

Carvoeiro

Faro District · Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Carvoeiro is a small resort town on the central Algarve coast, in the municipality of Lagoa. It grew from a fishing village around a sandy beach set between low cliffs. Today it has restaurants, bars and holiday villas, with golden limestone cliffs, sea caves and coves all around.

It suits a beach holiday with short walks and boat trips. Most visitors stay near the beach or on the hills above it. Algar Seco is a short walk away. The Benagil caves and Praia da Marinha are a few minutes by car, and the town works as a base for the central Algarve.

When to visit

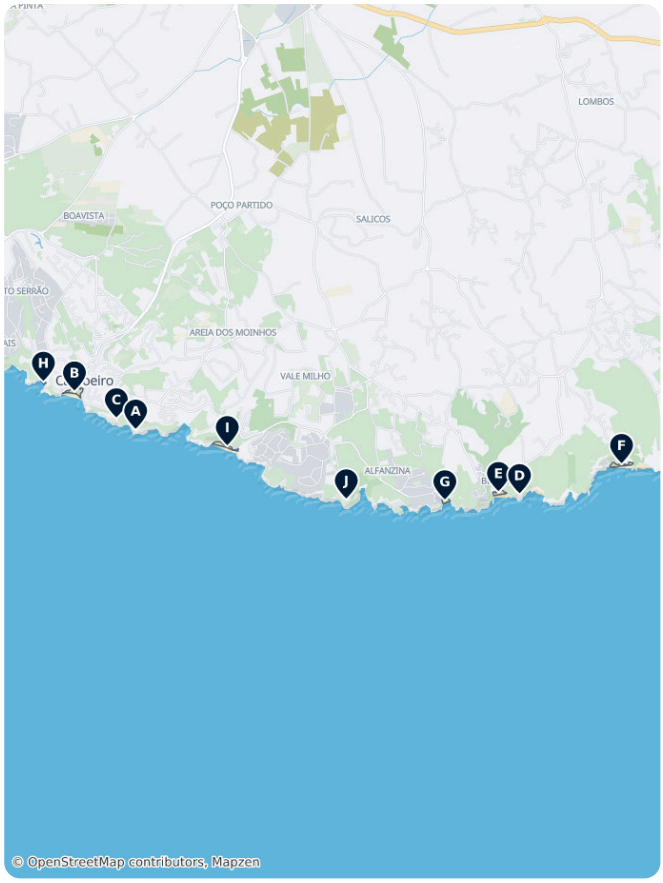
May, June and September are the best months. The weather is warm and dry, the beaches are less crowded and boat trips run often. The sea is warmest from August to October. July and August are hot and busy, and parking is hard. Winter is mild but wet, and some seasonal businesses close.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for hiking	16° / 19°	9° / 4°	Dry air
February	Great Great for hiking	17° / 20°	9° / 4°	Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	19° / 24°	11° / 7°	Dry air
April	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 26°	12° / 9°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 31°	14° / 11°	☀ 22 sunny days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	28° / 34°	17° / 14°	☀ 23 sunny days · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for the beach	30° / 35°	19° / 16°	☀ 28 sunny days · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for watersports	31° / 35°	19° / 16°	☀ 28 sunny days · UV 8 (Very high)
September	Great Great for watersports	27° / 33°	18° / 15°	☀ 23 sunny days · Calm winds
October	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 30°	16° / 12°	Calm winds
November	Great Great for hiking	19° / 23°	12° / 7°	Dry air
December	Good Good for hiking	17° / 19°	10° / 5°	Dry air

Best months: April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- **A** Algar Seco is the best-known sight in town. Wind and waves have carved the red-orange cliffs into caves, arches and a blowhole. It is a 12-minute walk from the beach along a clifftop path. Go late in the day for the light.
- **B** Praia do Carvoeiro is the small sandy beach in the middle of the village, with rock formations on both sides. Bars and restaurants stand right behind it, and boat trips leave from the sand.
- **C** Passadiços do Carvoeiro is a wooden walkway of about 600 m along the cliff top. It links the village to Algar Seco and is suitable for families.
- **D** Benagil Cave is the famous sea cave with a round opening in its roof and a small beach inside. You reach it by boat or guided kayak from the coast around Carvoeiro and Benagil.
- **E** Praia de Benagil is a small beach in the old fishing hamlet of Benagil. It is the starting point for many cave trips.
- **F** Praia da Marinha is one of the most photographed beaches in Portugal. Steep stairs lead down to clear water and tall rock stacks. It is a short drive east of Carvoeiro.
- **G** Praia do Carvalho is a small beach with no facilities, reached through a rock tunnel and stairs. It is quiet and good for a swim.
- **H** Praia do Paraíso is a small beach west of the village. Steps cut into the cliff lead down to it.
- **I** Praia de Vale Centianes is a calm beach in a narrow valley east of town. It is also an end point of the Seven Hanging Valleys trail.
- **J** Farol de Alfanzina is a lighthouse on the cliffs about 3 km along the coast, with open sea views.

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What to experience

Carvoeiro is known for boat trips, cliff walks and sunsets.

- Take a boat or guided kayak trip along the coast to the Benagil caves. Boats leave from Praia do Carvoeiro and Benagil. Swimming in the cave and landing on its beach are not allowed, and kayaks need a certified guide.
- Walk the Seven Hanging Valleys trail. It runs 5.6 km along the cliffs between Praia de Vale Centianes and Praia da Marinha. Carry water and avoid the middle of the day in summer.
- Watch the sunset from the clifftops around Algar Seco.
- Spend a morning at a small cove, such as Praia do Carvalho, before the day-trip boats arrive.

Day trips

Carvoeiro is central, so many towns are within an hour by car.



- A Silves: about 25 minutes by car. A red-stone castle and a cathedral stand in this inland town.
- Ferragudo: about 20 minutes by car. A small fishing village at the mouth of the Arade river, with beaches and a fort.
- B Portimão: about 25 minutes by car, or 35 minutes by bus. A large town with the wide Praia da Rocha beach and a fishing quarter.
- C Albufeira: about 35 minutes by car. A busy resort town with an old centre above the beach.
- D Lagos: about 35 minutes by car. A walled old town and the cliffs and caves of Ponta da Piedade.
- E Monchique: about 50 minutes by car. A cool, forested hill town with views to the coast from Foia, the highest point in the Algarve.
- F Sagres: about 1 hour by car. Windy cliffs at the far southwest corner of Europe, with a fortress and the Cabo de São Vicente lighthouse.

Where to explore

Nearby on the coast:

- Portimão and Silves lie to the west and northwest.
- Albufeira and Vilamoura lie to the east.

Further west:

- Lagos, Sagres and Aljezur for the western coast and wild Atlantic beaches.
- Monchique for the hills inland.

Further east:

- Faro and Olhão for the airport city and the lagoon coast.
- Tavira and Ria Formosa for islands and quiet towns.

Getting there

- By air: Faro Airport (FAO) is the main gateway, about 65 km away. A taxi, transfer or rental car takes about 45 minutes. Public transport has no direct link and takes about 2.5 hours with changes.
- By train: The nearest station is Estômbar-Lagoa on the Algarve line, north of the village. Continue by local bus or taxi. Book on Comboios de Portugal.
- By bus: Local buses run to Lagoa (about 15 minutes) and Portimão (about 35 minutes). Change at Lagoa for Albufeira and Faro.
- By car: The A22 motorway reaches Lagoa, then a local road leads to Carvoeiro.

Getting around

- On foot: The village centre is small, but the streets are steep in places. The beach, shops and restaurants are close together. Algar Seco is about 750 m from the beach on a clifftop path.
- Local transport: Buses run to Lagoa and Portimão. They do not reach the more remote beaches.
- Taxi: Taxis are useful for Benagil, Praia da Marinha and Praia do Carvalho.
- Cycling: The hills and cliff roads are steep, so cycling suits only fit riders.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The village centre and beach are compact, but the streets and cliff paths are steep in places.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

The hills and cliff roads are steep.

Driving

- Is a car worth it? Not for the village and its beach. Yes for Praia da Marinha, Benagil and day trips along the coast.
- Parking near the beach is very limited, so park higher up in town and walk down. The car park at Algar Seco often fills up in summer. The clifftop car park at Praia da Marinha also fills early.
- Motorway: The A22 along the Algarve has been toll-free since 1 January 2025.

Food & drink

Seafood is the main reason to eat out. Look for grilled fish, grilled sardines in summer and cataplana, a seafood stew cooked in a copper pan.

Restaurants cluster around the beach and the streets behind it, and along Estrada do Farol. A few beach restaurants, such as at Praia da Marinha, are known for fresh fish. Book ahead in July and August.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Caldo Verde
A simple, comforting soup of shredded kale, potato, and slices of chourico sausage.

Francesinha
A hearty Porto specialty: a meat-stuffed sandwich covered in melted cheese and a spiced tomato-beer sauce.

DINNER

Bacalhau
Salt cod, Portugal's national dish, said to be prepared in hundreds of different ways across the country.

Sardinhas Assadas
Charcoal-grilled sardines, especially popular in summer street festivals and along the coast.

Arroz de Marisco
A rich, soupy seafood rice, similar to paella but wetter, packed with shellfish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Pastel de Nata
A small custard tart in flaky pastry, best eaten warm with cinnamon and sugar.

DRINKS

Vinho Verde
A young, light, slightly sparkling white wine from northern Portugal, meant to be drunk within a year of harvest.

Port Wine · Vinho do Porto
A fortified wine from the Douro Valley, aged in cellars around Porto, ranging from sweet ruby to complex aged tawny styles.

Ginjinha · Ginãa
A sweet liqueur made from sour cherries, traditionally served in a small cup, sometimes with a cherry at the bottom.

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Safety & health

Carvoeiro is safe for visitors. The main risk is petty theft. Do not leave valuables in parked cars, especially at beach and viewpoint car parks.

The cliffs are the main physical danger. Stay behind the edge and on marked paths. Stairs to the beaches can be steep and slippery. Do not sit under cliffs, because rocks can fall. Boats come and go at the main beach, so swim close to the shore and check the sea flags. The sun is strong from May to September.

History

The area was settled in Roman times. Its fishing hamlet is recorded under an old Islamic-era name, Caboiere. Pirates often raided this coast, and a small fort and chapel stood above the beach to watch the sea. The fort was built in 1670 as part of Algarve coastal defences, and little of it remains.

Fishing was the main work for most of the village's history. Tourism began in the 1960s and changed the town. Carvoeiro became its own parish in 1985 and received town status in 2001. The beach, Praia do Carvoeiro, is still the centre of village life.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



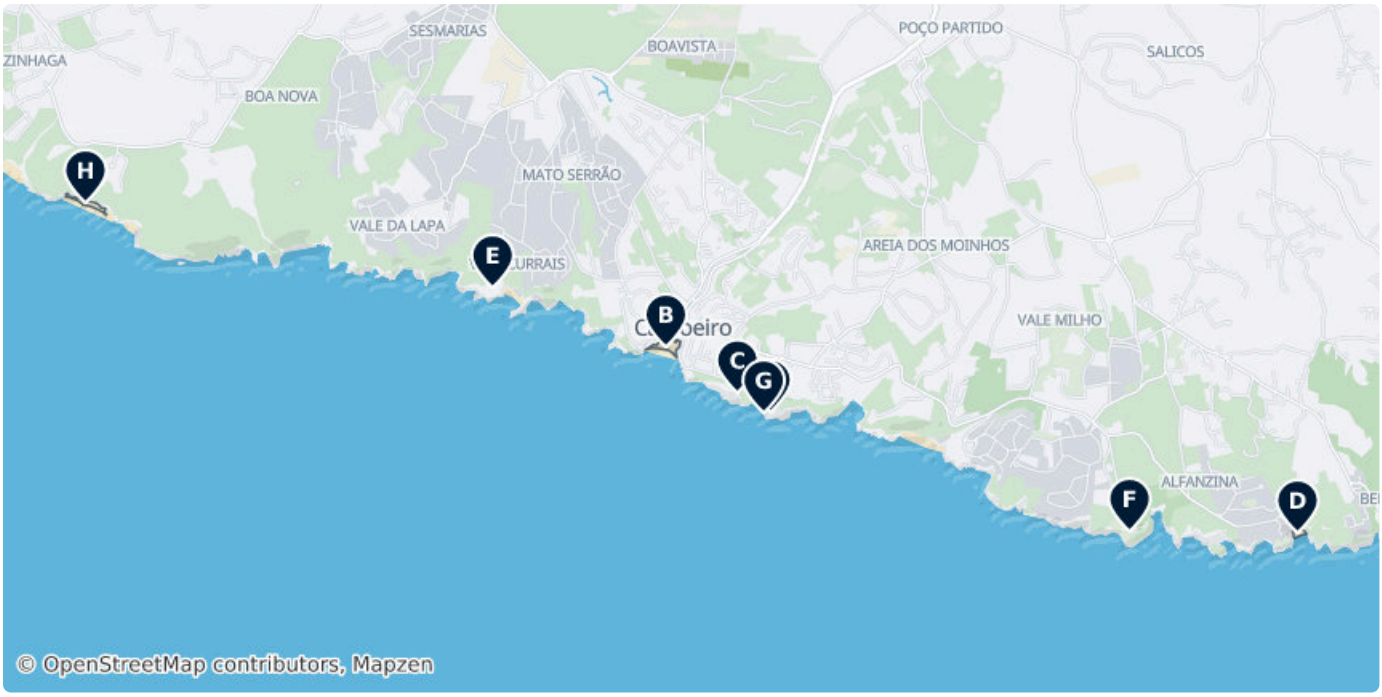
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Portuguese

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Carvoeiro's Coastal Crown Jewels

Carvoeiro’s coastline is defined by the Seven Hanging Valleys trail and intricate limestone formations. This selection features the Algar Seco rock pools and the Carvoeiro Boardwalk, which provides pedestrian access along the cliff tops. Key sites include Praia do Carvalho, accessed via a man-made tunnel, and the 1920s Alfanzina Lighthouse. These locations showcase the region's sea caves, such as A Boneca, and secluded beaches like Praia da Afurada, highlighting the geological diversity of the Algarve’s central coast.





A Carvoeiro

Carvoeiro is a town and a former civil parish in the municipality of Lagoa, Algarve, Portugal.

Estrada do Algar Seco, Carvoeiro 8400, Portugal
(37.09281, -8.46552)

Mo–Su

Open 24/7



B Carvoeiro Beach

Carvoeiro is a town and a former civil parish in the municipality of Lagoa, Algarve, Portugal.

22 Estrada do Monte Paraíso, Carvoeiro 8400, Portugal
(37.09613, -8.47219)

carvoeiro.com/Beaches/carvoeiro

C Carvoeiro Boardwalk

An elevated wooden walkway stretching 570 meters along the clifftops, connecting the ruins of the Fort of Nossa Senhora da Encarnação to the Algar Seco rock formations.

Estrada do Algar Seco, 8400-512 Praia do Carvoeiro (37.09380, -8.46763)

bit.ly/3QCbw2s



D Praia do Carvalho

A secluded beach accessible through a man-made tunnel carved into the limestone cliffs. It is known for its clear waters and high surrounding rock walls.

(Unnamed Road), 8400, Portugal (37.08667, -8.43185)



E Algar

A natural limestone cave and sinkhole characteristic of the Algarve's karst landscape.

8400, Portugal (37.09914, -8.48326)



F Alfanzina Lighthouse

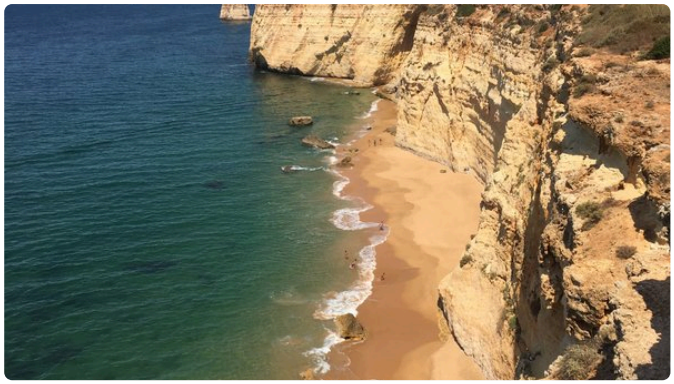
Established in 1920 on a rocky promontory, this lighthouse features a 23-meter square masonry tower that guides vessels along the rugged Lagoa coastline.

8400, Portugal (37.08675, -8.44258)

G A Boneca

A famous cave within the Algar Seco formation featuring two natural openings that resemble eyes, offering framed views of the Atlantic Ocean.

Estrada do Algar Seco, 8400-505 Carvoeiro, Portugal (37.09277, -8.46594)



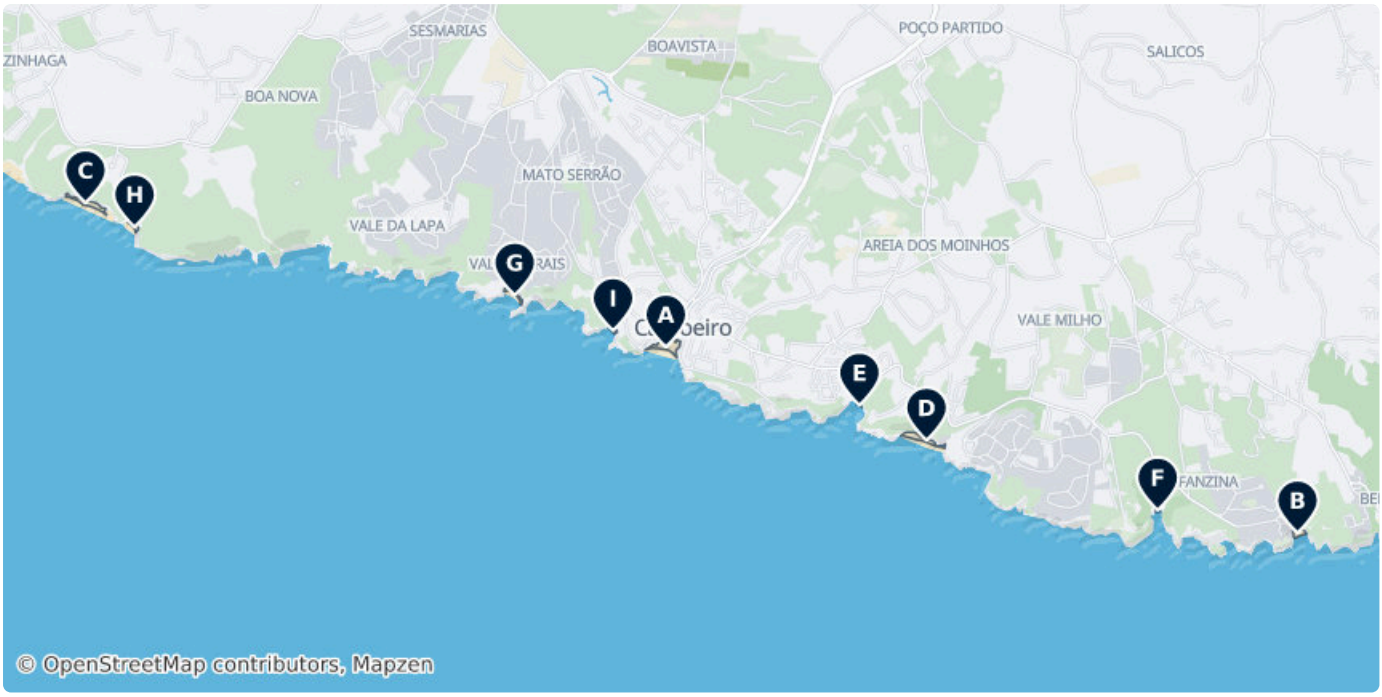
H Praia da Afurada

A remote beach flanked by high cliffs, primarily accessible by sea or via challenging coastal paths.

Portugal (37.10347, -8.50927)

Algarve's Best Beaches

This selection of beaches around Carvoeiro showcases the Algarve's characteristic limestone cliffs and turquoise waters. It includes the central town beach and more secluded spots like Praia do Carvalho, reached via a man-made tunnel through the rock. Several locations, such as Praia de Vale Centianes, serve as access points for the Seven Hanging Valleys coastal trail. Visitors will find a mix of accessible sandy stretches with facilities and hidden coves reachable only by steep staircases or by sea.





A Carvoeiro Beach

Carvoeiro is a town and a former civil parish in the municipality of Lagoa, Algarve, Portugal.

22 Estrada do Monte Paraíso, Carvoeiro 8400, Portugal (37.09613, -8.47219)

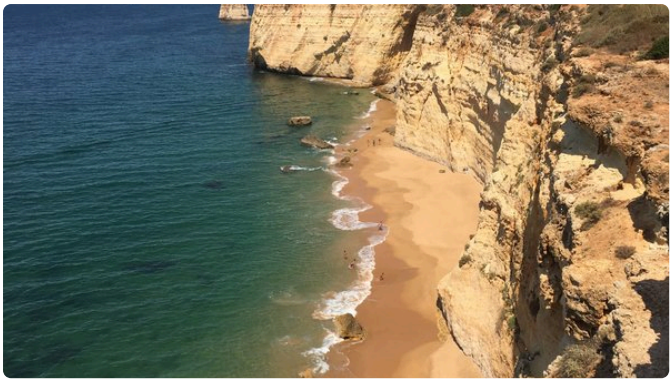
carvoeiro.com/Beaches/carvoeiro



B Praia do Carvalho

Accessible through a man-made tunnel carved into the limestone cliffs. This sheltered cove is known for its deep waters and high rock walls.

(Unnamed Road), 8400, Portugal (37.08667, -8.43185)



C Praia da Afurada

A secluded sandy cove surrounded by high cliffs, primarily accessible by boat or a difficult coastal path.

Portugal (37.10347, -8.50927)

D Praia de Vale Centianes

A wide sandy beach framed by steep yellow cliffs. It serves as the western trailhead for the Seven Hanging Valleys scenic coastal walk.

8400, Portugal (37.09138, -8.45555)

E Praia do Vale Covo

A small sandy cove situated at the base of a large sea cave known as the Algar de Vale Covo.

Portugal (37.09317, -8.45983)

F Praia do Vale Espinhaço

A quiet, narrow beach flanked by high cliffs, located between Carvoeiro and Benagil. It is often reached by sea due to the steep terrain.

8400, Portugal (37.08782, -8.44077)

G Praia dos Castelos

Characterized by distinctive rock stacks and formations rising from the sea. This small sandy beach is accessible via a staircase from the clifftop.

(37.09877, -8.48185)

H Praia do Mato

A small, isolated beach located at the bottom of steep cliffs, offering a quiet alternative to the busier central town beaches.

(37.10224, -8.50613)

I Praia do Paraíso

A small, shell-shaped cove reached by a long, steep white staircase descending the cliffside. It is located just west of the Carvoeiro town center.

(37.09697, -8.47557)

Portugal's Natural Wonders

Explore the distinct geological and historical landmarks of the Carvoeiro coastline. This selection features natural limestone formations, including vertical sinkholes and sea caves like A Boneca, known for its twin natural windows facing the Atlantic. The list also highlights the 1920s Alfanzina Lighthouse, the Pias peak, and the Convento de São José, which preserves prehistoric megaliths within its 18th-century grounds, illustrating the region's transition from ancient settlement to maritime importance.





A Algar

A vertical limestone sinkhole characteristic of the Algarve's karst landscape, formed by the natural erosion of the coastal plateau.

8400, Portugal (37.09914, -8.48326)



B Alfanzina Lighthouse

Built in 1920, this active lighthouse features a square masonry tower and serves as a navigational aid along the rocky cliffs of Lagoa.

8400, Portugal (37.08675, -8.44258)

C A Boneca

A sea cave accessible via a cliffside path, featuring two distinct natural openings that look out over the ocean.

Estrada do Algar Seco, 8400-505 Carvoeiro, Portugal
(37.09277, -8.46594)

D Convento de São José

An 18th-century former convent that now serves as a cultural center and displays a prehistoric menhir found in the local area.

(37.13691, -8.45362)

E Pias

A natural elevation providing a vantage point over the surrounding limestone hills and the coastal landscape near Carvoeiro.

(Unnamed Road), Carvoeiro 8400, Portugal
(37.11593, -8.48127)

valentim.org/cume/46288

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