



Portugal

Includes »

Lisbon	993
Sintra	1001
The Algarve	1003
Tavira	1004
Lagos	1004
Sagres	1005
Évora	1005
Coimbra	1008
Serra da Estrela	1010
Porto	1010
Along the Douro	1015
Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês	1017
Understand Portugal	1018
Survival Guide	1019

Why Go?

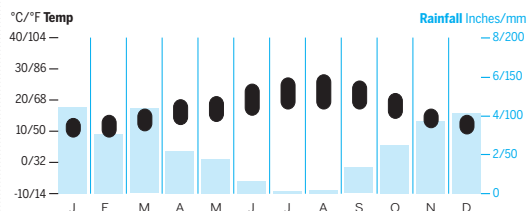
Medieval castles, frozen-in-time villages, captivating cities and golden-sand beaches: the Portugal experience can mean many things. History, great food and wine, idyllic scenery, and blazing nightlife are just the beginning.

Portugal's capital, Lisbon, and its northern rival, Porto, are gems among the urban streetscapes of Europe. Both are magical places for the wanderer, with picturesque river views, rattling trams and atmospheric lanes that hide boutiques, stylish lounges and a vibrant mix of restaurants, fado clubs and open-air cafes.

Outside the cities, Portugal's landscape unfolds in all its variegated beauty. Here you can overnight in converted hill-top fortresses fronting age-old vineyards, hike amid granite peaks or explore historic villages of the little-visited hinterland. Over 800km of coast offers more outdoor enticements. You can gaze out over dramatic end-of-the-world cliffs, surf stellar breaks or laze peacefully on sandy islands fronting calm blue seas.

When to Go

Lisbon



Best Places to Eat

- » Antiga Confeitaria de Belém, Lisbon (p998)
- » Café Ingles, Silves (p1005)
- » A Grade, Porto (p1011)
- » Taberna do Valentim, Viana do Castelo (p1016)

Best Places to Stay

- » Alfama Patio Hostel, Lisbon (p997)
- » Oasis Lisboa (p997)
- » Pensão-Restaurante Flôr de Coimbra, Coimbra (p1008)

Apr–May Pleasant sunny days and blooming wildflowers set the stage for outdoor activities.

Jun–Aug Summer is lovely and lively with a packed festival calendar and steamy beach days.

Late-Sep–Oct Magical, crisp mornings and sunny days; prices dip and crowds disperse.

Connections

Travelling overland from Portugal entails a trip through Spain. Good places to cross the (invisible) border include the ferry crossing from Vila Real de Santo António in the Algarve to Ayamonte (Spain), with onward connections to Seville. There is one daily train from Elvas to Badajoz (Spain) and a train service from Valença do Minho in the north to Santiago de Compostela (Spain).

ITINERARIES

One Week

Devote three days to Lisbon, including a night of fado in the Alfama, bar-hopping in Bairro Alto, and Unesco-gazing and pastry-eating in Belém. Spend a day taking in the wooded wonderland of Sintra, before continuing to Porto, gateway to the magical wine-growing region of the Douro Valley. Wind up your week in the picturesque lanes of Coimbra, Portugal's own Cambridge.

Two Weeks

On week two, stroll the historic lanes of Évora and visit the nearby megaliths. Take in magical hilltop castle towns such as Monsaraz before hitting the Algarve. Travel along the coast, visiting the pretty beach-surrounded towns of Tavira, Faro, Lagos and Sagres. End the grand tour back in alluring Lisbon.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Seafood** Char-grilled *lulas* (squid), *polvo* (octopus) and *sardinhas* (sardines); *cataplana* (seafood cooked in a copper pot) and *caldeirada* (fish stew).
- » **Cod for all seasons** Portuguese have dozens of ways to prepare *bacalhau* (salted cod). Try *bacalhau a brás* (grated cod fried with potatoes and eggs), *bacalhau espiritual* (cod soufflé) or *bacalhau com natas* (baked cod with cream and grated cheese).
- » **Field and fowl** *Porco preto* (sweet 'black' pork), *leitão* (roast suckling pig), *cabrito assado* (roast kid), *arroz de pato* (duck risotto).
- » **Port and red wines** Port and red wines from the Douro Valley, *alvarinho* and *vinho verde* (crisp, semi-sparkling wine) from the Minho and great, little-known reds from the Alentejo and the Beiras.
- » **Pastries** The *pastel de nata* (custard tart) is legendary, especially in Belém. Other delicacies: *travesseiros* (almond and egg pastries) and *queijadas* (mini-cheese pastries).

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Euro (€)
- » **Language** Portuguese
- » **Money** ATMs widespread
- » **Visas** Schengen rules apply; see p1319

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 91,470 sq km
- » **Capital** Lisbon
- » **Country code** 351
- » **Emergency** 119

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	€0.74
Canada	C\$1	€0.74
Japan	¥100	€0.87
New Zealand	NZ\$1	€0.56
UK	UK£1	€1.16
USA	US\$1	€0.72

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** €40
- » **Two-course evening meal** €10-16
- » **Museum entrance** €4-6
- » **Bottle of Sagres beer** €2-3
- » **Lisbon metro ticket** €0.80

Resources

- » **Portugal Tourism** (www.visitportugal.com) Portugal's official tourism site with upcoming events
- » **ViniPortugal** (www.viniportugal.pt) Covers wine regions, grape varieties and wine routes