

## How the orange landscape became a new brand for the Algarve

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The Algarve orange became a new brand for the southern region of Portugal in the past decade. Not only juice brands such as Compal have created a specific juice made of the Algarve orange, but there are several sites promoting this new brand (“laranja do Algarve”) and even touristic visit tours to the Algarve orange groves (“Rota da Laranja”) are offered as an alternative to beach tourism.

Orange trees have been cultivated in the Iberian Peninsula in sites of religious and political power at least since the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Rodrigues 2017a). History shows that citrus fruit existed in the Algarve not as a predominant crop, as that was the fig, but parallel to olive, carob, almond, and vines (Rodrigues 2017b and 2020). It was a typical Mediterranean landscape characterized by variety and balance. However, the European Union decided to exclusively choose citrus fruit and demarcate the Algarve as a geographically protected area for its culture. It was the mixture of rainfed crops with crops that require water supply such as citrus fruit that ensured the sustainability of the landscape. This is now lost.

Orange landscapes almost disappeared from the Algarve due to mildew in the nineteenth century and then a gradual effort has

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been made to replant orange groves. However, in the last decade, an impressive revitalization of orange landscapes occurred as the Algarve became a protected geographic region for the culture of citrus by the European Union. Hence, it became a new brand for the Algarve. The famous juice production company, Compal, launched the juice of 'Laranja do Algarve'. Moreover, the establishment of "Rota da Laranja" (Route of Orange), in the region of Silves, the Algarve inland, used a selected part of history, to promote orange landscapes as a new touristic destination.

This route takes the visitant to the places where oranges are cultivated, transformed and sold promoting orange picking experience in orchards of oranges, visits to packaging facilities, and industries that use oranges as it main product. This route stands as an example of how productive landscapes became new sites of historical heritage. In order to reach a wider public an application for mobile phone was developed. This story shows how history was used to create a new brand for the Algarve and how orange landscapes became geographical heritage.

**Methodology** - This work stems from the interface of traditional historical research with the analysis of data from the Base de dados Portugal Contemporâneo (PORDATA, Database of Contemporary Portugal), Direcção Regional de Agricultura e Pescas do Algarve (DRAP, Algarve Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries), Confederação dos Agricultores de Portugal (CAP, Confederation of Farmers of Portugal), Indicação Geográfica Protegida (IGP, Protected Geographical Indication), Associação de operadores de citrinos do Algarve (Algarorange, Algarve citrus fruit operators), Silves city council, legislation, and news in the media and websites.

**Fig. 1 – Placard for Oranges Roadmap and the application for mobile phone**

Source: <https://barlavento.sapo.pt/destaque/rota-da-laranja-de-silves-arranca-dia-7-de-fevereiro>

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