

Interpreted geological trails in Terras de Cavaleiros Geopark: a new tool for geotourism and education

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Terras de Cavaleiros (Land of Knights) is an aspiring Geopark located in northeastern Portugal. The main geological features are related to Variscan tectonics and allochthonous terrains. In order to value these natural resources, a set of trails was defined integrating a geoturistic and teaching strategy in the geopark. The footpaths and itineraries are supported by a geosites inventory, and by other sites with natural and/or cultural value. Descriptive and interpretative leaflets with pictures were developed for each trail, addressed to tourists with basic knowledge in geology. A guidebook with more detailed information was also prepared. The footpath “Vale da Porca – Salselas” is set around the Vilaríça fault in order to enhance the interpretation of basins and mountains related with this tectonic structure. A larger trail, named “Morais ocean”, is located in the core of the Morais Massif, a polymetamorphic geological unit that comprises a high geodiversity related with Variscan allochthonous terrains. The trail contains a set of stops where it is possible to see and interpret these continental and ophiolite sequences that characterize the region and that constitute the main scientific value in the geopark. The trail “Geologic Resources” is related to the lithological and mineralogical features with mining and historical interests, such as wolfram, talc and limestone. The trail “Geological Faults and Earthquakes” is dedicated to the landscape interpretation and based on tectonic structures and landforms.

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