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# Serra da Estrela

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## ABOUT



Photo: ARTP Centro de Portugal

### Serra da Estrela

**In summer or winter, mainland Portugal's highest mountain is the perfect scenery for a few relaxing days in contact with nature.**

At 1,993 metres at its highest point in Torre, **Serra da Estrela** is an area of rare landscape beauty, with striking mountain drops, where you can have a deep experience of the silence of the heights. Take advantage of those moments of communion with nature to observe it, discovering the diversity of plants and birds and the flocks of sheep herded by Estrela dogs from the breed named after the Mountain.

You can also follow the course of some major **Portuguese rivers** from their sources: the Mondego at Mondeguinho, the Zêzere at Covão de Ametade and the Alva at the Rossim Valley are breathtaking places. Or you can admire **glacier valleys** at Loriga, Manteigas or Covão do Urso and Covão Grande. In the warmest months, the best suggestion will certainly be the **25 Lagoon Itinerary**, leading you to some refreshing locations.

In cold weather, Serra da Estrela is the only place in Portugal where you can try **ski**, or go sledging, snowboarding or ride a snowmobile. There are several pistes with support infrastructure, as well as synthetic snow pistes for skiing at any time of the year.

This natural park is excellent for trekking, horse-riding or mountain biking. It boasts some **375km of marked trails** of varying degrees of difficulty, so you'll no doubt find one fitting your physical condition. And who has not dreamed of flying like a bird? You can experience the sensation para-gliding in **Linhares da Beira**, soaring over this historical village - which you shouldn't miss exploring on foot either.

To recharge batteries, you must taste the most famous product in the region - the **Serra da Estrela cheese**. With its buttery texture, it goes ideally with traditional bread. It can be tasted all over the region, but in the Solar do Queijo (Cheese Manor House), in **Celorico da Beira**, the tasting will be accompanied by an explanation about the manufacturing process. In **Seia**, it is bread, however, that has museum status, and in **Covilhã**, woollens. The most popular roads to cross the Mountain link these two cities and will take you to mountain villages such as Sabugueiro, Alvoco da Serra and Loriga, and to many other unmissable places: Penhas Douradas, Penhas da Saúde or Torre, at the summit of the Mountain.

For a tour around the region we suggest an itinerary across the mountain, but since there is so much to see and do in the largest Portuguese protected area, it is best to start by asking for information at one of the Natural Park's Information Centres, so as to make the most of your stay.

### Don't miss

- > climb up to Torre, the highest point on Estrela Mountain
  - > ski on the real or synthetic snow pistes
  - > taste and buy Serra da Estrela cheese
  - > buy woollen socks or contemporary design pieces in burel (traditional Portuguese woollen fabric)
  - > admire the glacier valleys at Zêzere, Loriga and Unhais da Serra
  - > discover the cool river beaches in summer
  - > visit the Bread Museum in Seia
  - > para-glide over Linhares da Beira
  - > drink water from a river source
  - > follow a long pedestrian trail and discover the splendour of nature
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### **USEFUL INFORMATION**

Find out more:

Natural Park

<http://www.icnf.pt>

Serra da Estrela

<http://www.turismoserradaestrela.pt/index.php/en/>

Ski resort

<http://www.skiserradaestrela.com>

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### **GETTING HERE**

By road:

A25 -exits at Viseu (N231) , Mangualde (N232), Celorico da Beira and Guarda

A23 -exits at Covilhã, Belmonte and Guarda

N17 -exits at Seia, Guarda e Celorico da Beira

By train: [www.cp.pt](http://www.cp.pt)

Beira Alta Line - Nelas, Mangualde, Celorico da Beira and Guarda stations

Beira Baixa Line - Covilhã, Belmonte and Guarda stations

Coach: [www.rede-expressos.pt](http://www.rede-expressos.pt)

to Covilhã, Guarda, Seia, Gouveia and Celorico da Beira