

EXPLORE!

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Cycle Portugal - Lisbon to Algarve

PORTUGAL - TRIP CODE CAL

CYCLING

Why book this trip?

From the cobbled streets of Lisbon we cycle south through wild coastal landscapes, past fishing villages, pristine coves and superb beaches, to the remote south-westerly corner of Europe. Discover the Costa Vicentina - Europe's largest coastal natural park.

- **Lisbon** - Explore Portugal's lively and charming capital
- **Vicentine Coast Natural Park** - Cycle the entire length of this wild and unspoilt corner of Europe
- **Food and drink** - Try great local cuisine, fresh fish, seafood and Alentejo wines



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour Leader / Cycle guide
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Bicycle
Ferry
Train



ACCOMMODATION
7 nights
comfortable hotel



CYCLING GRADE:
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Lisbon

Our trip begins in Lisbon, founded on seven hills overlooking the estuary of the River Tagus, the city became the capital of Portugal after its conquest from the Moors in 1147. As Portugal built a global empire from the 15th century onwards, Lisbon became the hub of international trade and the heart of this maritime Golden Age of discovery, reflected in the monumental architecture. A devastating earthquake and resulting tsunami almost totally destroyed the capital in 1755 and therefore Lisbon appears as a carefully planned 18th century city.

The Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 7.00pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner.

If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Lisbon Airport (LIS), which is a 30 minute drive from the hotel. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.



ACCOMMODATION:
Residencial Alcobia (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore Lisbon. Morning orientation walk. Afternoon optional visit to Sintra by train

After breakfast the Tour Leader will lead an orientation walk of Lisbon to help gain your bearings and introduce the city for the day ahead. The rest of the day is left free for you to discover more of Lisbon, perhaps even riding an old-fashioned tram to see the contrasting and characterful neighbourhoods. There is plenty to see and do in Lisbon itself but for those interested this afternoon there is the option of taking a train ride (40 mins) from Lisbon's Rossio Station to hill-top Sintra - the 'Garden of Lisbon' - where royalty and the aristocracy built elegant palaces, estates and gardens, each trying to outdo the other. In the evening you have the option to attend a fado performance - the melancholic melodies of the people of Lisbon or Lisboetas.

No cycling today.



ACCOMMODATION:
Residencial Alcobia (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Ferry across the Tagus and coastal cycling to Cape Espichel

Today we leave the capital behind and strike south on our journey. After breakfast there will be some time to ensure all are happy with our bikes and to make any minor adjustments. We then begin the first cycling section of the holiday from Lisbon south and ride directly from the hotel through downtown Lisbon and onto Belem district, derived from the Portuguese word for Bethlehem, where we cross the Tagus by ferry. Our route starts with some traffic in the Trafaria area then takes us along the Coast Caparica, sometimes parallel to the sea and other times inland, passing Albufeira Lake until we reach the lighthouse on Cape Espichel where the ride ends. From here we take taxis a short distance to our hotel in Sesimbra. Once a small fishing village, Sesimbra is now a pleasant beach town with great seafood restaurants and an old Moorish fort overlooking the sands. Around 20% of the route today is on an unpaved sandy surface, 80% paved. Please note that depending on conditions it may be necessary to walk the bikes over a 2km stretch of sand on today's route.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 59 kilometres (total 550 metres accumulated ascent and 430 metres descent).



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel do Mar (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Cycle through Arrabida Natural Park to Setubal

Today we ride to Setubal passing the rolling hills of the Serra da Arrabida. The stunning coastal scenery is somewhat greener than the south and contrasts the deep blue Atlantic with the greens of the pine-forested hills. There is a steep climb in the morning section of the ride where we gain about 200 metres elevation over 3kms and a couple of shorter climbs in the afternoon. Along the way we pass little bays and beaches and will make time for a quick swim. Finally we reach our hotel in the thriving port town of Setubal where you can take a walk through the pedestrianised old town and even up to the hilltop fortress for panoramic views. Around 10% of the route today is on a unpaved surface.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 35 kilometres (total 730 metres accumulated ascent and 720 metres descent).



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Arangues (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Into the Alentejo region and cycle to Vila Nova de Milfontes

We start the day with a bus ride (1.5hrs) south into the region of Alentejo (literally the land 'beyond' the River Tagus). The second cycling section of the holiday starts in the little coastal town of Sines from where we head south to Vila Nova de Milfontes. Shortly after starting we enter the protected lands of the Vicentine Coast Natural Park - Europe's largest coastal natural park. The remainder of the trip is within this huge park as we cycle south until Sagres, mostly on inland routes but always returning occasionally to the stunning coastline of rugged cliffs and miles of unspoilt beaches constantly pounded by the Atlantic Ocean. There is one longer climb today after Odeceixe where we climb for about a mile. Relax in the unhurried town of Vila Nova and take a stroll down to the harbour and explore the old quarter. Around 35% of the route today is on an unpaved surface.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 27 kilometres (total 220 metres accumulated ascent and 230 metres descent).



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Milfontes Beach (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Continue cycling down the Vicentine Coast to historic Aljezur village

Today is our longest ride as we continue south on another ride past wild coastlines and white-washed fishing villages. The final part of our ride is in the Algarve region, whose name dates back to Moorish time mean simply 'the west' in Arabic. We see the 'untouched' Algarve on the Atlantic Coast, far removed from the golf courses and beach resorts further east. Today's cycle ride ends in in the charming historical village of Aljezur. We recommend a stroll around its compact and well-preserved old quarter and, time permitting; you can choose to visit the ruins of the medieval castle with great views over the surrounding area. Around 15% of the route today is on a unpaved surface.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 66 kilometres (total 650 metres accumulated ascent and descent).



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Vicentina (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Cycle past great wild beaches to Sagres. Drive to Faro

Our final ride passes some of the greatest wild beaches on the west coast. There is one steady and gentle uphill at the beginning of the ride, then another couple later in the day. Our final destination is the historically important port town of Sagres. It was here that Prince Henry the Navigator founded his navigation school during the 'Age of the Discoveries' and the Fortaleza de Sagres castle, rebuilt in the 18th century. After celebrating the end of our ride we will drive for around 1.5hrs on to our hotel in Faro. Around 8 km of the route today is on a slightly rougher, unpaved surface.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 54 kilometres (total 760 metres accumulated ascent and 730 metres descent).



ACCOMMODATION:
Best Western Dom Bernardo (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Faro

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Faro.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Faro at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day, luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Faro Airport (FAO), which is a 15-30 minute drive away.





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Portugal

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	Plugs	Religion	Language
0	2 Pin Round	Roman Catholic	Portuguese

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Lisbon: Sintra train ticket - 5 Euros, Fado show with dinner - 35 Euros, San Jeronimo Monastery 10 Euros

Sintra: Palacio da Pena 14 Euros, Moorish castle 8 Euros

Sagres: Public Beaches: Mareta Beach, Beleeira Beach, Martinhal Beach (transport not included)

Clothing

When cycling: quick drying cycle tops, padded cycle shorts, lightweight wind and water proof jacket and warmer breathable layers where local conditions require. Be prepared for wind from the Atlantic in general and some colder days on the bike on departures in April, May and October.

General: Pack essentially for mild or hot weather depending on the time of the year.

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

20kg

Luggage: On tour

We recommend you bring a daypack and one main piece of luggage (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike.

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. 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. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised 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. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £20 of local currency for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Portugal

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

£18

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 Recommended Currency For Exchange**

Euro.

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, Bicycle, Ferry, Train

Accommodation notes

Comfortable - 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

Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport 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.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Cycling information



General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 241 km over five days (an average of 48 km per day). We cycle on a mixture of tarmac roads with traffic, cycle paths and off-road routes. A support vehicle (with room for 2 passengers) will accompany our rides where possible and transports our luggage throughout the trip while the Tour Leader cycles with the group. We have graded the route as moderate.

Bike included

27 gear Stevens Galant or Stevens Savoie hybrid bikes.

Electric bikes (e-bikes) are available for an additional cost for the duration of the holiday. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

Bike information

Your included bike is a 27 gear Stevens Galant or Savoie hybrid and will be the correct frame size for your height. A pannier is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet and water bottle.

Electric bikes (available for an additional cost) will be a Haibike sDuro Trekking 4.0. Please note this is with a unisex step-through frame. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

Cycling grade

Additional Information



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 support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**