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## Alcoutim

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### ABOUT



Photo: Odiana

Alcoutim's origins are presumably linked to the fact that it is situated at the place where the Guadiana becomes tidal. The vessels that traded metals and other wares were obliged to wait at this spot for hours, until the river conditions allowed them to sail down. Consequently there was a need for structures to support and defend them from which we can still find some vestiges.

Although it has lost the walls that for centuries surrounded it, and despite some modern constructions, Alcoutim's steep and narrow streets still maintain much of the calm atmosphere, typical of an algarvian hill town.

In a few minutes' walk we can discover simple houses, hundreds of years old and the tall white walls of the Misericórdia (Mercy) church. Don't miss the river side, where stand the humble hermitage of Santo António (St. Anthony) and the former residence of the Counts of Alcoutim. Afterwards, enjoy a moment's rest and a cold drink seated at the open air café by the riverside, and appreciate the returning of the fishing boats, the sailing yachts anchored in the little marina or the Spanish town on the other river bank.