

EXPLORE!

Self-Guided Cycle South Portugal

8 days

Portugal - Trip code CSPO



Self-Guided Cycle South Portugal

On this self-guided cycle journey you follow Portugal's beautiful coastline from the Algarve into Alentejo. Your route starts in Cabo Sao Vicente, the south-westerly most point of Portugal and continental Europe. You cycle off-road through the natural park of 'Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina' between villages. Enjoy the local food and wine along the way.

Trip highlights

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.

CYCLING GRADE:

Easy To Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate rides on the same tour. You'll be cycling through flat or gently undulating terrain, with the occasional more energetic ascent.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Arrival at Vila do Bispo

Your holiday begins in the town of Vila do Bispo. The afternoon is free for you to explore the local sights and relax after the journey. Details of how to reach the start point of your holiday can be found on our website in the tour specific 'dates and prices' section by clicking on 'Joining Info' and then the 'Show More' button.



Accommodation: Hotel Mira Sagres (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Circular route from Vila do Bispo

After breakfast your bike will be delivered to your hotel. Take your time to test the bike out and make any adjustments before you start the first route. First you follow dirt roads across pastures and fields to Cabo Sao Vicente (the far southwest corner of Portugal). Then a quiet tarmac road takes you east along the rocky shores to the village of Sagres, which has a beautiful beach and several bars and restaurants. You will then return to Vila do Bispo for the evening. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 30 kilometres (200/ 275 metres ascent and descent) with the option to add a further 9 kilometres.



Accommodation: Hotel Mira Sagres (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - From Vila do Bispo to Carrapateira

Today you combine sections of three famous trails. You start on the Via Algarviana as you head west from Sagres, before turning north to catch up with the Historical Trail which leads to Carrapateira via the restored village of Pedralva. If your legs are feeling strong we recommend you add the circular route from Carrapateira along the cliffs and beach as this is one of the most stunning beaches in the area. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 32 kilometres (300/ 400 metres ascent, 375/ 475 metres descent) with the option to add a further 10 kilometres.



Accommodation: Pensao das Dunas (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Cycle from Carrapateira to Aljezur

From Carrapateira you explore the rolling hills and quiet inland valleys with extensive pasture land and villages. After following the seaside plateau of Monte Novo and Chabouco for approximately 20 kilometres you descend to the medieval town of Aljezur. You can also choose to add a loop via the coastal village of Arrifana and the beach of Monte Clérigo. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 32 kilometres (275 metres ascent and descent) with the option to add a further 14 kilometres.



Accommodation: Hotel Vicentina (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - From Aljezur to Zambujeira do Mar via Odeceixe

Today is an enjoyable route as you cycle to Armoreiro beach, then climb up to a plateau filled with heather and pine trees at Rogil. After a short coffee break you will follow the Historical Trail alongside a winding irrigation channel, or alternatively you can choose to cycle along wider tarmac lanes. After the traditional village of Odeceixe you cross the border between the Algarve and Alentejo and start the second climb of the day, across an agricultural area to reach your accommodation for the night, set above the beach of Zambujeira. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 38 kilometres (225 metres ascent and descent).



Accommodation: Hospedagem Rosa dos Ventos (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Circular route via Zambujeira and Sao Teutonio

You may like to take it easy today and spend some time at the beach, or you can choose to cycle an easy circular route through the relatively flat agricultural area between Zambujeira and Sao Teutonio. However, we recommend you cycle the long route via Boavista dos Pinheiros in order to appreciate a different landscape along on the banks of the rivers Mira and Sao Teutonio. To reach the river banks you follow wide dirt roads (again waymarked as a Historical Trail) through undulating countryside with open woods of Holm Oak and Strawberry trees, bursting with flowers in Spring time. After Boavista dos Pinheiros, you can follow quiet tarmac and dirt roads back to Zambujeira. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 32 kilometres (275 metres ascent) with an option to add a further 15 kilometres.



Accommodation: Hospedagem Rosa dos Ventos (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Cycle from Zambujeira do Mar to Vila Nova de Milfontes

On your last day you mainly follow dirt roads and quiet tarmac lanes along the coast line. The end of the route is the magic Coastal town of Vila Nova de Milfontes, at the mouth of the river Mira. It has the nickname 'Princess of the Alentejo' and once you have stayed there you will understand why. This town is perfect for a few extra nights to enjoy the beach and the tasty gastronomy of the Alentejo. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 33 kilometres (150 metres ascent and descent).



Accommodation: Casa do Adro (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Holiday ends in Faro airport

After breakfast the bike rental company will pick you up at the hotel and drive you to Faro Airport.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Cycling information

DAILY DISTANCE



Optional Rides

General cycling information

During this trip you will cycle a minimum of 185 km during six days (and average of 26 km per day) with optional trips on most days. These cycling trips follow mostly well-surfaced tarmac roads and cycle paths. Inevitably, near the towns there is more traffic, but we have chosen alternatives wherever available in order to avoid busy roads. We have graded this trip as Easy to Moderate.

Bike included

18 gear Coluer Rave Mountain Bike with lockable front suspension.

Bike information

Your included bike is an 18 gear Coluer Rave mountain bike with lockable front suspension and will be the correct frame size for your height. This bike is fitted with a map holder and one lateral rear pannier bag. Female saddles can be provided on request (please advise at time of booking). Alternatively you can bring your own saddle (please ask for seat stem size). A lock, pump, spare inner tube and puncture repair kit with tyre levers will be provided. All you need to bring is your own helmet. You will be required to sign an agreement of care on collection of the bike.

Cycling grade

EasyToModerate



Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a pump, lock, spare inner tube and tyre levers. All you need bring is your own helmet.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7



Transport

Bicycle



Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple hotel

Trip information

Country information

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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

Optional activities

Throughout the trip there are fantastic photo or sketching opportunities with expansive views and traditional Portuguese architecture. Day 4 - A particularly good beach today to visit is at Monte Clerigo.

Clothing

Bring cycling gear such as quick drying cycle tops, padded cycle shorts and cycle gloves. The sun can be strong in the south of Portugal though at the start and end of the season you should bring warmer clothes as the weather at these times will be changeable. A waterproof cycle jacket is recommended in case of rain. A light windproof jacket is always useful.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of baggage as per your airline luggage allowance, maximum 20 kg per person. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage if using public transport so don't overload yourself. Luggage transfers between hotels are normally arranged by the hoteliers. Please note luggage transfers are restricted to 15 kg per person, any additional weight will need to be packed in your day bag or pannier bag. Mark your bags clearly and leave them at the place and time arranged with them. When travelling on public transport you should always take your luggage with you.

Luggage transfer

Included between each hotel.

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage. Maps - Along with the destination manual and route notes you will be sent a set of maps that have been created specifically for this trip to help you navigate. The route is marked on each map together with a series of numbered waypoints which correspond with instructions in the route notes. Should you wish to purchase a more detailed commercially produced map we recommend the following:- General Map Grupo Anaya, Portugal, Madeira y Azores, 1:340.000 (2008) Topographic Map Rota Vicentina Mapa / Map, 1:55.000 (2013)

Country Information

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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

Bicycle

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.

Standard - Our 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.

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, E.U nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visa information is subject to change. 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 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.

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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.
