

15 From Albufeira to Olhos de Agua

Along the rugged, broken cliff coastline to delightful bathing bays

Albufeira – Praia da Oura – Praia da Balaia – Olhos de Agua

Starting point: Albufeira, 10 m. Bus station. By car: signposted starting from the IP 1 and the N 125. Parking possible along the streets leading to the centre.

Destination: Olhos de Agua, 10 m. Station for the bus line Albufeira – Falésia on the main road 1 km north of the beach. By car: from Albufeira towards Quarteira, past the Vale Navio turn right. Parking possible directly at the beach.

Walking times: Albufeira – Praia da Oura

1¼ hr, Praia da Oura – Praia da Balaia ¾ hr, Praia da Balaia – Olhos de Agua ½ hr; total time 2½ hr (8.7 km).

Ascent: 50 – 150 m depending on the route conditions.

Grade: Easy walk along cliff paths and over stretches of sandy, sometimes rocky, beach.

Refreshments: At the starting point and destination numerous restaurants. Bars and cafés on all the beaches en route.

A marvellous walk, always keeping to the seashore – but only possible 3 hours before and after low tide! All along this route, the ocean presents us with the tangy smell of sea air and a multitude of lovely spots for swimming. At high tide, the sea encroaches upon the enticing routes along the cliffs, making these impassable and leaving only the beaches free of tidewater. For the »bathing walker«, who spent too long a time romping in the waves, trails heading inland and to a nearby bus stop can be taken at every beach.

From the bus station in **Albufeira's centre**, follow the Av. da Liberdade south direction to Largo Eng. Duarte Pacheco, one of the prettiest, flower-adorned squares in the town. Turn right here and after a few metres, turn left in the Rua 5 da Outubro. The pedestrian tunnel brings us to the beach. Here, turn left following the seashore east. During low tide, walk to



Only possible at low tide: the seashore walk at Olhos de Agua.

the other side of the old fishermen's harbour and then continue below the cliffs. Otherwise, ascend the steps to the left climbing to Rua G. Coutinho. Follow this to the rest-cure home INATEL then descend right to the sandy beach **Praia dos Alemanos**. The looming, sheer rock face cliffs below the **Forte S. João** can easily be skirted around in 2 km by climbing the concrete steps left. A panoramic path follows, heading above the rocky cliffs until descending over steps after 600 m down to the sandy inlet **Praia da Oura**.

To skirt around the next cliffs, scramble over rocks that can only be used during low tide. Follow the coastline for 1 km to **Praia da Balaia** on the other

side of the next cape. The appellation discloses the fact that in this peaceful inlet, beached whales have met their fate. The route ahead changes between stretches of rocks and the sandy beach Praia de Maria Luísa until reaching the quaint little fishermen's harbour **Olhos de Agua** below the next set of cliffs. The peculiar attraction of the sandy beach for this relatively tourist-oriented village lies in the fresh water springs that are only visible during low tide.

