



Estremadura & Ribatejo

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Best Places to Stay

- » Quinta de Rio Alcaide (p277)
- » Casa das Marés (p257)
- » Casa d'Óbidos (p261)
- » Challet Fonte Nova (p268)

Best Places to Eat

- » A Tasquinha (p266)
- » Malagueta Afrodisiáca (p272)
- » Mar à Vista (p254)
- » O Saloio (p281)
- » Vinho em Qualquer Circunstância (p271)

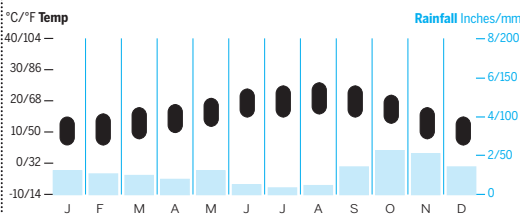
Why Go?

Stretching from the Rio Tejo to the Atlantic Ocean, Estremadura and Ribatejo constitute Portugal's heartland, but their central importance goes beyond geography. These fertile lands have formed the backdrop for every major chapter in Portuguese history, from the building of key fortified settlements in the 12th century to the release of Salazar's political prisoners in 1974. Two of medieval Portugal's critical battles for autonomy – against the Moors at Santarém and the Spaniards at Aljubarrota – were fought and won here, and remain commemorated in the magnificent monasteries at Alcobaça and Batalha, both Unesco World Heritage Sites. A third Unesco site, Tomar's Convento de Cristo, was long the stronghold of the venerable Knights Templar.

These days, the region draws visitors not only to these renowned monasteries, but also to its vineyards, beaches, castles and historic villages – and the new cathedral at Fátima, modern Portugal's premier religious shrine.

When to Go

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April & May Beat the summer heat with a spring-time visit to the region's World Heritage Sites.

June & September For warm beaches at cooler prices, visit the coast in early summer or fall.

October World-class waves and competitions well up at Peniche, Ericeira and other prime surf spots.



Estremadura & Ribatejo Highlights

- 1** Cross the narrow arched bridge to the island fort on **Berlenga Grande** (p259)
- 2** Watch the pros in action at Supertubos, the gnarliest spot in surfing **Peniche** (p256)
- 3** Survey the Rio Tejo from the crenellated heights of 12th-century **Castelo de Almourol** (p281)
- 4** Explore the region's three World Heritage Sites: the monasteries at **Batalha** (p269), **Alcobaça** (p267), and **Tomar** (p287)
- 5** Sail across the lagoon at sunset in **Foz do Arelho** (p263)
- 6** Sample *ginja* (cherry liqueur) in a chocolate cup while strolling the flowery lanes and medieval walls of **Óbidos** (p259)
- 7** Catch Carnival or New Year's fireworks at **Nazaré** (p264), one of Estremadura's most picturesque beach-party settings
- 8** Feast on the region's best seafood at **Ericeira** (p254)