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1

## Vereda do Pico Branco e Terra Chã



### Legend

- Regional road
- Footpath
- Rural road
- Water course
- Stream
- House

- Information Point
- Natural Flora
- Belvedere



White Rock



Cabeço do Caranguejo

### The Footpath

The trail starts at Regional Road E.R.111 and, following the way to the top of Pico Branco we come across a huge prismatic formation in which the footpath itself was carved. It is called Rocha Quebrada, or the Broken Rock. The steepest climb of the walk is done along a heater fence, in which it becomes similar to some walks in Madeira, the climb ending in a rock fissure at Crista do Cabeço.

The footpath goes on among a landscape where cupressus (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) dominates, until the walker finds a fork leading, on the right to Terra Chã and on the left to Pico Branco, or White Peak, the second highest in Porto Santo. It has that name because of a white rock column where there was a lot of dyer's weed (*urzela*), which was exported from Porto Santo and used in making dyes and other specialities.

The Pico Branco and Terra Chã is part of the European network of communitarian interesting places – Natura 2000 Network, Directive Habitats, since it evidences flora and fauna endemic specimens (earthbound shellfish – snails).

This is the only spot in Porto Santo where the largest quantity of indigenous flora was recorded in the best conditions, mainly because it is located in rugged areas and hardly accessible slopes, if accessible at all. The indigenous vegetation is mostly composed of herbs and shrubs.

Here, two relevant specimens of sea birds can be found, namely the Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) and the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). At Terra Chã there is a recently restored white stone house, having in mind to propagate endemic plants, to reintroduce them into the environment and to carry forward scientific research.

Underneath Terra Chã, a cave named as Furna dos Homiziados can be seen. It was an old hideaway for outlaws where, according to the tradition, several people found shelter on their escape from justice or from Algerian pirate raids. A legend tells that in one of those emergencies the roof collapsed, burying all those who were there.

Various natural sightseeing spots on this trail allow the walker to see a great deal of the Porto Santo Island, from Serra de Dentro, Pico do Concelho, Ilhéu de Cima, Pico do Maçarico, Portela, Rocha de Nossa Senhora, the city, part of the beach, Pico Ana Ferreira, Espigão dos Morenos, to Calheta and Ilhéu de Baixo.

This trail was built with the purpose of giving way to cargo mules, by the time barley was farmed by locals at Terra Chã. Return is done on the same footpath.



## Description

Distance: 2,7 Km (+ 2,7 Km return)

Time: 1h30

Highest point: 450 m

Lowest point: 184 m

Start: E.R. 111

Finish: E.R. Terra Chã

## Warning

Water springs unavailable, take drinking water.

## Walking Code

- Avoid noise or actions against nature.
- Do not take plants or animal with you.
- Do not throw rubbish away (litters 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 routes.
- Don't take risks.

## Contacts

Emergency number	112
Civil Protection	291700112
Volunteer Fire Department (Porto Santo)	291980060
Tourist Office (Porto Santo)	291982361
Taxis (Porto Santo)	291982334

## Local Festivities

- Festa de São João - St. John (24 June)
- Festa de Nossa Senhora da Graça (14 and 15 August)

## Handcrafts

Palm tree-leaf hats; Embroidered palm tree sprouts; Bamboo baskets; Clay statuettes.

## Promotor



## Technical information

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Coordination: Ana Sé

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REPRODUCTION INTERDICT

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1

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e Terra Chã

Porto Santo Island Foothpaths

