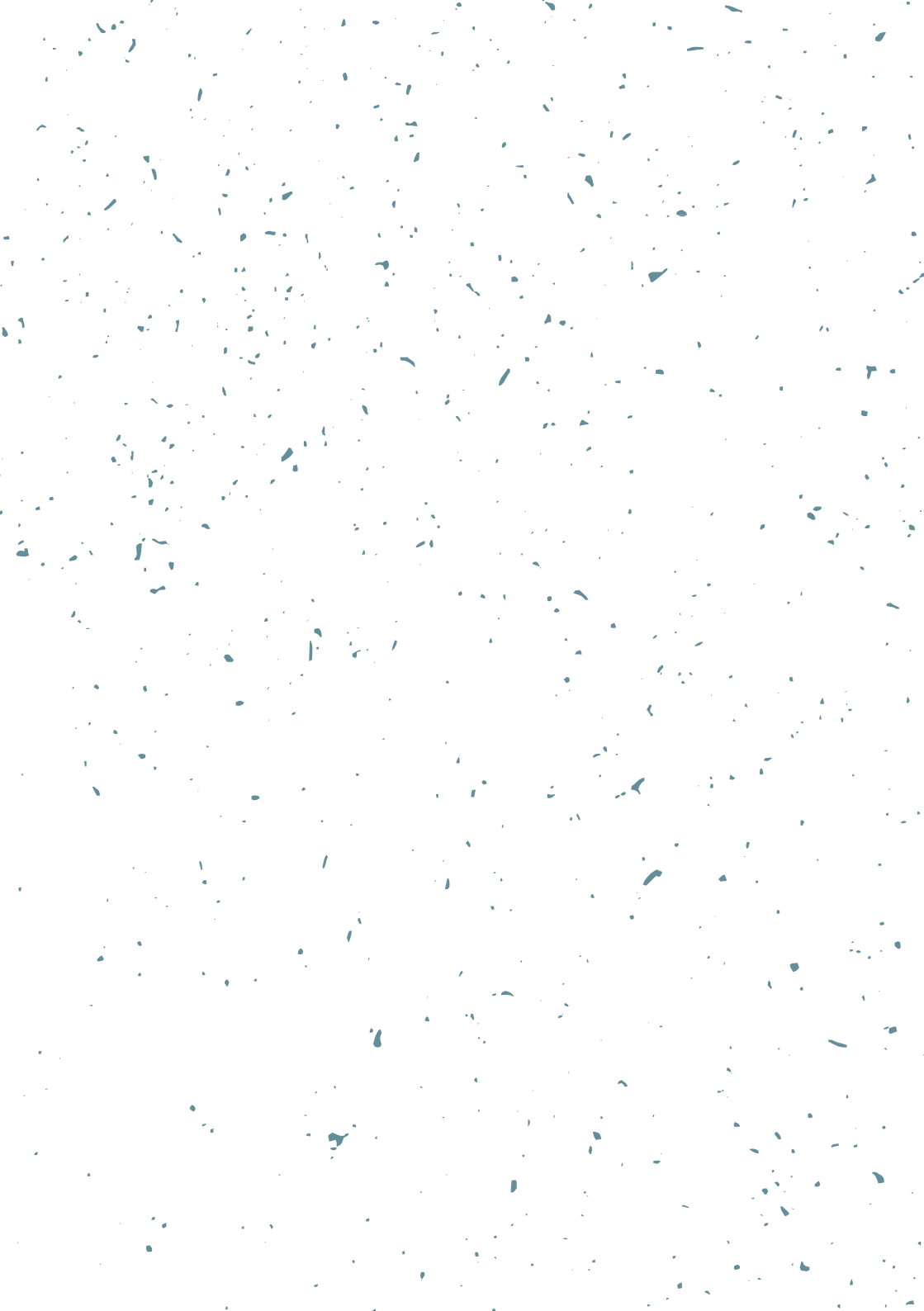


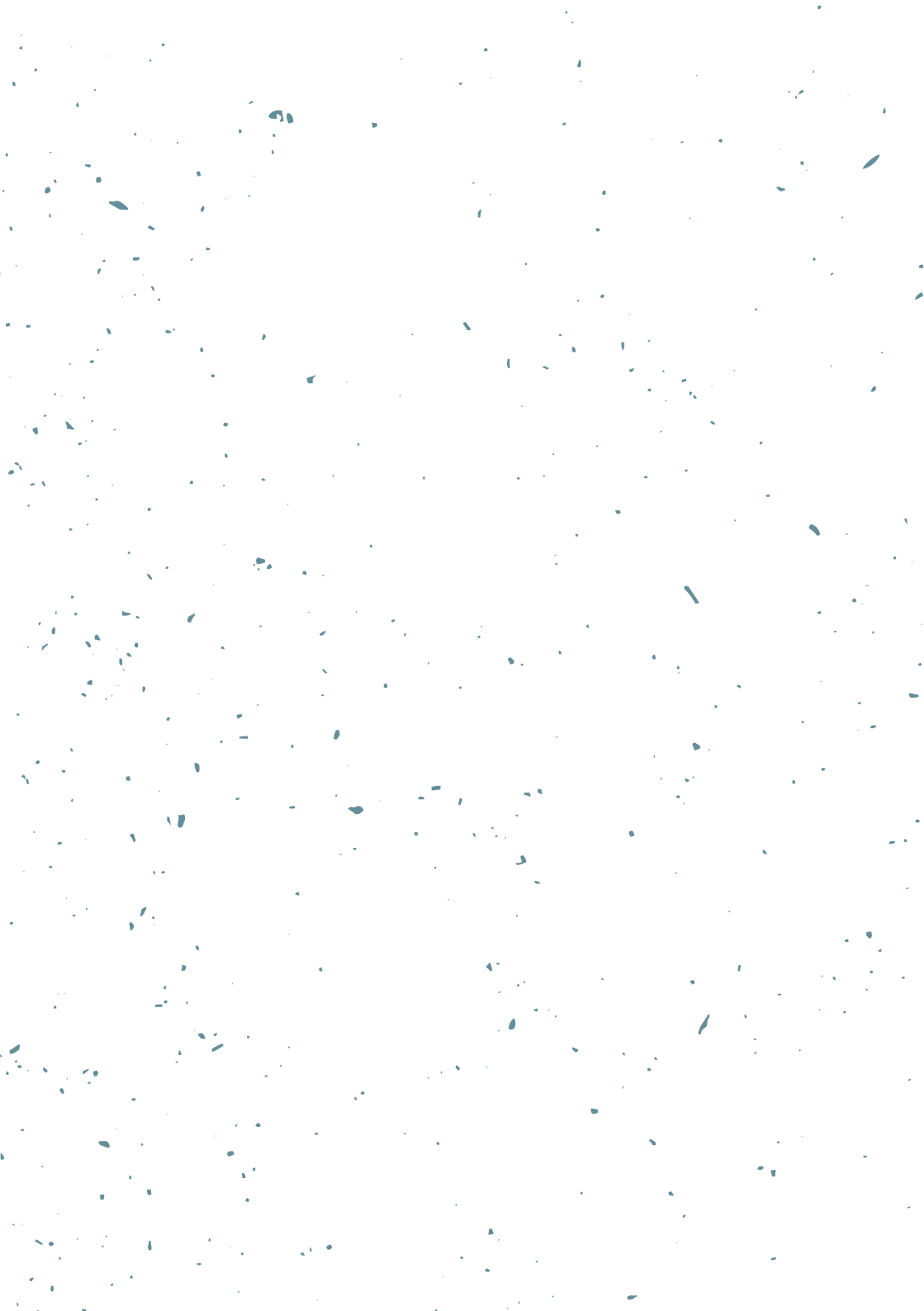
Tourist Resources Guide

ENGLISH

MESETA
IBÉRICA
RESERVA DE BIOSFERA







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IBÉRICA
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**Tourist Resources Guide
Meseta Ibérica**

Editorial director
**European Grouping
for Territorial Cooperation
AECT ZASNET**

Research, selection of contents and texts
Cápsula, Creative Agency

Translation
Cápsula, Creative Agency

Proofreading
Susana Oliveira

Design and layout
Cápsula, Creative Agency

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MESETA IBÉRICA

RESERVA DA BIOSFERA







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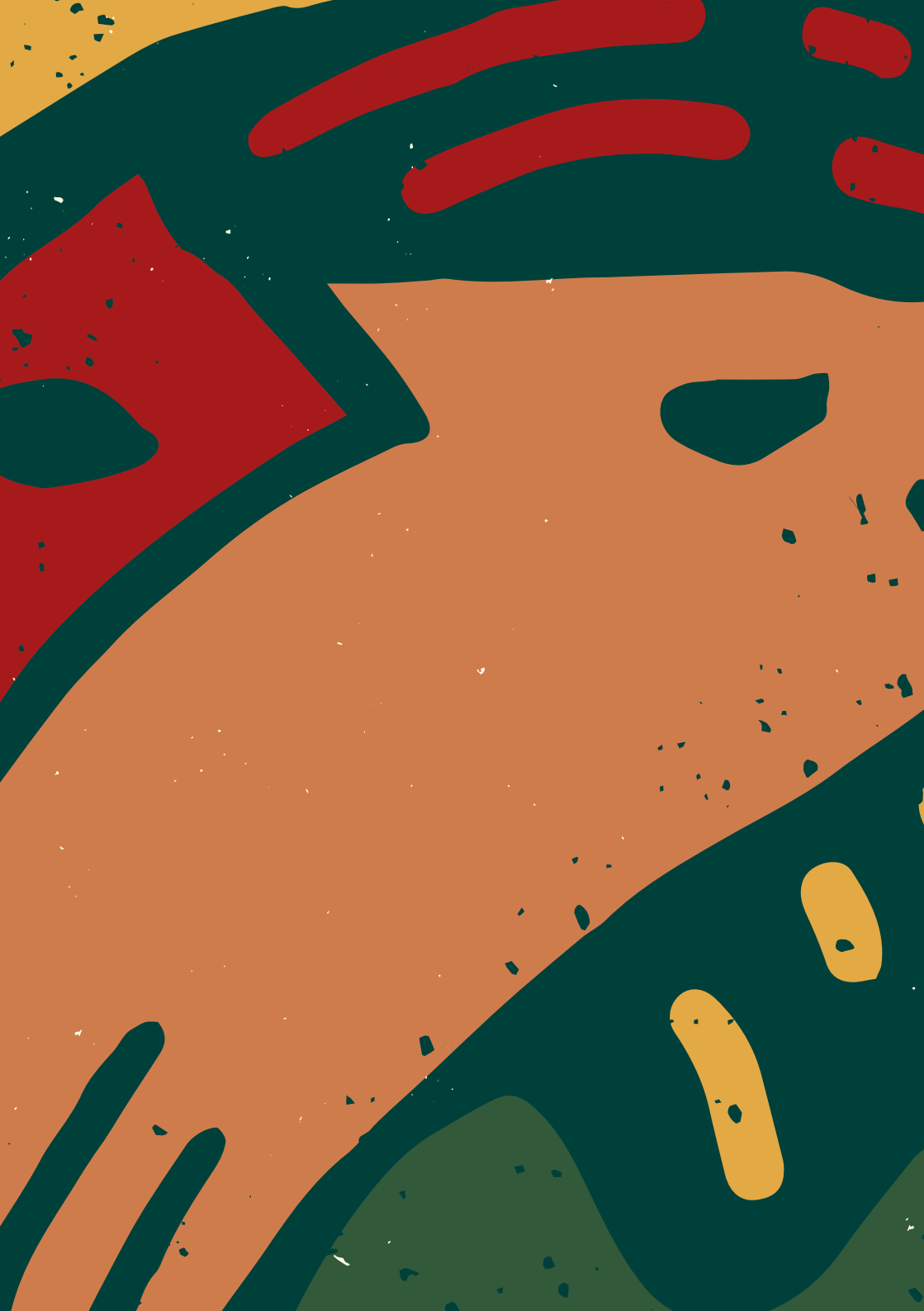
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WHAT
NATURE
UNITES.
MAN
DOES NOT
SEPARATE.



**« THERE IS NO NATURE
CONSERVATION WITHOUT
HUMAN ACTION, BECAUSE
MAN IS THE BASIC
STRUCTURE OF THE
ECOSYSTEM »**

1.

**MESETA IBÉRICA
BIOSPHERE
RESERVE**





A REGION PRESERVED BY NATURE

The Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve is an immense territory that unites Portugal and Spain, extending from Trás-os-Montes and Beira Alta to the provinces of Zamora and Salamanca, in a continuous space that imposes itself by its common identity.

The RBTMI is a broad plateau region, where here and there mountainous structures rise up, united by strong natural features and by a biodiversity that is neither national nor subjugated to human domination. A territory where the two countries have designed administrative divisions, differentiated regions, but where nature affirms its strong personality and the populations share resilience, genius and character.

From the mountains bordering Sanabria to the Douro River, from the Sierra de la Culebra to the Vale do Tua and from Bragança to Salamanca, the Reserve is a unique territory in the European context, with an admirable natural and cultural heritage.

On the periphery of both countries, the Reserve has been preserved within a natural "wall", a portentous space that nature has fortified and defended with mountains, ranges, escarpments, dramatic valleys and isolation, protecting landscapes, species, traditions and cultures. The communities in these territories have lived for centuries inland, far from the coast and, fundamentally, from the decision-making centres, contributing in symbiosis with nature to create unique scenarios, valuable habitats and a heritage of undeniable value.

The best example of the unity of this territory are the species that reign here, the eagles, herons, storks or falcons that make their home in the skies, cliffs and waters of the Reserve. The wolves, deer, wild cats, wild boar or roe deer which inhabit the mountains and plateaus. The oaks, cork oaks, holm oaks, olive trees or chestnut trees with which nature and man have "populated" the land, as a way of defining their kingdom.

The waters of the rivers that rip through mountains, cliffs and borders. But also traditions and ancient uses, such as masks, winter festivals or agricultural practices that reveal a common wisdom.

The Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve is a territory in its own right, created and shaped together by the natural elements and by the hands of those who dared to live and build in this region.

MESETA IBÉRICA BIOSPHERE

The Biosphere Reserves have their origin in the Man and Biosphere (MaB) Programme, created in 1971 by UNESCO, with the aim of establishing a scientific basis for understanding and promoting improvements in relations between communities and ecosystems. This programme gave rise to a network of reserves that encourage development in harmony with the preservation of natural heritage of undeniable value, protecting biodiversity and unique ecosystems. A sustainable development based on the activities of local communities and scientific knowledge.

The Biosphere Reserves were not created to erect barriers to the growth and integration of communities into the natural environment, on the contrary, they contribute to support growth based on education and to enhance the economic potential of natural values.

The Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve was created to promote and harmonise the preservation of values with the development of the regions and to support research and the sharing of knowledge about the past, present and future of this heritage.

These reserves are a fundamental strategy in the defence of landscapes, unique ecosystems, biodiversity and cultural heritage, with ways of enhancing human presence and economic

growth. It is about fighting the "misconceived" idea of conflict between conservation and development, supporting sustainable growth and the economic opportunities generated by natural and cultural heritage.

TWO COUNTRIES, FIVE NATURE PARKS, ONE RESERVE

The Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve is one of the largest of its kind in Europe and, unquestionably, one of the most important for its biodiversity, landscape heritage and the singularities of the human presence in the region. The territory covers a total of 87 municipalities, 12 of which in Portuguese territory (the municipalities of Terra Fria, Terra Quente, Douro Superior and one in Beira Alta) and 75 in Spanish territory (48 in the province of Zamora and 27 in the province of Salamanca).

With a total area of 1,132,607 ha (11 326 km²) and a population density of around 14 inhabitants per km², the RBTMI includes five Natural Parks (Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto, Montesinho, Douro Internacional, Arribes del Duero and Vale do Tua), the National Hunting Reserve, the Sierra de la Culebra Natural Space and dozens of spaces integrated in the Natura 2000 Network, such as Azibo, Sabor or the River Maçais. This territory preserves an extraordinary natural heritage and witnesses a millenary human presence, which still gives us the best examples of the symbiosis between Man and the Biosphere, of human communities as part of the ecosystem.

The RBTMI defends a natural unity based on morphological continuity, but also on the deep dynamic relationships between species, habitats and human communities, assuming them as the elements that found and shaped its identity.



LAGO DE SANABRIA
Y SIERRAS SEGUNDEIRA
Y DE PORTO

MONTESINHO

SIERRA
DE LA CULEBRA

PORTUGAL

AZIBO

VALE
DO TUA

LAGOS
DO SABOR

DOURO INTERNACIONAL
ARRIBES DEL DUERO

SPAIN



SUMMER AND WINTER

The turning of the seasons creates distinctive landscapes and environments, shaping territories with their own personality. The Reserve is not always the same throughout the year, it changes its mood, its appearance, as if there were other territories inside, metamorphosing landscapes, transforming ecosystems, where the people have learned to adapt to and live with nature's different temperaments.

Throughout the territory the seasons bring out different colours, from landscape to man.

In the Terra Quente Transmontana the climate is drier, the heat is longer.

Winter is harsher between Sanabria and Terra Fria Transmontana, which extends to Mogadouro. Nine months of winter, three months of hell.

With the cold comes the blankets of snow on the summits of Culebra, Montesinho and in the landscapes of Sanabria. The brown and the oranges are imposed by the cliffs of the Douro, the smoke denounces the heat and the human gastronomic



art, it's time for the masks to come out to the street to ask for the renewal and the fertility of the land and of the women. The sheep camouflaged in wool and the cattle gathered from the cold.

With the end of winter, the brownish tones are broken by brighter colours and, in a region of noble products, in spring the bees return to work, heralded by the almond trees, which paint the landscape white and violet, mainly in the south of the Reserve, and by the flowering of broom, rosemary and cistus, to welcome the birds. Spring is the season when the skies are buzzing, with many species arriving in the Reserve to nest. In the steep Douro valley, you can see black storks, Bonelli's eagles and Egyptian vultures.

In summer, the torrid temperatures put everything on hold, the skies are calmer, the days slower and everything seems to seek the freshness of the waters.

With the end of summer and the beginning of autumn, the trees and vines give man the reward of his work and the roar of the deer can be heard in Sanabria, Culebra or Montesinho. The bright and warm colours are offered by the deciduous trees.

A living Reserve, a cycle, many faces, an intense soul, many moods, colours and surprises. A turbulent and emotional relationship, for wise and patient people.



**THIS IS A TERRITORY THAT
CHANGES ITS TEMPERAMENT
AND SURPRISES AT EVERY
STEP, IN A DUALITY
BETWEEN PLATEAU AND
MOUNTAIN THAT MAKES IT
UNIQUE.**

2.

BETWEEN
THE PLATEAU
AND
THE MOUNTAIN





There is a robustness in this immense territory of the Reserve that can be felt in the vehemence of its elements and the hardness of its character. A robustness that manifests itself in the climate, the air, the tones, the vegetation and the rocks, but that is not always perceived in its long plateau horizons.

The plateau territory rises up to an average altitude of 700 m and extends in gentle or rough waves, sometimes crashing into deep, deep valleys or rising up into mountainous structures.

The meseta is the soul of this territory that unites its extremes with rounded and persistent horizons, a climate of excesses and contrasting colours.

This is a territory that changes its temperament and surprises at every step, in a duality between plateau and mountain that makes it unique.

The mountains and deeper depressions of Montesinho, Culebra or the Serra da Nogueira, the elevations in Sanabria and the angular valleys that occupy the territory give it greater complexity, but do not deny its nature as a meseta. There is a continuity, an identity, a soul of the plateau that prevails even when it seems to be transfigured. The plateau is a territory of many faces.

Between plateaus, mountains, flattened or deep valleys, between natural features of great beauty, nature and man have come together to create wonderful pictures, offering us extensive oak forests, chestnut groves, olive groves, almond groves, orchards, vineyards, vegetable gardens, scrubland, dryland crops, pastures or low growing vegetation on the slopes, with endemic species of extraordinary importance.

The landscape here is one of the main natural and tourist resources and is certainly an abundant one.

THE MOUNTAINS

The **Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto** Natural Park is located in the extreme northwest of the Reserve. It is a mountain scenery that includes the Segundera and Cabreira mountain ranges, with little human presence and which, in several places, exceeds 2000 m in altitude.

The lake that gives its name to the Park is the largest natural lake on the Iberian Peninsula, but embedded in the mountains we find many others, with pure and translucent waters, sheltered between valleys and canyons that create unique high mountain scenery and are a testimony to the glacial origins.

The coldest periods of the quaternary generated large amounts of snow that created several ice tongues, such as

the one in the valley from Tera to Ribadelago, 15 km long and 300 m thick.

The glaciations of this period carved U-shaped valleys, the Tera canyon, deep canyons, glacial cirques, glacial moraines (heaps of rocks and various sediments that go down with the ice), glacial striations, polished rocks, dozens of lagoons and the Lago de Sanabria basin.





Sierra Segundera

This mountainous region forms the boundary between the Atlantic and Mediterranean climate, the transition between humid and temperate zones creates a great biodiversity of botanical species. 1,500 species have been identified. The mountainous elevations provide slopes with different orientations, with an Atlantic influence on the north and west facing slopes and a Mediterranean influence on the south and east facing slopes.

Oak forests (*Quercus pyrenaica*) are predominant in the Park, mainly in the Tera basin and on the mountain slopes, as well as holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), yew (*Taxus baccata*) and chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) trees. Along the rivers and streams that feed the lakes, willows (*Salix salviifolia*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), birch (*Betula celtiberica*) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) dominate. The water springs, lakes and rivers allow for the presence of peat bogs, which are very rare at these latitudes.

With altitude, the forest is replaced by scenery of bushes and heaths, where the extreme climate has preserved Quaternary vegetation, dominating the landscape for 10 thousand years. This is where you will find the Sanabrian carqueja and the geranium (*Geranium bohenicum*), *Ranunculus parnassifolius ssp. cabrerensis* or *Armeria bigerrensis*.

THE MOUNTAIN RANGES

In an extension of the mountainous structures of Sanabria, mountains rise up which create different landscape rhythms, heterogeneous and rich sets.

The highest points are rather moderate, reaching 1486 m in Montesinho, which extends into Spain and reaches 1700 m in the Sierra Gamoneda, 1273 m in the Serra da Coroa, 1243 m in the Sierra de la Culebra, 1310 m in the Serra da Nogueira and, further south, 1200 m in the Serra de Bornes.

These mountains impose on the landscape mountainous





structures and embedded valleys, drawing a surprising diversity, exuberant and more impetuous scenarios.

Sierra de la Culebra seems to have the shape of a snake and is in continuity, to the northeast, of Montesinho. It is formed by a succession of several peaks, where Peña Mira, with its 1241 m, Miño Cuevo, 1207 m or Peña Castillo, 1185 m stand out, featuring quartzite ridges in several summits, one of the major identity factors of this region.

The maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*) dominates extensive forest masses, with mature plants over fifty years old. The Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is also present in this territory, identifiable by its orange-coloured bark, whose main mass is located in El Casal de Tábara. Other tree species coexist with the pine forest forming forests of greater or lesser size, such as the Pyrenean oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*), the holm oak (*Quercus rotundifolia*), the cork oak (*Quercus suber*), the chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and, to a lesser extent, the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*).

Along the rivers and streams, Valdalla, Manzanas or Cabrón, alders (*Alnus glutinosa*), ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*) willows (*Salix salviifolia*) and poplars (*Populus nigra*) prevail.

↑
Sierra
de la Culebra



When the forest gives way to scrubland, heather and cistus predominate, mainly on the mountain slopes. The region's economy owed a lot to heather, especially in Tábara, because it was the basis of charcoal exploitation, while cistus has always had medicinal applications.

Montesinho is at the top of the Terra Fria territory, is the 4th largest mountain range in Portugal and is located in a set where shale and granite predominate. The Natural Park of Montesinho, which integrates the mountainous massif of Montesinho and Coroa, is one of the largest protected areas of Portugal and consists of a plateau area with deep valleys, mountains and areas of smoother contours, alternating with valleys of embedded rivers.

Geologically, specialists consider this region one of the most complex in Portugal, conditioned by two important tectonic accidents, the Vilaríça fault and the Bragança-Vinhais fault.

This region presents unique characteristics at a geographical, biological and climatic level, quite harsh and tough characteristics, which combined with the diversity of natural resources and a millenary dialogue between communities

and the environment allowed the creation of a sequence of natural and humanised landscapes of enormous interest and value, with scrubland, forests, areas of agriculture, farming and cattle breeding and agro-forestry.

Montesinho offers a rare variety of habitats, such as woods, marshes, scrubland, bocage, chestnut groves, dryland crops and rare floristic resources.

In the bushes, the predominant species are heath and gorse in the higher areas and the cistus in the lower ones. In the woods, the black oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*) stands out,



which in the higher altitude zones presents a great floristic variety. The oak forests are a reference in this area, with exuberant scenery mainly between the Sabor and the Tuela Rivers, extending even beyond the limits of the Park, and are also one of the largest areas in Europe.

It is worth noting the presence of large stands of coniferous trees, some of which are exotic species, as well as Sardoais (*Quercus rotundifolia*) in the lower sheltered areas and Birch (*Betula celtiberica*) in the higher areas.

Next to the streams, an alluvial forest has developed with ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*), willows (*Salix salviifolia*), alder trees (*Alnus glutinosa*) or black poplar (*Populus nigra*).

The variety of flora in this area owes much to geological and climatic variability, with plants that are unique worldwide, which can be found in soils derived from ultrabasic rocks, and also to the human presence, which occupied the territory with chestnut groves, vegetable gardens, orchards, cereal crops, meadows or marshes, vines and uncultivated land.

Next to Montesinho, but outside the Natural Park area, is the Serra da Nogueira, which extends for 19 km and is formed of clay and chlorite schist, molar rock and iron outcrops (the people usually call it "pedra ferrenha").

In terms of vegetation, the mountain is marked by the strong presence of the black oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*) and the dwarf oak (*Quercus lusitânica*), a noble forest of great importance in the European context.

The floristic richness is remarkable and presents a continuity of the neighbouring Montesinho, with poplars (*Populus nigra-L* and *Populus alba-L*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), black willow (*Salix atro-cinerea-Brot*) birch (*Bétula pubescens*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*), narrow-leaved phillyrea (*Phillyrea angustifolia*), sloe (*Prunus Spinosa*), wild rose (*Rosa canina*) and blackberry (*Rubus ulmifolius Schott*). In the scrubland, the predominant species are the resinous rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer*), the heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), the broom (*Genista tridentata*) and rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), among others.

Associated with the human presence, we have the sweet chestnut trees (*Castanea sativa*), walnut trees (*Juglans regia*) and cherry trees (*Prunus avium*).

THE DOURO CANYON

→
Douro
Internacional/
Arribes
del Duero

The long path carved by the Douro River offers us a breathtaking scenery, with slopes of enormous spectacularity, imposing gorges, long granite structures open in the middle, where a tortuous and deep line of now pacified and resigned waters fits.

The Douro Canyon is an extensive canyon with unevenness that, in some points, exceeds 500 m in depth.

A large part of this section follows the border line between Portugal and Spain, linking Terra Fria Transmontana to the provinces of Castile and León.

THIS REGION HAS A GEOLOGICAL HERITAGE OF EXTRAORDINARY VALUE, WITH SOME OF THE OLDEST ROCKS IN THE PENINSULA, TRACES OF ANCIENT OCEANIC BOTTOMS, INCLUDING MARINE FOSSILS AND EVIDENCE OF THE DOURO'S TURBULENT HISTORY AND ITS STRUGGLE TO FIND ITS WAY WESTWARDS.

It is a landscape of "granites, gneisses, migmatites, serpentinites, limestones, marbles, travertines, quartzites, schists and grauvaques, as well as several terrace and gravel deposits" (ICNF). There is also a vast heritage of thermal springs which enabled, since the Roman presence until the middle of the 20th century, a long mining tradition.

A wide variety of habitats coexist in this area, such as Mediterranean ponds, heaths, woods, alluvial forests or grassy understepses.

The cliffs are dominated by vegetation which is still well preserved and has great floristic diversity, with junipers (*Juniperus oxycedrus*), with a relic character, *Juniperus spp.*, holm oaks (*Quercus rotundifolia*) and *Holcus setiglumis subsp duriensis* on the more humid slopes. The scrubland is populated with heather (*Erica ciliaris* and *Erica tetralix*) and broom



(*Genista anglica* and *Genista micrantha*). In the woods, which are more common on the plateau, mainly in uncultivated areas or in the divisions between properties, the Black Oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*), the Portuguese Oak (*Quercus faginea*) and the Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*) are predominant, as well as lotus (*Celtis australis*), broom, gorse and cistus woods.

In the alluvial forests, the alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* and *Fraxinus angustifolia*), willow (*Salix salvifolia*), poplar (*Populus nigra* var. *betulifolia*) and tamarisk (*Tamarix africana*) stand out.

It is also on the slopes that we find olive trees, vines and almond trees, terraced to counter the marked slopes of the area.

On the plateau, the forest alternates with landscapes made human by cereal crops, pastureland, resulting from a long farming tradition, vegetable gardens and fruit orchards. There are also chestnut groves further north and olive, almond and vineyards further south.

THE VALLEY

→
Vale do Tua

From the mountains of Culebra, Montesinho, Coroa and Nogueira, the territory extends southwestwards in gentle valleys, at more contained altitudes and in an agricultural mosaic of small properties, where olive trees, vines and almond trees predominate. The tectonic origins of this region are, today, well known, marked by the Mirandela and Vale da Vilarça tectonic ditches, creating a more flattened and of small hills relief.

It is a transitional territory between Atlantic and continental influences, a region of bright plateau, sometimes marked with mountainous elevations such as Bornes, Orelhão and Passos and cut by embedded valleys, created by the Rivers Douro, Tua and Tinhela.

The Vale do Tua is the western border of the Terra Quente Transmontana and also of the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve. The scenery becomes more diversified and rugged, alternating between mountains, plateaus and sloping hillsides. Mainly in its final stretch to the Douro, there are imposing rock formations (quartzite ridges) and steep slopes.

The variety of climates in the region creates a diversified vegetation landscape, with woods of cork oak (*Quercus suber*), Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea*), holm oak (*Quercus rotundifolia*) and juniper (*Juniperus oxycedrus*), in the hottest and driest areas, and woods of black oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*), in areas that receive more rainfall. The holm oak, known as Kermes oak, and the juniper are also common. In the shrubby vegetation, rockroses and rosemary dominate, but the gorse (bushes similar to broom) are the most frequent in the hottest areas close to the Douro.

On the riverside areas of the Tua, we find ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*), elm trees (*Ulmus minor*), poplars (*Populus*) and willows (*Salix salvifolia*).

The region's flora is very rich, and around 1100 species have been identified, including *Digitalis purpurea subsp. amandiana*, a plant exclusive to this region, as well as *Festuca duriotagana*, *Holcus annuus subsp. duriensis* and *Scrophularia valdesii*.



Agricultural production has enriched the landscape with olive, orange, plum, almond and fig trees.

The higher regions of the Park have vegetation with a Mediterranean climate profile, adapted to more extreme temperatures and a greater absence of water. Here, the water flows in deep valleys, forming a canyon with abrupt banks, allowing the water to run off from the higher areas. In the more open valleys, in the shape of an amphitheatre, the water finds its way through schist and granite, which the populations used to use by means of dams, ditches and mills. Today, the waters have been tamed by the dam, creating a reservoir that stretches for 27 km.

**WATER IS AN ELEMENT THAT
UNITES THE TERRITORY,
WHERE SHARING AND
DEPENDENCE EXIST.**

3.

LANDSCAPES
CREATED BY
WATER





Water helps us understand the deep links between all these spaces: the Tera flows down from the Sanabria Mountains to feed the largest glacial lake on the Peninsula and the Esla, one of the biggest affluents of the Douro in Spain.

The Tua is fed by the Tuela, which flows from Sanabria through Montesinho, and the Rabaçal, which comes from Spain, and then forms the majestic valley that leads to the Douro.

The Azibo comes from Bragança to join the Sabor to the south, which also takes a long way from Spain (Sierra Gamedona), through Montesinho, to flow into the Douro.

It is an immense and vital water network.



Tera River

THE RIVERS AND THE MOUNTAIN RANGES

It is from the Sanabria mountains and the Culebra and Montesinho ranges (La Parada on the Spanish side) that rivers are born. They flow down the mountains, open deep valleys, feed the land, wind across the plateaus to meet and give their waters to the Douro.

The territory of the plateau, mainly the eastern part of the Douro Internacional, is irrigated and fed by the mountains and hills in its extreme north.

From the marshes and groves of Montesinho to the extensive olive and almond groves of the Terra Quente, these waters, flowing from north to south, give vitality to the land and are essential to paint the different shades of this territory, from cold to hot.

The Tera river is born in Peña de Trevinca, at an altitude of over 2100 metres. A mountain river, which gathers with several other streams to form dozens of lakes before descending to the Sanabria Lake. The high altitude of its source, in a high



mountain environment, provides habitats of rare value and unique in the whole Reserve.

The steep descent down the extraordinary Tera canyon is accompanied by sweeping, rugged and steep landscapes that bear witness to various eras of glaciation. Along its route are waterfalls, lakes, rugged paths and unique mountain vegetation, until reaching the Sanabria Lake.

THIS IS THE LARGEST LAKE OF GLACIAL ORIGIN IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA AND IT GIVES ITS NAME TO THIS VALUABLE NATURAL PARK.





Sanabria Lake

Its origin dates back to the Quaternary, with perpetual snows established at an altitude of around 1600 m, an ice tongue of 15 km long and 300 m thick extended down the Tera valley, which at its point of union with other tongues coming from Cabrera and Segundera carved out the area of the present lake. A vast sheet of water, restful and clear, backs up against a backdrop of imposing mountains, from where it continues to receive water from the Tera River. The Lake has a maximum depth of about 50 m, 3 km in length and 1.5 km in width.

From Sanabria Lake, the Tera begins to draw with greater flow, as if it was born at this point, and goes from there to the southwest, receiving water from various affluents until it reaches the Esla. In total, the Tera covers 153 km, having 8 dams and reservoirs.

Its clear waters provide the presence of noble and exuberant vegetation with groves, oaks and holm oaks and in the lower areas with willows, poplars and meadows near villages and towns.

Its passage through Puebla de Sanabria, where its stunning historic walled town rises up, is one of the most sublime moments of your route.

It is also in the Sanabria Mountains, in the Sierra Segundera, at 1850 m, that the Tuela River is born, which crosses Montesinho to join with the Rabaçal River in the Terra Quente and that way form the Tua River. Also of glacial origin, at the beginning of its course, it marks the border of Castile and León with Galicia and enters Portugal through the municipality of Vinhais.

In Moimenta, the Tuela goes around the granite massif and reaches 250 m high slopes. Along its course there are several fluvial beaches, dams and mills, wandering through several hills that keep vestiges of hillforts and Roman occupation.

The Rabaçal also comes from Spain, from the mountains north of Montesinho, near the border, and enters through Vinhais, covering 21 km in the Natural Park, with equally deep and rugged slopes, exceeding 350 m in some places. Along the Park there is a drop of 165 m, creating some accelerated and rugged stretches.



The largest affluents of the Rabaçal are the Mente and the Assureira. The Mente, which springs at 1292 m in Peña Nofre, follows the boundary line between Portugal and Spain in the western part of the Park and is also the river with the steepest stretch in this territory because until it reaches Rabaçal it hides in deep valleys.

The Rabaçal also delimits the districts of Vila Real and Bragança and today it has a dam in Mirandela.

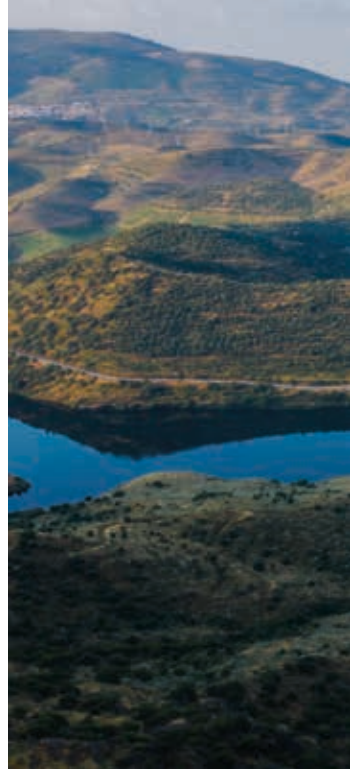
The Tua, which is born from the meeting of the waters of the Rabaçal with the Tuela, near the town of Mirandela, has a course of 40 km until the Douro. From its source to the mouth, the Tua is a river with different expressions, going from a smooth river flowing in wider valleys to an impressive canyon narrowed by monumental granite slopes. Today the Tua is a river that has been pacified by the dam built near its mouth, with a long reservoir between imposing valleys and steep slopes.

In this hydrographic basin of the Douro, it is in the Sierra Gamoneda that two other important rivers are born in the relationship of dependence of the Terra Quente with the mountains of the north of the territory. The Sabor, the main watercourse in the Montesinho Natural Park, runs for 35 km from its source to Gimonde, on the Park's southern border, gaining greater flow with the water from various affluents: Onor, Baçal, Igrejas and Labiados.

In the Montesinho mountains the Sabor crosses a higher zone still with a small flow and it is further ahead that the river becomes embedded where between shallow valleys it runs faster, descending 200 m in only 2 km. Close to the village of França, it begins to present steep scarps.

The Maças River, another of its affluents, comes from the Sierra de la Culebra, above the village of Manzanas, and delineates part of the border between Portugal and Spain in the eastern area of the Natural Park of Montesinho, entering once and again through one territory and another. Deep valleys, Appalachian ridges give a more rugged character to some of its banks in this Park.

The Sabor, once known as Portugal's last wild river, then flows to the Douro, which it meets at Torre de Moncorvo. The



↑
Lagos do Sabor





Azibo dam



construction of the dam changed its configuration, creating a series of lakes that extend 70 km to the mouth of Azibo. Lakes interconnected by arms of water that run along gorges and cliffs. In the Terra Quente landscape, the waters of the Sabor rose, serenaded and drew long mirrors of clear water, twisting wild and cultivated hillsides and creating extensive breathtaking sceneries.

It is also into Sabor that the waters of Azibo, which springs in the Serra da Nogueira, flow. Upstream, the famous Albufeira do Azibo was created with a dam built on earth, with the main function of ensuring water for irrigation in the agricultural areas of the municipality and providing drinking water to the population. Azibo is today one of the best examples of how human intervention can safeguard and enhance its links with the environment. The water mirror that has emerged between the valleys has strengthened habitats for birds that nest in the area and created a pole of great tourist attraction, safeguarding the respect for the environment. The Aliste also rises in the Sierra de la Culebra, at 1110 m, and flows into the Esla, just before it flows into the Douro. The Aliste, which owes its name to the strong presence of alder trees along its banks,

is about 72 km long, and from Tierra de Alba onwards it becomes more robust, due to the proximity of the reservoir of the Esla dam, near Ricobayo de Alba.

↓
Douro
Internacional/
Arribes
del Duero

A PEACEFUL GIANT

The Douro is the third longest river on the Iberian Peninsula and a central force that unites the whole of the Meseta territory. The Douro River is revered, it is towards this river that the waters that flow through the Reserve are directed, it is the giant that deserves the gift of mountains and sierras, which is transcended and sublimated, first by canyons and dramatic rips and then in open and exuberant valleys.



The Douro is born far away from the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve and it also flows far away into the ocean, after making its way through breathtaking valleys.

BUT IT IS HERE IN AND AROUND THE RESERVE AREA THAT THE DOURO GAINS ITS UNMISTAKABLE PERSONALITY, ITS STRONG AND IMPLACABLE CHARACTER, BUT ALSO WHERE MAN HAS MANAGED TO CALM HIS IMPETUS AND TAME HIS STRENGTH.

It is on the Douro River around the Arribes del Duero on the Spanish side and Douro Internacional on the Portuguese side that a series of dams were built that together calmed the rivers and created long stretches of successive reservoirs. In the Reserve area, the dams on the Esla, the Tormes and six on the Douro formed long arms of reservoir that swallowed up dozens of metres of the deep valleys and scarps that surrounded it.

With a natural gradient in some areas reaching 500 m and the confluence of several rivers, this region has extraordinary hydroelectric potential.

The first of these great works was the Ricobayo de Alba, which regularises the flow of the Esla. There is a popular saying that goes "el Esla lleva el agua y el Duero la fama", because at the meeting point between the two, the Esla shows more flow. The dam was built in an area of depression known as the arribas del Esla.

Still on the Spanish side, on the Douro River and after it meets the Esla River, is the Villaldecampo dam and a few kilometres ahead is the Castro dam, the last one before the Douro becomes the border line between the two countries.

Then there are three Portuguese dams, Miranda, which creates a relatively narrow but deep reservoir 14 km long, Picote, set in a narrow, steep and low-lying valley, and Bemposta, with a reservoir 21 km long and in a valley slightly more open than upstream.

This dam precedes the junction with the Tormes River, which still within the boundaries of the Arribes del Duero





Park, has the Almendra dam, one of the highest dams (202 m) and with one of the most extensive reservoirs in Spain, occupying an area of 7100 km².

The Tormes River flows into the Douro near Fermoselle and its waters come together in a new reservoir created by the Aldeadávila dam, the most important hydroelectric undertaking in Spain, which, at the time of its inauguration, was the largest in the whole of Western Europe.

The last dam on the Douro Internacional and the last Spanish dam on the Douro is the Saucelle dam, with a slightly wider reservoir between Freixo de Espada à Cinta and Saucelle, in a setting of more open and less dramatic valleys and a little ahead of the mouth of the Huebra River.

The undertaking of the six Spanish dams became known as the Douro Leap, which was joined by the three Portuguese

↑
Aldeadávila dam



dams, which, although not having the same name, are integrated in the same model of hydroelectric use.

A little further on, the Douro receives the waters of the *Águeda* river, which comes from the south and defines the border between Portugal and Spain, separating the Douro Internacional Park, in Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo and the *Arribes del Duero*. In this region it is a river that flows in hollow valleys and maintains continuity with the Douro in landscape, animal and plant life.

After the Douro curves westwards to meet the sea, it crosses longitudinally the whole Portuguese territory. It is still with *Terra Quente* on one of its banks that we find the *Pocinho* dam, shortly after the mouth of the *Sabor*, forming a reservoir 24 km long. This is the last dam with a lock on the Douro, allowing boats to go up from the mouth of the river to *Barca d'Alva*.



←
Águeda River

→
Tua's mouth

Still before the mouth of the Tua, the last of the Douro's dams on the border of the Reserve territory is the Valeira dam, the second highest in the Douro, which is 36 km long and rises just beyond an extremely narrow gorge. Here lies the mythical Cachão da Valeira, an area of waterfalls and cascades that hindered the navigability of the river. The first efforts to smooth out the course of the Douro began centuries ago and it was as early as the end of the 18th century that the rocky structure was destroyed.



**THERE IS AN IDENTITY
SHARED BY ALL THE
TERRITORIES OF THE
RESERVE WHICH IS BASED
ON THE DIVERSITY OF ITS
LANDSCAPE, FAUNA AND
FLORA.**

**DIVERSITY AS AN ELEMENT
OF IDENTITY.**

4.

BIODIVERSITY



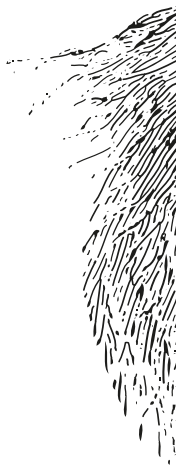


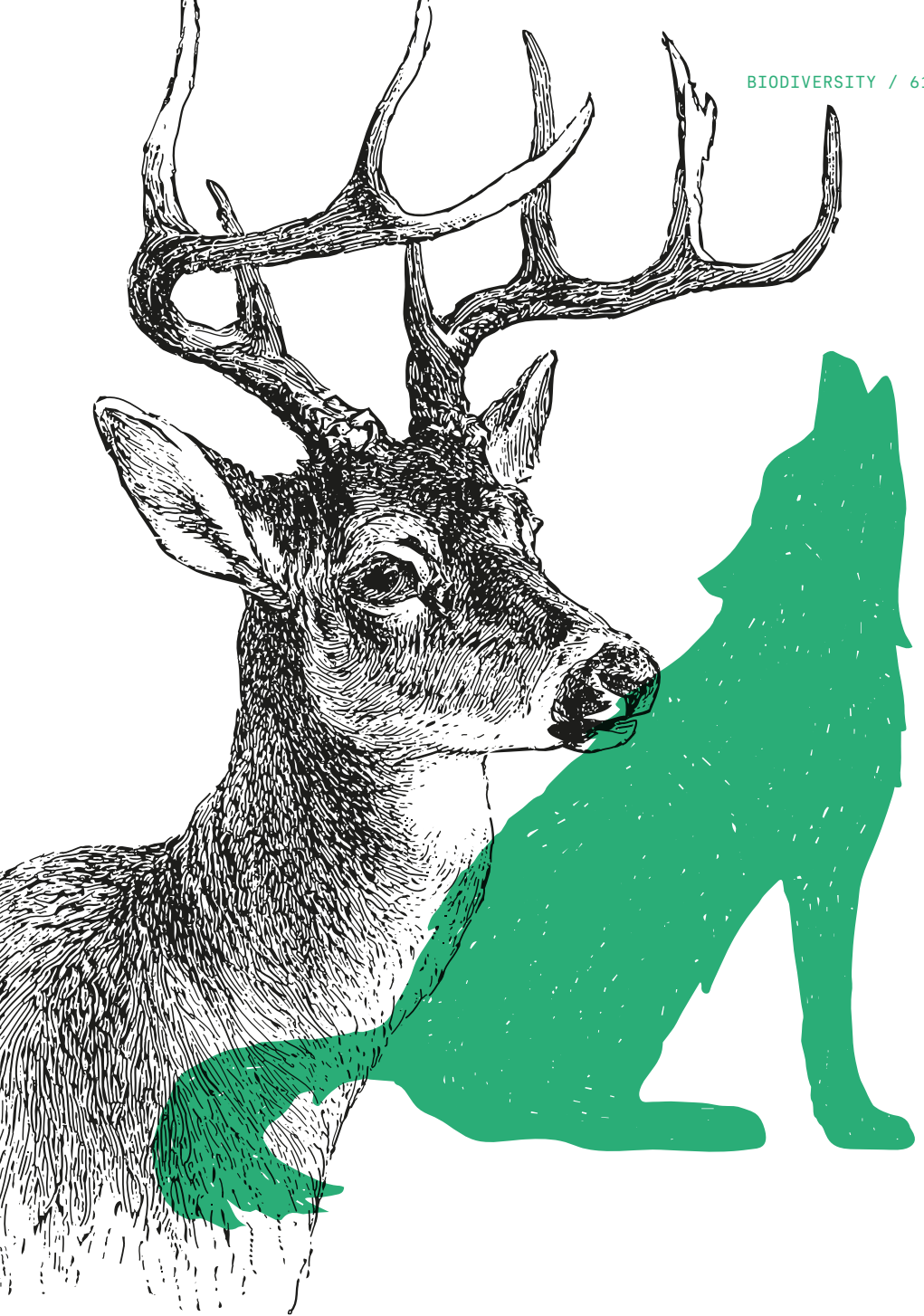
THE MESETA IBÉRICA BIOSPHERE RESERVE IS ONE OF THE RESERVES WITH THE GREATEST BIODIVERSITY IN ALL OF EUROPE.

There are a large number of species that share this territory, with truly impressive numbers. Montesinho brings together 70% of the land mammals recorded in Portugal, the Douro Internacional preserves around 250 species of vertebrates, in Lago de Sanabria there are 190 species, the Douro basin is home to 210 species of breeding birds out of the 270 identified in Peninsular Spain, the Vale do Tua has around 740 species of invertebrates and 29 mammals have been recorded in the Sierra de la Culebra.

In the European context, this Reserve is a sanctuary of life, of diversity, of cycles and dependencies, of deep relationships between multiple species. Many of them share the same spaces and others are exclusive to some of its Natural Parks.

The geographical location, the orography, the various mountain systems, the deep valleys, the mosaic of habitats and the millenary human activity have been crucial to ensure this biodiversity. An extraordinary faunal heritage, with unique species and ecosystems, some of them threatened, which gives the Biosphere Reserve an extremely important role and mission.





It is in this Reserve that we find the largest population of **Iberian wolves** (*Canis lupus signatus*) in the entire Peninsula. After decades of persecution, in which this species was reduced to small dispersed populations, it is in the territory between the Sierra de la Culebra and Montesinho that they are concentrated in greater numbers, but they also occur in the mountains of the Sanabria Lake and the Douro valleys.

This wolf is a little smaller than the wolf in other European regions and has a yellow-brownish colouration. It is a species that is fragmented into small communities and has difficulty communicating with each other. They are particularly isolated populations, dispersing little, contrary to the roaming nature of the species at a global level, rarely leaving the regions where they were born or seeking to mate outside their gene group.

Wolves are an iconic species in people's imagination, present in traditions, legends and tales. They frighten and fascinate, and throughout the Reserve they are part of customs, traditions, artistic expressions and popular culture, as in masks, sayings and expressions.

The proximity with wolves is manifested in rural constructions to protect cattle or in traps to hunt them (cortello or curro dos lobos).

The wolf is the last of the great predators that inhabited these territories and in the Reserve it plays an extraordinary role in the preservation of natural values. The wolf is the untamed nature, the untamed natural force. The wolf represents all the species of the ecosystem that are not at the service of human communities, the forces that we do not have and/or cannot control, the natural environment in its pure state. Balance is achieved by integrating all these forces, the threatening and the benign, the untamed and the gentle.

The **red deer** (*Cervus elaphus*) is the largest herbivore in this region and a natural prey for wolves. Highly pursued for decades, it disappeared in several regions, but after some efforts and protection measures, it has returned to territories such as the Sierra de la Culebra, which today has some of the most interesting specimens of this species. This animal can also be seen in the Sanabria and Montesinho mountain ranges. Males can reach 250 kg and females 150 kg, distinguished by

→
Roe deer male

↘
Red deer male



the antlers that the males have and which are fundamental in the process of fighting for females. The breeding season offers an extraordinary spectacle with the roar of the deer echoing through the mountains. The males occupy open areas, show off, challenge each other and fight, snapping their antlers. The winners claim the best territories to attract females. At this time, the males lose up to 40% of their weight.

The **roe deer** (*Capreolus capreolus*) is a much smaller cervid than the deer and also more common, being distributed throughout the Reserve, from Sanabria to the Vale do Tua. Its antlers are short but pointed, fall in autumn and grow in spring and are fundamental in the fight for females. It is an elegant animal that prefers the plains in winter and seeks the mountains in summer.

The **European otter** (*Lutra lutra*) is the symbol of the Lago de Sanabria y Alrededores Natural Park. It has a long body and a short, brownish coat. Silent and solitary, it builds burrows and shelters by the water, often taking advantage of other animals' burrows.

The **genet** (*Genetta genetta*) is a short-legged mammal that can reach a length of 1 m. It seeks out wooded areas with oak and holm oak trees where it usually lives inside trunks. It is a nocturnal and solitary animal, with the particularity of having glands in its anus, whose secretions have been used in the production of perfumes and medicines.

Among the most common mammals scattered throughout the Reserve are the **wild boar** (*Sus scrofa*), the **European rabbit** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), the **European hare** (*Lepus europaeus*) and the **fox** (*Vulpes vulpes*). These species are very much linked to the imagination and practices of human communities. The fox, due to its adaptability and opportunism, helped shape some of the animal protection systems on farms. The others are associated with great hunting traditions and the gastronomy of these regions.

The wild boar is very similar to the domestic pig, with an elongated head, brown and thick pelage, and a rather hard fur. This animal compensates for its poor sight with its acute senses of smell and hearing.

→

European otter



Bats are one of the most extraordinary groups of mammals in this territory, with rare species, some deeply threatened and requiring extreme attention in the protection of their habitats.

Colonies of bats live in caves, hollow trees in dense woods, abandoned mines or dam tunnels. In the tunnels of the railway line from La Fregeneda to Barca d'Alva, now deactivated and which can be discovered on foot, there is one of the largest and most extraordinary colonies of these mammals. Insectivores are important for fighting insect pests in many crops. From Sanabria to the Vale do Tua, passing through Culebra, Montesinho, Douro Internacional and Arribes del Duero there are species such as the **lesser horseshoe bat** (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), **greater horseshoe bat** (*Rhinolophus ferrum-equinum*) **mediterranean horseshoe bat** (*Rhinolophus euryale*), **lesser mouse-bat** (*Myotis blythii*), **greater mouse-eared bat** (*Myotis myotis*) and **common bent-wing bat** (*Miniopterus schreibersii*), among others.

The Reserve's birdlife is remarkably diverse and exuberant, with the presence of rupicolous birds, migratory species and some large ones. The Douro escarpments, on both sides of the border, are a sanctuary for some of the finest and most threatened birds in the area, but from Sanabria to the Tua there is a unique abundance of species.

→

Lesser horseshoe
bat

↘

Wild boar

↓

Genet





THE LESSER HORSESHOE BAT MEASURES BETWEEN 7 AND 25 CM, WITH SHORT EARS AND TWO NASAL FOLDS THAT RESEMBLE A HORSESHOE. IT IS A VULNERABLE ANIMAL, HAVING BEEN PERSECUTED BY HUMAN COMMUNITIES DUE TO SUPERSTITIONS THAT DEFINED THEM AS REPULSIVE ANIMALS.

In the Natural Park Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto and in the Sierra de la Culebra 76 bird species have been identified. In the Montesinho Natural Park 155 species have been inventoried, 126 of which are breeding birds, 200 species in the Arribes del Duero, 170 in the Douro Internacional and 123 in the Vale do Tua.

→

Golden eagle

AMONG BIRDS OF PREY, THE MAJESTIC GOLDEN EAGLE STANDS OUT, WITH MORE THAN 40 PAIRS IN THE DOURO INTERNACIONAL AND MONTESINHO REGIONS AND AROUND 20 IN THE DUERO ARRIBES AND SURROUNDING AREAS, AS WELL AS BEING SIGHTED IN THE SIERRAS OF SANABRIA AND CULEBRA.

It is the largest eagle on the Iberian Peninsula, can reach a wingspan of 230 cm, has a keen sight, capable of detecting a hare at 2 km, a robust appearance, dark brown in colour and is extremely aggressive. Due to the golden tones on its head, it is also known as the "Golden Eagle".

There are several species of eagles in this region, and it is possible to observe in various parts of the territory the **short-toed snake eagle** (*Circaetus gallicus*), the **booted eagle** (*Aquila pennata*), the **bonelli's eagle** (*Aquila fasciata*), the **golden-winged eagle** (*Buteo buteo*) or the Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*). Some of them are highly threatened and have special preservation status.

The bonelli's eagle is present on the slopes of the Douro, nesting on ledges on its steep walls. This eagle can reach a wingspan of 170 cm, has a powerful appearance and is sedentary, maintaining several nests in the territory.

The **egyptian vulture** (*Neophron percnopterus*) is an emblematic bird, having even been chosen as the symbol of the Douro Internacional Natural Park.

ALSO KNOWN IN THE PORTUGUESE REGION AS "BRITANGO" AND "BLANQUILLO" ON THE SPANISH SIDE, THIS VULTURE IS A MIGRATORY BIRD THAT SPENDS MOST OF THE WINTER IN AFRICA, RETURNING IN APRIL AND MAY TO NEST.



The Egyptian vulture is the smallest of the vultures of this territory, with a wingspan of about 160 - 170 cm and prefers mainly rocky spaces. It inhabits ravines and cliffs near rivers and is often mistaken for a stork from a distance. The Egyptian vulture is particularly intelligent, throwing stones to break eggs.

Among birds of prey, there are other emblematic birds, such as the **griffon vulture** (*Gyps fulvus*), the **kite** (*Milvus milvus*), the **black kite** (*Milvus migrans*), the **eurasian sparrow hawk** (*Accipiter nisus*), the **peregrine falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*) or the **kestrel** (*Falco naumanni*).

The griffon vulture is one of the largest birds of this Reserve, with a wingspan that can reach 280 cm. They nest in inaccessible areas, but tolerate humanized environments well, because they often facilitate access to food. They have no neck feathers because they usually stick their head completely into the carcass.

The peregrine falcon is a small bird, about 1 m wingspan, hunting in open spaces such as less dense forests, steppes and escarpments. This bird does not nest, but takes advantage of some abandoned nests or recesses in rocks, and hunts mainly birds, reaching speeds of up to 200 km/h.



Egyptian vulture



The kestrel is a small bird of prey, 100 cm, that inhabits both escarpments and forests or open fields.

Among many other species, the following stand out for their conservation importance: the **black stork** (*Ciconia nigra*), the **great bustard** (*Otis tarda*), the **eagle owl** (*Bubo bubo*), the **black wheatear** (*Onanthe leucura*), the **blue rock thrush** (*Monticola solitarius*), the **little owl** (*Otus scops*), the **european roller** (*Coracias garrulus*) and the **grey partridge** (*Perdix perdix hispaniensis*).

The eagle owl is the largest nocturnal bird of prey in Europe, with a wingspan of up to 180 cm, usually nesting in small rock shelters. Despite its large size it has a rather discreet and silent flight, camouflaging itself during the day thanks to its brownish tones.

The black stork is smaller than the white one, is classified as an endangered species and inhabits rocky areas and cliffs that are difficult to access.

The blue rock thrush is a small animal, 20 cm, solitary, usually observed on rocks, avoiding flat land and daily washing up in rivers and streams with gentle currents.

In the European context, the Reserve is a rich territory for



Griffon vulture





reptiles and amphibians, some of which are of particular importance given the level of threat they face. The **snub-nosed viper** (*Vipera latastei*) is undoubtedly the most famous, but the **collared water snake** (*Natrix natrix*), the **montpellier snake** (*Malpolon monspessulanus*), the **european smooth snake** (*Coronella Austriaca*), the **iberian emerald lizard** (*Lacerta schreiberi*) also stand out, the **marbled newt** (*Triturus marmoratus*), the **iberian newt** (*Triturus bocai*), the **european tree frog** (*Hyla arborea*), the **iberian painted frog** (*Discoglossus galganoi*) or the **mediterranean terrapin** (*Mauremys leprosa*).

The Iberian newt, measuring around 8 cm, inhabits ponds, springs and stagnant water, and is an exclusive species of the Iberian Peninsula. The European treefrog is only 5 cm long, normally lives out of water and has mainly nocturnal habits.

In the region's immense water network, there is also a group of extremely valuable fish and invertebrate species. The **river mussel** (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) is a notable case. It was once extinct in Portugal but in recent decades its population has grown again and gained some dimension, mainly in the Rabaçal, Mente and Tuela Rivers, in Montesinho.

↑
Snub-nosed viper

↖
Marbled newt

↗
Lycaena
virgaureae



It is a species in risk of extinction due to its sensibility to human disturbances.

In these rivers, despite the dams and reservoirs, there are still relevant populations of **bermejuela** (*Achondrostoma arcasii*), **northern bogue** (*Pseudochondrostoma duriensis*), **barbel** (*Barbus bocagei*), **northern blue whiting** (*Cobitis calderoni*) and **brown trout** (*Salmo trutta*).

The Bogue is a relatively small fish, between 15 cm and 50 cm, a gregarious animal, endemic to the Douro and other basins of Galicia.

There are also butterflies of particular interest such as the *Lycaena virgaureae*, the **northeastern orange** (*Boloria dia*) or the *Callimorpha quadripunctaria*.

THERE IS AN ANCESTRAL WISDOM THAT HAS ALLOWED US TO UNDERSTAND AND ENHANCE A TERRITORY OF CONTRASTS, SUMMER AND WINTER, COLD AND HOT LANDS, QUITE EVIDENT IN THE TRADITIONAL PRACTICES OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK BREEDING.

5.

HUMAN
NATURE





Climate, relief and man have together shaped the landscapes that define the Reserve, in a shared authorship that has created horizons, shades and hues, drawn outlines and influenced cycles.

Olive oil, chestnuts, almonds, cherries, wine, cereals, dams and reservoirs, or animals selected with nature's help, are the expression of Man as creator and agent of change, a deep mark of communities that have tamed and softened natural forces.

The Reserve populations, with common and interconnected roots, also share temperament, beliefs, resilience and creativity.

→

Mirandês donkey

AGRICULTURE

Over the centuries, settlements have developed in this region, generally compact, with most villages comprising only a few hundred people.

Farming has an enormous weight in the local economy, where the cattle benefit from the marshes, some always wet, others only in certain periods, and from the natural pastures, mainly in high altitude areas. Cereal crops are always linked to these animals, benefiting from them to fertilise the land after harvesting. Many temporary crops persist, such as cereals for grain (rye, wheat, oats), fodder, beans, potatoes or cabbages.

The potato is one of the excellent products, especially in the colder lands, as well as the chestnut, which has an enormous importance in the local economy. A large part of the Portuguese chestnut is produced in Trás-os-Montes, particularly in Bragança and Vinhais, and on the Spanish side it is very important in the local economy of the Sierra de la Culebra.

Also emblematic in this territory, the olive tree is present from north to south of the Reserve, from the coldest and most rustic landscapes, to the vineyards, next to the majestic Douro. But it is, without doubt, an inseparable element mainly of the Terra Quente landscapes, with extensive and quiet olive





←
Almond blossom

↙
Sheep breed
churra galega
bragançana

groves among the soft mountains and warm schist plateaus, where the influence of the Mediterranean climate also favours the cultivation of almonds, oranges and figs.

Next to the Douro, in Spanish territory, in the Terra Quente municipalities and in Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, the Reserve also offers us a dazzling surprise at the end of winter, the almond blossom, which last only a few weeks, colouring the landscapes white and pink.

The almond blossom is an ephemeral landscape that attracts thousands of visitors every year and are associated with many of the region's festivities.

Animal breeding has produced autochthonous breeds, certified on both sides of the border, which have increasingly deserved efforts and protection measures. "A genetic heritage that creates landscapes, gastronomy and culture" (Inventory of Autochthonous Breeds in the RBTMI).

This is a territory where cows subsist, such as the Alistana Sanabresa, from Aliste and Sanabria, the Sayaguesa, from Sayago, the Mirandesa, from the Miranda plateau, the Bísaro pig, fundamental in the sausage tradition, nine breeds of goats, where the churras, chickens and donkeys, Zamorano-Leonês and Mirandês stand out, which have contributed to creating a unique biological, genetic and cultural heritage (see RBTMI Agri-Food Products Guide).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

The human presence in this territory has left deep marks throughout twenty thousand years of history, accumulating layers of cultural expressions, artistic representations, social life spaces, means of work, faith manifestations, administrative organisation, testimony of power and defensive structures.

The oldest remains date back to the Upper Palaeolithic, a time when the climate was much harsher and extreme,

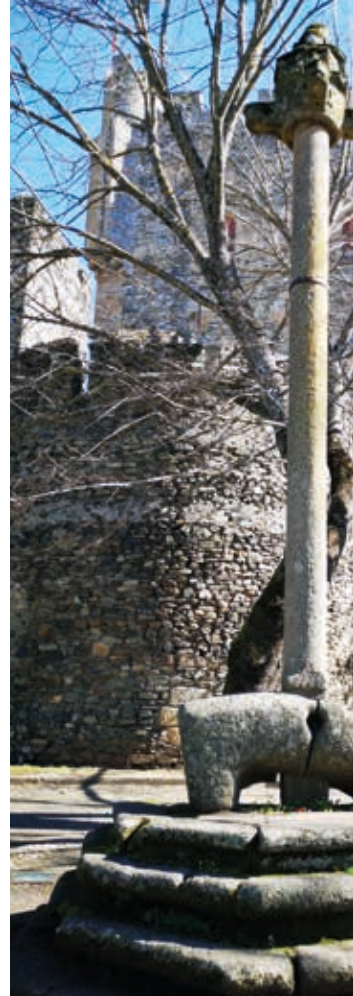


forcing man to take refuge in caves. There are engravings from this period, in the Bragança region, of horses and aurochs, in Pousadouro (Grijó de Parada), Sampaio (Milhão) and Fraga Escrevida (Paradinha Nova), probably dating back to the engravings of Foz Côa.

Rock engravings of Mazouco/Carneiro, further south, in Freixo de Espada à Cinta, also from the Upper Palaeolithic, are one of the most important, highlighting the representation of a horse (62 cm), which is considered one of the most beautiful images of open-air rock art in the world.

From the most recent prehistory, from the Neolithic to the Iron Age, there are traces distributed all over the territory: Cave shelters of Regato das Bouças, in Mirandela, Anta de Zedes, in Carrazeda de Ansiães, Fraga da Pegada, in Macedo de Cavaleiros, near the reservoir of the Azibo dam, Cova da Moura, in Assares, Vila Flor, Fraga do Gato, in Freixo de Espada à Cinta, Fragas do Diabo, in Mogadouro, Mamoá de Donai, in Bragança, paintings between Linarejos and Villarino de Manzananas, in the Sierra de la Culebra or the rock monument of Vilvestre, in Salamanca.

La Palla Rubia (Pozo de Los Humos), Pereña de La Ribera, is situated in the heart of the Arribes del Duero, in an impressive landscape, next to the waterfall of the Uces River, just before it reaches the Douro, generating vapours which gave rise to



↑
Berrão, Bragança

↵
Rock engraving
of Mazouco/
Carneiro



the name (Los Humos). The cave paintings of la Margarrida are located by the Huebra River, near its mouth in the Douro, in a place of difficult access, and include anthropomorphic elements and other undetermined ones.

It is during the Iron Age that the settlements develop and granite fortifications begin to appear, forts that benefited from good natural defence conditions. These settlements were relatively small, fortified, where it is possible to see the organisation for raising livestock, remains of iron exploitation, zoomorphic sculptures, with stone pigs and bulls. In the Sierra de la Culebra we find the hillforts in Riomanzanas, Ferreras de Arriba Y de Abajo and in Villardeciervos, and in the Arribes del Duero, the hillforts of Fariza, in Fermoselle or Villar del Buey. From the Terra Fria (Cold Earth) to the Terra Quente (Hot Earth) these spaces succeed each other: Sacóias, in Bragança, S. João das Arribas, Vale da Águia, Fraga do Puio, in Miranda do Douro, S. Brás, in Torre Dona Chama, among others.

Inseparable from this heritage, many granite zoomorphic statues are still preserved, such as pigs, bulls or bears, with a religious function and territory marking, common in the hillforts of Meseta Castellana, interior of Trás-os-Montes and Beiras.

Among this extraordinary legacy we should highlight the one from the historical centre of Bragança, La Mula or La Yegua, which is exhibited near the Church of Villardiegua de la Ribera, el Burro de la Barrera, in Lumbrales, the one from Picote and Duas Igrejas, in Miranda do Douro, the one from Torre de D. Chama, in Mirandela, or the one from Vilas Boas, in Vila Flor, this one a bull 1.30 m high and which is exhibited in the Museum Municipal. In Vilas Boas a famous gold torque was also found, an extraordinary example of goldsmithery of this period.

Although one cannot speak of a moment of rupture, but rather of transition and integration, the Roman presence left lasting marks in the territory, creating new road structures, renewing settlement models and intensifying mining.

The Via XVII of the Antonine itinerary, which went from Braga to Astorga, bifurcated in Chaves, creating connections by south and north that met again in Castro de Avelãs. It was here that the headquarters of the civitas Zoelarum was located,

which integrated the northern territories of the Bragança region. Several stretches of this route between Vinhais and Bragança have survived, such as the Calçada de Alimonde. There are also several remains of the southern connection, in Lamalonga and Castanheiro, both in the municipality of Macedo de Cavaleiros.

From Castro de Avelãs, the route continued through the territories of la Culebra, terras de Aliste and the Tera valley, where parts of this stretch have been marked.

From the presence near the Douro, there is evidence of routes that would connect Braga to Zamora and even South to Salamanca, and that in this territory would pass through Mirandela, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Miranda do Douro, Fermoselle and Villalcampo.

Some bridges of undeniable beauty still stand out from these connections, such as the bridge of Tudera, in Sayago, with a remarkable central eye, the stone bridge in Torre de Dona Chama, today part of the EN 206, which, despite later alterations, has a flat deck based on round arches.

Throughout the region, the hillforts were slowly romanized, the ethnic differences between these peoples were softened



with the integration of new ways of organizing work, defence, some construction techniques and new divinities. Several remains were found from this period, mainly artefacts, coins, polychronic mosaics, millstones, columns, capitals or funerary gravestones: Celas Tower and Ervedosa Castle, in Vinhais; Castro de Avelãs, Alto do Carocedo, Sacóias and Lombeiro Branco, in Bragança; Terronha de Argozelo, in Vimioso; Castro Vicente and Vilarinho de Galegos, in Mogadouro; S. João das Arribas and S. Martinho de Angueira, in Miranda do Douro; Villae romana da Senhora da Ribeira and Ansiães Castle, in Carrazeda de Ansiães; Castro de Merchanas, in Lumbrales, Castro del Castillo de Saldeana, in Saldeana, Castro de San Mamede, in Villardiegua de la Ribera, Castro Bermellar, in Bermellar, Cabeza de San Pedro, in Hinojosa de Duero, among others.

ARCHITECTURE

With the invasions of the Germanic peoples, these regions entered a period of greater isolation and conformed by natural barriers, deepening models of community life and a social and organizational profile of the territory that can still be felt a little everywhere today. Not even the arrival of the Arabs brought major changes, since the Muslim domain never fully asserted itself north of the Douro.

In the medieval period, the communities integrated forms of defence, social organisation, agricultural exploitation and elements of faith into the territory, of which there are still many remains, even if later adulterated, in chapels, walls, fountains, pillories, bridges and churches.

Of the religious heritage, on the Portuguese side the most noteworthy are the church of the old Monastery of Castro de Avelãs, in Bragança, with a remarkable semicircular headstone; the Church of Santíssima Trindade, in Vila Flor, already in a late Romanic style and which includes a Gothic arch in the interior; the Church of São João Batista, in Carrazeda de Ansiães, perhaps even of a pre-Romanesque style; the churches

of Algozinhos and Azinhoso, in Mogadouro, or the Convent of Santa Maria de Aguiar, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, of the 12th century.

On Spanish territory, the beautiful Monastery of San Martín de Castañeda, set in stunning scenery, the Church of Nuestra Señora del Azogue, in Puebla de Sanabria, the notable Church of St^a María de Tábara, in Tábara, the 10th century hermitage of Nuestra Señora de la Merced, in Fermoselle (San Albín) and the Church of Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción, also in Fermoselle, the last one as a beautiful combination of Romanesque and Gothic. The Parish Church of San Salvador, in Aldeadávila de la Ribera, built in the 13th century, preserves a semicircular arched doorway and eight buttresses, having been much transformed later until the Baroque period.

The defence structures erected in the medieval period have survived to the present day, although some are now much reduced in size and others have been greatly enlarged in later times.

In Portugal, the Castle of Bragança is a must-see, with the most beautiful and elegant Portuguese keep and situated next to a unique example of civil architecture, the Domus Municipalis of Bragança. Also in Terra Fria are the castles of Vinhais, with its Paços e cadeia, Miranda do Douro, Algosó (Vimioso) and Penas Róias (Mogadouro). To the south, the castle, with a heptagonal tower, of Freixo de Espada à Cinta. In Terra Quente, the Clock Tower, in Alfândega da Fé. Beyond the Douro, there is the Castle of Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, of medieval origin, built by Afonso IX of León.

On the Spanish side, there are also important remains of walls and castles, such as those of Puebla de Sanabria, with the first lines being built in the 12th and 13th centuries. These walls and castle were greatly extended in later centuries.

Next to the Douro is the Castle of Fermoselle, which is of castle origins but has medieval and later remains, and that of San Felices de los Gallegos, built by King Dinis of Portugal in the 13th century, when the territory was still Portuguese.

The granting of town charters left a vast heritage of pillories in the region, attesting to the subjection of these lands to the Crown, the nobility or the church. Few of the bridges from this

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San Felices
de los Gallegos
Castle



period have survived and most have been repaired over the centuries. The beautiful bridge between Santulhão and Izeda, on the Sabor River, stands out without a doubt.

Between the 15th and 16th centuries, the region did not suffer much from the impact of the cultural and artistic renewal that swept Europe, but there is still some ornamentation on the doorways and, mainly, the imposing Cathedral of Miranda do Douro, the churches of Moimenta and Vimioso or the main Church of Freixo de Espada à Cinta, with its Manueline façade.

Puebla de Sanabria has some of the most important architectural landmarks of these centuries in the Biosphere Reserve, such as the castle built by the IV Count of Benavente, reinforced in later centuries, and emblazoned houses, such as the 15th century Consistorial, located in the plaza Mayor. The keep of Sobradillo, in the Arribes del Duero, is what remains of the castle built in the second half of the 15th century.

The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, with great emphasis on the Baroque, left a remarkable architectural heritage all over the Reserve. Of particular importance is the town of Bragança, with its 16th century Sé Velha cathedral and later additions. The Brigantine estate is extensive and includes several churches in



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 Puebla
 de Sanabria
 Castle

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 Távoras Palace,
 Mirandela

the city with remarkable details, but a visit to the 17th century Basilica of São Cristo de Outeiro, an imposing sanctuary with a schist bell tower and an interior rich in carvings and paintings, is also a must. It is important to mention that Outeiro is the only Portuguese village with a basilica.

Vinhais also preserves a number of important monuments, such as the 19th century Solar dos Condes, the baroque Solar da Corujeira, the Cano fountain and the 15th century five-arched bridge of Arranca.

Still in Terra Fria, we must mention the 16th century São Francisco Church, the Igreja Matriz, the pillory, the Paços do Concelho building in Mogadouro with its Renaissance portal and the Vilarinho aqueduct in Miranda do Douro.

In Terra Quente, in Mirandela, some of the most important jewels of this period are still standing, such as the imposing 17th century Palácio dos Távoras, which today houses the Town Hall, and the extraordinary 16th century Ponte Velha bridge, with its 17 round arches.

At the gates of the Vale do Tua, Vila Flor has beautiful houses and manor houses, of which the Solar dos Lemos, 1700, stands out as one of the most interesting works of Transmontana architecture, and the S. Bartolomeu Mother Church, 18th century, with a majestic façade.

One of the main testimonies of the millenary presence of man in these regions is undoubtedly the rural architecture. The occupation of the territory by human communities took place in small villages, in a deep integration and interdependence with the natural elements. It is in the spaces of rural life, in the streets and buildings of the villages, in the walls that separate the plots, in the mills, in the shepherds' shelters and in the pastures to keep the cattle, that some of the most beautiful manifestations and memories of the villages that for millennia lived as part of the biosphere are preserved.



HANDICRAFT

In the cultural manifestations of these communities is expressed the nature of the relationship with the environment, deepened over millennia. Territory and man have shaped each other and cannot be understood without each other. Handicraft is one of the best examples of this interdependence, with creations made from materials provided by nature, but also as manifestations of the human effort to inhabit and impose themselves on the environment, allowing them to adapt and find some comfort in a climate of extremes and a demanding relief.

Iron, prepared for centuries in community forges, provided tools for working the land, while copper was used to make alembics, boilers for ovens and zinc was used to create pitchers, watering cans, funnels and cutlery.

The noble woods of the region, such as chestnut, were used to make doors, verandas, ox carts, canes and masks, a cultural element that identifies this territory.

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Combing
the churra wool

Basketry, so important in domestic and agricultural work, was made with wicker, the branches of willows, and in some cases with dried wheat straw, used for bread baskets.

Clothes, capes, towels, sheets and tapestries were made with wool, mainly from the Galician-Brazilian churra and Galician and Moorish linen, which requires long and patient work to prepare the threads in rolls for the loom. The textile industry in Lumbrales is noteworthy, which was of great importance in the region's economy between the 17th century and the mid-20th century. There are references to 106 looms in 1777, where blankets, coarse cloths, coarse woollen cloths and sarees were woven.

The ingenuity of these people often combined the elements to create instruments and utensils such as the bellows used to stoke the fire, made of alder wood, sheepskin or leather, olive wood wicker and zinc sheeting.

This rich legacy of popular culture includes the famous mirandesa cape of honour, made of serge (black wool), burel (coarse wool) and linen, the shepherd's flute (the traditional and unmistakable sound of the Arribes del Duero) and the archaic mirandesa, sanabresa and alistana bagpipes, made of goatskin and closely linked to pastoral environments.

GASTRONOMY

From this symbiosis with the land, the communities have been able to understand the natural elements and create an extraordinary gastronomic heritage. Unique and distinctive flavours of this region born out of a wise creativity, a close relationship with the personality of the territory, the rhythms of the seasons and the specificities of each product.

Chestnuts, potatoes, beans, mushrooms, cereals, honey, almonds, fruit, olive oil, wine, fish and native breeds are elements of a gastronomy based on a long learning of the values and contrasts of the land.

Beans are popular for the Transmontana feijoada, originally from Vinhais, an essential dish in Portuguese gastronomy and



for Sanantonada, large beans with pork, common in Sanabria and Culebra.

The pig, mainly the Bisaro breed, plays a major role in the gastronomic art of these lands, practically all its parts being used to create iconic and admirable dishes. From the pig comes the ear, feet and snout for bean stews and stews, but mainly the unequalled creativity in smoked meats and sausages that leave us today a valuable and incomparable heritage. Alheira sausages, such as the renowned alheira from Mirandela, "salpicões", hams, morcellas, "chouriças", sausages and the surprising butelo, a "bone sausage". In Zamora and Salamanca, suckling pig "cuchifrito" is also popular.

Autochthonous bovine breeds have been used to create essential, authentic dishes, cooked on fire and salt, such as the famous posta à mirandesa or the alistana-sanabresa or sayaguesa steaks and cutlets.

The kid and the lamb are very appreciated, associated to

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Handcrafted
production
of "covered
almonds"



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Traditional
roasts

a seasonal gastronomy, in roasts or stews. Fish, mainly trout, barb and eels, are popular on both sides of the border, either fried or prepared with parsley, garlic, paprika and vinegar.

In a territory with vast isolated regions and intense wildlife, hunting has always played an important role in the gastronomy, being popular wild boar, rabbit, hare, partridge or deer dishes.

In desserts, the presence of honey, nuts and especially almonds is inevitable, the *fiyuelas* from Villanueva de Valrojo, almonds from Villardeciervos, almond cheese or the *piñonate* rusk and the *perronillas*, typical Salmantine sweets, stand out. On the Portuguese side, Bragança-style walnut cakes, honey cakes and Easter cake are popular.

There is also a lot of fruit, mainly pears, cherries or oranges, and extraordinary cheeses, some certified and with guarantee marks, produced from native breeds and fed on natural pastures. The soft-tasting Zamorano PDO cheese has a warm and



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Cow's cheese

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Douro wine

pleasant smell, with notes of cooked butter and hay. Arribes de Salamanca Cheese (Marca de Garantía) has an intense, pleasant, soft and fatty flavour, with an aroma reminiscent of sheep's milk and cooked butter and evolving into fruity smells of dried grain. The Queijo de Cabra Transmontano PDO, cured, with extra-hard paste and uniform white colour, with clean, slightly spicy flavour and the Queijo Terrincho PDO, from the mountainous areas of Terra Quente, with soft, clean and characteristic flavour and aroma.

Olive oil of excellence is one of the distinctive elements of these flavours. In the olive groves of the Arribes, an olive oil is produced with a fruity aroma, touches of green apple and a robust flavour. There is also a growing commitment to organic olive oil, enhanced by the Ahigal de los Aceiteros oil mill, the first ecological oil mill in Castilla y León.

In the Terra Quente municipalities, the famous olive oil of Trás-os-Montes PDO is produced, with low or very low acidity, renowned for its balance, delicate aromas and flavours of fresh fruit and almonds.

WINE IS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, ONE OF THE TREASURES OF THIS TERRITORY, WITH TWO WINE-PRODUCING REGIONS, ONE IN SPAIN, THE ARRIBES AND THE OTHER IN PORTUGAL, THE DOURO.

Both regions, prestigious worldwide, although distinct and with their own personalities, have elegant, complex, intense and full-bodied wines, but also harmonious.

In the transition from Terra Fria (Cold Earth) to Terra Quente Transmontana (Hot Earth), vines have been cultivated since the beginning of time, producing wines classified as Trás-os-Montes, PGI, with their own characteristics conditioned by altitude and solar exposure.



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Caretos Parade,
Bragança

FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS

There is a cultural identity that has no borders, it is continuous, which allows us to affirm that man is undoubtedly the common element in all the landscapes of this Biosphere Reserve. The masks admirably express this ancestral and deep connection that is established from north to south between the villages and towns of the Reserve.

The masks reveal a strong connection of the communities to the natural environment, seeking to understand, dominate and/or mock its often indomitable forces.

THE MASKS REPRESENT THE HUMANISATION OF NATURAL CYCLES AND THE FAITH THAT DOES NOT CONFORM TO THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE FORCES OF NATURE, STAGING THE SURVIVAL, GROWTH, CHANGE, PASSAGE, ROBUSTNESS, FERTILITY AND THE VICTORY OF COMMUNITIES OVER WHAT THREATENS THEM.

They are the creation of communities that are part of the biosphere, that interact with the environment, that absorb, learn and invent together. But they are also the expression of Man who does not accept fatality, who wants to define his future and build his destiny.

The Winter Festivities integrate an immense set of noisy (rattle), colourful, creative, transgressive and provocative manifestations that take place from Christmas to Carnival, including also several festivities that start on the night of 31st October to 1st November, All Saints' Day. Processions, masses, parades, peddling and skits with strong social criticism, a jocular and provocative tone.

In December, at the time of the winter solstice, the Festa dos Rapazes, a celebration of the passage into adulthood, is still a tradition in many villages in Bragança, where single boys are the soul of the festivities, doing rounds and loas. Between 24 and 26 December, scattered throughout the territory,



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Carnaval
Villanueva
Valrojo

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Diablos
de Sarracín
de Aliste

masquerades take over the streets of the villages, combining religious and pagan elements, such as Natal de Ousilhão in Vinhais, Festa dos 'Belhos', in Mogadouro, Festas de St° Estevão, in Bragança, Chocalheiro de Bemposta, in Mogadouro, the Zangarrón of Sanzoles, el Pajarico y el Caballico of Villarino Tras la Sierra or La Filandorra of Ferreras de Arriba. From Christmas to the Twelfth Day, there are successive celebrations in various villages of Bragança (Baçal, Rebordainhos, Rio de Onor and Salsas), the Festas do Menino, in Miranda and Mogadouro, the Carochos of Riofrío de Aliste, Los Diablos of Sarracín de Aliste, Los Cencerrones de Abejera de Tabara or La Bufa de San Antón, in Aldeadávilla de la Ribera, with pre-Roman origins and representing the fight between the forces that protect animals and crops and the devils that want to destroy them.

These masquerades culminate in Carnival, mobilising populations and attracting more and more visitors: la Vaca Antrueja de Pererueta, el Carnaval de Villanueva de Valrojo, Antruejo de Almeida de Sayago, Carnaval dos Caretos de Bragança, Vinhais and the famous Caretos de Podence, in Macedo de Cavaleiros, declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

In the Salmantine region, charro folklore is a fascinating cultural manifestation of popular dances, rooted in a remarkable aesthetic identity, which tells the story of the complex lineage of beliefs, values, imagery and the affirmation of the communities in this environment.

In these ceremonious dances, typical costumes are displayed, some of the most sumptuous of all the Peninsula for their elaboration and ornamentation. The rhythms are marked by the drum and the three-hole flute, known as "gaita charra".

The charro button is a symbol of this folklore, a jewel of remote origins, which some believe to have Celtiberian roots, as it reminds them of the solar disk, or to be an inheritance from the Muslim presence in the region, mainly due to the concentric balls and the absence of empty spaces. Flattened and always with the same engraved image, they are usually made of silver or, in the most valuable version, of gold.

The sound of the drum is also a striking element in the singular baile de la bandera of Hinojosa de Duero, which still preserves a symbiosis between dance and performance, celebrating the victory of the people (flag) over the feudal lord. History and legend tells us that in Hinojosa de Duero there was a castle where a merciless and tyrannical feudal lord ruled, who imposed humiliations and suffering on the people. This



festival celebrates the people who, on the night of San Juan, united and stormed the castle, forcing the lord to flee.

Fire has always had a strong expression in this territory in many of the popular festivities, as a dramatic, purifying and renewing element. But there are still celebrations with fire that descend from ancient pagan rituals and which over the centuries the communities have integrated into their Christian beliefs, such as la hoguera de Navidad in Hinojosa de Duero and Christmas bonfires or rooster bonfires in Miranda do Douro.

In Hinojosa de Duero, on the night of 24 December, the bonfire is lit in the Plaza del Juego de Pelota, where the people gather after the midnight mass on Christmas Eve. The celebration goes on all night long, bringing neighbours together, promoting conviviality, warming up the atmosphere, with the quintos, young people reaching adulthood, continuing the party between the bonfire and the bars.

In Miranda do Douro there are still bonfires in the centre of the villages, in the square or churchyard on Christmas Eve, with wood collected by the boys, where people gather after midnight mass to sing and dance. In some villages, the bonfire is kept up until Twelfth Night.

The dances with sticks are another of the most singular cultural expressions of this area, dances of warrior origins, with Greco-Roman inspiration (replacing swords for sticks), fascinating because of the traditional costumes, the beating of the sticks, the coordination and dexterity of the movements. The composition and choreographic structure shows deep similarities between the Miranda dances and those on the Spanish side, with some differences in the costume or in the rigidity of the composition of the elements. On the paloteos, the dances are fundamentally accompanied by a musical group made up of the tamborileiro (shepherd's flute and drum) and bombo. On the Portuguese side, besides this group, it is very common for the dance to be accompanied by another type of ensemble, formed by the gaitero, percussion box and bombo. Notable are the Pauliteiros de Miranda, the Danza de Palos in Tábara, Sierra de la Culebra, the danzas of Muelas del Pan and Almaraz, or even the paleos of Saucelle and Vilvestre.

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Folclore Charro

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Pauliteiros
de Miranda



**STUNNING LANDSCAPES,
EXTRAORDINARY RICHNESS
OF FAUNA, NOBLE
VEGETATION, BREATH-TAKING
TRAILS AND VIEWPOINTS,
MILLENARY TRACES OF
HUMAN PRESENCE OR
ANCIENT TRADITIONS ARE
IRRESISTIBLE CHALLENGES
FOR THOSE IN SEARCH
OF NATURE TOURISM AND
INTENSE EXPERIENCES.**

6.

NATURAL PARKS AND PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

LAGO DE SANABRIA Y SIERRAS SEGUNDERA Y DE PORTO



The Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto Natural Park, with 22,365 hectares, is located at the northern end of the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve, in the province of Zamora. This area is part of the RBTMI, but the Park is much larger and extends as far as León.

Made up of medium and high mountain areas, the great lake is the brand image and point of confluence of the natural, cultural and folkloric forces of the region.

The Natural Park, classified in 1978, is an incredible geological testimony to the impact of quaternary glaciers, preserving clear, pure waters and abundant, diverse plant and animal life, protected by the mountains.

Deep valleys, gorges, river canyons, rocks that offer long journeys back in time, lagoons (the second largest group of lagoons in Spain, after the Pyrenees), forests, a magnificent diversity of vegetation, with many endemic species and a teeming kingdom of animal species provide intense discoveries, learning and experiences.

Sanabria is located in a transition zone between Zamora, León, Orense and the Portuguese region of Trás-os-Montes, sharing many cultural elements with its "neighbours", but also taking on a strong identity of its own. The difficult and rigorous nature of the mountain, the agricultural and livestock practices have defined its most characteristic cultural features, in



SPAIN

← OURENSE

SIERRA SEGUNDERA



VIEWPOINTS



RIVERSIDE BEACHES



CASTLES/FORTRESSES



RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS

LAGUNA DE CAMPOSAGRADO

PUENTE PORTO DAM

TUELA RIVER



Sanabres, the region's dialect, in the architectural elements in harmony with nature, in the sounds of the Sanabres bagpipes and drums, in the ancestral practices of land cultivation, in livestock breeding in harmony with the rhythms of the mountain or in the legendary relationships with the wolves.

The region's villages bear witness to the integration of these peoples into the natural environment, with buildings that reflect the existing natural resources: thick granite walls, slate roofs, lower floors for livestock and granite stairs to access the dwellings on the upper floor.

VILLAGES AND TOWNS

San Martín de Castañeda is situated at an altitude of 1200 m, next to the Sanabria Lake. This privileged location led Cistercian monks to settle in the region and build the monastery that today is one of the most important architectural elements of the entire region. Founded in the 10th century on top of a Visigothic monastery, it was one of the most important religious complexes in Zamora until the 19th century. The church is a building of large square pillars in three naves. The two images of San Martín de Tours, the image of the pilgrim virgin, the Renaissance altarpiece and the choir are of exceptional value. Currently, this monastery houses the Centro de Interpretación del Parque Natural Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto.

Puebla de Sanabria is a charming town in the Rhaeto-Sanabria region, standing on the banks of the Tera River and with the mountains on the horizon. A towering town that stands out for its extensive walls that surround an interesting historical centre.

Puebla de Sanabria invites you to take a walk through its streets, which are still medieval in spirit and have maintained their traditional character, emblazoned houses, churches and



**SAN MARTIN DE CASTAÑEDA,
MIRROR OF SOLITUDE,
THE LAKE GATHERS THE AGES
BEFORE MAN AND REMAINS
DREAMING IN THE SACRED CALM
OF THE SKY ON HIGH,
THAT RISES TO THE BOTTOM
TO BE FLOODED, POOR SOUL...**

Unamuno

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San Martín
de Castañeda

squares, constituting a beautiful artistic heritage. This town has been declared an historic artistic ensemble and has been included in the list of the most beautiful villages in Spain (Pueblos más bonitas de España).

The buildings preserve their noble air and some of the splendour of the times when Puebla de Sanabria was a centre of ecclesiastical, military and political power, with an architecture dominated by stone (in the paths and in the buildings), wood (in the balconies, doors and windows) and slate (in the roofs).

The Counts of Benavente Castle is the most charismatic and imposing building, it is well preserved and keeps its majestic looks which surprises those who approach this town. The medieval walls still survive, which can be discovered on walks framed by the stunning scenery of Sanabria. The castle is later, imposing with its keep, known as "El Macho", which offers the best view of the surrounding landscape. The city walls and the castle can be visited and there are several exhibition rooms about the Sanabrian culture, the fauna and flora of the region and the history of the town.

Protected by these walls there is an important historical heritage such as the Church of Nuestra Señora del Azogue, in the Plaza Mayor. With a high tower with a baroque clock, despite later transformations, the building maintains the original Romanesque features on the façade, the walls of the central nave and the portals.

The hermitage of San Cayetano, next to this church, shows beautiful decorations on its façade.

In the Plaza Mayor, the Town Council building also deserves special attention, with a haughty, elegant façade in the Elizabethan style, which fits into the surrounding architecture.

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Puebla de
Sanabria

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Church
of Nuestra
Señora
del Azogue

WHAT TO DO

Walking is undoubtedly the best way to discover and get to know this region. More or less arduous walks, of little physical



effort and of greater difficulty, from the lake to various high mountain points.

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[Sanabria Lake](#)

Visitors can enjoy the Park in any season. Although spring and summer are more suitable for exploring the high areas, there are relatively accessible routes that can be walked in the colder periods.

This extraordinary Natural Park offers endless possibilities to discover the mountains, their wide and imposing spaces, surprising corners and a set of natural values preserved by the isolation provided by the rigorous climate and relief.

There are over 100 km of well signposted trails and paths in the region to discover the mountains, their vegetation, fauna and landscapes, from where you can glimpse the best and most breath-taking views of the lake, as well as come into contact with a vast cultural legacy - human trails, stories of traditional economic activities, popular architecture and cultural manifestations.

The lake is umbilically linked to the mountains by the Tera River and is one of the most impressive ways to get to know the mountains, following a path through waterfalls, lakes, oak trees and giant granite blocks.

The Sotillo waterfall is a must-see because of its size, the intoxicating sound that fills the mountain and the path flanked by oaks and holly that takes us back to the enchanted scenes of children's tales.

Passing the Ribadelago dam reminds us of the 1959 tragedy, when the dam burst with the force of the waters and covered the village of Ribadelago, dragging 144 of its inhabitants to their deaths.

From these landscapes "walled" by nature, with lofty and challenging gorges, you reach high mountain areas dominated by heather and broom and crystalline lagoons sheltering at almost 2000 m of altitude, such as the Laguna de los Peces or La Ventosa.

The land is covered in water, becomes marshy and in winter the mountain becomes even more uncompromising, with snow and sub-zero temperatures.

On these walks, visitors will be surprised by the noble flora and by encounters with the most characteristic species of the



Park: the industrious otter, the deer, the roe deer, some of the amphibian species that inhabit these areas rich in water and examples of the most extraordinary birds that inhabit the Iberian Peninsula, such as eagles or hawks.

In the Natural Park Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto there are also other interpretative itineraries such as "Los Trabajos del Pan", "Hombres y Bosques", "Caminos de la Trashumancia" and "Paisajes Culturales", which allow you to get to know the specificities of the integration of the communities in the environment.

The lake has several sand, stone or grassy beaches where swimming and fishing are allowed. In summer, although it is a high altitude area, the still waters in the lower areas of the beaches become pleasant, sought after by bathers for swimming and diving in an idyllic and peaceful setting. These beaches have plenty of shade, picnic parks and support structures.

A wind and solar-powered boat offers ecological trips around the lake, showing the fauna and flora of the area.

In winter, the Park attracts many visitors to enjoy the snow.

NATURE OBSERVATION

SANABRIA FAUNA

MAMMELS

- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Cervus elaphus* **Red deer**
- *Erinaceinae* **European hedgehog**
- *Genetta genetta* **Common genet**
- *Lepus* **Lebre**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Martes foina* **Beech marten**
- *Martes martes* **Marten**
- *Meles meles* **European badger**
- *Mustela erminea* **short-tailed weasel**
- *Mustela nivalis* **Least weasel**
- *Mustela putorius* **European poleca**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**
- *Vulpes vulpes* **Red fox**

BIRDS

- *Accipiter gentilis* **Northern goshawk**
- *Accipiter nisus* **Eurasian sparrow hawk**
- *Alectoris rufa* **Red-legged partridge**
- *Anas platyrhynchos* **Wild duck**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Asio otus* **Long-eared owl**
- *Athene noctua* **Little owl**
- *Aythya ferina* **Common pochard**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Buteo buteo* **Common buzzard**
- *Cinclus cinclus* **White-throated dipper**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **Short-toed snake eagle**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Corvus corax* **Common raven**
- *Corvus corone* **Carriion crow**

- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Falco tinnunculus* **Common kestrel**
- *Fulica atra* **Eurasian coot**
- *Gallinula chloropus* **Common moorhen**
- *Garrulus glandarius* **Eurasian jay**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Monticola saxatilis* **Common rock thrush**
- *Motacilla alba* **White wagtail**
- *Pandion haliaetus* **Osprey**
- *Perdix perdix* **Grey partridge**
- *Phalacrocorax carbo* **Great cormorant**
- *Pica pica* **Eurasian magpie**
- *Podiceps cristatus* **Great crested grebe**
- *Pyrrhonorax graculus* **Alpine chough**
- *Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax* **Red-billed chough**
- *Strix aluco* **Tawny owl**
- *Tachybaptus ruficollis* **Little grebe**
- *Tyto alba* **Barn owl**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes obstetricans* **Common midwife toad**
- *Anguis fragilis* **Slow worm**
- *Chalcides chalcides*
- *Chioglossa lusitanica* **Gold-striped salamander**
- *Coronella austriaca laurenti* **Smooth snake**
- *Coronella girondica* **Southern smooth snake**
- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Epidalea calamita* **Natterjack toad**
- *Hyla molleri* **Iberian tree frog**
- *Iberolacerta monticola* **Iberian rock lizard**
- *Lacerta schreiberi* **Iberian emerald lizard**
- *Lissotriton boscai* **Boscá's newt**
- *Lissotriton helveticus* **Palmate newt**
- *Malpolon monspessulanus* **Montpellier snake**
- *Natrix maura* **Viperine water snake**
- *Natrix natrix* **Grass snake**

- *Podarcis hispanicus* **Iberian wall lizard**
- *Psammmodromus algirus* **Algerian psammmodromus**
- *Rana iberica* **Iberian frog**
- *Rhinechis scalaris* **Ladder snake**
- *Salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Timon lepidus* **Jewelled lizard**
- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Vipera berus* **Common European viper**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Achondrostoma arcasii* (**bermejuela**)
- *Barbus barbus* **Common barbel**
- *Pseudochondrostoma polylepis* **Iberian nase**
- *Salmo trutta* **Brown trout**

INVERTEBRATES

- *Callimorpha quadripunctaria*
- *Coenagrion mercuriale*
- *Euphydryas aurinia*
- *Geomalacus maculosus* **Kerry slug**
- *Lucanus cervus* **Stag beetle**
- *Margaritifera margaritifera* **Freshwater pearl mussel**

SANABRIA FLORA

ENDEMISM

- *Armeria bigerrensis*
 - *Geranium bohenicum*
 - *Ranunculus parnassifolius* ssp *cabrensis*
- Ranunculus**

PEATLAND

- *Drosera rotundifolia*
- *Sphagnum*

ALPINE MEADOW

- *Calluna vulgaris* **Heather**
- *Nardus stricta* **Mat grass**

PASTURE (FOR CATTLE)

- *Arrhenatherum elatius*
- *Dactylis glomerata* **Cocksfoot**
- *Phleum pratense* **Timothy**
- *Trifolium pratense* **Red clover**
- *Trifolium repens* **White clover**

BUSHES

- *Cytiso striati-Genistetum polygaliphyllae*
- *Erica ciliaris* **Heath**
- *Erica tetralix* **Cross-leaved heath**
- *Genista tridentata*
- *Ilex aquifolium* **Common holly**
- *Narcissus triandrus*

WOODS

- *Bétula-pendula* **Silver birch**
- *Pinus pinaster* **Maritime pine**
- *Pinus sylvestris* **Scots pine**
- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Quercus robur* L. **European oak**

RIVERSIDE FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**

NEXT TO THE VILLAGES

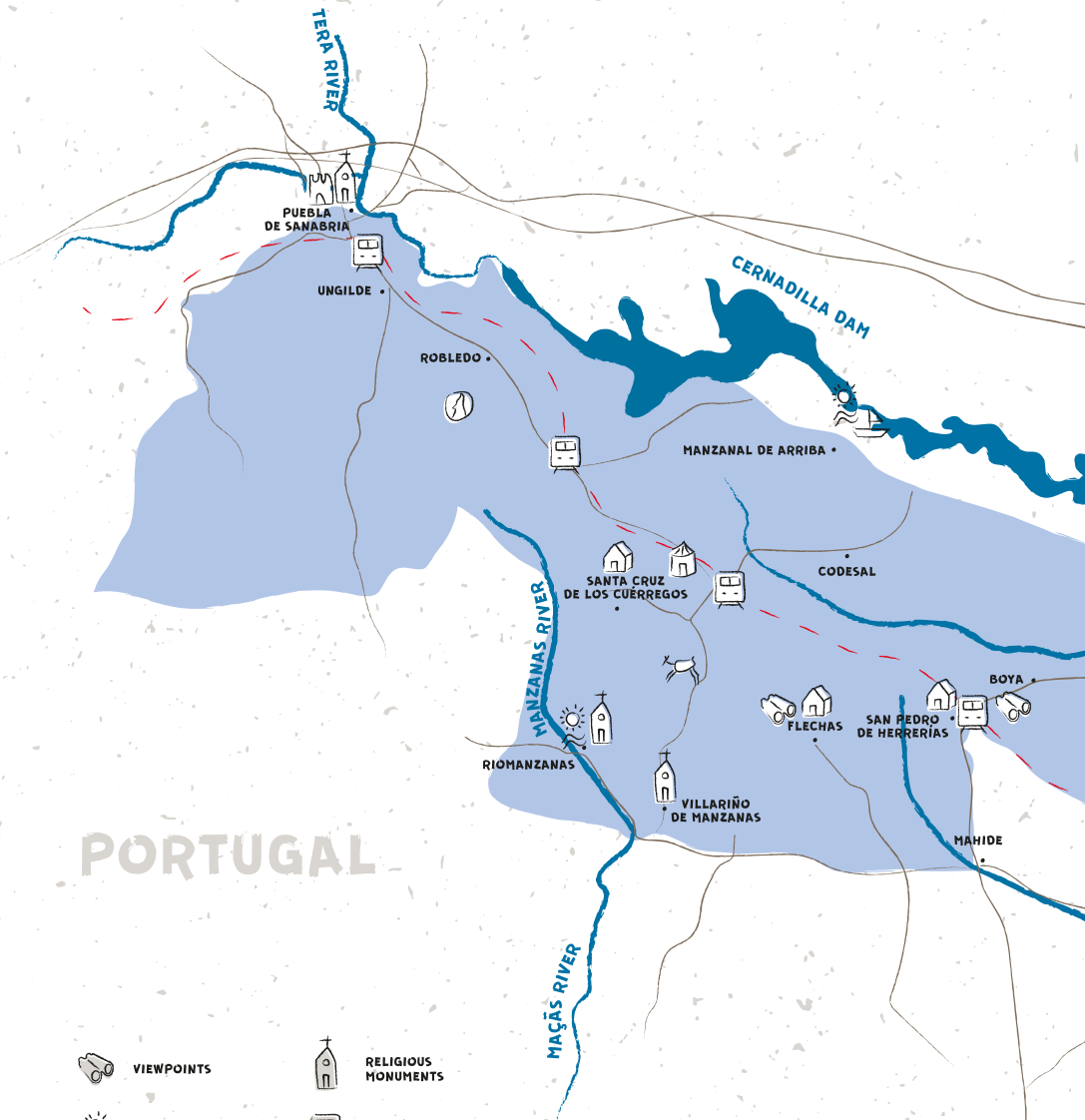
- *Castanea sativa* **Sweet chestnut**
- *Juglans regia* **Walnut**

SIERRA DE LA CULEBRA



The Sierra de la Culebra covers about 68 thousand hectares and represents, without a doubt, one of the most isolated areas of Spain, bursting with life, with landscapes that change colour with the seasons, natural richness and singular ethnographic expressions.

This protected area is a mountainous complex located southeast of the Natural Park Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto and already close to the Natural Park of Montesinho, therefore integrating a set of geological, floristic, faunistic and cultural continuity of this whole region.

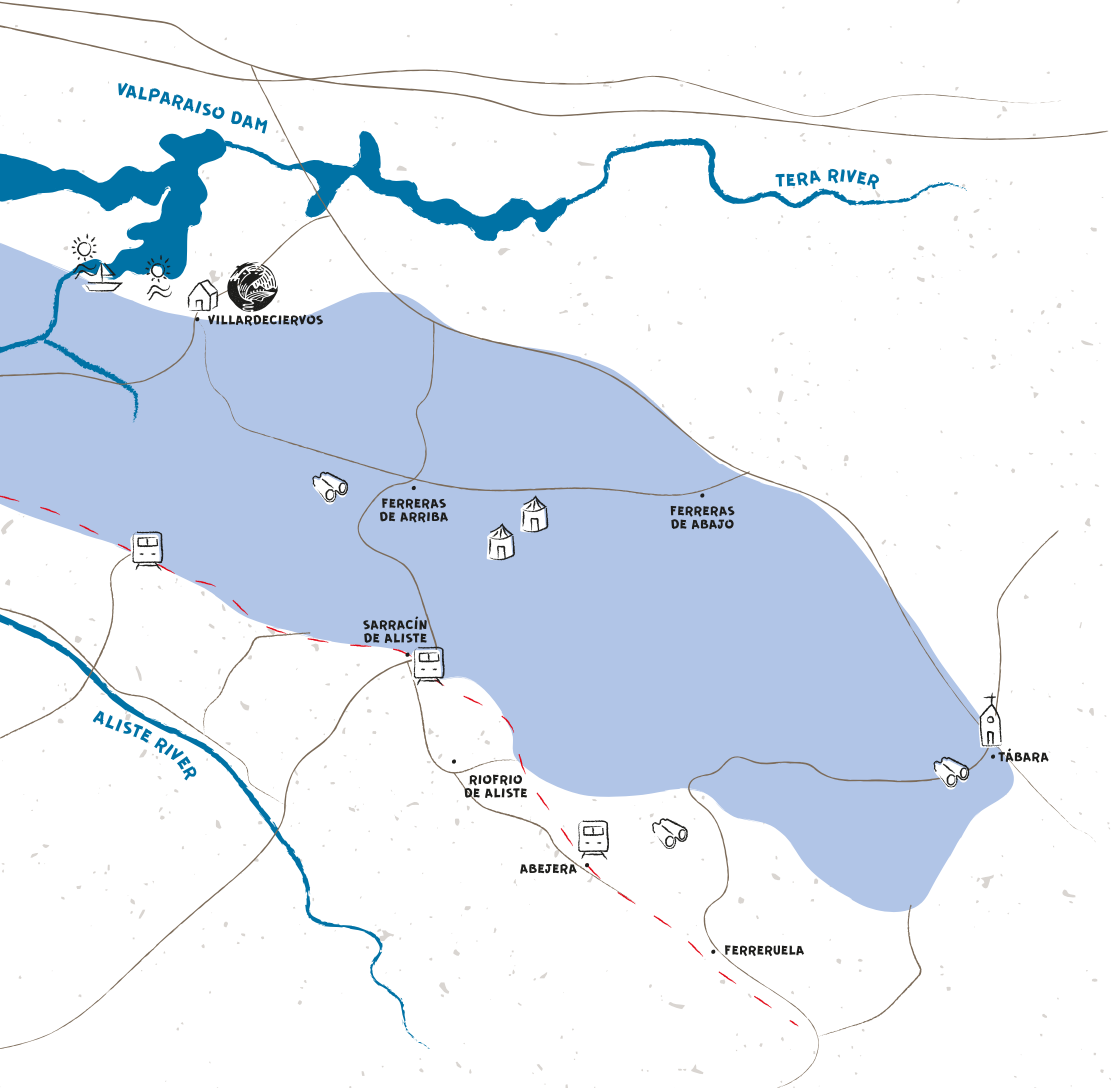


PORTUGAL

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | VIEWPOINTS |  | RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS |
|  | RIVERSIDE BEACHES |  | RAILWAY STATIONS |
|  | VILLAGES |  | IBERIAN WOLF CENTRE |
|  | CASTLES/FORTRESSES |  | PIERS |
|  | HILLFORTS |  | ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS |
|  | RÓTHI INTERPRETIVE CENTRE | | |



SPAIN



VALPARAISO DAM

TERA RIVER

VILLARDECIERVOS

FERRERAS DE ARRIBA

FERRERAS DE ABAJO

SARRACÍN DE ALISTE

TÁBARA

ALISTE RIVER

RIOFRIO DE ALISTE

ABEJERA

FERRERUELA



The Sierra de la Culebra, a regional hunting reserve, is border land, and is part of the protected spaces of Castile and León for its diversity of animal and plant species that interact every day in an intense cycle of struggle for survival.

It is also a land of wolves and men, with deep, centuries-old bonds that denote fear, threat, struggle, but also respect and coexistence.

Culebra is a protected space where the communities knew how to integrate themselves and today we can witness an extraordinary symbiosis, with cultural expression in the masquerades, in the creation of autochthonous cattle, in the exploration of sustainable natural resources, in the forest repopulation (mainly of pine trees), recognised with the declaration of Hunting Reserve. The constitution of this Reserve, in 1973, brought a profound social and economic dynamic, allowing the reintroduction of species such as the deer and the definition of environmental management policies and strategies for the preservation of biodiversity.



Deer

PICTURESQUE VILLAGES

The Sierra de la Culebra is also a reserve for its cultural heritage, a testimony of its inhabitants' integration in natural and idyllic spaces. The occupation of the sierra has taken place in small, traditional, isolated settlements which have been built up with the natural elements around them. At the bottom of the mountains, cut off by narrow streams and rivers, where various natural pools are formed, among shelters of forest and refreshing vegetation, you will find small villages with strong personality features, typical of popular architecture. An architecture which helps to understand a region which covers both sides of the border.

Houses with thick stone walls, slate roofs, balconies, galleries and verandas on the upper floors to dry clothes, control the surroundings or shelter from the rain.

On the top of the small chimneys you can see the rotating reeds and it is common to find on the outside of the old houses the ovens, covered with mud, to bake bread.

Faith also imposed many visible elements, such as horse-shoes or crosses. The wolf traps, the beehives, the mills by the rivers, made of gigantic stones, to grind the cattle's feed and flour for man or the "cortinas", divisions which define the land and protect the cattle, made of slate, are also unique elements of this mountain range.

A walk through the picturesque villages of this region is an experience of approach and understanding of the symbiosis man-environment.

Tábara, the gateway to the Sierra de la Culebra, is dominated by the extraordinary 12th century Romanesque Church of Santa María and its remarkable tower, where the Plaza Mayor, the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción and the Palace of the Marquis of Tábara, which preserves its Plateresque façade from the Spanish Renaissance, are also worth seeing. The typical housing complex, water fountains, the hermitage of San Mamés and a recreational area with a dense oak grove make this visit even more rewarding.

San Pedro de Herrerías is a charming town, both for its architecture and its surroundings, inviting you to take a walk along its streets among stone houses with wooden balconies and its austere church or even to find the spring of the Aliste River.

Flechas welcomes us with a centenary chestnut tree, next to a small chapel with a belfry. The group of houses made of stone, divided by a stream, keeps a sober look.

Riomanzanas lies in a valley populated by chestnut trees, close to the Portuguese border, where you can enjoy a swimming pool in the river, provided by a dam, surrounded by poplars. The church, and its beautiful baroque tower, the balconies and verandas of the carefully worked wooden houses, the stone frames on the windows and doors, a stone bridge with an arch, the river mill and the natural setting make Riomanzanas one of the most beautiful and charming places in the mountains.

Villarino de Manzanas fits into the delightful scenery of the Cabrón stream valley, offering a recreational area to enjoy its banks.

In the village the lofty tower of the church stands out, as does the stone house, with its elegant doors and interesting ironwork, and the restored windmill.

Santa Cruz de los Cuérragos, located in a setting of oak and chestnut trees, has been declared a Heritage Site of Cultural Interest by the Ayuntamiento de Manzanal de Arriba. The village preserves an aura of other times, with charming details such as the heather brooms, the beans or honeycombs in the sun, the fountain, the church, the stone walls and staircases or the wooden balconies.

Villardeciervos is a village with very well preserved houses, some of them of great importance such as the Casa de los Siete Balcones, the Casa de la Inquisición or the Casa de Rafael Romero. The housing complex is homogeneous and beautiful, with refined stonework, wooden balconies and conical chimneys, integrated into a pleasant and breathtaking natural environment. In this village there is an Interpretation Centre of the RBTMI.

Next to this Reserve, there are also two particularly interesting villages.



↑
Villardeciervos

↗
Church of Santa
María, Tábara



The beautiful town of Puebla de Sanabria stands out with its admirable walled structure on the edge of the Sierra, but we have already talked about it when we presented the Lago de Sanabria y Sierras Segundera y de Porto Natural Park.

Although it lies outside the Sierra de la Culebra area, Alcañices, capital of the Comarca of Aliste, took its name from the famous 1297 Treaty which established the borders between Portugal and Spain. Churches, a palace, old houses and the four towers of the old walls, especially the Clock Tower, are its main points of interest.

WHAT TO DO

The declaration of the Sierra de la Culebra as a hunting reserve has allowed it to become a centre of attraction for the enormous community of hunters, due to the large size of the reserve, vast uninhabited areas, isolation and the dynamics it has brought to multiple species, which have benefited from various protection and valorisation policies.

Rivers such as the Tera, Manzanas, Aliste or Cabrón, Cernadilla, Valparaíso and Agavanzal dams, streams, springs and rapids provide a great multiplicity of challenges for fishing lovers, who look for trout, barbels, bogas or calandins.

Nearby and associated to many of these activities, we find in these places, such as Cional, or in the surroundings of Villardecervos and Manzanal de Arriba, bathing areas that attract visitors for their translucent waters and refreshing surroundings.

Although it is a mountainous area, the changing relief between plateau, peaks, valleys with soft peaks and the huge number of paths that surround and cross the natural space make the Sierra de la Culebra an excellent destination for hiking and mountain bike enthusiasts.

The mountain has several approved and prepared paths for those who practise these activities to go off and discover the typical villages, the beautiful railway stations (jewels of industrial architecture) and the Zamora-Puebla de Sanabria line that crosses the mountain. The trail from Sarracín to Cabañas, the route of the windmills, the route of the Corrales y de las madroñeras, the route of the FFCC stations, the route of the high mountains and various thematic routes, on foot, by bicycle or by car between villages, rivers and hillforts.

There is a remarkable group of companies that organise and provide guidance on radical activities, guided walks to discover the Iberian wolf, knowledge of wildlife, bird and ornithology observation, night astronomical observation, adventure and environmental education.

IBERIAN WOLF CENTRE

In the heart of the Sierra de la Culebra, in Robledo, is the Iberian Wolf Interpretation Centre, with the aim of receiving animals that are not able to live in freedom, to make visitors and populations aware of the peculiarities of this species and to publicise the importance of the wolf in the natural and cultural context of the region.

These wolves are organized into two packs and allow specialists to better study this species and the general public to learn in more detail about the habits, biology and ecology of these wolves. The Centre has fenced areas, spaces for semi-wildlife, with ponds, refuges and natural vegetation.

This centre includes observatories, signposted walking trails and veterinary control.

SPORTS AND GAMES

"During festivities, pilgrimages or gatherings, some of the traditional games or sports that have survived to this day are still practised by local people. One of these traditions is the cervato cake, in Villardeciervos. To this we must add the practice of three others, Pina (which bears similarities to lawn jockey), Píngula (with evocations of baseball) and Tajuela (similar to bowling), mainly in the Aliste region. In the Sanabresa region games such as La Guillarda, Los Bolos Sanabreses, El Palán and Birlo, Las Chapas and La Porca still survive as a means of social cohesion" (Guide to the Sierra de la Culebra).

NATURE OBSERVATION

SIERRA DE LA CULEBRA FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Barbastella barbastellus* **Western barbastelle**
- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Cervus elaphus* **Red deer**
- *Felis silvestris* **Wildcat**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Lepus* **European hare**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Microtus cabreræ* **Cabrera's vole**
- *Myotis emarginatus* **Geoffroy's bat**
- *Myotis myotis* **Greater mouse-eared bat**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit**
- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* **Greater horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* **Lesser horseshoe bat**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**

BIRDS

- *Aegypius monachus* **Cinereous vulture**
- *Alcedo atthis* **Common kingfisher**
- *Anthus campestris* **Tawny pipit**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Asio flammeus* **Short-eared owl**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Burhinus oedicephalus* **Eurasian stone-curlew**
- *Caprimulgus europaeus* **European nightjar**
- *Ciconia ciconia* **White stork**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **European roller**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Coracias garrulus* **Rolieiro-europeu**
- *Elanus caeruleus* **Black-winged kite**
- *Falco naumanni* **Lesser kestrel**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**

- *Galerida theklae* **Thekla's lark**
- *Hieraaetus pennatus* **Booted eagle**
- *Loxia curvirostra* **Red crossbill**
- *Lullula arborea* **Woodlark**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Monticola solitarius* **Blue rock thrush**
- *Monticola saxatilis* **Common rock thrush**
- *Periparus ater* **Coal tit**
- *Pterocles orientalis* **Black-bellied sandgrouse**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Coronella austriaca laurenti* **Smooth snake**
- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Emys orbicularis* **European pond turtle**
- *Lacerta schreiberi* **Iberian emerald lizard**
- *Malpolon monspessulanus* **Montpellier snake**
- *Rhinechis scalaris* **Ladder snake**
- *Salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Chondrostoma polylepis* **Iberian nase**
- *Rutilus alburnoides* **Bleak**
- *Rutilus arcasii* **Achondrostoma arcasii**
- *Salmo trutta* **brown trout**
- *Squalius alburnoides* **Bleak**

SIERRA DE LA CULEBRA FLORA

BUSHES

- *Arbutus unedo* **Strawberry tree**
- *Erica ciliaris* **Heath**
- *Erica tetralix* **Cross-leaved heath**
- **Plants of the genus Ulex and Genista**



RIVERSIDE FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**

OAK-HORMBEAM FOREST

- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Quercus robur* L. **European oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**

WOODS

- *Pinus pinaster* **Maritime pine**
- *Pinus sylvestris* **Scots pine**
- *Populus alba* **Silver poplar**
- *Salix alba* **White willow**

OAK WOODS

- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**

BOCAGE

- *Castanea sativa* **Sweet chestnut**

ULTRABASIC ROCKS

- *Calluna vulgaris* **Heather**
- *Cistus ladanifer*
- *Festuca elegans*
- *Narcissus asturiensis*



MONTESINHO



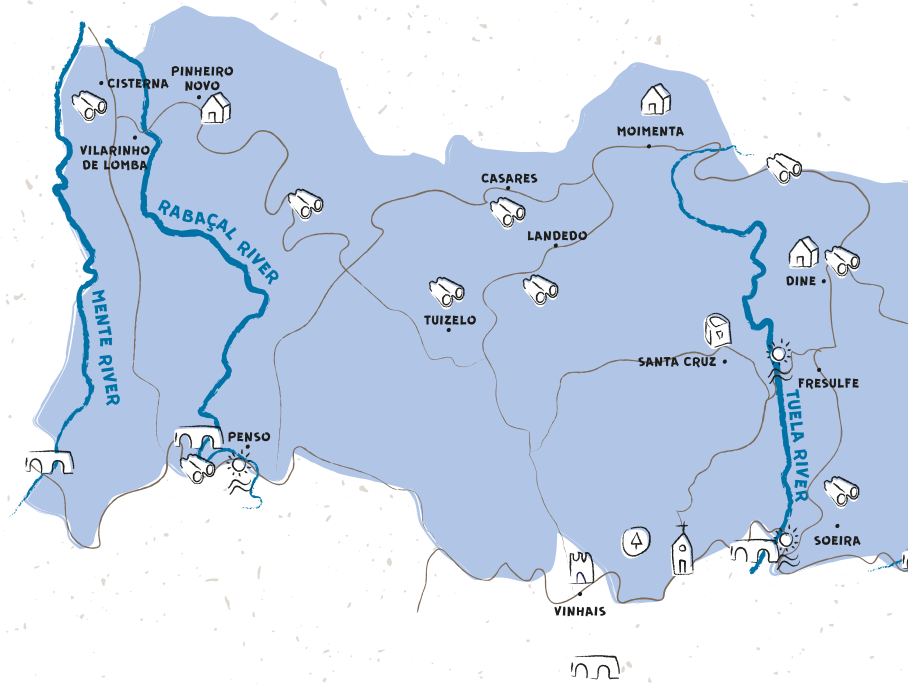
The Natural Park of Montesinho, with 75 thousand hectares, is located in the extreme northeast of the region of Terra Fria Transmontana and is one of the largest Portuguese natural parks. The Park is a testimony to the harmony between the environment and human communities, which has preserved biodiversity and a mosaic of stunning natural, semi-natural and humanised landscapes.











This mountainous complex, which encompasses the Montesinho and Coroa mountain ranges, cares for valuable natural and cultural elements that over the centuries have interconnected, communicated and influenced each other, creating an immense heritage of ethnographic, historical, botanical and ecological values.

In Montesinho coexist multiple habitats with enormous ecological value. Scrubland, marshland, oak groves, cork oaks, holm oaks and various riverine ecosystems make the Park a faunal retreat of extraordinary value and an exciting challenge for those passionate about natural and wild life.

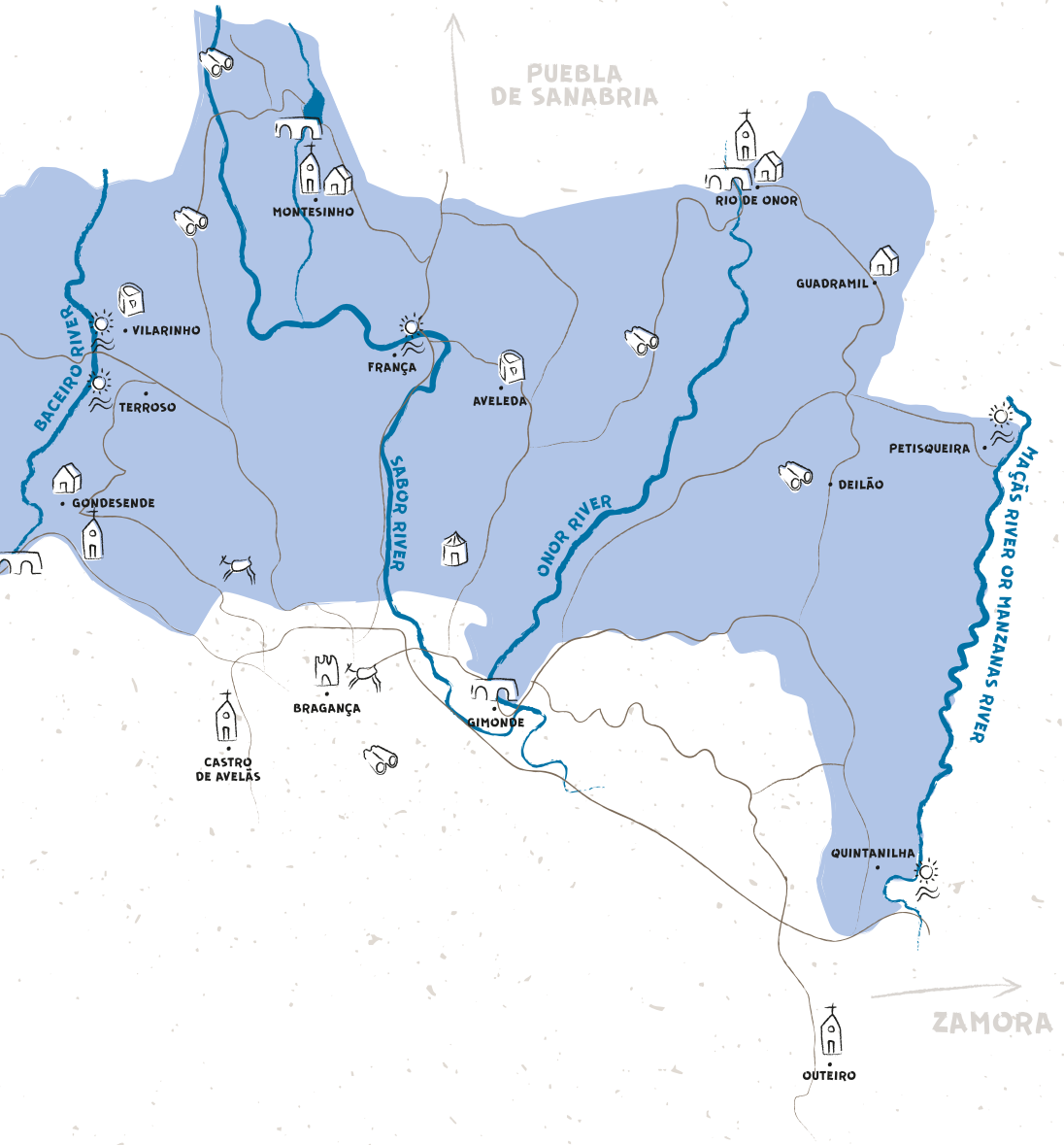


SPAIN



- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
|  | VIEWPOINTS |  | RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS |
|  | RIVERSIDE BEACHES |  | BRIDGES |
|  | VILLAGES |  | LOFTS |
|  | CASTLES/FORTRESSES |  | BIOLOGICAL PARK |
|  | ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS |  | HILLFORTS |

PORTUGAL





Protected by natural isolation, by a demanding climate (which can go from -12° to 40°) and by the reduced pressure of human presence, Montesinho holds an abundance of animal communities representative of the Iberian and European fauna (70% of the species of terrestrial mammals occurring in Portugal) and a wide range of plant life.

The Natural Park of Montesinho is also a Reserve of incalculable socio-cultural values, with ancestral practices and tools, traditional architecture, customs and festivities that reflect the connection and understanding of the natural environment, such as the "festa dos rapazes" (boys' parties) or the popular music and the typical bagpipes.

←
Village Rio
de Onor

VILLAGES IN THE PARK

In Montesinho there is a long history of popular and human wisdom in the way communities have integrated into the environment, discovering in the available elements the forms, functions and innovation that allowed to solve challenges, overcome threats and benefit from the resources of the mountains. In the villages, the houses are built around some paths, forming dense agglomerations of schist and, in some cases, also of granite, as in Moimenta, Montesinho or Soutelo. Between the schist walls, clay earth mortar, oak and chestnut were used in the structures supporting the roofs (usually in slate or ceramic tiles), floors, doors, windows or balconies.

The houses usually had two floors, the upper one for housing, while the lower floor was used for the corral, barn and cellar.

In these villages there are various constructions for community use, the forge, press and bread oven, kept in rudimentary buildings, while further away and integrated in the landscape, you can see the dovecotes, generally whitewashed, and the mills, set up near the water courses.

The Park includes about 90 villages spread throughout the territory, but some of them deserve special attention, inviting to a careful appreciation of the details of their architectural heritage, rural environments, landscape settings and gastronomy.

Montesinho is a village situated about a thousand metres above sea level, with houses and church representative of the architecture of the region, the interpretative centre of Montesinho and the museum, where the geological presentation of the mountain and traditional ways of life is made.

Rio de Onor, on the banks of the homonymous river (a affluent of the Sabor), is a border village with the peculiarity of being cut in half by the border between Spain and Portugal, being divided into Rihonor de Castilla and Rio de Onor, which the people call povo de cima and povo de baixo. It is



still common for people to own land on both sides, for cattle to cross the border and even today a communal pasture survives. This is one of the elements that make this village a testimony of rural traditions, still sharing forge, ovens and herds.

Guadramil is a typical village of Montesinho, integrated in a quite rugged relief, which still maintains practices of community life. Many of the houses preserve the typical traces of popular architecture, in the materials, forms and volumetry.

Gimonde, situated on the southern edge of the Park, on the outskirts of the city of Bragança, is a gateway to this protected area and has a remarkable set of landscape, architectural, archaeological and gastronomic attractions. Framed by the Sabor River, the architectural set of Gimonde is remarkable, either for its houses or for several constructions such as the roman bridge, mill, church or hillfort.

Gondesende is a small village in the municipality of Bragança, in the heart of Montesinho, currently exhibiting a well recovered group of houses with the distinctive lines of the local architecture, in which some of them serve rural tourism. Besides the stone houses, it is imperative to discover the church, water mills, Roman fountains and pavements, cruise and remains of fortified settlements.

←
Bragança
Castle

Moimenta is located at the bottom of the Serra da Coroa, on the edge of a wide plateau, on the banks of the Tuela River. It is a village of remarkable dimension, with granite constructions and an outstanding architectural set, from which its imposing church stands out. The natural environment and the remains of ancient human occupations invite you to enjoy the landscapes and discover the region through the different existing trails.

ONE PARK, TWO TOWNSHIPS

Bragança is the largest city in the Meseta Ibérica Transfrontier Biosphere Reserve. The beautiful keep is the most distinctive element of Bragança Castle, which stands proudly at the centre of the old town and watches over the long plateau that stretches from Montesinho to Sanabria or south to the Serra da Nogueira.

A visit to this centre is not to be missed, touring its schist fence, turrets, the princess tower and the imposing keep, which houses the Bragança Military Museum. Next to this tower is the unique *Domus Municipalis*, an example of Romanesque civil architecture in Portugal, which would have served as a cistern and for municipal meetings. In the surroundings, the town enchants with its houses, churches and green corners.

But there is more to see outside the walls. The Cathedral of Bragança, in the beautiful Praça da Sé, the São Bento Church, with its Mudéjar ceiling and a relevant collection of churches and manor houses.

The museums are one of Bragança's best surprises, revealing a bold artistic and cultural dynamic for a city that grew up in such a remote region. The Graça Morais Contemporary Art Centre or the Iberian Mask and Costume Museum are a must-see.



Bragança is a remarkable city as the gateway to the Natural Park of Montesinho, because it knew how to gather and give expression to the most outstanding traditions of the region, whether in terms of handicraft, ethnography or gastronomy, with events and spaces of reference at a national and peninsular level.

Vinhais preserves an interesting heritage concentrated in the town centre, around its medieval castle, and a relevant historical heritage scattered around the municipality.

Much of the original castle has already disappeared, but there are still walls, a turret and a gate. The pillory, the medieval town halls and the Parish Church of N.^a Sra. da Assunção are located in this complex.

The Palace of the Counts of Vinhais was built outside the castle walls and is a magnificent building in the baroque style typical of these 18th-century buildings.

Already inside the Natural Park, the Biological Park of Vinhais, a tourist attraction, promotes the natural values, making known 23 native breeds and promoting various discovery activities of Montesinho.



Vinhais

Castle

WHAT TO DO

The Natural Park of Montesinho can be explored on several footpaths, with different approaches and themes, for lovers of hiking, history, ethnography, archaeology, biology and botany. In Dine, Quadramil or Moimenta there are paths for the discovery of historical, ethnographic and archaeological heritage. Other trails such as Montesinho, Quintanilha and Rio de Onor give a better knowledge of the vegetation and fauna of the Park, with unforgettable experiences such as the deer braying at the time of mating or the privilege of sighting an animal as elusive as the wolf. The Biological Park of Vinhais offers an overview of the natural environment and the integration of human populations in this territory.

The Park allows a discovery not only on foot, but also by car, through the typical villages and viewpoints, BTT or equestrian, the latter mainly associated to rural tourism.

One of the best ways to get to know Montesinho is undoubtedly through its viewpoints, which offer breathtaking landscapes. Alto de Lagares, near Rio de Onor, the peak of Serra da Coroa, the Sanctuary of São Bartolomeu, in Bragança, the fortified town of Cidadelha, in Vinhais, are just some of the points where the beauty of Montesinho can be contemplated.

The great Terra Fria Transmontana Route passes through this area, a long circuit which covers the five counties of this sub-region (Bragança, Miranda do Douro, Mogadouro, Vimioso and Vinhais), in a total of 455 km. The route is divided into 11 sections that allow visitors to discover the Portuguese northeast by choosing their itineraries, destinations and paces. This route provides an experience of this territory in its landscape, floristic, biological, geological, cultural and human dimensions.

In each municipality there are the Portas da Rota (Route gates), support points for the integration and orientation of the visitor, facilitating the definition of itineraries by car, on foot or by bicycle. In these spaces, visitors get to know the destinations better, promoting events, tastings and landscapes, allowing integration with other thematic routes - the Way of

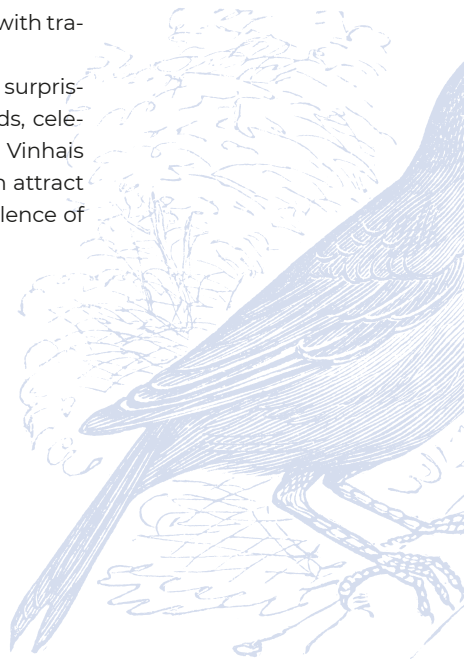
St. James, almond, chestnut, berrón and border hillforts. The Portuguese section of the Silver Route Way of St. James also passes through this area, which leaves Alcanizes and enters Portugal via Quintanilha, following the southern end of the Park, via Bragança and Vinhais, to end once again at the border with Spain, on the Mente River.

The river network which crosses the Park creates extraordinary conditions for leisure and enjoyment of beaches with clear waters, dams, picnic parks, pleasant environments, shade from the surrounding woods and extraordinary landscape settings. The beaches of Soeira, Fresulfe, Rabaçal, Colado, França or the Baceiro River offer excellent conditions for bathing.

These rivers are also very popular for fishing trout or bogas, as well as by tourist entertainment companies for radical activities or canoeing.

Many of the most typical and traditional villages of the Park have been recovered and already have several rural tourism spaces that allow a more intense enjoyment of the natural and cultural values of the mountains, normally associated with traditional gastronomy.

The gastronomic creativity of these communities is surprising, based on typical local products and native breeds, celebrated in seasonal events such as the Fumeiro Fair in Vinhais or the Butelo and Casulas Festival in Bragança, which attract thousands of visitors every year in search of the excellence of the products and flavours of this region.



NATURE OBSERVATION

MONTESINHO FAUNA

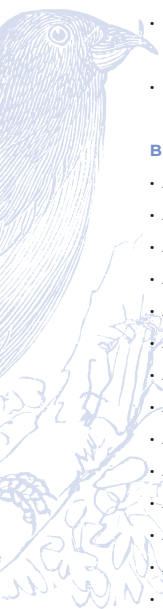
MAMMALS

- *Arvicola terrestris* **Black water rat**
- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Cervus elaphus* **Red deer**
- *Felis silvestris* **Wildcat**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Miniopterus schreibersi* **Common bent-wing bat**
- *Myotis blythii* **Mouse-eared bats**
- *Myotis emarginatus* **Geoffroy's bat**
- *Myotis myotis* **Greater mouse-eared bat**
- *Rhinolophus euryale* **Mediterranean horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* **Greater horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* **Lesser horseshoe bat**

BIRDS

- *Accipiter gentilis* **Northern goshawk**
- *Accipiter nisus* **Eurasian sparrowhawk**
- *Actitis hypoleucos* **Common sandpiper**
- *Alcedo atthis* **Common kingfisher**
- *Anthus campestris* **Tawny pipit**
- *Anthus trivialis* **Tree pipit**
- *Anthus spinoletta* **Water pipit**
- *Apus melba* **Alpine swift**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Aquila fasciata* **Bonelli's eagle**
- *Aquila pennata* **Booted eagle**
- *Asio flammeus* **Short-eared owl**
- *Asio otus* **Long-eared owl**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Burhinus oediconemus* **Eurasian stone-curlew**

- *Calandrella brachydactyla* **Greater short-toed lark**
- *Caprimulgus europaeus* **European nightjar**
- *Caprimulgus ruficollis* **Red-necked nightjar**
- *Ciconia ciconia* **White stork**
- *Ciconia nigra* **Black stork**
- *Cinclus cinclus* **White-throated dipper**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **Short-toed snake eagle**
- *Circus cyaneus* **Hen harrier**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Clamator grandarius* **Great spotted cuckoo**
- *Columba oenas* **Stock dove**
- *Coracias garrulus* **European roller**
- *Corvus corax* **Common raven**
- *Elanus caeruleus* **Black-winged kite**
- *Emberiza citrinella* **Yellow hammer**
- *Emberiza hortulana* **Ortolan**
- *Falco columbarius* **Merlin**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Falco subbuteo* **Eurasian hobby**
- *Galerida theklae* **Thekla's lark**
- *Jynx torquilla* **Eurasian wryneck**
- *Lanius collurio* **Red-backed shrike**
- *Loxia curvirostra* **Red crossbill**
- *Lullula arborea* **Woodlark**
- *Luscinia svecica* **Bluethroat**
- *Melanocorypha calandra* **Calandra lark**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Monticola saxatilis* **Common rock thrush**
- *Motacilla flava* **Western yellow wagtail**
- *Muscicapa striata* **Spotted flycatcher**
- *Oenanthe hispanica* **Western black-eared wheatear**
- *Otis tarda* **Great bustard**
- *Otus scops* **Eurasian scops owl**



- *Pernis apivorus* **European honey buzzard**
- *Pyrhcorax pyrrhcorax* **Red-billed chough**
- *Phylloscopus bonelli* **Western Bonelli's warbler**
- *Saxicola rubetra* **Whinchat**
- *Scolopax rustica* **Eurasian woodcock**
- *Streptopelia turtur* **European turtle dove**
- *Sylvia borin* **Garden warbler**
- *Sylvia cantillans* **Eastern subalpine warbler**
- *Sylvia hortensis* **Western Orphean warbler**
- *Sylvia undata* **Dartford warbler**
- *Tetrax tetrax* **Little bustard**
- *Turdus philomelos* **Song thrush**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Emys orbiculares* **European pond turtle**
- *Lacerta schreiberi* **Iberian emerald lizard**
- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Achondrostoma arcasii* (**bermejuela**)
- *Cobitis calderoni* **Northern blue whiting**
- *Iberocypris alburnoides* **Bleak**
Pseudochondrostoma duriensis **Northern bogue**
- *Salmo trutta* **Brown trout**

INVERTEBRATES

- *Aphantopus hyperanthu*
- *Boloria dia* **Weaver's fritillary**
- *Brenthis daphne*
- *Lycaena virgaureae*
- *Margaritifera margaritifera* **Freshwater pearl mussel**

MONTESINHO FLORA

BUSHES

- *Arçã lavandula stoechas* ssp. *sampaiana*
- *Cistus ladanifer* **Gum rockrose**
- *Echinospartum ibericum*
- *Erica australis* ssp. *aragonensis* **Spanish heath**
- *Erica ciliaris* **Heath**
- *Erica tetralix* **Cross-leaved heath**
- *Genista anglica* **Petty whin**
- *Genista micrantha* **Broom**

GRASSLAND

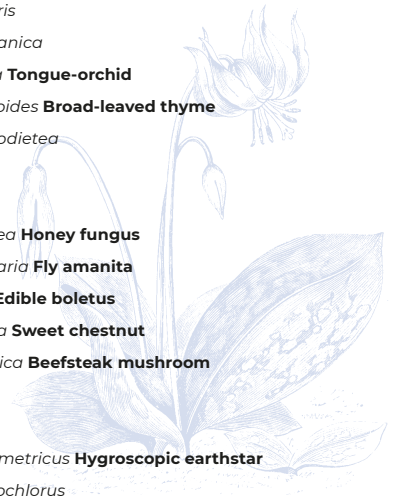
- *Ajuga pyramidalis* ssp. *meonantha*
- *Dactylorhiza maculata* **Pyramidal Orchid**
- *Nardus stricta*
- *Potentilla erecta* **Tormentil**
- *Polygala vulgaris*
- *Paradisea lusitanica*
- *Serapias lingua* **Tongue-orchid**
- *Thymus pulegioides* **Broad-leaved thyme**
- *Thero-Brachypodietea*

BOCAGE

- *Armillaria mellea* **Honey fungus**
- *Amanita muscaria* **Fly amanita**
- *Boletus edulis* **Edible boletus**
- *Castanea sativa* **Sweet chestnut**
- *Fistulina hepatica* **Beefsteak mushroom**

OAK WOODS

- *Astraeus hygrometricus* **Hygroscopic earthstar**
- *Cortinarius ionochlorus*
- *Jasminum fruticans* **Jasmine**
- *Lycoperdon perlatum* **Lycoperdon**
- *Osyris alba* **Osyris**
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**
- *Ruscus aculeatus* **Butcher's-broom**



RIVERSIDE FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Crataegus monogyna* **Common hawthorn**
- *Eryngium viviparum*
- *Frangula alnus* **Alder buckthorn**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Ilex aquifolium* **Common holly**
- *Luzula sylvatica* ssp. *henriquesii*
- *Populus nigra* **Black poplar**
- *Prunus avium* **Wild cherry**
- *Ranunculus* spp. **Ranunculus**
- *Salix salviifolia* **Willow**
- *Sorbus aucuparia* **Rowan tree**
- *Veronica micrantha*

- *Lilium martagon* **Martagon lily**
- *Narcissus asturiensis*
- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Ramaria* spp. **Genus Ramaria**
- *Viola hirta* **Hairy violet**

ULTRABASIC ROCKS

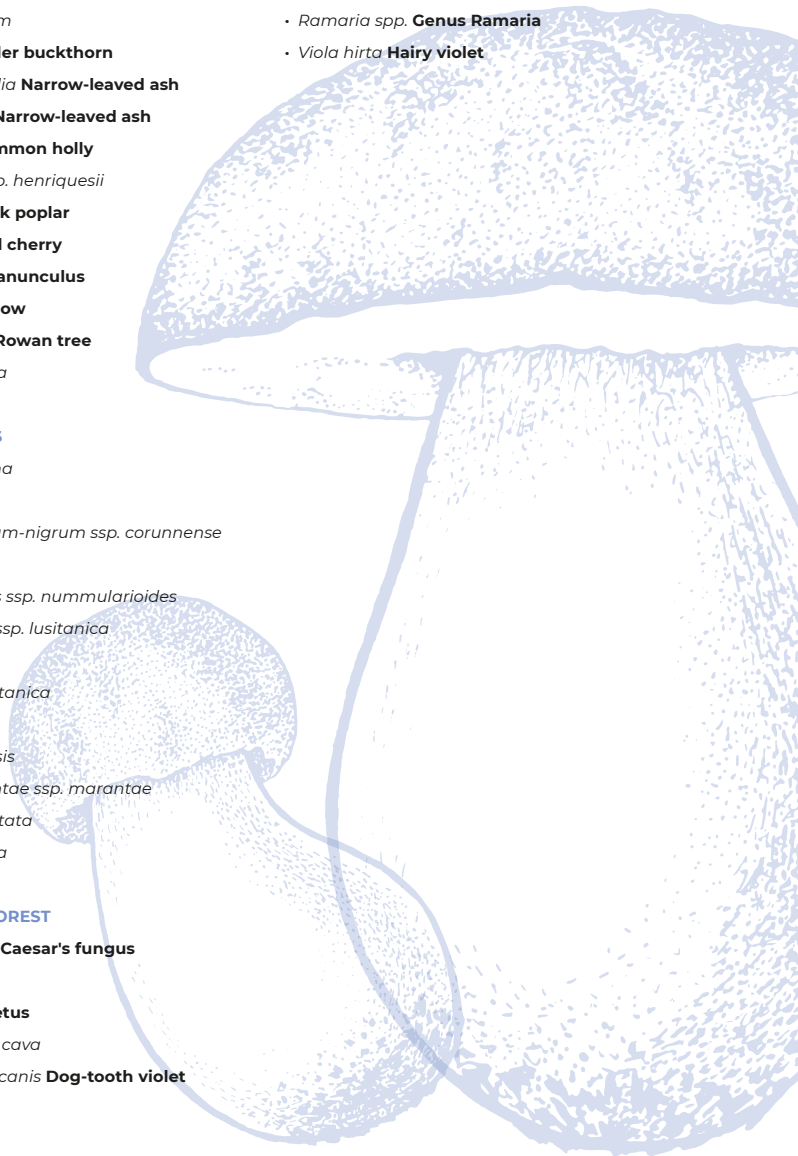
- *Anthyllis sampaiana*
- *Armeria eriophylla*
- *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum* ssp. *corunnense*

Black spleenwort

- *Astragalus incanus* ssp. *nummularioides*
- *Avenula pratensis* ssp. *lusitanica*
- *Festuca elegans*
- *Festuca summilusitanica*
- *Linaria intricata*
- *Narcissus asturiensis*
- *Notholaena marantae* ssp. *marantae*
- *Santolina semidentata*
- *Veronica micrantha*

OAK-HORMBEAM FOREST

- *Amanita caesarea* **Caesar's fungus**
- *Arabis glabra*
- *Boletus regius* **Boletus**
- *Corydalis cava* ssp. *cava*
- *Erythronium dens-canis* **Dog-tooth violet**
- *Festuca elegans*



ARRIBES DEL DUERO



The Arribes del Duero Natural Park, with 106 thousand hectares, is a portentous territory that follows on the Spanish side the courses of the Douro River and the Águeda River, when they define the border between Portugal and Spain. It is a territory united by the waters, geology, climate and human communities to the Douro Internacional.

This natural fault, generated by the collision of the plates and harnessed by the force of the rivers, bursts through the monotony of the plateau, against a backdrop of granite and water, forming 180 km of river canyons that join the Águeda, Esla, Huebra, Tormes and Uces Rivers to the Douro.

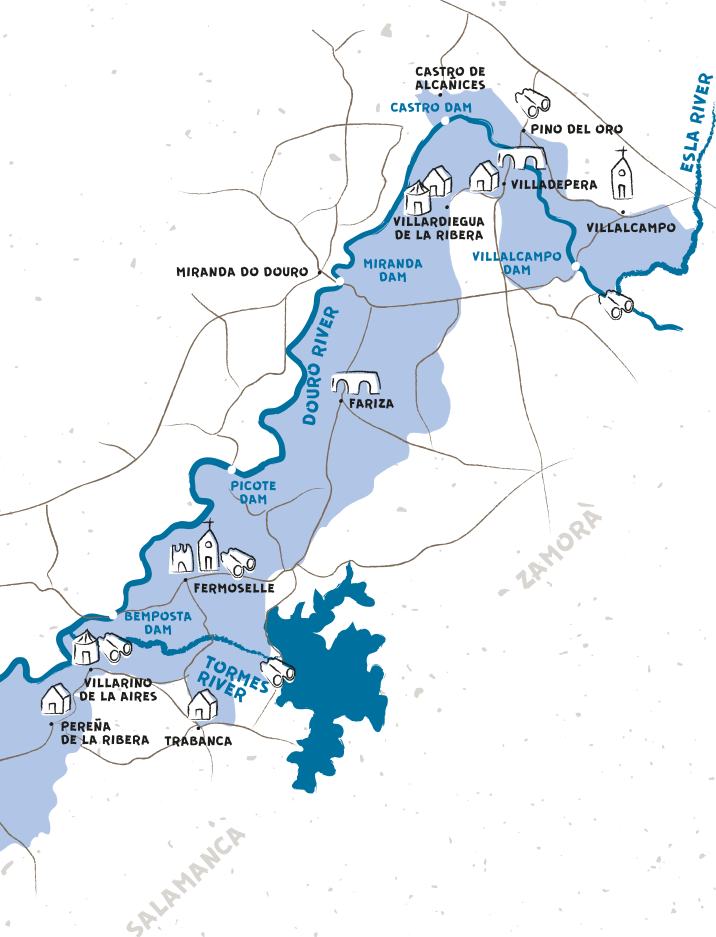
The orographic particularities have provided various micro-climates, a great diversity of vegetation and fauna, giving this region enormous importance as a special reserve for the protection of birds, with two hundred notable species and some rare, endangered species.

It has always been a sparsely populated territory, isolated from the major centres, preserved in a unique and ancestral cultural unity with the Portuguese region. The arribes are a territory of small villages, with an enchanted aura and unmistakable traces of traditionality. The human presence has left



PORTUGAL





SPAIN

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|  | VIEWPOINTS |  | RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS |
|  | RIVERSIDE BEACHES |  | BRIDGES |
|  | VILLAGES |  | HILLFORTS |
|  | CASTLES/FORTRESSES |  | CRUISES/PIERS |
|  | ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS |  | RBTHI INTERPRETATIVE CENTRE |

deep marks over millennia in a fascinating historical heritage, semi-natural scenery, unmistakable musical sounds, creative gastronomy and excellent native products and breeds.

CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES

In addition to the extraordinary landscapes of water and gorges, the Arribes del Duero Natural Park is also a territory with deep marks in the historical heritage and ways of life of an ancient human presence.

Villalcampo is located in the Aliste region, between the Villalcampo and Ricobayo dams, in the northwest of the Natural Park. With a historic hull of traditional Aliste architecture, this town brings together some interesting heritage such as its Renaissance church, the bridge of La Vega and the hermitage of the Incarnation.



Still in the northern limits of the Park, near the border with Portugal, is **Pino del Oro**, which still recalls its mining past at the time of the Roman presence, 1st and 2nd centuries BC. These structures are still preserved today and have created a unique landscape on the peninsula, where there are interpretative visits to learn about the economic and social structure of the period.

A little further south you reach **Villadepera**, linked to Pino del Oro by the Requejo bridge, a beautiful metal structure over the cliffs of the Douro River. In this town, the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción deserves attention, with a beautiful and robust tower, several chapels, fountains and the museum of Sacred Art.

Villardiega de la Ribera is an authentic museum of the history of human occupation of this region. The streets of its historic quarter, among the granite walls and buildings, display pre-Roman idols such as the famous boar, known as La Mula or La Yegua, (which is actually a bull), Roman tombstones and various inscriptions.

In the small Quintanas neighbourhood are some fine examples of local architecture, such as the parish church, with a graceful belfry.

Accumulating historical traces from pre-Roman times, **Fariza** is a town with a remarkable historical heritage from multiple eras, as shown by the bridge over the Pisón River, a medieval construction over an ancient structure with Roman origins. But in Fariza there is also the Poza bridge, the Pozo de los Burros, the Pozo de la Rodilla, the stone crosses of great ethnographic interest and magnificent landscapes.

Considered the "capital" of the Arribes del Duero, the charming **Fermoselle** has been declared an historic ensemble and is located in a region with steep slopes.

Through the winding streets of this charming town stands the Nuestra Señora de la Asunción Parish Church, magnificently combining elements from multiple eras (Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque) and various other hermitages and churches - Santa Colomba, the hermitage of Santa Cruz, the convent of San Francisco, the hermitage of la Soledad or the hermitage of San Albín, from where the Fermoselle bull

aces take place. What remains of the Castle of Doña Urraca, near the Plaza Mayor, presents visitors with magnificent views of the Douro valley.

In the streets of Fermoselle you will discover its granite "soul" and the surprising arches that lead to the underground cellars, an immense labyrinth of semi-circular arches carved in the bowels of the town.

Trabanca is one of the best places to get to know the socio-cultural traditions of the region. The 10 km² theme park of popular constructions reproduces structures and buildings from the civil and traditional architecture of this area. Trabanca also has a traditional forge more than two hundred years old, the fountain and the church with a lofty tower.

Villarino de los Aires is a beautiful town with several points of historical interest such as the majestic Church of San Sebastián, the Church of Santa María la Mayor and the primitive sanctuary of Teso de San Cristóbal, which preserves the structures of a hillfort settlement and several tombs.

Pereña de la Ribera is known as the "balcony of the cliffs" and it is on its boundaries that the waterfalls and archaeological remains of the Pozo de los Humos, one of the biggest tourist attractions in the whole Park, can be found. Pereña maintains a traditional atmosphere in its streets, the underground cellars, the striking features of popular architecture in its buildings and an outstanding religious heritage - the Church of Santa María, its proud tower and the Nuestra Señora del Castillo hermitage.

The beautiful **Aldeadávila de la Ribera**, which Unamuno called "the heart of the Arribes", boasts its architectural personality in its famous and imposing tower. The Parish Church of San Salvador now joins the tower to the building that began to be built in the 13th century as a fortress convent. In this remarkable heritage, the Corporario Church, the Church of Santo Cristo del Humilladero, the former Franciscan monastery of La Verde, the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de las Huertas, the hermitage of San Sebastián or the Palaces of the Marqués del Caballero and of the Family of Pozo.

In Aldeadávila there are extraordinary viewpoints over the river and the grand dam with the same name, a must-visit point.

→

Mirador
del Fraile

Vilvestre is a municipality with popular architecture clearly visible in the houses around the Plaza Mayor and Plaza del Toro and has a wide heritage of cultural interest. The “Devil's Bed” brings together some cave paintings that continue to deserve studies to understand their meaning. The Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, which combines Gothic and Renaissance elements, the hermitage of the castle, exemplary of the Baroque, the La Luisa mill, which still works some days of the year, and El Rollo, a cross carved in granite, in Manueline Gothic, are sightseeing attractions.

Further south, **Saucelle** is an imposing and magnificent place, with countless streams, wild Rivers (Huebra and Camaces), waterfalls (such as the Cachón de Camaces), cliffs, viewpoints, “balconies” decorated with olive and almond trees, the majestic reservoir in the Douro is a refuge for birds of prey and scavengers.

Hinojosa de Duero has ancestral roots, with traces of prehistoric presence and a settlement structure that seems to have Roman origins. Hinojosa exhibits a very interesting heritage ensemble: hermitage of the Santísimo Cristo de la Misericordia, where you can enjoy great views, Gothic Church



of San Pedro, which guards beautiful Baroque altarpieces inside, Roman bridge de la Molinera, with three arches, fountain of the Obispo, from the medieval period, traditional olive oil mill or Roman fountain del Gejo.

La Fregeneda is located on the Arribes between the Douro and Águeda, in a landscape of steep slopes, gorges, almond, olive and orange trees. La Fregeneda is also distinguished by its traditional architecture, the rock sanctuary La Mesa de los Curas, the Vega Terrón River pier and the amazing tunnel route, which follows the old railway line between La Fregeneda and Barca d'Alva. In this municipality there is an Interpretative Center of RBTMI.

In **Lumbrales** there is a lot to discover. The fort of Las Merchanas, with an area of over 5 hectares, the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, the Casa de Los Condes, which houses the Territorio Vetón Interpretación Center (a pre-Roman community that inhabited the region 2500 years ago), the Ethnographic Museum, located in the Clock Tower, which shows the region's history for 10,000 years, viewpoints, shelters, traditional houses and high walls.

Sobradillo is a town with a rich historical heritage, where the beautiful keep (House of Arribes del Duero Park) or the Parish Church of Santiago Apóstol, which has a Baroque altarpiece, stands out.

But there is more to discover in Sobradillo, from funerary stelae, hermitages, bridges or Roman buildings such as Fuente del Lugar, the ruins of the convent of Santa Marina la Seca, viewpoints and uniquely beautiful routes through the Park.

The small town of **La Redonda** has traces of human occupation since the Iron Age, preserving funerary monuments of Los Pedazos de La Mata and Los Cortinales, archeological sites of Las Eras and Monte Caído. In La Redonda you can still appreciate traces of the Roman presence (tombs and stelae), popular architecture with granite houses or the beautiful Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción.

In **Ahigal de los Aceiteros** there are two Roman sites with abundant traces of mosaics, tiles and ceramics and the Baroque Church of Santa María de la Magdalena. In a landscape marked by the presence of olive, almond and fig trees, its

privileged position on the Águeda makes this location a point of great tourist interest.

San Felices de los Gallegos is one of the most visited towns in this Park, mainly because of its medieval fortress and the declaration of a historic-artistic complex. The castle dates back to the 12th century and still preserves the old wall, the fortifications erected in the 18th century and, today, it includes an interpretive center in the keep.

The Church of Nuestra Señora entre Dos Álamos, 12th century, preserves a Romanesque façade and the bell tower from the original construction. The hermitages of the Rosario and the Divino Cordero, with the image of Jesus of Nazareth, which aroused some religious fervor in the local populations on both sides of the border, are other buildings of interest.

WHAT TO DO

A bird sanctuary, a land of amazing landscapes, traditional towns and villages, magnificent dams and reservoirs and excellent agricultural heritage create endless possibilities for tourist experiences in the Arribes del Duero.

The immense trails for hiking, mountain biking or car journeys are inevitably the best way to be dazzled by these natural and cultural riches, which will allow you to get to know hillforts, waterfalls, outlooks, streams or agricultural heritage.

The GR14 is a route which on the Spanish side follows the Douro River from its source in the peaks of the Serra de Urbión to Vega de Terrón, in La Fregeneda, where the river crosses the border into Portugal. To this route, which in the Arribes del Duero Park provides dozens of signposted kilometres to explore between La Fregeneda and the Salto de Villalcampo, there is also the GR14.1, which makes it possible to visit the Park to the south, in the Águeda valley, between Vega de Terrón and Puerto Seguro.

The Park has a wide network of mountain bike centres in different municipalities, with hundreds of kilometres of



different levels of difficulty, going through woods, pastures, historical heritage, the spectacular viewpoints and gorges, museums and interpretative centres - Museo del Vino y de los Destilados (Villarino de los Aires), El Museo "Casa Los Frailes" (Vilvestre), Museo Interpretativo del Duero (Hinojosa de Duero), Centro de Interpretación de Territorio Vetón (Lumbrales), Museo Etnográfico (Lumbrales), Casa del Parque, Centro de Interpretación y Referencia Turística de Arribes del Duero (Sobradillo), Museo del Aceite y Museo de la Cantería (San Fellices de los Gallegos).

An extraordinary experience of discovery of this Park, in continuity with the Douro Internacional, is through the Railway Route through the tunnels and bridges that run along the old railway line that connected Barca d'Alva to La Fregeneda. This section was built in 1887 and was at the time one of the great railway engineering works of the Iberian Peninsula. Deactivated in the eighties of the 20th century, the line allows you to get to know a work which defied the imposing slopes. With eight bridges, two pontoons and 20 tunnels, the trail offers breathtaking views.

The route of the viewpoints is a must. To the north, the Requejo bridge built over the Douro is today a privileged place

←

Pozo de los

Humos

to admire the Douro between cliffs, with unforgettable landscapes. The Mirador de las Barrancas, in Fariza, is a privileged place for landscapes and some of the most emblematic birds of the region. In Fermoselle is the viewpoint of the castle of this town, near the Plaza Mayor, with an extraordinary landscape over the Douro. To the southwest you reach the viewpoint of the Almendra dam, built on the Tormes River, with views over the gorge carved out by the river and this man-made mega-structure. Following the course of the Tormes and near Villarino de los Aires is the Mirador Teso de San Cristobal, which allows you to admire the cliffs of the Tormes, and nearby, another viewpoint, a pleasant and relaxing place offering views over the Douro River.

The Mirador Picón del Filipe is one of the places where you can enjoy one of the most spectacular views over the Douro, with several places to appreciate the vertiginous cliffs over the river. At the Mirador del Fraile, over the Aldeadávilla dam, there is a small platform, protected with an iron railing, over the immense void between the high rocky walls. In **Mieza** there are other spectacular viewpoints such as the Code, the Colagón del Tío Paco and the Peña del Águila.

The Pozo de los Humos waterfall is a must-see, one of the most incredible in the entire Peninsula and with a viewpoint suspended over the waterfalls of the Uces River.

In the arribes, as well as on the other side of the border, it is possible to find some proposals for boat trips on the Douro River. In Aldeadávila de la Ribera, on the beautiful Rostro beach, there are cruises on the reservoir of this imposing dam, in Vilvestre there is a connection to Freixo de Espada à Cinta and cruises also arrive at the pier of Vega Terrón, at the mouth of the Águeda River. This is the end of the navigable line of the Douro from the mouth to the Spanish border.

NATURE OBSERVATION

ARRIBES DEL DUERO FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Erinaceus europaeus* **European hedgehog**
- *Martes foina* **Beech marten**
- *Felis silvestris* **Wildcat**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Genetta genetta* **Common genet**
- *Lepus* **European hare**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Meles meles* **European badger**
- *Microtus cabreræ* **Cabrera's vole**
- *Miniopterus schreibersi* **Common bent-wing bat**
- *Myotis blythii* **Mouse-eared bats**
- *Myotis myotis* **Greater mouse-eared bat**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit-comum**
- *Rhinolophus euryale* **Mediterranean horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* **Greater horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* **Lesser horseshoe bat**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**
- *Vulpes vulpes* **Red fox**

BIRDS

- *Acciper nisus* **Eurasian sparrowhawk**
- *Alcedo atthis* **Common kingfisher**
- *Anthus campestris* **Tawny pipit**
- *Apus melba* **Alpine swift**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Aquila fasciata* **Bonelli's eagle**
- *Aquila pennata* **Booted eagle**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Burhinus oedipnemus* **Eurasian stone-curlew**
- *Caprimulgus ruficollis* **Red-necked nightjar**

- *Charadrius dubius* **Little ringed plover**
- *Chersophilus duponti* **Dupont's lark**
- *Ciconia ciconia* **White stork**
- *Ciconia nigra* **Black stork**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **Short-toed snake eagle**
- *Circus cyaneus* **Hen harrier**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Clamator glandarius* **Great spotted cuckoo**
- *Coracias garrulus* **European roller**
- *Dendrocopos minor* **Lesser spotted woodpecker**
- *Elanus caeruleus* **Black-winged kite**
- *Emberiza hortulana* **Ortolan**
- *Falco columbarius* **Merlin**
- *Falco naumanni* **Lesser kestrel**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Falco subbuteo* **Eurasian hobby**
- *Galerida theklae* **Thekla's lark**
- *Gyps fulvus* **Griffon vulture**
- *Hirundo daurica* **Red-rumped swallow**
- *Lullula arborea* **Woodlark**
- *Melanocorypha calandra* **Calandra lark**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Monticola solitarius* **Blue rock thrush**
- *Neophron percnopterus* **Egyptian vulture**
- *Oenanthe leucura* **Black wheatear**
- *Pandion haliaetus* **Osprey**
- *Pernis apivorus* **European honey buzzard**
- *Phalacrocorax carbo* **Great cormorant**
- *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* **Common redstart**
- *Pyrhhorax pyrhhorax* **Red-billed chough**
- *Sylvia undata* **Sardinian warbler**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes obstetricans* **Common midwife toad**
- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**



- *Emys orbicularis* **European pond turtle**
- *Epidalea calamita* **Natterjack toad**
- *Hyla molleri* **Iberian tree frog**
- *Lacerta schreiberi* **Iberian emerald lizard**
- *Lissotriton boscai* **Boscá's newt**
- *Malpolon monspessulanus* **Montpellier snake**
- *Mauremys leprosa* **Mediterranean terrapin**
- *Psammmodromus algirus* **Algerian psammmodromus**
- *Rhinechis scalaris* **Ladder snake**
- *Salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Tarentola mauritanica* **Common wall gecko**
- *Timon lepidus* **Jewelled lizard**
- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Achondrostoma arcasii* (**bermejuela**)
- *Cobitis calderoni* **Northern blue whiting**
- *Esox lucius* **Northern pike**
- *Gambusia holbrooki* **Eastern mosquitofish**
- *Iberochondrostoma lemmingii*
Iberochondrostoma lemmingii
- *Iberocypris alburnoides*
- *Luciobarbus bocagei* **Common barbel**
- *Pseudochondrostoma duriensis* **Northern bogue**
- *Squalius alburnoides* **Bleak**

INVERTEBRATES

- *Empusa pennata* **Conehead mantis**
- *Inachis io* **Peacock butterfly**

ARRIBES DEL DUERO FLORA

BUSHES

- *Cytisus scoparius* **Common broom**
- *Cytisus striatus* **Broom**
- *Erica ciliaris* **Heath**
- *Erica tetralix* **Cross-leaved heath**

- *Genista anglica* **Petty whin**
- *Genista micrantha* **Broom**

ALLUVIAL FOREST

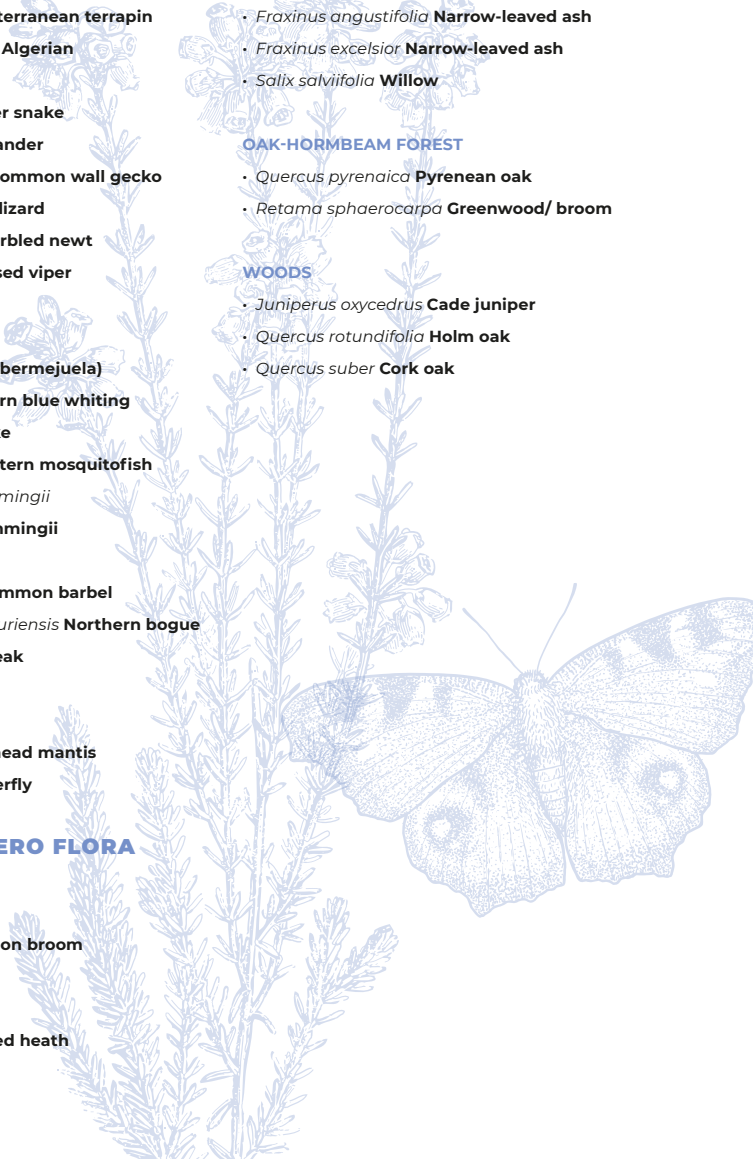
- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Celtis australis* **Hackberry tree**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Salix salviifolia* **Willow**

OAK-HORMBEAM FOREST

- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Retama sphaerocarpa* **Greenwood/ broom**

WOODS

- *Juniperus oxycedrus* **Cade juniper**
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**



DOURO INTERNACIONAL



The Douro Internacional Natural Park, with 85 thousand hectares, is a remote territory, which excites both for its inhospitable character and for its own natural beauty. With its austere magnificence, it protects its dramatic, rugged lines and surprising natural heritage, but not even the deep waters of the Douro can separate it from its Spanish "brother".

This Park is an extensive territory that follows the border line between Portugal and Spain for 122 km, from Miranda do Douro in the north to Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo in the south.

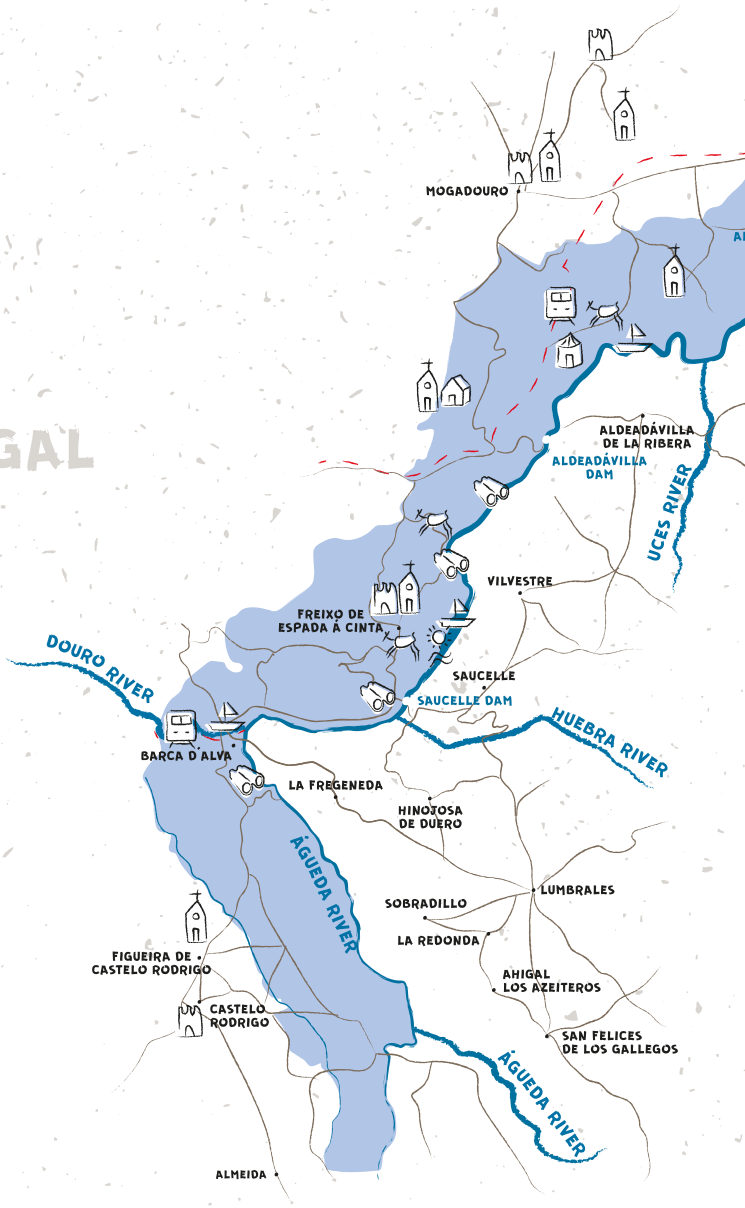
The Douro Internacional is unique in the Portuguese context for its monumental and breathtaking gorges, which seem to tame and calm down the great river as well as not to be designed by it.

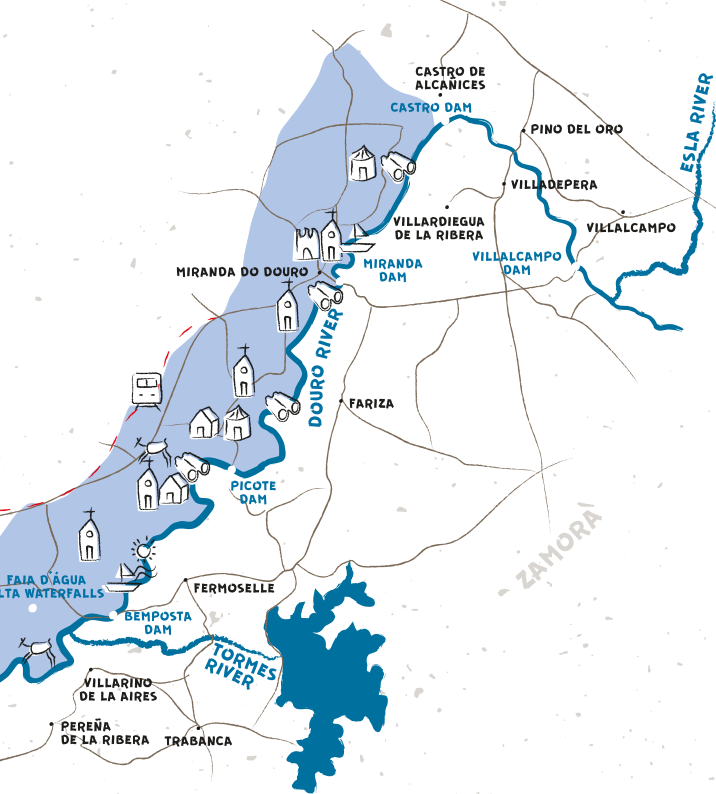
The overwhelming landscapes, the rich fauna, the paths and viewpoints for the astonishment, the vegetation and the agricultural occupation of the plateau area are a tempting challenge for nature tourists.

Further away from the imposing and inaccessible escarpments, man has inhabited the softer areas, some terraced spaces and the surrounding valleys.







PORTUGAL





SPAIN

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
|  | VIEWPOINTS |  | RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS |
|  | RIVERSIDE BEACHES |  | RAILWAY STATIONS |
|  | VILLAGES |  | HILLFORTS |
|  | CASTLES/FORTRESSES |  | CRUISES/PIERS |
|  | ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS | | |





Miranda do Douro
Cathedral

The journey through the Douro is also a discovery of an ancient human presence, with ancestral traditions that can be seen in gastronomy, handicrafts, agriculture, music, faith and in the indigenous races.

CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Miranda do Douro is a town with a strong personality, proud, with affable but resilient communities. Birthplace of the second official language in Portugal, mirandês, Miranda do Douro is a land of unique traditions, with a history of struggle and affirmation and an ancestral culture.

Dominating the town's profile, and overlooking the Douro canyon, Miranda Cathedral is one of the most beautiful monuments in northern Portugal. Built in the 16th century, the building has an imposing, symmetrical façade flanked by two monumental towers. In Mannerist style, the Cathedral also has some Renaissance elements and inside it the chancel altar-piece and the armchair of the Cathedral Choir stand out.

At the back of the Cathedral are the ruins of the Episcopal Palace, the arches of the cloister, with low arches, and the entrance door, where the names of the bishops are inscribed.

Close by is Praça D. João III, the only square in this old town, which houses some of the city's main buildings - the Museu da Terra de Miranda, a testimony to the way of life on the Miranda plateau, the Paços do Concelho and the Solar dos Ordazes.

Of the 13th century Castle of Miranda, some admirable elements still remain, such as part of its keep, square and several walls, which survived a violent explosion of the armoury in 1762.

Besides this castle, there are still parts of the pre-Romanesque wall and fortress erected during the Christian reconquest, which today are considered the best preserved medieval walls of all north-eastern Trás-os-Montes.

Amongst 16th century churches, such as the Misericórdia Church or the Santa Cruz Church, Miranda still has several typical houses and streets that are worth visiting.



Nowadays, the Miranda dam is one of the most attractive local features, due to its impact on the landscape of the cliffs.

Throughout its villages, there are many elements of interest, such as the Centre for the Appreciation of the Burro of Miranda, in Atenor, prehistoric remains, forts, elements of Roman presence, typical houses or churches as in Aldeia Nova, Picote, Genísio, Malhadas, Palaçoulo or Póvoa.

Miranda's neighbour, **Mogadouro** is a pleasant town nestled between the gorges of the Douro and the Sabor valley. In the centre of the town, a significant heritage is preserved, with a castle, the Mother Church, the Church of Misericórdia, the

↑
Mogadouro Castle

κ
Torre do Galo,
Freixo de Espada
à Cinta



pillory, the Solar dos Pegados and the Convent of S. Francisco.

The Castle of Mogadouro was built at the dawn of nationality to defend the territory from the onslaught of Leon and the Muslims and the keep was built by the Templars in the 12th century. Until the 14th century several gothic elements were added to the structure, which would become the residence of the important Távora family.

In the centre you can also admire the 16th century S. Francisco Church, which was built next to the convent, the Misericórdia Church, with its Renaissance door, and the three-nave main church, with a Gothic vaulted chancel and gilded carved altarpieces.

But some of Mogadouro's most relevant heritage is also scattered around its parishes: the Church of Travanca, the Romanesque Church of Bemposta, the Romanesque Church and pillory of Algosinho, the Romanesque Church and pillory of Azinhoso, the Monópetro S. Gonçalo (a unique Baroque work throughout the peninsula) and the Castle of Penas Róias.

The village of **Freixo de Espada à Cinta** is surrounded by green mountains. It is said that a knight rested in the shade of an ash tree and hung his sword on it. Today, next to the parish church there is an ash tree bearing a strong iron belt with a sword.

The civic centre of this small town is Praça Jorge Álvares, with the town's main monuments and its admirable Torre do Galo, one of the most beautiful towers in the Peninsula. The tower bears the town's coat of arms on its façade and a corbels projecting parapet with the Burgundian type. On the terrace rises the clock tower, placed later and which gave rise to the name Torre do Galo (Rooster's Tower). Next to it is the Mother Church, a remarkable example of the Manueline style, easily perceptible in its beautiful and elegant portal. In the three-nave interior there is no lack of delicate and fascinating elements.

Manueline details can be admired throughout the entire building, such as in the beautiful pillory in front of the Paços do Concelho, or in shutters and windows.

The municipality is home to the important rock carvings of Mazouco, a schistose wall with two panels, surrounded

by a magnificent landscape, which are the first example of open-air rock art from the Upper Palaeolithic to be identified in Europe.

On the south bank of the Douro is **Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo**, a small and ancient town with a historical heritage of singular beauty, made up of churches, castles, pillories and bridges.

In order to appreciate the heritage of this region, it is important to visit its villages, from which the historic and monumental village of Castelo Rodrigo stands out, enchanting with the harmony of its shapes, its colours and the authenticity of its materials. The tower of the castle rises high above the houses. With origins in the reconquest period, of which the arched doors still remain, the castle underwent changes in the 13th century, such as the addition of the balcony, the quadrangular turret and later rebuilding in the 16th century, visible at the entrances to Rua da Cadeia. Protecting the village and probably built before nationality, the walls, founded on semicircular cubicles, remind us of Avila.

Of the village's extraordinary set of heritage features the ruins of the Palácio de Cristóvão de Moura, the medieval cistern, combining an entrance in gothic style with another of Arabic influence, a five-century pillory and the Mother Church, in a transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic.

WHAT TO DO

The Douro Internacional Natural Park is a privileged destination for intense tourism of experiences, immersion in unique cultural environments, learning, communion with the natural values, being dazzled by the intensity and monumentality of its landscapes, enjoying its isolation and tasting the flavours of the products of a wise relationship between the communities and the land.

Miranda do Douro and Mogadouro are also part of the Terra Fria Transmontana Route, which crosses the five municipalities

of this northeastern region. We referred to it in the chapter dedicated to Montesinho (see page 137).

To appreciate the Douro in all its splendour and observe some of the most remarkable birds that inhabit this land, you have to visit the many viewpoints that nature has created.

The Miradouro de Penhas das Torres, in Portugal's most easterly town, Paradela, provides one of the boldest views of the river and its gorges as it begins its journey in Portugal.

8 km from Miranda do Douro, the Miradouro de São João das Arribas is in Aldeia Nova and offers visitors the scenery of the Douro between steep cliffs. Close to this viewpoint is a hillfort and the chapel dedicated to St. John. The Miradouro de Vale da Águia, next to a hillfort, offers direct panoramic views of the river at a point where its course changes direction, creating a formidable cut in the granite landscape.

In Miranda do Douro, it's near the Sé Cathedral that you can best appreciate the river passing through the city and the yellowish lichen cliffs, which seem to have been cut out by human labour. The enigmatic "2" engraved on Yellow Crag, on the Spanish bank, right in front of the town of Miranda do Douro, attracts the curiosity of visitors, fueled by legends and various explanations for the phenomenon.

To the south, there are several privileged places to contemplate the Douro. Miradouro da Freixiosa, Fraga do Puio, in the village of Picote, where the river makes a capricious curve and of great importance for rock carvings. Miradouro de Picões, 2 km from the village of Peredo de Bemposta, Miradouro do Colado, Mazouco, in Freixo de Espada à Cinta, where engravings from the Palaeolithic period are preserved, and which provides a different view from the previous ones, a more open valley with greater diversity.

Still in Freixo, Penedo Durão, overlooking the dam of Saucelle and the mouth of the Huebra River, is a must stop, as it is one of the most frequent spots for spotting emblematic birds such as the griffon vulture, the black vulture or the black stork.

To the south, in the municipality of Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, the Miradouro da Sapinha provides a panoramic view over the transition zone from the Castilian plateau to the green hillsides of the Douro and Águeda Rivers.

Next to the Douro is Barca D'Alva, a small and peaceful town that grew with the railway and the excellent agricultural products of this splendid valley. From here, the railway line continued to La Fregeneda, on the Spanish side, making the Douro line an international link. Today, it is the arrival point for cruises that go up the Douro.

→
[Environmental
cruise, Miranda
do Douro](#)

In the Douro Internacional, the Faia da Água Alta waterfall, in Mogadouro, which reaches a height of 60 m, deserves special mention.

Boat trips on the river are one of the most desired ways of getting to know and feel the Douro between the cliffs. An environmental cruise upstream departs from the Miranda do Douro quay, allowing a special visit through the River canyon.

In Freixo de Espada à Cinta there are also boat trips on the reservoir created by the Saucelle dam, between Cogida beach in Portugal and the Spanish beach of La Code.

The cultural offer is also extensive. Among small museums, interpretative centres, typical shops, rural tourism, historical villages and restaurants which sublimate the traditional values and the products of the land, visitors have an intense and remarkable experience in communities with ancestral roots.



NATURE OBSERVATION

DOURO INTERNACIONAL FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Felis silvestris* **Wildcat**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Microtus cabreræ* **Cabrera's vole**
- *Miniopterus schreibersi* **Common bent-wing bat**
- *Myotis blythii* **Mouse-eared bats**
- *Myotis myotis* **Greater mouse-eared bat**
- *Rhinolophus euryale* **Mediterranean horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* **Greater horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* **lesser horseshoe bat**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**

AVES

- *Accipiter gentilis* **Northern goshawk**
- *Acciper nisus* **Eurasian sparrowhawk**
- *Alcedo atthis* **Common kingfisher**
- *Anthus campestris* **Tawny pipit**
- *Apus melba* **Alpine swift**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Aquila fasciata* **Bonelli's eagle**
- *Aquila pennata* **Booted eagle**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Burhinus oedipnemus* **Eurasian stone-curlew**
- *Calandrella brachydactyla* **Greater short-toed lark**
- *Caprimulgus ruficollis* **Red-necked nightjar**
- *Charadrius dubius* **Little ringed plover**
- *Chersophilus duponti* **Dupont's lark**
- *Ciconia ciconia* **White stork**

- *Ciconia nigra* **Black stork**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **Short-toed snake eagle**
- *Circus cyaneus* **Hen harrier**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Clamator glandarius* **Great spotted cuckoo**
- *Coracias garrulus* **European roller**
- *Dendrocopos minor* **Lesser spotted woodpecker**
- *Elanus caeruleus* **Black-winged kite**
- *Emberiza hortulana* **Ortolan**
- *Falco columbarius* **Merlin**
- *Falco naumanni* **Lesser kestrel**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Falco subbuteo* **Eurasian hobby**
- *Galerida theklae* **Thekla's lark**
- *Gyps fulvus* **Griffon vulture**
- *Hirundo daurica* **Red-rumped swallow**
- *Lullula arborea* **Woodlark**
- *Melanocorypha calandra* **Calandra lark**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Monticola solitarius* **Blue rock thrush**
- *Neophron percnopterus* **Egyptian vulture**
- *Oenanthe leucura* **Black wheatear**
- *Pandion haliaetus* **Osprey**
- *Phalacrocorax carbo* **Great cormorant**
- *Pernis apivorus* **European honey buzzard**
- *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* **Common redstart**
- *Pyrhhorcorax pyrrhcorax* **Red-billed chough**
- *Sylvia undata* **Sardinian warbler**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes cisternasii* **Iberian midwife toad**
- *Emys orbicularis* **European pond turtle**
- *Mauremys leprosa* **Mediterranean terrapin**
- *Chalcides bedriagai* **Bedriaga's skink**



- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Lissotriton boscai* **Boscá's newt**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

PEIXES

- *Achondrostoma arcasii* (**bermejuela**)
- *Cobitis calderoni* **Northern blue whiting**
- *Esox lucius* **Northern pike**
- *Gambusia holbrooki* **Eastern mosquitofish**
- *Luciobarbus bocagei* **Northern barbel**
- *Iberochondrostoma lemmingii*
Iberochondrostoma lemmingii
- *Pseudochondrostoma duriensis* **Northern bogue**
- *Squalius alburnoides* **Bleak**
- *Squalius carolitertii* **Northern orfe**

INVERTEBRATES

- *Callimorpha quadripunctaria*

DOURO INTERNACIONAL FLORA

BUSHES

- *Cytisus scoparius* **Common broom**
- *Cytisus striatus* **Broom**
- *Erica ciliaris* **Heath**
- *Erica tetralix* **Cross-leaved heath**
- *Genista anglica* **Petty whin**
- *Genista micrantha* **Broom**

ALLUVIAL FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Andryala ragusina*
- *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis*
- *Celtis australis* **Hackberry tree**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Globularia vulgaris*
- *Isatis platyloba*

- *Linaria coutinhoi*
- *Narcissus jonquilla*
- *Petrorhagia saxifraga*
- *Populus nigra* var. *betulifolia* **Poplar**
- *Ranunculus peltatus* **Pond water-crowfoot**
- *Salix salviafolia* **Willow**
- *Silene boryii* subsp. *duriensis*
- *Stipa lagascae*
- *Tamarix africana* **French tamarisk**

EDEMIC FOREST

- *Juniperus oxycedrus* **Cade juniper**
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**

PLATEAU

- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**

VALE DO TUA



The Regional Natural Park of the Vale do Tua covers an area of 25 thousand hectares and is part of the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve, in the municipalities of Vila Flor, Carrazeda de Ansiães and Mirandela. The Tua River defines its outline and is the soul of this Park, which after meandering through the Terra Quente Transmontana narrows and makes its way through imposing granite walls until it reaches the Douro.

The Regional Natural Park of the Vale do Tua covers an area of 25 thousand hectares and is part of the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve, in the municipalities of Vila Flor, Carrazeda de Ansiães and Mirandela. It is a Park with great natural and landscape diversity where you can admire the transition from the free-flowing river, agitated and changing its moods, to the great lake, in a magnificent flow, imposing itself between long valleys.



PORTUGAL



VIEWPOINTS



RIVERSIDE BEACHES



VILLAGES



CASTLES/FORTRESSES



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
REMAINS**



**RBTMI
INTERPRETATIVE
CENTRE**



**RELIGIOUS
MONUMENTS**



BRIDGES



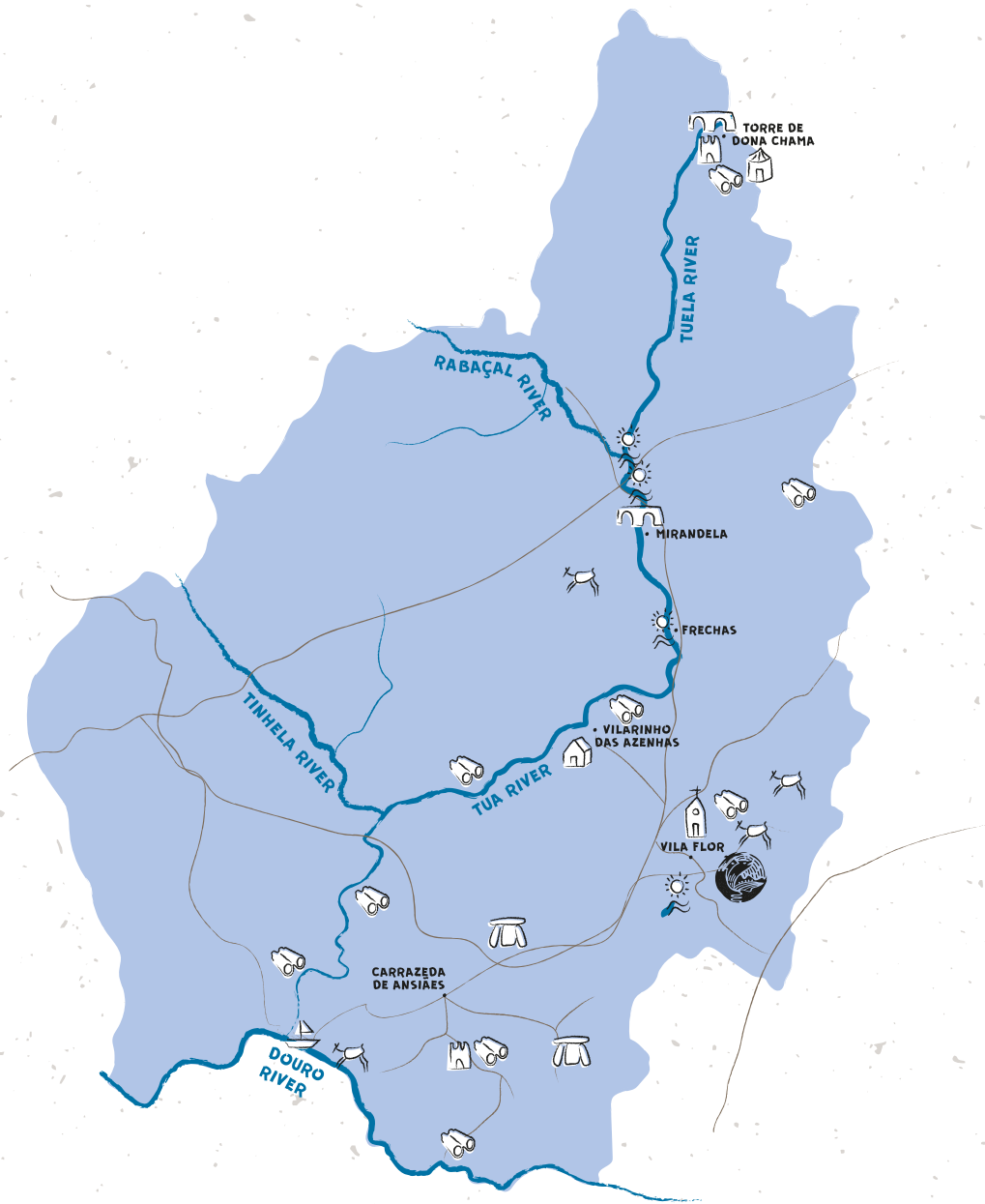
DOLMENS



CRUISES/PIERS



HILLFORTS



TORRE DE DONA CHAMA

TUELA RIVER

RABAÇAL RIVER

MIRANDELA

FRECHAS

VILARINHO DAS AZENHAS

VILA FLOR

CARRAZEDA DE ANSIÃES

DOURO RIVER

TINHEIRA RIVER

TUA RIVER

This territory is located in a region where continental and Mediterranean influences meet, between graceful plateaus and harsh, impetuous valleys cut by rivers and streams.

The region preserves an extensive cultural heritage, with remains, values, practices, constructions and ancestral traditions that show a long and deep relationship of symbiosis of the communities with the natural environment. There is a heritage of rituals, expressions, hillforts, stone carvings, verracos, documents and agricultural and pastoral practices which reveal a territory occupied and understood by man, but also the character and wisdom of these people, shaped over centuries.

The territory possesses a set of micro-reserves with unique habitats of exceptional biodiversity. Discovering the region involves visiting these spaces and their environmental and natural uniqueness.



CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Mirandela is a city full of light, warm and welcoming, surrounded by gentle hills shredded by olive and cereal crops, which change tones throughout the year.

The water mirror of the Tua River is a central element in this city, with a spillway that seems to transform the river into a giant fountain and the extraordinary 17-arched bridge, ex-libris of the city, built in the 16th century, which today is only for pedestrians.

In the highest part of the city, the Paço dos Távoras dominates, rebuilt in the 17th century, with unique views over the Tua River. The façade is typically Baroque, with abundant decoration and a three-storey central body.

The long history of human presence throughout the municipality has left countless material evidence of religiosity, work, nobility and mastery of the natural elements.

Of the pre-Roman presence there are important remains in the Rock Shelter of Regato das Bouças, in Monte dos Passos and in the São Brás and São Juzende forts.

From more recent periods, a relevant heritage is preserved by the municipality's villages - Frechas, a parish which still shows evidence of its medieval importance, Romeu, famous for the history of the farm of the same name, Avantos, with the 16th century Church of Santo André, and Guide, which surprises with an altarpiece in gilded woodcarving in the Church of São Mamede.

Vila Flor is a municipality of admirably delicate landscapes, of vineyards and olive trees, but also of historical heritage.

Traces of rock art have been found in various places in the county, such as in Cova da Moura or the fox carved in Vale Frechoso, but the most fascinating findings were in Vilas Boas, from the Iron Age, and include a zoomorphic sculpture 1.51 m long and an extraordinary gold torc.

Already in the village, the 18th century Mother Church, dedicated to São Bartolomeu, is an imposing baroque construction, with some touches of mannerism.



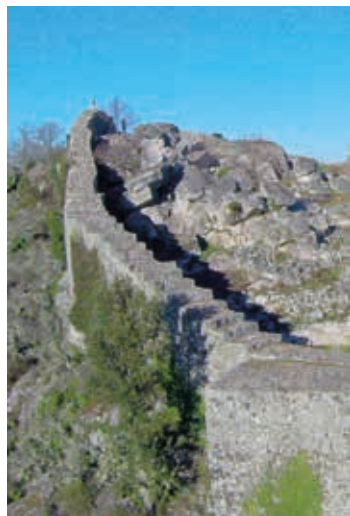
But it is the remarkable set of beautiful manor houses that make Vila Flor even more charming, where we can highlight, among others, the manor house of Aguilares, rebuilt in the 20th century on the original structure that dates back to the 13th century, the manor house of the Viscount of Lemos, from the 19th century, and, especially, the extraordinary manor house of Lemos, a precious Transmontana architecture, the most important civil monument of Joanina art. Also not to be missed is the Vila Flor museum, which houses prehistoric relics found in the region. In this municipality there is an Interpretation Centre of RBTMI.

Carrazeda de Ansiães is the municipality that lies at the southwestern end of the Biosphere Reserve, where the Tua meets the Douro. Granites dominate this region of rivers and rushing streams and there are numerous traces of human presence since prehistoric times.

Cachão da Rapa, located by the Douro River, dated between the Calcolithic and the Bronze Age, is one of the most important prehistoric rock painting sites in Portugal, on a granite panel measuring over 4 metres.

Among the megalithic constructions, the Anta de Zedes, locally known as Casa da Moura, and the Anta de Vilarinho da Castanheira, also known as Pala da Moura, stand out.

The castle and walled town of Ansiães, in the parish of Se-lores, is a unique space which provides a panoramic view of the





Anta de Zedes



Ansiães Castle
and Walls

long history of the communities in this territory. In a place with excellent natural defence conditions, the first structures date back to the 3rd millennium BC. The Arabs may have walled the village, but it was during the reconquest period that the area gained particular importance, and its wall structure grew considerably until the 15th century.

In the highest part of this area is the oval-shaped castle, with five turrets. The urban area, with small neighbourhoods, was protected by a second line of walls with an extension of more than 600m.

The notable Church of S. Salvador de Ansiães, situated inside, is probably from the 12th century. Outside the walls, the Church of S. João Baptista is pre-Romanesque in origin and was probably altered during the Middle Ages.

Nearby, in Lavandeira, you will find the Church of Santa Eufémia, with a porch of 12 Tuscan columns and a splendid Rococo decoration.

Carrazeda de Ansiães is also a county with cultural dynamics, which can be seen in the Interpretation Centre of the Vale do Tua (CIVT), dedicated to the relations of man with the territory, in the amazing International Park of Sculpture in Carrazeda de Ansiães, with pieces of 12 artists and, among others, in the Museum of Rural Memory, about the culture and practices in the country life of this region.



WHAT TO DO

There are many possible trails that can be done on foot, by car and/or bicycle, but the main routes include the discovery of the historical heritage of the small villages and of a Natural Park of rare beauty, with bridges, pillories, churches, fortified settlements, hillforts, viewpoints, castle, houses, dolmens, almond trees, olive groves, vegetable gardens and orchards.

From Mirandela we set off to discover Frechas, Cachão and Vale da Sancha, in a graceful path, surrounded by olive and almond trees. From Cachão to Vilarinho das Azenhas we go through one of the most fascinating riverside paths of the

Vale do Tua, sought after for nature observation and fishing. From Vilarinho we continue to Vilas Boas, which reserves an interesting heritage, emblazoned houses, remains of an extraordinary hillfort, fountain and wayside cross. Nearby, Freixiel is located in a fertile basin, strongly Mediterranean, preserving an important historical heritage.

→
[Miradouro
 Olhos do Tua,
 Castanheiro
 do Norte](#)

Continuing through the territory of Carrazeda de Ansiães, you can admire the Anta de Zedes, one of the best preserved, but also a very interesting historical and archaeological set, scattered throughout the county, as well as impressive landscapes of both the Douro and Tua.

On the way to Castanheiro, a village of typical narrow streets and granite masonry, you will discover places full of history and traditions, such as Linhares, where the wildest views of the Tua River can be seen.

The route down the sunny slopes of Ribalonga goes through "the various stages of shaping of the cultivated soils and its enchanting vineyards" (PNRVT).

One of the most important access gates to this Park is at the meeting point of the Tua and the Douro: the train of the Douro line, also with its "Historic Train", as well as the river pier, attract visitors to a scenery that hesitates between the idyllic and the colossal.

The most breathtaking scenery of this region can be seen from the sightseeing spots. The Miradouro do Senhor da Boa Morte, within a religious space, is enchanting because of the view it provides over the rugged slopes of the Tua River. Nearby, the Miradouro Olhos do Tua is one of the most impressive, with a steel structure representing the keel of a boat hanging over the imposing watercourse made navigable by the dam. The Miradouro de Selores, located at the Ansiães Castle, allows you to admire a landscape that seems to plunge into the Douro valley. The Miradouro Rota do Douro, in Beira Grande, overlooking the river, shows us some of the illustrious farms in the region.

At the Miradouro de São Brás, in Torre Dona Chama, one feels the seduction of the wide plateau and the Miradouro da Serra de Santa Comba dazzles by the extension of the views from the mountains of Trás-os-Montes to those of Castile.



In Abreiro, the Miradouro de Santa Catarina "allows a view over the cultivated slopes and to feel the meandering of the Vale do Tua and of the railway line which confers a very striking natural attractiveness" (PNRVT).

In a region with these river resources, some beaches attract visitors because of their clear waters and landscape settings. In Mirandela there are more accessible beaches, such as das Quintas, Vale do Juncal, da Maravilha and, in the centre, Parque Dr. José Gama. In Vila Flor, the Peneireiro dam invites you to take a dip or to enjoy the surrounding nature and its playground.

The Tua reservoir can now be discovered by tourist boats and, from Brunheda to Mirandela, by tourist train, which revitalises this small stretch of the famous Tua Line.

NATURE OBSERVATION

VALE DO TUA FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Barbastella barbastellus* **Western barbastelle**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Genetta genetta* **Geneta**
- *Hypsugo savii* **Savi's pipistrelle**
- *Martes foina* **Beech marten**
- *Meles meles* **European badger**
- *Microtus cabrera* **Cabrera's vole**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit**
- *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* **Soprano pipistrelle**
- *Rhinolophus euryale* **Mediterranean horseshoe bat**
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* **Lesser horseshoe bat**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**
- *Vulpes vulpes* **Red fox**

BIRDS

- *Acciper nisus* **Eurasian sparrowhawk**
- *Alcedo atthis* **Common kingfisher**
- *Alectoris rufa* **Red-legged partridge**
- *Aquila fasciata* **Bonelli's eagle**
- *Aquila pennata* **Booted eagle**
- *Ardea cinerea* **Grey heron**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Buteo buteo* **Common buzzard**
- *Caprimulgus europaeus* **European nightjar**
- *Circaetus gallicus* **Short-toed snake eagle**
- *Dendrocopos major* **Great spotted woodpecker**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Falco tinnunculus* **Common kestrel**
- *Fringilla coelebs* **Common chaffinch**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Hirundo daurica* **Red-rumped swallow**

- *Merops apiaster* **European bee-eater**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Monticola solitarius* **Blue rock thrush**
- *Motacilla alba* **White wagtail**
- *Motacilla cinerea* **grey wagtail**
- *Neophron percnopterus* **Egyptian vulture**
- *Oenanthe leucura* **Black wheatear**
- *Parus cristatus* **European crested tit**
- *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* **Black-bellied sandgrouse**
- *Saxicola rubicola* **European stonechat**
- *Sylvia melanocephala* **Sardinian warbler**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes cisternasii* **Iberian midwife toad**
- *Bufo bufo* **Common toad**
- *Bufo calamita* **Natterjack toad**
- *Coluber hippocrepis* **Horseshoe whip snake**
- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Elaphe scalaris* **Ladder snake**
- *Lacerta lepida* **Jewelled lizard**
- *Mauremys leprosa* **Mediterranean terrapin**
- *Macroprotodon cucullatus* **False smooth snake**
- *Malpolon monspessulanus* **Montpellier snake**
- *Natrix natrix* **Graess snake**
- *Psammodromus algirus* **Algerian psammodromus**
- *Rana iberica* **Iberian frog**
- *Salamandra salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Tarentola mauritanica* **Common wall gecko**
- *Triturus boscai* **Boscá's newt**
- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Cobitis calderoni* **Northern blue whiting**
- *Lampetra planeri* **Brook lamprey**

VALE DO TUA FLORA

BUSHES

- *Cistus ladanifer* **Gum rockrose**
- *Lavandula stoechas* **Rosemary**
- **Plants of the genus *Retama***

ALLUVIAL FOREST

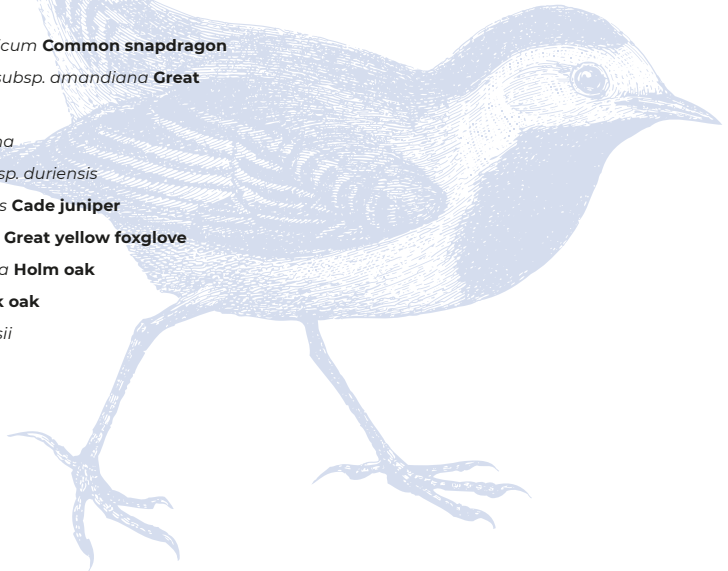
- *Acer monspessulanum* **Montpellier maple**
- *Ulmus minor* **Elm**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Fraxinus excelsior* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Populus* **Poplar**
- *Salix salviifolia* **Willow**

OAK-HORMBEAM FOREST

- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**

WOODS

- *Antirrhinum graniticum* **Common snapdragon**
- *Digitalis purpurea* subsp. *amandiana* **Great yellow foxglove**
- *Festuca duriotagana*
- *Holcus annuus* subsp. *duriensis*
- *Juniperus oxycedrus* **Cade juniper**
- *Narcissus triandrus* **Great yellow foxglove**
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**
- *Scrophularia valdesii*



AZIBO E LAGOS DO SABOR



In the heart of Terra Quente Transmontana, the hand of Man has designed a new landscape with quiet lakes and long arms of water that any visitor will be convinced were created by natural forces. Mirrors of water that lie between mountains and hills, a shelter for species of fauna and flora, with breathtaking landscapes.

In a land of harsh and hot summers, Azibo e Lagos do Sabor are two human creations that have changed habitats. Two water paradises, small blue seas, inland, capable of boosting the region's economy in symbiosis with the biosphere. An enormous tourist potential designed by Man, of stunning scenery and spaces to enjoy the environment, in harmony with dozens of animal and plant species emblematic of the Meseta Ibérica Biosphere Reserve.

These two areas are interconnected because the waters of the Azibo River, after leaving the reservoir, flow into the Sabor River, and it is at this point that the sequence of lakes begins, joined together by gorges and cliffs.



PORTUGAL



VIEWPOINTS



RIVERSIDE BEACHES



VILLAGES



RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS



ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS



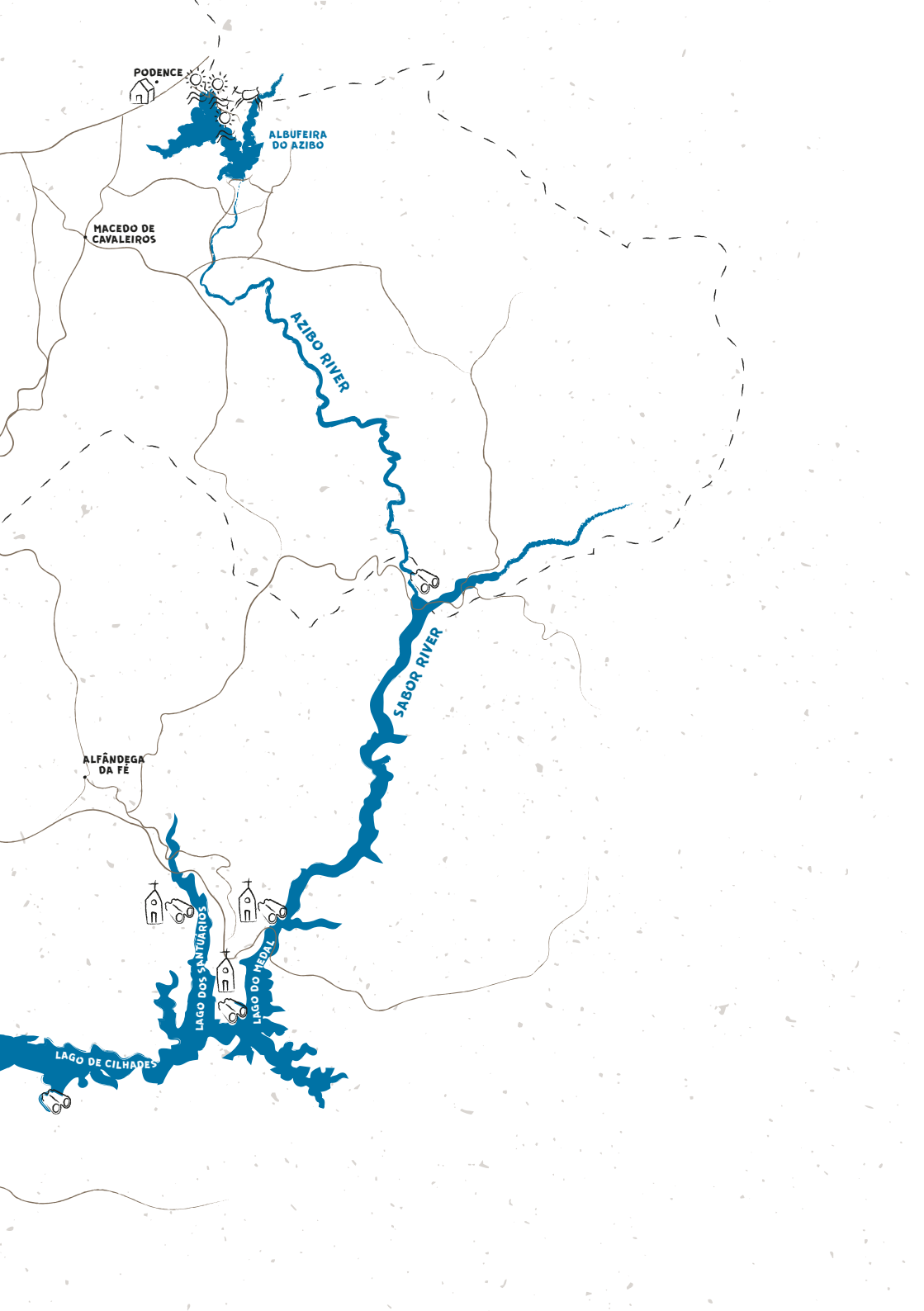
GEOPARK



VILARICA STREAM

DOURO RIVER

TORRE DE MONCORVO



PODENCE

ALBUFEIRA DO AZIBO

MACEDO DE CAVALEIROS

AZIBO RIVER

SABOR RIVER

ALFÂNDEGA DA FÉ

LAGO DOS SANTUÁRIOS

LAGO DO MEDAL

LAGO DE CILHADES

ALBUFEIRA DO AZIBO

The Azibo dam was built in the 1970s with the purpose of providing water for agricultural irrigation in the Macedo de Cavaleiros valley and to supply household consumption. The dam receives water from the Azibo River and the streams of Azibeiro and Reguengo, forming an extensive lake surrounded by gentle elevations and a unique ecosystem for migratory birds.

It is this combination of landscape values and the importance of preserving fauna species that led to the integration of the Azibo landscape in the Natura 2000 Network and to its affirmation as one of the main tourist attractions of the North-eastern Transmontano region.

The protected landscape of the Albufeira do Azibo is today a natural set where some of the aims of the Biosphere Reserves are affirmed - economic development based on natural and cultural values. The clear water beaches attract tourists who seek proximity to nature, trails and parks that allow multiple leisure activities integrated in natural scenarios. Azibo is a destination for those seeking experiential visits, but also for more specialised tourism, such as birdwatching.

The Albufeira do Azibo Protected Landscape combines Mediterranean and Atlantic flora, with oak trees, chestnut groves, marshes, olive trees, vines and cork oaks, with undergrowth where there are about ten and a half species of spontaneous orchids (ICNF). Among the birds, the Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*) appears from March to September and is admired for its low flying and acrobatic manoeuvres. The Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) is the ex-libris of this protected landscape, and the "restless rockworms", mallards, herons, white-faced cormorants and the Small-leaved plovers.



[Lagos do Sabor](#)



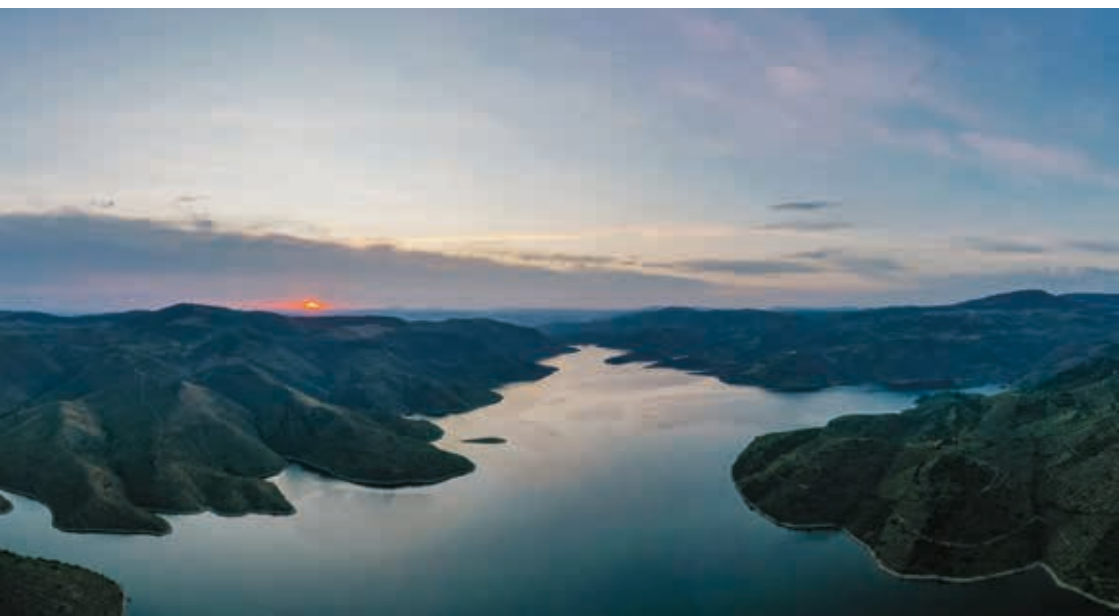
LAGOS DO SABOR

"There are 70 kilometres from the Baixo Sabor dam to the mouth of the Azibo, with large lakes, linked together by gorges and cliffs, which form a true sanctuary for wildlife and offer visitors blue skies and a breathtaking horizon" (Baixo Sabor Municipalities Association - AMBS).

The construction of the Sabor dam has calmed the waters of what was known as "the last wild river in Portugal", creating a new landscape that is impressive and has environmental values that preserve habitats.

A water paradise in a land of hot summers, a haven of wild life, with fauna and flora that affirm the natural identity of this region.

The reservoir extends over three large lakes, Cilhades, Santuários and Medal, linked by narrower, steeper and more tortuous branches that make this scenery even more splendid and surprising.



The reservoir raised the waters at the confluence of the Azibo and the Sabor, creating a wider mirror. Towards the Douro, it opens into a lake, the Medal lake, which is connected to the next one, the Santuários lake, through the Aguilhão strait. The third lake is the lake of Cilhades, which appears after the gorge of Fraga do Fojo. This is the largest of them all and inherits its name from an abandoned village in the municipality of Torre de Moncorvo, which was submerged by the rising waters.

Baixo Sabor has been declared a Site of Community Importance (SCI) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for Birdlife, and a large part of the main reservoir, Cilhades, is part of the Natura 2000 Network.

The creation of the Lagos do Sabor brand represents a clear bet on the tourist potential of this landscape, which combines extraordinary natural and cultural values. The entrance to the lakes is, without a doubt, the Douro, where the Sabor flows between terraces and vineyards, only 10 km away from the main dam. The Sabor Lakes are thus affirmed as a tourist destination of excellence complementary to the Douro.



↑
Riverside Beach
of Ribeira,
Azibo

↗
Lagos do Sabor

WHAT TO DO

The Albufeira do Azibo is one of the spaces that integrates the Terras de Cavaleiros Geopark, which covers the entire municipality of **Macedo de Cavaleiros**. Declared by UNESCO in 2014, the Geopark brings together an admirable and unique geological heritage, combined with great biodiversity and a strong historical and cultural legacy.

The Morais Massif, whose main point is Monte de Morais, is the main surprise of this territory, as it offers a journey back in time. Known as the "navel of the world", it is a testimony of the geological history of our planet, being possible to walk on traces of 400 million years, with shocks of ancient continents forcing the oceanic bottoms to rise. Unaware that this territory came from the bottom of the sea, rich in iron and nickel, the locals called it the cursed mountain, because the crops never grew.



In this Geopark there are 180 km of trails signposted by the Albufeira do Azibo, mountains and villages, to be discovered on foot or by bicycle. In the villages of the municipality you will find churches, sanctuaries, pillories, traditional houses and restaurants that preserve the gastronomy made of local products. But Azibo is the driving force of this tourist destination, due to its fluvial beach of Ribeira, elected in 2012 one of the 7 Wonders of Portugal (Beaches category). The reservoir is very popular for its waters, leisure parks and activities such as bird-watching, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking or catamaran.

The Geopark is also a land of history and culture, where you can discover traditions that are still alive, enjoy the autochthonous products and local gastronomy and discover the heritage spread around the municipality.

Close to Albufeira do Azibo is Podence, which preserves one of the most famous masquerades of the whole Reserve, declared by UNESCO as Intangible Heritage of Humanity. At Carnival time, thousands of visitors come to Podence to see the caretos running around the streets of the village looking for girls to rattle them.

The best way to discover the Lagos do Sabor is to travel the 220 km circular route to contemplate lakes and gorges, with

various viewpoints, picnic parks and interpretative content along the way. A journey with dream landscapes, natural heritage, history and traditional gastronomy.

The Lagos do Sabor have an integrated offer from all the municipalities involved, in an effort to enhance human transformation to the benefit of local populations and their unique heritage. Undoubtedly, these lakes create ideal conditions for nature tourism, with enormous potential for water-related activities.

Around the lakes, besides Mogadouro, already presented in the chapter on the Douro Internacional Natural Park, and Macedo de Cavaleiros, which we got to know with Azibo, **Alfândega da Fé** keeps the attractions of the Terra Quente (the warm land), its long plateaus, the warm tones, the intense flavours and the hospitality born from a wise relationship with the land.

A region of history and legends, of ancient memories, of immemorial remains, there is much to discover and enjoy, such as fortified towns, villages, churches, pillories, houses, fountains, chapels and sanctuaries.

There are routes through cultural and natural heritage. The "Frescos da Fé" route leads to the discovery of the mural paintings found in the municipality's churches. The urban art route shows the surprising town of Alfândega da Fé with a remarkable set of sculptures and ceramic panels of contemporary art spread across several public spaces. The route of the "Amendoeiras em Flor" (Almonds Blossom) is undoubtedly the most famous one. It takes you through the region's almond heritage, which paints the landscape white and pink during the months of February and March.

NATURE OBSERVATION



AZIBO FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Crocidura russula* **Greater white-toothed shrew**
- *Felis silvestris* **Wildcat**
- *Furrius squidgeterrius* **Eurasian red squirrel/red squirrel**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Lepus* **European hare**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Martes foina* **Beech marten**
- *Meles meles* **European badger**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**
- *Vulpes vulpes* **Red fox**

BIRDS

- *Actitis hypoleucos* **Common sandpiper**
- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Anas platyrhynchos* **Wild duck**
- *Anthus trivialis* **Tree pipit**
- *Ardea cinerea* **Grey heron**
- *Charadrius dubius* **Little ringed plover**
- *Ciconia ciconia* **White stork**
- *Circus pygargus* **Montagu's harrier**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Milvus milvus* **Red kite**
- *Muscicapa sriata* **Spotted flycatcher**
- *Phalacrocorax carbo* **Great cormorant**
- *Podiceps cristatus* **Great crested grebe**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes obstetricans* **Common midwife toad**
- *Bufo calamita* **Natterjack toad**

- *Chalcides striatus* **Western three-toed skink**
- *Coronella austriaca* **Smooth snake**
- *Mauremys leprosa* **Mediterranean terrapin**
- *Pelobates cultripes* **Western spadefoot**
- *Psammodromus hispanicus* **Iberian psammodromus**
- *Rana iberica* **Iberian frog**
- *Rana perezi* **Iberian waterfrog**
- *Salamandra Salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Triturus boscai* **Boscá's newt**
- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Austropotamobius pallipes* **Freshwater crayfishrio**
- *Barbus bocagei* **Northern barbel**
- *Chondrostoma polylepis* **Iberiana Nase**
- *Cyprinus carpio* **European carp**
- *Esox lucius* **Northern pike**
- *Rutilus alburnoides* **Bleak**
- *Rutilus arcasii* **Panjorca**
- *Micropterus salmoides* **Largemouth bass**
- *Squalius carolitertii*

AZIBO FLORA

FORESTS

- *Castanea sativa* **Sweet chestnut**
- *Quercus faginea* **Portuguese oak**
- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**

EDEMIC FOREST

- *Dactylorhiza sambucina* **Marsh orchids**

- *Juniperus oxycedrus* **Cade juniper**
- *Limodorum abortivum* **Orchids**

BRUSHWOOD

- *Calluna vulgaris* **Heather**
- *Cistus ladanifer* **Gum rockrose**
- *Cytisus scoparius* **Scotch broom**
- *Halimium lasianthum subsp. alyssoides* **Bladder wrack**

ULTRABASIC ROCKS

- *Arenaria querioides subsp. fontqueri*
- *Avenula partensis subsp. lusitanica*
- *Dianthus loricifolius subsp. marizii*
- *Plantago subulata subsp. radicata*
- *Santolina semidentata*

RIPARIAN FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Salix salviifolia* **White willow**

HUMANIZED LANDSCAPE

- *Olea europaea L.* **Olive tree**
- *Prunus dulcis* **Almond tree**

SABOR FAUNA

MAMMALS

- *Canis lupus signatus* **Iberian wolf**
- *Capreolus capreolus* **Deer**
- *Galemys pyrenaicus* **Pyrenean desman**
- *Lepus* **European hare**
- *Lutra lutra* **European otter**
- *Martes foina* **Beech marten**
- *Meles meles* **European badger**
- *Oryctolagus cuniculus* **European rabbit**
- *Sus scrofa* **Wild boar**
- *Vulpes vulpes* **Red fox**

BIRDS

- *Aquila chrysaetos* **Golden eagle**
- *Aquila fasciata* **Bonelli's eagle**
- *Ardea cinerea* **Grey heron**
- *Bubo bubo* **Eurasian eagle-owl**
- *Ciconia nigra* **Black stork**
- *Cyanopica cooki* **Iberian magpie**
- *Falco peneireirus* **Common kestrel**
- *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine falcon**
- *Cyps fulvus* **Griffon vulture**
- *Milvus migrans* **Black kite**
- *Monticola saxatilis* **Common rock thrush**
- *Neophron percnopterus* **Egyptian vulture**
- *Oenanthe leucura* **Black wheatear**
- *Phalacrocorax carbo* **Great cormorant**
- *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax* **Red-billed chough**

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

- *Alytes obstetricans* **Common midwife toad**
- *Bufo calamita* **Natterjack toad**
- *Coluber hippocrepis* **Horseshoe whip snake**
- *Discoglossus galganoi* **Iberian painted frog**
- *Malpolon monspessulanus* **Montpellier snake**
- *Rana iberica* **Iberian frog**
- *Rana perezi* **Iberian waterfrog**

- *Triturus marmoratus* **Marbled newt**
- *Salamandra Salamandra* **Fire salamander**
- *Vipera latastei* **Snub-nosed viper**

FISH

- *Barbus bocagei* **Northern barbel**
- *Chondrostoma polylepis* **Iberiana Nase**
- *Cyprinus carpio* **European carp**
- *Esox lucius* **Northern pike**
- *Micropterus salmoides* **Largemouth bass**
- *Pseudochondrostoma duriensis* **Northern bogue**
- *Squalius carolitertii*

SABOR FLORA

FORESTS

- *Castanea sativa* **Sweet chestnut**
- *Juniperus oxycedrus* var. *lagunae*
- *Quercus rotundifolia* **Holm oak**
- *Quercus suber* **Cork oak**
- *Quercus faginea* **Portuguese oak**
- *Quercus pyrenaica* **Pyrenean oak**

EDEMIC FOREST

- *Juniperus oxycedrus* var. *lagunae*

BRUSHWOOD

- *Calluna vulgaris* **Heather**
- *Cistus ladanifer* **Gum rockrose**
- *Cytisus scoparius* **Scotch broom**
- *Juniperus communis* **Cade juniper**
- *Pistacia terebinthus* **Terebinth**

ROCKY SLOPES AND THE SURROUNDING OF WATER

- *Antirrhinum lopesianum*
- *Buxus sempervirens* **Boxtree**
- *Festuca duriotagana*
- *Petrorhagia saxifraga*

RIPARIAN FOREST

- *Alnus glutinosa* **Black alder**
- *Celtis australis* **Hackberry tree**
- *Fraxinus angustifolia* **Narrow-leaved ash**
- *Populus alba* **Silver poplar**
- *Salix salviifolia* **White willow**

HUMANIZED LANDSCAPE

- *Olea europaea* L. **Olive Tree**
- *Prunus dulcis* **Almond tree**

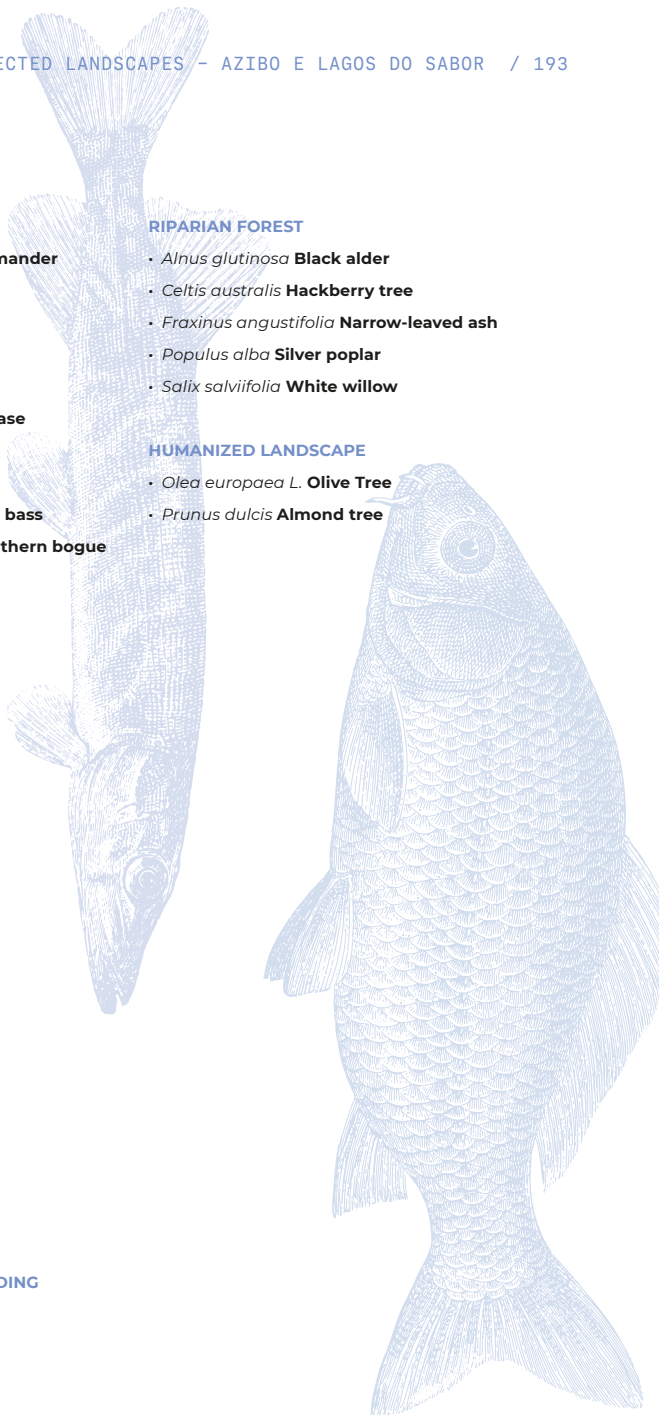






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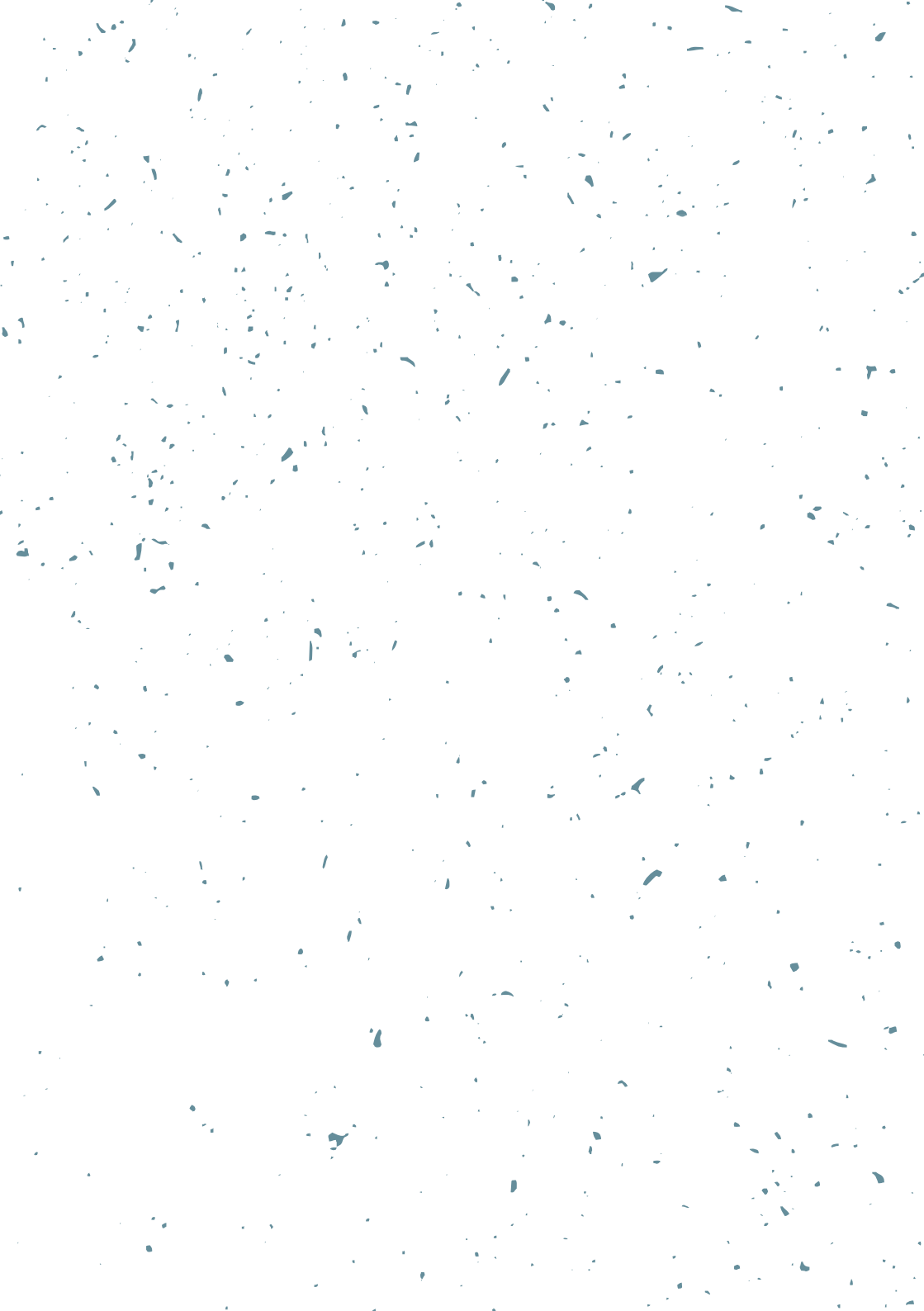
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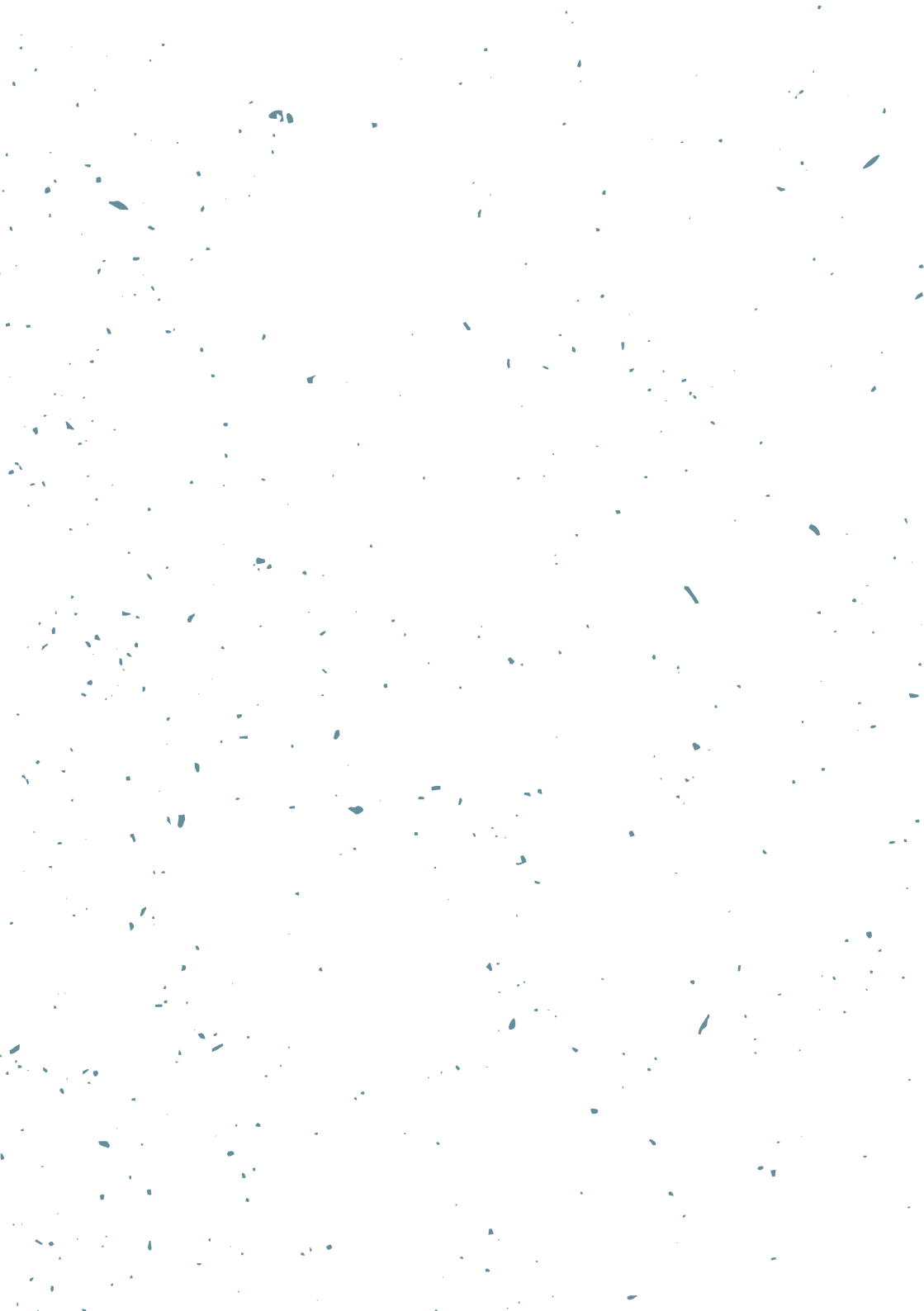
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