



Why book this trip?

Based in the historic town of Tavira, this walking trip combines scenic coastal and inland walking. The relaxed walks take you through picturesque villages and traditional fishing communities, past orchards, into the rolling Barrocal Hills and along unspoilt sandbank islands.

- **Tavira** - Enjoy time in this ancient Moorish town, exploring the colourful cobbled streets
- **Portuguese food and drink** - Savour the local Cataplana dish accompanied by a glass of crisp wine
- **Rio Formosa Estuarine National Park** - Walk along protected coastal and bird habitats



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Ferry
Taxi
Train



ACCOMMODATION
7 nights premium
hotel



WALKING GRADE:
Easy



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 Tavira

Our trip starts in the delightful town of Tavira. 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.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 7pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Tavira at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive at Faro Airport (FAO) which is around 30 minutes' drive. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, 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.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Boat trip and walk in Ria Formosa National Park

Today we explore the Tavira coast, walking through the old town out to the pier to take a one-and-a-half hour boat tour. This gives us a great introduction to the scenery, lifestyle in Algarve and Tavira and surrounding waterways. The boat will dock at Tavira Island where we begin today's walk.

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 dos Barrills, 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 nine kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three hours with a total ascent and descent of 70 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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

Today we drive (30 min) to 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 13 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four-and-a-half hours with a total ascent of 170 metres and descent of 205 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Walk in the Barrocal hills north of Tavira

Today we travel by taxis from Tavira to Santa Catarina da Fonte do Bpo in the Barrocal hills north west 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 12 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three-and-a-half hours with a total ascent and descent of 350 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Free day. Opportunity to relax or walk the Seven Hanging Valleys trail

Today is a free day to relax on the local beaches or explore the region more. It is possible to take a more challenging walk along the Seven Hanging Valleys trail. Taking a taxi to Praia do Marinha and from here walking to Praia do Carvoeiro along the spectacular cliffs and coastline. At the end of the walk, you will take a boat trip to Benagil with amazing views into sea cut caves.

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 12 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three-and-a-half hours.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Walk through Cork Oak forests from São Brás de Alportel

This morning we take a short drive (30 mins) to São Brás de Alportel, the centre of the Algarve's cork production. We walk into the surrounding wooded hills past fig and olive trees and through the cork oak forests, learning about traditional production methods, there are still five operating cork factories in the area. Returning to Sao Bras there is time to stroll through the old town.

Today's 12 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three-and-a-half hours with a total ascent and descent of 350 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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

This morning we take the train 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:

Maria Nova Lounge (or similar)



Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Tavira.

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Tavira.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Tavira 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 Faro Airport (FAO) which is around 30 minutes' drive from the hotel.



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.

Seven Hanging Valleys walk - Transfer price about €200 for shared taxi taking four people (1 hour in the morning and another hour in the afternoon) + boat trip 60min: €25 or 90min: €30

Clothing

Bring light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. It can become cool, especially at night, so bring warmer layers. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier, a warmer fleece is recommended as a mid layer, and walking trousers are preferable to trousers of heavier material such as jeans.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers

- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Midlayer Fleece/pullover
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)

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

- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Small Torch (with spare batteries and bulb)
- Camera
- Walking poles (if you usually use them)
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
- Insect repellent
- Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)
- Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore
- Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)

Tipping

Explore leader

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 £15 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. 10% is recommended at meal times.

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.

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

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, Ferry, Taxi, Train

Accommodation notes

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

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.

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 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

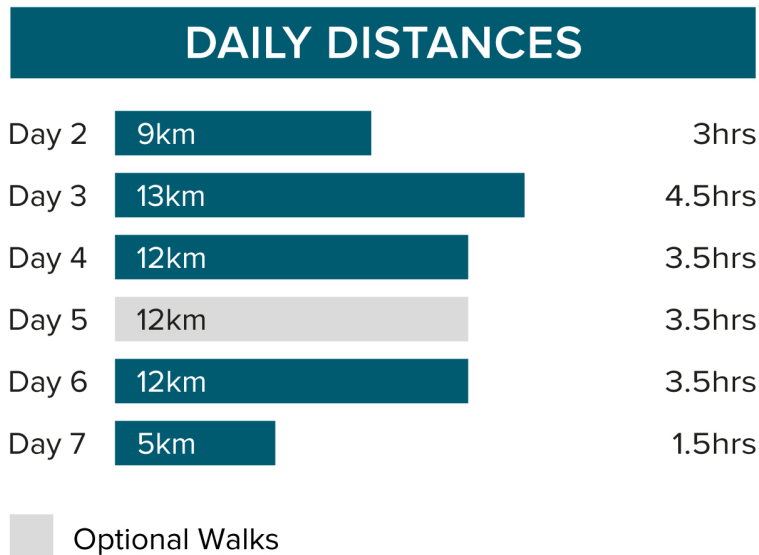
dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport. On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking 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.

Walking and Trekking information



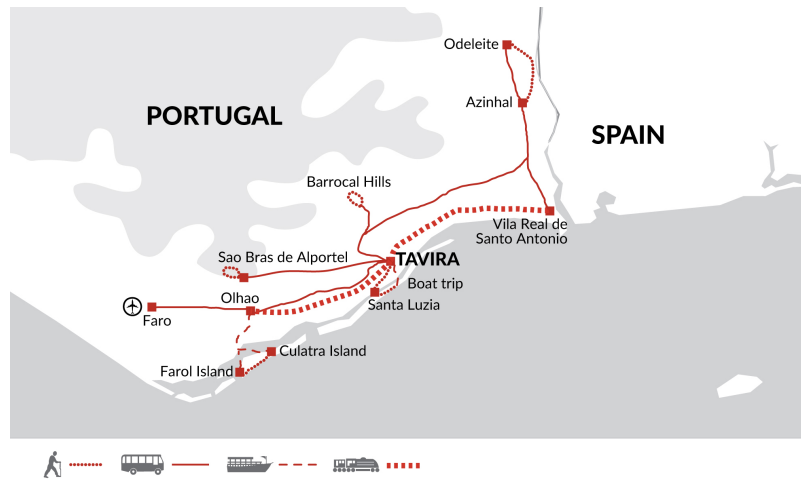
Walking grade

Easy

Trek details

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

Additional Information



Looking to spend longer exploring Portugal?

To see more of the Algarve you can combine our Walking in the Eastern Algarve with our [Remote Coastal Trails of Portugal](#) for a two week Portuguese walking holiday. Many of our dates work back to back, both holidays are centre based and they begin and end at Faro Airport, making extending your time easy!

Speak to one of our Adventure Travel Consultants to help you arrange this.

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.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**