Description

Distance: 1,5 Km (+ 1,5 Km regresso)
Time: 1h 30m
Highest point: 630m
Lowest point: 630m
Start: E.R. 103 (Ribeiro Frio)
Finish: E.R. 103 (Ribeiro Frio)

Warning

Weather subject to frequent changes, take warm clothing; path in some places is slippery.

Contacts

Emergency number	*112*
Civil Protection	*291700112*
Bus SAM	*291706713*
Taxis (Santana)	*291572540*

Local Festivities

- *Festa dos Compadres (2nd Sunday before Carnival)*
- *48 Horas a Bailar (48 hours of Dancing) / Regional Folklore Festival (July)*
- *Festa de Santa Ana (last weekend of July)*
- *Gastronomy Week - Santana (beginning of August)*
- *Festa do Santíssimo – Holy Sacrament (1st weekend of August)*

Handcrafts

Madeira embroidery; Patchwork tapestries; Woollen garments; caps with ear flaps or "barretes de vilão"; Cornshuck dolls; Typical houses at Santana; Wax candles.

Field Code

Walking Code

- *Avoid noise or actions against nature.*
- *Do not take plants or animal with you.*
- *Do not throw rubbish away (tissues do not easily decompose).*
- *Do not light fires.*
- *If you are a smoker do not throw cigarettes ends on the floor, keep them for the dust-bin.*
- *Do not change or damage the signs.*

For your own safety ...

- *Before starting out make sure you have update instructions on the route.*
- *Let someone else know where you're going and when you expect to return.*
- *Be sure to confirm the time it will take so that you can finish before nightfall.*
- *Take some extra food and water with you.*
- *Wear suitable clothes and shoes;*
- *If possible take a mobile phone whit you;*
- *In case of heavy rain or strong winds do not go on and/or turn back using the same route.*
- *Don't take risks.*

Promotor

S. R. REGIÃO AUTÓNOMA DA MADEIRA
GOVERNO REGIONAL DA MADEIRA

SRA SECRETARIA REGIONAL DO AMBIENTE E RECURSOS NATURAIS

INTERREG III B AÇORES • MADEIRA • CANARIAS

FEDER

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Coordination: Ana Sé

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REPRODUCTION INTERDICT

PR 11 Vereda dos Balcões

Madeira Island Footpaths

PR 11

Vereda dos Balcões

Balcões Belvedere

Legend

- Regional road
- Foothpath
- Rural road
- Water course
- Stream
- House
- Information Point
- Litter
- Forestry Station
- Belvedere
- Natural Flora
- Bus Stop
- Fauna
- Aquicolous Station
- Restaurant

The Footpath

This trail begins at regional highway E.R.103 at Ribeiro Frio and follows the levada of Serra do Faial, providing access to the Balcões belvedere, which offers beautiful panoramas of the deep valley of Ribeira da Metade and the parish of Faial.

Surrounding the levada the most varied endemic species abound, such as laurel trees (Laurus novocanariensis), Madeira mahogany (Persea indica), Madeira blueberry (Vaccinium padifolium), and Madeira orchids (Dactylorhiza foliosa), as well as exotic deciduous trees like English oaks (Quercus robur) and London plane trees (Platanus x acerifolia), which are found at regular intervals at the edge of the path.

When you arrive at the Balcões belvedere, you will come upon a splendid scene completely occupied by the verdant valleys that characterise the Laurisilva forest, which is integrated in the Natura 2000 Network. This forest takes on added importance as a "water producer", because it condenses the water from the mists on the leaves of the plants, and from there brings great quantities to the soil, where it later replenishes the springs and brooks. The Hydroelectric Plant of Fajã da Nogueira is completely visible from this location and is evidence of the value this forest has for the island of Madeira. The plant produces electricity with water from reservoirs and supplies the entire municipality of Santana.

On days when the visibility is good, you will be able to see the Central Mountain Chain of the island, with the highest peaks of the island standing out, Pico do Areeiro (1817 m), Pico do Gato, Pico das Torres, Pico Ruivo (1861 m) and the majestic geological display of the Penha d'Águia rock formation.

With a bit of luck, you may see a firecrest (Regulus ignicapillus maderensis), the smallest bird of the Madeira forest, chaffinches (Frigilla coelebs maderensis), grey wagtails (Motacilla cinerea schmitzi), blackbirds (Turdus merula cabreae), robins (Erithacus rubecula), buzzards (Buteo buteo harteti), or the very rare Madeira long-toed pigeon (Columba trocaz).

Having retraced your steps and arriving at Ribeiro Frio once again, take advantage of the opportunity to purchase some souvenirs of regional handicrafts and look for the rainbow trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss Walbaum) nursery of the Ribeiro Frio Fish Hatchery, the main purpose of which is the production of trout to replenish the water courses of Madeira Island.