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## In the heart of the Serra do Açor

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### ABOUT



Photo: Turismo Centro de Portugal

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**Perched on the slopes of the Serra do Açor, Fajão and Benfeita are two welcoming villages awaiting your visit.**

Abundant fresh water is one of the constant features of the village of **Fajão**. The old fountain, in the centre of the village, next to the churchyard, distributes the precious elixir to anyone looking for refreshment. Walk through the patios of the jail, visit the Monsenhor Nunes Pereira Museum and walk to the top of the village, where you'll find a swimming pool, which is ideal for taking a dip on hot summer days. If you prefer natural watercourses, seek out the weirs of the river Ceira. Since you are very close to the source of the river, the waters are crystal clear, inviting you to dive in. The more adventurously-minded will encounter excellent conditions for mountain climbing in the high boulders surrounding the village. When you reach the top, at 900 m above sea level, there is an added bonus - an infinite landscape stretching out to the Beira Baixa.

We continue north towards **Benfeita**. Along the way, it's well worth discovering the protected landscape of the **Serra do Açor** via the footpaths through the Mata da Margaraça, a biogenetic reserve considered to be the last sanctuary of original vegetation in the centre of Portugal. It's also worth visiting Fraga da Pena, that has a 70m-high waterfall, where it's well worth relaxing in the recreational and leisure zone, on hot summer days.

In **Benfeita**, try strolling through the streets, alleyways and passageways flanked by white houses. You're sure to notice the Torre da Paz, whose walls are made of slate. If you visit on May 7, don't be surprised if the church bell never stops ringing. This has taken place since 1945 at the end of the Second World War. The bell tolls 1620 times - the number of days of the "Portuguese peace", given that our country remained neutral during the war. It's a celebration of the spirit of peace that you'll encounter at any time of the year in these tranquil villages.

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