

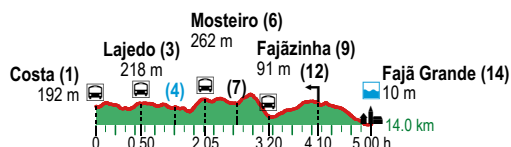
**TOP 74 From Costa to Fajã Grande**

5.00 hrs



**From village to village along the west coast**

An old connecting trail runs along the entire western coastline. From its southernmost end in Costa, the trail leads in steady up and down walking through all of the settlements located on the island's west coast. En route, we can enjoy many lovely views of the rugged coastline and the offshore islands.



**Starting point:** the chapel in Costa, 192m.

**Destination:** the harbour in Fajã Grande, 10m.

**Height difference:** a total of 630m in ascent and 810m in descent.

**Grade:** mostly along cobbled cart tracks that are overgrown with grass. Very slippery when wet. In the settlements, along streets.

**Refreshment:** bars and restaurants in Fajãzinha and Fajã Grande.

**Alternative:** to Poço das Patas (1.3km; 25 mins): in front of the Ribeira do Ferreiro, turn right to follow the grassy trail (sign: *Poço da Alagoinha*). This immediately becomes an ancient cobbled trail. Through the wood, a good 15 mins later, reach the shoreline of a lake known to the locals as the Poço das Patas. The lake owes its waters to the countless waterfalls of the Ribeira do Ferreiro. Afterwards, return along the same route.

**Linking tip:** with Walks 75, 76 and 77.

**Bathing:** harbour area of Fajã Grande.

Start off at the little chapel in **Costa do Lajedo (1)**. 20m below this, turn right along the narrow tarmac trail which ascends onto the height of the Rocha do Pico and, passing a cattle pen, descend again gently. When the trail begins another ascent, turn left onto a grassy trail (2). The trail leads into the valley of the Ribeira do Campanário which we cross over below Lajedo. A cobb-

*At the Poço das Patas (Alternative).*

le stone trail climbs up to the street where we turn left and then reach the village centre of **Lajedo (3)** (50 mins). At the church, turn right and 40m on, turn left onto the Rua Dr. Caetano Tomás. We have already crossed through the tiny village when we reach a **picnic area**. The road ends just past this area; now follow the country lane to the left to continue. At the fork 100m on, bear left again to keep on the trail. From now on, keep following the old, cobbled mule track which leads in steady up and down walking while crossing a number of streambeds. 30 mins of walking along the mule track, reach the old stone bridge spanning the **Ribeira da Lapa (4)** with the basalt massif Rocha dos Bordões towering above. 20 mins later, reach the Ribeira do Fundão (5) which must be forded via boulders. Past this point, the trail climbs up again and finally reaches the street in **Mosteiro (6)** at an electricity sub-station (2 hrs 5 mins). Turn left onto the street and descend past the church until the street hooks off to the right at the end of the village. Before reaching a rest area, continue along the concrete trail straight ahead until meeting the bridge spanning the Ribeira do Mosteiro. Past the bridge, a mule track continues, leading past a hay barn and then ascending to the road. Turn left onto the road. 10 mins later, the road veers to the right and climbs down to the hamlet of **Caldeira (7)** abandoned since 1992; the natural stone-built houses have succumbed to the forces of nature (2 hrs 40 mins).





After the trail levels out again and 50m before reaching a bridge, turn left onto a grassy trail to continue towards a natural stone-built house (a water tap to the right). At the fork past the house, turn right onto a sunken trail to finally ascend to the road again. Turn left onto the road and ascend the slope for a somewhat strenuous 5-minute climb. Where it levels out again, turn left onto a grassy trail. Soon reach the top **(8)** and then begin the descent to **Fajãzinha** along old cobblestones (to the right, a short excursion ascending to the viewpoint taking in Fajãzinha is worthwhile).

20 mins later, reach the first houses and also a concrete trail. Pass the church and now, after a total of 3 hrs 20 mins, reach the village square (*Rossio*) in the **village centre (9)**. At the power station, past the café, turn left. 70m further on, at the little chapel, turn sharp right and, along the street to the right, pass a total of three fountains in 5 mins until meeting up with a T-junction. Here, turn right and, 10m on, at the garage, immediately turn left into the narrow Rua do Espinheiro. Before reaching the residence, turn right onto an

*Mosteiro at the foot of the rock formation Rocha dos Bordões.*



*Fajãzinha on Flores' dramatic west coast.*

ancient cart track to ascend and, 15 mins later, at the old watermill, **Moinho da Ribeira da Alagoa (10)**, merge into the main road to Fajã Grande (3 hrs 45 mins).

Along the main road, turn left over the bridge spanning the Ribeira Grande. 150m on, you could take the opportunity to make an excursion to **Poço das Patas** (sign: *Poço da Alagoinha*; Alternative). We, however, keep to the main road for a short time and then, past the bridge over the **Ribeira do Ferreiro**, turn right to ascend along the narrow street. A good 10 mins later, this ends at a **stable (11)**. Here, a mule track continues. 100m further on, bear left. After an additional 200m, reach a fork **(12)** (waypoint 4 for Walk 75).

To the left heads for Cuada but we turn right to descend and, 20 mins later, meet up again with a road **(13)**. Here, turn right again to continue following the cart track. The mule track crosses over the road again and, at the end, above a junction, merges into the road. At the junction, turn right until reaching the bridge spanning the Ribeira das Casas. On the opposite side of the road, a cart track continues which follows the coastline, leading directly to the little **harbour of Fajã Grande (14)**.