

Nazaré

Leiria District · Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Nazaré is a Portuguese fishing town on the Atlantic coast, about 120 km north of Lisbon. It has two faces. In summer it is a lively beach resort with a wide sandy bay. In winter it is known worldwide for some of the biggest surfable waves on Earth.

The town has three parts. Praia is the flat beachfront with restaurants and shops. Sítio is the old village on the cliff above. Pederneira is a quieter hilltop village. It suits a short stay of one to three nights, and it works well as a base for the Oeste region coast.

When to visit

Summer is the best time for the beach. Days are warm and dry, but the Atlantic stays cold. Spring and early autumn are calmer and less crowded. Winters are mild but wet and windy.

Big waves come in winter, mostly from about October to February. They depend on the Atlantic swell, so the biggest days are hard to predict. A pro tow-surfing event is held here most winters. Check the forecast and watch from the fort.

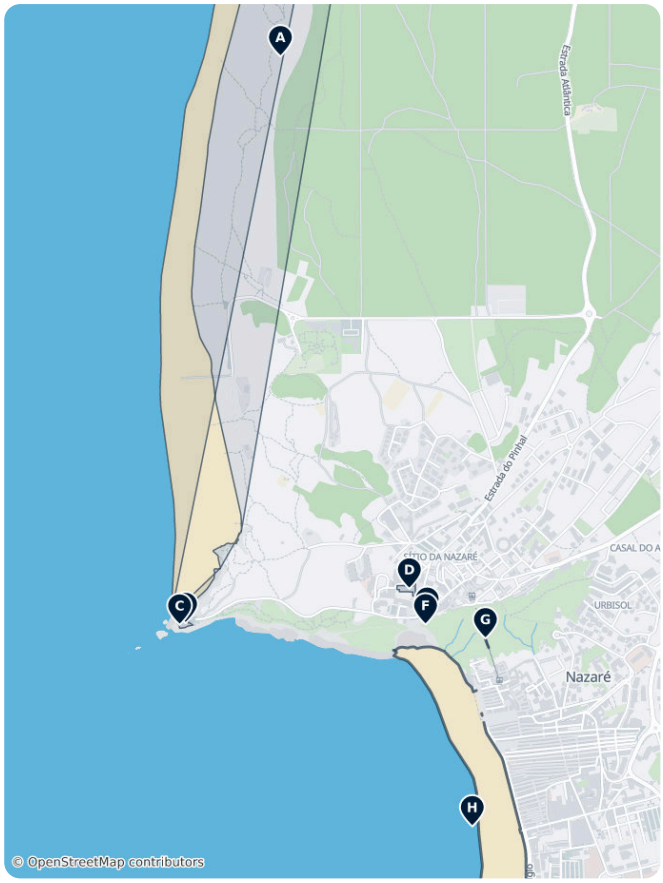
The town festival honours Our Lady of Nazaré. It peaks around 8 September, with processions, folk dancing and fireworks.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for sightseeing	14° / 18° Feels like 11°	9° / 4°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Good Good for sightseeing	15° / 19° Feels like 12°	9° / 5°	Dry air
March	Good Good for sightseeing	17° / 23° Feels like 14°	10° / 7°	Dry air
April	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 25°	12° / 9°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 28°	14° / 11°	Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 30°	16° / 14°	
July	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 31°	17° / 15°	20 sunny days · Humid air · UV 8 (Very high)
August	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 32°	18° / 16°	21 sunny days · Humid air
September	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 30°	17° / 14°	
October	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 27°	15° / 11°	
November	Good Good for sightseeing	17° / 21°	12° / 7°	13 rainy days · Dry air
December	Fair Fair for sightseeing	15° / 18° Feels like 12°	10° / 5°	12 rainy days · Dry air

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

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

Top sights



- A Praia do Norte is the beach where the giant waves break, shaped by a deep underwater canyon. The world record for the largest wave surfed, 26.21 m, was set here in 2020. In calm weather it is a wide, quiet beach.
- B Forte de São Miguel Arcanjo is a 16th-century fort on the headland. It is the best place to watch the big waves and also holds exhibitions on local history and surfing.
- C Farol da Nazaré stands next to the fort. The hillside around it is a popular viewing spot on big-wave days.
- D Santuário de Nossa Senhora da Nazaré is the town's main church in Sítio. It was founded in 1377 and later rebuilt in Baroque style. It holds the statue of Our Lady of Nazaré.
- E Capela da Memória is a small chapel on the cliff edge in Sítio. It marks the place of the town's best-known legend.
- F Miradouro do Sítio da Nazaré looks down over the beach, the rooftops and the bay. It is a good place for sunset.
- G Elevador da Nazaré is a funicular from 1889 that links Praia and Sítio. The ride is short and the views are wide.
- H Praia da Nazaré is the main town beach, a long curve of sand beside the promenade. It is the place for swimming and sunbathing in summer.

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What to experience

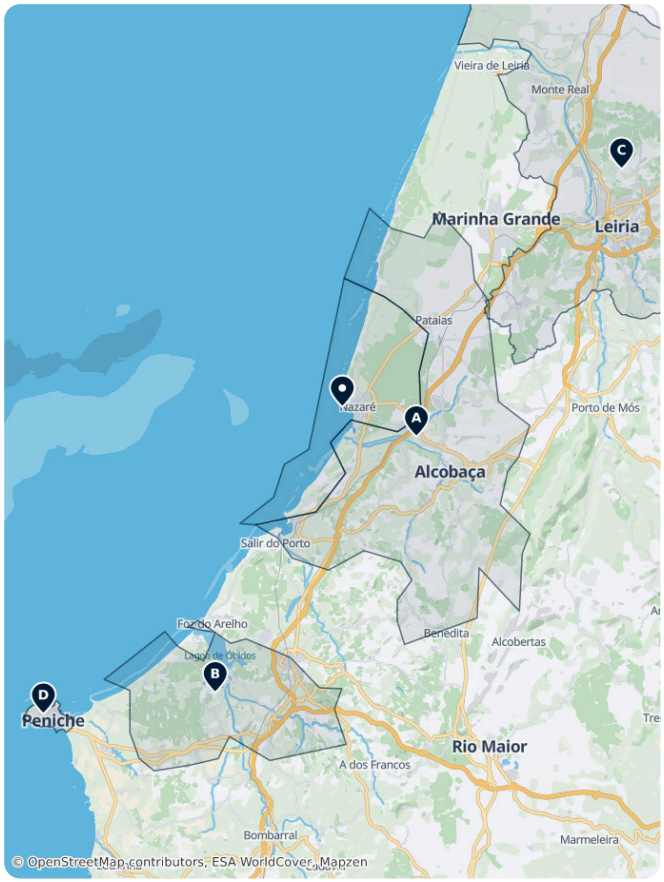
Most good experiences here depend on the season and the sea.

- Watch a big-wave day from the fort or the lighthouse hill in winter. Crowds gather when a large swell arrives, so come early.
- See the winter tow-surfing event, held at Praia do Norte most years. It is part of the big-wave surfing tour.
- Come for the town festival around 8 September. It lasts about ten days and includes processions, bullfights, folk dancing and fireworks.

Day trips

Several historic towns lie within an hour, so Nazaré works well as a base. Times are one way.

- A Alcobaça: about 15 min by bus or car. It has a large medieval monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- B Óbidos: about 35 min by direct bus. It is a walled hilltop town with whitewashed streets.
- C Leiria: about 35 min by bus. It has a hilltop castle and a lively old centre.
- D Peniche: about 50 min by bus. It is a surf town with a fortress. Boats to the Berlengas Islands leave from here.
- Fátima: about 1 hour by bus, with a change. It is one of Europe's main Catholic pilgrimage sites.



Where to explore

- Medieval towns: Alcobaça, Batalha and Óbidos.
- Bigger city nearby: Leiria.
- Coast and nature: Berlengas Islands and Serras de Aire e Candeeiros Nature Park.
- The wider region: Oeste region.

Getting there

- By air: The nearest major airport is Lisbon (LIS), about 120 km away by road. Some coaches run from the airport to Nazaré, or you can change at Lisbon's Sete Rios coach station. Porto (OPO) is much farther.
- By bus: This is the easiest option. Rede Expressos and FlixBus run to Nazaré's bus station from Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Aveiro, Peniche and Leiria. Lisbon takes about 1.5 to 2 hours. Fares start at about 4 €, and booking online in advance is cheapest.
- By train: Nazaré has no station. The nearest is Valado dos Frades, on the Oeste line, outside town. Check times on CP Comboios de Portugal. There is no direct train from Lisbon, so the bus is usually much simpler.

Getting around

- Local bus: Onda Nazaré is the municipal bus. Lines run from Praia to Sítio, Pederneira and the fishing port. Buy a ticket from the driver. Customer service is at the municipal services shop in the market building. See Serviços Municipalizados da Nazaré for local services.
- Funicular: It links Praia and Sítio. It runs daily, about every 15 minutes by day and every 30 minutes in the evening. Pay per ride.
- On foot: Praia is flat and compact. The climb to Sítio on foot takes about 40 minutes and is steep. The fort is a further walk of about 30 minutes along the cliff.
- Taxi: A taxi is the easiest way to reach the fort and Praia do Norte on a wet or windy day.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

Praia is flat and compact. Sítio is up a steep cliff, reached by funicular.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Hills and busy summer streets make cycling less practical.

Driving

- Is a car worth it?: Not for a stay in town, which is walkable. A car helps for Alcobaça, Óbidos and nearby beaches.
- Parking: Parking in Praia and near the fort fills up in summer and on big-wave days. Arrive early or use the Onda Nazaré bus.
- Restrictions: Streets around the seafront and in Sítio are narrow and busy. Walk the last part.

Food & drink

Nazaré is a fish town. Look for grilled sardines, fish stew (caldeirada) and seafood rice. Fish dried in the sun on racks on the beach is a local tradition. Eat fresh fish at the restaurants in Praia, between the beachfront and the market.

Fish is often sold by weight, so check the price before you order.

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

Nazaré is safe for visitors. Petty theft happens in busy summer weeks, so do not leave bags on the beach or valuables in a parked car.

Stay away from the water's edge at Praia do Norte and the rocks below the fort. Big waves and strong currents are dangerous. Swim at the main beach only where lifeguards are on duty, and follow the flag signs.

History

Nazaré was first settled in Pederneira and Sítio, high above the sea. The hills gave refuge from Viking raids and later from pirates. Praia on the beach was built up only after piracy faded in the 19th century.

The local legend says a small statue of the Virgin Mary came here in 711. In 1182 the knight *Dom Fuas Roupinho* was hunting in fog when his horse stopped at a cliff edge. He believed the Virgin saved him and built Capela da Memória. The statue is kept in Santuário de Nossa Senhora da Nazaré, which was founded in 1377. Women in Nazaré are known for a traditional dress with seven skirts, still worn occasionally.

The fort, built in 1577, was meant to protect the bay from pirates. In 2011 *Garrett McNamara* surfed a wave of about 24 m here, and Nazaré became famous for big waves.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



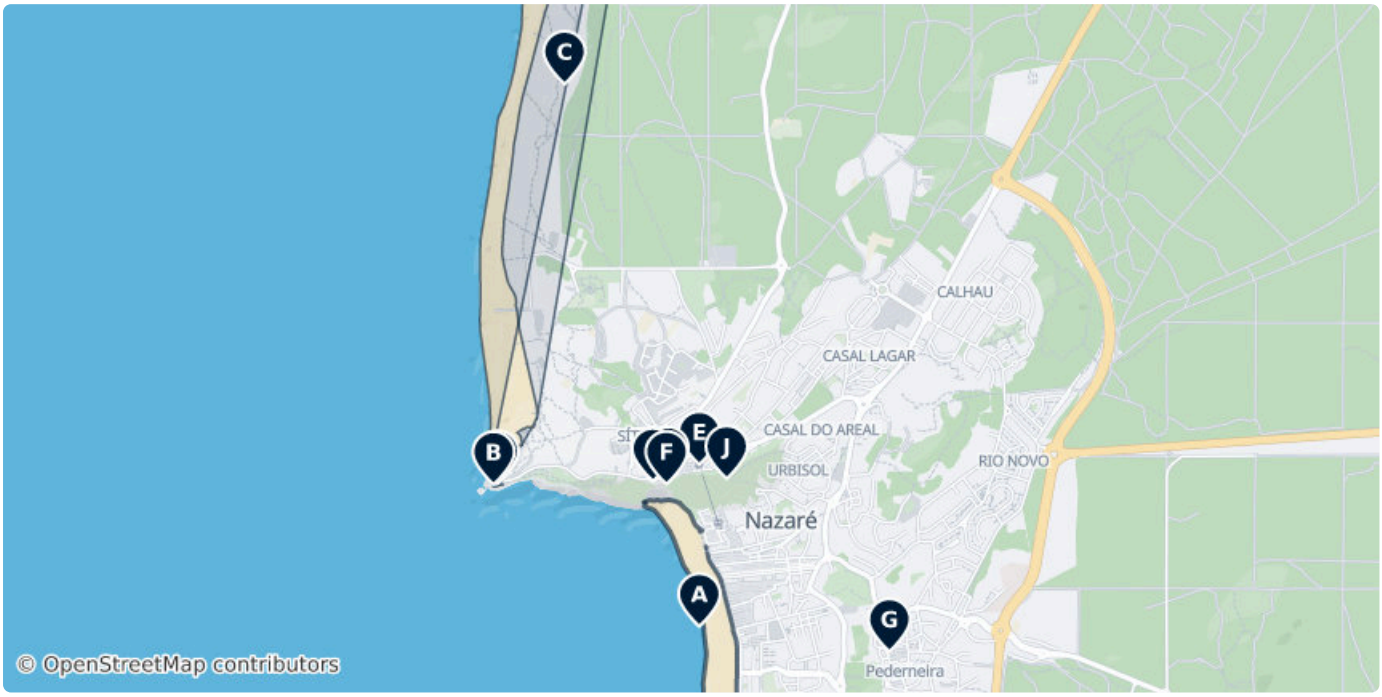
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Portuguese

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Nazare's Absolute Essentials

Nazaré is defined by its dramatic topography, split between the coastal town and the clifftop Sítio district. This collection features the town's dual character, from the expansive Nazaré Beach to the world-renowned big-wave surfing at Praia do Norte. Key historic sites include the 16th-century Forte de São Miguel Arcanjo and the 12th-century Ermida da Memória. Elevated viewpoints like Miradouro do Suberco provide 110-meter-high perspectives of the Atlantic coastline and the traditional red-roofed town below.





A Nazaré Beach

A wide, crescent-shaped sandy beach in the lower town, known for its traditional fish-drying racks and proximity to seafood restaurants.

Portugal (39.59864, -9.07446)



B Farol da Nazaré

An active lighthouse located at the tip of the promontory, overlooking the Nazaré Canyon where the world's largest waves are formed.

Largo do Elevador, 2450, Portugal (39.60442, -9.08535)



C Praia do Norte

Praia do Norte is a beach located in Nazaré, portuguese Oeste region, which due to its giant white breaking waves is famed for its surfing...

2450, Portugal (39.62072, -9.08160)



D Fort of São Miguel Arcanjo

A 16th-century defensive fort that now houses a museum dedicated to the science of the Nazaré Canyon and the history of big-wave surfing.

Largo do Elevador, 2450, Portugal (39.60447, -9.08512)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00

E Sítio

The historic upper district of Nazaré, situated on a cliff 110 meters above the beach and accessible by a century-old funicular.

Rua Doutor Joaquim Manso, 2450-065 Nazaré, Portugal (39.60524, -9.07446)



F Miradouro do Sítio da Nazaré

A prominent viewpoint in the Sítio district offering views of the lower town's urban grid and the Atlantic horizon.

1 Rua do Cirio da Petta Grande, Nazaré 2450, Portugal (39.60443, -9.07620)

G Pelourinho da Pederneira

A historic Manueline-style pillory located in Pederneira, representing the town's former administrative independence.

9 Rua Professor Burguete, Nazaré 2450, Portugal
(39.59762, -9.06442)



H Ermida da Memória da Nazaré

Memory Hermitage, also known as the Chapel of Our Lady of Nazaré, is located on the edge of promontory in Nazaré, Portugal.

1 Rua do Cirio da Petta Grande, Nazaré 2450, Portugal
(39.60462, -9.07614)

I Miradouro do Suberco

One of the most famous viewpoints in Portugal, situated 110 meters above sea level with views of the Nazaré coastline.

(39.60456, -9.07692)

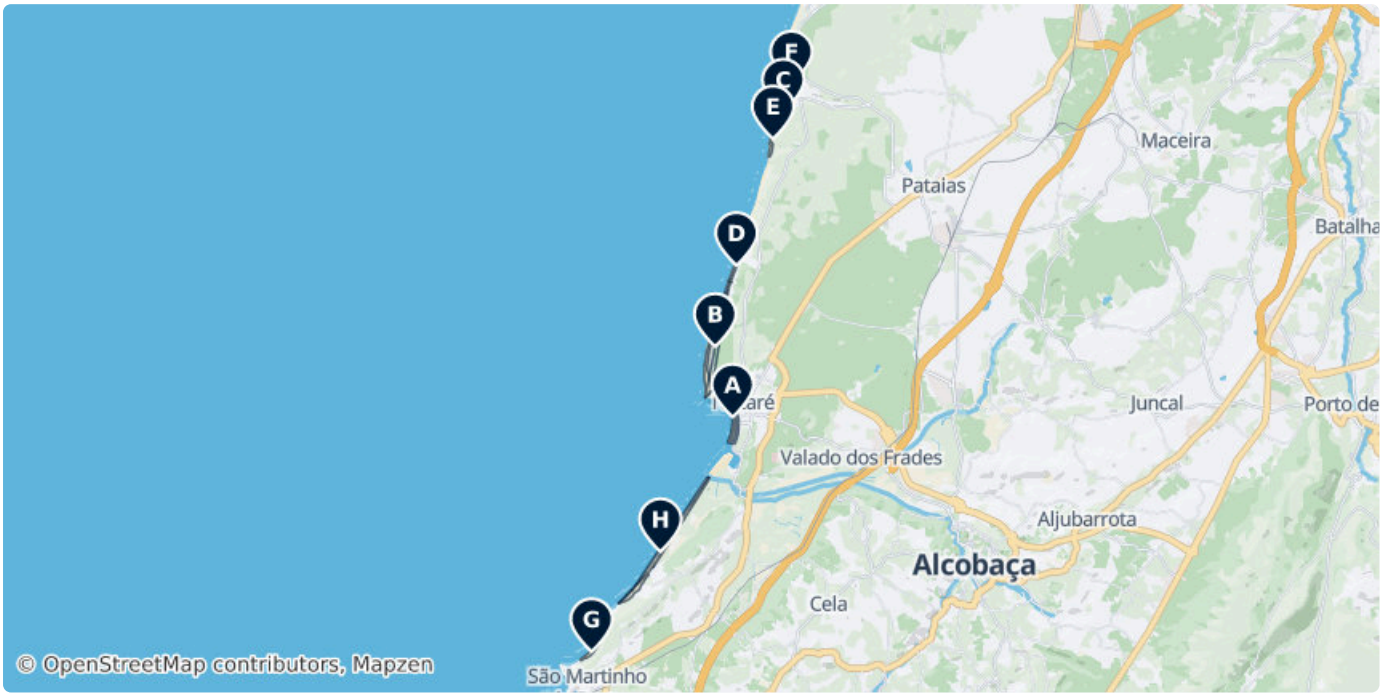
J Baloiço Panorâmico da Ladeira

A wooden panoramic swing located on the hillside path connecting the lower town to Sítio, providing a vantage point over the bay.

Ladeira do Sítio, 2450-104 Nazaré, Portugal
(39.60466, -9.07302)

Best Beaches

This coastline around Nazaré features diverse geological formations, from the massive submarine Nazaré Canyon that produces world-record waves at Praia do Norte to the ochre cliffs of Vale Furado. The central Praia da Nazaré maintains traditional maritime heritage with sun-drying fish racks, while southern spots like Praia do Salgado offer expansive dunes and paragliding launch points. The region includes both developed urban waterfronts and secluded wild beaches accessible via steep cliff paths.





A Nazaré Beach

A crescent-shaped urban beach known for traditional fishing boats and racks where fish are sun-dried. The wide promenade is lined with shops and restaurants reflecting the town's maritime history.

Portugal (39.59864, -9.07446)



B Praia do Norte

Praia do Norte is a beach located in Nazaré, portuguese Oeste region, which due to its giant white breaking waves is famed for its surfing...

2450, Portugal (39.62072, -9.08160)

C Praia da Mina

A secluded, wild beach situated north of Nazaré, characterized by its rugged cliffs and lack of infrastructure. It is accessible via unpaved trails.

2445, Portugal (39.69397, -9.05395)

D Praia da Falca

An isolated stretch of sand flanked by high, golden cliffs. It offers a primitive environment with no direct paved road access.

2450, Portugal (39.64603, -9.07296)

E Praia de Vale Furado

Noted for its dramatic vertical cliffs in shades of yellow and red. The beach features unique rock formations created by erosion and a seasonal waterfall.

Rua Oceano Atlântico, 2445-526 Alcobaça, Portugal (39.68560, -9.05813)

F Praia de Paredes de Vitória

Located at the mouth of the Ribeira de Paredes, this beach is framed by a natural rock amphitheater and features a small river flowing into the sea.

Rua Rainha Santa Isabel, 2445-493 Alcobaça, Portugal (39.70271, -9.05063)

G Praia da Gralha

A clothing-optional beach surrounded by high cliffs. Its elevated position makes it a frequent takeoff point for paragliders.

(39.52526, -9.13180)

H Praia do Salgado

An expansive sandy shore spanning over six kilometers between Nazaré and São Martinho do Porto. It features high dunes and a designated nudist-friendly area.

2450, Portugal (39.55655, -9.10382)

Top Fishing Spots

Nazaré's coastline offers diverse angling opportunities, from the rugged cliffs of the Sítio to the sandy stretches near Praia do Salgado. These specific fishing spots, known as pesqueiros, are established locations used by locals for rock fishing and surf casting. Most sites provide elevated vantage points over the Atlantic, with several designated as accessible for easier gear transport. Common catches in these nutrient-rich waters near the Nazaré Canyon include sea bass, sea bream, and sargo.



A Pesqueiro do Facho Bico do Facho

Rock fishing spot located on the high cliffs of the Sítio promontory, offering elevated access to deep Atlantic waters.

(39.52153, -9.14492)

B Pesqueiro de Santo António

Coastal fishing location situated near the southern base of the Nazaré cliffs, accessible via the port area.

(39.51767, -9.14254)

C Pesqueiro da Caldeira 2

Shore fishing site located on the rocky shoreline north of Nazaré, near the slopes of Praia do Salgado.

(39.53697, -9.12503)

D Pesqueiro das Pedras Altas

Elevated rock fishing station characterized by high stone formations, suitable for targeting sea bass and bream.

(39.53818, -9.12377)

E Pesqueiro Lageira do Salgado

Accessible flat-rock fishing platform located at the southern end of Salgado Beach, popular for surf casting.

(39.54056, -9.11954)

F Pesqueiro da Praia da Gralha

Coastal angling spot located on the rugged cliffs between Nazaré and São Martinho do Porto.

(39.52461, -9.13276)

G Pesqueiro do Túnel

Fishing location near the harbor infrastructure, providing easier access to the water compared to the high northern cliffs.

(39.51178, -9.14207)

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