



*“600 Million years of stories  
and landscapes to  
discover...”*

## Report 4 December 2006

### Olá/Hola/Ciao/Bonjour/Hello

Christmas month is boring! All the people is buying gifts or on holidays. Institutions are closed or working half-gas. Everyone spend almost one month preparing the parties of Christmas and New Year. But the sunny although cold weather helps to do wonderful field excursions. So, this month was dedicated once again for promotion of Geopark concept indoors, for understanding deeply the tourism resources we have in our territory and for studying and inventorying old and new geosites in one corner of our Geopark, Proença-a-Nova. Armindo Jacinto travelled a lot to promote our common project, Carlos Neto de Carvalho stayed in the territory for field work and meetings with local agents and institutions, Rafael André and Rui Marques established contacts with governmental entities and prepared new candidatures for funding programs that are appearing in the beginning of the year. Working with Geopark Naturtejo, Association for Studies of the High Tejo and Group of Friends of Foz do Cobreão association is preparing new foot-paths in Foz do Cobreão Schist Village and a candidature to bring the International Congress on Geological and Mining Heritage or the Iberian Symposium on Historical Mining and Metallurgy to the territory. The “Naturtejo girls” as we friendly call to the Naturtejo office staff composed by Cristina Preguiça, Alice, Fátima Rodrigues and Eliane Antunes, were enthusiastically working on the new Naturtejo’s Nature Tourism activities calendar for 2007. Moreover, they are developing new tourist packages for Soltropico tourism operator and preparing the presence of Geopark Naturtejo and EGN/GGN in the international tourism fairs of Lisbon (Portugal) and Madrid (Spain) next January. For Lisbon, we are

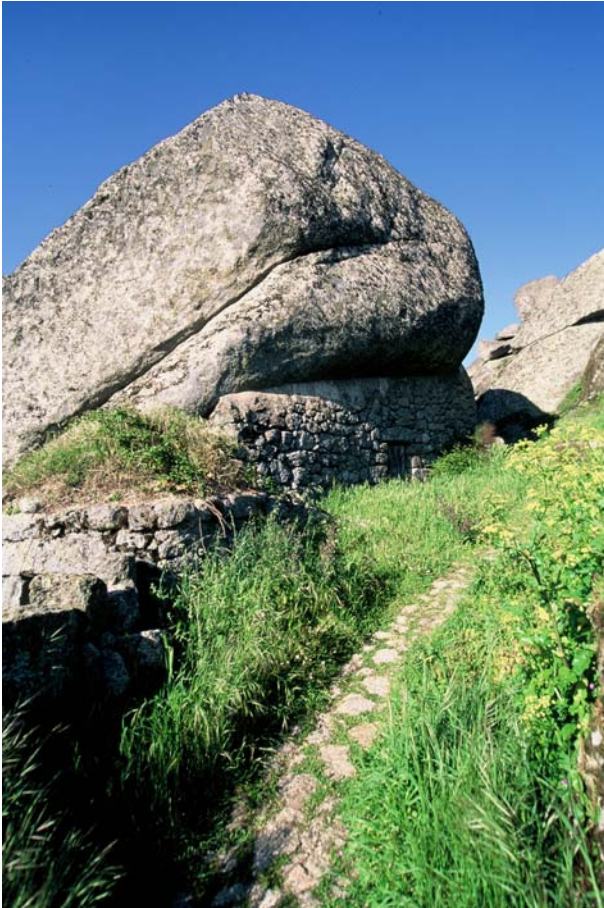


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preparing the stand with the help of a designers company but in Madrid, the governmental Institute for Tourism of Portugal invited the Geopark Naturtejo to present EGN/GGN Network included in the stand of Portugal!! This is highly important for us since we have the credibility of Portugal giving us visibility like one of its Tourism regions. One other hand, EGN/GGN Network will be presented to international tourism operators from all world in a special press conference we are preparing in FITUR, for which we already invited our boss Nickolas Zouros. With the help of our partners from other geoparks we can use this opportunities to increase the visibility of our Network as a unique tourism destinations. How can you help and benefit from Portuguese and especially from Spanish international tourism fairs (with millions of people visiting the fair)? It is very simple: contribute sending some photos of your geopark by e-mail and some promotional material by the address in the footnote. If you want you can be physically present in Naturtejo/EGN/GGN stands during the events. We have a desk only for you to sell your territory to tourism operators! FITUR will works between 31<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> February and the BTL (Lisbon) event, between 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January. Take this opportunity as yours! Happy 2007 for all European Geopark partners, with many contests and more conquests!

## 1) Activities

**1<sup>st</sup> December – Promotion of Geopark Naturtejo tourism packages in a new Spanish newspaper.** Cleverly prepared by our Delegate for Spain, Jesús Alarcón, the issue 0 of the new newspaper Gente Madrid presented a promotion to Geopark Naturtejo, filling almost one page, to 1200000 inhabitants of the Spanish capital. This was great for our territory because this issue was distributed for free in the main places of the city, in one of the most important sources for tourists in Europe and we didn't pay anything for the publicity!! By the way, strangely and not so efficiently, the promotion was made in Portuguese: this is apparently not so attractive for our Spanish friends, as you may guess why...



4<sup>th</sup> December – **Field workshop for Tourism rangers from Idanha-a-Nova.** Carlos Neto de Carvalho and Armindo Jacinto prepared a guided visit to the inselberg of Monsanto to present the Geopark Naturtejo and the Monsanto's geomorphosites to the 17 tourism rangers from Idanha-a-Nova municipality. Basic knowledge of the Geological heritage from Idanha-a-Nova and the remaining Geopark's territory is now required to the main players of Tourism.



5<sup>th</sup> December - **Course on Implementation of**

**a Tourist Quality Management System in Geopark Naturtejo – Handcrafts in Naturtejo.**

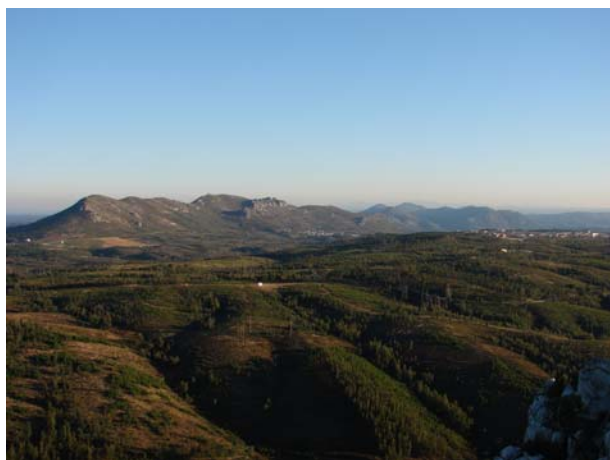
As an action for implementing a tourism management quality system for the Geopark territory, Rui Marques prepared a seminar about handcrafting in Nisa. Besides him participated also Armindo Jacinto presenting Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional and Carlos Neto de Carvalho, with a talk entitled “New products in the Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional – UNESCO European and Global Geopark – with proposals for Nisa”.

The conference was presided by the Mayor of Nisa, Gabriela Tsukamoto with the presence of the Governor-civil of Portalegre District as well as local handcrafters and general public. In this event it was presented the new Christmas basket Geopark Naturtejo, the best resume of local products from all the municipalities. Due to some communication problems between municipalities that we still need to solve, this Christmas basket was sold only to some of the municipalities in a total number of 52. It was a splendid idea to create a working group for a single traditional product which could be the first commercial image for all the territory but it partially failed because municipalities are still not fully working together for the same goal which is to create a mature tourism destination under the umbrella of the Geopark concept. Interestingly, Proença-a-Nova municipality raffled Geopark baskets in the traditional commerce which had high acceptance from local shops as we found by the big number of pamphlets at the shop-windows such as the one shown above.



5<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> December – **Photography Exhibition:**

**“600 million years illustrated” in the Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional.** The travelling photo exhibition from Pedro Martins opened again to the public, now in the Municipal Library of Nisa with the presence of the Governor-civil from the Portalegre District and the President of Nisa municipality, Gabriela Tsukamoto.



12-22<sup>nd</sup> December – **Inventory of the**

**Geological Heritage and Tourism Resources of Proença-a-Nova.** Now that Geopark Naturtejo is one of the EGN members it is even more urgent to understand deeply the tourist resources we have in the territory as well as all geosites and their characteristics in order to manage them in the benefit of local communities and geosciences. For 11 days Carlos Neto de Carvalho travelled by the Proença-a-Nova municipality, visiting more than 100 villages, georeferencing tourism resources with GPS and searching and studying previously inventoried and new geosites. The work is not finished yet because we are working in a new project to protect Portas de Almourão geomonument as national Natural Monument and Carlos Neto de Carvalho is conducting detailed studies until February. 17 geosites were already identified in Proença-a-Nova using ProGEO - Portugal inventory criteria. At the end of January geosites will be presented to the public and authorities of Proença-a-Nova with new proposals for their tourist use, conservation and management,

and after that the new identified geosites will be sent to ProGEO as proposal to integrate the Portuguese Geological Heritage together with the previous inventory made in 2005.



16<sup>th</sup> December – **A new concept of restaurant appears in the granite landscape of Monsanto.** It was officially opened in Monsanto (Idanha-a-Nova) the restaurant Petiscos & Granitos, probably one of the first geological restaurants in the world. Geology and good traditional food is the bet of the owners João Soares and São Salgueiro, now that the territory where they born was included in the European Geoparks Network. For them it was a challenge to create a restaurant responding to the excellence and innovation criteria purposed by the Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional: from a conjugation of ideas and the passion for their Land appeared Petiscos & Granitos. This new concept of restaurant allies the offer of regional products and Portuguese gastronomy to a pedagogical strategy to promote the Portuguese geological heritage. The restaurant is located in one of the most charismatic geomonuments of Geopark Naturtejo, the granite inselberg of Monsanto, leading these local enterprisers to touch and to decode the Monsantoine Natural History and Culture in the context of Portugal.

The originality of this new place is shown by the traditional architecture of the restaurant, using the gigantic granite balls as walls or roof, as it happens in “Gruta de Santo Amador” cave, one of the thematic rooms of the restaurant. “Mons Sanctus” esplanade and view point complete this restaurant located in the historical centre of the village, with beautiful landscapes reaching Serra da Estrela range more than one hundred kilometres far and most of the Geopark territory. A dynamic “Geo-menu” follows the gastronomic calendar of Idanha municipality and resort to the strong relationship between Portuguese food and the geographical diversity of the country (some of the best examples are the Stone Soup, the Marble Cake or the Alabaster wine). Idanha-a-Nova municipality promotes an all year calendar of gastronomic festivities, such as the Badana (old sheep) Festival of Rosmanihal and the Soup Festival of Proença-a-Velha, which attracted hundreds of visitors to this area searching for its cultural specificities. The strategy is also to follow these and the Monsanto’s Gastronomy Museum initiatives, offering the



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opportunity to the tourists of tasting the best and most genuine flavours typical from the Borderland.

But the dynamics of the new geo-restaurant goes beyond the menu. With the support of Geopark Naturtejo, Petiscos & Granitos is preparing the original exhibition **The Rolling Stones show** – The Geological History of Portugal told by the Rocks in English and Portuguese and soon there will be thematic photo and art exhibitions about the Geopark, their landscapes and their rocks. Petiscos & Granitos will also have an annual set of initiatives promising to shake the days (and the nights!) of Monsanto. This new concept is not restricted by a formal space; it goes outside the restaurant house, the geographic place and can move to where the client needs it as it happens already in a big party for 200 people in Aldeia de Santa Margarida village. Petiscos & Granitos started with the ceremony “Prize Nature Tourism 2006” organized by the Idanha-a-Nova tourism office. More than 40 people and guests participated in these event with lots of surprises during the night, such as the presentation of the movie “Nature Tourism Idanha 2003-2006” directed by Nuno Capelo with photography of Pedro Martins, and the presentation of the new T-shirt “Nature Tourism” for 2007 with the support of Geopark Naturtejo. The curiosity became national when the new geo-restaurant was invaded by national televisions and newspapers. Tourists are coming from Lisbon and Coimbra only to eat in stone dishes inside a cave! Marketing around Geology works very well, my friends, if we know how to reach the publics!!

18<sup>th</sup> December – **Workshop “Chase and the Natura 2000 Network in Portugal” (Raiano Cultural Centre, Idanha-a-Nova)**. In the scope of the project “Awareness raising on the NATURA 2000 network among users, in particular hunters” Armindo Jacinto was invited for this international workshop to talk about Geopark Naturtejo’s territory as example of multiple approaches of natural resources in areas Natura 2000. This workshop, supported by the General Direction of Environment – European Commission, the Association of the European Landowners, the National Association of Owners and Producers of Chase, the National Confederation of Portuguese Hunters, Idanha-a-Nova municipality and the Monfortur – Monfortinho Tourism company, was open to the general public and counted with about 100 people.

## 2) Geopark’s Impact in Media

### *Tv/Internet*

13<sup>th</sup> December – Sic Online (national TV webpage) – **“Petiscos & Granitos”**: the first European geo-restaurant opens in the village of Monsanto”

19<sup>th</sup> December – Portugal Directo news in RTP1 (national TV) – A report of the opening night with interviews to the proud owners and Armindo Jacinto

26<sup>th</sup> December – Jornal da Tarde news in RTP1 (national TV) – Again the same report in a different hour of the day for a different public.



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**30<sup>th</sup> December – Jornal da Tarde news in TVI (national TV)** – The most popular TV in Portugal was in Monsanto for a report about the new concept of restaurant making interviews with the owners and the customers. Information about “Petiscos & Granitos” appeared in **Jornal da Noite** as footnotes, and the same report was again part of **Jornal da Tarde** in 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

### **Radio**

**13<sup>th</sup> December – TSF and Renascença (national) radios** – “A restaurant made of rock” was the title presented in the news of Renascença radio. Along the day the opening of the new geo-restaurant Petiscos & Granitos was announced by these two of the most listen radios in Portugal. Armindo Jacinto was interviewed for TSF to talk about this new tourism proposal in Geopark Naturtejo.

### **Newspapers**

**29<sup>th</sup> November (Gazeta do Interior)** – “Archaeological map is concluded”

**30<sup>th</sup> November (Reconquista)** – “Beautiful birds is in Granja”

**December (Boletim Municipal de Vila Velha de Ródão)** – “Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional – The singularity and beauty of our territory internationally recognized”

**December (Proença-a Nova em revista)** – “Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional – the first Geopark from Portugal”

**1<sup>st</sup> December (Gente Madrid – Spain)** – promotion to tourism in Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional

**13<sup>th</sup> December (Gazeta do Interior)** – “Monsanto has the first geo-restaurant in Europe”

**13<sup>th</sup> December (Turisver)** – “The first geo-restaurant opens in the village of Monsanto”

**14<sup>th</sup> December (Jornal do Fundão)** – “Geo-restaurant opens tomorrow”

**14<sup>th</sup> December (Reconquista)** – “Cheirinho de Penha Garcia shop starts exclusive wine”

**14<sup>th</sup> December (Opção Turismo)** – “The first European geo-restaurant will open in Monsanto”

**15<sup>th</sup> December (Diário XXI’s first page)** – “At the table with Geopark Naturtejo”

**15<sup>th</sup> December (Correio do Alentejo)** – “Village opens geo-restaurant”

**16<sup>th</sup> December (Público)** – “The first European geo-restaurant opens today in Monsanto”

**28<sup>th</sup> December (Reconquista)** – “Naturtejo values ornithological tourism - Granja de S. Pedro farm with bird diversity”

**28<sup>th</sup> December (Reconquista)** – “Monsanto opens geo-restaurant”



Photo Geopark of the month – **“Tectonics from a medieval point of view”**. Crossing the medieval (Roman?) bridge of Ladeira, clear waters on the Pracana river bottom allow to see the Padrão-Silveira Unit (Vendian-Middle Cambrian) coarse-grained metagreywackes with some schists almost vertical (dipping 70° NE) broken by WNW-ESE left strike-slip fault. In this fault zone, close to the border of Geopark Naturtejo, there are the Ladeira thermal springs showing that some of those faults are still active.