

Ribeira da Igreja (superior)

Arruda superior

Create: 2024-03-25 19:03:04	Update: 2024-10-25 12:34:53	Print: 2025-07-23 08:07:14
Country: Portugal Region: Madeira Subregion: Town: Porto Moniz		
Difficulty: difficult	Grading: v5 a2 V	Total time: 5h45
Approachtime: 30min	Tourtime: 4h30	Returntime: 45min
Altitude entry: 560m	Altitude exit: 220m	Delta Altitude: 340m
Canyon length: 350m	Highest rapell: 60m	Amount rapells: 13
Transport: Cablecar	Rock type:	drainage area: km²
Season: October - May	Orientation: Northwest	Best Time: 9-14 o clock
Rating: ★ 3.5 (1)	Info: ★ 3 (1)	Belay: ★ 2 (2)
Warnings: Observe tides / swell Canyon is located on the coast. A safe way back is only possible at low tide and when the waves are low.		
Specialities:		
Gear: Ropes: 2x60, 2x40, 1x20		
Summary: (machine translated) Vertical rappel canyon with a spectacular 200-meter waterfall, best combined with the Inferior.		
Hydrology: (machine translated) After long dry periods, the Igreja falls dry.		
Access: (machine translated) Park in Achadas da Cruz at the mountain station for the cable car (Teleferico) (1 car). If you have a 2nd car: Drive back up the road and after 1.2 km take the first right (Rua Juvenal Isidoro de Carvalho). Follow this asphalt road for a good 350 meters and park on the right just before the exit (2 parking spaces by an electricity pylon).		
Approach: (machine translated) If 1 car is available, take the path described above on foot (approx. 25 minutes). Then turn right and walk the few meters to the exit of the concrete road, follow the path downhill. Cross the slope and continue downhill (the path gets a little lost here). Turn right at the ruined house and follow the more or less mown path. It leads along an edge slightly above former fields. At the exit, turn left downhill through the bamboo, past two ruins. Continue along the mown path, keeping to the right at junctions, the left arms are former access attempts. Another ruin. Always keep towards the coast. Towards the exit, the path becomes less clear. A green plastic bottle stuck in a tree serves as a guide. At one point, you have to climb up a terrace over three round boulders. Now the path becomes clearer again, finally you are at the edge of the drop-off to the sea, which breaks in waves on the pebble beach over 500 meters below. Descend the dusty and slippery boulder field on the left and keep left at its foot through the bamboo towards the audible stream. Sawed-off branches and trees here and there can serve as orientation. (1 hour from the cable car station, 35 minutes from the 2nd car)		
Tour: (machine translated) The tour begins immediately with the first rope traverse/rappel combination, both from trees. Further abseils follow in quick succession up to a height of 25 meters, here and there a few blackberry bushes grow in the canyon, garden shears can be helpful. The first rappels are abseiled over rope rings around trees. Finally, there are abseiling points where solid rock has made it possible to drill titanium anchors. After the second higher waterfall, a short walking passages follows and you stand at the edge of the huge waterfall, which is abseiled in 5 lengths: MC 8, C50, C40, small pool with some space, C60, minimum walking passages, C10, C40. I strongly recommend also doing the Igreja inferior from here, the exit from here is extremely exposed and can currently (October 2024) only be done with a very high risk of falling due to landslides. This is definitely an EMERGENCY exit. It starts on the right bank between the knee-high plants.		

Return: (machine translated)

Continue via Ribeira da Igreja inferior (9 abseils, 150 min), go orographic right at the sea (the sea is on the left). If the high tide cuts off the path at a rock ledge, you can climb it. There is an anchor at the top to rappel down the other side. After a good 15 minutes over rough scree, you can climb 2 to 3 meters up a bad staircase of boulders on the right. Follow the path at the top until it joins a paved road. Now turn left and walk to the valley station of the cable car (45 min).

Take this to the top. Pay attention to the travel times and don't forget to pay for your ride at the top (one way 3 euros (October 2024)). If the cable car does not run (wind, too late, broken), there is the option of climbing 200 meters northeast of the cable car via the Vereda do Calhau to the top station. The path initially leads up steep steps through the Ribeira do Tristao canyon. Keep right at the fork. (450 m, 75 min).

Coordinates:

Parking Entry and Exit [32.8527 -17.2098](#)

Canyon Start [32.8449 -17.2209](#)

Parking at Entry [32.8449 -17.2131](#)

Reports:

2024-10-21 | Casa Vento Madeira | ⭐⭐⭐⭐ | 📖 ⭐⭐⭐ | ⚓ ⭐⭐⭐ | 🌊 Dry | 🍏 Completed

The canyon is now fully equipped, in places there are still old anchors from the first ascent, these will be removed soon. Some abseiling points are still equipped with fixed ropes, all high waterfalls except for one C25 with titanium glued anchors. (machine translated)

2024-03-06 | Christian Balla | 📖 | ⚓ ⭐ | 🌊 Low | 🚦 Emergency exit

We tried to find an alternative to the extremely dangerous access to the Ribeira da Igreja (inférieur) with lots of equipment and ropes. From the starting point of the Igreja inferiore it is clear to see that there is an upper part. This can also be seen on maps. However, we didn't get very far. It was all extremely overgrown. We made our way through the bushes for the first few meters. Another attempt must follow at some point ... ATTENTION: - CANYON IS NOT YET SET UP! - FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR IGREJA INFERIORE! (machine translated)

Parts:

Ribeira da Igreja (inférieur), v5 a2 V, 1h30+2h30+45min

Ribeira da Igreja (superior), v5 a2 V, 30min+4h30+45min

First descent: 21.10.2024 by Michael Jordan, Casa Vento Madeira