

# Destination positioning report of Alqueva

## INTRODUCTION

The destination was chosen for the study is the city of Alqueva, Portugal. Alqueva is a small village located in the east of the Spanish border in Portugal - region of Alentejo. It is a village of 79,2 km<sup>2</sup> and no more than 329 inhabitants.

The economics activities are the agriculture and the tourism. Since the construction in 2004 of the seventh largest dam in Portugal with over 250 km<sup>2</sup> and an ability to 4.150 hm<sup>3</sup> making it the largest dam water tank of Portugal, Alqueva has seen increase (boom in tourism) related to water activities in a quiet and peaceful environment.



## 1.- Analysis of the destination and visitor profile

This destination is famous in tourism because of its dam. The usual tourist products offered are stand up paddle, water – skiing, canoeing, boat trips and recreational fishing.

The average visitors per year according to the tourist office there are between 3,000 and 3,500 tourists a year. Always according to the tourist office 40% are international and 60% national.

People can access to the destination by car via the motorway (230 km from Lisbon, 469 km from Porto, 204 km from Faro and 135 km from Badajoz Spain). You also can go by Bus; Alqueva is serving from the entire big city by bus. And finally the country has two airports Faro airport and Lisbon airport.

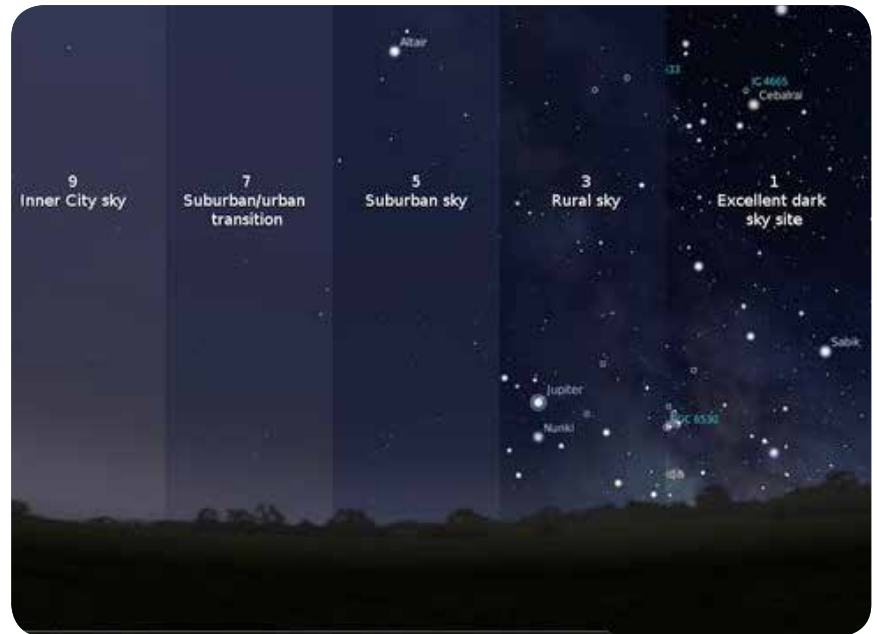
The activity area is not protected but Starlight requires a reduction of the light pollution. The destination doesn't have any kind of certification.

Starlight Destinations are visitable places characterized by excellent quality for the contemplation of starry skies and the practice of tourist activities based on these resources.

The Starlight Tourism Certification System was created with the aim of encouraging, at worldwide level, the improvement of the quality of tourist experiences and the protection of the night skies in Starlight Destinations. The Starlight Certification seeks to guarantee the capacity to enjoy the view of the stars and to discover the associated scientific, cultural, natural and scenic values.

Minimum criteria for certification:

- Clouds of absence > 50 % with cloudless nights
- Darkness > 21mag / arcsec<sup>2</sup>
- Seeing ≤ 2
- Transparency: 6 mag



<http://www.starlight2007.net/>

## 2.- Analysis of the tourism supply

The Astrotourism offer is focalized on the Alqueva region more specifically in the municipalities of Alandroal, Reguengos, Monsaraz, Mourão, Barrancos, Portel and Moura. Organizing around the 'Alqueva Dark Sky Route'.

The Alqueva Dark Sky Route are prepared to receive the astro-tourists with services adapted to their specific needs. The Route integrates members certified by the Alqueva Dark Sky Reserve to offer services of accommodation, restoration and tourism activities

Here you have a list of services and activities directly related to Astrotourism:

- Group visits for night observations (with or without telescope)
- Workshop Astrophotography and Telescoping with the astrophotographer Miguel Claro - <http://www.miguelclaro.com/wp/>.
- Festival Sky and nature.
- Project with the schools – Sciences and citizens - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_d0hDnW0Vw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_d0hDnW0Vw&feature=youtu.be)
- Astronomy Guide for beginners by the association 'Guias-intérpretes do alentejo' - [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Guias-do-Alentejo-Alentejo-Guides/127024867371195?fref=pb&hc\\_location=profile\\_browser](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Guias-do-Alentejo-Alentejo-Guides/127024867371195?fref=pb&hc_location=profile_browser)



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### Activities:

- Break Momentos Fantásticos - <http://www.momentosfantasticos.com/>
- Dark Sky activities: Wild Life Watching – night and day, Night
- Canoeing – Alqueva Lake or Ardila River. This enterprise offers a wide range of activities for night and day and apart the ones programmed they can organize programs by request.

Alqueva Line - <http://www.alquevaline.com/>

- Dark Sky activities: Boat trips in the Lake Alqueva

Sem-Fin Boats - <http://www.sem-fim.com/>

- Dark Sky activities: Boat trips in the Lake Alqueva

Gastronomy:

- Xarez Restaurante
- Monsaraz

Pateo de Cascalhais

- Juromenha

Páteo da Oliveira

- Mourão

BarZeco Bar-Restaurante

- Monte dos Estevais

Accommodation:

- Monte de Santa Catarina - <http://www.montesantacatarina.com/>  
- Telheiro/ Monsaraz
- Dark Sky activities: stargazing with telescopes (DOBSON GSO 12") and binoculars accompanied by an astronomer amateur.

Monte Alerta - <http://www.montealerta.pt/>

- Telheiro/ Monsaraz

- Dark Sky activities: stargazing, night walks, SPA.

Casa Saramago - <http://www.casasaramago-monsaraz.com.pt/>

- Telheiro/ Monsaraz

- Dark Sky activities: night horse riding.

Monte Saraz - <http://www.montesaraz.com/>

- Telheiro/ Monsaraz

Rural Hotel Refúgio da Vila - <http://www.refugiodavila.com/>

- Portel

Casas do Montado - <http://www.casasdomontado.com/>

- Portel

- Rural Hotel Nave Terra - <http://www.hotelnaveterra.com/>

Alandroal

Casa do Montel Parque de Noudar - <http://www.parquenoudar.com/pt/>

- Barrancos

Monte Falperras - <http://falperras.carbonmade.com/>

- Mourão "

Os V Sentidos - <http://www.os5sentidos.pt/>

- Mourão

Social network:

- Facebook:

- Reserva Dark Sky Alqueva 10 951 Likes - <https://www.facebook.com/Alqueva?fref=ts>

- Miguel Claro Astrophotography 8574 Likes - <https://www.facebook.com/Astroarte>

Website:

- Dark Sky Alqueva - <http://www.darkskyalqueva.com/>

The communication channels for the offer services are the social network, the Website but also the Portuguese and the international press

Publico 29/09/12 <http://www.publico.pt/tema-de-capa/jornal/astroturismo-percorrer-a-terra-para-observar-o-ceu-25318226>

Sky at Night Magazine 17/01/2013

<http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/feature/miscellaneous/starlight-tourism-alqueva-portugal>

Sic Noticias

Sic Mulher 12/03/2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fm2XX3ya2NM&feature=youtu.be>

The most special resources Alqueva has are:

- No light pollution.
- Clear Sky.
- Sustainable tourism infrastructure.
- Presence of sky observation equipment.

There are some events related with Astrotourism in this region:

- Workshop
- Exhibition
- Conference

### 3.- Analysis of the tourist demand

There is no available information about average visitors per year that perform the activity.

The profile of the tourist who engages in Astrotourism-related activities obtained from the managers of the Dark sky project in Portugal is:

- Level superior qualifications.
- +60% of people are foreigners.
- Fort purchasing power.
- Research authentic and recognized areas (certification is an added value).
- Astronomy Amateurs (usually equipped).
- Interest for astronomy photo.

During the last 3 years the tourism has increased over 24%.

#### 4.- Diagnosis and conclusions: current product development and potential for future development in Alqueva

References List Website:

<http://www.darkskyalqueva.com>"

<https://www.facebook.com/Alqueva>"

<http://www.miguelclaro.com/>"

<https://www.facebook.com/Astroarte?fref=ts>"

<http://www.foto-nature.com>"

<https://www.facebook.com/fotonatureworkshops>"

<http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/feature/miscellaneous/starlight-tourism-alqueva-portugal>"

Telephone exchange:

Tourist Office of Alqueval (Portel)"

Tourist Office of Reguengos de Monsaraz"

EDIA.SA Office

Publication:

[http://fugas.publico.pt/Noticias/345584\\_no-planetario-miguel-claroleva-nos-ao-ceu](http://fugas.publico.pt/Noticias/345584_no-planetario-miguel-claroleva-nos-ao-ceu)"

<http://www.espiraldotempo.com/ultima-edicao-imprensa/>"

<http://epod.usra.edu/blog/2015/01/welcome-to-2015-fireworksmoonlight-and-streaking-stars.html>"

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fm2XX3ya2NM&feature=youtu.be>"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4PDxl-\\_j04](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4PDxl-_j04)"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7TDDbop1U>"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvFrcBRnk04>"