

Natural Park of Litoral Norte



Located between the rivers and the sea, the North Coast Natural Park stretches for nearly 18 kilometres between the Cávado River estuary and the village of Apúlia in a line of white sand dunes. Dotted with low vegetation that helps to anchor the sand, these dunes act as a natural barrier against the sea winds that give them their shape and prevent the ocean from encroaching upon the nearby farmland.

Their soft, harmonious colours, which take on warm hues at dusk, make this one of the most beautiful landscapes on the Portuguese coast. The traditional windmills, blending perfectly into their natural surroundings, no longer grind corn but are now used as summer homes.

The North Coast Natural Park is one of the main bathing areas in northern Portugal and features nearly deserted beaches lapped by transparent waters, ideal for long, invigorating walks.

To experience the protected area in its entirety, stand back slightly from the sea's edge. Fill your lungs with the pure air of the Ofir Pine Forest and follow the Natural Park's suggested hiking trail along the banks of the Cávado River, where you will spot migratory birds such as capped herons, terns, mallards and herring gulls.

The farmland that you see from a distance has the distinctive feature of being fertilised by "sargasso", the seaweed washed up onto the beaches by the ocean. Indeed, the harvesting of sargasso has been the traditional occupation of the men of this region for centuries, and the "Sargaceiro of Apúlia" (Sargasso harvester) is one of the most traditional characters in the folklore of this region.

Declared

Category: Natural Park

Area: 8,761 ha.

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Municipalities in the province of Braga: Esposende

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