
Naturtejo Geopark

ABOUT



Photo: Maurício Abreu

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Deep in the interior of the country, where the Tagus River becomes Portuguese, there is a preserved territory where people live at the pace of nature and seem to have all the time in the world to share their stories and knowledge with others.

Here you will find the **Naturtejo Global Geopark**, which covers the municipalities of **Castelo Branco, Idanha-a-Nova, Nisa, Oleiros, Penamacor, Proença-a-Nova and Vila Velha de Ródão**. There are **17 geomonuments** in this area whose importance is recognised by UNESCO, such as the imposing **Ródão Gateway** which forces the longest river in the Iberian Peninsula through a narrow gap, and the striking curious formations of the **ichnofossils of Penha Garcia**.

But there is much more to discover in these lands which include the **Tagus International Natural Park**. On arrival, you immediately smell the aromas of pine, lavender and rosemary released from the vegetation, where rabbits, deer and foxes lurk and disappear instantly when they notice your presence.

If you look carefully, you might see the colourful bee-eaters perched on the branches of trees, or nightingales and hoopoes outdoing each other with their singing. Black storks fly higher and spend some time here between February and August. And there are imperial eagles and vultures living in colonies that enjoy landing on the river cliffs from which they have the best view of the landscape. The Geopark organises **birdwatching** trips on which you can admire all this diversity – there are about 154 species that frequent these parts!

The marks of the past are still present. Found in **archaeological treasures** such as the complex of River Tagus cave paintings and the ruins of Egitânia. And also in the **historic villages** of Monsanto and Idanha-a-Velha and the churches that receive lively **pilgrimages** every year.

You can even combine these visits with some exercise. The range of **activities** is very varied and includes hiking, horse riding and mountain biking, climbing and canoeing. To recuperate from these exertions, there's nothing like a few moments of leisure on the **river beaches**, breathing in the fresh air and the aromas of the countryside, or a longer rest in the **thermal spas** at Monfortinho or Nisa.

But the wealth of the region is its people. They are **hospitable**, and love to welcome outsiders with delectable **delicacies** such as strong smelling cheeses, kid or river fish cooked using age-old recipes. Their skills are also revealed in their **handicrafts** - embroidery from Castelo Branco and ceramics from Nisa are souvenirs that will remind you of these lands until you return. And you surely will, because as they say in the region, "those who come always come back."

Don't miss

- > follow the Geotrails and admire the ichnofossils from Penha Garcia and the Ródão Gateway
- > try to spot the 154 species of bird that frequent this region
- > take a boat trip on the River Tagus
- > try a wellness treatment at the spa in Monfortinho
- > buy sausages, cheeses, honey and olive oil directly from the producer