

Barril Beach Trail



Old fishing camp and anchor cemetery

Civil Parish: Santa Luzia

Municipality: Tavira

Location: Pedras d'El Rei

How to get there: from Faro, take the A22 (Via do Infante) or the N125 towards Tavira; about 2 km east of Luz de Tavira, head to the village of Pedras d'El Rei. You can park in the parking lot near the beach and along the road connecting the village to Santa Luzia.

Type: walking

Circular trail: no, linear

Distance: 3 km (there and back)

Average duration: 2h

Cumulative elevation gain: 20 metres D+

Type of path: dirt and cement paths, wooden walkways and sandy shore.

When to visit: all year

Approval: no

Signposted: no, but there are information billboards.

Specific features: the trail is located in the Ria Formosa Natural Park (PNRF) and the Ria Formosa/Castro Marim Natura 2000 Site.

Points of interest: salt march and dunes flora and fauna, aquatic birds, landscapes of Ria Formosa.

Owners: public paths

Responsible Party: Tavira Municipal Council



Pedestrian bridge connecting Pedras d'El Rei and the island of Tavira



Fiddler crab (*Uca tangeri*), visible in the mud during low tide

This hike leads you to Barril beach, to where you can also go by tram. The trail crosses the Tavira channel, through the Barril's drawbridge, and a considerable area of salt marsh and dunes.

A – The first 600 metres of the trail cross Ria Formosa's typical salt marshes, with its complex network of snaking watercourses, silt banks and the salt marsh's peculiar vegetation. The path is lined by a plant exclusive to the south, the *Limoniastrum monopetalum*, a shrub of exuberant lilac foliage. During your journey, you can easily see (especially during the low tide) iconic species like the *Uca tangeri* crab and aquatic birds such as herons, sanderlings, terns, ringed plovers, red knots, black-winged stilts and pied avocets.

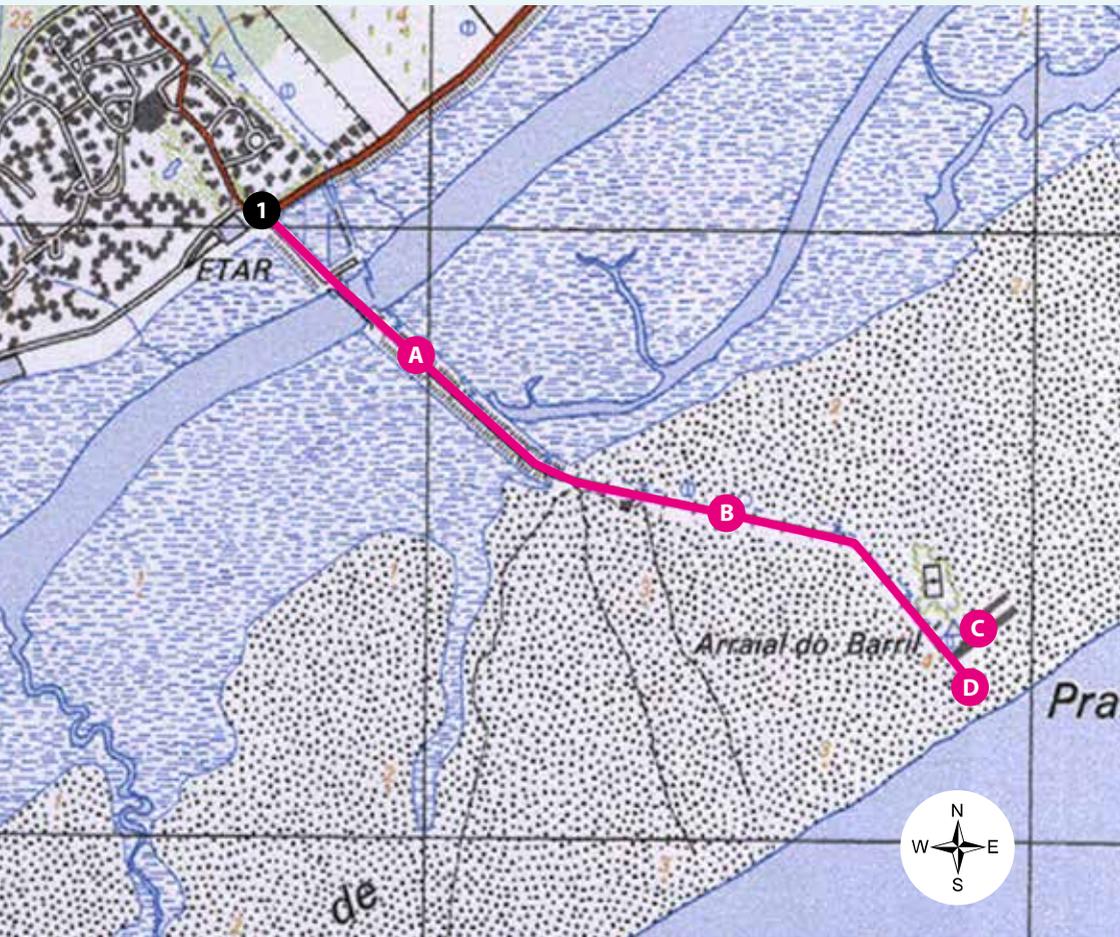
B – The succulent plants common in saline areas gradually give way to beds of reeds and bulrushes, indicative of an upwelling of fresh or brackish waters. The path then continues over a vast stretch of dune with low vegetation, typical of more stable sands. The curry plant, a golden scrub which, as

the name indicates, smells intensely of curry, takes over the landscape and the fragrances in the air.

C – Here you can find various support facilities for use at the beach. They are at an old fishing camp, which used to support the fishermen during the summer months (mainly for tuna fishing). In its heyday this fishing camp, created in 1841, would have been a home to 80 fishermen and their families. On the beach you can see a cemetery of anchors that were used for pound nets.

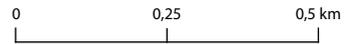
D – On the sea-facing side of the dunes grow small plants well-adapted to the shifting sands, like the seashore false bindweed, the sea holly and the European searocket. Behind them there's the jaunty sea daffodil and the seagrass, whose long roots help shape the dunes. The yellow-legged gull, the Mediterranean gull and the common tern are usual visitors to the beach.

Barril Beach Trail



1 Start of the trail

37° 05' 35.02" N 7° 40' 30.79" W



 Trail

