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## Along the river Zêzere

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### ABOUT



Photo: Turismo Centro de Portugal

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**The river Zêzere winds its way between the high serras and mountains, scented by the dense wild pine vegetation and forging spectacular landscapes.**

Five slate villages are nestled harmoniously within this idyllic setting, that we invite you to visit. Following the river Zêzere from North to South, we begin in the village of **Barroca**. Observe the ancient watermills and cross the footbridge in order to admire the engravings that were inscribed into the rocks several thousands of years ago by the ancestors of the local inhabitants. If you're interested in such topics, visit the Casa Grande, that houses the Slate Villages Promotional Centre, and ask for information about the Pinhal Interior Rupestrian Art Route.

In **Janeiro de Cima**, you'll discover a sound that you've probably never heard before - looms driven by experienced hands as they create linen articles in the Casa das Tecedeiras. Next to the riverbank, relax on the riverside beach and observe the wooden boat. This is a replica of the boat that once established the only connection between the two banks, taking people to the other settlement that, due to its lower elevation, was called **Janeiro de Baixo**. Admire the ingenious manner in which the Watermill is built, carved into the rock side, making the most of the narrow, natural space.

Further downstream, the river Zêzere is much calmer, as it flows towards the peaceful environment of the Albufeira do Cabril dam. Stretching along the hill overlooking the river, **Álvaro** is one of the "white villages" of the Slate Villages Network - known as such because its stone walls are covered in white plaster. Visit the rich, religious heritage, that once pertained to the religious orders who lived here for many centuries. Make sure to sample the delicious "cabrito estonado" (peeled roast kid), one of the zone's gastronomic specialities.

In **Pedrógão Pequeno**, the river flows into the Cabril dam, an ideal leisure spot. In the white village, that displays noble architecture, there are many monuments to discover in a landscape that culminates in the old Filipina bridge, once again linking the banks of the River Zêzere.

Across the river, **Mosteiro** lies at the bottom of a valley on the right bank of the Ribeira de Pena. The water, once used by the people in mills and sluices, now delights those summer visitors to its river beach, which blends perfectly into the landscape, and maintains a rural character, complete with an old wine press turned into a bar.

**To help organize your trip, check out the offers of activities and accommodation that the Schist Villages have for you in <http://aldeiasdoxisto.pt>**