



Gruta do Natal

Ilha Terceira – Açores

Christmas Cave

Terceira Island – Azores

SOME ADVICE FOR THE ADVENTUROUS:

- »Do not leave any trash inside the cave
- »Do not take or destroy any geological formations
- »Follow arrows that indicate the direction you should take
- »Do not smoke inside the cave
- »Be responsible inside the cave



OS MONTANHEIROS

Environmental Association

Rua da Rocha, 8
 9700-169 Angra do Heroísmo
www.montanheiros.com

Be inside a lava tube and
experience nature's creation



Christmas Cave

Terceira Island – Azores

Christmas Cave is located in the middle of Terceira Island; it belongs to the Protected Area of Santa Barbara/ Misterios Negros.

It's one of two touristic caves of Terceira Island.

Inside you may see many geological structures such as: different types of lava flows, stalifites and small lateral "counters".

It's like a didactic space, where more and more people visit to understand better the volcanic activity responsible for the genesis of these islands.

The cave was probably formed by lavas of a nearby fissural eruption, but there isn't much data about the year of the eruption.

This lava tube has 697m of extension and it's easy to walk inside. The cave floor has few height differences and it has high ceilings.

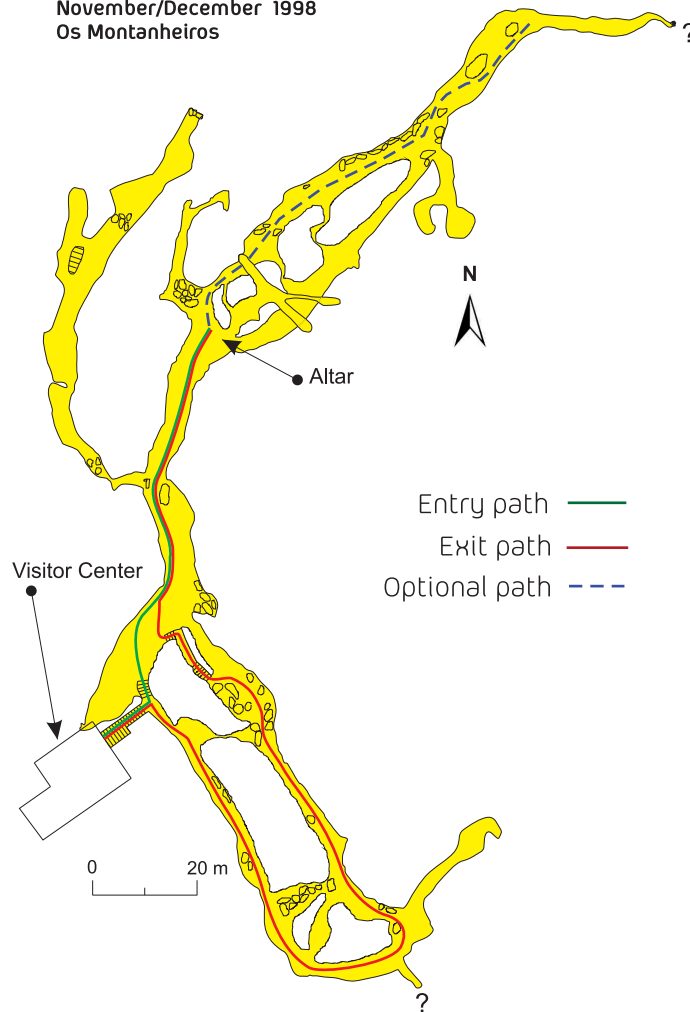
The cave route is circular so the visitors may see different things.

At the left side of the altar you will find a cave section that should be visited only by experienced persons.



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Topografia
F. Pereira, L. Bettencourt e G. Pereira
November/December 1998
Os Montanheiros



Photos 1, 2, 3, 4 e 5 Jorge Góis

In the womb of the island

On December 25th of 1969, Montanheiros organized the first mass inside the cave.

Since then it's known as Christmas Cave ("Gruta do Natal").

This day was too the first public opening, so it was built a simple wooded stair case and it was installed a rudimentary illumination system.

On December 1st of 1998, Montanheiros inaugurated the first house to support the touristic exploitation of the cave and later on 2006 they made more changes.

Inside the traditional house, you can see a photo exposition about the social and historical activities that occurred inside this cave, such as christenings, masses and weddings.

For those who visit Terceira island and go to Christmas Cave, have the perfect conditions of illumination and safety to be in contact with something new and may enjoy the beauties of a volcanic manifestations of this kind.

Christmas Cave opens each year, from April to October during the afternoon.

