

August 29 2016, sunny, 32°



The next painting week will start on 6 October. There is still room for three participants. For further information, please visit our website.

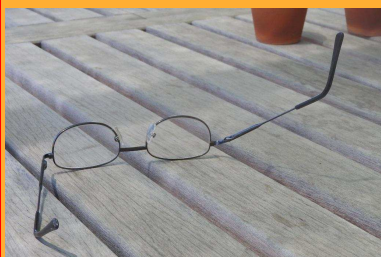
www.montedocasaraao.com
info@montedocasaraao.com
www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVtr-TOeEcc&feature=youtu.be

Glasses found

In the gravel at Casa Marcanta a pair of glasses has been found, men's glasses. It seems in working order. By the look of it, only the left arm has been slightly bent.

I do know that one of our guests lost his glasses last year. He was forced to wear his sunglasses with prescription lenses on his way home. I just can't remember who he was.

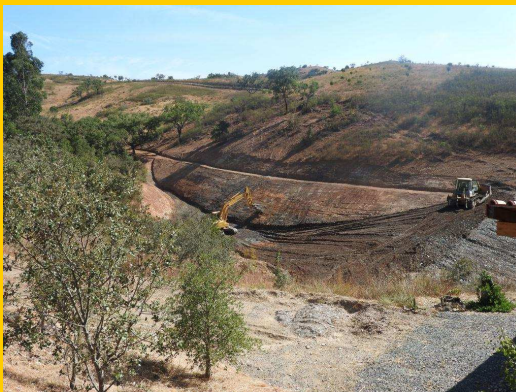
Are you the owner of the glasses and do you want them back? Please, let me know. I will send them by return post.



You can find further information and pictures regarding the Green Key Award, the reservoir and stargazing on our website.

BARRAGEM DO CASARÃO

Our reservoir is all but ready. The finishing touches still need to be added on the overflow, and the project will be finished up. It has turned out to be amazing. It's not just a pit (as our Flemish neighbour puts it). No, it's



been completely fitted into the landscape. During the job, Senhor Gato, the best reservoir builder far and wide, really began to enjoy himself and started suggesting all kinds of solutions and embellishments. Picnic site, allotment (oh yes!), it's all there.

A reservoir had been on our to-do list for a long time. During the summer months we only have just enough water. There is less water in any case (as there's hardly if any rain) and the use has increased: many guests, the swimming pool need topping up every few days, and the plants need water every now and again too.

The reservoir (with a capacity for about 8000 cubic metres of water) serves as a buffer. The swimming pool will be filled directly from the reservoir. It will make a huge difference. Now it's waiting for the rain.

GREEN KEY AWARD

On 27 May last, Monte do Casarão was presented the 2016 Green Key Award, a certificate for sustainable entrepreneurship within the tourism industry.

The Green Key is an international quality label that is valid for one year. It's an on-going process. Every year, the tourism establishment in question needs to formulate targets. When they have been realised, it will be awarded another certificate for the following year. Et cetera.

The main targets that Monte do Casarão aimed at for 2016/17 have to do with water and waste management. For instance, we want to increase our natural water supply – in which the reservoir will play a crucial role – and reduce the use of water. Also, we shall place waste containers in which our guests can separate their waste. That way,



we can save them a drive into the village. We are really proud of the certificate. It suits us, too. When you live smack in the middle of nature, respect, care and conversation are appropriate.

TELESCOPE

The starry sky above Monte do Casarão is so impressive that it simply demands to be explored. That's why, a real, professional telescope was high on our wish list.

Recently, we've become the proud owners of a Skywatcher Dobson N305/1500. Actually, the instrument is a presents from our guests. We put all the 'it's alright' money into a special telescope piggy bank, and thus, we've saved up for it through the years. There was even enough in the piggy bank for Nikon binoculars, a Deep Sky Reise atlas and two extra (better) ocular lenses.

So now a stargazing evening is yet another option. Together with Bas, who by now knows quite a bit about stargazing. A must.



THE REAL HEROES

Unfortunately, fires during the summer months are not exceptional in Portugal – nor are they in other southern countries. Warm, dry, hard winds... they are all conditions that bring on a starting fire.

This year, it wasn't so bad, at least, until the start of August. Until 6 August. From that date onwards, half of Portugal (including Madeira) was on fire. Until 15 August (in the course of nine days!) there were **3139** fires. On average about 300 a day. They kept more than 74,000 firemen busy. Most fires are under control, but still new fires ignite



every day.

Everywhere, activities are started to support the firemen, the real heroes in this story. Veterans offer their help, as do colleagues from France. The local population starts collections for water, soft drinks, energy bars and anything else that can help the firemen to keep going; The hairdresser donates his day's earnings. Italy is sending a fire-fighting plane; Russia even sends two.

The firemen have their own Facebook page. Obviously, it's in Portuguese, but don't let that stop you from visiting the page. The pictures and videos speak for themselves and show all the emotions. They include shocking images, but touching ones as well. For instance, the one in which five firemen are sprawled on the asphalt, totally exhausted. Or the one in which they offer a bucket of water to a dog that had a lucky escape.

Bombeiros, os Verdadeiros Heróis, the page is called. Firemen, real heroes.

So true.

Nel