

Griffon vultures (Gyps fulvus)

# > Highlights

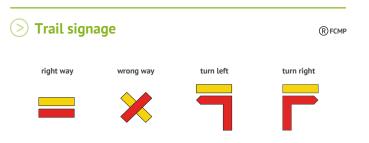
**NATURE:** colony of griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*) in the valley of the Soverete River near the Chapel of N. Sr.<sup>a</sup> da Lapa. Landscape formed by forests of maritime pine and eucalyptus. It is worth mentioning the *montado* found in some sections with pastures under extensive regime.

**HANDICRAFT:** rag dolls; Portalegre tapestries (Portalegre stitch); basketry of Portalegre; *adufe* from Portalegre.

**GASTRONOMY:** grain baked with pods - Alentejo's way; cod *albardado*; *cachola*; rabbit in wine and garlic; fried hare. Sweets (blancmange, *toucinho-do-céu*, almond lamprey, candy eggs). Cherry from São Julião (Protected Designation of Origin).

# **Recommended season**

This walking path can be done throughout the year. Nevertheless, users must be aware of high temperatures during summer time.



# **Place of Interest**

#### CHAPEL OF N. SR.<sup>a</sup> DA LAPA

Built in a worship space in the fields and *montados* surrounding the villages of Alegrete and Besteiros, the Chapel of N. Sr.<sup>a</sup> da Lapa is a pinnacle of stories, pilgrimages and devotions with five thousand years of sacredness. Although it was built between the 16th and 17th centuries, with an ancient legend involving a medieval knight inlaid in its worship, recent discoveries illuminated traces of a rich and colourful prehistoric past. Under the main chapel altar a secret passage was found leading to a cave that under layers of time and lime, revealed schematic cave paintings of reddish tones, dating between the Neolithic and Chalcolithic Periods.

# > Walking code

Follow sign-posted trails only. / Respect private property. / Avoid making unnecessary noise. / Do not disturb the animals. / Do not collect or damage plants or rocks. / Do not litter and leave no trace of your visit. / Do not light fire and do not throw cigarettes on the ground. / Be kind to local people. / Beware of cattle. Although gentle, they do not like strangers approaching their young. / Leave the gates as you found them. If they are closed, be sure they remain well shut.

# **Useful contacts**

Town Hall of Portalegre: +351 245 307 400/1 Municipal Tourist Office: +351 245 307 445 SOS Emergency: 112 SOS Forest: 117 Medical Center: +351 245 302 050 Hospital: +351 245 301 000 Anti-Poisoning Information: +351 217 950 143 GNR (Republican National Guard): +351 245 609 320 PSP (Public Security Police): +351 245 300 620 Fire Department: +351 245 307 000 Village Hall of Alegrete: +351 245 965 134



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# PR1 WALKING PATH OF SENHORA DA



## PATH NETWORK IN NATURE

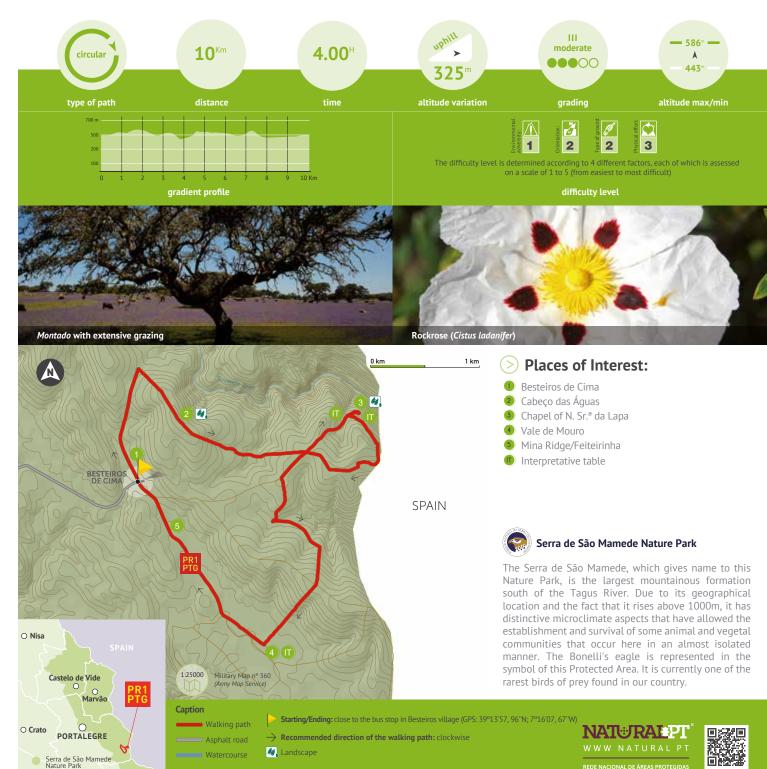


### > Walking path description



Chapel of N. Sr.<sup>a</sup> da Lapa. Place of worship and contemplation.

Beginning and ending at the village of Besteiros, the path we follow heads eastwards towards the border, going up and down hills covered with *montados* and steppes, with a more marked presence of eucalyptus and pine. In the valley of the Ribeira do Soverete the quartzite cliffs are home to a small colony of vultures, the griffons. During the morning you can see them in low circular flights over the valley, trying to gain altitude. At the end of the path, almost with a foot in Spain, we find its ex-libris, the Chapel of N. Sr.<sup>a</sup> da Lapa. Protected by the escarpment where it was built, this ancient temple has hidden behind the altar a secret passage to a cave where you can see on the walls the paintings left by primitive Man of several thousand years ago. The path continues on in the same way, going up and down hills, through pine and eucalyptus forests until, in a last descent, we are transported to the Vale of Mouro, a magnificent *montado*. Further ahead in the pathway, the cork oaks give way to pastures where herds of goats graze and soon afterwards we return to the starting point of this path.



Arronches