

Baptistery of the Paleochristian Basilica (Roman *villa* of Torre de Palma)

Place of Interest

ROMAN *VILLA* OF TORRE DE PALMA

Of the one-time wealthy and self-sufficient Roman *villa* of Torre de Palma belonging to the *Basilli* family, little else remains besides its foundations. By the extent of traces that extend over the gentle hill, the place still radiates a mystery of how sumptuousness it would have been. Built in the first century with a layout designed for activities predominantly linked to agricultural functions, it was expanded to make room for a *villa* with a peristyle for social gatherings and the relaxation of its owners, thus lasting until the 5th century. To the west is what remains of the Roman baths used by the owner, with its rooms destined for hot, tepid and cold baths.

GR 42 LONG-DISTANCE PATH OF MONTES DE MONFORTE

alentejo feel nature

PATH NETWORK IN NATURE

Highlights

NATUREZA: pasture, cereal areas in extensive regime, *montado* of scattered holm oak (important habitats for the conservation/maintenance of the Monforte Special Protection Area).

PATRIMÓNIO: historic borough of Monforte.

ARTESANATO: pastoral artwork on wood, horn, cork, skin and leather.

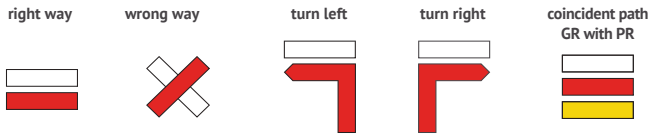
GASTRONOMIA: *açorda* of coriander or pennyroyal; potato soup with purslane; stew and lamb roast. Sweets (*fintos* cakes (Easter), *mexericos* and nougat (Christmas), cigars of Vaiamonte, rancid bacon of Monforte). Black pork sausages; Nisa cheese (Protected Designation of Origin).

Recommended season

The walking path can be made at any time of the year but users have to take some precautions with the high temperatures that can be felt during the summer and with the muddy ground or even covered with water during the winter or during periods of higher rainfall. The crossing of some water lines may be constrained in some periods of the year.

Trail signage

FCMP



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 Monforte: +351 245 578 060
Municipal Tourist Office: +351 245 578 067
SOS Emergency: 112
SOS Forest: 117
Medical Center: +351 245 578 210
Anti-Poisoning Information: +351 217 950 143
GNR (Republican National Guard): +351 245 573 220
Fire Department: +351 245 573 420
Village Hall of Vaiamonte: +351 245 564 105
Village Hall of Monforte: +351 245 578 200

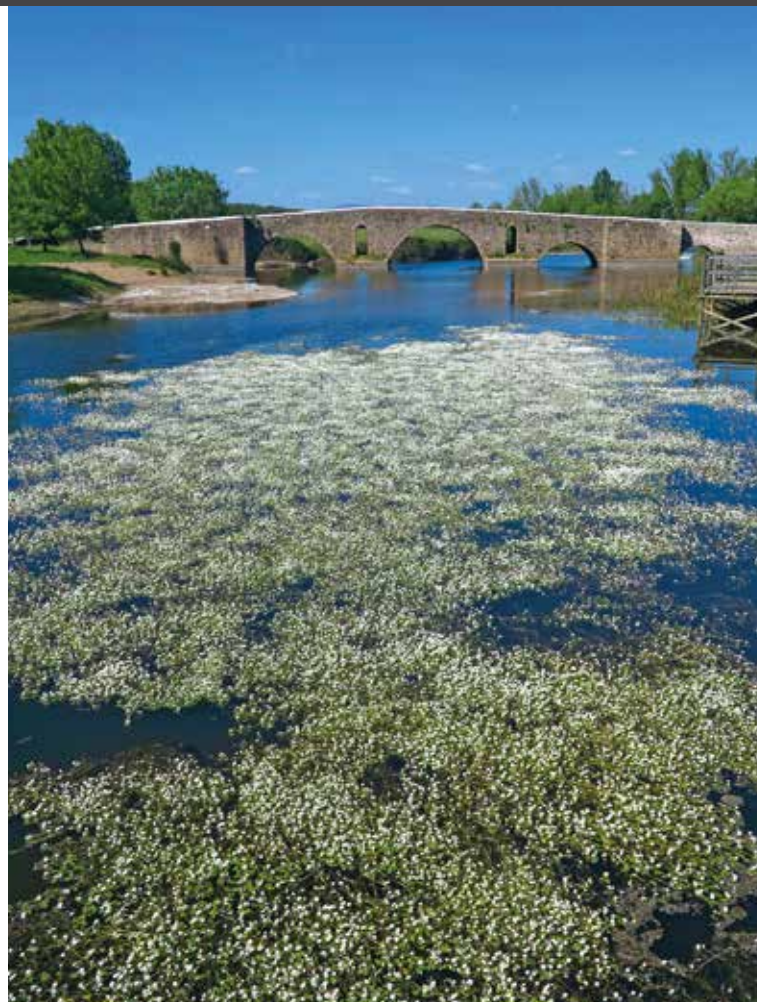
Promotor: CIMAA comunidade intermunicipal do Alto Alentejo

Walking path registered and approved by: EW ERA FERP Fédération Européenne de la Randonnée Pédestre

Partner institution: alentejo Turismo do Alentejo - ERT; alentejoutdoor

Co-financing: alentejo; inMOTION; PROVERE; INALENTEJO 2007.2013; QREN Quadro de Referência Estratégica Nacional; União Europeia Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional

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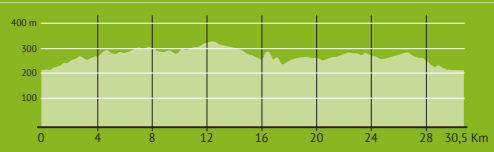
Walking path description



Bustard (*Otis tarda*). The area of Torre de Palma and Arribanas is an important area of occurrence of this steppe bird, one of the most northerly sites where it is found.

We leave Monforte using the Roman bridge over the Ribeira Grande. The path passes through an extensive area of *montado* of holm and cork oak, with varying ages and densities, interspersed with treeless areas dedicated to pasture or forage crops. In some areas we note the implementation of new intensive olive groves. The whole area is like a puzzle where the land of successive farms fit together, almost all of them abandoned nowadays. It is important to respect the fences of the properties, especially in the various passages that we find along the way, lest any neglect allow the passage of livestock to other parcels of land. Besides several small dams and the many and extensive stretches where the view extends to the far horizons, the Marmeleiro Valley stands out - a wide open valley lying at a slightly higher altitude. After Vaiamonte and Monte das Freiras we pass by the foot of the hill of Cabeça de Vaiamonte and we enter into the Monforte Special Protected Area, on the way to Torre de Palma with its hill and Archaeological Site, where an interpretive centre is dedicated to the Roman *villa* and to the remains of a paleo Christian basilica and its very rare baptistery.

type of path	distance	time	altitude variation	grading	altitude max/min
circular	30.5 Km	11.00 H	uphill 407 m	V severe	345 m / 227 m



gradient profile



The difficulty level is determined according to 4 different factors, each of which is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5 (from easiest to most difficult)

difficulty level



Roman *villa* of Torre de Palma



Intensive pasture in *montado*



Places of Interest

1. Roman bridge
2. Zambujal Farm
3. Almo Farm
4. Santo António Farm
5. Cabeça Gorda Farm
6. Dolmen of Esquerdos
7. Esquerdos Farm
8. Cantos Farm
9. Marmeleiro Valley
10. Vaiamonte
11. Freiras Farm
12. Cabecinha Farm
13. Pau River
14. Relvacho Farm
15. Zé Neca Farm
16. Manteigas Farm
17. Menhir of Carrilha
18. Carrilha Farm
19. Torre de Palma Farm
20. Roman *Villa* of Torre de Palma
21. Paleo Christian Basilica
22. São Domingos Sheds
23. Novas Sheds
24. Víbora Dam
25. Old olive mill
26. Vila Fountain
27. Monforquejo

IT. Interpretative table

Monforte Special Protection Area

This Special Protection Area encompasses the municipalities of Monforte and Fronteira, covering an area of 1887.25 ha. It is dominated by extensive pastures and cereal crops in extensive and semi-intensive regime. There are also some small traditional olive groves and *montados* of scattered holm oak, with pasture and cereals in the undergrowth. This area was established in order to promote the conservation of steppe birds, especially the great bustard (*Otis tarda*) and the little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), which occur here as breeders. Note also the presence of other bird species of interest for conservation, such as the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), the Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*), the black-winged kite (*Elanus caeruleus*), the calandra lark (*Melanocorypha calendra*), the short-toed lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) and the European roller (*Coracias garrulus*).

Caption

- Walking path
- Asphalt road
- Watercourse
- Path intersection

Starting/Ending: Roman bridge over Ribeira Grande, Monforte **(GPS: 39°03'27,24''N; 7°26'35,04''W)**

Recommended direction of the walking path: counter clockwise

- Accommodation
- Restaurant
- ATM
- Landscape
- Pharmacy
- Market
- Tourist office
- Information on site