

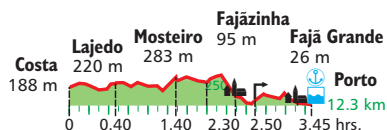
66 From Costa to Fajã Grande

3.45 hrs.



From village to village along the west coast

An old connecting trail runs along the entire western coastline. From its southernmost end in Costa, the trail leads in steady up and down walking through all of the settlements located on the island's west coast. En route, we can enjoy many lovely views of the rugged coastline and the offshore islands.



Starting point: The chapel in Costa, 188m.

Destination: The harbour in Fajã Grande, 10m.

Height difference: A total of 610m in ascent and 790m in descent.

Grade: Mostly along cobbled cart tracks

that are overgrown with grass. Very slippery when wet. In the settlements, along streets.

Refreshment: Bars and restaurants in Fajãzinha and Fajã Grande.

Alternative: Ending the walk in Cuada (400m, 10 mins. from the main route): at the first fork after crossing the bridge spanning the Ribeira Grande, turn right and climb steadily up along the footpath until reaching the village of Cuada.

Combinations possible with Walks 64, 65, 67 and 68.

Bathing: At the harbour area in Fajã Grande.

The village centre of Fajãzinha at the Rossio square.

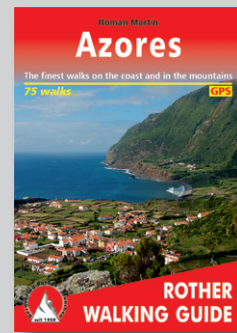


Start off at the little **chapel** below the old schoolhouse in **Costa do Lajedo** by descending along the narrow street for a few strides towards the coast. Just when meeting up with the old milk collection point, turn right onto a dirt trail which at first ascends to the massif Rocha do Pico but then descends again. A good 15 mins. later, the trail becomes a tarmac road. Just before this happens, however, turn left onto a grassy trail. The trail leads into the valley of the Ribeira do Campanário which we cross over below Lajedo. A cobblestone trail climbs up to the street where we turn left and then reach the village centre of **Lajedo** (40 mins.).

At the church, turn right and 40m on, turn left onto the Rua Dr. Caetano Tomaz. We have already crossed through the tiny village when we meet up with a trail board. The road ends just past the trail board; now follow the grassy trail to the left to continue. At the fork 100m on, bear left again to keep on the trail. From now on, keep following the old, cobbled donkey track which leads in steady up and down walking while crossing a number of stream beds. 25 mins. of walking along the donkey trail, reach the old stone bridge spanning the **Ribeira da Lapa** with the basalt massif Rocha dos Bordões towering above.

15 mins. later, reach the Ribeira do Fundão which must be forded via boulders. Past this point, the trail climbs up again and finally reaches the street in **Mosteiro** at an electricity sub-station (1 hr. 40 mins.). Turn





left onto the street and descend past the church until the street hooks off to the right at the village limits. Now follow a concrete trail straight on to continue until reaching a concrete bridge spanning the Ribeira do Mosteiro. Past the bridge, a cart track continues on, leading past a hay barn and then ascends to the road. Turn left onto the road. 10 mins. later, the road veers to the right and climbs down to the hamlet of **Caldeira**, abandoned since 1992; the natural stone-built houses here have succumbed to the forces of nature (2 hrs. 5 mins.).

Where the trail levels out again and 50m before reaching a bridge, turn left onto a grassy trail to continue towards a natural stone-built house. At the fork past the house, turn right onto a sunken trail to finally ascend to the road again. Turn left onto the road and ascend the slope for a somewhat strenuous 5-minute climb. Before reaching a left-hand bend and at a water reservoir, turn left onto a grassy trail. Soon reach the top and then begin the descent to **Fajãzinha** along old cobblestones.

15 mins. later, reach the first houses and also a concrete trail. Pass the church and now, after a total of 2 hrs. 30 mins., reach the village square (*Rossio*) in the village centre. Just past an electricity sub-station, turn left and follow the street until it hooks off to the right. Here, continue straight

Mosteiro at the foot of the rock formation Rocha dos Bordões.



Fajãzinha on Flores' attractive west coast.

ahead onto the cart track on the right-hand side – there are two to choose from – and descend (the left-hand track leads for a couple of metres to the ruins of the mills at Cabeço do Outeiro.) At the bottom, meet up again with the road and turn left to continue on to the next left-hand bend. At this point, a footpath continues straight on through the reeds and rushes to reach the rebuilt bridge spanning the **Ribeira Grande**. Past the bridge, the traces of a path climb up through the grass. Now above the coast, an old cart track ascends further. 100m on, the trail forks; the right-hand trail descends to Cuada (the alternative route).

We, however, continue straight on to ascend and 15 mins. later, meet up with a breach in the wall on the side of the trail at a landslide; on the other side, a donkey trail continues, becoming steadily more pleasant and then passes a cattle trough a good 10 mins. later. 70m on, clearly before reaching the first houses of the village, an excursion is worth-while: turn left to ascend to the old **whale-spotter's outlook** (*vigia*). The path ascends steeply at the outset, sometimes leading over steps, but will soon level out again. At the top, enjoy a marvellous view of the promontory with Fajã Grande.

Afterwards, the donkey trail descends to return to the main road. Turn left onto the road and then keep straight on for 10 mins. crossing through **Fajã Grande** until reaching the **harbour** at the end of the street.