

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 short Circular Route combines the ancient trails of the mountain with its aromatic shrubs (some of them spiky!) with the lovely rural path that goes along the Carrapateira River, crossing it several times.

The slopes of this route are made up of forest and shrubs growing in worn soil, which has been transformed by millenia of erosion. At the bottom of the valleys, the deposit of sediments has created some floodplains, which are made deeper, flatter, and more fertile by the water lines. The trail crosses agricultural areas, forests, shrubs, and water lines. In the agricultural areas, the hoopoes, larks, corn buntings, and white wagtails abound. In the stone pine forests, the woodpeckers make holes in the bark of the trunks in order to place the seeds there and extract the pine nuts. In the cork tree forests, there is also the strawberry tree, whose fruit is used to make the famous brandy medronho. In the water lines, dominated by the African tamarisk, you can harvest blackberries, fennel, wild roses, wild mint, and pennyroyal. In the spring and summer, you can stop here for a moment to watch the creeping buttercups floating in the water.









75% of all species of amphibians in Portugal can be found in the wetlands of Vilarinha. There are salamanders, newts, frogs and toads, as well as a rare and protected species of frog – the Iberian painted frog (*Discoglossus galganoi*). Amphibians play important role in ecosystem, for example, by feeding on the aquatic larvae of mosquitoes they contribute to controlling insect-borne diseases.

This territory was deeply transformed by human beings, especially from the Mesolithic era, more than 8000 years ago A.C. These populations burned the forest to promote the growth of herbs and to favor the herbivorous animals, an important food base for them. After the fire, the less dense vegetation allowed for hunters to access and see their game. Depending on the time of year, these populations used temporary camps by the sea or in the mountains to better manage and make use of the abundance of fish and shellfish, as well as collect wild fruits and hunt. However, in safe and mild climates, these nomadic populations would make more permanent base camps. We know this to be true because we have since discovered their cemeteries and food storage facilities.

In fact, this pendulum-like movement of people, depending on the time of year, has continued to be practiced into the present day. People continue to leave their villages to hunt, fish or harvest wild

plants, using knowledge, whose origin has been lost in time. For example, every year in late spring, many inhabitants of the southwest coast travel through the mountains to harvest oregano, which after drying, is stored to use for the rest of the year. Local hunters continue to hunt partridges, one of the species whose bones are most common in the region's archaeological sites. For many locals, fishing is still a way of supplementing the livelihoods of families, especially in the spring and summer.

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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VILARINHA

CIRCULAR ROUTE | 5 KM

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DESCRIPTION OF ROUTE

Start next to the information boards and turn left; then, at the fork, turn right, following the white and red markings. Go through the valley, crossing the river several times. At the point, where two streams meet, cross by going right and enter the Pedralva Valley. Cross the river two more times. 500 m after the second crossing, at the fork meeting the Historical Way, turn to the right and start ascending through a eucalyptus forest until you reach the top. From here, take the path on the right, follow it for about 100 m, and exit to the left along a trail that leads to the Vilarinha Valley. When you arrive at the point, where the trail meets the Circular Route Cerros da Carrapateira, turn right and continue walking towards the village of Vilarinha and the starting point of this route.



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



FACT SHEET:

Distance: 5 km

Approximate duration: 2h

Accumulated descent: 150 m

Difficulty level : Average

Max. / Min. Altitude 120 m / 20 m

Recommended direction clockwise

Recommended season September till June

WHERE TO START?

Vilarinha: next to the information boards.

IMPORTANT WARNINGS:

This circular route is marked in white and red (as it is part of the Historical Way) and only a small part has white, red and yellow marking.

In periods of intense rainfall, this path is not passable.

