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# Caminho Real da Encumeada



## Legend

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



Central Mountainous Massif

## The Footpath

This trail begins at the Boca da Corrida belvedere and runs along elevations between 1340 and 940 metres, crossing part of the Central Mountainous Massif along the foot of the highest peaks of the island of Madeira.

It is an old "Royal Path" that was paved and served as one of the main routes for the movement of persons on the island. It was used by landed gentry on horseback whose wives reclined in hammocks carried by men. There are references to a grocery store that existed somewhere along this path that was likely a trading post in an area where travellers passed by as they crossed the island.

In the landscape that unfolds before you, you will be able to see Curral das Freiras in the valley below. In 1566, this small village surrounded by enormous mountains in the heart of the island became a refuge for nuns from the Santa Clara Convent, who brought with them the treasures of the convent when pirates attacked Funchal.

The waterways that cut through the mountains along this trail sustain the vegetation made up of Laurisilva species that abound here: the laurel (*Laurus azorica*), the Madeira mahogany (*Persea indica*), centuries-old Madeira laurels (*Ocotea foetens*), and Lily-of-the-Valley trees (*Argyranthemum pinnatifidum*).

Along this trail you may catch sight of some of the indigenous bird species such as the firecrest (*Rugulus ignicapillus maderensis*), the chaffinch (*Frigilla coelebs maderensis*), the buzzard (*Buteo buteo harterti*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus canariensis*), the Madeira long-toed pigeon (*Columba trocaz*), or the grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*).

As you go around Pico Grande, the settlement of Serra d'Água and Encumeada will come into sight, as well as the large pipelines that carry water from the reservoir to run the Serra d'Água Hydroelectric Plant, indicating that you are reaching the end of the trail at Boca da Encumeada.

## Description

Distance: 12.5Km  
Time: 6h 30m  
Highest point: 1340m  
Lowest point: 940m  
Start: Boca da Corrida Belvedere  
Finish: E.R. 228 (Encumeada)

## Warning

Carry sufficient drinking water.

## Contacts

Emergency number	112
Civil Protection	291700112
Buses (RODOESTE)	291220148
Taxis (Estreito de Câmara de Lobos)	291945229
Taxis (Ribeira Brava)	291952349

## Local Festivities

- Cherry Festival at Jardim da Serra (June)
- Festa de São João at Ribeira Brava (23 - 24 June)
- Festa de São Pedro at Ribeira Brava (28- 29 June)
- Regional Band Meet at Ribeira Brava (1st Sunday of October)

## 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 with 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



## Technical information:

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Madeira Island Footpaths

