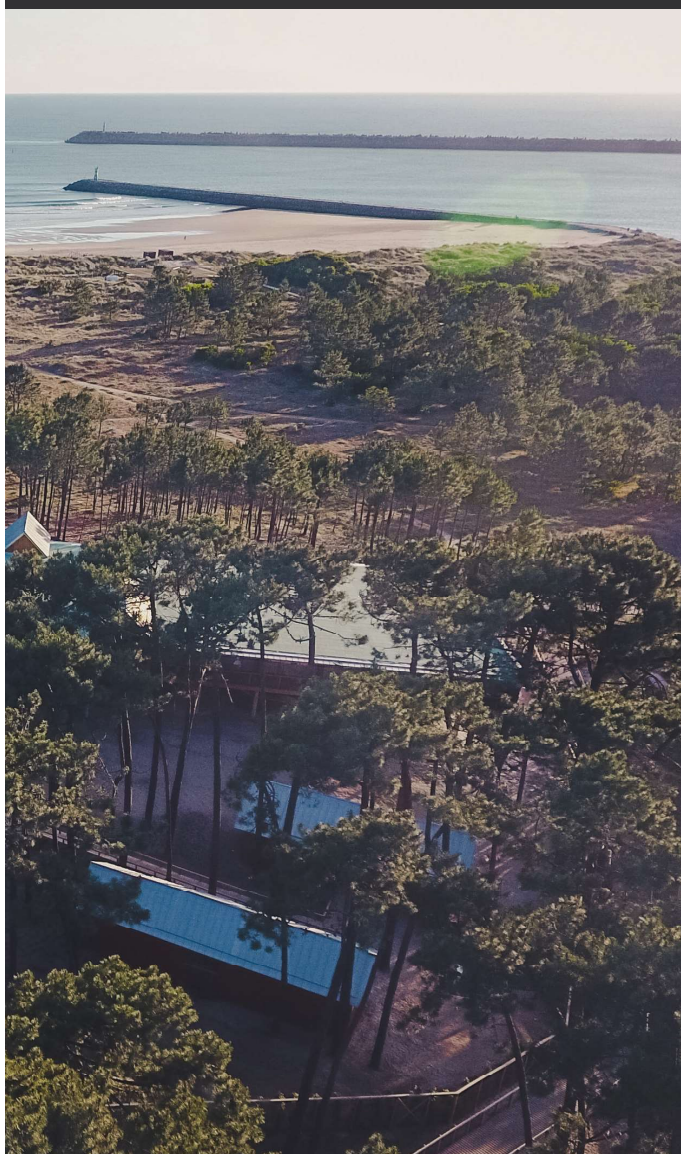


FEELVIANA
SPORT HOTEL

FEATURED RESORT: FEELVIANA



If you're looking for a European getaway that will pretty much guarantee that you can get on the water every day or — in the unlikely situation that you can't — has plenty of other active and non-action options then there are a few good ones to choose from.



If you want a European getaway that does this but is also within a couple of hundred meters of what a lot of riders would claim to be the best (and easiest!) kiteable right hand waves in Europe, then you want to head to FeelViana.

FeelViana opened its doors (and its pool, and its pump track, and it's very short path down to the beach) earlier this year. A project that passionate kiter Jose Sampaio has had his eye on for a few years, the complex got the go ahead in early 2016 and was pretty much completed by the end of that year. Jose's that kind of a guy.

So let's start with the hotel itself. Designed to fit in to the local topography (which is about 99.8% pine forest) FeelViana is a 'low rise' development with no part of it reaching above the surrounding trees. There are a selection of detached lodges, and then the hotel itself is long and narrow, with the restaurant and bar at one end and apartments stretching off along the rest of the top floor. The bottom floor then has the pool, spa, meeting rooms, equipment hire, equipment shop and A LOT of room for storing your kit... Yup, this isn't the kind of place where 'sporting options' have been tagged on as an afterthought.

The look and feel of FeelViana is very Scandinavian with a whole lot of wood in evidence and that lovely dry 'woody' smell. The rooms are fitted out luxuriously with large beds, big bathrooms and plenty of hot water. Some also have a Jacuzzi on the balcony. And you are on holiday, so why not?! Walking around and there are huge windows periodically built into the roof giving the hotel a light and fresh vibe.

LEFT

The set up.. And the beach...



For eating, there is a buffet breakfast with cereals, fruit and yoghurts, as well as a whole spectrum of local products including cold meats, cheese and local pastries. So load up – it's going to be a busy day. For lunch and dinner there is a well thought out menu which regularly changes and offers a great selection of local meat and fish. There is also a bar menu for eating out of the restaurant's opening times, or for if you fancy something to eat while you sup your sunset *cerveja*... FeelViana is a four star hotel but the quality of the food suggests it ought to have another one in this department...



So on to the kiting.

It's an overused term, but FeelViana really is kiting 'nirvana'. Set back a little way from Cabedelo beach (Viana Do Castelo's southern beach) you really can't get any closer to this prime bit of kiting real estate. The setup is pretty simple: there is a large harbor wall that stretches out into the sea and provides complete protection from the swells that hit the coast in the prevailing northerly wind direction. So for flat water kiting, for beginner kites and for teaching it's perfect – with mirror flat conditions and with a nice slowly shelving beach.

Head a little way further left (away from the harbor) and if there is swell running then you'll start to see some waves coming in – these can range from waist to shoulder high depending on the size of the swell and are the perfect place to hone your waveriding skills, or to have your first few sessions on a surfboard. Head another couple of hundred meters down and you might well find yourself in wave kiting heaven... Depending on the size of the swell you can get anything from shoulder high to double overheard waves coming through, all walling up and breaking away down the line. The Nortada – which blows throughout the spring and summer – is strengthened a little due to the local conditions so there is wind most days and it blows right to left – pretty much dead side shore – providing prime waveriding conditions. Like I say: it's wave kiting nirvana.

And if you don't bring your own kit, FeelViana have the full Cabrinha range available for hire... You can also get individual lessons or a complete course with their experienced instructors who operate directly on the beach.

If the wind or waves are not on (or you want to try something different for your early morning or evening activity) then fear not: FeelViana have you covered. You can take out a SUP or surfboard (there is great surfing at the kite spot when there is no wind or, for smaller swells, you can drive a little up the coast to a couple of super nice beach breaks) or you can take a bike (they have the full Scott range) and a GPS and explore some of the 400kms of tracks close by. If you don't want to go that far, then you can always just head to the 'pump track' which is tucked away under the end of the complex and offers hours of fun for kids and grown ups as you pump your way around the circuit.

There are a lot of places you can go in the world and get a 'sport focused' hotel experience, but there is only one that has been imagined with kitesurfing at its very core, and with a world class kiting beach a two-minute walk through the pine forest... And that's FeelViana.