registered and approved by:



Partner institution:



Co-financing:



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> Walking path description



Rock paintings of Lapa dos Gaivões. Paintings on red, orange and black, about 5000 years old, decorate the natural shelter of Lapa dos Gaivões, classified as a National Monument.

The houses are white in Esperança - with only one floor and large chimneys - decorated with stripes, either blue, or ochre, such as in the Church of N. Sr.ª da Esperança, near where the path begins. Up to Hortas de Cima the path has an asphalt surface and, from there, we keep going along steeper roads. In fact, the whole path is set in a transition zone between the gently rolling plain and the rugged ups and downs that extend to the areas of rugged cliffs of the Serra de São Mamede. At Marco we realize that the international border follows the flow of water of the Abrilongo Stream. It takes only three steps and we are in Spain.

The journey continues and penetrates an area where the largest oak trees in the whole region seem to have been assembled in order to form a green cathedral. We resume the path, going down to flatter land, reaching then Hortas de Baixo. We cross the road and go up to the Lapa dos Gaivões, where 5000 years ago, Man left his art or his beliefs painted on the walls of quartzite. The vineyards now appear, taking advantage of the shelter provided by the mountain and the exposure of its slopes. At modern wineries, mature wines are born, carrying the flavours of this path in their bottles.



type of path

15.2 Km

distance

5.30^H

time



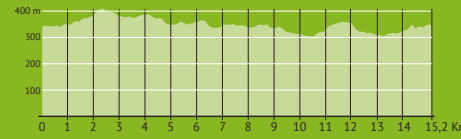
altitude variation



grading



altitude max/min



gradient profile



The difficulty level is determined according to 4 different factors, each of which is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5 (from easiest to most difficult)

difficulty level



Monte da Esperança - Cellar and Rural Tourism



Typical dwelling in Hortas de Baixo



1:25000 Military Map nº 373 (Army Map Service)

Caption

- Walking path
- Asphalt road
- Watercourse

▶ Starting / Ending: Esperança's Church Square (GPS: 39°09'26, 68°N; 7°11'33, 59°W)

→ Recommended direction of the walking path: clockwise

Restaurant Accommodation Pharmacy Information on site

Monte da Esperança - Cellar and Rural Tourism Casa do Marco - Accommodation

> Places of Interest

- 1 Typical habitation of Esperança
- 2 Interpretation Centre of Local Identity
- 3 Former frontier post
- 4 Marco's frontier
- 5 Cork oak forest
- 6 Typical dwelling in Hortas de Baixo
- 7 Rock Paintings of Vale de Junco
- 8 Vale de Junco Cellar
- IT Interpretative table



Serra de São Mamede Nature Park

The Serra de São Mamede, which gives name to this Nature Park, is the largest mountainous formation south of the Tagus River. Due to its geographical location and the fact that it rises above 1000m, it has distinctive microclimate aspects that have allowed the establishment and survival of some animal and vegetal communities that occur here in an almost isolated manner. The Bonelli's eagle is represented in the symbol of this Protected Area. It is currently one of the rarest birds of prey found in our country.

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