

# EXPLORE!

NEW

**Walking in the Eastern Algarve**  
8 days

Portugal - Trip code WIA



## Walking in the Eastern Algarve

Based in the historic town of Tavira, this walking trip in the eastern Algarve offers scenic coastal and inland walking. Tavira, separated by the Gilao River, has retained its charm with whitewashed buildings and cobbled streets. The relaxed walks take you through picturesque villages and traditional fishing communities, past lemon orchards and bamboo trees, into the rolling Barrocal Hills and along the banks of the Guadiana River. Explore the beautiful unspoilt beaches on the sandbank islands of Tavira and Cultra, reaching the southernmost lighthouse in Portugal.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Rio Formosa Estuarine National Park** - Walk along the protected coastal habitats found off the coast
- ★ **Tavira** - Enjoy time in this ancient Moorish town, exploring the colourful cobbled streets
- ★ **Portuguese food and drink** - Savour the local seafood delicacies accompanied by a glass of crisp wine
- ★ **Culatra Island** - Explore traditional fishing communities and sand dunes on this beautiful island
- ★ **Barrocal hills** - Walk through pretty forested hills, olive groves and citrus orchards

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

#### WALKING GRADE:

##### Easy

Suitable for most people in good health, these easy walks are predominantly on good paths, at low altitude and on undemanding terrain. Previous walking or trekking experience is not necessary.

#### GROUP SIZE:

##### 10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Arrive in Tavira

Our trip starts in the delightful town of Tavira, about forty minutes from Faro Airport. If you arrive early our hotel is the perfect base from which to explore the cobbled streets on foot discovering the pretty tiled houses and there are plentiful alfresco dining options. Our welcoming hotel is within walking distance of the old centre, restaurants and bars. Its location offers great views over the town and river from the rooftop bar and outside pool area.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Walk in Ria Formosa National Park on Tavira Island

Today we explore the Tavira coast, walking through the old town out to the pier to take a 10 minute boat journey across to Tavira island. Tavira island forms part of Rio Formosa Estuarine National Park, a long strip of salt marshes and lagoons stretching from Faro to the Spanish Border. We walk along the unspoiled beaches, observing the wetland ecosystem and coastal habitats, past; mudflats, sea rushes and the native curry plant (with yellow flowers that smells like curry powder!) The area is a paradise for birdwatches and we'll see flamingos feeding in the shallow water. Our walk continues along the beautiful Praia de Barril, a long white sandy beach backed by sand dunes. The most noticeable and unique feature of this beach is the anchor 'graveyard'. Dozens of anchors have been planted in the dunes, an eerie reminder of the regions once thriving tuna fishing industry. The fishermen huts have now been converted into cafes, restaurants and shops. From Terra Estreita Beach we take boat back to the mainland, to the small fishing village of Santa Luzia from where we walk back to town. There will be time this afternoon time to explore more of Tavira. Take in the view up river from the seven-arched Roman Bridge, although actually Moorish in its origin, throughout the centuries the bridge has provided vital access across the River Gilao. Today's 10 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four hours with a total ascent and descent of 70 metres.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

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Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 3 - Walk along the Guadiana river to Odeleite, return by bus and train

Today we drive (45 min) to near the small village of Azinhal. We walk through gentle hills and low rising vegetation along the banks of Guadiana river (which marks the Spanish border) and on to the small old fashioned village of Odeleite. From Odeleite we drive south to San Antonio de Vila Real. We take some time here for a coffee overlooking the main square and stroll around the pedestrianized streets leading to the river, before travelling back to Tavira by train. Today's 14 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four and a half hours with a total ascent and descent of 150 metres.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)

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Standard Hotel

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Single room available

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Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 4 - Walk to through orchards to Moinhos da Rocha waterfall

This morning we take a short drive north from Tavira. Today's walk follows the River Sequa through bamboo trees and lemon orchards with views across the Asseca Valley. We cross Asseca creek by footbridge to reach Moinhos da Rocha waterfall. There is time to rest and take a swim in the lagoon before heading back on a different route to the road where we'll get taxis back to Tavira. Today's 11 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three hours with a total ascent and descent of 100 metres.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)

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Standard Hotel

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Single room available

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Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 5 - Free day. Opportunity to relax or walk the Via Algarviana trail.

Today is a free day to relax on the local beaches or explore the region more. It is possible to take an inland walk following the Via Algarviana long distance walking trail through the Barrocal hills. Part of the Great Pedestrian Route (GR13) which traverses the Algarve from East to West this trail flows an old pilgrim path through small rural villages. The walk options can be discussed with your Leader. For an interesting insight into Portuguese traditions you could attend a Fado performance, this 30 minute show starts with a film about the history of Fado, a Portuguese traditional song, followed by guitarists and a singer performing a range of Fado songs. The tour leader will be able to advise on the best location and timings. You could also visit the Camera Obscura, housed in an old water tower close to the castle. A rotating mirror on the roof of the tower projects a telescopic view of Tavira, the guide uses the image to point out key sights and explain the history and culture of the town. Today's optional 14 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four hours with a total ascent and descent of 450 metres.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)

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Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Walk in the Barrocal hills north of Tavira.

Today we travel by taxis from Tavira to the Barrocal hills north of Tavira. The Barrocal area is the Algarve's fertile farmland situated between the coastal strip and the mountains of the Serra. We'll follow a dirt track through cork oak woodland, olive groves and citrus orchards. In the springtime wildflowers cover the fields and in autumn the area becomes a haven for birds. Today we will enjoy a picnic lunch, getting supplies in Tavira before leaving. Tonight you could try a Cataplana, originating from southern Portugal this flavoursome dish combines a variety of seafood in an aromatic stew, cooked in a copper clam shaped pot. Today's 13 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three and a half hours with a total ascent and descent of 200 meters.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Take a ferry to Culatra Island and walk to Farol

This morning we take a public bus or taxi to Olhao. Olhao is the Algarve's largest fishing port; we'll visit the morning fish and vegetable market before taking the small local ferry to Culatra island (30 minutes). The sand bar island of Culatra in Ria Formosa National Park is home to a small fishing community living in a cluster of low built houses and cottages. With no cars or paved roads walking around the sparsely developed island feels like stepping back in time, we'll take the wooden walkway through the sand dune system and relax on the vast empty beaches. Culatra is known for its abundant wildlife, and is a prime spot for birdwatching with a variety of seabird species. We get the boat back to the mainland from the other side of the island at Ilha do Farol (lighthouse), and travel back to our hotel. Today's five kilometre walk is expected to take approximately one and a half hours along a flat route.



**Accommodation: Marina Nova Lounge** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Trip ends in Tavira.

Your trip ends this morning after breakfast, in Tavira.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

# Walking and Trekking information

## Walking grade

Easy

## Trek details

Walks on 5 days for between 1.5 to 4.5 hours each day on well-marked and maintained trails.

## Why book this trip

Portugal has so much potential for fantastic walking trips. This trip explores a different, less vitiated area of the Algarve. Suitable for all the trip is graded as easy, with relaxed walking and day trips from our base in the historic beautiful town of Tavira, combining scenic coastal and inland countryside walks.

## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 7



### Transport

Bus  
Taxi  
Train



### Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Driver(s)



### Accommodation

7 nights standard hotel

## Trip information

### Country information

## Portugal Holidays & Tours

### Climate

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a trip to Portugal - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The northern high plains has both extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. The islands have very different weather patterns due to their positioning and can have sudden rain

falls throughout the year so waterproofs are recommended even in the summer.

#### **Time difference to GMT**

0

#### **Plugs**

2 Pin Round

#### **Religion**

Roman Catholic

#### **Language**

Portuguese

## **Budgeting and packing**

### **Clothing**

Lightweight cotton clothing is best from June to September, and a warm fleece/light jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights at the beginning and end of the season.

### **Footwear**

Lightweight walking boots or study shoes are recommended and trainers / sandals for relaxing and walking around Tavira. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable

### **Luggage**

20kg

### **Luggage: On tour**

One main piece of baggage and daypack a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a jumper, camera, sun-cream, picnic lunch etc. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

### **Equipment**

We also recommend taking a water bottle, insect repellent, and sun cream.

### **Tipping**

#### **Explore leader**

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly, we recommend approximately 15€ per person for tipping. 10% is recommended at meal times.

#### **Country Information**

## **Portugal Holidays & Tours**

### **Food and drink**

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

#### **Dinner price**

£15

#### **Beer price**

£2.00 - 3.00 depending on your location, well touristed areas are usually slightly more expensive.

**Water price**  
£1.4

## Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**  
Euro.

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**  
Take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

**Where To Exchange**  
We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

**ATM Availability**  
Cash-point machines are available in all major towns. Bankcards with the Cirrus logo are accepted.

**Credit Card Acceptance**  
Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

**Travellers Cheques**  
Travellers cheques can be exchanged in all major towns but are not recommended due to the high rate of commission.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, Taxi, Train

### Accommodation notes

#### Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Our hotel is located in a quite hillside area of Tavira, a five minute walk from the centre. The Maria Nova Lounge offers great views over the city, both from your own private balcony and the rooftop bar. The hotel features both an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, perfect for relaxing after a day of walking. A plentiful buffet breakfast will be served daily from the on-site restaurant.

## Essential information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking

please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## Visa Information

Portugal: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Portugal Holidays & Tours

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.



