

# EXPLORE!

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## Cycling Portugal - Porto to Lisbon

PORTUGAL - TRIP CODE CPL

CYCLING

### Why book this trip?

Discover the cultural highlights, sweeping beaches and natural beauty of central Portugal. Cycle up the Douro Valley, ride a bike path to university town Coimbra then take a train to picturesque Aveiro. Spend the next three days following the Atlantic Coast, trying the excellent local wines and catch of the day.

- **Varied and scenic cycling** - two inland rides and three days closer to the coast
- **Porto and Lisbon** - Explore Portugal's two finest cities
- **Local cuisine** - Taste great food especially fresh fish and seafood



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 7



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



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus  
Bicycle  
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 Porto; evening orientation walk

Our trip starts in Porto. Portugal's second city straddles the River Douro and its atmospheric historic centre lies on the northern bank. The Port Wine lodges are located along the river in Gaia on the southern side.

The Tour Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting followed by a quick orientation tour on our walk to the first group dinner where you can get to know your fellow travellers. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you will need to arrive into Porto Airport (OPO), which is a 30-minute drive from the hotel. If you miss the briefing, your Tour Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

No cycling today.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Moov Hotel Porto Centro (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**



## DAY 2 - Cycle ride up the scenic Douro Valley on quiet roads to Peso da Regua

We leave Porto this morning after breakfast, travelling by train for nearly two hours to reach Pala where our first ride begins. We will walk from our hotel some 500 metres to the train station (mention to Tour Leader if you are going to struggle). There will be some time to ensure all are happy with our bikes and to make any minor adjustments. We then begin cycling and continue our journey up the Douro Valley, cycling on relatively quiet roads. Towards the end of our ride we enter one of the world's oldest demarcated wine regions - Porto and we start to see the famous terraced vineyards that have produced Port for over three hundred years. Our ride ends in Peso da Regua from where we travel by public bus for about an hour to Viseu and our hotel for the night. Set on a high plateau in the hills of Beira Alta, Viseu retains a medieval feel and has been an important crossroads since Roman times. Nowadays it is the centre of production of Dão wines.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 47 kilometres (total 800 metres accumulated ascent and descent).



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Durao (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 3 - Ride the Dão cycle path; drive to university town of Coimbra

We cycle from the hotel after breakfast and ride our way to the start of the Ecopista do Dão cycle path. This cycle and walking path was made in 2011 by converting a railway line and we follow the entire route, with a downhill bias, to Santa Comba Dão. The first part runs along the banks of the river Dão, later leaving the river and running through landscapes covered with oak and chestnut trees with some vineyards and cultivated land. In the distance the mountains of the Serra do Caramulo (in the north) and the Serra da Estrela (in the south) are always present. At the end of the ride, depending on our arrival time we travel by train or public bus to Coimbra - once the medieval capital of Portugal and home to the historic University. The Tour Leader will take us on a walk through the backstreets and old quarter.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 49 kilometres (total 150 metres accumulated ascent and 550 metres descent).



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ACCOMMODATION:  
Tivoli Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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#### **DAY 4 - Train ride to Aveiro - the Portuguese 'Venice'; cycle on coastal plains to Figueira da Foz**

First thing today we catch the train to Aveiro - a charming town that is known for its canals, Art Nouveau architecture and colourful Moliceiros boats. We start our cycle along the colourfully painted beachfront houses in the Costa Nova neighbourhood. The surrounding area is a shallow coastal lagoon rich in birdlife and our cycle route takes us south, through the plains and marshland close to the sea, to finally reach Praia de Mira where our ride ends. We then travel by bus 45mins to Figueira de Foz where we spend the night. Figueira sits at the mouth of the Mondego River and its extensive beaches of soft white sand meant that it has developed as a seaside resort as well as a fishing port.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 49 kilometres (total 190 metres accumulated ascent and descent).



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Wellington (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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#### **DAY 5 - Drive to historic Alcobaça; coastal cycling via Nazaré to Foz do Arelho**

After breakfast we drive for about 1.5hrs to Alcobaça, allowing some time here to explore before starting our cycle ride. The 12th century UNESCO listed monastery is considered to be one of the finest examples of early Gothic architecture in Portugal. Today's cycle ride starts here and the first section follows the



valley down to where it meets the sea at Nazaré. This seaside town has become famous among surfers for the monster waves, created by a trench close to shore, that can reach over 20 metres in height in the winter months when conditions are right. Our cycle route then follows the coast south to Foz de Arelho where we spend the next two nights. Foz de Arelho remains remarkably undeveloped and boasts a vast beach on the estuary, popular for windsurfing, as well as a great seafront beach just 15 minutes walking from town.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 48 kilometres (total 400 metres accumulated ascent and 330 metres descent).



ACCOMMODATION:  
Inatel Foz Do Arelho Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## **DAY 6 - Free day. Relax on the beach or visit charming walled town of Óbidos**

Today has been left free to explore or relax. We suggest a visit to nearby Óbidos and it is possible to travel there by taxi or join the Leader on an optional cycle ride. Óbidos is considered to be one of the most picturesque and well preserved medieval towns in Portugal. The town prospered after becoming part of the royal estate from the 13th century and within the walls you can visit the castle and lose yourself in the maze of narrow streets and little squares with fine examples of religious and civil architecture from the town's golden days.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 30 kilometres (total 420 metres accumulated ascent and descent) (optional)



ACCOMMODATION:  
Inatel Foz Do Arelho Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 7 - Coastal ride to traditional fishing port of Peniche; drive to Lisbon**

Our final ride is always close to the sea as we cycle south until Peniche, spectacularly set on a headland surrounded by the sea. The town remains an important fishing port as well as offering great beaches and surf. We will have some time to explore the walled historic centre where you can see the old fort where Salazar's regime imprisoned political prisoners only a few decades ago. We then drive for around 1.5 hours to Lisbon and the Leader will do a short orientation walk on arrival followed by free time to explore further. Resting on seven hills overlooking the estuary of the River Tagus, Lisbon became the capital of Portugal after its conquest from the Moors in 1147. As Portugal built a global empire 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. Lisbon offers a good selection of restaurants to celebrate the end of our journey followed by the option to see a live performance of traditional 'Fado' music for those interested.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 43 kilometres (total 490 metres accumulated ascent and descent).



ACCOMMODATION:  
Empire Lisbon Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 8 - Trip ends in Lisbon**

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Lisbon.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart 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 need to depart from Lisbon Portela Airport (LIS), which is about 15 minutes' drive from the city centre.



## Trip information

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### 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

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### 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 - Fado concert 35-40 Euros

#### 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.

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**Transport, Accommodation & Meals****Transport Information**

Bus, Bicycle, 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.

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**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](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.

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

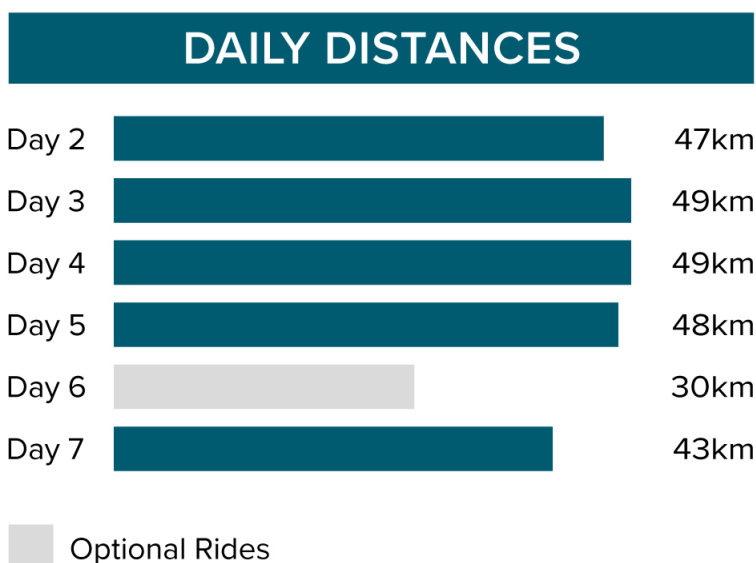
### Vaccinations

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.

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## Cycling information



### General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 236 km over five days (an average of 47 km per day) with a further optional 30 km available. We generally cycle on quieter tarmac roads except on day 3 with a fine gravel cycle path. Day 3 is largely downhill whilst all other rides are in hillier areas with some short climbs and uphill sections. 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

Moderate

## 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**