

# ROUTE INTERPRETATION

#### **ROUTES**

GREEN ROUTE (medium / easy dificulty level)

YELLOW ROUTE (medium / hard dificulty level)

RED ROUTE (very hard dificulty level)

GREEN ROUTE START POINT

GREEN ROUTE DIRECTION

YELLOW ROUTE START POINT

> YELLOW ROUTE DIRECTION

RED ROUTE START POINT

RED ROUTE DIRECTION

#### MONUMENTS

MONUMENTS / MUSEUMS

HISTORICAL VILLAGES

SCHIST VILLAGES

### NATURAL LANDSCAPE

NATURAL PARK / LANDSCAPE

RIVER / DAM / THERMAL BATHS

### **SERVICES**

**BIKE SHOP** 

TRAIN

RESTAURANTS

BUS

LODGING

ATM

### CLASSIFICATION

Technical dificulty

Phisical dificulty

Asphalt quality ASPHALT ...

TECHNICAL ...

PHISICAL





Digital routes with the Komoot app. Automatic route loading. Available for ANDROID and IOS





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# **BEIRA BAIXA**

Located in the centre of Portugal on the Spanish border, the Beira Baixa Intermunicipal Community is home to a vast diversity of both physical and intangible elements that give it, on the one hand, a strong collective identity, and on the other, a unique diversity, scattered amongst the municipalities in the province: Castelo Branco, Idanha-a-Nova, Oleiros, Penamacor, Proença-a-Nova and Vila Velha de Ródão.

Criss-crossed by rivers – the Tagus, the Zêzere, the Ocreza, the Erges and the Ponsul – and nestled between mountain ranges - Gardunha, Malcata, Muradal e Talhadas - Beira Baixa captivates anyone who might visit the region through the way in which the traditions that sustain it, both culturally and economically, come together to form a lifestyle that is geared towards the future.

Between schist and granite, geographical contrasts shape the natural landscape and the way its people have constructed housing and religious and cultural buildings. From houses built into the rock to terraced slopes, windmills and water mills, countless chapels and churches erected thanks to animal power and human ingenuity, several layers of human presence are visible in Beira Baixa, stretching back to prehistoric times.

These lands have been occupied since the Paleolithic period by Celts, Visigoths, Lusitanians, Romans, Moors, Crusaders, Templars, Liberals and Michaelites, the French and Republicans, right up to nowadays and the European Union

Here, history can be found in the villages, where the food reveals ancient knowledge that deserves to be savoured.

As well as the soil, the climate has also influenced the economic activities the populations have developed over time, especially those related to the land and animals. Visitors haven't discovered the real Beira Baixa until they have tasted its cheese, olive oil, sausages and honey, which taste even better if sampled with traditional regional bread

**COMUNIDADE INTERMUNICIPAL DA BEIRA BAIXA** 

Praça Rainha D. Leonor, Edifício dos Emblemas, 1º Andar 6000-117 Castelo Branco

272 342 840 | geral@cimbb.pt | www.cimbb.pt

like olive oil bread or com bread and a glass of wine.

The ancestral uses and customs of the beirão people, which have been preserved over time but which have also always been tied to more innovative knowledge, is what leads to the production of unique agri-food products with a strong character and incomparable quality.

Come and discover this land of flavours and landscape of textures made up of cork oaks and holly oaks, olive trees and vines, oak and chestnut trees, pines and strawberry trees, through heather and rosemary, rock roses and juniper berries, and who knows, you might even spot a griffon vulture - one of the numerous species of birds that fly over the Beira Baixa - from a viewpoint or the battlements of a castle. Choose a route and go on a walk or bike ride, stopping off for a dip at a river beach to cool off. You also have the option of visiting a church or one of the many museums, going to a concert or relaxing in a spa.

Come and discover Beria Baixa in the very heart of the lberian Peninsula and live, feel and savour endless experiences.



#### A PARADISE FOR CYCLING

Thanks to its unique characteristics, the region is also considered ideal for cycling, both in terms of tourism and of sport. This is due to three essential factors: the terrain, the climate and the network of roads.

The varied landscape, from the smooth, harmonious curves of the border region to the harshness and beauty of the pine forests in the interior, provide visitors with a diversity of unique routes sure to give each type of rider exactly what they're looking for.

sports. And this is, of course, a decisive factor for those who love to cycle.

The practically empty network of roads is another essential factor. In fact, on numerous roads you'll find you can pedal for miles without coming across a single car, leaving you to enjoy and make the most of the beauty of the landscape and the silence that surrounds you.

The region also has a variety of large hotels you can choose from, especially when it comes to rural tourism, which is an excellent option if you want to get closer to the real customs. flavours and traditions of the Beira region.



HIGH WAY / SPEED WAY

..... NATIONAL ROADS





# **CASTELO BRANCO**

## embroidered with rock and nature

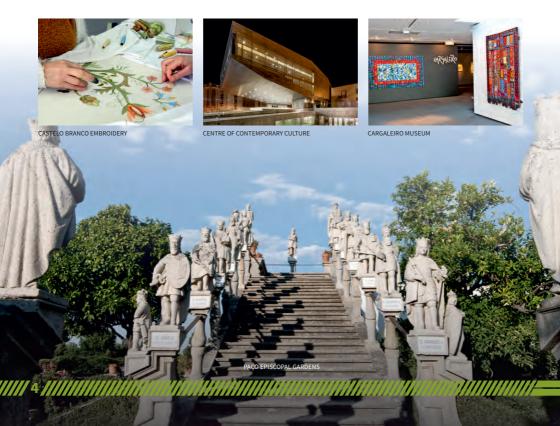
With a history that combines legends, myths and facts, Castelo Branco brings together contemporaneity, heritage and traditions. An example of this is how Embroidery has been taken on as a symbol of the city, and can be spotted everywhere, from pavements to the facades of buildings.

In addition to the Embroidery Interpretation Centre, the Cargaleiro Museum, the Centre for Contemporary Culture and the Jewish Remembrance House are also essential stops on a cultural tour through Castelo Branco.

## PLACES TO VISIT

- The Cargaleiro Museum
- The Castelo Branco Paço Episcopal Gardens
- The Castelo Branco Centre for Contemporary Culture
- The Jewish Museum
- O The Castelo Branco Embroidery Interpretation Centre
- Sixteenth Century Doorways / The Historic Centre

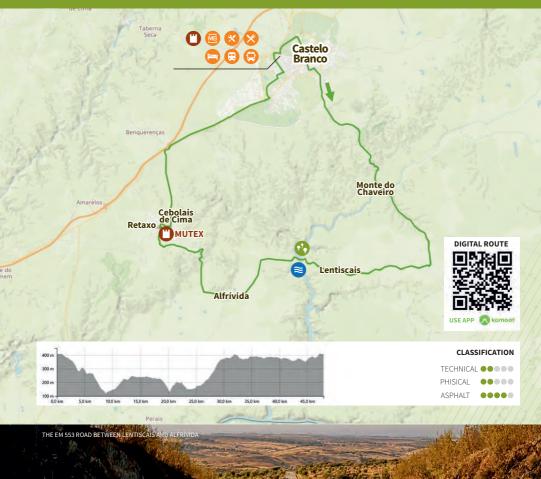
www.cm-castelobranco.pt



The route sets off in front of the Castelo Branco Town Hall, and will lead you on a path of discovery in the Tagus International Nature Park. Once you have left the city, there is a few-mile-long descent until you reach the Ponsul River, where you'll get an unobstructed view of the old bridge. Carry on to Lentiscais and follow the new stretch of river until you find Alfrivida. A 1.8-mile ascent will get you to Cebolais de Cima, where the textile

industry once thrived, and where you'll find the MUTEX, the museum of textiles. From there, follow the N3 for a few miles until you reach the southern entrance of the city of Castelo Branco, which will take you through recreational areas and some of the main roads. This route ends at Rua da Mina, where you'll be able to see the Francisco Tavares Proença Júnior Museum, the Palace Gardens, the Cathedral and other monuments.

01 580 D+ 48,0 KM



# VILA VELHA DE RÓDÃO

## life lived through a river

In Vila Velha de Ródão, you'll find natural resources like you've never seen before.

Lying on the banks of the river, this is one of the towns, along with Castelo Branco and Idanha-a-Nova, that can be found in the Tagus International Nature Park.

The Portas de Ródão geological formation, the Serra das Talhadas mountain range, the Castle of King Wamba, the village of Foz do Cobrão andthe Portos de Almourão (a rugged geological monument on the banks of the Ocreza river) are truly unmissable. You'll find birds like griffon vultures, black storks and red kites live and nest throughout the area.

## PLACES TO VISIT

- The Portas de Ródão Natural Monument
- The Rock Art Interpretation Centre and Museum of Archaeology
- The village of Foz do Cobrão (Portas do Almourão)
- O The Museological Nucleus: Contraband | Perais
- The Varas Olive Press
- O The Castle of King Wamba

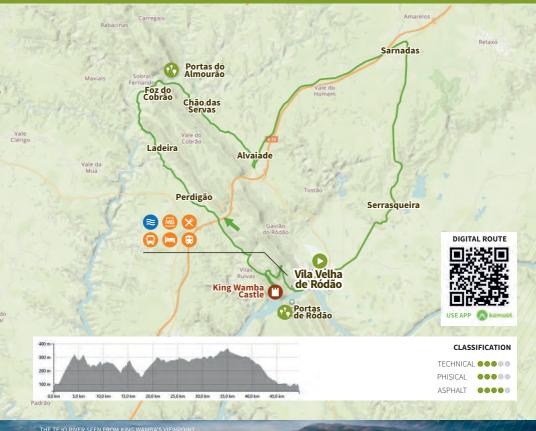
www.cm-vvrodao.pt



Our adventure begins at the River dock in Vila Velha de Ródão. The southernmost village of the region is about much more than just industry. In fact, here you'll find several locations that have a breath-taking beauty thanks to their close proximity to the Tagus River, such as the Portas de Ródão, a striking geological monument. High up you'll find King Wamba's Castle set in a prime location for a panoramic view over

the valley. The route continues, winding towards Perdigão, Ladeira and Foz do Cobrão, each with their steep, pebbled streets. At the top of the hill you'll find the Portas de Almourão where you must stop to take in the view. Next, you'll come across Chão das Servas and Alvaiade, where you'll be able to follow the N3 until you get to Sarnadas. Turn right to come back down to your final destination in Vila Velha de Ródão.

02/ 720 D+ 49,4 KM





# **TEJO INTERNACIONAL**

The route sets off in front of the Castelo Branco Town Hall, and leads you on a path of discovery to the Ponsul River Valley and the landscapes of the Tagus International Nature Park. It starts off with about 5 and a half miles of downhill slopes until you get to the river, and carries on to Lentiscais where you'll cross the Ponsul River again to find Alfrívida.

From there, ride to Perais where you'll be able to catch a glimpse of Vila Velha de Ródão, an industrial village where you'll find several locations that have a breath-taking beauty thanks to their close proximity to the Tagus River. The most iconic one, the striking geological monument of Portas de Ródão, marks the river's narrowest point in Portugal. Heading back up

the mountain, you'll find Ródão Castle (better known as the Castle of King Wamba) and the panoramic views it provides over the Tagus. From here, head west towards Perdigão, Ladeira and Foz do Cobrão, beautiful villages with schist houses and pebbled streets. As you leave the village you'll be faced with an uphill stretch of just over half a mile of steep slopes, which will all



be worth it for the views you'll get of Portas do Almourão when you reach the top, a place where you must stop.

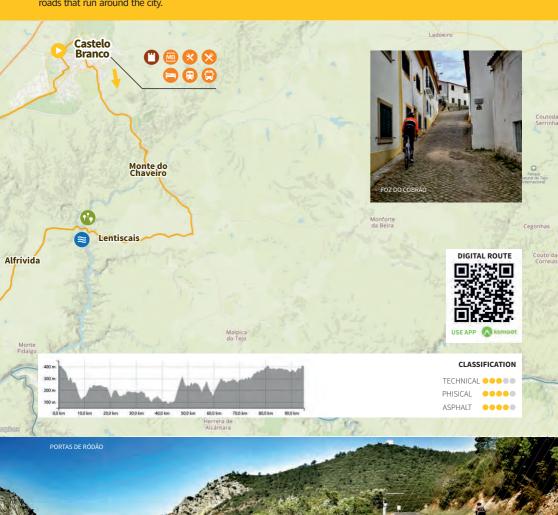
Keep going until you reach the villages of Chão das Servas, Samadinha and Alvaiade, where you'll re-join the N3. Be especially careful of traffic on this road. The N3 will take you right up to the southern entrance to the city of Castelo Branco, taking you through some recreational areas and main roads that run around the city.

You'll arrive, at last, at the northern entrance and Rua da Mina.

At the end of the route, you'll be able to see some of the city's main attractions, especially the Francisco Tavares Proença Júnior Museum, the famous Palace Gardens and the Cathedral.

Finish up on the Alameda da Liberdade and the pleasant centre of Castelo Branco. 1320 D+

**CYCLING ROUTES** 



# IDANHA-A-NOVA

## land of fertility

In Idanha-a-Nova you'll find traces of settlements built by several different European peoples, making a long, analytical visit a must. Stop by Monsanto (where the houses are built from rocky massifs), Idanha-a-Velha (ancient Roman Egitania), Penha García (and its Iconological Park) and Monfortinho (with its famous thermal baths).

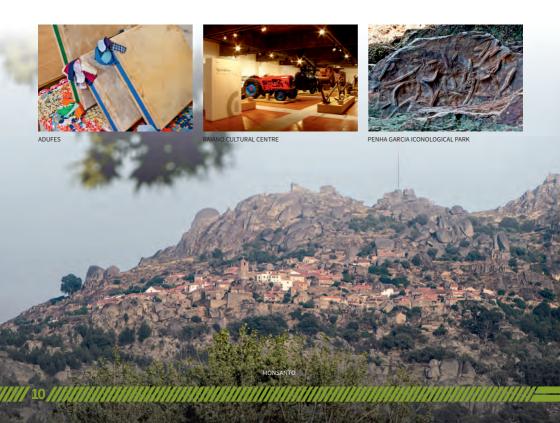
Idanha-a-Nova is also a land of the Adaufe, a traditional square tambourine of Moorish origin, and both ancient and modern music, making it a UNESCO Creative City of Music.

The "Easter Mysteries" are also strong candidates for the Best events in the area.

## PLACES TO VISIT

- Raiano Cultural Centre
- Olive Oil Museum Lagares de Proença-a-Velha
- O Historical Village of Idanha-a-Velha
- Historical Village of Monsanto
- O Penha Garcia Iconological Park
- Monfortinho Thermal Baths

www.cm-idanhanova.pt



The route sets off in front of the Idanha-a-Nova Town Hall, heading north. Proença-a-Velha is the next stop, followed by Medelim, taking you near the village of Monsanto. You can choose to ride uphill to the Historical Village via a Valado, following a cobbled road that will make you feel as if you have gone back in time. A challenging climb right to the top, it'll all be worth it when you get to the impressive town

of Monsanto. Go back down again towards Idanha-a-Velha, ancient Roman Egitania, a town that is also well worth a visit.

The route will then take you to Alcafozes and Senhora da Graça, with the last part of the ascent to the village providing magnificent views of the Ponsul valley.

The route ends next to the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova.

04/

850 D+ 59,8 KM



# PENAMACOR

## /an infinite landscape

Tucked into the vast, sweeping landscape, the town of Penamacor was founded at the end of the 12th century and grew up around the castle walls. Given its proximity to the border, it was here that many of the Jews exiled from Spain in the 15th and 16th centuries found shelter.

Rich in traditions, such as the famous Madeiro celebration, the area is famous for the natural beauty of

the Serra da Malcata, which was once the home of the Iberian lynx and where it is expected that it will be re-introduced.

An area of thermal baths and ecological tourism, Penamacor already has a European Charter of Sustainable Tourism approved, as the Land of the Lynx.

## PLACES TO VISIT

- The Castle Keep
- The Convent of Santo António
- O The top of Town / Historic Centre of Penamacor
- Malcata Nature Reserve
- Main Church (Águas)
- Geosites of Penamacor (throughout the area)

www.cm-penamacor.pt



The route sets off from the Jardim da República and heads down towards Aldeia do Bispo and Aldeia de João Pires, and is an easy ride to Medelim, on quiet roads with gentle slopes. Once you reach Medelim, the route continues towards Monsanto and up the Valado with its cobbles, making you feel like you've gone back in time you feel like you've gone back in time. At the top, you'll find the entrance to a historic village that is definitely worth exploring.

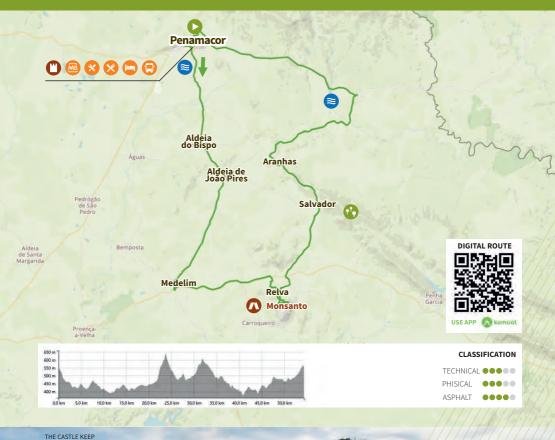
Next, head towards Salvador for vast Next, head towards Salvador for vast Bazágueda river valley landscapes. You'll cross the river itself a few miles after Aranhas. The road leading past Sra Bom Sucesso will take you back to Penamacor via the ER 346.

You'll be able to get into the town of Penamacor through the north entrance if you keep the castle tower in sight.

05

830 D+ and and and and

54,2 KM





CYCLING ROUTES

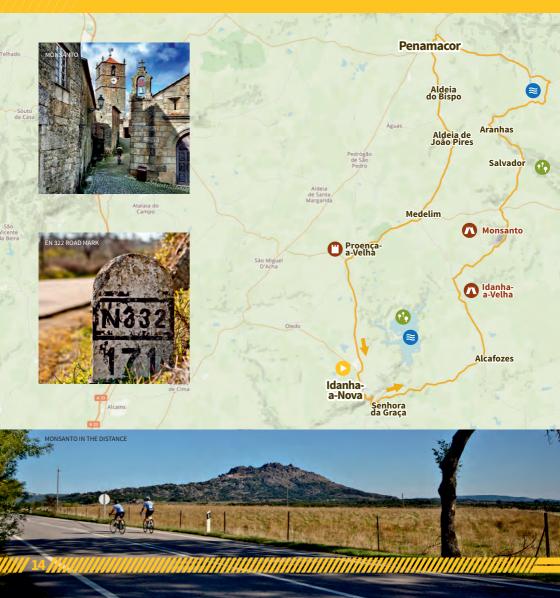
# RAIA

This route sets off from the town hall of Idanha-a-Nova, following the road as it descends into the town. Once you're out of the town, carry on down the slope until you reach Senhora da Graça, where you'll cross the river Ponsul. Next, head towards Alcafozes and

Idanha-a-Velha. Gentle slopes and the landscape on the Spanish

border are an open invitation for a cycle ride and to spend time enjoying nature. A diversion to explore the historic village of Idanha-a-Velha, is optional but a must if you have never been to the town before. Once you have left the Roman metropolis, with its ancient remains, carry on to Monsanto, another historical village that is

considered to be "the most Portuguese in Portugal". The entrance to Monsanto (which is a steep climb) is also not part of the route, but well worth a visit. After Monsanto, carry on to Salvador where you'll be near Spain and the Serra do Vieiro das Gralhas. Once you reach Aranhas head east via the Bazágueda River,



joining the ER 346 towards Penamacor further along. In Penamacor take the opportunity to visit the Castle and the streets of the historical area. Known as Vila Madeiro, this Beira town has strong Jewish roots.

Leave Penamacor and head south to Aldeia do Bispo, Aldeia de João Pires and Medelim further ahead. From there, carry on to Proença-a-Velha and reach the end of the route in Idanha-a-Nova. This route is characterised by the gentle slopes of the borderlands, the open landscapes and bright yellow fields where every once in a while you'll see cattle grazing leisurely. It is a region with a history that stretches back thousands of years, full of traditions linked to cattle breeding, livestock husbandry, traditional music, rich culinary traditions and the preservation of regional products. Come and visit the borderlands!





# PROENÇA-A-NOVA

## a centre of charm

The forest, which covers most of the area, has made its mark on both the daily life and the identity of Proenca-a-Nova. That is why it's so important to visit to the Living Science of the Forest Centre, which promotes knowledge and scientific and technological culture around this important environmental and economic resource.

The area, which has a rich natural and cultural heritage. also has important museums, as well as gold-standard river beaches, perfectly preserved typical schist villages and facilities geared towards natural and historical-cultural tourism, such as the Centre for the Interpretation of Forts and Batteries.

## PLACES TO VISIT

- Living Science of the Forest Centre (Moitas)
- The Schist Village of Figueira
- O Isilda Martins Museum (Sobreira Formosa)
- O Aldeia Ruiva, Alvito, Cerejeira, Fróia and Malhadal River Beaches
- Skydiving School- Sky Fun Center (Moitas)
- Cruzeiro Viewpoint at Serra das Talhadas

www.cm-proencanova.pt

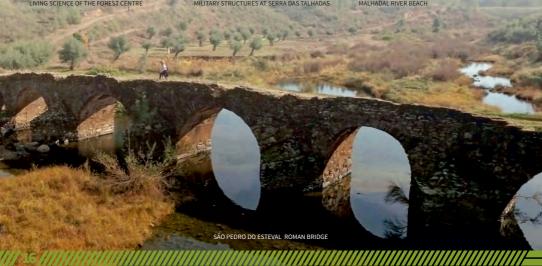




MILITARY STRUCTURES AT SERRA DAS TALHADAS



MALHADAL RIVER BEACH

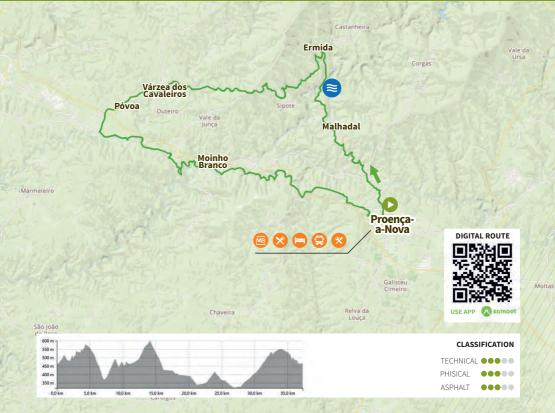


The terrain in the Pinhal Interior region is somewhat challenging for cyclists. Even shorter routes take you through demanding uphill slopes, which, once overcome, lead to surprising finales.

First leave the Comendador João Martins Urban Park in Proença-a-Novand head up to the village of

First leave the Comendador João Martins Urban Park in Proença-a-Nova and head up to the village of Malhadal, which is known for its famous river beach, which you'll find 1.8 miles later at the bottom of the slope. Continue on to Ermida and Várzea de Cavaleiros, following the road for about 4 and a half miles, almost all of which is uphill. Once you're past Póvoa, the N241 will take you the remaining 10 miles to the end of the route. You'll still have uphill stretches that are between 2.5 and 3 miles long, but these have softer gradients between 4% and 6%. You'll end up back at the Comendador João Martins Urban Park.

790 D+





# **OLEIROS**

# the land of water eyes

The landscape of the Oleiros region is marked by the numerous waterways that run through it, one of which is the Zêzere River, and by the rural nature of its ten parishes that are separated by mountain ranges covered with dense forests.

Aland of rare beauty, Oleiros has a number of attractions, such as the Appalachian International Trail, churches with

various architectural styles and, when it comes to food, the much sought-after goatfish, which is always served with "callum" wine.

It was in Oleiros that the Jesuit priest, Antonio de Andrade, was born in 1624, the first European to reach Tibet and the Himalayas.

## **PLACES TO VISIT**

- Schist Village of Álvaro
- O Açude Pinto (Oleiros) River beach
- O Fraga de Água d'Alta (Orvalho)
- Oleiros Main Church
- Appalachian Trail
- O The Meanders of the Zêzere River

www.cm-oleiros.pt



ROASTED GOAT



APALACHE'S TRAIL ROUTE



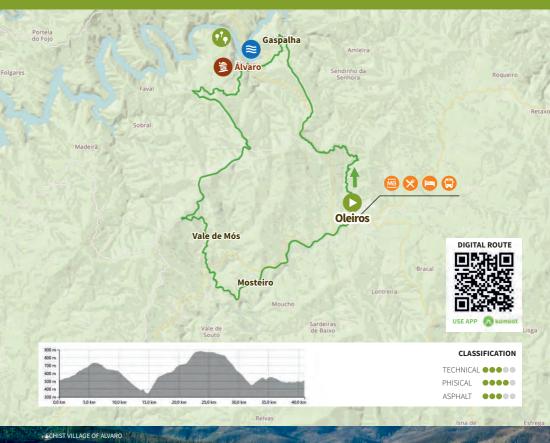
ORVALHO'S GEOROUTE



This route is reasonably physically demanding, mainly because of the uphill slopes it takes you through. Set off from the Oleiros Town Hall and start with a 3.7-mile climb right from the offset, following the N351. Next, follow the road down to Gaspalha and Álvaro, a Schist Village with incredible views of the Meandering Zêzere River. After Álvaro, you'll find a 5-mile uphill stretch you can take on 5-mile uphill stretch you can take on at a steady pace.

At the top you'll find the N350 and all the effort will have been worth it for the panoramic views that will fill your soul. Further ahead, turn left to Vale de Mós and go back down until you reach the old N238, which will take you back to Oleiros.

This route has two big uphill stretches that can be followed at a leisurely pace while you take in the 08 960 D+ and and and and 41,1 KM



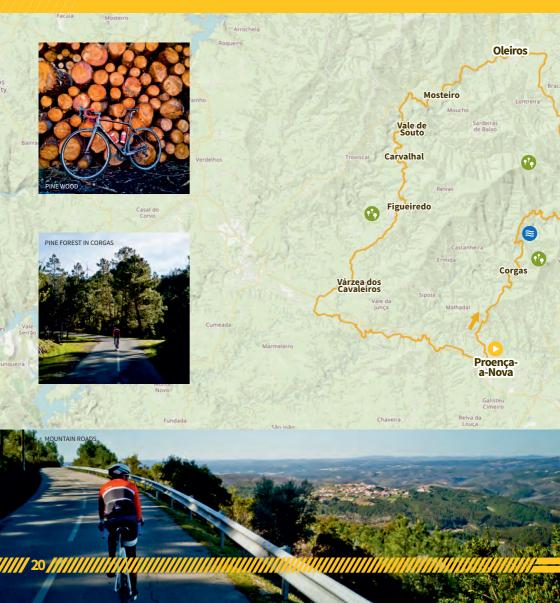
# **PINHAL**

The route sets off from the Comendador João Martins Urban Park in the centre of Proença-a-Nova. The route starts with an uphill climb towards Corgas, with 3 quite demanding miles. The ascent begins to reveal the panoramic landscape of the pine forest and the fantastic views to the east with a descent to the village of

Corgas appearing right after. The word Corgas can be seen everywhere in this area and is attributed to gullies where water runs through. These gullies are often used in subsistence farming, which you'll see here on a small scale. Between Corgas and Isna de Oleiros the route is "leg breaking", with constant undulations of the

land and some demanding climbs. Once you're past "Isna", you'll get back to the N351, where at 25 km you'll reach an altitude of 980 meters in the Serra de Alvelos, which amounts to a 1000-metre difference.

The descent back to Oleiros via the N351 is very fast. With a short trip through the village, you'll be back



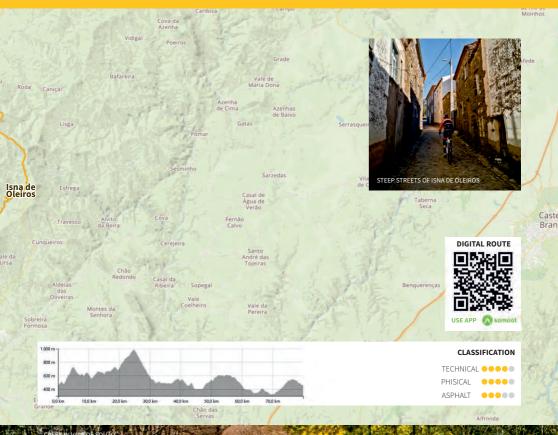
onto the N238 for a mile or two, turning left further ahead to Mosteiro. From here, the road goes back up into the mountains, following a beautiful winding road that will take you through villages that are lost in the time, and where everything is done slowly.

Further ahead is the Parish of Figueiredo, an area of loggers and slopes covered in leafy pine forests. The route will take you along panoramic roads, going down to Várzea de Cavaleiros and Póvoa where you'll get onto the N241. This road will take you back to Proença-a-Nova on a more rugged, degraded path.

Before the route is over, you'll still have two uphill stretches of 2.5 to 3 miles, with softer gradients of between 4% and 6%.

The Pinhal Interior region is characterised by its forested hills and steep, winding slopes that make the routes very demanding. A region that demands a response from cyclists. Follow the call to Adventure!







## **BEIRA BAIXA TOUR**

The Beira Baixa Tour is the biggest challenge in this collection of itineraries, and will take you through many of the locations highlighted in the shorter trails. This is a challenge for cyclists who have experience in taking long routes, especially if they want to do this in a single day. The suggested location for the starting point is Castelo Branco,

however, if you want to set off from any other location it's up to you. Leaving Castelo Branco, head towards Escalos de Baixo and Mata, going through the Ribeira de Alpreade valley towards Idanha-a-Nova (35km). For Penamacor (70km) go through Proença-a-Velha and João Pires Village. After Penamacor comes the longest distance between locations. It is 110km from Penamacor to Oleiros, taking you through Alpedrinha, São Vicente da Beira, Almaceda and Estreito. From Oleiros to Proença-a-Nova, the route coincides with the Yellow Pinhal route, the big uphill stretch at the Serra de Alvelos taking you all the way to Proença-a-Nova at the 215km mark. Continue on to Vila



Velha de Ródão, located at 251km, which will take you through Sobreira Formosa and Foz do Cobrão, taking you closer to the Tagus valley and its magnificent views.

It is about 30km from here until the end of the route, gentle uphill slopes taking you to the N3, where you should be careful with traffic, and where the adventure comes to a close. Make your way back into the city through the recreational areas, bypassing the city itself until you get

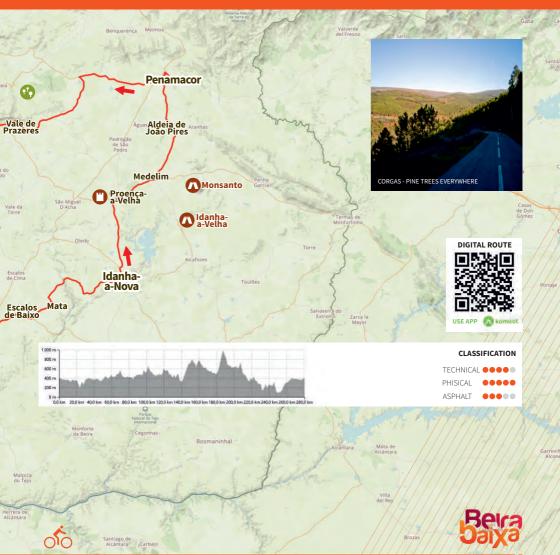
to the northern entrance, through Rua da Mina. Go down Alameda da Liberdade, where the great challenge is finally over.

This route takes you down well-preserved roads, although in some areas they might be in need of repairs. The entire region of Beira Baixa is very challenging for cyclists, but the Pinhal Interior area is one that will require the most "physical effort".

Follow the call to Adventure!

**10**/

4190 D+ 280 KM



## Castelo Branco

CONTACTS

## INSTITUTIONAL

Municipality | +351 272 330 330 Tourism | +351 272 330 339

#### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 272 340 622 Police | +351 272 340 900 Firemen | +351 272 342 122 Hospital | +351 272 000 272

# Vila Velha de Ródão

CONTACTS

### INSTITUTIONAL

Municipality | +351 272 540 300 Tourism | +351 272 540 312

#### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 272 549 050 Firemen | +351 272 541 022 Health Center | +351 272 540 210

## Idanha-a-Nova

CONTACTS

#### INSTITUTIONAL

Municipality | +351 277 200 570 Tourism | +351 277 201 023

### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 277 200 050 Firemen | +351 277 202 456 Health Center | +351 277 202 903

## Penamacor

CONTACTS

#### INSTITUTIONAL

Municipality | +351 277 394 106 Tourism | +351 277 394 106

### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 277 394 274 Firemen | +351 277 394 122 Health Center | +351 277 390 029

# Proença-a-Nova

CONTACTS

#### INSTITUTIONAL

Municipality | +351 274 670 000 Tourism | +351 274 670 000

#### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 274 672 667 Firemen | +351 274 671 444 Health Center | +351 274 670 041

## **Oleiros**

CONTACTS

#### **INSTITUTIONAL**

Municipality| +351 272 680 130 Tourism | +351 272 681 008

#### **EMERGENCY**

Police | +351 272 682 311 Firemen | +351 272 680 170 Health Center | +351 272 680 161



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Always cycle with other people, it's more fun. If you go on a cycle ride alone, take a phone with you to use in the event of an emergency.
- 2 Always respect the Highway Code. Although the roads in the region do not tend to get very busy, vehicles may appear when you least expect it.
- 3 Beira Baixa registers extreme temperatures at various times of the year. In winter there are often negative temperatures and in summer temperatures can reach above 40°.
- 4 Always carry a Mechanic First Aid Kit. Some stretches between towns and villages are in isolated areas where there are no garages.
- 5 Some of the routes described in this guide are very physically strenuous. Always approach them leisurely, and make sure you are well hydrated and energised.

**NOTE:** The data in this guide may change over time. Plan your trip using more detailed information on the routes you want to take.



## **TECHNICAL DATA SHEET**

#### PROPERTY

Comunidade Intermunicipal da Beira Baixa

### **TECHNICAL CONTENT**

Associação de Ciclismo da Beira Interior

### TOURISTIC CONTENT

Comunidade Intermunicipal da Beira Baixa

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

CIMBB / Municipalities / Agnelo Quelhas Archive

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