

Portugal

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Best Places to Eat

- » 100 Maneiras (p706)
- » Fortaleza do Guincho (p714)
- » Café Ingles (p718)
- » A Grade (p731)
- » Taberna do Valentim (p734)

Best Places to Stay

- » Solar dos Mouros (p701)
- » Pensão Residencial Sintra (p713)
- » Palace Hotel do Buçaco (p727)
- » Guest House Douro (p730)
- » Hotel de Peneda (p735)

Why Go?

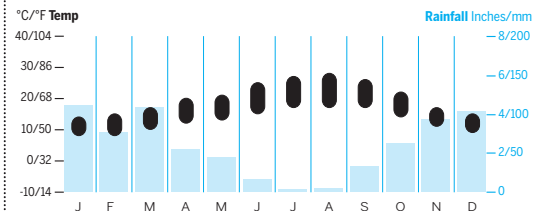
Medieval castles, frozen-in-time villages, captivating cities and golden-sand beaches: the Portugal experience can mean many things. History, great food and wine, idyllic scenery and blazing nightlife are just the beginning...

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 views over the river, rattling trams and atmospheric lanes that hide boutiques and old-school record shops, 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 stay overnight in converted hilltop fortresses fronting age-old vineyards, hike amid granite peaks or explore historic villages of the little-visited hinterland. More than 800km of coast offers more outdoor enticements. You can gaze out over dramatic end-of-the-world cliffs, surf stellar breaks off dune-covered beaches or laze peacefully on sandy islands fronting calm blue seas.

When to Go

Lisbon



Apr & May

Sunny days and wildflowers set the stage for hiking and outdoor activities.

Jun–Aug

Lovely and lively, with a packed festival calendar and steamy beach days.

Late Sep & Oct

Crisp mornings and sunny days; prices dip, crowds disperse.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** euro (€)
- » **Language** Portuguese
- » **Money** ATMs widespread; banks open Mon-Fri
- » **Visas** Schengen rules apply

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 91,470 sq km
- » **Population** 10.8 million
- » **Capital** Lisbon
- » **Telephone** country code ☎351; international access code ☎00
- » **Emergency** ☎112

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	€0.67

Set Your Budget

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

Resources

- » **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com/portugal/lisbon)
- » **Portugal Tourism** (www.visitportugal.com) Official tourism site

Connections

Travelling overland from Portugal entails a trip through Spain. Good places to cross the (invisible) border include ferry crossing from Vila Real de Santo António in The Algarve, with onward connections to Seville. There are also links from Elvas (going across to Badajoz) and rail links from Valença do Minho in the north (heading up to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia). See p739 for more details.

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 like Monsaraz and scenic Castelo de Vide before hitting The Algarve. Travel along the coast, visiting the pretty beach-surrounded towns of Tavira, Faro, Lagos and Sagres. End the grand tour with a bang in Lisbon.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Seafood** Char-grilled *lulas* (squid), *polvo* (octopus) or *sardinhas* (sardines). Other treats: *cataplana* (seafood and sausage cooked in a copper pot), *caldeirada* (hearty fish stew) and *açorda de mariscos* (bread stew with shrimp).
- » **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 & fowl** *Porco preto* (sweet 'black' pork), *leitão* (roast suckling pig), *alheira* (bread and meat sausage – formerly Kosher), *cabrito assado* (roast kid) and *arroz de pato* (duck risotto).
- » **Drink** 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 (particularly the Dão region).
- » **Pastries** The *pastel de nata* (custard tart) is legendary, especially in Belém. Other delicacies: *travesseiros* (almond and egg pastries) and *queijadas* (mini-cheese pastries).