



The Alentejo

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Best Places to Stay

- » Quinta do Barreiro (p233)
- » Herdade do Touril (p250)
- » Convento de São Francisco (p236)
- » Casa do Terreiro do Poço (p219)
- » Pousada de Rainha Santa Isabel (p217)

Best Places to Eat

- » Tasca do Celso (p249)
- » Tomba Lobos (p227)
- » Botequim da Mouraria (p208)
- » Dom Joaquim (p207)
- » Adega do Isaías (p218)

Why Go?

To be bewitched. Covering a third of the country, Portugal's largest region truly captivates. Think dry, golden plains, rolling hillsides and lime-green vines. A rugged coastline, traditional whitewashed villages, marble towns and majestic medieval cities. Plus a proud, if melancholic, people (so their countrymen say), who valiantly cling to their local crafts.

Centuries-old farming traditions continue here, ongoing economic stalwarts in Portugal's poorest (but arguably most beautiful) region.

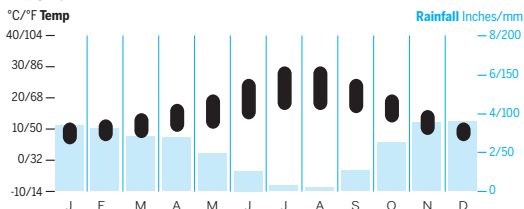
Alentejo's rich past offers Palaeolithic carvings, fragments from Roman conquerors and stolid Visigothic churches. There are Moorish-designed neighbourhoods and the awe-inspiring fortresses built at stork-nest heights.

As for the cuisine? Alentejo is 'it' for traditional food. Gastronomic delights are plentiful – pork, game dishes, breads, cheeses, wines, and seafood along the Alentejan coastline.

Bird life and rare plants are prolific, and excellent walking opportunities abound.

When to Go

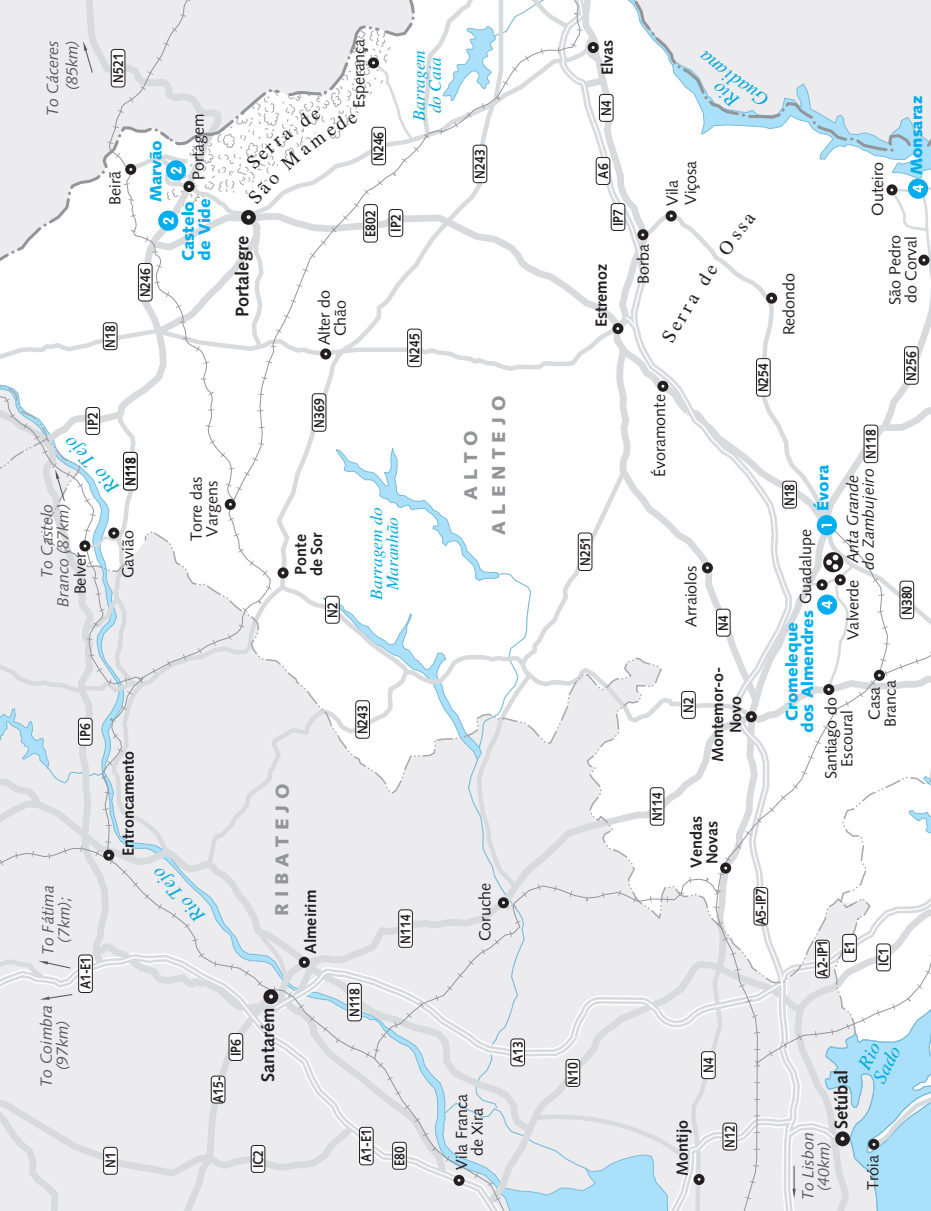
Évora



April & May
Red and yellow flowers mingle with golden plains, and it's baby stork time!

September & October
Festival frenzy hits; enjoy while missing the crowds and the heat.

June & July
Pre-August beaches await, plus Festas Populares, Évora's bounciest annual country fair.



The Alentejo Highlights

- 1 Sample the history, culture and cuisine of historically rich **Évora** (p200), a Unesco World Heritage-listed city
- 2 Gaze out over the countryside from the castle perches of enchanting **Marvão** (p232) and **Castelo de Vide** (p228)
- 3 Stroll with spirits of past civilisations and religions in **Mértola** (p234) and at the nearby **Convento de São Francisco** (p235)
- 4 Discover the archaeological ruins of the Roman city of **Conímegon** (p236) and the medieval castle of **Castelo de Beja** (p237)