

**Underwater Archaeological Route
from Ponta de São Lourenço, Madeira**

**FINDING
SS NEWTON**

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Margullar

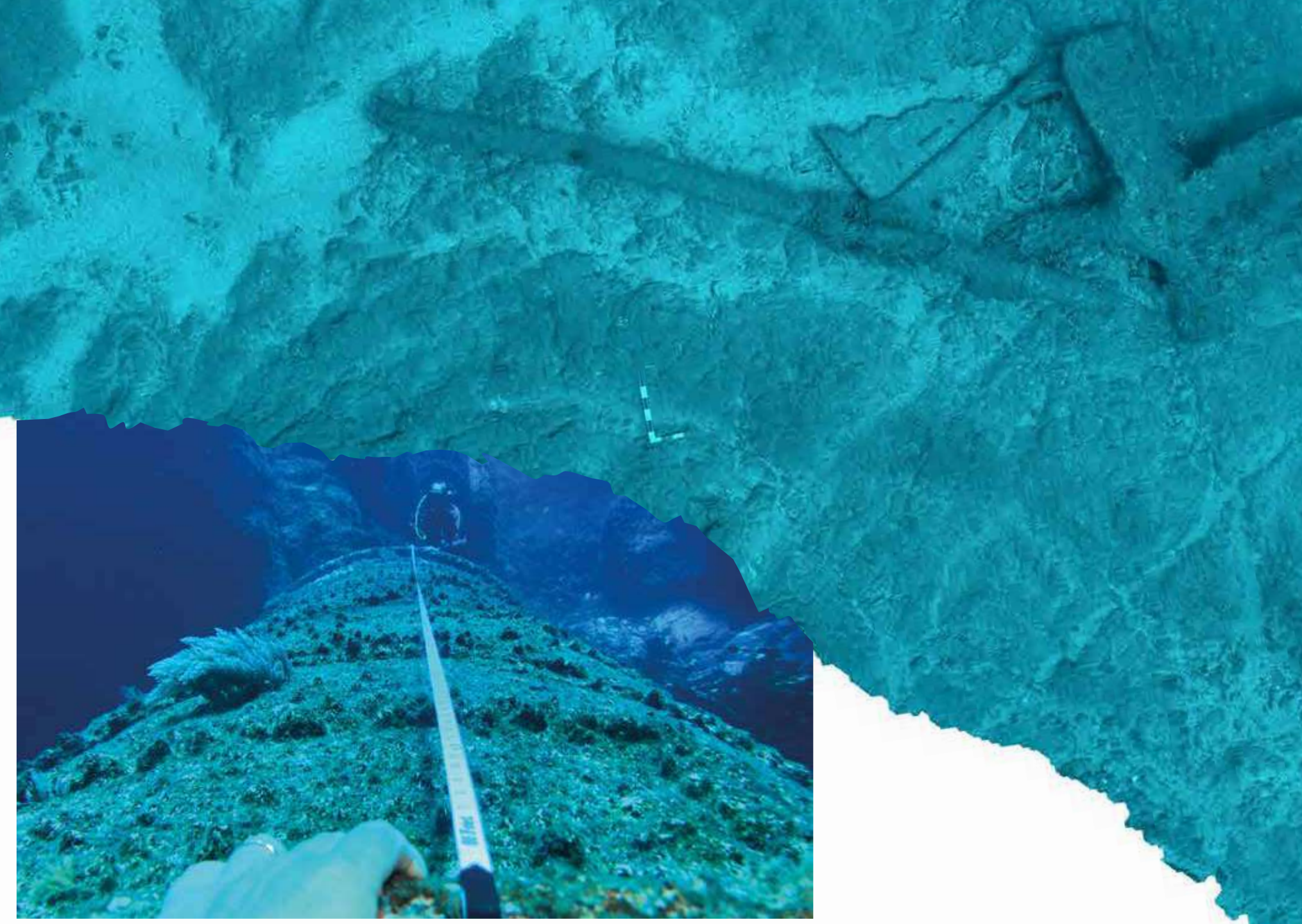
The Margullar project was financed under the INTERREG MAC 14-20 program, with the primary objective of enhancing the underwater archaeological heritage, through the preservation and creation of tourist assets that contribute to the increase of our cultural offer.

The investigation that was carried out, allowed us to identify and map the wreckage of a ship, that we believe is the remains of the British ship SS Newton, sunk in 1881.

ABOUT THE

Ship

The SS Newton was a steamship under the British flag, of iron construction, built in Greenock, in the year 1864. It was about 76 meters long, 9.5 meters wide (mouth), a 6.1 meter draft and a displacement of 1324 tons. It was built by Macnabb & Clarke and was equipped with a steam engine, which produced 90hp, capable of reaching a speed of 9 knots, propelled by inverted composite engines, with a single axis and a propeller, from the same company. It was registered in 1874 by Lamport & Holt Ltd. (WJ Lamport & G. Holt – Brazil & River Plate Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.) of Liverpool, with the objective of transporting passengers and cargo between England and South America. It was commanded by Mr. Robert James Hellyer Arscott.





ABOUT THE Shipwrecks

The bibliographic search of shipwrecks in the Madeira Archipelago mentions several occurrences of accidents in the southernmost tip of the island of Madeira. However, there are only two iron ships from the second half of the 19th century sunk at this site, the SS Newton and the SS Forerunner.

On October 25, 1854, at 7 pm, the SS Forerunner hit a an offshore bar, located south of Ponta de São Lourenço, causing an inflow of water that led to its sinking.

After this disaster, and under pressure from the English community of Madeira and the British Government, it was decided to build the Ponta de São Lourenço Lighthouse, which was only completed in 1870.

The existence of the Ponta de São Lourenço lighthouse was not enough to prevent another accident. In 1881, just eleven years after the completion of its construction, another British ship, the SS Newton, also after leaving Funchal for the British islands, was to sink in the same zone and in conditions very identical to that of the SS Forerunner.

The Archaeological investigation carried out by the Margullar project allowed us to positively identify that the remains present in Baixa da Badajeira belong to a single vessel, quite possibly the SS Newton, an identification supported by the archaeological interpretation of the remains and the discovery of a plate fragment from Brazil & River Plate Steam Navigation CO Ltd of Liverpool, who owned the ship.

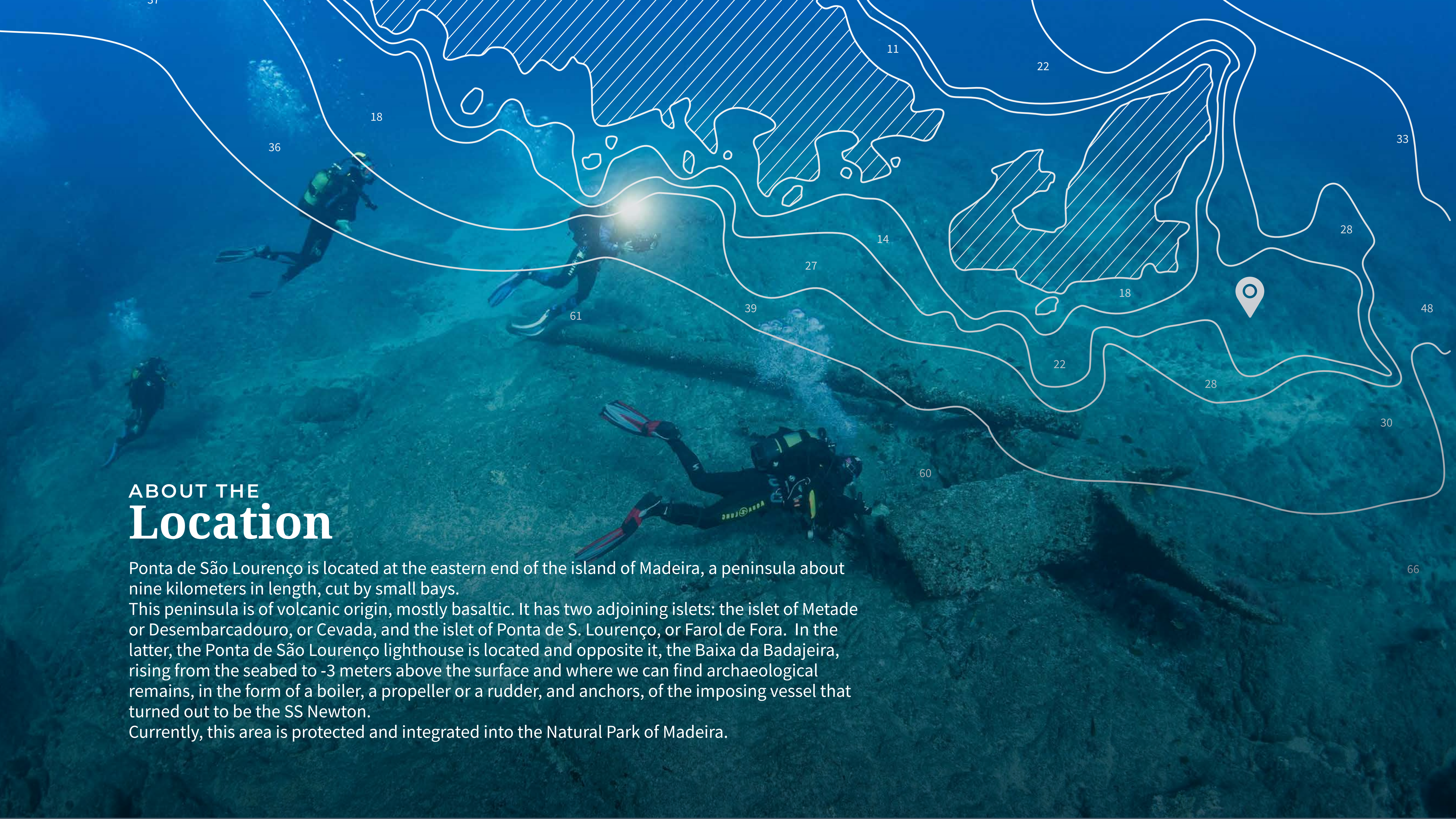
The mystery of the SS Forerunner's location remains.

ABOUT THE Location

Ponta de São Lourenço is located at the eastern end of the island of Madeira, a peninsula about nine kilometers in length, cut by small bays.

This peninsula is of volcanic origin, mostly basaltic. It has two adjoining islets: the islet of Metade or Desembarcadouro, or Cevada, and the islet of Ponta de S. Lourenço, or Farol de Fora. In the latter, the Ponta de São Lourenço lighthouse is located and opposite it, the Baixa da Badajeira, rising from the seabed to -3 meters above the surface and where we can find archaeological remains, in the form of a boiler, a propeller or a rudder, and anchors, of the imposing vessel that turned out to be the SS Newton.

Currently, this area is protected and integrated into the Natural Park of Madeira.





 Time of travel 15 to 30 min	The trip can be easily carried out, should the sea conditions permit.
 Depth 5 to 20 meters	Perfectly achievable even for a novice diver, if the sea conditions allow it.
 Immersion Time 45 to 60 min	Bottom time depends on the diver. We estimate this immersion period for a diver with average experience, in ideal sea conditions.
 Type of background Mixed	Area occupied by a rock mass, with several indentations, which extends in the form of a slab to sand, very fine, of a light shade.
 Fauna Abundant	Trumpet Fish, Blue Atlantic chromis, Black Atlantic chromis, Moray eel, Amberjacks, Hogfish, Groupers, Triggerfish, Island Grouper, Parrotfish.
 Category Abundant	Dive of Photographic Interest: Wreck Dive; Submarine Dive; Drift Dive; Mixed bottom diving; Embedded Dive, Historical Dive, Scientific Dive,(...)
 Difficulty Easy to High	Under correct sea conditions, this dive does not present any major difficulties. However, the meteorological instability of the location can change the degree of difficulty for the diver.
 Classification Very Good to Excellent	Taking into account the visibility conditions of the place, its historical context, the varied biodiversity and the number of alternative dives possible.

Two shipwrecks, an identified ship and a mystery yet to unravel.



For more information, visit:
www.acif-ccim.pt/diving/



Secretaria Regional
de Turismo e Cultura

