

Warning: this is a document to support the walker, not being allowed to be reproduced for commercial purposes, without the written authorization of Rota Vicentina®.

This is a short hike that allows the less experienced hiker a taste of the grand Fishermen's Trail without having to commit to the more difficult parts of the route. The cliffs contain surprisingly bizarre geologic forms, contrasting with the soft curves of the dunes. The route is always looked over upon by the Pessegueiro island resting off the coastline in the background.









On this route overlooking the sea, the dune vegetation fills with color in the spring, when thyme, wild garlic, gum rockrose, lavender and shrubby everlasting perfume the atmosphere and attract an amazing diversity of insects. This variety of insects serves as food for many birds, such as larks, the European stonechat, the pipits and the corn buntings. At low tide, the restless dunlins, plovers and ruddy turnstones seek out small invertebrates to feed on. The Western jackdaw, which can be found in only a few places in Portugal, is easy to spot along this route. It likes to be in open fields with scattered trees, and near quarries or coastal cliffs, where it finds cavities to make its nest. For breeding, it forms long-lasting pairs, which nest each year in not just in the same exact place, but in the same exact nest.

The Island of Pessegueiro, 340 m long and 325 m wide, is a strong component of this route's landscape, and is just 250 m from the coastline. The island stands as an emerging part of a large fossil dune, now partly submerged, which resulted from the consolidation of ancient dunes formed when the sea was a few kilometers back from the current coastline. Nowadays this island works just like a giant breakwater. Two old port establishments have been documented, one that existed during the Iron Age and the other in the Roman Age, each taking advantage of the island's natural shelter. In the second half of the first century AD, a Roman trading warehouse was founded on the Island of Pessegueiro where amphorae filled with salted or sauced fish were manufactured, while olive oil, wine and ceramics were obtained from Bética, southern Gaul and the Iberian Peninsula. In turn, the island drained mining products from Serra do Cercal. In the second century AD, modernization of construction occurred. In addition to housing and warehouses, there would be workshops (for example a forge) and a bread baking oven. At that time, the industrial activity of fish salting began, packing the salted fish in amphorae and producing it in the Sado and Tejo Rivers. From the second half of the third century, the island transitioned fully to be a center for the production of fish products. This led to the construction of buildings like the bathhouse, which contained a dressing room, a semicircular tub of cold water (which functioned as a frigidarium), hot baths, consisting of a large rectangular room controlled by an apse and heating systems (furnace and hipocaustum).

At the north end, the island seems to have been sliced by

a gigantic knife. There are vestiges of a great enterprise that occurred during the end of the sixteenth century: the creation of an artificial port, whose objective was to create ideal conditions for tuna and sardine fishing and for the settlement of inhabitants in the region. At the same time, the construction of a fort on the island and on the land began as well, in order to protect the port. However, this project was abandoned in 1603, due to the political issues of the time, frequent pirate attacks and technical difficulties.

RULES & RECOMMENDATIONS

-  Walk only along the marked trails
-  The circulation of motor vehicles puts hikers at risk. Choose alternative paths.
-  The trails cross private properties; always close gates and fences. The cattle are tame but can get aggressive if you approach their offspring.
-  Respect Nature. Do not collect or disturb animals, plants or rocks.
-  Do not camp or light fires outside designated areas.
-  Trails without WC, bring a bag and leave the paths clean
-  Keep your dog on a leash and clean up after it.
-  Prepare your hike well, don't run any risks from lack of preparation or planning.

SOS

Emergency: 112
Environment and territory Police
Department: 808 200 520
For further information on accommodation, restaurants and nature/cultural activities please contact the local Tourism Office or go to rotavicentina.com

HELP US

For any further information or help regarding the Rota Vicentina, please contact us:

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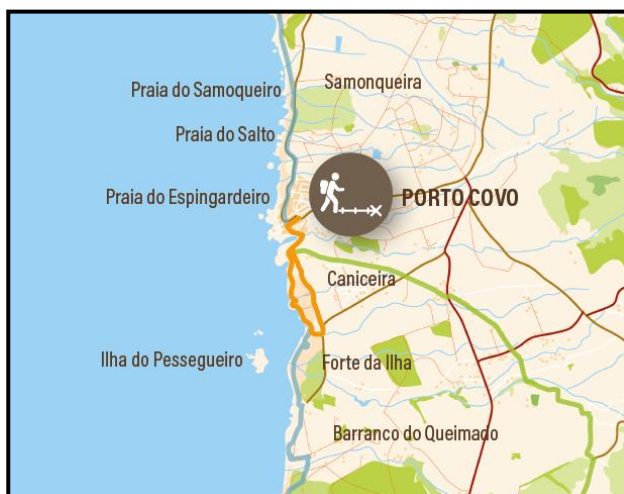
SISSAL BEACH

CIRCULAR ROUTE | 4.5 KM

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DESCRIPTION OF ROUTE

The trail starts from Marquês de Pombal square – the heart of Porto Covo, and a prime example of the typical 18th century architecture. Take a moment and observe the local elderly gentlemen having good time; then, walk along the Fishermen's Trail, passing by the fishing port. At the fork that separates the Fishermen's Trail from the Historical Way, follow the Fishermen's Trail to the right, continuing along the coast, until you reach Sissal Beach and the iconic Island of Pessegueiro, immortalized today by the popular song Porto Covo. Admire the breathtaking views and let yourself to travel to a time of buccaneers and pirates. Before reaching a small wooden bridge that leads to Praia da Ilha, leave the Fishermen's Trail behind, but not before enjoying another impressive view of the immense and inspiring Atlantic Ocean. Head to the left and continue walking until arriving at the paved road that accesses Ilha do Pessegueiro Beach. From here, turn left onto a dirt path, surrounded by dunes on one side and by pastures on the other, and return to Porto Covo.



FACT SHEET:

Distance: 4.5 km

Approximate duration: 2h

Accumulated descent: 120 m

Difficulty level : Easy

Max. / Min. Altitude 30 m / 0 m

Recommended direction counterclockwise

Recommended season September till June

WHERE TO START?

Porto Covo: at the main square.

IMPORTANT WARNINGS:

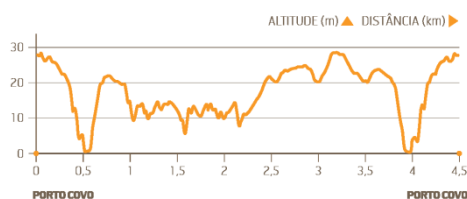
Pay attention to the high tide period, which may make it impossible to cross the fishing port of Porto Covo.

Pay attention to the signage as there are intersections with a other routes.

TIPS:

Refreshments along the way: In Porto Covo.

At the turning point of this Circular Route, you can continue with the Fishermen's Trail another 200 m to visit the beach of Ilha do Pessegueiro.



Download the **Rota Vicentina APP** and take it with you all the information about this route

