CENTRAL MAGAZINE

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PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF ADVENTURE

AN ADRENALINE FUELLED 'BUCKET LIST' OPTION

PORTUGUESE MAGIC FRUITS

DISCOVER THE BEST PORTUGUESE AUTUMNAL FRUITS



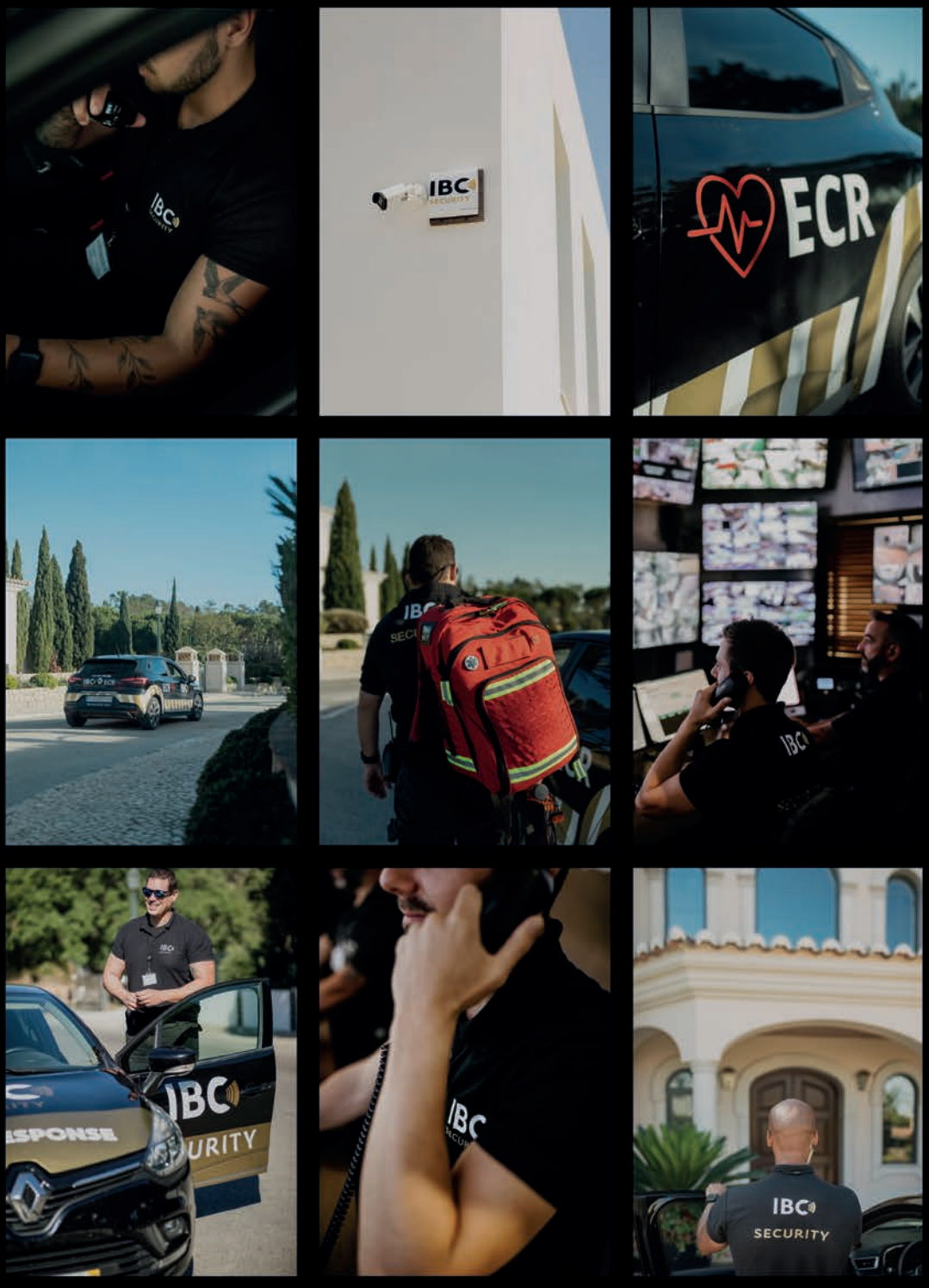
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Welcome to Central Magazine Autumn Edition!

“As long as autumn lasts, I shall not have hands, canvas, and colours enough to paint the beautiful things I see.” – Vincent Van Gogh

The overwhelming heat is over and the cool autumn season is underway, which means it is time for another exciting edition. We are back with an insider´s perspective of the very best that the Algarve has to offer at this time of year.

Portugal in autumn combines all the positive features of summer but offers a fresh breeze alternative, and much fewer people, which enables you to discover its true beauty.

Our team have been busy visiting lots of beautiful places and meeting lots of you across the Algarve to hear your heartwarming stories, so we are especially proud of the unique witch´s brew we have conncocted this season. We have stayed true to our roots as always with the community at the centre of the sphere along with the ethos of supporting wonderful local businesses.

We hope you love this edition as much as we loved making it. We kicked off our adventure series with hot air ballooning and this time you are in for a treat as we wanted to provide you with one of the most adrenaline fuelled experiences you can do in the Algarve. I wonder if this has ever been on your ‘bucket list’?

In this edition, we dive into truffles and autumnal fruits and explore nature like never before with birdwatching, a climb to the top of Monchique’s suspension bridge, an exhilerating skydiveand take in the secluded views of another secret beach. We visited an artists haven, an Aladdins cave of books, learnt the Portuguese language, and enjoyed the beauty of music, and then relaxed at a countryside retreat before exploring the wonders of space together. We also have plenty of hidden gems and curiosities for you to unfold along the way.

We would love to hear your thoughts and more importantly, we want to share your stories! You can reach out to us at info@thecentralmagazine.com

Celebrate the best that the autumn season has to offer with Central Magazine.

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Discovering an unspoiled surfer's paradise

SARA J. DURÃES

SOME OF PORTUGAL'S MOST BEAUTIFUL BEACHES MAY BE FOUND IN THE COSTA VICENTINA, WEST COAST OF THE ALGARVE, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE SEEKING WILD BEACHES, EXCITING WATER SPORTS, AND A MYSTIC AMBIANCE.



The access to Praia da Murração is not only an adventure in itself, but a tour of Vila do Bispo's most remote terrain. As you leave Sagres behind and head north on the N268, between the villages of Vila do Bispo and Raposeira, on your left, you'll see an open entry leading to a dirt driveway and facing a wind farm which lies on the other side of the N268. There are no signs or any landmarks to indicate this access, so its best is to drive slowly and use the help of Google Maps.

In order to get to the beach, you have two options: either you're fortunate enough to own a 4X4, or brave enough to explore this region's best remote secrets. You have to drive 5 km after entering the dirt driveway that is situated between eucalyptus plantations, until you reach a road crossroads where it is easy to spot a steep road on the right side.

You won't really see any evidence that you've approached this hidden beach, but you'll know you're in the correct place when you see some cars parked along the steep road and the ocean in the distance. This is the right moment to park. Walking the last few metres up to the sandy area, as you travel down the steep dirt road, you start wondering what is beyond those rocks, and then, you are finally stunned by a distinctive beach with an amazing diversity of natural features.

The sizable, yet peaceful beach is sheltered by an amazing dark-coloured cliff on the left that appears to be taken out of a movie, and by smaller, equally stunning lighter-coloured cliffs on the right side, that add to the beach's magical atmosphere. Because of its remote location and tricky access, this beach is only reachable by those who are driven to find it. At Praia da Murração, peace reigns and you may experience nature in its purest form. Even on foggy days, which are prevalent on Portugal's southwest coast, the temperature remains comfortable due to the massive cliffs that protect it from strong winds.

However, this hidden spot is mostly known for being a surfer's haven. Portugal has an extensive variety of wave configurations to suit various surfing tastes, but the beaches of the Costa Vicentina are some of the bests for those who breathe water sports. Because Praia da Murração boasts a wide variety of wave patterns, with higher waves on the left side of the beach and lower ones on the right, it's the ideal location for surfers of all ages and skill levels.

Surrounded by the beautiful Atlantic Ocean and magnificent cliffs, this golden sandy beach exudes natural beauty. In addition to surfing, relaxing and swimming in the chilly sea, braver ones can also walk along the cliffs, and take in the breathtaking coastline panorama and the wildness of this hidden piece of paradise.

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Incluido em cada pacote são servidos vinhos portugueses finos, cervejas locais e refrigerantes ilimitados, bem como uma seleção de tapas, snacks e fruta fresca. Para melhorar a sua experiência, pranchas de stand-up paddle e equipamento de snorkelling também são fornecidos gratuitamente.

Included in each package are unlimited servings of fine Portuguese wine, local beers, soft drinks, as well as a selection of tapas, snacks, and fresh fruit. To enhance your experience, stand-up paddleboards and snorkelling gear are also provided, complimentary.

Read Our Reviews!

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Pushing the boundaries of adventure

KATE SREENARONG AND SARA J. DURÃES

SKYDIVE ALGARVE WAS ESTABLISHED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM AND ACQUIRED BY THE SWALLOW GROUP IN 2014, WHO BROUGHT WITH THEM OVER 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE SKYDIVING INDUSTRY.



"Some members of the Swallow family are skydivers, others are pilots, and some are both. This personal connection to skydiving and aviation drives us to keep the sport growing, organising skydiving events, and fostering a vibrant community", Ana Costa, the manager of Skydive Algarve, told Central Magazine.

The Swallow Group, through Skydive Algarve, aims to share this passion for skydiving and offer people an opportunity to experience the thrill of freefall in one of the most beautiful locations of the world. "Our goal is to create unforgettable moments that push the boundaries of adventure, allowing people to embrace their fears and see the Algarve from a breathtaking perspective", she shared.

Excitement for all

Their team offers a variety of skydiving programmes designed to cater primarily to first-time jumpers and those looking for a memorable adventure. The tandem jumps are the most popular activity, as they provide a thrilling introduction to skydiving, where participants are securely harnessed to an experienced instructor throughout the entire venture. "We are also proud to be the only company in Portugal offering a special type of tandem jump from 15,000 feet that concludes with a landing on the beautiful Alvor beach", Ana emphasised, adding that "we host a multitude of skydiving events during the winter season, attracting jumpers from around the world and ensuring that the excitement continues year-round".

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Skydive Algarve welcomes a diverse audience, from thrill seekers and adventure enthusiasts to those marking a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, or even a wedding proposal.



"There's no maximum age limit as long as the participant is in good health and meets the physical requirements. Age is truly just a number when it comes to skydiving – if you feel good and are physically able, you can enjoy the tandem experience at any age", she assured. The minimum age for skydiving at Skydive Algarve is 16, with parental consent required for those under 18 years of age.

Freefalling through the sky

There is much more to skydiving than just jumping out of an aircraft. It's possible that the nervousness you experience in the hours or days leading up to the jump will be equally as strong as the one you experience when you're about to jump. Perhaps that's why skydiving is so enjoyable. "Skydiving is an indescribable rush of adrenaline, freedom, and awe", Ana explained. Your body will sense all those uncertainties causing an even greater level of tension before you skydive, especially if it's your first time. Your head is full of thoughts about how it will be, and whether the fear will overcome your excitement. But dealing with all of these emotions and feelings is enjoyable since it adds to the uniqueness of the entire experience.

On the day of the event, putting on your suit, preparing to board the aircraft, feeling like you are not in control of what you're about to do, are all part of the experience. The plane ride is the perfect place to start this adventure because it's a pretty powerful experience that causes your blood to start pumping with adrenaline. The view out there is amazing, which provides you with a distraction from reality.

You are just about to jump out of a plane, which is crazy! Finally, the moment that you have been waiting for arrives. The upside is that you don't have much time to overthink things; instead, you either push yourself out of the aeroplane or you are slightly pushed out of it into the unknown. "From the moment you exit the plane, you're in a world unlike any other, with the wind rushing past and the ground far below. It's an intense sensory experience—one that's simultaneously exhilarating and peaceful", she continued.

What you feel from that moment until you reach the ground again is very hard to describe. "Even though some people might think skydiving would trigger intense fear, many find that when they are truly living in the moment, their fear actually diminishes", Ana further exemplified. Everyone is unique and every person experiences things in a different way, but the only thing I can guarantee is the magical feeling of weightlessness, and weirdly serenity. "Remember, the biggest hurdle is often just making the decision to try - once you're in the air, you'll be glad you did. As Nelson Mandela once said, 'Courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it'", she concluded.

One of the things people enjoy most at Skydive Algarve is the stunning coastal views of the region from the sky, as their unique location provides breathtaking scenery that makes the jump even more special.





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The Wonders of Birdwatching

CRISTINA DA COSTA BROOKES

PORTUGAL IS OFTEN REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BEST DESTINATIONS FOR BIRDWATCHING IN EUROPE, SO WE SPOKE WITH THE EXPERTS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS SOCIAL PHENOMENON.



Established over 30 years ago, SPEA which stands for Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds) "focuses on protecting birds and their habitats in Portugal and on the islands, occasionally partaking in projects in São Tomé Principe and Cape Verde."

SPEA's Membership Relations and Events Officer, Lara Broom, shared with Central Magazine "We are a membership association like the RSPB but we are part of the big organisation Birdlife International. We are mainly conservation project focused which are mostly EU funded."

SPEA also asserted that since the pandemic birdwatching has become increasingly popular and it has many wonderful benefits. Some of its benefits include supporting our wellbeing, a great way to stay active as well as allowing us a moment to de-stress and reconnect with nature.

Exemplifying one of their most recent projects called the LIFE Ilhas Barreira project which is based in the Ria Formosa Natural Parque. "The project focuses on the islands as they are really important in terms of protecting us from climate change and they are important places for breeding. We have been getting rid of invasive plants and controlling the population of cats and rats."

Adding, "We also focus on how the populations of these specific birds are doing and making sure they will be here for years to come. We also do this by giving environmental education so we go around the schools and speak to the children about the ecosystems and we take a similar approach with adults during the birdwatching trips we run for both our members and the general public."



Diverse eco-system

Lara explained to Central Magazine: "Obviously there are countries with many more bird species than Portugal, like Colombia and Costa Rica which are biodiversity hotspots, but Portugal, as part of the Iberian Peninsula is a really great place for birdwatching because they have a lot of different habitats in a very small country. You don't need to travel far to see a lot of different habitats.

The Algarve is outstanding for birdwatching with over 250 species co-existing here. Lara shared: "There are two reasons why it is great to watch birdwatching here, firstly because it has a lot of wetlands and lagoons which attract a lot of birds and then secondly, because in Sagres we get bird migration twice a year where they pass through Portugal, making Sagres a great place to watch bird migration on a smaller scale than say Gibraltar. Despite being built up, the Algarve has multiple pockets of nature included three natural parks: Castro Marim, Ria Formosa and then the Costa Vicentina Natural Park."

When asked what time of year is best to plan your birdwatching holiday, Lara replied that the best time to visit would be April, September and October. "I think April is amazing because you start to see things coming through and it is exciting like Bee-eaters and Rollers who are Migrants from Africa but then the Birdwatching Festival in October is really cool as they are going back."

Birdwatching Festival of Sagres

The 15th edition of the Birdwatching festival is running from the 3 to 6 October 2024 in Sagres and has been organised by Vila do Bispo City Council, in partnership with SPEA and Associação Almargem proposing four days full of activities.

Asides from birdwatching you can participate in group surf lessons, dolphin watching, kayaking, beach cleanups, visiting the museum of Vila do Bispo, cave tours and photography courses as well as activities aimed at the youngest members of the families including children birdwatching tours.

It is important to note that there is a mixture of paid and free activities, with some needing you to sign up on the website beforehand to guarantee your space.

This year the festival's headliner is the booted eagle, whose name comes from the feathers that cover its legs like pants. This medium-sized bird of prey is mainly seen in flight, and is identified by its "landing lights": white spots on the sides of its neck, facing forward, like the landing lights of an airplane.

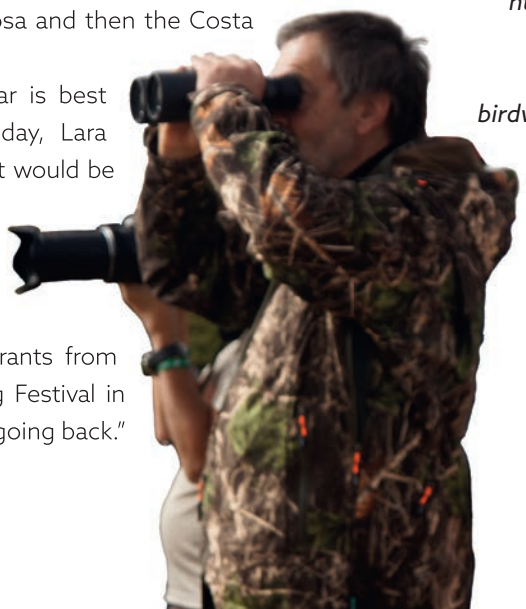
Your chance to win

SPEA are kindly offering a fantastic half-day birdwatching experience for a group of up to 5 people in a natural area of Lisbon (not including transport to the site). If you would like the chance to experience the wonders of birdwatching, name two biodiversity hotspots outside Portugal that are mentioned in the article. Send your answers to win@theportugalnews.com

You can support SPEA by becoming a member where you receive discounted activities and much more at https://spea.pt/en/how-to-help/become-a-member/ or alternatively, you can donate for a more sustainable world.

For more information, please visit www.spea.pt, https://www.birdlife.org/who-we-are/ and https://www.lifeilhasbarreira.pt/en/ .

To find out more about the Birdwatching Festival and to register please see https://www.birdwatchingsagres.com/en/ or alternatively find them on https://www.facebook.com/birdwatchingfestivalofsagres/





Finding the cutest birds in the Algarve

BRUNO G. SANTOS

INTEREST IN BIRDWATCHING IS INCREASING, AS IT IS AN ACTIVITY THAT CAN MAKE PEOPLE FEEL CLOSER TO NATURE WHILE ENJOYING AND APPRECIATING THE LIFE OF SOME OF THE MOST ICONIC BIRD SPECIES.





In Portugal, the activity is gaining more and more interested people who flock to places such as Ria Formosa, trying to see the beauty of birds that live in the country. Some species migrate, and others do not, therefore some species are more common to watch during autumn and winter, while others may be seen all year.

Águia Calçada

The Booted Eagle is one of the species that may be seen all year. Being agile and graceful, it is a bird that catches the attention of birdwatchers, who enjoy watching the smallest eagle in Europa fly. With brown and white feathers, some of these species present lighter or darker colours. The lighter-coloured eagle's feathers are white and contrast with light brown feathers. The darker ones are completely brown, nevertheless presenting some nuances in the tones. During breeding season, usually between spring and summer, booted eagles are seen hunting small mammals, reptiles, and other birds.

Pato de Bico Vermelho

Probably one of the cutest birds to watch is the Red-crested Pochard, which adds vibrant colours to the Portuguese wetlands. Its round orange head and red bill, make this species easily identified when taking a birdwatching tour. The black chest and white flanks are only visible in males and the other vibrant colours. The females are usually more brownish, with fewer colourful feathers than males. Birdwatchers love to watch them dive into the water to find food and shake their wings.

Borrelho de Coleira Interrompida

The Kentish Plover is a small and fast bird that resides mostly next to the saltiest waters, namely by the beaches or salt pans. The Portuguese name refers to the little "collar" *(coleira)* that the bird has that is interrupted *(interrompida)* when getting close to the white chest. During nesting season, the Kentish Plover becomes more protective, and their behaviour becomes interesting to watch.

Flamingo-comum

The Greater Flamingo is known by most people, as it is part of the imagination of everyone, whether through documentaries or even films. Some of the most iconic images already filmed in nature are the ones where a flock of flamingos is flying above the waters. The majestic pink birds are easily seen in Algarve waters, trying to find the greatest food source in the water. The flamingos' beauty will stand out during the sunset or when the sun is rising, as the colours of the sky contrast with the bright colourful feathers of this species that is loved by humans.



Fuselo

The Bar-tailed Godwit has a long and upturned bill and a very distinctive plumage, that changes during seasons. The male species, during the breeding season, have a red chest, and during the winter, the feathers become brown and grey. In Portugal, they are usually seen during the winter. The Bar-tail Godwit is usually seen in mudflats looking for food, namely invertebrates, specifically being seen in Portugal during its migration period.



Garajau Grande

The Sandwich Tern is usually located in the coastal regions of Portugal and is known by its long orange bill, which has a small black tip at the end. This bird is commonly called dramatic, in a good sense, as its dives into the water are magnificent, and, of course, with a lot of drama. Their social behaviour makes it possible to watch them in large flocks in places like the Algarve's sandy islands of Ria Formosa. Their high-speed dives are what leaves most birdwatchers impressed.



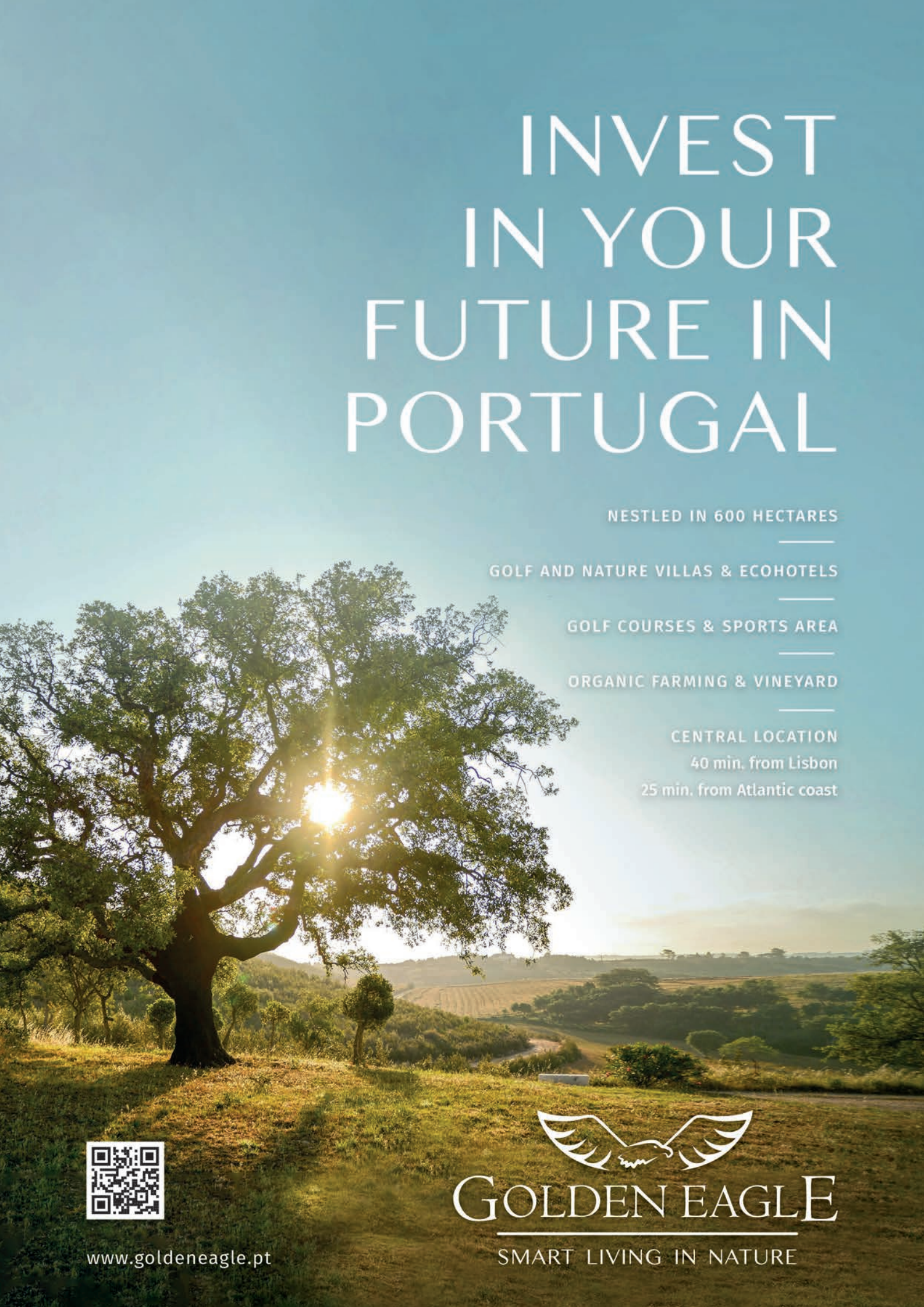
Ostraceiro-Europeu

The Eurasian Oystercatcher is a peculiar bird, with black and white plumage, and this species has a long orange bill. It is possible to understand the diet of this bird by reading its name, the Oystercatcher is an expert when it comes to opening shellfish, especially oysters, and for that, they only need to use their bill. The loud call will warn about his arrival, being heard before they land as they stand out among all the other species that may be present in the coastal line, where this species really likes to live.



Birdwatching in Portugal

Currently, there are a lot of tours to do birdwatching in Portugal, including in the Algarve. Birdwatching is very sought after by those who love taking pictures or are deeply in love with nature. In the Algarve, along with its great landscapes, birdwatching will inspire visitors and promote calm moments by the waters. According to the season of the year, the species seen may be different, however, in the Algarve, it is possible to watch some of the birds all year round.


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Embracing the innovative concept of smart living in harmony with nature, this enchanting haven offers a sustainable and luxurious lifestyle like no other.

At the core of the resort's philosophy lies a commitment to sustainability and ecological integration. The resort's houses are designed to be self-sustainable, open, bright and functional, ensuring the lowest possible impact on nature by seamlessly integrating with the environment. Projects are carefully crafted with high energy efficiency and low carbon footprints, utilizing 100% renewable energies and conscientious use of resources.

Golden Eagle Resort boasts an impressive array of 206 plots, ranging from 1700m² to 7500m², presenting residents with the opportunity to create their dream homes amidst the beauty of nature. With 176 house villas, 158 townhouses and 448 apartments, the resort caters to diverse living preferences, ensuring every individual finds their perfect abode.

Smart living is an attitude.

Golden Eagle Resort is not just a place to live; it's a thriving community that nurtures intergenerational relationships. With kindergartens and senior residences, the resort fosters a sense of togetherness and care for every age group. Additionally, the resort promotes local commerce, supporting the community and celebrating the region's unique crafts and culture.

The resort's dedication to sustainable agriculture shines through its permaculture-inspired biologic gardens, which supply fresh produce to the farm-to-table restaurant. Here, consumers and producers come together in the same space, celebrating the joy of nourishing food sourced from the land itself.

For those seeking relaxation and indulgence, the Golden Eagle Resort offers a haven of tranquility at its luxurious spa. The Country Club provides a lounge café, gym, sauna and swimming pools, ensuring that residents can unwind and rejuvenate in style.

Adventure awaits at every turn with an abundance of recreational options. From golf on one of the largest and most esteemed courses in the Iberian Peninsula, featuring 18 holes, 8 lakes and 87 bunkers, to tennis and padel academies, horse-riding, yoga, jogging, cycling and water sports, there's something to cater to every passion.

The resort's natural ecosystem, with its lakes, rivers and ponds, invites exploration and offers a sanctuary for local wildlife. Residents can immerse themselves in nature with trails designed for hiking and permaculture enthusiasts, as well as self-sustaining gardens that nurture the land and its inhabitants.

Golden Eagle Resort is a testament to the perfect synergy of smart living and nature, where luxury and sustainability coexist harmoniously. It beckons those who seek a truly enriching lifestyle, surrounded by the splendor of the outdoors and a community that celebrates eco-consciousness and well-being.

Join, be a part of the Golden Eagle experience, where nature and modern living unite in perfect harmony.

The sustainable rural escape

SARA J. DURÃES

IN BETWEEN THE LAND AND THE SEA, FIVE KILOMETRES AWAY FROM THE PORT TOWN OF TAVIRA, YOU CAN FIND A RURAL SETTING WHERE PEOPLE AND NATURE ONE.



Altanure is a touristic and retreat centre where the concept is facilitating nature and mankind to complete each other in the aim of balance and harmony. Altanure proposes that everyone, in their daily experience, actively and passively participates to an improvement in the conditions of the environment:

• The experience begins from the moment you wake up in a peaceful nature, respecting the natural cycle of the elements comprising it.

• The routine follows with personal hygiene habits, where waste waters are forwarded to a natural debugging system that will be used for plant irrigation – plants which will later treat us to its fruits.

• Throughout the day you can wander in the gardens integrated in a natural landscape where you can find a permaculture vegetable garden or bath in a naturalised lake fed by the rain waters, this while always having the possibility of collecting in the dojo and appreciating from its uniqueness.

"Our goal is to create and arrange natural areas so that you experience this sense of being connected to the natural world", Maurice Levy, the creator of this concept shared.

Altanure, derives from the Arabic word Altanure, which means 'bread oven'. However, on an etymological level, it is also the inspiration of the word 'athanor' which refers to a flask used by alchemists to perform transmutations from lead into gold. In addition, as explained by Maurice, it also relates to the anagram of "la nature" in French, which is "the transition from a condition of existence to a state of consciousness in which the exterior and interior natures are one and the same in harmony".



The property

Consisting of two distinct lodges, and a breathtaking garden featuring a pond and a swimming pool, Altanure impresses with each one of its details. The Casa Terra stands for the earthly home, which is to be united with the earth, at the same time it also refers to the building's composition which is 'Taipa'. Casa Terra features 7 separate, open-to-nature bedrooms. The main house's communal areas, which are beautifully furnished and made of locally sourced materials, warmly invites you to relax and be in contact with nature.

Just a few metres away from this majestic property you can find Quinta Sol d'Água. The farmhouse's original construction from 1913 has been respectfully preserved, and it features four beautifully decorated double bedrooms, a family kitchen, an ample living room with a massive sofa and equally massive side table which invites for group gatherings, and even a piano where the most artistic ones can immerse themselves.

Almatere

With the purpose to demonstrate that it is possible to bring nature and peaceful activities to a metropolitan environment, while maintaining the serenity and intimate relationships typically seen in rural areas, Altanure opened recently a new location in Tavira's downtown area. Almatere, which offers 8 rooms with balconies or terraces that are centred around nature. In addition to offering rejuvenating accommodations as a haven from reality, Almatere also offers different massage options and a breakfast buffet which can be delighted in a covered garden surrounded by a mix of vegetation.

The experience

We began the morning in the beautiful dojo, a wooden structure designed for specific practices, located in the heart of the property garden with a comprehensive exercise led by Maurice Levy. The sound of distant birds and the fresh breeze coming in through the open glass doors created the ideal atmosphere for what was a very relaxing and personal awaken meditation practice. Tibetan rituals, yoga, and meditation are unique experiences available during the stay at Altanure. As Maurice shared: "We are willing to share a place where the real nature of being can be reflected in a harmonious natural environment".

The breakfast at Altanure is simply a projection of their concept and essence. Prepared daily with different locally sourced ingredients, and inspiration of the chefs, you never know what to expect – but I can guarantee you it is not only delicious but extremely healthy. I was lucky to experience some homemade bread made with hummus, a natural juice, overnight oats and a variety of fruit, served with coffee and tea according to one's preference.

The retreats

Putting together yoga retreats is a crucial aspect at Altanure, as its pacific location and natural features, plus its offered facilities, makes it the perfect gateway for these practices. Both Casa Terra and Quinta Sol d'Água, are specifically designed to accommodate the unique demands and specifications of yoga retreats, which can accommodate groups of up to 22.

"We have been growing sustainably, and we want to maintain a continuity dynamic by ensuring the balance of the entire system that characterizes Altanure," Ana Correia, a crucial member of the team revealed.

For more information, please visit https://www.altanure.org/en/.



Rio Mourinho

A PARADISE IN ALENTEJO THAT COMBINES SOPHISTICATION AND AUTHENTICITY



There is a paradise yet to be found on the Alentejo coast, near Alcácer do Sal, between Lisbon and Algarve, in one of Portugal's most beautiful and least-known regions. Herdade Rio Mourinho is located on a property rich in natural resources, covering more than 450 hectares and 200 hectares of the Pego do Altar Lake. The secret to a sustainable investment focused on the preservation of nature and the development of the local community.

An immersive and authentic experience

The project, approved by the Diário da República, has a construction area of 50,000 square meters and is set to be a sophisticated tourism enterprise, with a hotel and residences that offer a unique combination of luxury and comfort and direct contact with nature. Everything about this estate conveys the peace and tranquility typical of the Alentejo coast.

With a lake as far as the eye can see, constant respect for biodiversity and environmental preservation are the pillars of a project designed from scratch, with Portuguese roots. Rio Mourinho will be the birthplace of a sustainable and authentic development with the use of renewable energies, sustainable materials typical of the region and mobility without the use of fossil fuels.

The privacy and silence offered by this property is set for absolute seclusion, making Rio Mourinho a privileged place for outdoor activities and water sports, with family and friends, and for true inner journeys.

In balance and harmony with the Alentejo ecosystem

Taking advantage of the richness that this region of Portugal offers, the project doesn't forget to promote integration with the local culture and community. An extensive, quiet, secluded area in the heart of the natural environment provides for accommodation that blends in with the Alentejo landscape, ensuring that nothing in this project detracts from its surroundings, based on an architectural design with a strong identity, maintaining the typical white of the local buildings. The approved project plans to install 900 beds or 450 housing units, such as hotels or villas.

An investment that represents the promotion of a healthy lifestyle with a commitment to the well-being and health of each visitor and the preservation of the local ecological balance and biodiversity. We truly believe that reducing ecological footprint, providing new experiences and supporting the development of the local community are the right ways to do business.

Explore one of the best kept secrets of the Alentejo coastline!



DISCOVER ONE OF THE BEST KEPT SECRETS IN THE ALENTEJO COAST

5 HECTARES
building area

APPROVED LICENSING
for construction

AN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY
Pego do Altar, Alcácer do Sal



HERDADE DE
RIO MOURINHO
Sociedade Agro-Turística

Discover this zen plant

MARILYN SHERIDAN

COULD THIS BE TOO MUCH GARDENING FOR SUCH A SMALL PLANT?

But treated correctly, it might last for hundreds of years!

These little trees are somewhat pleasing, almost serene, with a zen-like air of delicacy. The name Bonsai comes from the Japanese word for 'tree in a pot', but originally came from China as 'pun-sai' or 'penjing', and loosely means potted scenery or landscape. Bonsai trees are intended to be a miniature representation of nature, and are often found in a decorative shallow pot.

Wood stemmed trees or shrubs

They are not a special type of dwarf tree, and almost any perennial woody-stemmed tree or shrub species that produces branches can be cultivated to remain small through pot confinement and careful crown and root pruning, and can be turned into a both realistic and beautiful bonsai. Enthusiasts are sometimes skilled enough to care for a collection of different ones, with many different styles they can be shaped into, each having its own name. A true art or science in itself.

In Japan, the Sandai-Shogun-no-matsu in the famous Tokyo Palace refers to a white pine type of bonsai tree, which is considered to be the oldest known specimen, being more than 500 years old.

My own experience of Bonsai

My husband used to have a bonsai tree, and would spend a lot of time critically examining it from all angles, and armed with a small pair of scissors, would carefully snip and prune. Sadly, it didn't thrive, mainly my fault, and I have since found out (too late!) that the main cause of 'Bonsai death' is underwatering – they are shallow rooted, and are prone to drying out, being pernickety plants that can just decide to die if they aren't cared for properly. You would be wise to get a book or learn as much as you can before purchasing, or if you are gifted one, make sure you check out how to care for it.

Care of Bonsai

Watering is the tricky part, and they should only be watered when the top layer of soil seems dry, and might need watering as much as once a day, so it would be best to check frequently. The root system needs to be fully saturated; they should be made wet enough that water escapes through the drain holes underneath, and most bonsai trees come complete with a tray underneath to collect excess water.

But overwatering is just as bad, and will cause yellowing leaves and the shrivelling of smaller branches. The roots drown in water and are deprived of oxygen which prevents further growth, and this could possibly just be due to poor-draining soil.

Another tricky bit is the shaping, sometimes the branches are wired to make them grow into a desired shape, and there are clubs and online courses for serious bonsai gardeners.

You can buy miniature sets of tools, including special scissors, miniature rakes and shovels, tweezers – even mini watering cans – it just depends how much of a perfectionist you are!



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Explore the Autumn colours in Barão de São João

BRUNO G. SANTOS

AUTUMN IS HERE AND THE GREEN LEAVES WILL EVENTUALLY BECOME BROWN AND YELLOW, PAINTING THE FLOOR WITH NEW COLOURS THAT ANNOUNCE THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW SEASON.

There is no better place to assist the gradual season change than in nature, namely in sites such as Mata Nacional de Barão de São João, the Lagos municipality's main natural monument, located 13 kilometres from the city centre.

This Algarve Forest is a protected area, with the infrastructure for people to do various activities, such as running and biking on one of the six hiking trails that may be explored in Mata Nacional de Barão de São João.

The trails are between six and 34 kilometres long and may be done by walking or riding a bicycle, on moderate-level paths that will allow people to explore the unique fauna and flora of the Algarve. In addition, there are also statues and sculptures representing the life of those who live in the countryside, making the walks much more enjoyable, as there is much to appreciate during the more than six-kilometre journey.

There is a running path, where exercises can be performed along the way as the municipality has provided the proper equipment, that may be used for free in an attempt to promote a healthy lifestyle for the inhabitants of not only the parish of Bensafrim and Barão de São João, but also Lagos municipality.

For those who would rather enjoy a peaceful moment, with some food and drinks, the Mata Nacional de Barão de São João is also the perfect place. With a magnificent picnic area, the forest is the right site to go with family, namely children, and enjoy a great moment by the wooden tables. The access by car is easy and there is the possibility of parking vehicles right next to the picnic area, as there is a parking lot available for everyone that visits the forest.

The existing species may be known with a visit to the Centro Interpretativo da Mata Nacional de Barão de São João. The centre is located in what used to be the house of the forest guards that protected that area. Nowadays, it is a place where people can learn about what can be found in the forest, and also a place where people can learn how to deal with challenges that may appear along the way.

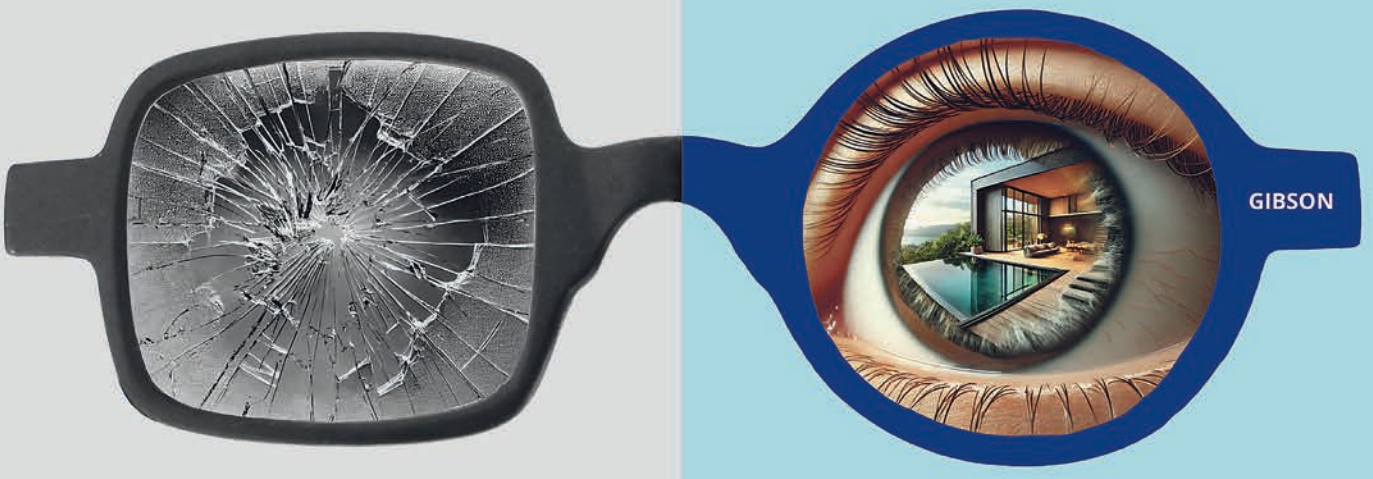
Visit Mata Nacional de Barão de São João and explore all the colours of the Autumn in nature, while enjoying moments alone or with family. Whether to practise sports or to read a book next to a tree, while the birds sing, the forest is the perfect place to stay away from the city's hectic life.



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Immerse yourself in Carvoeiro's sea of books

SARA J. DURÃES

AT THE ALGARVE BOOK CELLAR, A SECOND-HAND BOOK SHOP SANCTUARY IN CARVOEIRO, YOU CAN NOW FIND BOOKS FOR SALE AT REDUCED PRICES, PERFECT FOR THOSE CRAVING SOME EXCEPTIONAL AUTUMNAL READING.



In one of the streets leading down to Carvoeiro Beach, in the picturesque village of Carvoeiro, you can find a sub-world dominated by books. In between shelves, which are already packed with books, you can find even more books lying on top of each other constructing a combination of unevenly organised piles.

Once you get to Algarve Book Cellar, you can see the passion of Raymond Compton for his books, which he has collected over the last 22 years, since the day he opened this second hand bookstore. The 81-year-old book collector has made the book shop a part of his routine, but after all this time, Raymond feels that it's time to start a new chapter in his life, a chapter which will still involve books, as he revealed that he reads "three or four books a week," but it will take place in a more peaceful setting, as a leisure activity at his home.

That was why, in the past month of September, Raymond put his vast collection of thousands and thousands of books for sale, at a reduced price of €1 or €2 each copy. This enormous book sale, which started in the beginning of September, will continue throughout the month of October, at least. After a previous attempt to sell the book shop with all its possessions – roughly 400,000 books - Raymond has decided that this is the most suitable option, which will benefit more people.

The Algarve Book Cellar features mainly books in English, around 75%, but it also includes copies in other languages such as Portuguese, German, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, and French among others, some of which he brought with him from the UK, and others which have been donated over the years. In addition to the enormous selection of books, you can get PlayStation 2 games, CDs, DVSs, and even cassette tapes.

When asked why he opened this bookshop in 2002, Raymond explained that in addition to his notorious passion for reading, he "felt the need to provide people with books which were affordable," since the average cost of a copy in Portugal is fifteen euros. "The more you print, the cheaper they are, but sadly, not many books are printed in Portugal", Raymond mentioned showcasing the importance of second hand book shops and his consistent effort in making books accessible to all.

Additionally, he clarified that before relocating to Portugal in 2001, he and his wife would take three-week trips to the Algarve each year, requiring him to bring roughly twelve books each time from England, his native country, which he admitted "was not that easy". The American Crime book genre enthusiast is now looking forward to regular clients, locals and tourists to stop by, immerse themselves in this book's paradise and hopefully leave without empty hands, as you can be sure to find any book you may be dreaming about.

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Uncovering the world of truffles in the Algarve

KATE SREENARONG

IT ALL STARTED IN 2017, WHEN DIETER HONSTRASS, THE "TRUFFLE POPE", WITH OVER 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD, AND THE FOUNDER OF THE HYPOGEA RESEARCH GROUP (FGH), WERE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DOGS TO TRAIN TO HUNT FOR TRUFFLES.

"I received an email from Martins Kulinarium in Carvoeiro about a weekend workshop on truffle hunting with dogs and I immediately found it very interesting, so I signed up", Larissa Möller, founder of the Algarve Truffle Group, told Central Magazine.

"You need a dog to hunt for truffles, as they are a fungi that grow underground with an intense scent, so when trained, the dogs can find them thanks to their excellent sense of smell", she explained. "This doesn't require a specific breed or age, it's all about good teamwork."

The First Steps

During the workshop, Larissa and her then 7-year-old American Akita, Fashima, met Nelli Eleonore dos Santos, whose Rhodesian Ridgeback, Nala, was only six months old at the time, and they trained together.





Tuber aestivum ascus with spores

"Those were the first steps of our exciting and successful truffle hunts in the Algarve", she mentioned.

Once the first search successes were recorded, Larissa searched the Internet for truffle research in the country and came across a Youtube video by Professor Celeste Santos e Silva from the University of Évora, in which she presented her work on the desert truffle species in Portugal, due to climate change. "Mr. Honstrass and I were invited to visit her at the university and that's how we met. It was six years ago, and we've been working together ever since."

Truffles and trees live together in a symbiosis, the so-called mycorrhiza, where there is an exchange of important nutrients and water. Therefore, it is crucial to know what truffle species connects with which tree, and certain soil conditions.

"When we find truffles, we make a detailed documentation of the discovery. Pictures are taken of the fresh truffles in the environment they are found, as well as the associated trees or plants, and we collect a sample", Larissa elaborated on their research. "I have a small laboratory here, because microscopic examination is essential to identify the truffles more accurately. The samples that stand out, we send to a laboratory in Évora or Spain for DNA sequencing to verify exactly what we uncovered."

The Algarve Truffles Group consists of five active members with a total of seven dogs of different breeds, ages and training classes. "The whole group meets up once or twice a month, we travel all over the Algarve, near the coast, in the hinterland and Serra de Monchique, always in different areas", she shared. "When you're out in the field, the dogs are very precise. They can show you the exact location of the truffles and we often find many different species on our excursions in nature."

New discovery

At the beginning of May 2024, Nelli Eleonore dos Santos and Larissa Möller with their dogs Nala, 7, and Figo, 3, succeeded for the first time in finding the culinary valuable black summer truffle, Tuber aestivum, in the wild at several places in the Algarve.

"Discovering the summer truffles was one of our greatest achievements, as this species has never been found in the South of Portugal", she expressed. The Tuber aestivum is a speciality in the culinary industry, often offered as a highlight in upscale restaurants during truffle season.

"Following the discovery, Professor Celeste Santos e Silva personally visited the sites, and thanks to our great dogs, we were able to find more summer truffles in her presence for research work at the university. By taking soil and root samples from the locations, she was able to clearly confirm the findings after extensive laboratory work", Larissa continued.

Since 2018, the Algarve Truffle Group has identified over 60 species in the region and the Alentejo, with the help of their dogs. "Among the identified species so far, are DNA sequencing-confirmed evidence of very rare, in some cases undescribed specimens, as well as previously unknown and unpublished truffles that are waiting to be revealed together with fellow scientists", she mentioned.

Truffle community

"The main reason I started this was because I wanted to do something fun and meaningful with my dog. Even as a child, I went mushroom hunting in the forest with my parents and I always loved it. Through truffle hunting, I learned a lot about the interactions and relationships in nature and it really changed my view of our world", Larissa recalled. "Mr. Dieter educated us very well, and he still regularly comes to the Algarve to work with us."

The Algarve Truffle Group also offers services to truffle plantations in Portugal, as there aren't many trained dogs besides theirs in the country. "This allows us to earn some money to pay the laboratories and continue our work", she concluded.



A dynamic community for remote workers

KATE SREENARONG

THE LOFT COMMUNITY IS A COLLECTIVE BASED IN THE CENTRAL ALGARVE FOR REMOTE WORKERS, DIGITAL NOMADS, AND ENTREPRENEURS, CONNECTING PEOPLE IN REAL LIFE TO THRIVE TOGETHER.



Originally from Buenos Aires, Flor Dos Reis, founder of the LOFT Community, aims "to support the remote work movement and help defeat loneliness in the region", she told Central Magazine.

Working remotely gives people the freedom to choose where they want to live, but one of the main downsides is the lack of social in-person connections. "I moved to a small beach town in the Algarve and spent two years working remotely, it was difficult to meet people. I looked for coworking spaces but couldn't find any in the area", Flor recounted her initial experience living in Portugal.

Building a community

Having studied Social Communications, Flor spent 10 years working in digital marketing. "I enjoyed the possibility of providing a service and product to someone who was seeking it. It's not as great anymore, good intentions were lost and now it's about creating struggles." No longer identifying with her career, she decided it was time for a new chapter.

"I saw other digital nomad groups in different areas of the Algarve and got inspired – if there's things going on, it's possible to have them anywhere." So, with the help of Claire, who she met while looking for a coworking space, they created digital nomad groups in Faro and Olhão.

It started as an after-work hangout in October of last



year, but soon grew to be something much bigger. "I promoted it all around and 30 people showed up, a mix of remote workers based in the area, digital nomads passing by and locals curious about the lifestyle", she recalled. Over the past couple of months, the LOFT Community has hosted more than 100 events and receives 10 new member requests every week.

"When I saw people talking, connecting, having a good time, I saw there was something here and decided to keep it going", she added. "I noticed a positive impact. It started from a selfish need, something I was looking for, but I found that many others also needed it."

Collective spirit

The LOFT Community hosts events every week, alternating between the regions of Loulé, Olhão, Faro and Tavira, from which the group gets its name. "I didn't know of any tools or theory in community building, I just had a natural inclination from who and how I am", Flor shared. "Now, I'm trying to acquire more tools and skills to make this more sustainable. I'm also always looking for people who are active and passionate in the community to work with and help – it's a lot just for one person."

In addition to these, she also organises monthly events where people of all four corners of the community and even from the border of Spain join together for activities such as hiking, volleyball and many more. "It's been nice to see people becoming more proactive within the community, organising meetups themselves too!"

Within the scope of the LOFT Community, there are smaller groups which also offer opportunities to meet people, including football games, padel, dog walks, cooking sessions and golf. They also provide Portuguese classes so that members can better integrate themselves in the local culture. "The community isn't a business, I'm trying to create a collective spirit of helping each other out."

"We would also like to contribute to the region with workshops and projects", she expressed. According to Flor, remote work is an opportunity to make a living in the countryside away from big cities. This helps the development of regions that have fallen behind as people have moved into urban areas, which continues to happen in Portugal at an alarming rate.

"My vision is for this to go on, even if I don't live here anymore", Flor spoke about her ambitions for the community. "For digital nomads passing by, if you're only here for a month, it's hard to find people and places, so having a community welcoming you with open arms when you're unfamiliar with the area is a huge advantage. For the people who live here, it's to be able to find and build connections, business partners, collaborators, and lasting friendships.

"It's my pleasure to see people coming together, I remember my struggles a year ago and to be able to help means a lot to me" she explained. "I had no idea where this was going, it's just grown. But I'm trying to lead everyone in a positive direction.

"I would love to inspire people to live a remote life if that's what they want, and it does not need to be lonely", Flor concluded. "Go with the flow. If you find something you like, just invest in it. Be fulfilled."

To find out more about the LOFT Community or if you want to get involved, please visit: https://linktr.ee/faro.olhao.digitalnomads and https://www.instagram.com/faro.olhaodigitalnomads/.



Creating choral magic

CRISTINA DA COSTA BROOKES

"MUSICAL TRAINING IS A MORE POTENT INSTRUMENT THAN ANY OTHER, BECAUSE RHYTHM AND HARMONY FIND THEIR WAY INTO THE INWARD PLACES OF THE SOUL" - PLATO.



Bella Acapella is an established mixed gender international chorus of 15 years, whose members come from all over the Algarve with the same enthusiastic passion for music and love of singing.

Expertly guided by Musical Director, Rob Does, Bella Acapella has performed at numerous concerts across the region, where you have maybe been lucky enough to see them perform. Speaking with Rob Does, Central Magazine found out more about this beloved chorus which now has over 30 members.

In an almost fated situation, Rob who has over 25 years' experience as a conductor was recruited by Bella Acapella seven years ago, "Asides from being a conductor, I have sung in quarters and had a musical education where I played the violin. We moved to the Algarve eight years ago, where I had no plans of being a conductor again as I was focusing on the B&B."

"One of the members found out that I had experience and they were looking for a Musical Director. I was hesitant at first but it clicked. It was an easy way to make friends and language is not a barrier as we all speak English and all share a love for music so it was an easy fit. It has given me the opportunity to work with so many talented people and learn a lot."

Rob told Central Magazine: "We have counted 12 nationalities, which includes Dutch, French, German, American, Portuguese, Finnish, Swedish, Italian and Lebanese, which is quite a challenge with pronunciation as you can imagine we have all these different accents. It is a challenge to get a harmonised sound but we succeed and have a lot of fun."

Adding: "Our youngest member is 26 and our oldest member is 84 and we sing a repertoire of musical songs and evergreens, all in English. We help new singers so you don't need any experience, but you need to have some time to commit and dedicate. We require people to study at home and sing with other people in your section."

Bella Acapella rehearse every Wednesday from 7:30pm to 9:30pm at the República 14 Cultural Center in Olhão. If you are curious to know more, they hold open rehearsals every first Wednesday of the month and they welcome you with open arms and an inclusive buddy system, where the only criteria being that you must speak English in order to

follow rehearsals and an evident musical feeling. Do not let the distance deter you, as they have people coming from "various locations such as Boliqueime, Tavira, Loulé and even Messines."

Striking Gold

Last Spring, Bella Acapella became the first Portuguese Chorus to win Gold in the Iberian Barbershop Competition, whereby the score they achieved qualified them for the European championships in Helsingborg, Sweden in May 2025.

Central Magazine asked what goes into preparing for a competition on this scale, "I think the effort starts with having very disciplined rehearsals. I am very particular about singing the right notes, the right pronunciation and the weekly rehearsals are the start and then we spend money on having specialised coaches who come from abroad, this season we will have coaches from the UK, Holland and Germany."

Rob shared the moment Bella Acapella won Gold: "I do remember the moment very well when we were in the big hall and they announced the Bronze and then the Silver and I thought now we either win or we have nothing... but we received the best score. It was like all the work we put into it, came out in that very moment and it was a great feeling and an extreme satisfaction."

Adding "It is not about the winning per se, but it was an amazing experience to meet hundreds of others who enjoy singing together and trying their best. It is more than just a competition; it was a convention of likeminded people that share the love of choral music."



European Championships

Bella Acapella have started a major crowdfunding campaign to help them to get to the European Championship in Sweden. For a local chorus it is a considerable individual investment, with Rob explaining: "Going to Sweden is an expensive adventure, with flights, hotels, extra coaching and even uniforms to purchase for 25 people so we do appreciate financial support for the members who are not very well off financially. This is about helping members of the chorus who need the money to go to Sweden so if you have a big heart for the arts then please donate and share the link with friends https://gofund.me/8dda93bc ."

For more information and to get in touch, please visit https://www.bellaacapella.pt/ or alternatively, visit also our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/bellaacapella.portugal



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With a unique flavor, the simplicity of its 14 botanists harvested in the mountains of Sicó and Açor, highlight the Amicis experience.

In 2017, shortly after its launch on the market, it wins the Médaille d'Or 2017 Gold Medal in the contest Spirits Selection By Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, a contest that awards drinks from all around the world.

Amicis, which has been part of Grupo BEL, S.A. since 2016, has been one of the favorite gin brands of consumers, consolidating itself in national and international market.

To Teresa Missionário, Marketing Director of the brand: "We know that the quality of Portuguese gin is internationally recognized, and that gin consumption is today a habit that has come to stay, with an audience with very particular characteristics. Although we are in a phase of growth and consolidation, we are focused on an innovative production that stands out for its quality, for the flavors it awakens and for the concept that it has associated with. Since 2022, we have been working on strengthening the brand with a creative presence on social media and increasing the number of presences at specific events."



Quality at the origin, excellence in the gin

Amicis is distilled from 14 botanicals, which gave it a floral and unique flavor. The botanists are harvested in the portuguese "Serra do Açor" and "Serra de Sicó" at certain times of the year in order to obtain the greatest aromatic flavour.

From this 14, we highlight 2 that makes the Amicis a Unique Experience. The Carqueja Flower arises spontaneously in nature, particularly at high altitude, like Serra de Açor. Eatable, it's a flower widely used for cooking.

Sant Maria herb, One of the most famous plants in Serra de Sicó, recognized for its influence on the palate of one of the most traditional products of this region, rabaçal cheese. It grows abundantly in the region.

"Gin has more and more followers associated with leisure time and Amicis is the right partner. We are facing a demanding market and therefore we are not in a "hurry" to reach everyone, we want to be close to those who value the origins of gin and who celebrate good times with good friends", says Teresa Missionário.

IT'S ALL ABOUT

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A song for peace recorded in Portugal

KATE SREENARONG

STEVE ANDREWS, KNOWN ALSO AS THE BARD OF ELY, HAS JUST RELEASED A NEW SONG PREACHING PEACE FOR THE WORLD, IN COLLABORATION WITH AMERICAN AND PORTUGUESE ARTISTS.



The song, named "We Can Sing Together", was composed by Steve and recorded in Quinta do Conde, near Setúbal, in the studio of Portuguese musician Ricardo Verdelho. "The composition process was a bit different with this project because usually it's with my own words, this time I was doing it with someone else's but there was no problem at all", Andrews told Central Magazine. "I managed to get a tune together in 10-20 minutes!"

The lyrics for this song were written by Stephen Friedland, known by the stage name Brute Force, a veteran of the music industry. Speaking of the collaboration, Steve shared he "felt very honoured, because Stephen is a very talented singer-songwriter himself". Friedland is best known for his time as a songwriter and keyboardist with The Tokens and for working with John Lennon and George Harrison on Apple Records with his song "King of Fuh".

"We Can Sing Together" also features background vocals courtesy of a choir of Portuguese children, an idea put forward by Ricardo Verdelho, who is also a music teacher. The two musicians collaborated further on the music video, in which Steve appears with the children.

"The most challenging part possibly was the afternoon before we were filming for the music video", Steve recounted. "Ricardo had to tell the parents whether or not it was going to take place at 6pm because we had to get permission to use the Boa Água Amphithetre, in Quinta do Conde."

Calling for peace

The song is an acoustic ballad calling for peace among people of all nations. "At this particular point in time, we have problems going on all over the world. We have wars, political issues, riots, all kinds of terrible stuff going on between human beings, and this song is about conveying the message that we can stop all this. Can we not all share this planet and coexist as human beings? It's a call for people to get together and recognise that we're all human, we all have red blood, and we should stop all this fighting and division", Steve explained.

"It's demonstrating as well, which is important, that we can in fact do this", he added, "that somebody in Portugal and somebody in New York can collaborate on this, that someone else from Portugal can get involved too. I think the song shows that people can work together, enjoy working together, and enjoy living life and sharing this beautiful world we have".

The Bard of Ely has made a career out of creating activist music, calling for not just world peace, but also for a society built on empathy for both people and nature. "I really believe in people going out there and doing stuff. We are a part of nature, so if we're not looking after nature, we're not looking after ourselves."

One of his more recent works of activism was at the World Ocean Summit in Lisbon earlier this year, where he advocated for a concert featuring various artists from around the world with the goal of raising money for ocean conservation. He is also an active promoter of butterfly conservation and has written a book on the subject.





Career highlights

Steve's roots are in the folk scene of 70's Cardiff. Inspired by music legend Bob Dylan to become a singer-songwriter, the 71-year-old wrote his first song at the age of 17. "I've had a weird career, but it's had some real highlights. I performed at Glastonbury several times. I was at the 1st and 2nd Green Man Festivals in Wales, and that's how my beard became green", is how he summarised his experience. " After a break, I really got back into to it all in 1989, when I was on a collaborative music album. I've been writing songs, performing, and recording since 1990, for over 30 years straight."

He further elaborated on how much luck plays its part in becoming a successful musician. "When I auditioned for Britain's Got Talent, the reason I told them why I wanted to be on the show was that I was looking for my big break. In my time, I've had many what you could call little breaks, but I'm still searching for my big break to this day."

Recently, Steve left Cardiff behind to move to Portugal. "I have my residency here now. I'm very interested in nature and this is a very good place for wildlife. You've got the weather, the people, I think it's an amazing country."

"We Can Sing Together" is now available to listen to on Youtube and Bandcamp, as well as the rest of the Bard of Ely's extensive discography.



An Arts & Crafts Haven

CRISTINA DA COSTA BROOKES

LOCAL ART COLLECTIVE OPENS BRAND NEW ARTISAN SHOP IN THE HEART OF OLD TOWN LAGOS.



TEIAS Arte Local is a collaboration of unique independent local makers, with the Algarve very much at the centre of their lovingly made creations.

Following years of selling at markets and organising events together, a group of local makers decided 2024 was the year to come together as an association and open a beautiful gallery and shop in the old town of Lagos.

The nine brilliant long term resident artists consist of international and local talent, with Gill Goode, Nina Bradley, Sandra Knop, Oficina Poeta Azul, Jewel Kat, Margarida Gorgulho, Romp, Two Dogs and HMN.

At TEIAS you can expect to find an Aladdin's cave of jewels with an eclectic mix of puzzles, paintings, jewellery, ceramics, cards, sculptures and wooden pieces. Sustainability is at the forefront of their lovingly curated pieces, that are either inspired by the Algarve or use materials from their beloved region. Here you will find something for every age and pocket, with the price range being from a euro up to €850.

On your arrival at TEIAS, you will be greeted by one of the nine makers, who are tending the space for the day as they all take turns minding this haven. Here you can explore the work of each maker, learn about their different artistic processes but most importantly you can find unique treasures to take home (they make wonderful gifts too!).

Best of all, you will find the artists photos in all their glory so you will know who is behind your chosen craft which really gives TEIAS that personal touch. Sandra jokingly added "there is nowhere to hide for our group and by having out pictures and showing who TEIAS is, it gives such a different atmosphere as the product is not mass produced."



Uplifting arts & crafts

It felt fitting to hear about how special TEIAS is over a cup of coffee, it was a heartwarming tale of a close-knit group with an ardent passion for arts and crafts and who wish to showcase their work whilst engaging with the community.

Central Magazine spoke with two of its makers, Jewel Cat's Catarina, who makes botanical jewellery using hand-picked wild flowers from the Algarve and Sandra Knop, who designs and creates handmade wooden puzzles. "Our space honours Portuguese heritage and gives those who visit us the chance to take a little bit of the country back home with them," shared Catarina.

Catarina also explained that: "Some of us from the team have worked together for about eight years, at markets, exhibitions in Lagos and in a beautiful little space in Caldas de Monchique which is a shop that runs a similar system to TEIAS. At the beginning of this year, we decided we needed a home and to do our own thing all together and it was clear that us nine worked so well together under pressure, under stress and challenging circumstances such as covid", explained Sandra.

Catarina added, "At TEIAS we all bring something unique; Sandra has her puzzles which have either an animal, family or friendship themes and then she has her linocuts which have cats and the Algarve and the ocean, next door you have Poeta Azul with notebooks, stamps, everything connected to the Algarve and its architecture and the sea so it is Algarve shines through each of us individually. We are all inspired



by the location or we source our materials from it so Márcia and I use the plants, Gill's landscapes, doors and towns and then we have Rita who does sculptures of the waves."

To most having a shared space between nine artists could be a recipe for disaster but not for TEIAS, you can really tell that these artists have trust and respect for one another and admiration for each other's work. "We found out who is bringing what to the table and by having different nationalities, ages and different products we really found that our strengths complement each other really well. I am honoured and excited to be around the other artists", reiterated Sandra.

Artisanal workshops

It was wonderful to hear that TEIAS has started hosting a diverse collection of artisanal workshops, both for adults and children alike. Keeping in line with their ethos of inclusivity, the workshops are available in different languages, with hopes to expand this offer further. Additionally, they are always open to meeting other artists, so if you would like to give a workshop at TEIAS please do contact them at info@teiaslagos.pt



You can find updated workshops and more information at www.teiraslagos.pt or alternatively, you can find them on Instagram/Facebook @teias.lagos. Teias Artísticas Associação, R. António Crisógno dos Santos 31, 8600-687 in Lagos

ECONOMY

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creativum.pt@gmail.com

Don Alfonso Restaurant

Located next to Vilamoura Marina. Portuguese flavours mingle with touches of Mediterranean cuisine, customized by Chef Fernando Reis. Open: From 18:30 | Reservations: Recommended

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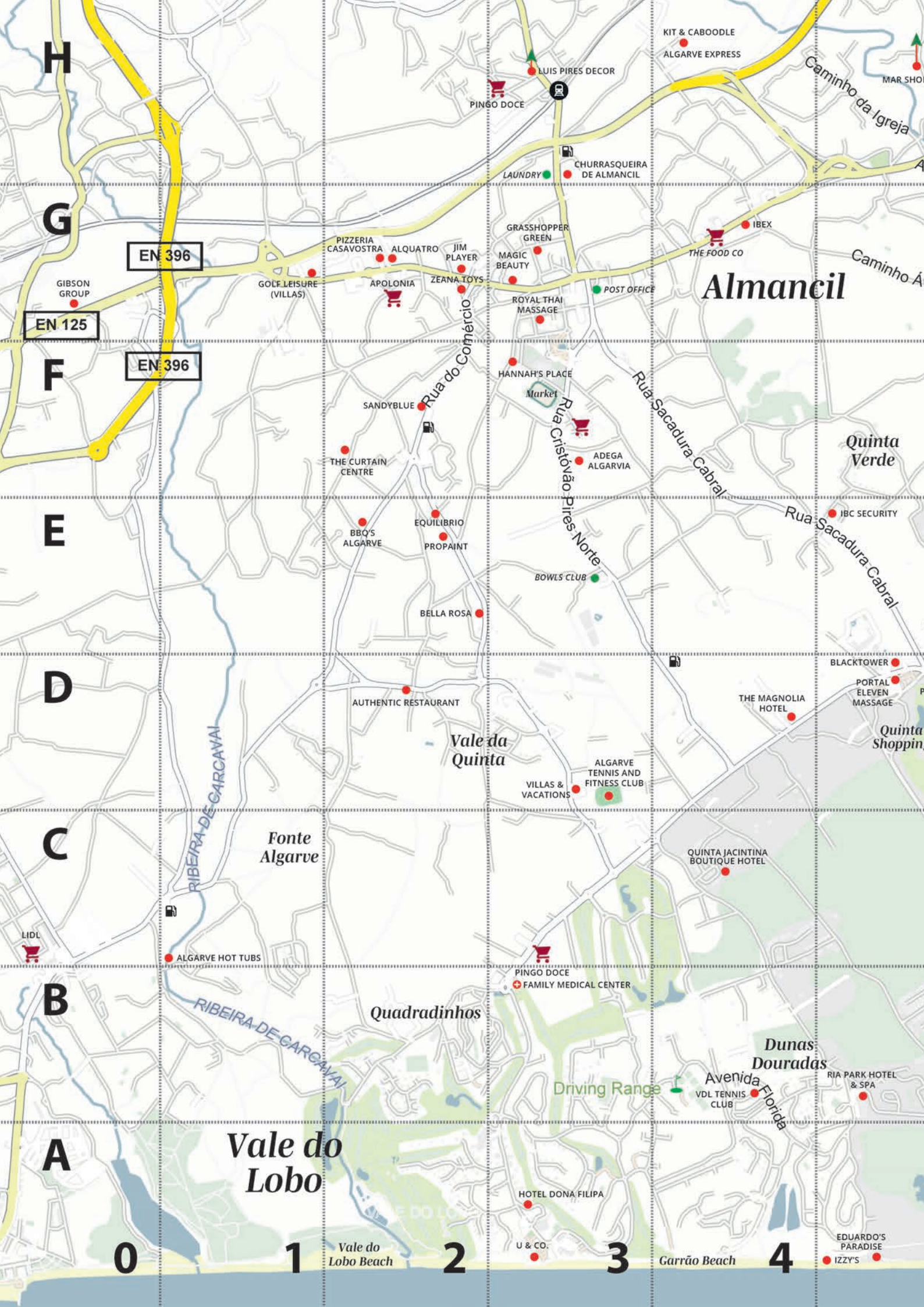


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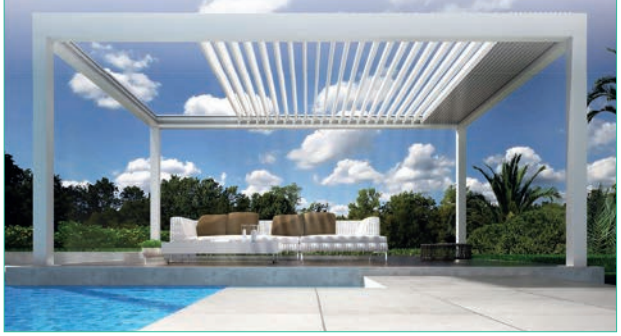
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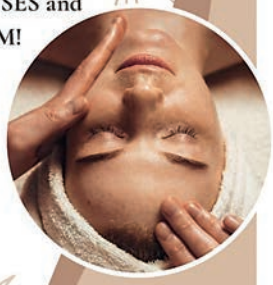
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Portuguese magic fruits of autumn

BRUNO G. SANTOS

AUTUMN IS HERE AND SO IS THE NEED FOR WARM AND COMFORTING FLAVOURS. DURING THE SUMMER, PEOPLE TEND TO HAVE A SALAD OR A SNACK ON A TERRACE, HOWEVER, IN THE AUTUMN, PEOPLE MAY BE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT.



As temperatures cool down, the colour palette on the streets changes, and from September onwards Portugal starts to look more orange. The leaves fall from the trees, leaving dry leaves on the ground. Autumn is related to changes, as classes begin for the younger ones, possibly marking important milestones, and parents start a new routine with their children.

In addition to colours and changes, autumn also brings delicacies, that can bring a piece of the season to everyone's house. When autumn arrives, people look for comfort food, leaving aside the fresh food of summer.

According to the Mediterranean diet, human beings should eat seasonal products, which means that in autumn they should eat the produce that nature offers us this season.

Chestnuts

Chestnuts are probably the fruit that is the most related to autumn. It's impossible to think about the season without thinking of *Magustos*. Chestnuts are a dry fruit, which come from the chestnut tree and are rich in vitamins, being very well appreciated in Portugal. Bought at the supermarket, or on the streets, they are the food that mark the beginning of the workday of many street roasters, who guarantee part of their budget to sell chestnuts on city streets. Roasted in front of everyone, customers can buy hot chestnuts roasted in a very special way, a secret kept among the street vendors that no one else knows. At home, they can be made in the oven, just with salt, cooked with fennel, or used in a puree, a soup, or even to accompany a good piece of meat roasted in the oven.

Quince

Quince is another fruit that can only be eaten during the autumn, usually, it is not eaten raw, as the taste is bitter, and the pulp is quite rough. The raw texture of quince may not be pleasant to eat immediately after being picked from the tree. Despite the numerous health benefits, quince is usually consumed in the form of marmalade. Marmalade, or *marmelada*, in Portuguese, is nothing less than a quince jam. The fruit is cooked in water and sugar and, when purchased in supermarkets, comes in a rectangular or square shape so that it can be cut into thin slices. It is usually accompanied by cheese, or it can be spread on toast with butter.



Pomegranate

Besides being a natural antioxidant, pomegranate is a very versatile fruit. Despite the challenge of peeling it, after tasting it, people forget all the time it took to put the small red jewels in the glass. It can be eaten plain, or with a little sugar. However, it is great when mixed in yoghurt at snack time, or even as a juice, with antioxidant characteristics which our bodies really love and ask for.



Persimmon

Hated by many, but loved by many others, is the persimmon. This Asian fruit has been part of Portuguese autumn for several centuries and it helps people opt for a healthy lifestyle as the fruit is recommended by nutritionists to add to weight loss diets, for example. There are two persimmon variables in Portugal: gnawing and opening, as the people say. The gnawing ("*morder*", in Portuguese) persimmon can be eaten like an apple, the texture is similar and as the name implies it can be gnawed. Its colour is orange, but it is still as sweet as the opening one. Open ("***abrir***") persimmon is softer and should be handled and transported with care as it can burst easily. With the persimmon open, it is best to eat the pulp with a spoon, the texture can be more gelatinous and reddish, but it will certainly please everyone's palate. But be careful, the persimmon should be eaten quite ripe, by consuming the fruit before it is ripe tannins may be ingested and contract the muscles of the mouth for a few seconds.



Apples

Apples are seen at supermarkets throughout the year, however, the natural season for apples to grow is autumn. The flavour is already known by everyone as well as the ways to prepare or eat it. However, autumn calls for more cosy and warm foods and apples can be a very versatile food. With the particularity of fitting perfectly with the intensity of cinnamon, roasting apples in the oven can be an excellent autumn dessert, or, now that a new Snow White movie will be released, an apple pie, but be careful and make sure it was not cooked in the Evil Queen's kitchen.



Big Zuu's Swedish cinnamon bun recipe

THESE PILLOWY TREATS ARE SPICED TO PERFECTION.



Craving cinnamon buns but can't be bothered with the faff of making and proving your dough?

Big Zuu has a handy hack for this – and all it requires is shop-bought croissant dough and you're off to the races.

Swedish cinnamon buns

Ingredients:

(Makes 6)

60g caster sugar

1tbsp ground cinnamon

½tsp ground cardamom

Pinch of salt

350g roll ready-made chilled croissant dough

3tbsp golden syrup

2tbsp pearl sugar

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas 6. Grease a six-hole deep muffin tin lightly with vegetable oil.

2. Mix the caster sugar with the cinnamon, cardamom and salt in a bowl and set aside.

3. Unroll the croissant dough and remove the pieces on either end so you have four triangles in a rectangular sheet.

4. Scatter the spiced sugar evenly over the sheet of dough, then roll up the short end to form a thick log. Trim the uneven edges off, then cut into six even pieces. Place the rolls carefully in the muffin tin and bake for 20 minutes until risen and golden.

5. Take the buns out of the oven and carefully remove them from the muffin tin while still hot to prevent sticking.

6. Heat the golden syrup in a pan over a gentle heat and brush over the buns to glaze them. Sprinkle with the pearl sugar and serve still warm.

Donal Skehan's autumn pasta recipe

Studded with blue cheese and crisp walnuts, this is a warming seasonal dish.

"I love the sticky sound this steamy pasta makes as you stir through pumpkin, walnuts and blue cheese until it forms a creamy sauce," says chef Donal Skehan.

"It's proper autumnal food – seek out smaller, sweeter pumpkins with interesting textures and skin colours; they are far more flavourful than the regular large orange ones."





Autumn pasta with blue cheese and nuts

Ingredients:

(Serves 4)

1 pumpkin or autumn squash (about 1kg), peeled, deseeded and sliced

3-4 sprigs of thyme

1tbsp olive oil

1tbsp salted butter

2 onions, thinly sliced

350g pasta shapes, such as conchiglie or rigatoni

100g blue cheese

75g walnuts, toasted and roughly crushed

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Best-quality extra virgin olive oil, to serve

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/Gas 6.

2. Place the pumpkin on a large baking sheet with the thyme sprigs and toss in the olive oil until all the pieces are coated. Season generously with salt and pepper. Roast in the oven for 40 minutes, or until tender and caramelised at the edges. Once cooked, keep warm.

3. While the pumpkin cooks, place a large heavy-based frying pan (skillet) over a medium-high heat and add the butter. Add the onions and season generously, tossing to coat completely in the melted butter. Reduce the heat and cook gently until the onions are sweet and caramelised, about 10-15 minutes.

4. Towards the end of the pumpkin cooking time, bring a large pan of water to the boil and generously season with salt. Once boiling, add the pasta and cook until al dente. Drain and reserve a cup of the starchy cooking water for use in the sauce.

5. Increase the heat back up under the pan with the onions, then add the reserved pasta water and bring to a steady simmer. Meanwhile, mash half the cooked pumpkin and add this to the onions. Crumble in almost all of the blue cheese (keep a little back to serve) and stir until you have a smooth, creamy sauce. Working quickly, add the pasta to the pan and stir through until completely coated.

6. Serve the pasta hot in warmed plates topped with the remaining pumpkin slices and blue cheese. Sprinkle with toasted crushed walnuts and top with a generous drizzle of the best-quality extra virgin olive oil you have to hand and a last seasoning of sea salt and black pepper.





A unique learning experience

KATE SREENARONG

PORTUGUESE WITH ANITA IS A UNIQUE ONLINE PLATFORM WITH OVER 3,000 STUDENTS FROM ALL AROUND THE WORLD SIGNED UP TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE OF PORTUGAL.

Anita, 44, is a university qualified teacher who lives in the Algarve, with a mission to "spread my passion for the Portuguese language to as many people as possible worldwide", she told Central Magazine.

The online platform offers a variety of self-paced courses which provide comprehensive lessons designed for every level, whether you are approaching the Portuguese language for the first time or want to go beyond grammar and speak with fluency.

A Passion for teaching

"I have known what I wanted to do for the rest of my life since I was 10 years old", she shared. "I told my mum I'm going to teach Portuguese. She told me to go for it, but I'd have to study hard and go to college.

"I find it amazing to be able to communicate with people from all over the world in their native language, it's a beautiful way to create a connection", Anita stated, citing her passion for studying languages as the motivation to acquire a Masters in Teaching English and Portuguese.

"As soon as I finished uni, I started to pursue my career", she recalled. "Before you finish college, you send CVs to see if you can get a nice job, but you don't expect to get a good one right away. I consider it to be fate, I got a call from the Four Seasons Country Club, in Quinta do Lago."

"They needed someone to tutor the kids in Portuguese and they had groups of expats that were interested in learning the language too", Anita explained. "I was hired and that's how it started. I wasn't looking for it, but I couldn't be happier that I got that call."





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Creating a platform

Anita continued to teach Portuguese in different positions, including as a teacher in several schools, a Cluster Training Manager for Conrad Hotels and Double Tree by Hilton in Portugal, and as a Pedagogical Director at a local micro international school in the Algarve, which she enjoyed for over a decade, but had always wanted to create a school of her very own. "Once I decided I wanted to pursue teaching differently, I was happy to take the risk, but I didn't know where to begin."

"One day, I was talking to my best friend, and she suggested I start with social media, open an account and see how it goes. She created an Instagram page for me, then with my reputation as a teacher, people started to contact me for lessons", Anita recounted.

"Initially, I began teaching by Zoom. You need to do this face-to-face, even if it's through a computer, so I had to make schedules", she continued. "When I realised my hands were a bit full with people from all around the world wanting to have lessons, and the time differences were quite challenging, I thought to myself I had to go the extra mile and try and find a way to help everyone at the same time.

"I have been teaching for 19 years, since I can remember, there has been a big hole in interactive resources that could make people have fun while learning, which is quite important for me", Anita emphasised, "so I created my own, which do not require the textbooks often needed for the traditional methods".

"I developed self-paced courses to help more people and students, which solved the issue of time differences and rushing to class." The platform is comprised of a variety of video lessons with a focus on pronunciation and vocabulary that make use of visual elements to maintain the audience's attention, as well as a combination of quizzes, challenges, and listening activities. "I take advantage of all the technological and teaching resources, that together contribute to the success in learning the language in a fun and engaging way", she summarised.

Anita has taught Portuguese to people from as far as Thailand and Malaysia. "I always ask, where are you from and why do you want to learn the language? I like to know the motivation and focus on the needs. It's rewarding to hear about the success and accomplishments of my students, being a part of the process."

"I just always had the goal to teach and spread my knowledge of the language and culture, which I consider to be as important when you learn a language to understand the people and country", Anita concluded with a reflection on her path so far. "I quit my job to launch this platform, to work as an entrepreneur, and create my own company. But I listened to my heart and it worked out great!"

Interested in getting some Portuguese lessons? *Please visit https://www.portuguesewithanita.com/theportugalnews-store to find out more details about her course and get into contact.*



Algarve Fitness & Tennis Club

ATF, federated with both the Portuguese Tennis and Padel-Tennis Federation. The club is located on Estrada de Vale do Lobo (Map reference H4).















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Astro Faro – a look into astronomy

SARA J. DURÃES

THERE ARE PLENTY OF DAYLIGHT ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE SOUTH OF PORTUGAL, BUT AT NIGHT TIME, THE CELESTIAL OBJECTS BECOME THE SPOTLIGHT, AND WHAT A FASCINATING PICTURE IT IS.



João Costa, a professional fitness instructor and personal trainer, has recently embarked on his childhood passion of astronomy. "I've always loved space and what is out there", the amateur astronomer mentioned. João described how he used to wait patiently for any news and updates in the astronomy world, information which was not as accessible as it is nowadays. "I would spend my free time trying to learn more about astronomy" he shared, noting that "back in those days the access to that type of content was limited to a few magazines and documentaries which would occasionally stream on TV".

Even though João showed an early interest in astronomy, he didn't find the opportunity to fully immerse himself in the subject and he did not purchase his first good telescopic lens until 2020, when the pandemic outbreak forced him to stay indoors. After gradually immersing himself in amateur astronomy and making friends who shared his interests, he was later asked to help in some educational astronomy events at the Centro de Ciência Viva do Algarve in Faro. Claiming, "Here, I was able to start sharing my passion and motivate others to do the same".

At first, João's intention for Astro Faro was limited to creating a Facebook page where he could connect with other amateur astronomers and share his passion for astronomy observations and space research. "My objective was to create a safe space where people who are as passionate about space exploration as I am could freely express their thoughts, opinions, and outer space

images". However, João Costa is now attempting to conduct his own astronomical observation events by organising astronomical activities for the community, in collaboration with different entities. Recently he has partnered with the Chamber of Faro at many occasions to do so.



As an amateur astronomer, João has been able to demonstrate, instruct, and engage with individuals of all ages throughout different astronomical observation events. In August, he had the opportunity to share his expertise with those interested at 'Forum Family Garden' initiative organised by the Forum Algarve. "Seeing the children's joy when they observe the moon, the thrill on their faces and the little giggles of excitement" is the most rewarding element of undertaking this astronomical events, the astronomy enthusiast shares. Fortunately, João Costa has promised to keep holding these engaging and instructive activities for the whole of the upcoming autumn season, since a lot of people are eager to get a closer look at the night sky. Every month, at Vale do Lobo, everyone is welcome to gather for a night of astronomy.

"I really enjoy studying the moon; it is undoubtedly the most amazing object in the universe to observe up close, especially for the younger population," he said in response to a query about which celestial objects he preferred to observe. João started studying astronomy as a hobby, but after spending many hours gazing up at the sky, he has come to find that the planets and the deep sky are what most interest him. The deep sky classification is used by most amateur astronomers to distinguish visually observed faint objects that are visible to the naked eye as well as telescopic objects like galaxies, nebulae, and star clusters. "It is more difficult for people who are not accustomed to observing the sky in this detail to comprehend how fascinating it is to watch nebulae as an example, but for us astronomers, it is simply outstanding as we really understand what it is and what it means".

Understanding the night sky takes more than just staring at it. If you don't know where to start, João's advice is for you to ask someone you know or interact with amateur astronomy groups, and utilise their assistance to try and locate the equipment that will be most useful for your own skills and expectations. "And always remember that the best telescope is the one we use". According to João, amateur astronomers frequently use this expression to express their thoughts, as "what good is it to own the greatest, largest telescope if we don't know how to use it? Because we can't move it or because it is too complex to operate". As the astronomer further shared, "It took a lot of patience and resilience, but practice leads to ease – today what is extremely easy for me was extremely difficult at the beginning, so do remember that when you start your journey".





A mission, a deadline, a goal

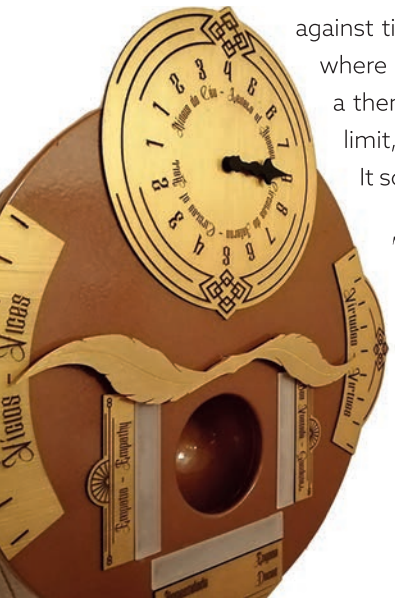
SARA J. DURÃES

CHOOSE YOUR MISSION. YOUR CLOCK STARTS TICKING WHEN YOU ENTER THE GAME. SOLVE THE ENIGMAS IN TIME TO MAKE YOUR ESCAPE – CAN YOU DO IT?



It's reasonable to associate the Algarve with outdoor activities, as we are lucky to experience more than 300 days of sun a year, but it is also important to remember that not all the fun is outdoors; sometimes it can be hidden inside, locked in between four walls, immersed in challenges and enigmas.

Located near Praia da Rocha, in Portimão, Escape One Algarve is an Escape Room experience which provides a great mentally demanding challenge for people of all ages. In other words, "It's a puzzle game... A race against time... An immersive experience...", where you must "Solve all the puzzles in a themed environment, within the time limit, to escape or unravel the mystery". It sounds exciting, doesn't it?



The experience

Upon your arrival, you are greeted by the host, who assumes a role that immediately prepares you for what is ahead. After being invited to carefully read the brief of the game you are about to experience, the host gives an enthralling introduction about what to expect and some regulations of the game. Then, it's time to start the adventure.

You are then directed to the room in which the game will take place, and in a matter of seconds you are locked in a room, facing a completely different reality, with no clue what to do or where to start, and with only one goal – to escape before the clock hits 00:00. Throughout the game you will get some clues in case you feel stuck, but keep in mind it's up to you to solve the enigmas and escape.

It would be fun to describe exactly what is going on inside these rooms, but that would ruin the surprise – the best advice I have is for you to experience it for yourself. Nonetheless, you can be certain that you will experience a lot of different emotions. In between the chaos, the anxiety, the stress, and the adrenaline, you will start to find enthusiasm, pride and happiness when you start solving puzzles, conquering obstacles, and opening lockers throughout the mission, whilst at the same time you are moving towards your escape.

The games

Depending on which game you choose to play, you can spend 60, 90, or 100 minutes at Escape One Algarve. The games also differ in terms of complexity, and teams of two to six players can participate in the games, which are available in both Portuguese and English. This Escape Room experience currently offers four game options: The Laboratory, Final Call, Final Call XL and Catastrophe. For the younger ones, aged between 11 and 15, it is possible to play The Project Cyborg and Zombie Cadets.

Open every day between 12pm and 10pm, this is the perfect 'escape' for when you are craving both mental and physical adrenaline or for when you feel like doing something completely different!
https://www.escapeonealgarve.com/

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What do you know about Lagoa?

MARILYN SHERIDAN

APART FROM THERE ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE A TRAFFIC JAM THROUGH THE CENTRE OF TOWN.



Lagoa is one of the most important tourist municipalities of the Algarve, known for its idyllic beaches, and it is here that the beautiful beaches of Marinha, Cova Redonda, Carvalho and Albandeira can be accessed, only a few kilometres apart.

This much-overlooked old historic town is somewhere you might pass through on your way to these beaches, but of importance to the town is the huge site of the FATACIL (Feira de Artesanato, Turismo, Agricultura, Comercio e Industria), where events with themes of Agriculture, Commerce, Industry and other entertainments are held.

Lagoa town

Lagoa has grown into an administrative town for an area that had formerly lived in past times from its agriculture, and the town still preserves traces of this. Although seriously affected by the 1755 earthquake, its reconstruction is evident by the number of monuments and buildings that still exist from that time.

In 1773 Lagoa became recognised as a town, when its history was first documented. Known facts are that both neighbouring Estômbar and Porches were important centres in the Islamic and medieval periods, and Ferragudo had defensive ramparts, and this latter town still remains largely unspoilt, despite its location near popular tourist spots.

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Recent Visit

I was in Lagoa for the first time in a while recently, and would definitely have got lost if I hadn't been taken by the hand of someone who knew their way round. With a maze of narrow winding streets, some were barely wide enough to walk through, let alone drive a car through, but it was a delight to visit somewhere that embodied all the charms of Portuguese architecture.

Places of interest

The coastal zone was attacked by pirates in the past, and various defensive structures were erected along the coast. Still standing on the promontory is 'Capela da Nossa Senhora da Rocha' (Chapel of Our Lady of the Rock), a small chapel that is believed to once have been contained in a fortress complete with moat and drawbridge. The 1755 earthquake destroyed it almost completely, but spared this small 16th century chapel. Considered a place of public interest since 1963, this structure presents itself as one of the hallmarks of the parish of the Porches and Lagoa municipalities, and if you are lucky, you might stumble on an outdoor wedding there, as I once did, and it was a delightful sight - the view of the cliffs and beaches either side of the promontory make a stunning backdrop. It is likely that much of what remains of the fortress was destroyed through successive landslides and by the ocean's movement, and to this date, its perimeter continues to be threatened ocean forces.

Benagil Cave warrants a special mention here, really only accessible by water, and many boat-trips are available for visitors to see it. Over the past 23 million years, the forces of nature have sculpted a cave that looks designed by man, resembling a domed temple with an open skylight. This light-filled natural wonder encloses a beach and is one of most famous sights in the Algarve. Often said to be one of the world's most extraordinary sea caves, it has two arched openings, and tidal variations mean that the smaller the boat, the better are your chances of getting in.



Seven Hanging Valley Trail

For walkers or hikers, the 'Seven Hanging Valley Trail', measuring some 5.7km in length, takes you along the top of deeply sculpted cliffs, and connects Praia de Vale Centeanes to Praia da Marinha Beach – but doing it one-way might be sufficient hiking for many in the heat!



Sand City and Slide & Splash

Fairly recently, the sand sculpture centre of Sand City moved to newer and bigger premises along the N125 main road just outside Lagoa town, and is said to be the biggest sand sculpture park in the world occupying an outdoor area of 6 hectares, where more than 60 artists from several continents have created more than 90 different sculptures. Stop by in the late afternoon, enjoy the sunset, and prepare yourself for a magical experience where the sculptures are all illuminated by an outstanding light show.

Also on the outskirts of Lagoa is the waterpark Slide & Splash and this is well worth a visit, with at least 25 attractions, water slides and an Olympic sized pool. It has two areas for children, and has a grassy, reserved area where you can rent a sunbed, a parasol or even lockers – everything you need to relax and benefit from all the great options on offer there.

Within the town are the offices of the producers of this very magazine, Central Magazine, a glossy, stylish quarterly magazine with articles on business, lifestyle, tourism, and more, which hopefully you are enjoying!



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A walk in suspension

SARA J. DURÃES

IN BETWEEN THE GORGES OF THE SERRA DE MONCHIQUE, YOU CAN FIND AN EXCITING WOODEN WALKAWAY PERFECT FOR AN AUTUMN DAY OUT IN PURE NATURE.



The Algarve is widely known for being a beach paradise, where the warm weather invites us to spend the entire day in the water. However, as autumn arrives, visitors begin seeking other exciting things to do in the area, and it is good to keep in mind that the Algarve is way more than just its coastline.

In the heart of the 'Serra Algarvia', in the parish of Alferce, municipality of Monchique, a distinctive walkway came to life last October. The stunning wooden walkway, which is part of the trail that connects the village of Alferce and the Cerro do Castelo de Alferce Archeological Site, has more than 500 stairs and an exclusive 50-metre suspension bridge hanging 20 metres above the ground, which makes you feel like you are in the Shrek or Indiana Jones movies.

O 'Passadiço do Barranco do Demo' is located approximately 7 km from Monchique, in between majestic hills where you can observe the geologic transaction between the nepheline-syenite massif, and the interlocking rocks composed of schist and greywacke. This walkaway, and mainly the suspension bridge, was constructed because of the site's natural features.

The site can be accessed from two directions: from the north, via the village of Alferce, which is reachable from the EN 267 which connects Monchique to São Marcos da Serra, and from the south, via the Cerro do Castelo de Alferce Archeological Site, where you must follow a dirt road to get to the beginning of the trail. There is enough space to park your car at the start of the wooden walkway in both sides.

Laying above the tributaries originated from the Odelouca stream, which flows through the gorge and creates little waterfalls and lagoons along the way, that can be spotted in specific seasons of the year when rainfall is more prominent, this walkaway experience is ideal for those who love the outdoors, seeking excitement, and wish to immerse themselves in the splendour of the Serra de Monchique.

Offering breathtaking views, the 515-metre passage may feel short. Luckily, the 'Passadiço do Barranco do Demo' is integrated in a longer and slightly challenging walking trail of 3 km meant for braver people, which connects the Interpretative Centre (CICCA) and the Archaeological Site (SACCA). Along the well signed walkway, you will pass through farmland, streams, forested valleys, cork trees and even a mediaeval causeway, which keeps the walking trail entertaining.

There are rest spots at both ends of the walkway, which are perfect for a quick drink, a lovely picnic, or for simply admiring the remarkable landscape view it provides. Although you are free to visit the site at any season of the year the best period to walk them is from the end of September to the beginning of June, when the Algarve has mild temperatures.



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Discover the charming Vila Real de Santo António

BRUNO G. SANTOS

ON THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE ALGARVE, SEPARATED FROM SPAIN BY THE GUADIANA RIVER, IS VILA REAL DE SANTO ANTÓNIO, A CITY COMBINING HISTORY WITH AN AMAZING SHORE.

The town offers a calmer experience as, the city centre, is not as close to the most sought-after tourist destinations of the Algarve.

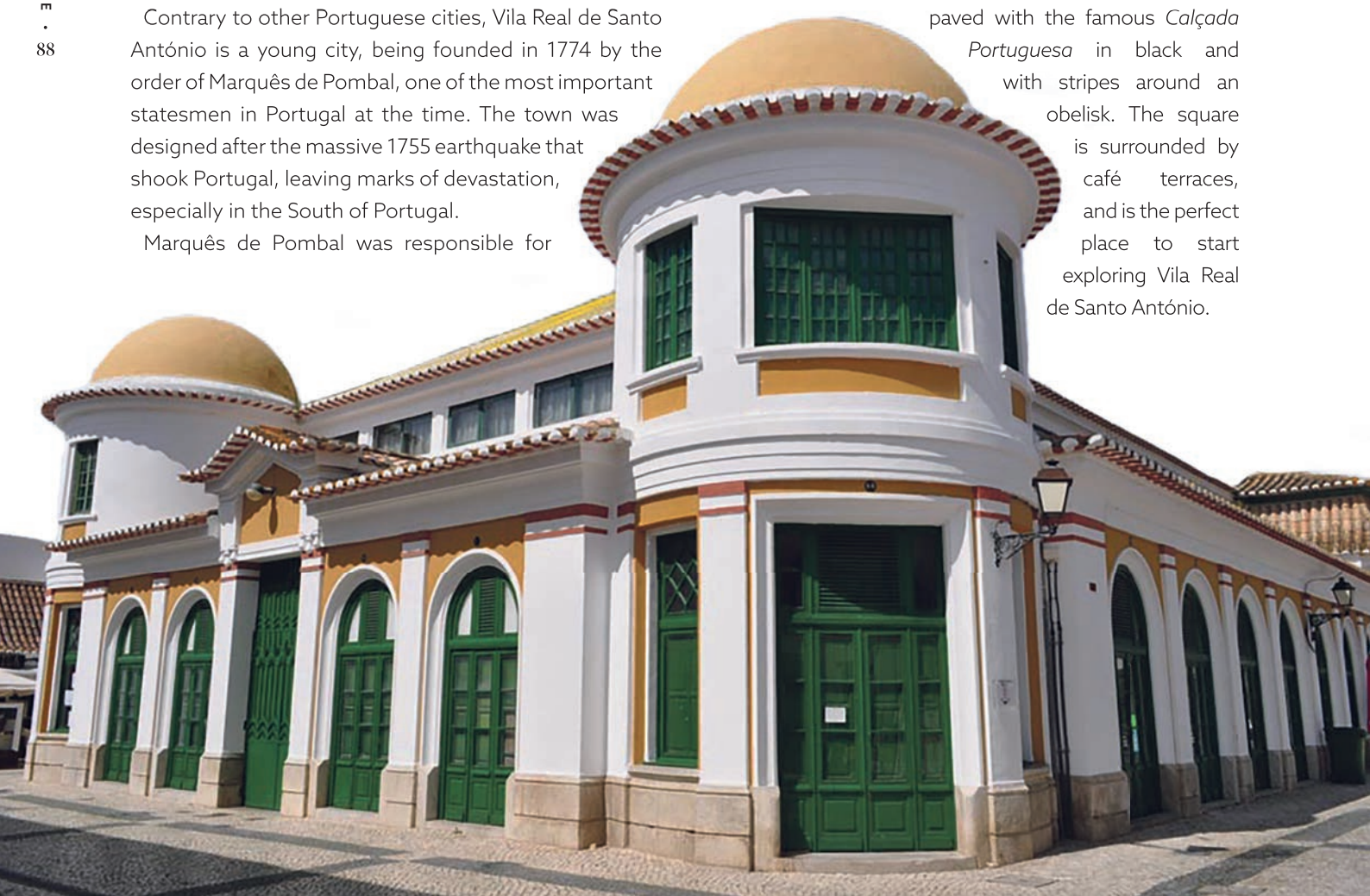
Step into a journey and explore the amazing neoclassical architecture of Vila Real de Santo António. Later, take a refreshing dipat the municipality's amazing beaches.

A young city

Contrary to other Portuguese cities, Vila Real de Santo António is a young city, being founded in 1774 by the order of Marquês de Pombal, one of the most important statesmen in Portugal at the time. The town was designed after the massive 1755 earthquake that shook Portugal, leaving marks of devastation, especially in the South of Portugal.

Marquês de Pombal was responsible for Lisbon's reconstruction, but as the founder of Vila Real de Santo António, he was also in charge of constructing the new Portuguese town. Therefore, the design of both cities' downtowns is similar, with parallel streets that lead to a magnificent square in front of a river.

The downtown was built in record time, with modular design principles, bringing an elegant and simple landscape that is still preserved and that culminates in the amazing Praça Marquês de Pombal, a square paved with the famous *Calçada Portuguesa* in black and with stripes around an obelisk. The square is surrounded by café terraces, and is the perfect place to start exploring Vila Real de Santo António.





Modern and cultural

Vila Real de Santo António's architecture has amazing neoclassical features, with the usual Algarve white façades, always with some colourful adornment. Going for a walk in Avenida da República is the right place to enjoy not only a stroll next to the Guadiana River but also the landscape that allows people to see Spain parallel to the neoclassical buildings.

It is in Vila Real de Santo António that is also possible to appreciate the work of António Aleixo, a local poet. The Centro Cultural António Aleixo is located in the old market building, hosting art exhibitions, concerts and events that promote the artistic activity of the city. For those who appreciate history, it is possible to visit the city's Historical Archive and learn about Vila Real de Santo António's development, and the influence of Marquês de Pombal in the city's construction and urban planning.

The greatest beaches

The region of the Algarve will always be known for its amazing beaches, which can also be found in Vila Real de Santo António municipality. The Praia de Santo António is relatively uncrowded compared to other famous beaches in the west part of the municipality. With calm and pristine water, this golden sand beach may be accessed by walking through the Mata Nacional das Dunas Litorais de Vila Real de Santo António.

Going west, in Vila Real de Santo António, will take people to one of the most renowned Algarve beaches, Praia da Manta Rota. Located in Cacela Velha, still in Vila Real de Santo António municipality, the beach is visited by thousands of people every year, coming from Portugal and even abroad. Usually crowded, during the summer, without ever losing its beauty and charisma, Praia da Manta Rota is a must-go for those who would like to visit Vila Real de Santo António.

Finding the border

The Guadiana River is the natural border that separates Portugal from Spain, in the southern part of both countries. Therefore, it is possible to watch both countries at the same time during a boat trip along the river. When on board people may discover hidden gems from both countries, namely little towns placed by the river margins.

How to get there

Access by public transport to Vila Real de Santo António is not complicated. Besides having access by car, it is possible to arrive at the city by public transport. The bus companies in Portugal have routes that may end or pass through Vila Real de Santo António, with economical prices, when tickets are bought in advance. The Algarve railway finishes in Vila Real de Santo António, making it possible to arrive at the city by train, however, the route will always start and end in Faro, so it is necessary to change to another train in case the final destination is not Faro, or any other station during the trip.

Calm, cultural and adventurous

Whichever your goal is, Vila Real de Santo António is the perfect city for people to enjoy whatever they want. Exploring amazing places, next to a river, then going to the beach, while keeping in mind that history must be explored in the city centre, will definitely make the holidays as amazing as they ought to be.



In between Fridays

KATE SREENARONG

ORIGINALLY FROM FRANKFURT, MAXIMILIAN GESCHKE, IS THE PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARY IN BETWEEN FRIDAYS.



In Between Fridays follows an International Community, Farm and Permaculture Project, who throw a weekly pizza party while working towards becoming self-sustainable.

"I was always interested in film, especially documentaries. I like how you're telling real stories, about real life. I think it's amazing that you can turn it into a picture, into words, into a story", Maximilian told Central Magazine.

The German producer shared how his filmmaking journey began: "I officially got into the industry around four years ago, working at a production company in Berlin, which was also making documentaries. From then on, it just kept rolling, but I had always wanted to do a project of my own."

Discovering Tojeiro

In 2017, at a hostel in Lagos, Maximilian met Aljoscha Habel, the creative producer of the documentary. "He told me about this place where hippies live in the mountains and throw a weekly pizza party. I wasn't 100 percent sure of what to expect there, but when we arrived it was just a very special atmosphere", he recalled.

Maximilian continued to visit the location over the years and got to know the founder of Tojeiro, Rudi. During the pandemic, Maximilian thought about the community and their lifestyle. "I rang up Rudi to see how he was, and he told me that Covid-19 had hit Portugal pretty hard. The community had to close everything down, so their source of income was gone. That was the moment I realised I had to go back to Tojeiro."

Capturing the atmosphere

The documentary follows Rudi, his former partner Katrina, their son Francesco and his current partner Bea, who are responsible for The Fridayhappiness Associação, a community created by people, for people, located in the mountains of Monchique. "The family puts all their work and energy into this one party every week and I wanted to know what their lives were like apart from the parties", Maximiliam explained.

Far from the big cities and surrounded by nature, this place offers an alternative way of life with permaculture gardens, farm animals, and sustainability projects, including art and culture workshops. Volunteers from all over the world help manage the gardens, animals and daily life throughout the year.

During the production of the documentary, the film crew stayed in Tojeiro for five weeks, where they were shooting almost the entire time. "There are many volunteers from different countries, getting to know them and living with them, was really amazing. And of course, filming with our protagonists was the highlight of the production because over time they opened up more and more, and we had incredible talks. Both in front, and off camera" he recounted.

With this documentary, Maximilian Geschke aimed to capture the atmosphere of Tojeiro. "Bringing it to life with all the creativity and weirdness it has to offer. I also wanted to focus on the delicate balance between living in a partially sustainable community, with fresh vegetables from the garden and so on, and what it's like to live in a location that hosts visitors every Friday, polluting the environment and bringing an imbalance to everyday life."

In Between Fridays is now available on the streaming platform: https://vimeo.com/ondemand/inbetweenfridays

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The importance of the 1st December

MARILYN SHERIDAN

HERE WE ARE, DECEMBER LOOMING, AND ANOTHER PORTUGUESE BANK HOLIDAY DUE ON THE 1ST OF THE MONTH. YOU MAY BE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE VARIOUS SAINTS' DAYS THAT ARE SCATTERED ACROSS THE CALENDAR, AND IT MIGHT SEEM AS THOUGH PORTUGAL WILL HAVE A BANK HOLIDAY AT THE DROP OF A HAT.



But some are really important, and apart from 25 April (Portugal's Independence Day), 1st December is equally as important, being the date of the Restoration of Independence in Portugal. This date remembers the action of Portuguese nobles, who on December 1st 1640 invaded the Royal Palace of Lisbon and killed Miguel de Vasconcelos, a man considered a traitor by the people of Portugal, who was the representative of Spain in Lisbon.

End of discontent with Spain

This became the end of a period of great discontent on the part of the Portuguese population. Unhappy with the union of Portugal and Spain, where three kings of Spain had ruled over Portugal for 60 years (from 1580 to 1640), the discontent included tax burdens and Portugal's involvement in the conflicts of Spain. At the time, Miguel de Vasconcelos was Secretary of State, the equivalent to the position of 'prime minister', appointed in 1635 by Vice-Queen Margaret of Savoy, on behalf of King Philip III of Spain.

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Évora involved

His collaborationist policies led him to demand heavy taxes from the people that gave rise to several revolts and riots, among which the Manuelino revolt in Évora stands out. The people of Portugal hated Vasconcelos because, although Portuguese, he had collaborated with Spain and had obtained full powers from the Castilian court in Madrid to impose high taxes on the Portuguese people.

Shot and thrown out of a window!

Led by a group called The Forty Conjured, on 1st December 1640, the group invaded the Royal Palace of Lisbon, searching for Miguel Vasconcelos – where he initially evaded capture. When Vasconcelos realised that he could not escape, he hid in a small closet and locked himself inside with a gun. His movements and the rustling of papers gave him away, whereupon he was discovered and shot, and after his death, his body was thrown out of the window into the crowd, leaving his corpse to the angry public. All this culminated with the restoration of Portugal as a sovereign country, and the restoration of the Portuguese King, D. João IV.

Interestingly, in 2012 the Coalition government controversially revoked four holidays – two civilian holidays - Republic Day, (5th October), and Restoration of Independence, (1st December), plus two religious ones - Corpus Christi, (around 30th May) and All Saints Day (1st November). The move was effective from 2013 onwards and was presented as a measure to increase productivity, but the four holidays were eventually restored by the government in January 2016.



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Three bedroom villa with a private pool and lovely gardens. Set within the heart of the Golden Triangle, the Dunas Douradas resort.

Vale do Lobo | 30748/AL

This villa is everything you could wish it to be and more! With magnificent golden beaches in a walking distance, to oceanside restaurants, to all the facilities the resort has to offer, you do not want to miss out on the opportunity of staying here!



A charming and tastefully furnished townhouse with amazing sea views located just a short walk to the beaches and the Vale do Lobo Praça!

Vale do Lobo | 29717/AL

Two bedrooms with a charming exterior garden, with a beautifully kept grass area and a terrace with exterior furniture, great for al-fresco dining!
This is the perfect spot for your next memorable family holiday!



Newly renovated to high standard three bedroom Mimosa Villa with pool

Vale do Lobo | 21239/AL

Spacious three bedroom townhouse with a private plunge pool. Set within the heart of the prestigious resort of Vale do Lobo near the Tennis Valley. The surrounding areas are extremely peaceful, with gorgeous golden beaches and much more within walking distance!



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Sitio dos Quartos | Ref. 3920

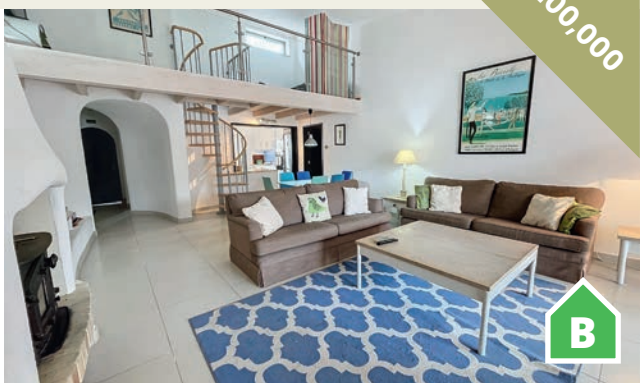
03	03	238m²	Yes	Yes

This property is ideal as a family home, and the location offers a blend of country living as well as being close to all the amenities. With three bedrooms, two bathrooms, large garage this property provides ample space for a home or rental property.

Two bedroom. Vale do lobo, walking distance to beach

€1,200,000









Vale da Quinta, Almancil | Ref. 5866

02	02	172m²	Yes	No

This attractive 2+1 bedroom linked villa is located in the heart of Vale do Lobo. Comprising, a cosy covered patio with a plunge pool. The surrounding areas are extremely peaceful, with gorgeous golden beaches, the famous 'Praca', superb restaurants and bars, shops, seaside pools and much more within walking distance!

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Vale do Lobo First Floor Duplex Apartment

€475.000









Vale do Lobo | Ref. 2412

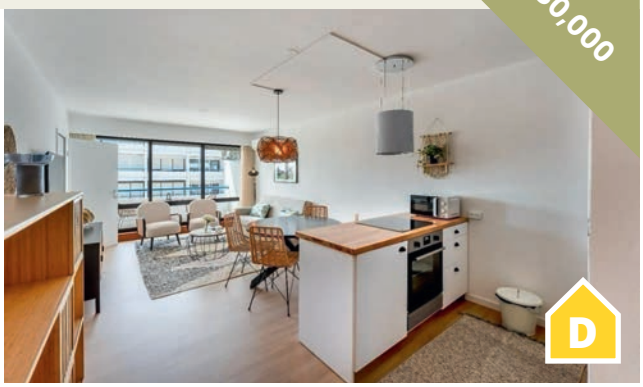
02	02	122m²	No	No

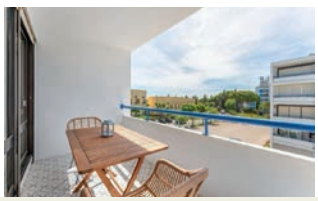
Set in the prestigious golf resortof Vale do Lobo this 2 bedroom duplex apartment benefits from being end-of-terrace and thus allowing more light into the living space due to its side windows. Competitively priced for a quick sale and with a gorgeous outlook it really is a rare opportunity.

Vilamoura two bed apartment golf view

€350,000









Vilamoura | Ref. 6610

02	01	70m²	Yes	No

Recently renovated two bed apartment with views over the golf course, has all year round great rental potential. Located in the centre of Vilamoura with all its amenities including restaurants, cafes, bars, marina, golf courses and the Falesia beach.

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