Ribeira da Loiral superior

Create: 2026-06-23 10:59:06	**Update:** 2026-06-23 23:04:08	**Print:** 2026-10-30 01:10:27
Country: Portugal **Region:** Madeira **Subregion:** **Town:** Ponta do Sol		
Difficulty: difficult	**Grading:** v5 a2 III	**Total time:** 4h25
Approachtime: 25min	**Tourtime:** 3h	**Returntime:** 1h
Altitude entry: 1280m	**Altitude exit:** 980m	**Delta Altitude:** 300m
Canyon length: 350m	**Highest rapell:** 100m	**Amount rapells:** 10
Transport: Car optional	**Rock type:**	**Drainage area:** km²
Season: December - June	**Orientation:** South	**Best Time:** 9-16 o'clock
Rating: ☆ 3 (1)	**Info:** ★ 3 (1)	**Belay:** ★ 2 (1)
Specialities:		

Gear:
Ropes: 1x20m, 2x30m, 2x70m

Summary: (machine translated)
A rappel canyon with a challenging start and a fantastic 100-meter waterfall, ideal during the rainier winter months.

Hydrology: (machine translated)
It is best to visit after rainfall or during the winter and spring months.

Access: (machine translated)
Option with two cars:
It’s best to use a navigation app. Drive past Ponta do Sol and Canhas onto Caminho Pomar Dom João and follow it along the part shown on Maps, past a large water tank, until you reach red metal bollards. There is space here to park 1 to 2 cars. Be sure to keep the driveway clear and do not park on walled-off private property! To reach the upper parking lot with the second car, simply follow the trail—which is concrete at first and then paved—for about 3.5 km until you see a hiking trail leading uphill in a left-hand curve. Here, on the left, you’ll find a narrow spot to park 1 to 2 cars. This route is not included in standard navigation apps! Alternatively, for those less adventurous off-road, there’s the option to take a wide detour via paved roads. This route is suggested by Maps, but at 14 km and a 25-minute drive, it’s significantly longer.
Route with one car:
At GPS coordinates 32.737832, -17.098988, turn off the ER 209 onto the paved road and follow it downhill for about 500 m until you reach the second bend. Here, on the right, there is a narrow strip of space to park 1 to 2 cars.

Approach: (machine translated)
Follow the uphill trail over the hilltop to the Levada do Paul 2. Follow this trail into the valley heading north until you reach a freshly paved (June 2026) dirt road. Follow this track downhill for 200 meters; now a barely visible path leads downhill through the meadow. Leave this path shortly afterward. A solitary, 10-meter-tall conifer serves as a landmark. From there, make your way through the underbrush toward the stream.
Total time: 25 minutes

Tour: (machine translated)
Depending on which entry point you choose, the first few meters are more of a struggle through sometimes thorny underbrush than actual canyoning. The first equipped rappelling point—which is 3 meters high—can also be downclimbed if you're lucky. The anchor is on the ground and may be overgrown. If the surface is slippery, it's best to rappel directly to the next belay station (7 meters total). After another struggle with underbrush and, in some places, thorns, you'll reach the first of two taller waterfalls, each 30 meters high. Take a short breather with a 5-meter downclimb and a 6-meter rappel. Then you'll reach the heart of the tour: Access Path/Rope Traverse 8 // C30 // C70. The last 40 meters are overhanging. A real treat when the water level is good. This is followed by several more small drops of up to 15 meters. The last waterfall features a concrete trough, beneath which the water is channeled through corrugated metal. Be careful not to rappel past the water intake; otherwise, you'll end up in the Ribeira da Loiral inferior.
Total time: 3 hours

Return: (machine translated)
You'll end up on a narrow, concrete path.
Option for two cars:
Follow this path on the orographic right past a small landslide. At first, the path is overgrown with grass, but after 15 minutes it becomes a freshly maintained road (June 2026). Follow this road for 45 minutes to the lower parking lot.
Total time: 60 minutes
Option with one car:
Follow the orographic path to the left (initially through brush and some thorns) until, after a good kilometer and 20 minutes, you come to a path leading left and uphill. Follow this path to the trail (800 m, 160 m elevation gain), then keep left, go through a short tunnel, and follow the trail uphill for 1.2 km/30 minutes until you reach the levada you saw during access. Be careful—it's easy to walk right past this point. Now follow the levada to the mountain ridge, and then head downhill to your car. Total time: approx. 1h30 / 4.2 km / 430Hm

Coordinates:
Parking at Exit 32.7145 -17.0938
Parking at Entry 32.7354 -17.0967
Canyon End 32.7382 -17.0878
Canyon Start 32.7409 -17.0889

Reports:

2026-06-21 | Casa Vento Madeira | ☆ ☆ ☆ | 🕮 ★ ★ ★ | ⚓ ★ ★ | Low | 👍 Completed
First ascent of the upper section of the route, low water level, great panoramic view of the valley. Remaining work, such as installing adhesive anchors and "landscaping," will follow. (machine translated)

First descent: 21.06.2026 by Michael Jordan, Matilde Klut und Team ICA Costa Rica