


















galicia

woodlands of galicia



XUNTA DE GALICIA

Contents

-  07 | SOUTO DA RETORTA: THE WOODLAND OF GIANTS
-  11 | FRAGAS DO EUME: THE LAST ATLANTIC WOODS
-  15 | FRAGA DAS BARBUDAS: PEACE AMONG THE WATERFALLS
-  19 | FRAGA DA MARRONDA: AN ANCESTRAL WOODLAND
-  23 | BOSQUE DA FERVENZA: FLOATING ON THE RIVER MIÑO
-  27 | CRUZUL AND AGÜEIRA: THE ENCHANTED WOODS
-  31 | OS ANCARES: HOME OF THE BEAR, WOLF AND GROUSE
-  35 | DEVESA DE ROGUEIRA: THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOODS OF ALL
-  39 | SANTA CRISTINA DE RIBAS DE SIL: THE BENEDICTINE WOODS
-  43 | SANTO ESTEVO DE RIBAS DE SIL: THE PRAYING WOODS
-  47 | BIDUEIRAL DE MONTEDERAMO: ON THE TRAIL OF THE WEREWOLF
-  51 | REBOLEIRAS DO NAVEA: THE DEEP WOODS
-  55 | SOUTO DE ROZABALES: THE MESSAGE OF THE TREES
-  59 | TEIXADAL DE CASAIO: THE INMORTAL WOODS
-  63 | XURÉS: THE BORDER WOODS
-  67 | CORTEGADA: THE ISLAND OF THE BAY WOODS
-  71 | FRAGA DE CATASÓS: WALKING ON A CARPET OF FALLEN LEAVES



recommended only with experienced guides



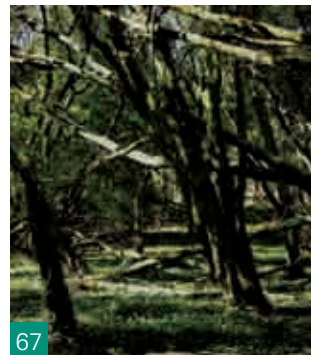
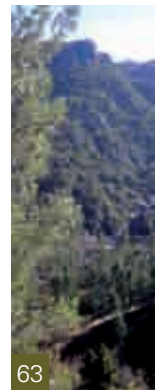
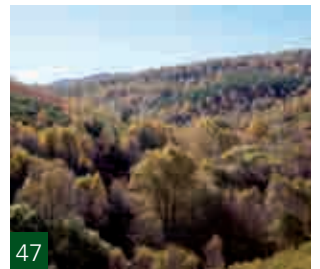
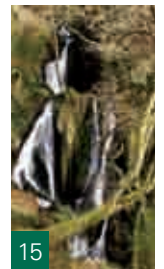
experienced hikers who know how to use maps and can find their way



occasional hikers



all types of people





GALICIAN WOODS

Galicia is green.

From sea level to its highest mountains –which can reach 2.000 m– Galicia offers a wide range of natural habitats.

The warm weather added to the plentiful rain allows the landscape to appear constantly as a green carpet. In between the mosaic of meadows, rivers and mountains, our wonderful woods stand out.

Islands which hide suprising laurel tree woods, oak tree groves which float on the river Miño, birch tree woods where the werewolf sought shelter, holm oak groves which have drifted away from the Mediterranean meadows to be covered in Atlantic moss, the westernmost beech tree woods on the Cantabrian coast, the largest yew tree wood in Europe...

Galicia is a mystery.

And so as to venture into its mysteries, we are invited to discover the most unique woods and the legends and myths which surround them. The Celtic druids, the enchanted rivers, the Ribeira Sacra, the eucalyptus trees' grandfather, the highest chestnut trees in Europe...

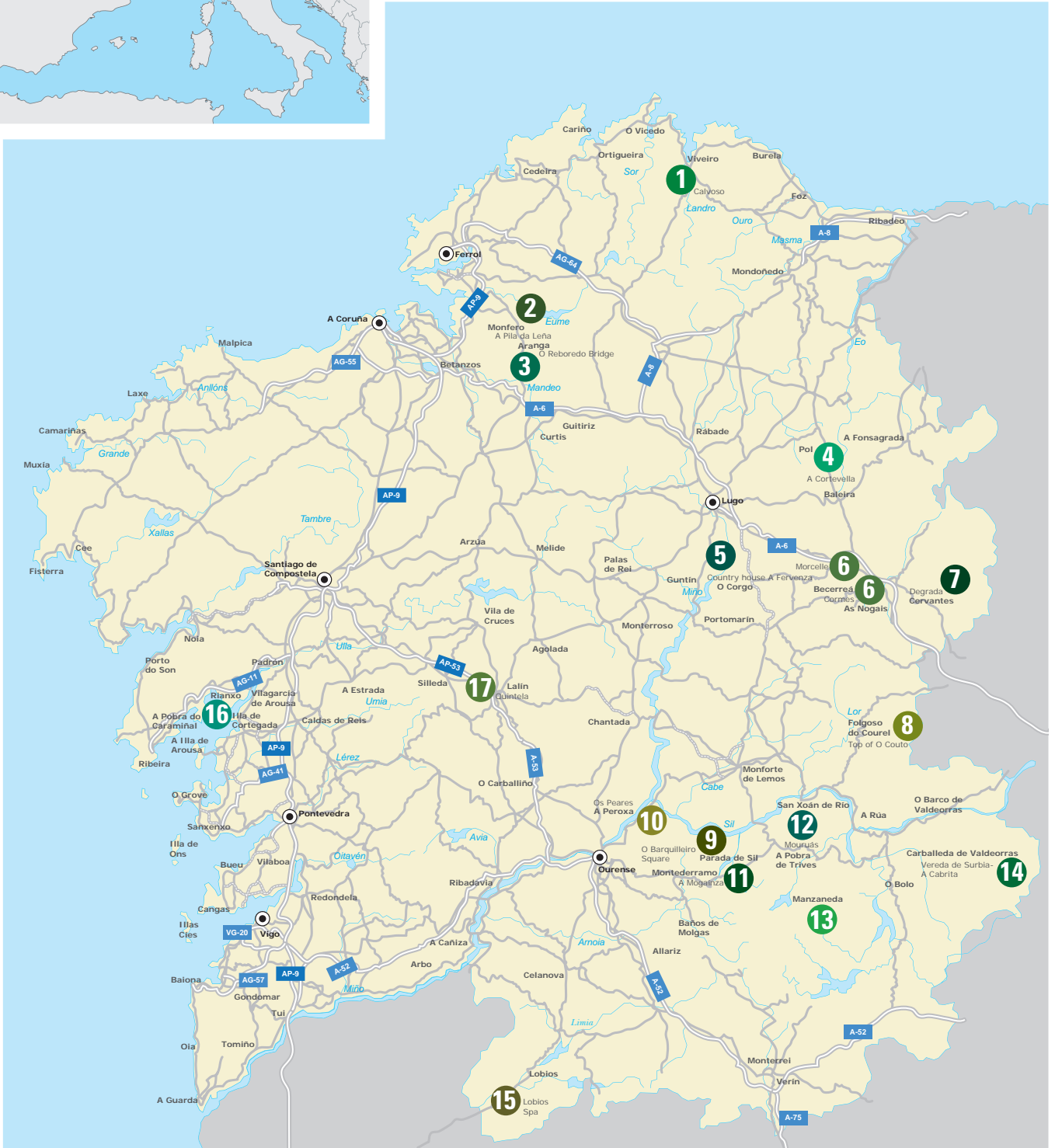
Galicia is nature.

And this is how we would like to preserve it: protected nature. The Illas Atlánticas National Park, the Fragas do Eume Natural Park, the Natural Monuments of the Souto da Retorta, the Souto de Rozabales or the Fraga de Catasós, the river Navea Protected Landscape, the Natura 2000 Ecological European Network...

We have chosen the best itineraries and the thickest woods in Galicia. And they are to be seen here.

Find your way around Galicia without missing a single thing.

Galician woods



Motorway / Dual carriageway	
High capacity road	
Others	



SOUTO DA RETORTA | 1



FRAGAS DO EUME | 2



FRAGA DAS BARBUDAS | 3



FRAGA DA MARRONDA | 4



BOSQUE DA FERVENZA | 5



CRUZUL AND AGÜEIRA | 6



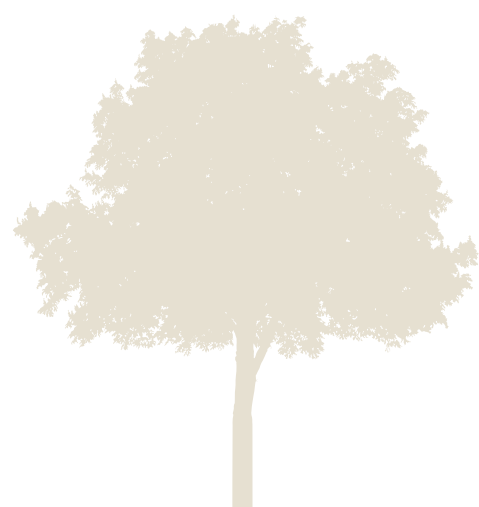
OS ANCARES | 7



DEVESA DE ROGUEIRA | 8



SANTA CRISTINA DE RIBAS DE SIL | 9





SANTO ESTEVO DE RIBAS DE SIL | 10



BIDUEIRAL DE MONTEDERRAMO | 11



REBOLEIRAS DO NAVEA | 12



SOUTO DE ROZABALES | 13



TEIXADAL DE CASAIO | 14



XURÉS | 15



CORTEGADA | 16



FRAGA DE CATAÓS | 17

Can you keep my secret?



SOUTO DA RETORTA

Can you keep my secret?



Souto da Retorta: the woodland of giants

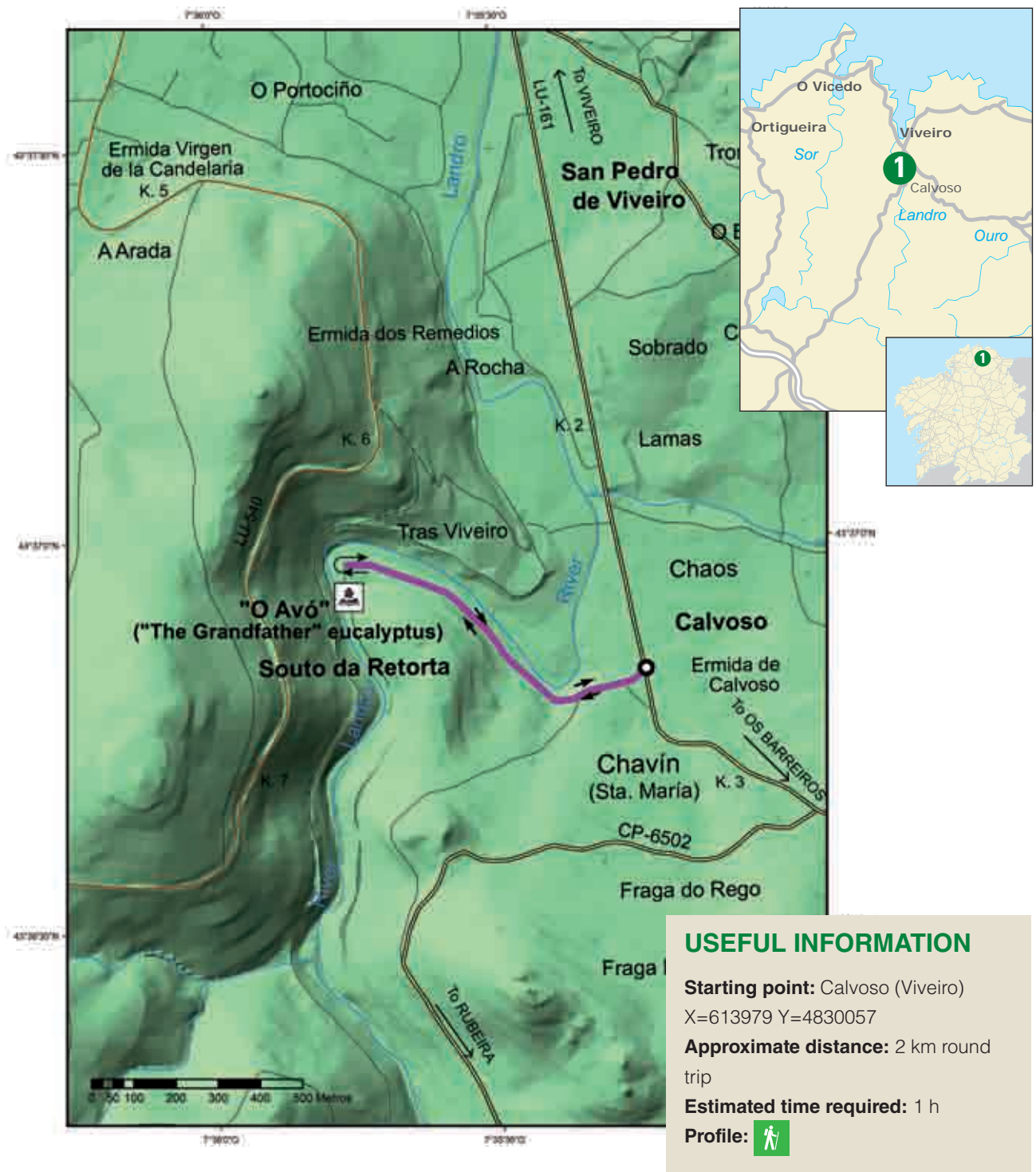
The eucalyptus tree arrived in Europe during the 19th century, specifically in Galicia, when a Galician priest brought its seeds from the faraway lands of Australia where he had been a missionary. And this species adapted so well to our climate that it spread massively throughout our entire region.

At the Souto da Retorta, also known as the Eucaliptal de Chavín (Chavín Eucalyptus tree wood), near the town of Viveiro, we will stumble upon some of the highest and widest eucalyptus trees in Europe, like the famous “O Avó” (The Grandfather) which was planted around 1880 and is over 67 m high and has a perimeter of 10,5 m. On our walk through this woods of giants we will be able to admire the colossal dimensions of these grandfather eucalyptus trees and hug them by joining hands around them.



ROUTE MAP

HOW TO ARRIVE?




USEFUL INFORMATION

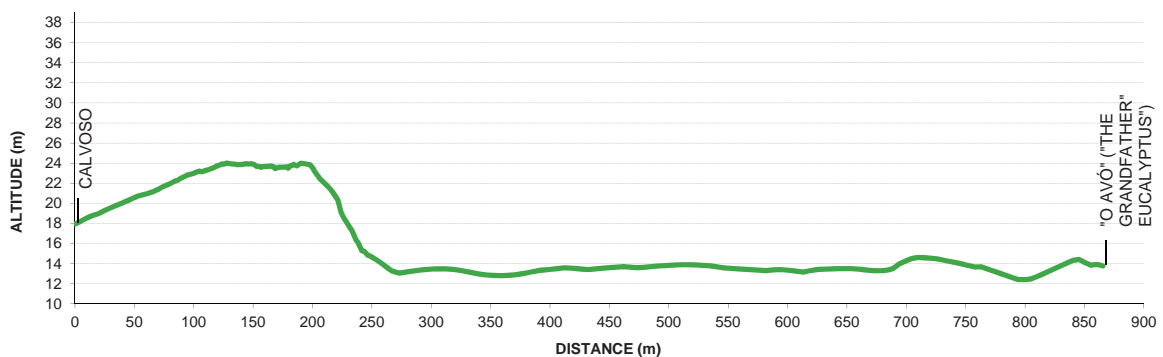
Starting point: Calvoso (Viveiro)
 X=613979 Y=4830057

Approximate distance: 2 km round trip

Estimated time required: 1 h

Profile: 

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Everything is ready to make the visit to this Natural Monument, the Souto da Retorta or the Eucaliptal de Chavín, easier. It is a simple walk which winds in between the river Landro and the canal which leads to the dam which is further up. In just over half a mile, we will get to know all the ancestors

of the eucalyptus trees which cover the Galician coastline.

Our itinerary starts off at Calvoso and ends where the largest eucalyptus tree stands, the one known as “O Avó” (The Grandfather). We shall return following the same trail back.



FRAGAS DO EUME

Can you keep my secret?



Fragas do Eume: the last atlantic woods

Hidden and placed within a deep valley, the river Eume runs spirited when its waters are free from the blockage of the dam. The array of colours from the surrounding woods is reflected upon the reservoir. One can sense the latent energy as if the river were taking a break before rushing over the steep canyon walls.

Galicia's great Atlantic woods, the Fragas do Eume, hides within it marvelous trees, moss and lichen, wildlife and mills which fill the visitor's senses with the magic of their constant whispers. In the middle of the woods, the outline of the old Monastery of Caaveiro emerges. Within its walls lived the monks who prayed and ploughed these lands in perfect harmony with nature.

Currently, the Fragas do Eume offer a network of trails which make the trip into the heart of the woods simpler. It is a green heart where one can wander off among the holly trees, the strawberry trees, oak trees and hundred-year-old chestnut trees. Maybe the fairies which live here are hidden under the giant leaves of the primitive fern.

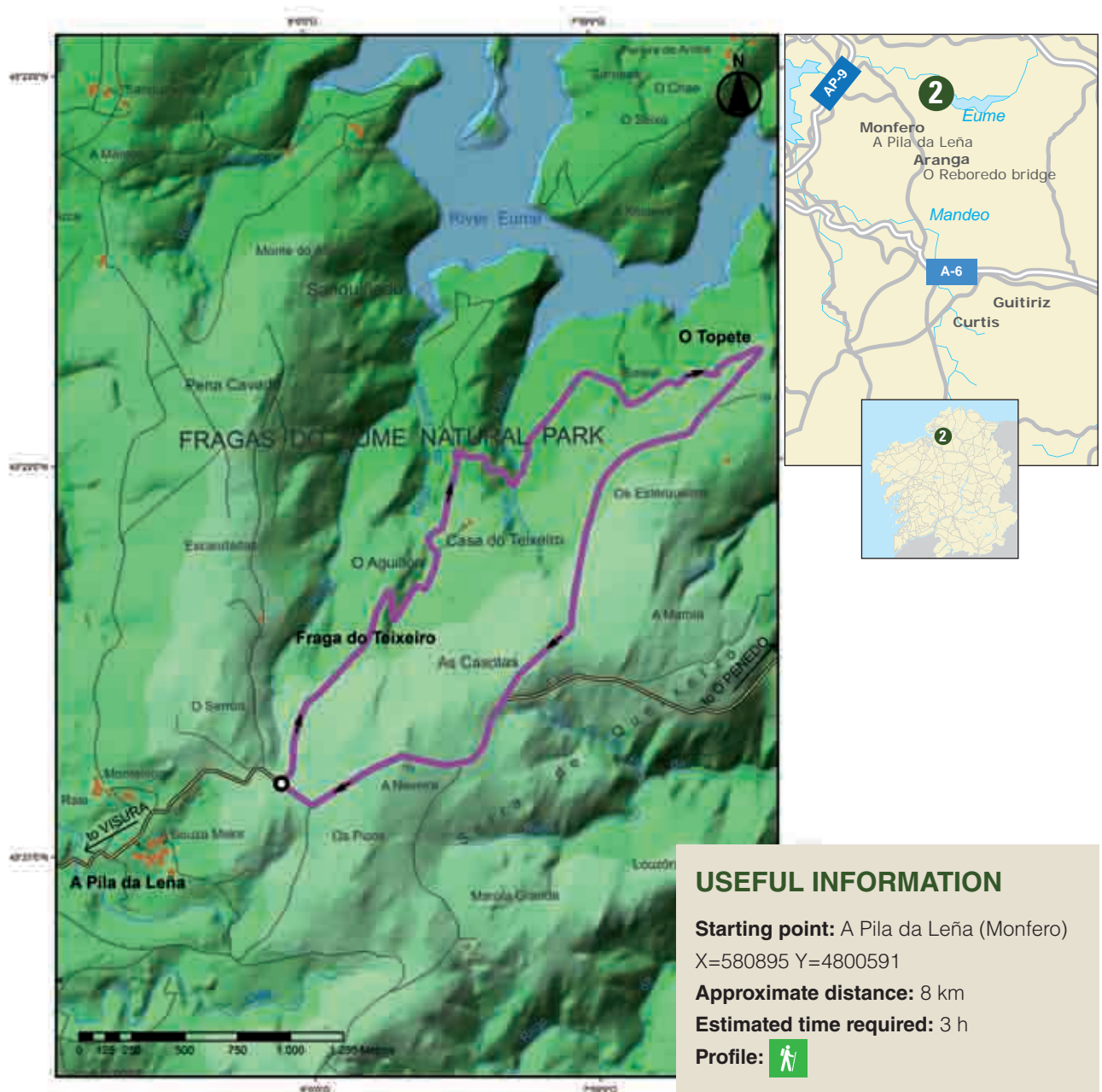
A wide selection of colours will take us from the autumn yellows to the green umbrella which the leaves shape into and offer shade during the spring and summer afternoons.

To begin with, we suggest one of the most beautiful trails: Os Cerqueiros.

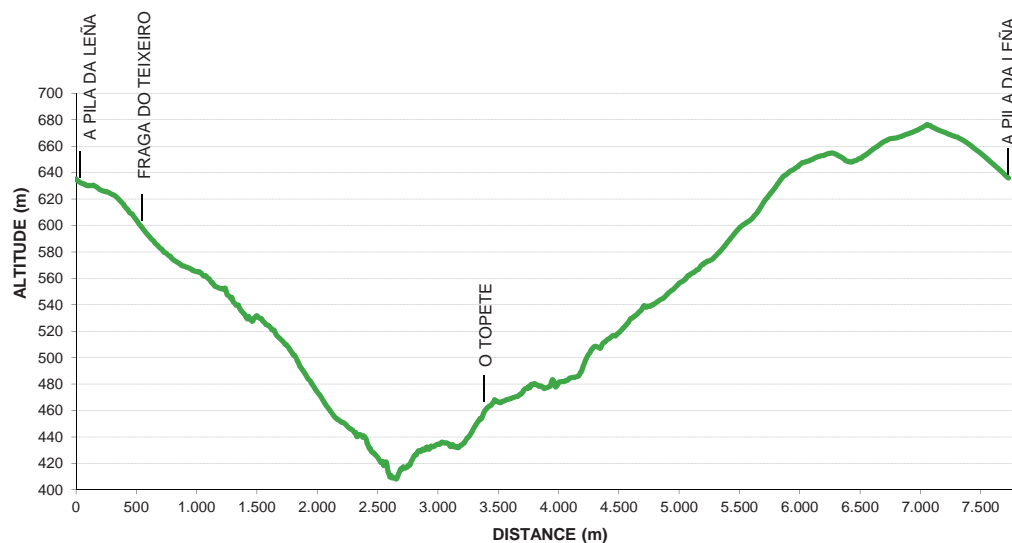


ROUTE MAP

HOW TO ARRIVE?



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Os Cerqueiros trail is very easy, it is impossible to get lost and what is more, it will allow us to admire the vast vegetation in this Natural Park. In order to find the starting point, we shall approach the Monastery of Monfero and then head towards A Visura. Once we arrive, we will make our way to A Pila da Leña, until we get to some information panels which will officially welcome us to Os Cumios de Sanguinredo and to our trail: Os Cerqueiros. This trail starts and ends among pine trees, it crosses an intense, deep “fraga” (oak tree wood) and it approaches the bottom of the mountain. In case this were not enough, it will offer us the chance to visit the reservoir or some currently abandoned villages which will tell us about the traditional life in these lands. Be aware! We are covering terrain where the wolf, shy and suspicious of humans, roams.

We shall start off downhill through pine trees and meadows. Very soon, on our right, we will be able to see how the Teixeira valley and “fraga” emerge. They quickly become thick and dense and hide

within amazing trees, wildlife, mills, moss, lichen and the magical life of the wild “fragas”. All this wealth is protected by the absence of roads and the steep sides of the valley.

On this stretch, the trail still offers great views which rival with the mystery we can sense in the valley which appears on our left. In the background of this natural scene, we will be able to make out the Fontardi3n peak.

Let us continue until we arrive at a 90 degree bend on our right where we need to make a decision: to carry on along Os Cerqueiros trail or to venture into a wide path which will lead us to the reservoir and thus taking the opportunity to enter the mysterious wood which could be seen from the very beginning of the route.

Back on the main trail, we shall continue our route which will lead us into the “fraga” and which will offer several short but interesting detours; so, if we have time we should not miss them.

The route will take us back to the main road and shortly after to the starting point.



FRAGA DAS BARBUDAS

Can you keep my secret?



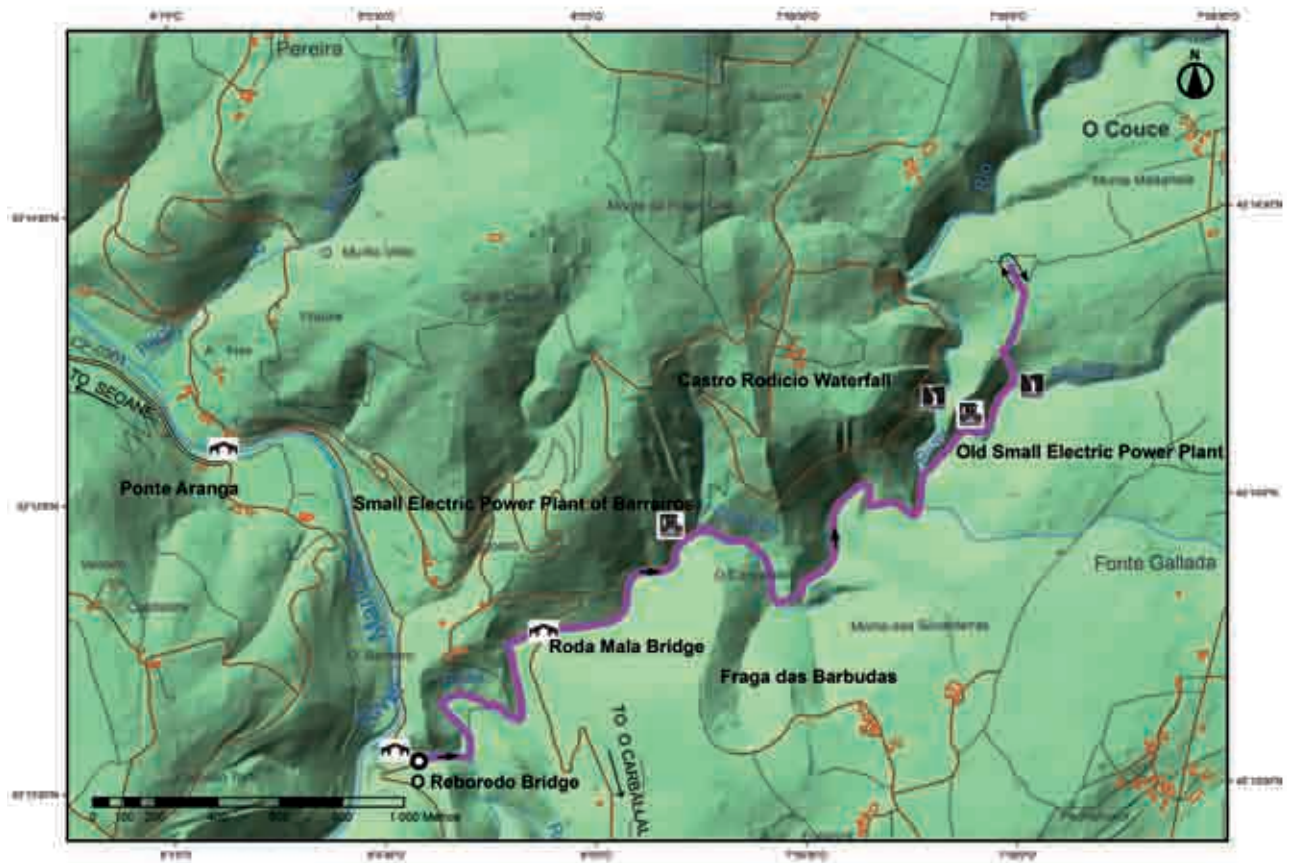
Fraga das Barbudas: peace among the waterfalls

There is peace within the rush of the river. The waters run and jump over the rocks, they fill the valley with their voice which speaks words of peace and tranquility.

The river Cambás is a deep broken line which crosses Fraga das Barbudas. Numerous falls expand the river's voice. Landscapes full of slopes and great trees, which may at one moment filter the sun's rays onto a meadow and at another, shelter the darkest spots where moss and lichen feast.

Goats, foxes, roe deer and wild boar are witnesses to the intense relationship between the river and the wood. Downstream, the river Mandeo awaits and with it the lushness of other woods which accompany it on its way to the ocean.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?

USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: O Reboredo bridge (Aranga)

X=580641 Y=4786459

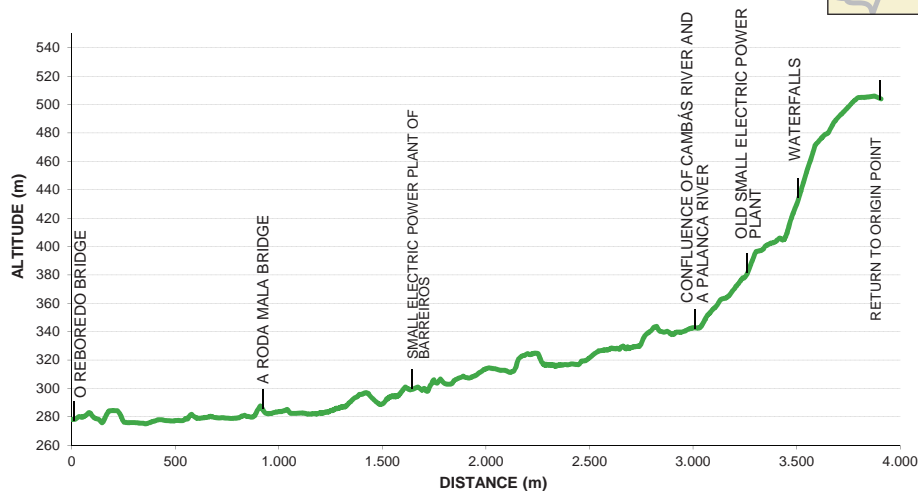
Approximate distance: 8 km round trip

Estimated time required: 4 h

Profile:



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

We propose a route which follows the course of the river Cambás where it empties into the river Mandeo. As it is a part of the network of the Mandeo Trails, it is signposted, so all we need to worry about is enjoying nature. We can park our car near Ponte Aranga leaving the river to our right until we get to the starting point of the route at O Reboredo bridge.

On the first stretch, the trail goes upriver through “fragas” and rapids, mills and pastures, until we get to the small electric power plant of Barreiros. From here, the trail becomes a little complicated, but not to worry, we will come across walkways and handrails; this will allow us to continue without a struggle.

When we get to the confluence with the river A Palanca, the route follows its course among waterfalls. Yet again, a mini power station will be our next milestone. It is an old abandoned power station which once produced electricity for the nearby villages. The work which was done on the steep slopes so as to enable the people in charge to get to it “to turn on the light” is amazing. We will be able to go up the steep hill by making use of

the steps which remain from some old stairs and we will reach the top part of the valley. Here, the trees are impressive. The waterfalls appear one after another, and more and more beautiful until we come to the last three which could well reach a height of 20 m. Awesome!

This route will give us the chance to leave the valley and head towards the village of O Couce. Just before the village, among pastures and farmland, it is worthwhile to stop and look back at the massive wood we have just covered; undoubtedly, a smile will fill our faces. Feeling that we have fulfilled our purpose, it is time to head back to the starting point.

Where the river A Palanca and the river Cambás meet, we will be able to see some old signs and posters which show the old route from the East to the Castro Rodicio waterfall. A landslide makes it impossible to follow this route although we may go up the river bed if the water allows it and search for traces of this lost trail. Yet, this route is not signposted and it could be risky. If we do decide to take it, we should take into account the energy we have left and of our knowledge on trekking.



FRAGA DA MARRONDA

Can you keep my secret?



Fraga da Marronda: an ancestral woodland

In the high lands of the town council of Baleira, in the province of Lugo, we will find some unique woods where the westernmost beech trees in Europe grow. The metamorphosis of the seasons will lead us from the golden shades of autumn to the winter bareness, giving way to the spring which dyes the light which enters the woods green.

Humans have adapted to this half mountainous, half forest terrain and have become a part of it and thus, as we follow the signposted trail, we shall discover their traces in the shape of bridges, mills, granaries and other constructions. Our steps will lead us to the source of the river Eo, which makes its way towards the Cantabrian Sea through the mountains and these hundred-year-old woods. The forever-changing light and colour will bid us to return and cover it again from a different angle.

ROUTE MAP




HOW TO ARRIVE?

USEFUL INFORMATION

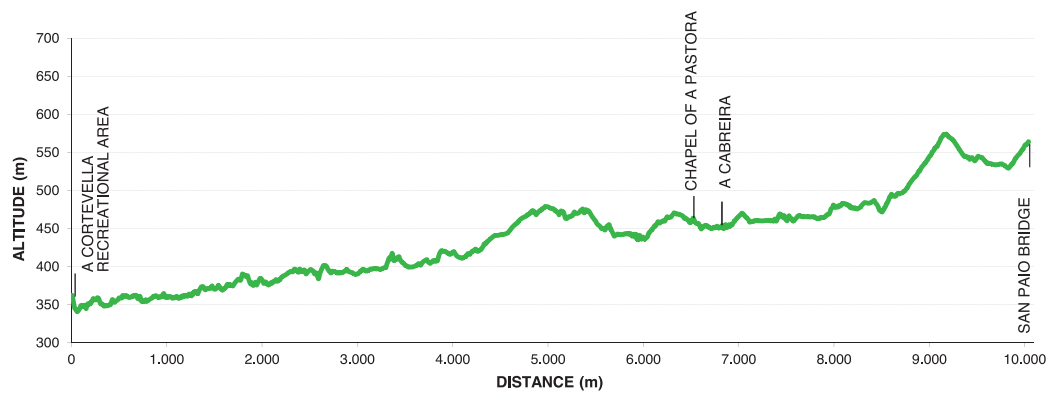
Starting point: A Cortevella (Baleira)
X=644424 Y=4770720

Approximate distance: 20 km round trip

Estimated time required: 5 h 30 min

Profile: 

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Fraga da Marronda woods are well-known for being the source of the river Eo. It has a perfectly signposted itinerary, which will take us through a gallery-like forest which spreads out around the river and its tributaries during the first half.

The route we suggest in order to visit the “fraga” begins at the A Cortevella recreational area. To get there, we take the road which leads to Meira once we arrive at O Cádavo-Baleira. On our way we will pass Fonteó, where it is a good idea to stop and contemplate the source of the river Eo, right by the road. From Fonteó, we need to head to A Muíña where we will find a turning on the right towards Martín along a spectacular road which crosses exuberant woods with scattered villages here and there. As we pass Martín, we should watch out for a signposted turning on the right towards A Cortevella. Our proposal is part of the official PR-G 145 route, which is perfectly marked and which

will point out the upstream route we need to follow. All the typical trees to be found in a “fraga” grow in A Marronda: oaks, birches, chestnut trees, holly trees, rowan trees or hazelnut trees. However, the beech tree stands out among them all and it gives this forest landscape a remarkable personality.

Signs of human presence are abundant in the middle of these woods. As well as the houses and granaries which have been abandoned in A Cabreira, we shall come across bridges, “sequeiros” (drying places) and some mills which remind us that these paths were trodden by people who would work in the “fraga” as a part of their daily routine. The Chapel of A Pastora and the San Paio bridge will also be there to greet us. We suggest turning round at this point and heading back to the start, although, if we feel up to it, we can always continue discovering the beauty of this area by completing the PR-G 145.



BOSQUE DA FERVENZA

Can you keep my secret?



Bosque da Fervenza: floating on the river Miño

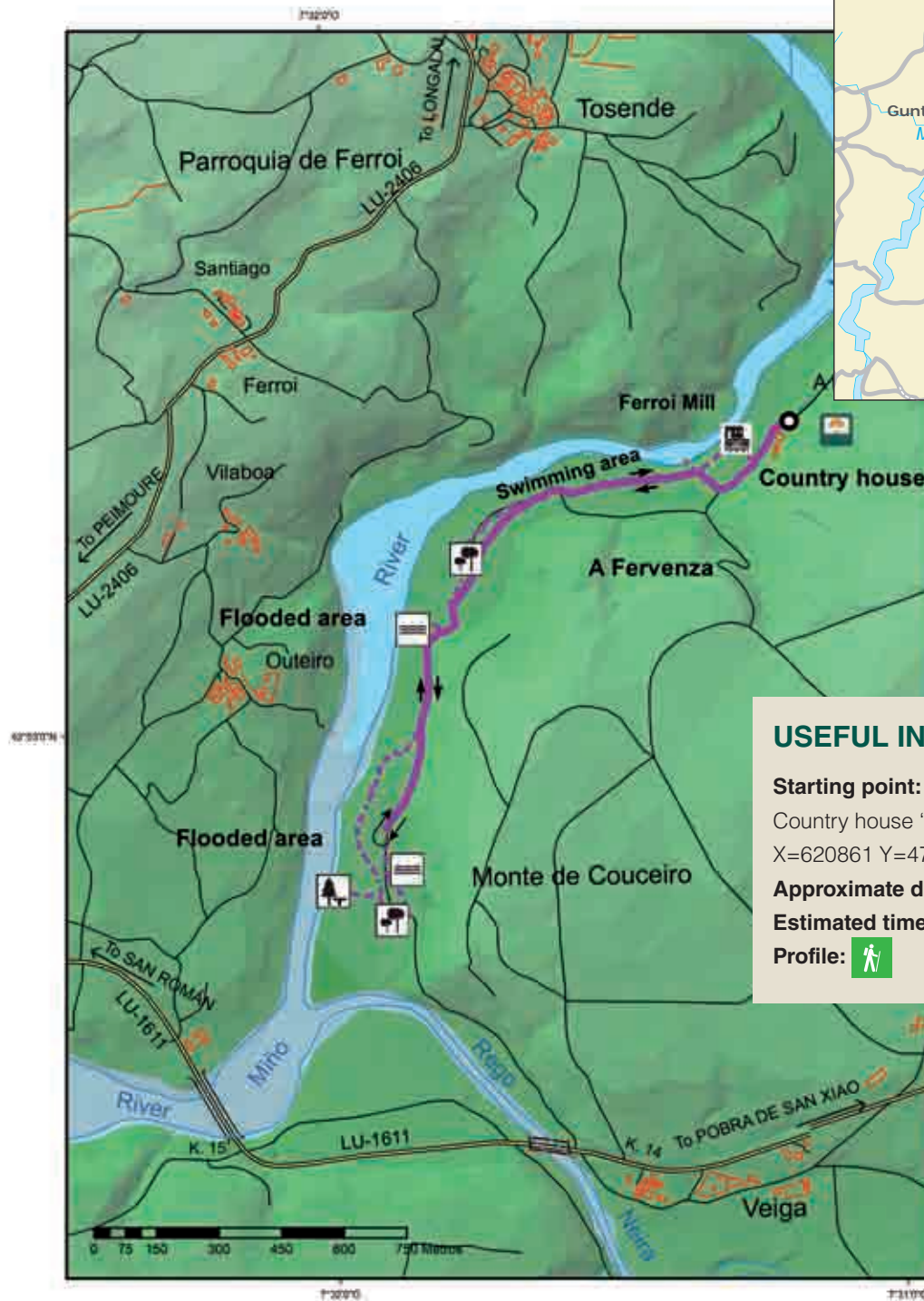
The hundred-year-old Bosque da Fervenza is an autochthonous forest which is periodically flooded by the river. This is the time when oak trees which are over 300 years old and colossal alder trees take a swim and cool off their roots. The lagoons, ponds and river isles decorate a very unique landscape.

A Fervenza forest is located upstream on the river Miño in an area declared as Biosphere Reserve. It is one of the most important flood woods which remain in the Iberian Peninsula. It is well preserved and alder trees, oaks, ash trees and willows are its main inhabitants.

The waters of the river seem to be boiling and they become wild in the rapids and the dams which lead them to a mill. So in Galician we say, it is the “fervenza” (boiling) forest.

ROUTE MAP

HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point:

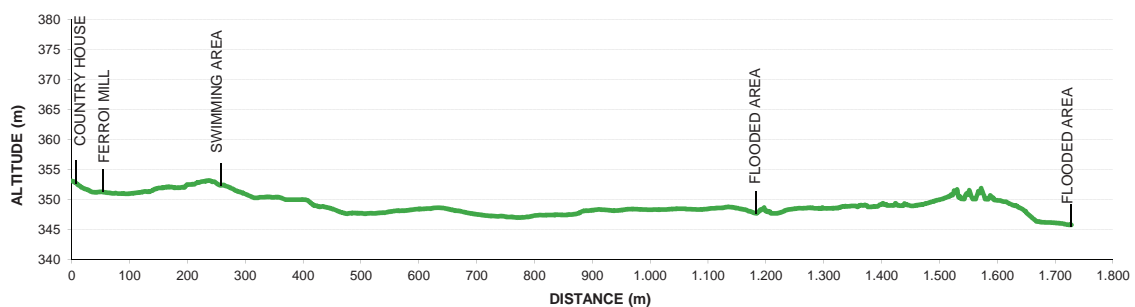
Country house "A Ferverza" (O Corgo)
 X=620861 Y=4749716

Approximate distance: 3,5 km

Estimated time required: 2 h 30 min

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Several times a year, the river and the wood blend into one as the waters of the river Miño flood the wood and create a unique ecosystem which is very close to the city of Lugo. The 15 km which separate A Fervenza from the capital of the province can be covered easily along a practically flat track which crosses riverside woods, mills, isles and rural landscapes.

For those who wish to rest and continue the route the next day, there are options for accommodation

in the area where we can regain our strength. Several paths run through A Fervenza forest reaching the hundred-year-old oak trees which sink their roots in the puddles which appear when the river Miño retreats or which seem to emerge from the depths of the Earth when the woods are flooded by the river's waters. For each season in the year will become a different experience in this unique, changing gift of nature. We suggest a 2 km trail along the river Miño and back.



CRUZUL AND AGÜEIRA

Can you keep my secret?



Cruzul and Agüeira: the enchanted wood

To the east, the Encinar de Cruzul (holm oaks); to the west, the Souto de Agüeira (chestnut tree woods), let us embark on a trip through Galicia's natural history.

In the heart of wet Galicia a holm oak forest is rare. Yet it exists. The Cruzul holm oak forest is different. Multi-coloured and thick, its trees prevent us from seeing the wood. Moss and lichen decorate the tree trunks so we do not forget that we are in Galicia. No meadows nor Iberian pigs. There we will find various species of owls, toads and “meigas” (Galician witches). Cruzul is an enchanted forest.

In the lands of chestnut trees, there are legends which speak of the healing power of these great trees. They offer remedies for gout or rheumatism, for sadness or for belly-aches. And if we are feeling low-spirited the pollen from the chestnut tree is truly invigorating.

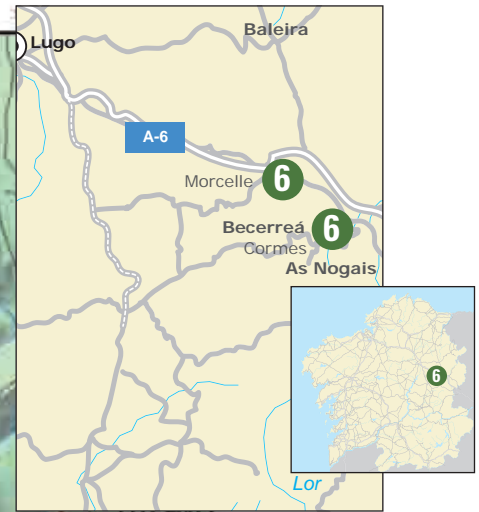
For many years the “soutos” prevented neighbours from dying from starvation. And thus, the landscape confirms this. There are trails and tracks which lead into the woods where we can collect chestnuts and contemplate the trees which have been pruned year after year.

And where man cannot reach, tall, thin chestnut trees appear in search of light on the shady slopes. The slender ones are sons and daughters of the woods and the wider ones associates of man.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

ENCINAR DE CRUZUL

Starting point: Morcelle (Becerreá)

X:652677, Y:4744886

Approximate distance: 2 km round trip

Estimated time required: 1 h

Profile:

SOUTO DE AGÜEIRA

Starting point: Cormes (Becerreá)

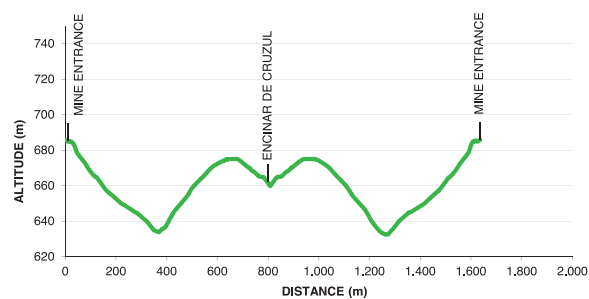
X:653284, Y:4742549

Approximate distance: 3 km round trip

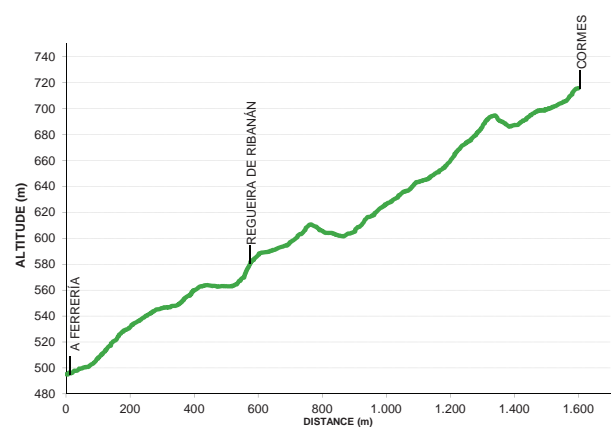
Estimated time required: 2 h

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILES



ENCINAR DE CRUZUL



SOUTO DE AGÜEIRA



ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

Before you begin, it is important to point out that there are no signposted routes to help you visit these two woods; so you need to pay special attention to our map and the instructions. Also, at some point, you will need to decide how far into the woods you are willing to go; so, we recommend being very cautious and calmly enjoying the beauty and uniqueness of the surroundings. These routes have been designed so that you can venture into the woods in a simple fashion, but if you still want more, there is a wide selection of tourist packages where nature guides will gladly take you in deeper. One of the best ways to visit the Encinar de Cruzul is by following the trail which starts just before the village of Morcelle, a few miles away from Becerreá. Watch out! The clue to discover where this route begins is a sign which indicates the entrance to a mine. You can leave your car there and enter the Encinar de Cruzul. The map is easy to follow and

the way down and entrance to the woods will be easy to identify. We suggest a return trip.

Once you are in the thick of the woods, you should bear in mind that you will be on uneven grounds with steep slopes as well as slippery lichen which may give you an unnecessary scare.

In order to complete our experience, after Cruzul the Souto de Agüeira awaits. The trail which will lead you there starts at the quaint little village of Cormes, following the same road from Morcelle. In Cormes, a continuous uphill route reaches A Ferreira. This chestnut tree wood will offer you beautiful colourful snapshots and marvellous views of the valley. As you are here, you can visit the Chapel of Santo Estevo and the Casa Boado. This time, you will take the lower fountain as a reference where you will see a sign which points the way to A Ferreira crossing the heart of the “souto”.



OS ANCARES

Can you keep my secret?



Os Ancares: home of the bear, wolf and grouse

It is not easy to come across a bear while we are taking a walk in Os Ancares, yet it is not impossible. According to the Fundación Oso Pardo (Brown Bear Foundation), this plantigrade has returned to the Lugo mountains during the 21st century and it feels at home in these woods. However, in these mountainous lands there are also some other emblematic inhabitants like the wolf and the grouse.

In Os Ancares, we will encounter beautiful mountain landscapes and an exuberant example of nature which at the same time can become rugged and offers a tough snowy winter season. In some villages, some pre-Roman constructions –the “pallozas”– which have been used until recent times, can still be found.

All over the woods, we will discover the magic of nature: that of the great hollow oak which blossoms every year or of the holly tree which dyes the snow red in winter.

ROUTE MAP



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Degrada (Cervantes)

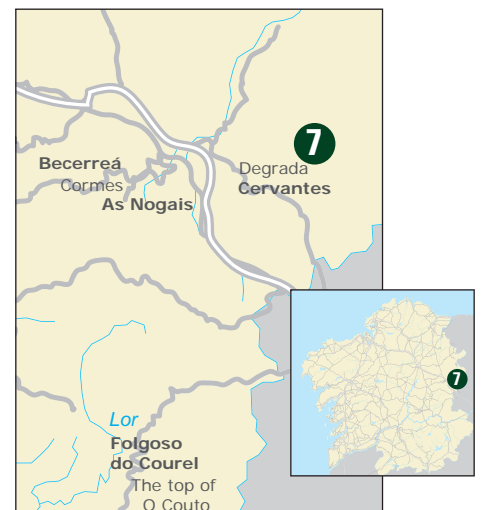
X=670014 Y=4743129

Approximate distance: 17,63 km

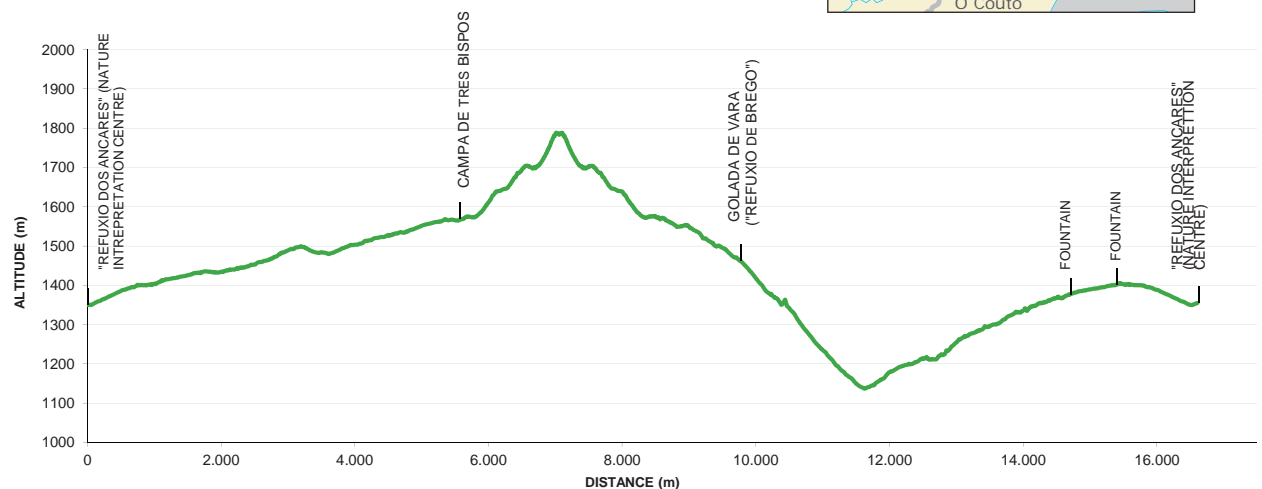
Estimated time required: 5 h 30 min

Profile: 

HOW TO ARRIVE?



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Even though there are many woods which fill Os Ancares with their colours, on this occasion, we suggest setting off from Cabana Vella so as to cover them all. The excitement involved in covering Os Ancares along this hiking trail will lead us to a little village in the municipality of Cervantes called Degrada. Behind the emblematic Ancares Club lodge, we will find the Nature Interpretation Centre which is a good starting point where to gather useful information for the day ahead.

From here, we will begin a route which will turn into a trip in time: we will head towards an era when woods were full of magic and mystery, as the Cabana Vella woods will open up a window to these past times.

The route is not signposted but there is no need to panic. It is easy to find our way if the weather is favourable. We shall take the track that leads upwards from the Ancares Club car park. We will soon get to a fork where we should bear left towards the Tres Bispos peak. After a three-and-a-half mile hike, we will have reached a clearing on the mountain. At this stage, the track ends and gives way to a narrow path which bravely enters

the thick woods we will see on the right. For those more intrepid adventurers, an hour long detour can be taken here in order to reach the top of the popular Tres Bispos peak. The route will be longer and slightly harder, yet the struggle will surely be worthwhile as we will be able to contemplate some breath-taking views.

Back at the clearing, the uphill track we will need to find on our right could be the most complicated part of the route as both if it is snowing or if there is lush spring vegetation, we might not be able to make it out clearly. So, we should pay attention to our map! Once we have found our bearings, the path continues among trees until we reach the “golada” de Vara. Here, we leave behind the natural path and take a trail on the right which at last crosses the magical Cabana Vella wood and leads us back to our starting point.

It is recommended to walk calmly through the woods while we pay utmost attention so as to capture all the sensations this wood has to offer. Who knows, we may even hear the call of the male grouse trying to charm a female or the howl of Wolf congregating its herd.



DEVESA DE ROGUEIRA

Can you keep my secret?



Devesa de Rogueira: the most beautiful woods of all

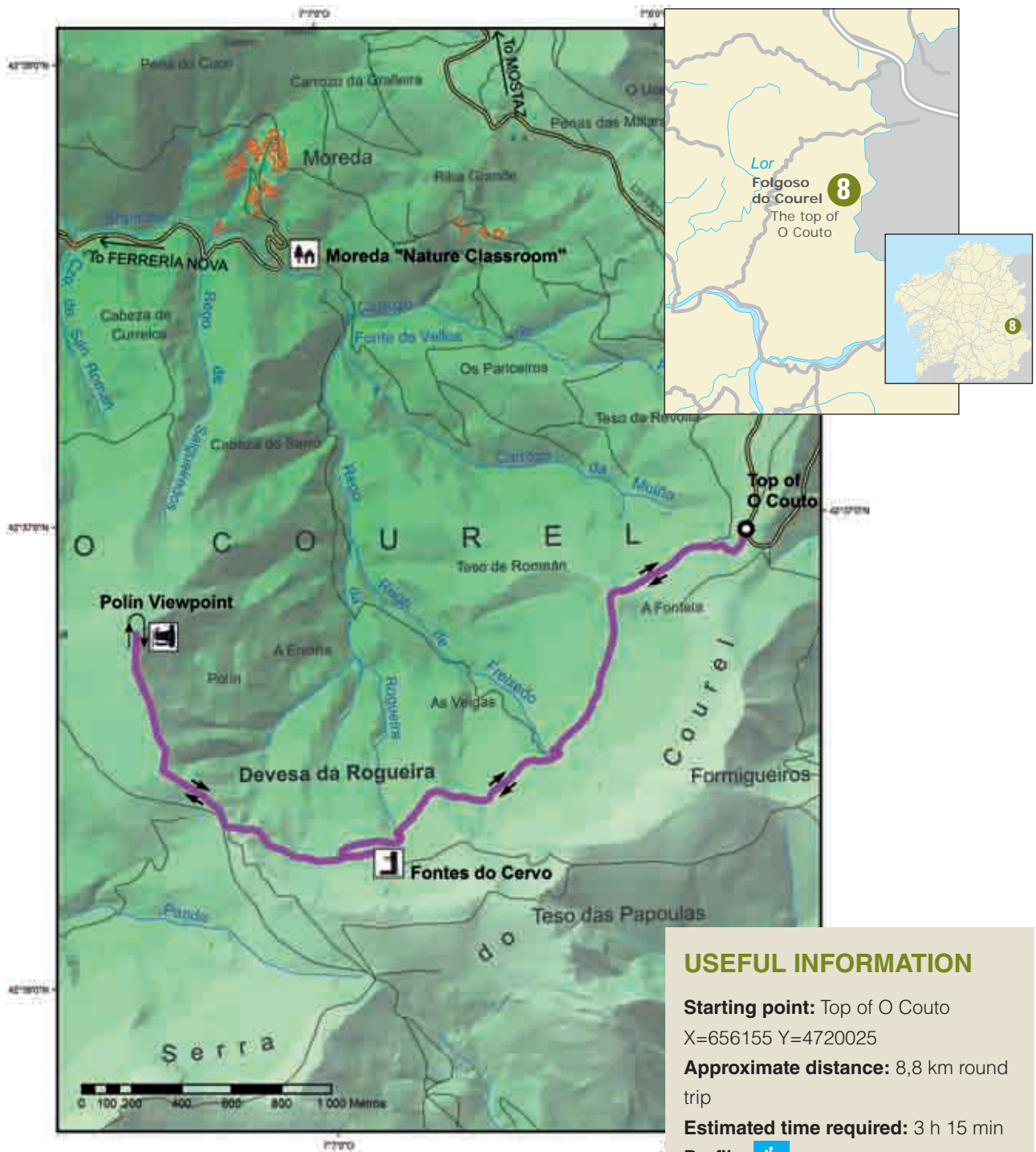
O Courel mountain range is a huge green reserve. In its valleys and mountains we will encounter the largest variety of vegetation in Galicia. And it is here where our most beautiful woods, Devesa da Rogueira, hide.

Beech trees are mixed with yews, oaks, rowan trees, maple trees, chestnut trees... a botanist's paradise and also for those who love nature. The paths which cross this area offer an array of colours which are full of life and are worthwhile visiting by everyone. Approaching these woods produces fascination and enchantment. The green blanket which covers them climbs up the mountains to the glacier lagoon, where the views are splendid. A step higher will lead us to the Formigueiros peak. We have reached heaven.

The possibilities these woods have to offer are endless; our experience unique.

ROUTE MAP

HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Top of O Couto
 X=656155 Y=4720025

Approximate distance: 8,8 km round trip

Estimated time required: 3 h 15 min

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Our suggestion is one of the best options to get to know these beautiful woods. On this occasion, you are fortunate as you can make use of the Moreda "Nature Classroom" in Seoane do Courel where you will also begin your route. You need to check maps, find your bearings, and obtain interesting information all of which are necessary when you venture into an unknown area.

Though it is possible to start a beautiful route from the Nature Classroom to Fontes do Cervo, we suggest an alternative, simpler and for all ages. You can actually get to the top of O Couto, at an altitude of 1.311 m, by car on the Seoana/Visuña road. Almost at the very top of this mountain pass, there is a path that leads to the woods. It

is a practically flat path where viewpoints upon the valley give you the chance to contemplate the forest with its magical spots full of beautiful old trees as you cross streams and cascades. If you continue, you will also reach Fontes do Cervo, but in a much more relaxed fashion. From the springs, you will cross the Devesa through the only path you will encounter until you get to the Polín viewpoint, where you can once again take your time and contemplate the magnificent views before making your way back. It will seem a short trip and when you get back to O Couto, you will probably be thinking when to return... for O Courel always surprises the visitor even if you visit it a thousand times.



SANTA CRISTINA DE RIBAS DE SIL

Can you keep my secret?



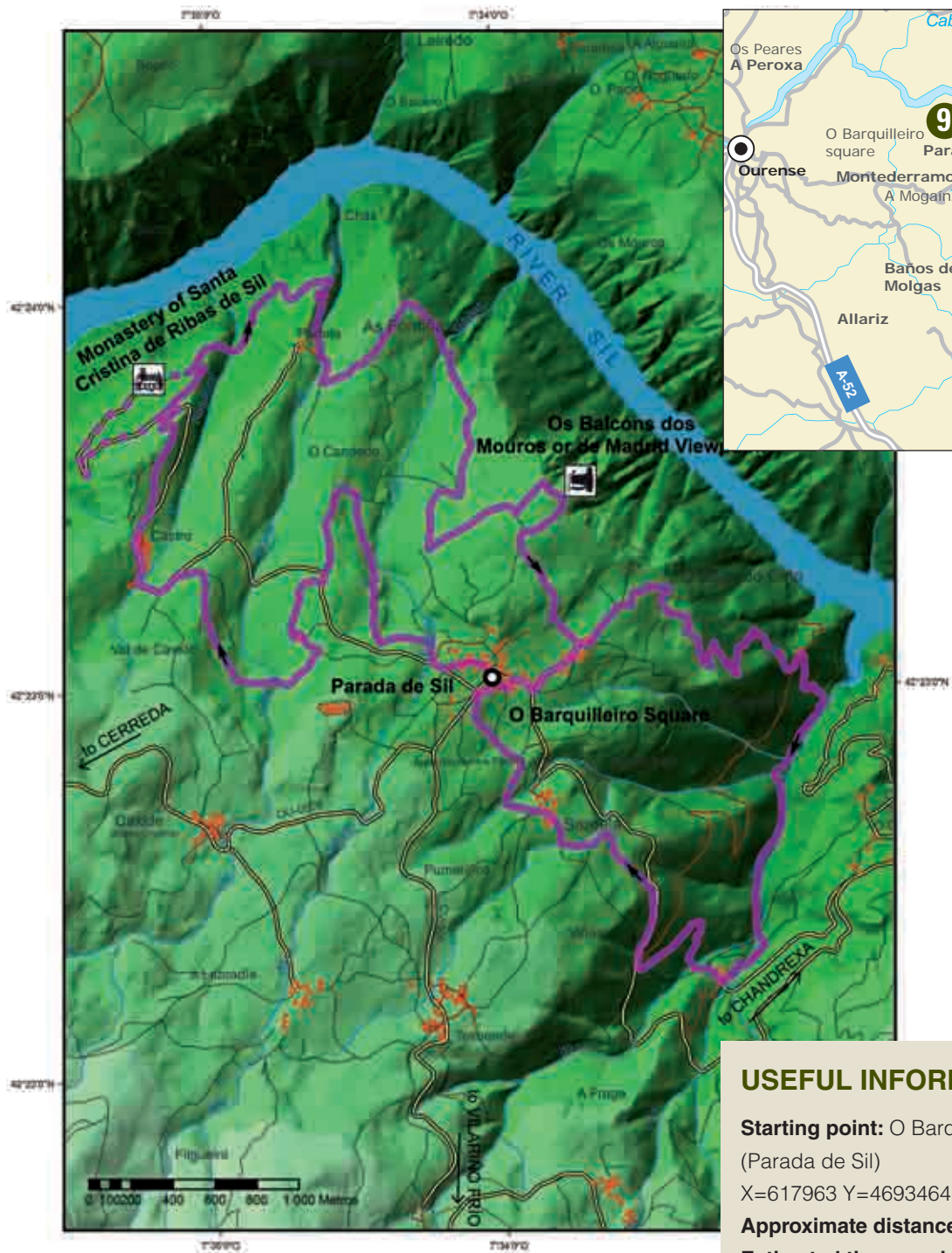
Santa Cristina de Ribas de Sil: the benedictine woods

Thousands of chestnut trees coat the south slope of the river Sil canyon. The belfry of a monastery stands out just over the top of them. In the shade of the woods, the shadows of the tree trunks mislead us and here and there monks suddenly appear. Is this our imagination or is it real? In this special, magical and beautiful place our senses play tricks on us. We are in the Ribeira Sacra.

The landscape here is made up of the letters of a simple alphabet for beginners. As we read, words like light, woods, vineyards or meanders appear.

To be able to grasp its entire beauty one needs to come here at least four times a year so as to explore each season. It is necessary to approach the road calmly and listen to the voice of the river, the happy whistling of the wind and the historical speech of every stone in the monastery.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: O Barquilleiro square (Parada de Sil)

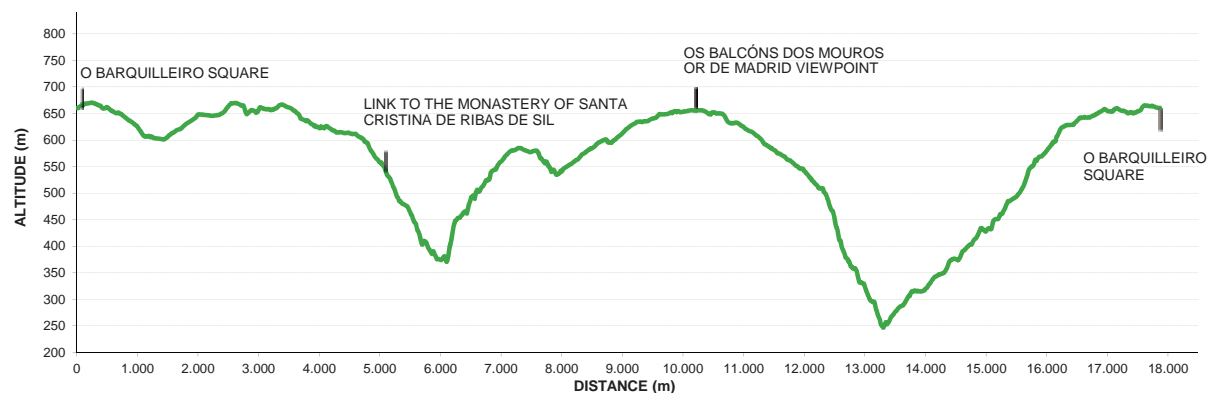
X=617963 Y=4693464

Approximate distance: 18,10 km

Estimated time required: 6 h 15 min

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

At Parada de Sil we have a route which condenses all the charms of the Ribeira Sacra. The PR-G 98, perfectly signposted, begins and ends at O Barquilleiro (person who sells wafers) square. This square takes its name from the many youths who immigrated to Madrid where they made a living selling wafers in parks and boulevards. In the village square, where there is a statue in honor of these immigrants, we shall set the starting point of our route. An information panel will explain all the necessary information to make this experience a complete one.

The route has the shape of the number eight enabling us to choose the complete 18 km itinerary or one of the 8,5 km or 10 km loops. We recommend the stretch which leads to the Monastery of Santa Cristina which is a must. Whether we choose the complete trail or one of the loops, we will be before one of the best short trails in Galicia. Not only is there beauty, a variety of landscapes and cultural and historical monuments but also well-kept signs which allow us to fulfill the experience in one of the most emblematic stretches of the River Sil canyons.



SANTO ESTEVO DE RIBAS DE SIL

Can you keep my secret?

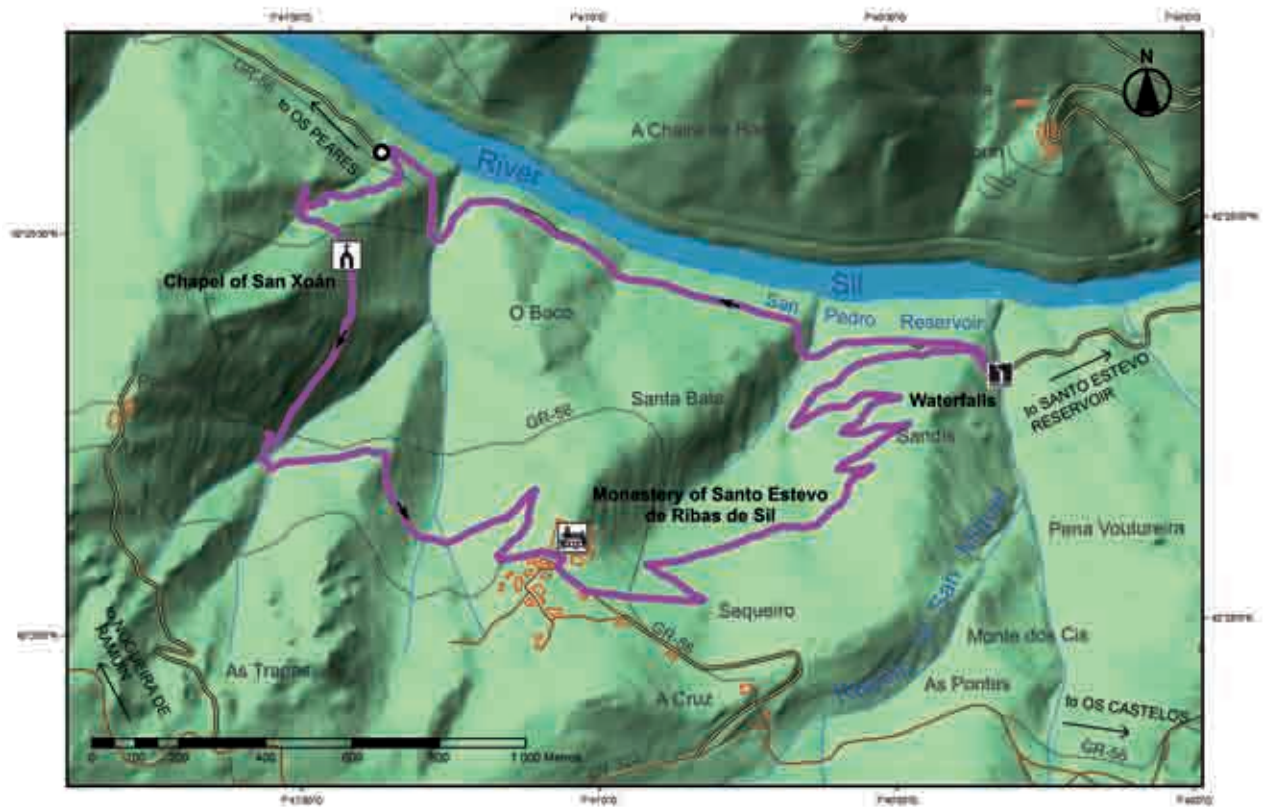


Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil: the praying woods

The river Sil runs along the bottom of a deep valley which shelters a riverside wood where Mediterranean vegetation grows alongside the typical vegetation found in a Galician “fraga”. Further up, the remains of the Chapel of San Xoán offer us a spot from where to take in magnificent views. And even higher up, we can just make out the outline of the monastery in between oaks and chestnut trees.

What was once the Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil is now a friendly Touristic “Parador” (state-owned hotel). The rooms, which were once the monks’ cells, have been brilliantly restored. Protected by the thick wood, the monastery whispers its secrets to the Chapel of San Xoán. We can listen in silence to their conversation. At times, words and prayers can be heard here.

ROUTE MAP




USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Os Peares (A Peroxa)

X=607833 Y=4698065

Approximate distance: 7 km

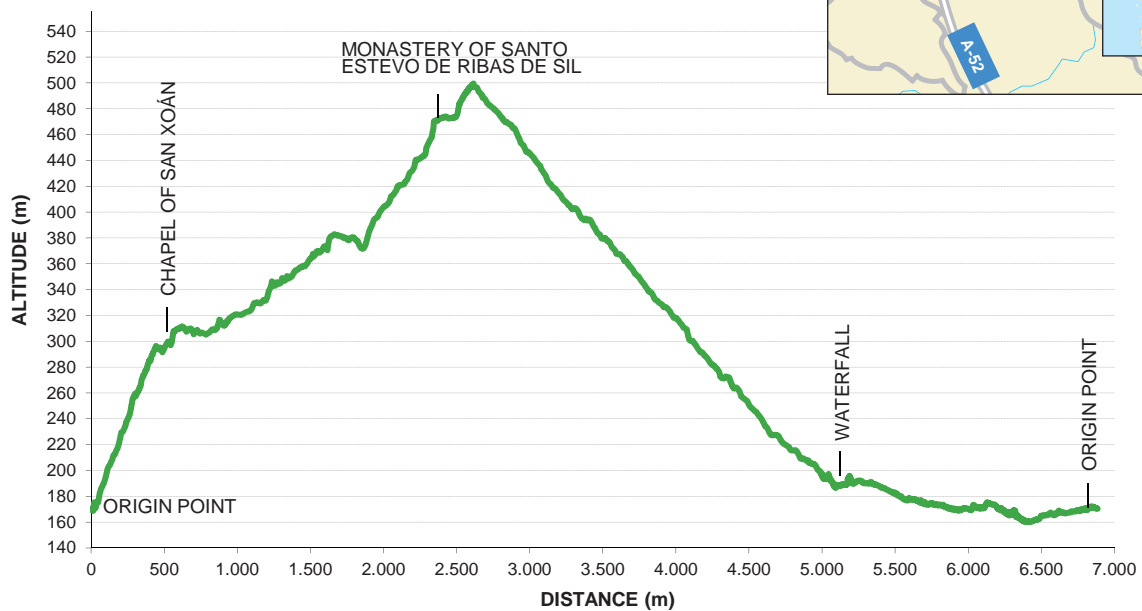
Estimated time required: 3 h

Profile: 

HOW TO ARRIVE?



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route we suggest on this occasion is circular, so we can start and finish at any of the spots through which it runs. We recommend setting off at the road which leads to the San Pedro power station, and then continues upstream by the river Sil, from Os Peares. We will drive for about four miles until we get to a small car park where the information panels for the route are too.

Our walk begins by the river where we will try not to be put off by the steep slope which welcomes us. The trail rises at a rate which we should approach calmly as the effort is for a short while and the prize is worth it. In order to catch our breath, we can look for the remains of the Chapel of San Xoán and just enjoy the surrounding beauty.

We shall leave behind the chapel by crossing an amazing forest which combines beautiful views with a variety of trees and vegetation. Half way along the proposed route, we will come to the

Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil. At first it will be hidden by the trees but as we come closer its shapes will appear imposing. When we get to the “Parador”, we can take some time to cool off in a very soothing historical and artistic atmosphere. After discovering the secrets of Santo Estevo, we can continue our experience along the upper part of the monastery by climbing the stairs opposite the main entrance. Near here, a detour will take us to find out about how the “sequeiros”, traditional constructions used for drying and keeping chestnuts, worked. It is a short and fun detour. It is well worthwhile!

Back in the woods, we will continue downhill towards the river where a small enchanted waterfall will welcome us.

Finally a stretch of paved track which is about a mile long will lead us back to our starting point.



BIDUEIRAL DE MONTEDERRAMO

Can you keep my secret?



Bidueiral de Montederramo: on the trail of the werewolf

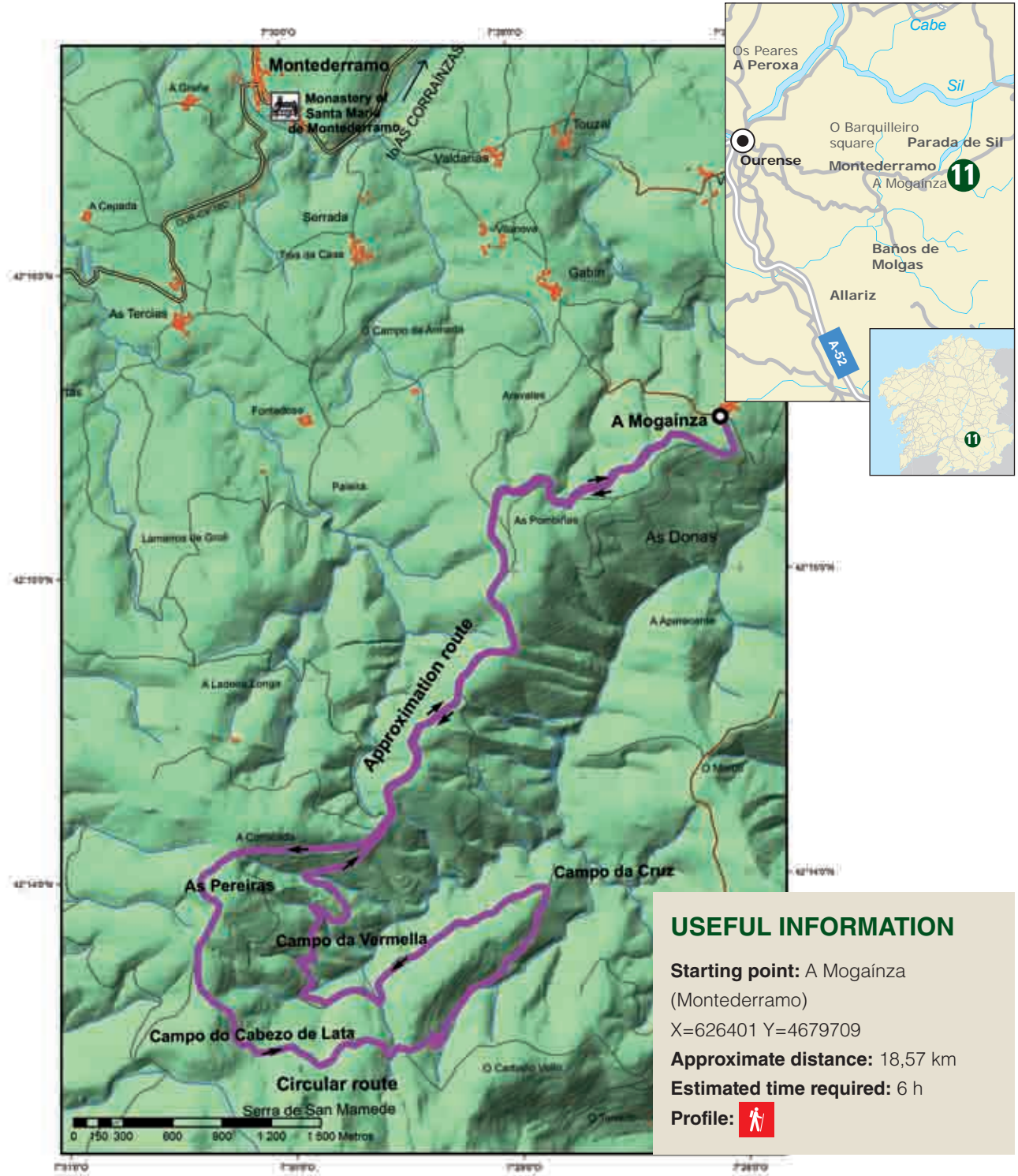
This forest which is embedded in the San Mamede mountain range in the province of Ourense, was the centre of a story which shocked the whole of Spain during the first half of the 19th century: the story of Manuel Blanco Romasanta, the “lobishome” (werewolf).

According to his legend, he would turn into a wolf and devour his victims here. This extremely gruesome character was investigated and taken to court. First he was sentenced to death and later his sentence was commuted by Queen Elizabeth II herself. After this there is no information on his whereabouts. It is still possible to see wolves in the area to this day, although no one has actually been able to see Romasanta.

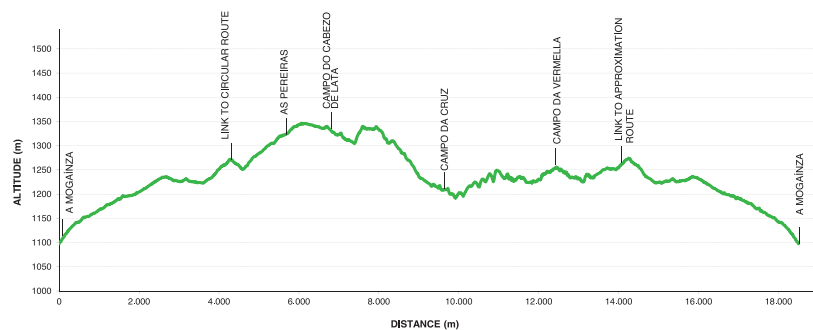
A circular trail will allow us to visit this splendid birch tree grove easily, and obviously, without having to fear any dangerous animals. Venturing into it will offer a pleasant feeling as we try to sense the mysteries of the past.

ROUTE MAP

HOW TO ARRIVE?



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

We can access the Bidueiral de Montederramo from different spots as there are no official trails marked yet. We suggest a direct approach. Nevertheless, it is necessary to plan ahead as it is a long hike which is not as easy as others due to the fact that it is not signposted. It is a good idea to visit the Montederramo tourist information centre, where there is information on the woods, possible routes and more, before we set off.

The route starts at the village of A Mogaínza. From here, we will continue along a dirt track, only suitable for four by four vehicles, for almost four miles until we get to the starting point of the

circular route. The map is essential so as not to get lost on one of the paths or firebreaks all around this area. The trail leads to many of the high points of the San Mamede mountain range yet without leaving the woods. It crosses As Pereiras, Campo do Cabezo de Lata, Campo da Cruz and Campo da Vermella, from where we get back to the starting point. From there, once again we will need to cover the almost four miles along the dirt track to A Mogaínza.

Due to the characteristics of the route, the distances and the scarce difficulty of the trails, this is an ideal route to carry out on a mountain bike.



REBOLEIRAS DO NAVEA

Can you keep my secret?

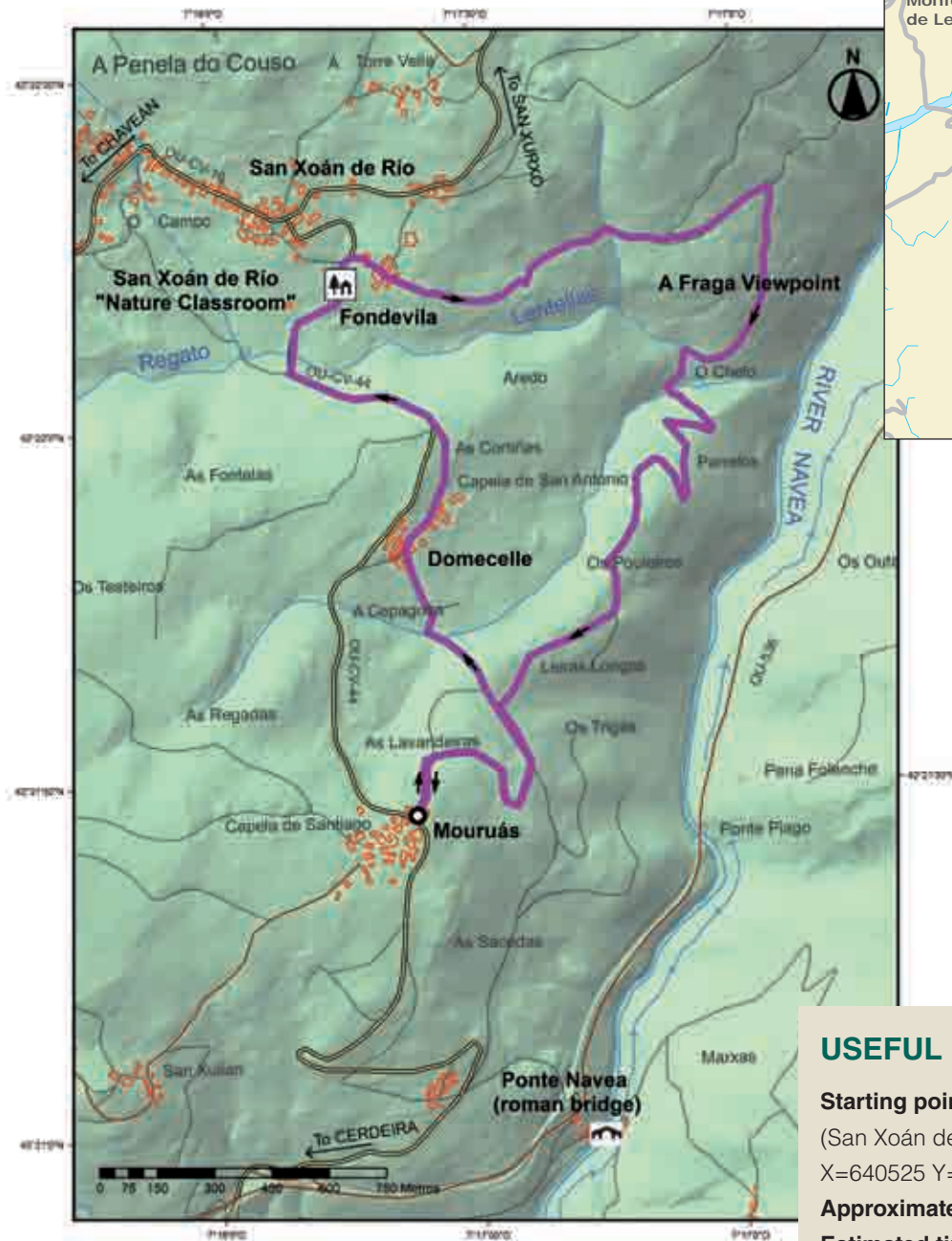


Reboleiras do Navea: the deep woods

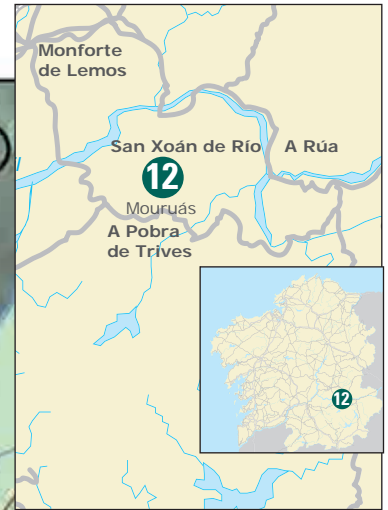
The river Navea runs deep within the mountains. On the steep mountainsides of the valley there flourishes a thick Pyrenean oak tree woods. These trees live alongside the regular oak. This entire area, carved by the water, has been distinguished with the label of Protected Landscape, which suggests beauty and invites one to visit it.

A simple trail winds in between oak trees, chestnut trees and Algerian oaks in the great San Xoán de Río woods. This Galician forest is the forest of the Celtic druids. This is an ancient wood which allows for a calm and comfortable visit.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Mouruás

(San Xoán de Río)

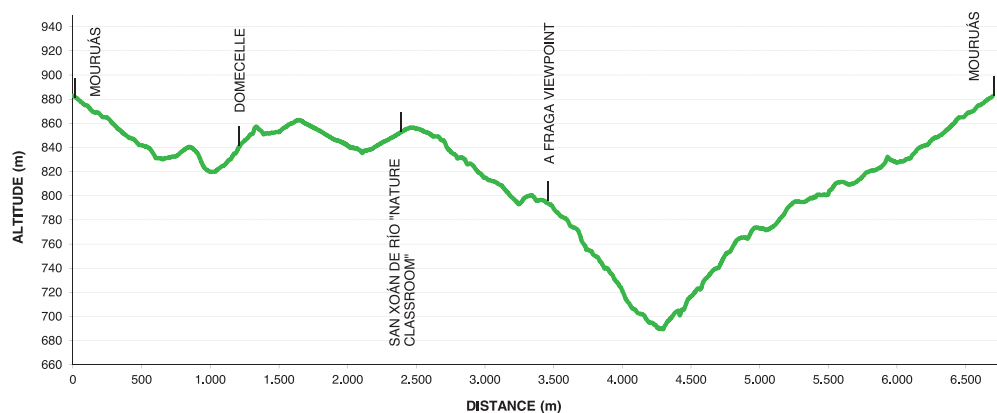
X=640525 Y=4690975

Approximate distance: 6,8 km

Estimated time required: 2 h 30 min

Profile: 

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Next to the first houses in the village of Mouruás, in San Xoán de Río, we will find the panel which shows the start of the route; it states: “A Fraga”. From here, a forest which hangs from the steep slopes of the river Navea valley awaits.

We suggest a route which will lead us first to San Xoán de Río-Fondevila, and crosses the tiny rural village of Domecelle. We recommend stopping at

the Nature Classroom which will offer noteworthy help and information. From here, we will venture into the woods and cover areas where chestnut trees intermingle with oaks or “rebolos” (Pyrenean oaks) which give this place its name: “reboleiras”. We should also pay attention to the view of the river valley. We will cover a simple route which will allow us to approach the appealing, unique forest.



SOUTO DE ROZABALES

Can you keep my secret?



Souto de Rozabales: the message of the trees

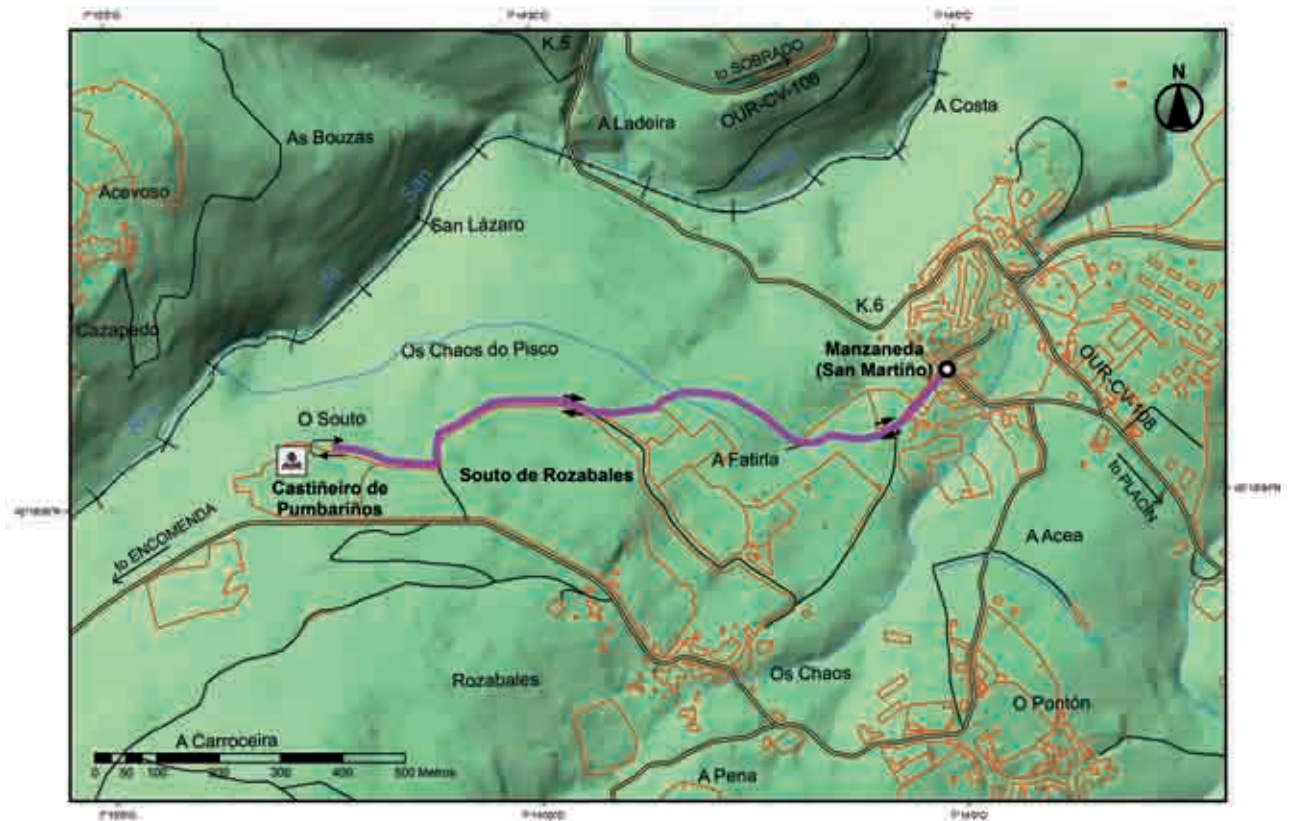
Under the branches of the Castiñeiro de Pumbariños generation after generation has passed. This tree, which can be found in the Galician catalogue of unique trees, has probably celebrated over a thousand birthdays. Maybe when it was younger it heard people speaking in Latin.

If we visit the Souto de Rozabales, in the municipality of Manzaneda in Ourense, we will come across chestnut trees which are several hundred years old like Pumbariños which has been declared a Natural Monument.

And when a tree is this old, it is worthwhile listening to it. It will sometimes speak of wars and others of love affairs which went on under its branches.

In case we had not heard, in Galicia the woods can speak.

ROUTE MAP




USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Manzaneda (San Martiño)

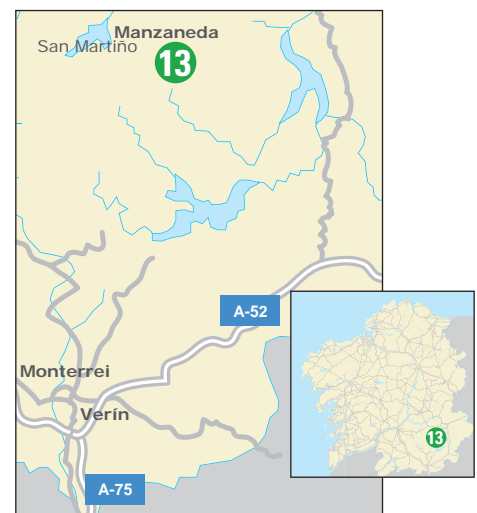
X=645583 Y=4685806

Approximate distance: 2,3 km round trip

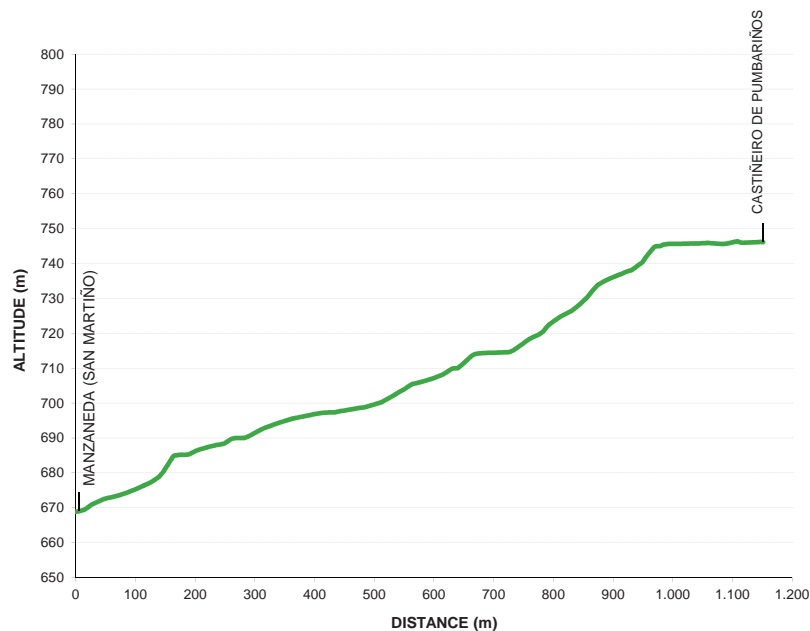
Estimated time required: 1 h 15 min

Profile: 

HOW TO ARRIVE?



ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Different paths can lead us to the Souto de Rozabales, but probably the best one is the one which begins in the town of Manzaneda, by the “porta da Vila” (the town gate). This simple trail will take us in between hundred-year-old chestnut trees for just over 2 km. A sign which reads “Castiñeiro de Pumbariños” and an information panel with a sketch of the route will also give us instructions

about the trail and what it has to offer. At first, we shall walk along a traditional “corredoira” (track) which connects the urban part of Manzaneda to the rural surroundings. Further ahead, we will come to a forest full of spectacular chestnut trees. The oldest of them all is reason enough to set off on this route. Its image will remain in our mind as we make our way back to the starting point.



TEIXADAL DE CASAIO

Can you keep my secret?



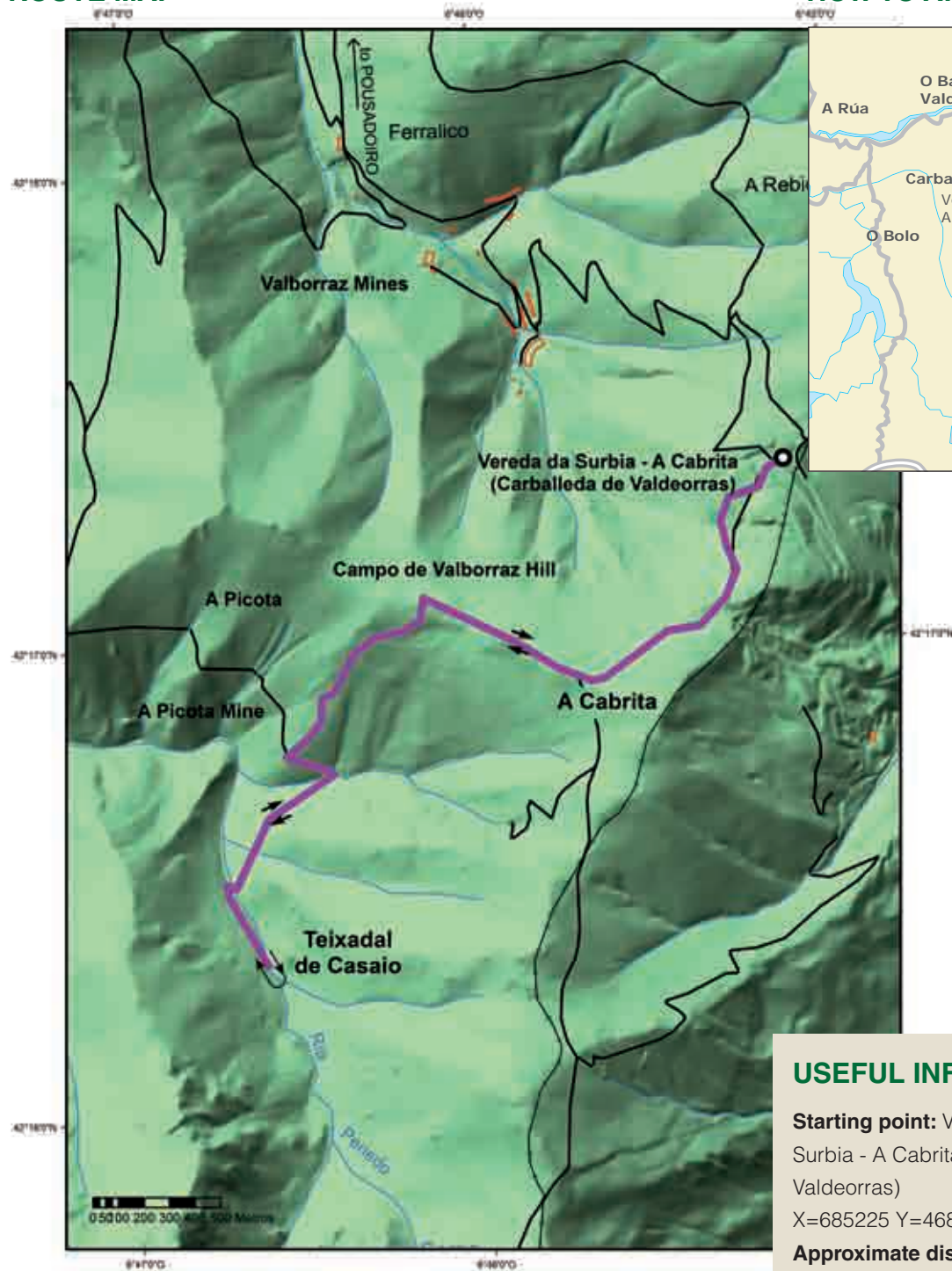
Teixadal de Casaio: the immortal woods

The most important gathering of yew trees in Europe can be found in Galicia. It is sacred, mythical, a Celtic druid temple..., a mysterious forest, a magical forest. Any adjective we might choose in order to grasp its essence will automatically allow our imagination to run loose. This visit is a trip to the past in search of the original natural space.

To enter the Teixadal de Casaio is like venturing into a cathedral of nature. Through the branches the sun filters its rays like through a stained glass window. The tree trunks are the pillars which support the vaults made up of the tops of the trees. In this outdoor temple, where it would be absurd to lock up the gods, is where maybe the Celtic druids held their ritual celebrations.

At the foot of the highest mountains in Galicia, the Teixadal hangs on to the slope at a spot which is so hard to reach that it has remained hidden. There it has survived for thousands of years.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Vereda de Surbia - A Cabrita (Carballeda de Valdeorras)

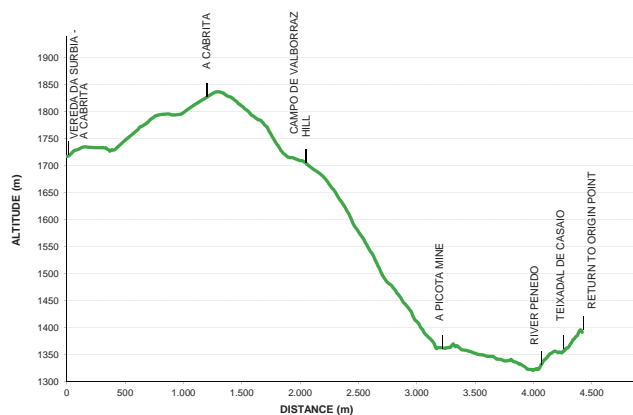
X=685225 Y=4684271

Approximate distance: 9,5 km round trip

Estimated time required: 5 h

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

There are several options to choose from in order to visit the Teixadal de Casaio but whichever one we pick, it is important to know that the access to this ancient, unique forest is by no means easy and certainly not appropriate for everyone. If we are not experts on hiking, reading maps and orienteering, it is advisable to contact a guide to help us. A guide will not only offer safety on the mountain but also share stories about the places we pass by.

Of all the paths which lead to the “teixadal”, we suggest the shortest which also happens to be the easiest.

Our trip shall begin at a slate quarry located on the bottom part of A Cabrita where we can leave the car. Be aware that in winter it is common to encounter snow which will make it impossible to reach this spot by car. From the quarry, we shall walk up a well-marked trail to the top where we will be at an altitude of 1.840 m.

Once we have reached the highest part of the route, we will go downhill to the mountain pass at Campo de Valborraz. A little before, at an altitude of 1.700 m, we shall go down a steep path until it meets the one that leads to the abandoned wolfram mine in A Picota. Now we will continue a little more relaxed and we will begin to see the first yew and holly trees, which welcome us to the hidden treasure. We will realize that we have

officially arrived at the Teixadal de Casaio once we have crossed, with extreme care, the river Penedo by leaping from one rock to the next. After a few feet, sooner than expected, on our right we will see one of the oldest and largest yew trees in the woods. What a feeling! The old tree has been there for hundreds of years! Without a doubt, it is one of the best witnesses of the passage of time. Our experience will continue among yew trees of all shapes and sizes many of which are growing out of branches which are resting on the ground. By the yews, we can contemplate holly trees, hazelnut trees, oaks, birches, maple trees, rowan trees and ash trees. Their branches barely allow the sunlight to enter the woods and the feeling is like being in a strange, ancient, magical forest. We should not think we are crazy if we believe we see an elf or a fairy in between the branches, if they exist, this would be their home. If this were not enough, the route ends at the foot of a waterfall: a gift from the river Penedo as it crosses the “teixadal”.

We will take the same route back bearing in mind that the steep downhill walk from Campo de Valborraz to the trail will now be a steep uphill hike. It will be a challenging route, but the experience of having walked within this wood will last forever; it will make us feel special, unique and extremely privileged.



Can you keep my secret?



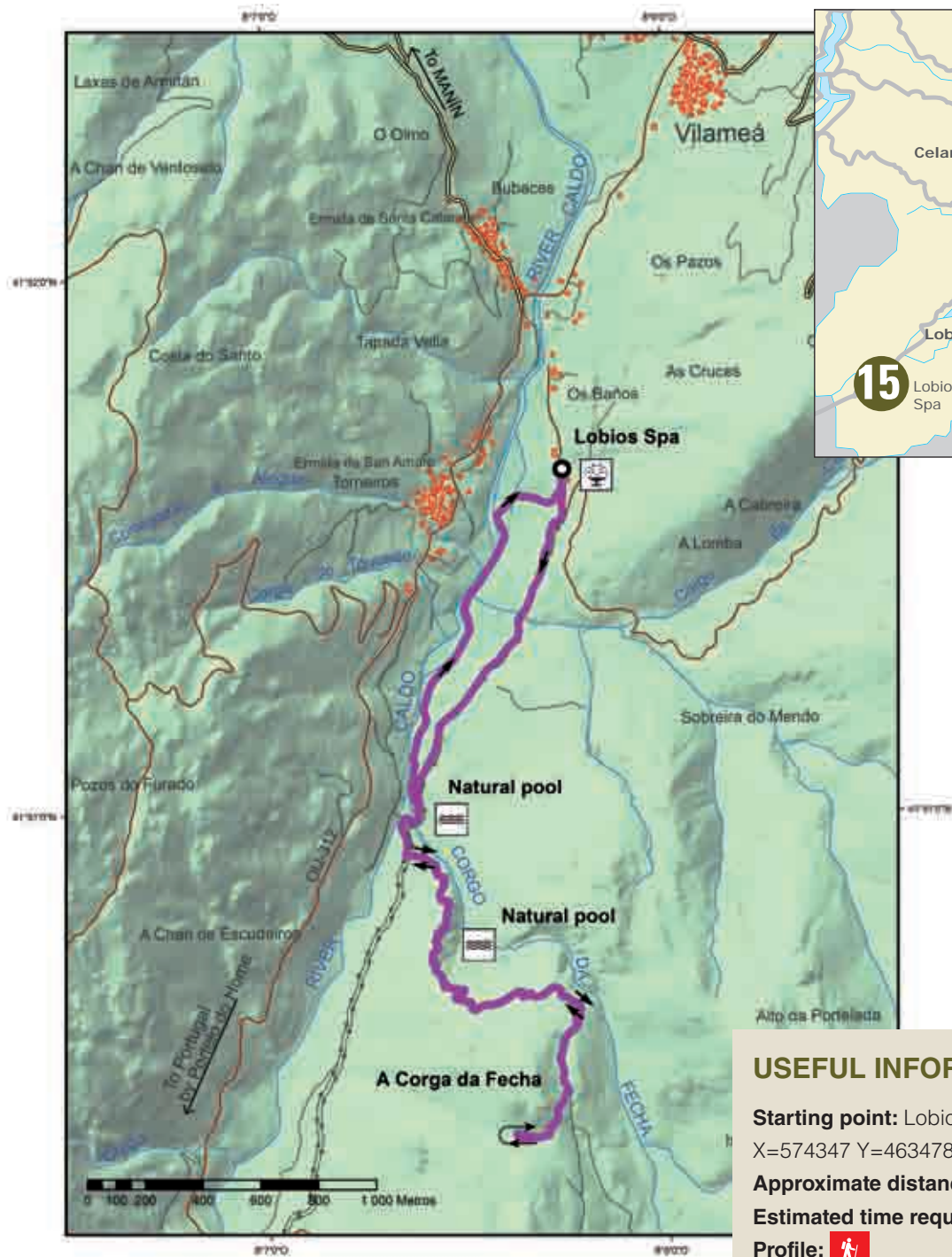
Xurés: the border woods

The Baixa Limia-Serra do Xurés Natural Park has woods which intermingle with a mountainous granite landscape. From its steep slopes, torrents and waterfalls rush down and pools of clear water where we can bathe when the heat is unbearable appear. Several milestones, a Roman road and the ruins of a thermal spring prove that these lands were taken by the Romans. The river Caldo invites us to relax in its spring waters.

In the woods we will come across the famous “cabaniñas” or “chivanas” (huts), where the farmers from the past would seek shelter. It is quite common to see royal eagles and vultures flying over the park. Nor is it unusual to find traces of the wolf or the slick wild cat.

The Peneda-Gerês National Park and the Baixa Limia-Serra do Xurés Natural Park meet where the mountain ranges mark the limits between Portugal and Galicia, and this enriches even more a natural area where the cultural and linguistic diversity, together with the variety of woods, the sound of the torrents and the rivers, or the reflections on the calm still waters offer us a unique experience.

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?




USEFUL INFORMATION

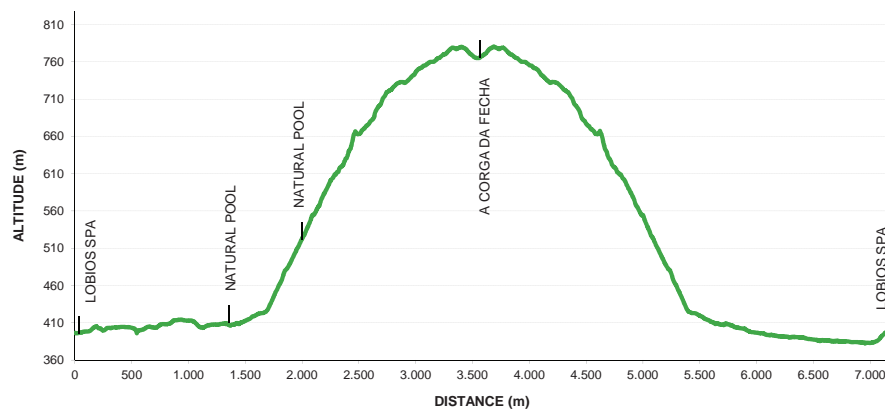
Starting point: Lobios Spa
 X=574347 Y=4634782

Approximate distance: 7,5 km

Estimated time required: 3 h 45 min

Profile: 

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Although there are many routes which allow us to discover the park, we suggest one which is simple yet immensely beautiful. Setting off at the Lobios spa, we will go upstream along the river Caldo over the Roman bridge until we get to the Corga da Fecha, a waterfall which is worthwhile “climbing”. A steep narrow trail will offer us breathtaking views. On the way, we will pass several natural pools, whose waters of an almost magical,

spectacular colour, will work hypnosis on us until we finally plunge into them.

We will take the same route down towards A Corga da Fecha as we took up. And back at the river Caldo, we will look for the trail that runs by it which will lead us back to the spa.

There are endless reasons for coming and staying in O Xurés: a world hanging from the mountains of a frontier open to eager eyes, trips and experiences.



CORTEGADA

Can you keep my secret?



Cortegada: the island of the bay woods

Who has ever seen a bay wood? Few people, indeed very few have. For something like that is quite exceptional, a botanic peculiarity visited by experts from all over the world.

There is an island in Galicia where the forest smells of bay leaves and seafood, the wisest of combinations. The Arousa estuary offers the clams, the cockles, the razor clams..., and the isle of Cortegada offers the necessary bay leaves to aromatise such tasty sea products.

Hundred-year-old trees hide meadows and lands which were farmed in past times. A chapel which is on the verge of collapsing, a ghost village with no inhabitants and a stone cross which contemplates it all. The bay wood and the island of Cortegada breathe mystery. Should we miss it?

ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Park's Visitor Centre

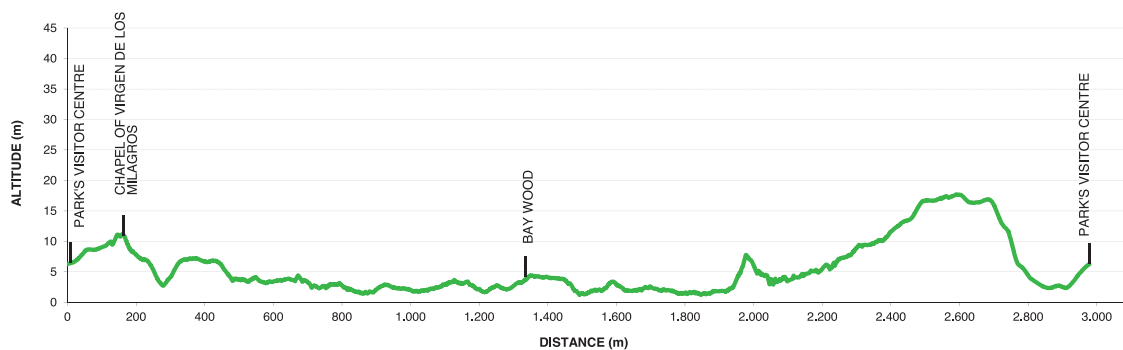
X=517705 Y=4718331

Approximate distance: 2 km

Estimated time required: 1 h

Profile:

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This first great experience we shall live in the wood of the island of Cortegada is actually getting to it! There is no better way to begin to explore it than discovering it from the coast as we slowly approach it over the calm waters of the Arousa estuary. The isle, the estuary, the gentle rocking produced by the waves, the sea breeze, the sea culture which can be seen all around, the small fishing towns on the coast, the white sand which decorates the coastline... everything is telling us that this will be an unforgettable experience.

When we get to the island, opposite the dock, we will find the visitor welcoming centre which is part of the Illas Atlánticas National Park and where we will be able to collect interesting information about the area we are going to venture into.

The island offers us two circular routes which are easy to follow and which will enable us to find out about the values hidden within this treasure of

nature. Both trails start at the ruins of the 1652 Chapel of Virgen de los Milagros, which attracted many pilgrims due to its healing powers.

The first route goes around the entire island while the second one goes half way around and then crosses the centre of the island. This last option is the most complete one as we will be able to contemplate the coast but also the laurel tree wood. To wander into this atmosphere is a unique, once in a lifetime experience. Moreover, it will lead us by huge eucalyptus trees to the remains of an old village, which was inhabited until the island was donated to King Alfonso XIII in 1910.

It is a good idea to book the trip to the island and a guided tour at one of the local companies which offer these services. If we fancy it, we can agree on returning in the late afternoon so as to enjoy a beach day on one of the isle's secluded spots.



FRAGA DE CATASÓS

Can you keep my secret?



Fraga de Catasós: walking on a carpet of fallen leaves

The Fraga de Catasós, on the outskirts of the town of Lalín -halfway between Santiago and Ourense- hides hundred-year-old oak trees and chestnut trees. How they were cared for and spoilt so they would offer their fruits! Chestnuts were a main dish during the winter months and the wood from the slender trunks were used as beams in the “pazos” (manor houses) of the lands of the river Deza.

Protected under the status of Natural Monument, now these trees grow proudly reaching for the sky and have grown into some of the highest in Europe. A short walk along a carpet of leaves will allow us to discover the secrets of this “fraga” which is an example of a deciduous forest which once covered practically all of Galicia.



ROUTE MAP



HOW TO ARRIVE?



USEFUL INFORMATION

Starting point: Quintela (Lalín)

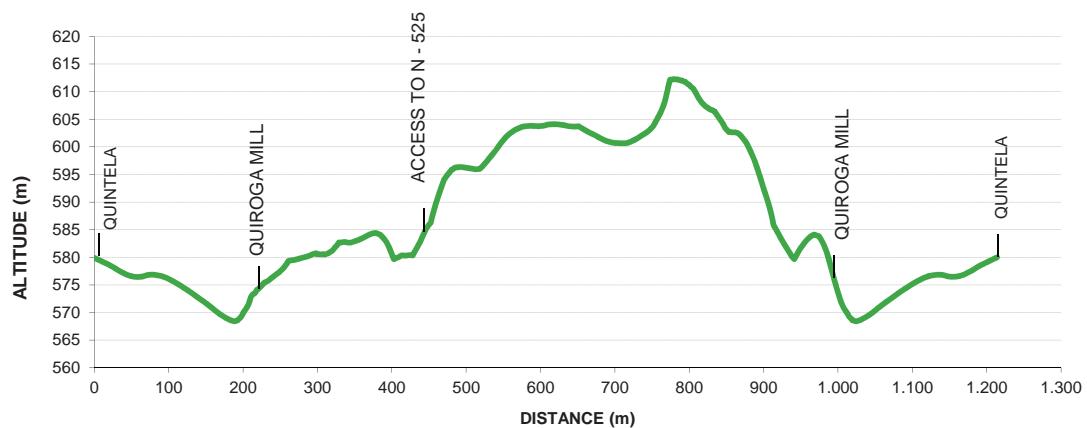
X=574271 Y=4721327

Approximate distance: 1,2 km

Estimated time required: 1 h

Profile: 

ROUTE PROFILE





ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The walk through the Fraga de Catasós is simple and it is perfectly signposted. The different information panels will make our visit more fruitful as they will provide information which will help us to understand the importance of the “fraga”, modest in extension but intense if we refer to the

power and beauty of its trees. Watch out for the tall and slender chestnut trees and oaks which grow in the “fraga”! This is a short, simple walk at the same time as spectacular and insightful, perfect for families. The starting point of the route is in Catasós, which is very close to Lalín.



INTERESTING ADDRESSES

TOURIST OFFICES OF THE XUNTA DE GALICIA

A CORUÑA

Dársena de la Marina
15001 A CORUÑA
Tel.: 981 22 18 22 · Fax: 981 22 18 22
oficina.turismo.coruna@xunta.es

FERROL

Rúa Magdalena, 12 baixo
15402 FERROL (A CORUÑA)
Tel.: 981 31 11 79 · Fax: 981 33 71 31
oficina.turismo.ferrol@xunta.es

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Rúa do Vilar, 30-32
15705 SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA
(A CORUÑA)
Tel.: 981 58 40 81
Fax: 981 56 51 78
ot.santiago@xunta.es

LUGO

Rúa Miño, 10-12
27001 LUGO
Tel.: 982 23 13 61 · Fax: 982 23 13 61
oficina.turismo.lugo@xunta.es

OURENSE

Edif. "Caseta de Legoeiro".
Ponte Romana.
Enlace N-120 con Rúa Progreso
32003 OURENSE
Tel.: 988 37 20 20 · Fax: 988 21 49 76
oficina.turismo.ourense@xunta.es

PONTEVEDRA

Rúa Marqués de Riestra, 30 baixo,
local A
36005 PONTEVEDRA
Tel.: 986 85 08 14 · Fax: 986 84 81 23
oficina.turismo.pontevedra@xunta.es

VIGO

Av. Cánovas del Castillo, 22
36202 VIGO (PONTEVEDRA)
Tel.: 986 43 05 77 · Fax: 986 43 00 80
oficina.turismo.vigo@xunta.es

MADRID

C/Casado del Alisal, 8 28014 MADRID
Tel.: 91 595 42 14 · Fax: 91 595 42 68
ot.gal.madrid@xunta.es

Info: 902 200 432 | www.turgalicia.es | cir.turgalicia@xunta.es

EDITED BY: Turgalicia. Estrada Santiago Noia km 3, 15896 Santiago | Tel.: 902 200 432 | Fax: 981 537 588 | cir.turgalicia@xunta.es

COORDINATOR: www.valoraconsultores.com

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