



Ribeira Principal (Parque Natural Serra Malagueta)

This is the wildest, steepest and most beautiful hike you can make on Santiago! Himalayan in appearance and dimension! We started at road pass on Serra Malagueta at 1 p.m. End in Hortelao at 5 p.m. Approx. 4 hours.

This walk follows the ridge of Serra Malagueta in the North of Santiago Island. After about 2 hours of pleasant walking on a forest road you climb down (northeast) into one of the steepest and most secluded valleys of the Capverdean Islands: Gon Gon. At Hortelao you reach Ribeira Principal. Pick up by taxi should be at Hortelao because the walk on the stone-paved road out to the main-road is about 6 km. After having climbed down almost 1000m, a walk of 6km on "paralelos" hurts!

The walk starts exactly where the road cuts through the ridge of the Serra Malagueta. At the northern end of this man-made little gorge, there begins a forest road which you will follow for about 2 hours, always in easterly direction. On the rock faces of the gorge, at eye-level as soon as you get out of the jassi, you will be greeted by one of the most delightful endemic flowers: *Campanula jacobea*, a "blue-bell" typical for the rocky habitat in the humid and semi-humid zone between 500 and 1000m. It is widely used in traditional medicine. You are at about 800 meters here, the forest-road will take you over the highest point of the Serra ridge at 1064 meters. After a few minutes you will be puzzled by a structure on your right. Amidst the eucalyptus trees there are a few big rectangles, looking like advertising billboards, but with a netting spread between the wooden or iron posts. This is an attempt to "milk" or "comb" the water out of the frequent mist and clouds, a pilot-project run by a professor from Praia. With falcons, buzzards and ravens circling overhead and breath-taking views down towards the West coast and as far as Fogo this is a pleasant start in the fresh mountain air. To your left you are looking down into Ribeira Principal (-but you will no be climbing down here!!). *Lingua de Vaca* (*Ox-tongue*, *Echium hypertrophyicum*) is a beautiful, highly endangered endemic shrub with big whitish-bluish, cone-shaped groups of little flowers. Also "Tortolho", *Euphorbia tuckeyania* is frequent there, a plant formerly used for tanning leather. *Passerinho* and *Passer Iagoensis* are everywhere in the jungle of "Lantana" and "Carapate" (Agavas). After about an hour you pass the ruins of a house built of concrete blocks. The road leads you up, great views down to your right.



Where the road ends, a little path to your right(!!) takes you roughly south-east into the shrubbery. Climb down a few man-made terraces until you can look both sides: to the south Ribeira San Miguel, to the north: Gon Gon. Here you climb down over the plots of Batata Doce to the highest little farm. It is called CHAN CORREIA.