



Walking in Portugal - Sintra and Arrabida

PORTUGAL - TRIP CODE WISA

WALKING AND TREKKING

Why book this trip?

On this two-centre trip explore the contrasting green hills and UNESCO heritage landmarks of Sintra and the rugged coastline of Arrabida Natural Park, Portugal's hidden gem. Discover ornate palaces, follow towering cliff paths and wander the cobbled streets of Lisbon.

- **Portuguese food and drink** - Custard tarts, fresh seafood and ruby wine
- **Sintra Hills** - Discover opulent places and beautifully manicured gardens concealed within the lush forests
- **Arrabida Natural Park** - Stunning unspoilt coastal scenery and the wild headland of Cabo Espichel



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader



TRANSPORT
Bus



ACCOMMODATION
7 nights
comfortable hotel



WALKING GRADE:
Easy To
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join trip at Colares in the Sintra region

The tour starts at Colares in the Sintra Natural Park, our base for the first three nights of the holiday.

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 Colares at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive at Lisbon Portela Airport (LIS) which is around 45 minutes' drive. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

Colares is a small town located at the foot of the Sintra Mountains within the Natural Park, an area known for its red wine which is produced locally from grapes grown in the sandy soils. You will be welcomed with views of the countryside and coast from our hotel, a historical building with beautiful gardens - the perfect spot to relax after a days exploration. There are no dinner options near our hotel in Colares, except a simple shop where you could pick up a sandwich. Your local leader will therefore be arranging an orientation walk (four kilometres) to one of the beaches tonight and transport to local restaurants on the coast for the subsequent evenings.



ACCOMMODATION:
Sarrazola House (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore the forested hills of the Serra de Sintra. Optional visits to the palaces

Today we head out on foot to explore the hills around Sintra with time for visits to some of its most famous palaces. The cultural and natural landscape of the Sintra Hills has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Landmark, where kings and aristocracy built summer residences and parks during the 18th and 19th centuries. The cooler climate here allows for vegetation to flourish, carpeting the granite mountains in oak and pine forests.

Taking taxis to Sintra town, we begin our walk passing the Gothic style National Palace with its distinctive white cone chimneys. Ascending through the forest we get our first glimpse of King Ferdinand II's colourful Palacio da Pena. The palace is an extravagant mixture of influences and architecture, with ornate domes, towers and ramparts. There's an opportunity to visit before we continue to climb walking among the pine-covered hills of the Serra de Sintra before returning to Sintra where you'll have some free time to explore the cobbled town centre independently.

Today's easy seven and-a-half kilometre walk is expected to take approximately three hours with a total ascent and descent of 330 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Sarrazola House (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Walk through mystic Mediterranean woodland

This morning we leave the hotel on foot, taking a trail up to the Convent of the Capuchos, a fascinating 16th Century Franciscan monastery engulfed by nature. This hobbit-hole like building is also known as the 'Cork Convent' due the extensive use of this material in its construction. A visit is possible from June 2020 when it re-opens.

From here we walk up into the forested hills with fabulous views across the Atlantic Ocean. Heading towards the coast we pass a shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary of Peninha. Reaching Azoia, the

westernmost village on the European continent, we take the public bus back to Colares.

Today's moderate 11 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four hours with a total ascent of 450 metres and descent of 250 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:

Sarrazola House (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Walking orientation of Lisbon. Drive to Sesimbra on the edge of Arrabida Natural Park

Leaving the Serra de Sintra behind today, we transfer to Sintra to take the train into Lisbon for an orientation walk of Portugal's capital led by your local Leader. You can walk through some of the city's eclectic neighbourhoods, admiring the painted Portuguese tiles on the streets and houses, called azulejos and pass the old-style trams up Alfama Hill to Castelo de S.Jorge for great views over the city. Paying a visit to a traditional pastelaria to enjoy a delicious pastels de nata - Portuguese custard tart dusted with cinnamon - is highly recommended!

After lunch we continue south to the coastal town of Sesimbra on the edge of the Arrabida Natural Park. Once a fishing village, Sesimbra is now a pleasant beach town with plentiful seafront restaurants, many with outdoor barbecues.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel do Mar (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Walk along the coast to the lighthouse at Cabo de Espichel

Today's walk takes us along the cliff top plateau following the rocky coastal trail to reach the lighthouse at Cabo de Espichel on the south west tip of the peninsula. The landscape is wild and dramatic with windswept towering cliffs, secluded coves, scrubby Mediterranean vegetation and vast views across the Atlantic.

The dramatic headland of Cabo de Espichel was once a pilgrimage destination, legend has it that the image of Our Lady of the Cape (Virgin Mary) was saved from the waters below. We can walk around the 15th Century church, Sanctuary Nossa Senhora do Cabo and former pilgrims' lodgings.

Sesimbra is renowned for its fresh shellfish caught daily by local fisherman. Tonight you could enjoy dinner in a family-run marisqueira (seafood restaurant), found on the towns smaller streets away from the main promenade.

Today's easy 10.5 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately four hours with a total ascent of 175 metres and descent of 220 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel do Mar (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Free day. Opportunity to take a ferry over to the Troia Peninsula

Today is a free day to relax in Sesimbra or explore the region further. You could take a taxi to Setubal from where you can catch the ferry over to the Troia Peninsula. This large sand spit, backed by dunes and pine forests, sits in the Sado estuary. You could take a walk along the 18 kilometres of sandy beach to find quieter stretches and Roman ruins, Troia was once home to a Roman fish-salting community. There is also

the option to take the public bus to Lisbon if there was more you wished to see.

The optional easy walk today is 10-12 kilometres, expected to take approximately four hours along the flat.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel do Mar (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Hike into the hills of the Serra da Arrabida for fabulous views across the Atlantic

After a short drive out of the town we walk into the rolling hills of the Serra da Arrabida. This Natural Park offers some of the most stunning coastal scenery in the Lisbon area with the contrasting deep blue ocean and greens of the pine-forested hills. We take a picnic lunch overlooking the picturesque Portinho da Arrabida coastline. The walk takes us back to the hotel.

Today's moderate 14 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately five hours with a total ascent of 200 metres and descent of 385 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel do Mar (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Sesimbra

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Sesimbra.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Sesimbra 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 around 50 minutes' drive from the hotel.



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.

Palacio da Pena - €18 entrance fee

Capuchos Convent - €8 entrance fee

Dinner transport whilst in Colares - €8 per person for the three nights

Public bus to Lisbon, one hour - approx. €8 return

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
- 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

We recommend you bring well-worn in walking boots - leather or fabric are both fine. In addition please take comfortable trainers/shoes or sandals for the evenings. 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

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. 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

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 £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.

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

Accommodation notes

This two centre trip gives you the flexibility to unpack and get to know the different areas. Accommodation and service levels in Portugal are generally very good.

Our first hotel, Sarrazola House, is located near to the town of Colares with views of the countryside and coast. The hotel is a historical building with beautiful gardens, with seating areas. The light rooms are comfortable and clean, all with en-suite bathrooms. There are no dinner options near the hotel except a simple shop where you could pick up a sandwich. Your tour leader will arrange walks and transportation to local restaurants on the coast.

The second hotel of the trip is located in Sesimbra, a short walk from the towns restaurants and beaches. It has more facilities with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, lounge bar and two on-site restaurants. The en-suite rooms all have a private terrace or balcony with sea views.

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.

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 2	7.5km	3hrs
Day 3	11km	4hrs
Day 4		
Day 5	10.5km	4hrs
Day 6	12km	2hrs
Day 7	14km	5hrs

 Optional Walks

Walking grade

Easy to moderate

Trek details

Walks on 4 days for between 3 to 5 hours. Terrain varies from stony and paved paths to dirt trails and woodland tracks.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Portugal is a fantastic walking destination, this trip combines the picturesque Sintra Hills with the less visited wild Arrabida coastline. Both locations are a short drive from Lisbon allowing for more flight options and Portugal is still a good value destination in Europe, especially for eating out. This walking holiday is suitable for all with a mixture of easy and moderate walks along well-defined trails.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**