



48 Parque Natural da Ria Formosa (Ria Formosa Nature Park)

# An outing to the seashore and the upland hamlets

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Route covering approximately: 51 km

## An outing to the seashore and the upland hamlets (Cabanas and Conceição)

Leaving the **1** Municipal market, cross the Ponte dos Descobrimentos bridge, carry on until you come to a roundabout next to the shopping centre, keep going towards the ER 1.25 and then turn towards Vila Real de Santo António.

When you arrive at Conceição de Tavira you will find a roundabout with a golfer on it; take the first exit, carry on and enter the town of Cabanas after the level crossing.

The origin of this remote area's name dates back to 1734, which was when the tuna trap began. The first "cabanas" ("cabana" is the Portuguese word for "hut") were built as part of this activity and were essential for storing fishing paraphernalia, as well as housing for the people involved in the activity. Today, the town primarily lives on fishing and the tourism industry.

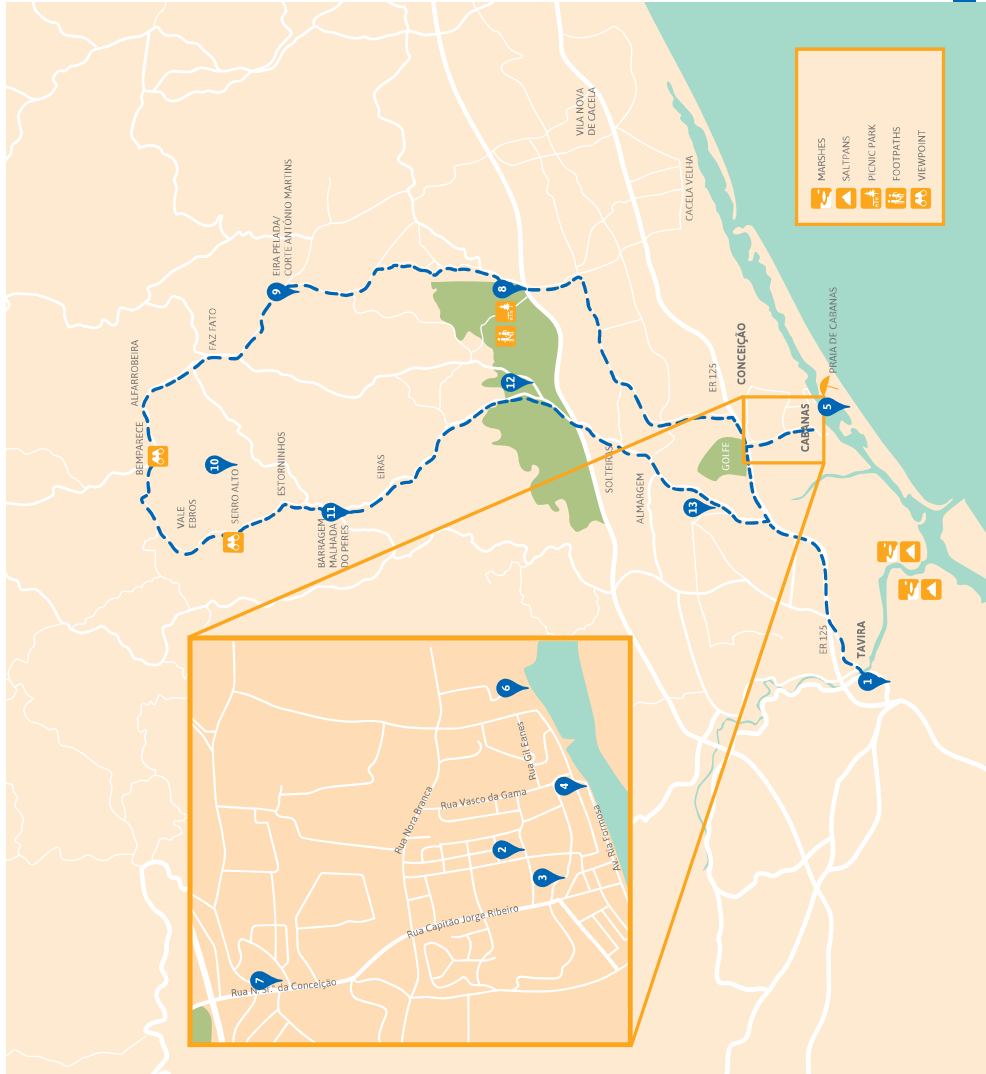
Entering Cabanas, carry on in the direction of the sea and, before you get there, turn left onto Rua José Branquinho (across from the entrance to the Pedras da Rainha holiday complex). Now turn right onto Rua Raul Brandão and a few metres farther, ahead you will see the **2** Church of Nossa Senhora do Mar (Our Lady of the Sea) to the left.

This church was expanded in June 2008. The architectural design for the expansion and remodelling of the space is based on the image of a boat in reference to the town's fishing activity. After this visit, turn right onto Rua Ormerindo



Fisherman repairing equipment

Church of Nossa Senhora do Mar (right)



Sousa Bagarrão and drive past the **3 "Amigos Unidos de Cabanas"** ("United Friends of Cabanas") neighbourhood (neighbourhood of the local outpatient support service – S.A.A.L), which is on the left. This was built by the people shortly after the Carnation Revolution (25<sup>th</sup> of April 1974). Its history is inextricably linked to life at sea and the tides of a primarily fishing-based community.

At the end of Rua Ormerindo Sousa Bagarrão, turn left towards the waterfront avenue of Cabanas.

Park the car and take a walk, admire the relaxing scenery of the Ria Formosa and the Ilha de Cabanas (Cabanas Island) or simply stop for a rest at one of the open-air cafes next to the Ria. Along the waterfront, you will find the **4 pier**, where you can catch a boat to take you across the Ria Formosa to the **5 Cabanas-mar Beach**. Take the opportunity to enjoy the sun and the sea.

Return along Rua da Fortaleza, where you can admire the **6 São João da Barra Fort**. This fort was ordered to be built in 1656 by Count Val de Reis, in the reign of King João IV, and rebuilt in 1793. This example of Portuguese military architecture is currently private property.

Cabanas:seafont avenue (left)



Pier

São João da Barra Fort



Turn left onto Rua Gil Eanes, follow it to the end and turn right onto Rua Vasco da Gama; now turn left onto Rua da Nora Branca until you reach the main road and turn right there.

After the level crossing, return to Conceição de Tavira.

The first references to Conceição are from 1518 in a report by visitors from to the Order of Santiago.

Right next to the street admire the magnificent sixteenth-century **7 Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição** (Our Lady of the Conception).

Inside, the chancel covered by a groined vault stands out, with its keystone bearing the arms of the Order of Santiago (Saint James). The main façade features a gateway with Manueline late Gothic decoration, while the capstone pediment is part of the eighteenth-century additions, which introduced baroque shapes.

After the church, turn right onto Rua 25 de Abril, pass through the village of Conceição and, at the end of this street, you will find a junction on the left. Turn towards Vila Real de Santo António and, around 300 metres farther on, turn left towards Cumeada/Mata da Conceição.

Approximately 1,300 metres farther ahead, you will encounter a junction; follow the signs indicating the **8 Parque de Lazer** (Leisure Park) until you arrive at another junction. Turn left there, heading towards the leisure park. Pass the village of Santa Rita and keep going. The leisure park is around a kilometre away.

The 40-hectare park has various species of trees and game animals, four small dams, a children's playground, toilets, a picnic area and four well-signposted trails.



Door of the Main Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição



After relaxing and enjoying this natural space, carry on in the direction of Rocha dos Corvos for around 2 km along a dirt track next to the park. Continue straight ahead, pass the hamlet of Rocha dos Corvos and, at the end of the track, turn right onto a tarmacked street. On the way, take the opportunity to enjoy the view over the landscape of hamlets like Malhada da Figueira, Champana and **9 Eira Pelada** (Corte António Martins). Now turn left towards Faz-Fato. On this route, you will find some of the old primary schools built in the 1940s and 1950s that now serve as headquarters for various associations.

Keep going for around another 3 km. To your left, there will be some signs for Faz Fato, Vale de Ebrós, Cintados and Estorninhos. Turn and follow the main road, only turning left when you find the signs for Vale de Ebrós and Campeiros, following that road. On this route you can admire the magnificent panoramic views to the south. Head towards the hamlet of Vale de Ebrós, go through it, and then follow a dirt track to Berberia and Estorninhos.

Viewpoint at the Leisure Park (left)

Serro alto (below)

