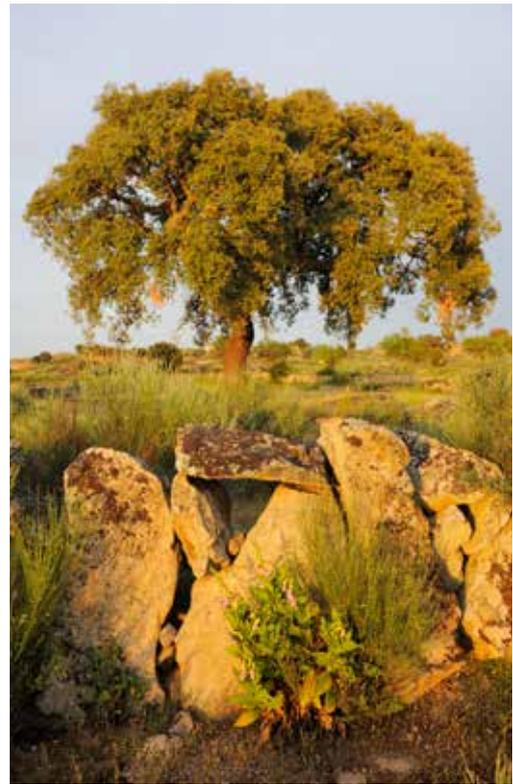


# Reserva de Faia Brava, Côa River Valley, Portugal

A New Wilderness Tourism Development Opportunity  
in Portugal's First Privately Owned Protected Reserve

**CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**





## Reserva de Faia Brava

Reserva de Faia Brava is an 800 hectare private nature reserve straddling 5km of Portugal's dramatic Côa River Valley. Steep canyons, ancient cork oak forests and dehesa plains characterise this region of Western Iberia and distinguish the reserve in a wider European context.

Previously farm land but now Portugal's first privately owned protected reserve, Faia Brava was established in 2000 by Associação Transumância e Natureza (ATN), who own and manage the property. The dramatic landscape supports an abundance of flora and fauna including over 180 species of plant, 25 mammal and 100 bird species crowned by the majestic Golden and Bonelli's Eagles; Egyptian and Gryphon Vultures; Black Stork; and Eagle Owl. Natural grazers such as the wild primitive Garrano horses and Maronese cattle have been reintroduced to the landscape and occupy the meadow mosaic high above the meandering Côa River and natural rock pools that carve through the heart of the reserve. Plans are currently underway to attract and support populations of the rare Spanish Imperial Eagle and Iberian Ibex.

## Associação Transumância e Natureza

ATN is a Portugal registered environmental NGO who in 2000 purchased and started to extend Faia Brava (an ongoing process) and is the sole owner of the reserve. Its aim is to use Faia Brava as a site for demonstrating sustainable natural resource management focused on ecological restoration, the enhancement of habitats and increasing natural food availability for some of Iberia's most endangered species.

In 2011 ATN signed a partnership agreement with Rewilding Europe, an initiative of WWF-Netherlands, the ARK Foundation, Wild Wonders of Europe and Conservation Capital which aims to 'rewild' 1 million hectares of European landscapes across 10 different multi-national sites, making Europe a wilder place, with much more space for wildlife, wilderness and natural processes.

Drawing on lessons learned both within and beyond Europe, Rewilding Europe is working with ATN to explore and develop new ways for entrepreneurs and communities to generate sustainable economic benefits from the wild. The creation of a world-class nature tourism destination in Western Iberia, including Faia Brava, through the development of complementary wildlife tourism products is a core focus of their work, and considerable financial and human resources are being invested in the area to achieve this goal.

## Tourism development opportunity

As part of this wider vision, a site of outstanding natural beauty within Faia Brava reserve is being made available by ATN on a leasehold basis – initially for 15 years.

The lease will be awarded to a competent operator for the construction, development and operation of a wilderness tented camp/lodge (making use of an existing attractive stone building) that will aspire to set world class standards at a number of levels – in terms of product creativity and quality, its sensitivity to the surrounding environment (low impact eco-credentials) and the development of positive linkages between that product and the important conservation and rewilding context within which the facility will operate. In this regard, ATN will commit to allocating



85% of the lease fees generated by this facility to a Property Acquisition Fund that will be used to expand the Faia Brava nature reserve.

It is anticipated that the facility will have a capacity of between 12 and 20 beds although this will ultimately depend on the design proposed by the chosen operator. The facility will be able to make use of a very attractive, traditional natural stone barn (will require renovation) that exists on the site.

### Access

Faia Brava is connected via a motorway network to three international airports including Oporto (240 km – 2.5 hrs driving), Lisbon (357 km – 3.5 hrs driving), Madrid (400 km – 4 hrs driving) and a number of regional airports. Good train links also exist to Guarda and Pocinho (where the train runs through the Douro Valley) which are both 45 minutes from the reserve by road. The site is situated inside the reserve and is only accessible by 4x4 vehicle.

### The surrounding region

The Western Iberian belt where Faia Brava is positioned boasts a diverse spectrum of natural, cultural, historic and gastronomic attractions. Picturesque medieval border towns such as Castelo Rodrigo (±20 minute drive) overlook the famous Douro wine region to the West (±20 minute drive) and the dehesa landscapes to the East (±40 minute drive) – formed by some of the world's oldest cork oaks (where cork is still harvested) and a heartland for *jamón ibérico* production. Within closer proximity is the UNESCO protected “Côa Valley Archeological Park” (±20 minute drive), one of the world's

largest outdoor Paleolithic rock carving sites dating back some 35,000 years. The meandering Côa River provides a number of opportunities for swimming in and exploring natural rock pools within and outside the reserve.

### Financing

This opportunity will be made available on a build, own and operate basis and beyond making the site and associated lease available ATN will not invest any financial capital into the development of the facility itself. However, subject to business plan, due diligence and terms and conditions, co-investment finance may be available from Rewilding Europe Capital (REC) – a rewilding enterprise financing division of Rewilding Europe.

### Expressions of interest

Expressions of Interest should include:

- Identity of proposed bidding entity including a summary of ownership and management structure.
- A summary of past and current operations highlighting the relevance of this track record to this opportunity.
- A short statement highlighting what specific distinguishing attributes the entity, its shareholders and management team will bring to the Faia Brava tourism development opportunity.
- An indication as to whether or not the bidding entity would be likely to seek co-financing support from REC.

**Bidders should submit expressions of interest in electronic format by Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 2013 to Matthew McLuckie, Enterprise Development Manager for Rewilding Europe at: [matthew.mcluckie@rewildingeurope.com](mailto:matthew.mcluckie@rewildingeurope.com)**