

SITUATION

Salvada is a village situated in the southwest of the municipality of Beja. Its vocation is agriculture. With the arrival of the water from the Alqueva dam, cultivation of cereals and sunflowers is being replaced by the production of irrigated crops, giving way to pastures of holm and cork and some pine forest which, in a more rugged landscape, is transforming the scenery as we head south. On arrival in Vale de Rocins you can be rewarded with some bread baked in the communal oven.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE

Start at the Casa do Povo building and go up towards the market, transformed into a restaurant, where you can savour good freshwater fish, carry on to the Monumental Cinema and the church. The route starts with a short stretch of tarmac, deviating right to a beaten track at 2.3km, passing by Monte das Oliveiras. Carry straight on in an area where the landscape is characterized by the cultivation of cereals and sunflowers which are being replaced with irrigated crops. These clay soils are very fertile. To the left, below, you can spot Serpa. Carry on to Monte Novo, a grand agricultural house, which today belongs to the Salvada Agricultural Co-operative. Take a moment to look at your surroundings and start your descent to the Figueira 'arroyo' and carry on through more rugged terrain, entering a pasture of cork and holm oak. Below, to the right you can see Beja and Cabeça Gorda. Ahead you come to the EM511 to which you walk parallel for 200 metres in order to cross further on, continuing along a beaten track, this time on the opposite side of the road. The Atalaia homestead, now completely in ruins, gives an insight into a traditional 'Taipa' (rammed earth/compacted earth) construction. Go up as far as Monte da Malhadinha Velha which branches to the left in an area of traditional olive groves. Cross a wood of pine and eucalyptus and go up to Monte Vale Loução. Further ahead turn left through the olive grove and you will be back in an area of cereal crops. Cross the Salvada 'arroyo' following through a small oak pasture. You can now see Vale de Rocins below but will have to walk a further kilometre before reaching there. At Vale de Rocins where the route ends, next to the primary school, you may be lucky enough to sample some bread from the communal oven.

POINTS OF INTEREST

VILLAGE OF SALVADA

Is a village with 1097 inhabitants, whose historical origin is not known, although it existed in the 15th century. The territory underwent alterations, in administrative terms, in the early 20th century (1901), Cabeça Gorda was split from Salvada to form an independent parish.

The oldest known testimonies date back about 5000 years, to that which is called the copper age or Chalcolithic Period - near the border of the village, between Rua dos Pastores and Rua do Pombal, there is an enclosure demarcated by several concentric trenches dug into the rock. The exact function of this place is not known: could it have been a village, or a sacred site where they worshipped gods and ancestors?

In 1980, excavation work in the village unearthed 3 graves from the Bronze Age, about 4000 years old. These graves, called cists, were rectangular, built with schist slabs inside which skeletons were found together with clay pots which were offered to the dead to accompany them on their last journey. Outside the village, before the crossing to Cabeça Gorda, there are traces of a large villa from Roman times.

The name Salvada may derive from the fact that the lands belonging to the king were designated as 'safe' or 'saved', a designation that was attributed when the lands were exempted from the ecclesiastical tithe (a tax paid to the Church). Another justification may derive from the excommunication of the population of Reguengo Novo, for non-payment of the tithe. Only with King João III, was the ambiguity that led to the excommunication clarified, resulting in the absolution of the farmers, who were 'saved'.

NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO CHURCH

There are no longer any vestiges of the primitive building which is deemed to date back to the 16th century. It underwent restoration in the 17th to 18th centuries and also in 1868 which gave it its current structure.

MONUMENTAL CINEMA, COMMUNITY CENTRE AND OLD MARKET

In the village of Salvada several important public building works were carried out at the beginning of the 20th century, which largely contributed to the improvement in quality of life for its inhabitants and the settlement of people in the village. This is the case with the Monumental Cinema - a building, with 500 seats constructed in 1957, the community centre and the old market.

NATURAL VALUES

FAUNA

Birds: Rufous robin, Sardinian warbler, Spanish sparrow, great spotted cuckoo, bee-eater, melodious warbler, short toed snake eagle, common snipe, common blackbird, European robin, stone curlew, northern lapwing, golden oriole, blue rock thrush.

Mammals: Hare, hedgehog, fox, badger.

Reptiles: Viperine, large psammodomus.

Amphibians: Common frog, spadefoot toad.

Butterflies: *Papiliomachaon*, *Maniola Jurtina* and *Pieris rapaes*, and moths - *Cossuscossus*, *Smerinthusocellatus* and *Watsonallauncinula*.

Dragonflies such as: *Orthetrumtrinacria*, *Lestes virens*, *Paragomphusgenei*.

FLORA

The major part of the soil in the parish is given over to extensive agricultural enterprises and more recently to irrigated crops.

The least exploited area is generally that near the main river (Terges and Cobres), where some Mediterranean vegetation can still be seen (cistus, myrtle, and wild oleaster).

The predominant trees are holm oak and some oak with oleanders, ash and poplars along the water's edge. The herbaceous stratum includes varied flowers and plants

such as camomile, some species of snapdragon, lilies and hyacinths and dozens of ground cover plants.

GEOLOGY

The route begins in Salvada where the soil is of reddish heavy clay, resulting from the alteration of schistous rocks. The colouration of the soil changes to more brownish and less reddish tones, a result of the change in the lithology, and it is possible to identify fragments of phyllites, quartzites and quartz of exudation. At the same time one can see purple shale which is the result of the weathering of black shale. The route develops along the Northern side of the South Portuguese Zone (ZSP), an important geological unit that integrates the Iberian Massif. These soils, classified as Brown-reddish clay, have good mineral reserves which gives them good agricultural characteristics. Its use as a building material is also visible on many 'taipa' (rammed earth/compacted earth) buildings present throughout the route.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Tourist Office: 284 311 913 / turismo@cm-beja.pt
www.cm-beja.pt

Parish Council: 284 947 114

Medical emergency and in case of Fires: 112

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FACTSHEET

NAME: ROTA DO PÃO

PARISH: UNIÃO DE FREGUESIAS DE SALVADA E QUINTOS - SALVADA

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Salvada, Beja

From Beja to Salvada go along the EM 511, for about 12km enter the village and carry on to the Casa do Povo square, where the route starts.

TYPE OF ROUTE: Linear

DISTANCE: 12.5 km

APPROXIMATE DURATION: 4h

TYPE OF SURFACE: Nature trails and rural tracks

UNEVENNESS: Some inclines

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Somewhat difficult

GROUND: Beaten track

STARTING POINT: Salvada

FINISHING POINT: Vale de Rocins

GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES: 37°56'05.4"N 7°46'33.3"W

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP: N°s 521; 522; 531; 532; 540; 541

WHERE TO PARK: There is parking at the location

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Stock up on food and water in one of the cafés or grocery stores in the village;
- Follow the indicated tracks;
- Respect private property, always close gates;
- Respect nature;
- Avoid noises and attitudes that disturb the tranquillity of the area;
- Don't leave litter or vestiges of your passage. Tracks without toilet, take a bag and leave the track clean;
- Be very careful with the cattle, because although docile they usually react with aggressiveness when strangers approach their offspring;
- Do not light fires;
- Use comfortable clothes and shoes and take a hat and sunscreen;
- Calculate the time of the route in order to finish before dark;
- In the summer avoid the hottest parts of the day;
- Be careful in hunting season between August 15 and February 28;
- Be friendly with the locals, elucidate them about the signage of the route and ongoing activities.

MAP

