

Portugal

Destination Guide




Contents

Portugal is known for being one of Europe's oldest countries, located in the continent's southwest. Tour the historical monuments scattered throughout the country or escape to the south to relax and enjoy the view from the many hilltop towns. In Lisbon, Portugal's capital, you will find a collection of tourist activities such as museums, castles and traditional architecture all just waiting to be discovered. The country's mild climate and 800km of coastline can be enjoyed further when there are approximately 3000 hours of sunshine each year!

This self drive guide can help you determine which regions of Portugal to explore, and provides information useful to any traveller venturing to this fantastic nation. Auto Europe have included everything you need for a self drive holiday in Portugal, from hiring a car and rules of the road, to some great touring ideas in the many unique regions of Portugal.

Contents	Page
Renting a Car in Portugal	3
FAQs	4
Rental Vehicle Insurance	5
Driving in Portugal	6-7
Porto and The North	8 - 9
Beiras and Central Portugal	10 - 11
Lisbon and The South	12 - 13
Stay Healthy & Stay Safe	14
Money Matters	15
Useful Information	16

Renting a Car in Portugal

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	Examples: ECMN: E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon FDAR: F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
		R= Recreational		C = Electric No Air
		F = 4 Wheel Drive		
		X = Special		
		K = Commercial Van/Truck		
		P = Ute		
		X = Special		
		E = Executive		

What kind of car should I rent for my holiday in Portugal?

There are plenty of car rental options to choose from depending on your needs. Consider where you're travelling, how many people are travelling and the style of driving you intend to do. You can use the ACRISS system detailed above to find the car that suits your needs. This is an internationally recognised code that will ensure that you get the same standard of vehicle wherever you rent.

Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Automatic and manual vehicles are available in Portugal, though automatic may be more expensive and suppliers may have fewer available.

Collecting at an airport in Portugal

At most Portuguese airports, rental companies will have a desk in the arrivals hall and vehicles will be located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. Usually a courtesy transfer will be provided from the airport to the depot in this instance. Auto Europe New Zealand offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location/airport fees that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at time of booking to ensure your rental will include all airport fees.

Do I need a credit card?

Yes. A credit card will be needed for a deposit when collecting your vehicle. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car which can vary between \$385 and \$3,500 (+tax) depending on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

Should I hire a GPS for driving in Portugal?

GPS units can also be requested directly with some suppliers, however this will be at their own rates.



Can I collect my rental car in one Portuguese city and drop it off in another?

Yes, this is certainly possible, though in some cases there may be a one-way fee which will be payable when you collect your rental. Check with Auto Europe upon booking to discuss any additional costs.

Can I visit other European countries and return my car to Portugal?

Travel to surrounding mainland European countries and the United Kingdom is possible. There will likely be restrictions on travel to Northern European countries in winter, so please advise Auto Europe upon booking if you're considering travel to these countries. Most suppliers will not permit travel to Eastern European countries. If you are travelling outside the country, make sure that you advise Auto Europe at the time of booking for any restrictions that may apply.

Can I pick up my car in Portugal and drop it off in another country?

Many rental suppliers in Portugal do allow one way rentals to other countries, however drop off fees do apply. Some suppliers that have rules stating their cars must be returned within the country. International one ways always need to be booked in advance.

What do I do if I want to extend my car rental once I have already collected it?

Once the car rental has commenced, you will need to call the depot where you initially collected the vehicle for assistance. If the car is available to be extended, you will be offered extra days at the local rate.

Rental Vehicle Insurance



Rental Vehicle Insurance

Portuguese law requires all vehicles to have Compulsory Third Party (CTP) injury insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering their cars. In the case of an accident, it must be reported to the insurance provider immediately, and an excess may be due.

Car Rental companies in Portugal will normally include:

- **Third Party insurance** and compulsory insurance will be included in your car hire rate. This covers you for other people's injury and damage to their vehicle.
- **Collision Damage Waiver (CDW):** This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle, and is normally included in the prepaid car hire rates. Rentals are often subject to a liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance**.
- **Theft Loss Cover:** This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental rates.
- **Fire and Liability:** This limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death, and is usually included in the prepaid car hire rates.
- **Personal Accident Insurance:** This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rates. It is considered an optional extra that you can take upon collection of the car.

Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance. However, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an insurance excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in case of an accident. To find out more, simply call Auto Europe on 0800 885 052 or visit the [Auto Europe website](#).

The Auto Europe Hire Car Excess Refund Insurance is managed by Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited, ABN 26 053 335 952, AFSL 238261 and underwritten by CGU Insurance Limited, ABN 27 004 478 371, AFSL 238291.

Driving in Portugal



Licence Requirements

A full driving licence is required to drive in Portugal. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of one year and be at least 21 years of age. An International Drivers Permit is also required for New Zealand Licence Holders. Contact your local motoring association for further information.

Age Requirements

Minimum Driving Age: The minimum age to rent a car in Portugal is usually 21.

Young Driver's Surcharge: Drivers aged 21-24 years may be charged a young driver's surcharge. The cost of the young drivers surcharge is decided by the car hire supplier and will be advised at time of booking.

Maximum Driving Age: Most car hire suppliers do not have a maximum driving age in Portugal. In some cases, aged drivers may be required to hold a letter from their GP stating they are healthy and fit to drive. Check with Auto Europe at time of booking.

Other Road Rules

- Children under 12 years old are not allowed to travel in the front seat. Passengers under 135cm tall are required to use a child safety restraints or booster seat.
- In a situation during which you need to step out of your vehicle on a highway, approved reflective jackets must be worn.
- Warning triangles are compulsory, as are spare lamps and bulbs.
- Give way to traffic from your left unless otherwise signalled.
- Mobile phones cannot be used whilst driving even when pulled to the side; you MUST park before using a mobile phone.
- Dipped headlights must be used in poor daylight visibility.
- It is illegal to wear sunglasses in a tunnel.

Driving in Portugal, cont'd



Road Signs

Many European countries now follow the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals, where signals and signage are standardised, which make them easier to understand for tourists and locals alike.

Road Tolls

In Portugal, most motorways charge a toll fee for usage. Prices are determined on distance travelled, the road on which you're travelling and car type. Electronic tolling passes are now used on all major motorways, check with your car rental supplier for tolling information and additional costs.

Parking Laws

Do not park in areas painted yellow on the pavement, curb or where a no parking sign is displayed. In major cities, parking spaces marked blue on the pavement are metered parking, spaces marked with yellow mark no parking spaces. Before parking your vehicle, make sure to check for signage nearby, otherwise you may be left with a parking infringement and/or towing. Double parking is also illegal within Portugal.

Portugal Regions

Porto & Norte de Portugal

Viana do Castelo
Brag
Porto
Vila Real
Braganca

Beiras & Center

Aveiro
Coimbra
Viseu
Guarda
Castelo Branco

Lisboa & Coast

Leiria
Lisbon
Santarem

Alentejo

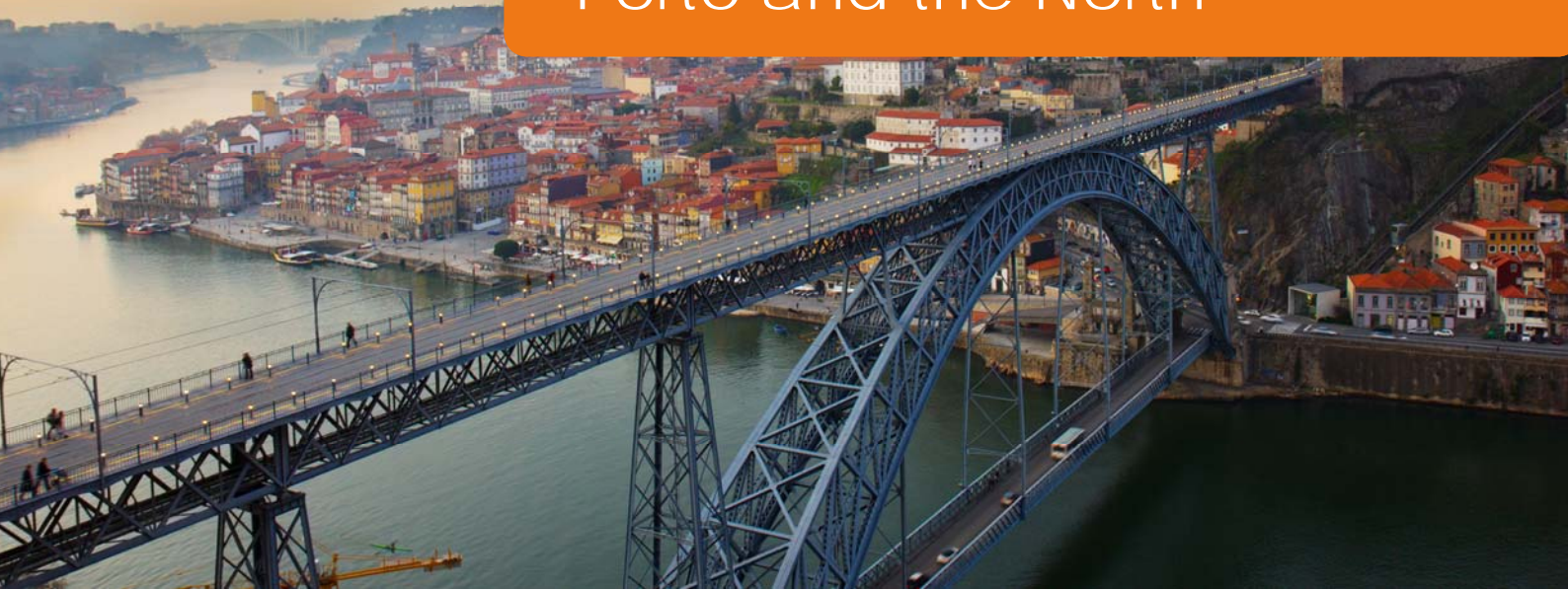
Portalegre
Evora
Beja

Algarve

Faro



Porto and the North



With sweeping valleys, mountainous ranges and a vibrant culture, the north of Portugal is fantastic for outdoor activities and exploring the natural surroundings. This region of Portugal has both a number of cities waiting to be uncovered and explored, as well as serene rural areas in which to relax. Visit the popular city of Porto to the west, or explore the north eastern city of Bragança. There are over seventy beaches along the northern coastline, filled with stunning vistas which make this region the ideal summer getaway.

Attractions

Serralves Museum - A contemporary art museum, park and villa exemplifying Modernism and Art Deco architecture in Porto

Church of Sao Francisco - Explore the gothic architecture of this historic building

Cais Da Ribeira - The riverfront district of Porto which dazzles with colour and history

Bragança Castle - Wander the grounds and learn about the rich history of Portugal

Vila Real - Make your way to the top of Calvario and take in the amazing views over the city

Vila Nova de Gaia - Travel across the Douro River from Porto to visit this enchanting municipality

Imbibe - Venture to nearby wineries specialising in port wines, for which the area is known

Events

January

King's Day - Commemorating the beginning of Carnival, this day is celebrated on January 6 in Porto each year by enjoying King Cake and sharing gifts (it is when many Portuguese children receive their Christmas gifts)

May

Serralves em Festa - The largest contemporary arts festival in Europe, hosted in Porto

June

Sao Goncalo Festival - A traditional Portuguese festival to honor fertility

August

Feasts of Nossa Senhora Da Agonia - A three day religious event and festival hosted in Viana do Castelo for the purpose of making the sea more favourable to fisherman

November

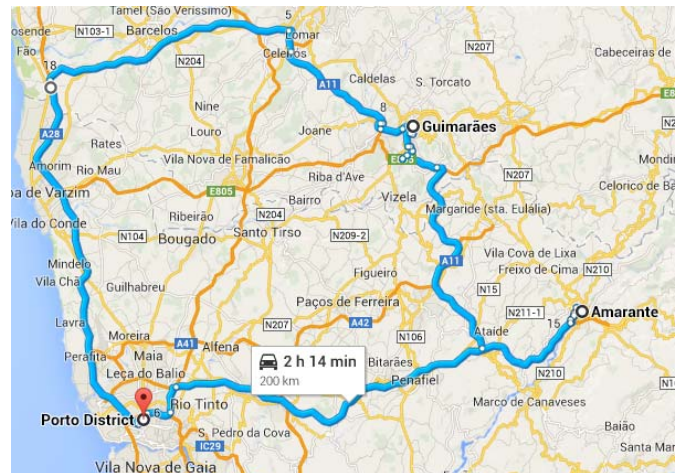
Cinanima - An annual animated film festival hosted in Espinho, south of Oporto

Self Drive Tours: Porto and Northern Portugal



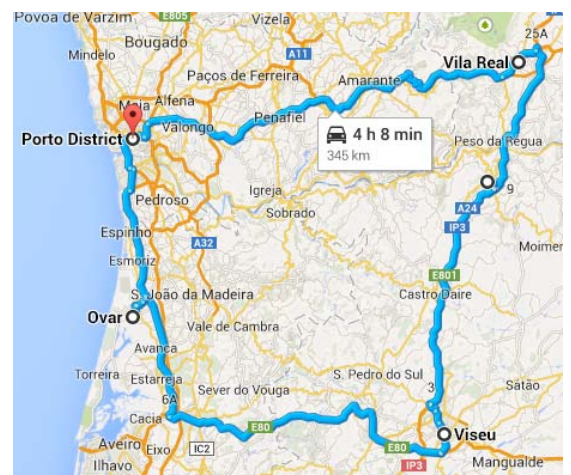
North of Porto

Start your journey in the city of Porto, where you can experience the historic buildings, beautiful riverside areas and numerous museums. Make sure to taste the world famous port wine produced in this area. From Porto, start your drive north to Minho. Minho is a historic province with a rich history and friendly locals. Stop to explore the blooming gardens or walk through the neighbouring forests. From here, continue south east to Guimaraes, the residence of the country's first king. Roam the area and pay a visit to the famous Guimaraes Castle and the Palace of the Dukes of Bragança. Stop over for the night at one of the many bed and breakfasts and taste the local produce at one of the town's restaurants. Once you've finished exploring, jump back into your car rental and drive south to Amarante, a pleasant village with riverside terraces and granite bridges. Taste the local sweets or visit the church and other historical buildings. From Amarante, drive back to Porto or continue south to seek out more regional towns.



South of Porto

This drive also begins in Porto, first heading slightly north to Vila Real before turning south and looping back to the city. Take the Auto Estrada Porto-Amaranth north, passing quaint towns, forests and rivers along the way. When you reach Vila Real, stop to take in the laid-back lifestyle of this region. Wander through the breathtaking gardens of Mateus Palace. From here, continue south through wine country, a path that includes remarkably lush landscape engulfing this part of the Portugal. Look out for the small inland town of Lamego and visit the rustic church at Sao Pedro de Balsemao, only 3km from the town. You can also stay over night for more time to enjoy the traditions of this historical region. Continue south through the wine country until you reach the ancient town of Viseu. Enjoy the mountain air, wander the narrow streets in the hub of the city and explore the ancient cathedral, located near the city centre. From Viseu, travel back to Porto, stopping along the way at towns such as Urgeirica, Estarreja Municipality and Ovar.



Beiras and Central Portugal



In central Portugal you will find a range of coastal beaches and alluring small towns. Explore the popular fishing village of Nazare and relax on one of its pristine beaches. From Nazare, continue inland and follow the stretch of roads up into the mountains and plateaus nearby. Here you will have the chance to explore the ancient forests of the region. When visiting central Portugal, make time to visit the area's many attractions including the Museu de Aveiro, a Dominican convent where you will find an exquisite collection of furniture, ceramics and sculptures. A short drive from the museum, you will uncover Farol da Barra, a light house towering 62 metres over Barra Beach. Visit the light house at sunset for a magical scene.

Attractions

Alianca Underground Museum - A display of unusual geological pieces and art with an in house winery

The Maritime Museum of Ilhavo - A museum emphasizing the strong ties between the surrounding bodies of water and the people of this land; considered a must see in this area

Geopark Naturtejo - Incredible landscape holding 600 million years of highly diversified geological history

Schist Villages - There are 27 nearly-hidden, completely enthralling villages spread throughout the Lousã and Açor ranges, which are built of a specific type of rock, nearly blending into the landscape in which they sit

Coimbra - One of Europe's oldest university towns that has maintained many of its traditions

Taste - Relish the local flavours of Portugal with roast suckling pig, lamb stew, ovos-moles (sweet eggs), pao-de-lo (sponge cake), regional cheeses and more

Try thalassotherapy - Portugal has a close relationship with the Atlantic ocean and uses its water for specialized therapeutic treatments

Events

January

Festa das Fogaceiras - A festival held in Santa Maria de Feira praising Saint Sebastian, who is said to have saved the city from plague

February

Carnaval - A major event leading up to Lent which includes parades, floats, parties and dancing

May

Festas de Nossa Senhora do Castelo ou das Cruzes - (Festival of Our Lady of the Castle or of the Crosses) Celebrated in Monsanto to commemorate a medieval siege of the castle, during which women climb the castle walls and toss pots decorated with flowers over them

August

Festival Internacional de Música - (International Music Festival) Enjoy traditional and contemporary music in Figueira da Foz

December

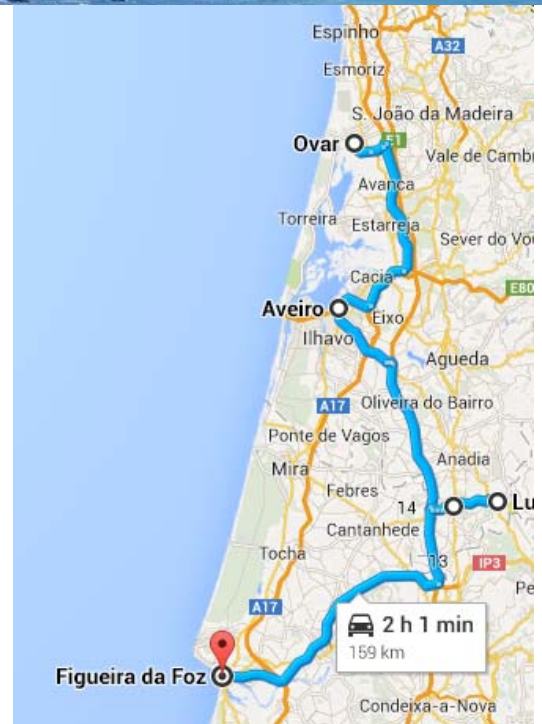
Feliz Natal - The town of Óbidos transforms into a winter wonderland with activities for children as well as adults

Self Drive Tours: Beiras and Central Portugal



The West Coast

The town of Ovar, just 45 minutes south of Porto, is your starting point for this road trip. Learn about the culture and history of this town at the Ovar Museum before driving 50 minutes south to the lively town of Aveiro. Make your way up the canal in the middle of town and view the antique architecture of the northern district. Expand your knowledge of local art with a visit to the Museu de Aveiro. Once you have explored the coastal town continue your drive inland to Mealhada, a small town famous for its traditional pork dishes. While in Mealhada, dine at one of the many fine restaurants to experience this and other ambrosial local dishes. Another popular town close to Mealhada is Luso, home to Portugal's popular thermal spas, which attract thousands of visitors each year. From Luso, you will have the choice to continue your journey through to the town of Coimbra or make your way across the highway to the coastal town of Figueira da Foz, renowned for its white sand beach and pristine waters. Try your hand at one of the many water sports available including scuba diving, surfing and canoeing, or explore the local theme parks such as Aqua Park Teimoso & Forest Adventure for some great family activities.



Inland drive

Your road to discovery starts in the small town of Coimbra, with its charming cobblestone laneways, alluring views and an old Portugal feel. Explore the cathedrals, museums and the University of Coimbra, or stroll through the alleyways. Appreciate the local cafes and browse one of the many ceramic shops in town. Continue your journey to Covilha to visit the famous Santa Maria Church, which is covered



in decorative blue tiles. There are plenty of opportunities to take photos of this exquisite town at one of the many lookouts in the area. Carry on your trip south to Castelo Branco, where you will uncover the outstanding Jardim Episcopal, a collection of beautiful maze gardens, walkways and 18th century statues. From Castelo Branco head east to Fatima to view the world famous Our lady of Fatima, or stop over in Batalha for the handsome architecture of the Monastery of Batalha.

Lisbon and The South



Southern Portugal is known for its sweeping coastlines and breathtaking scenery. Explore and uncover the many coastal cities and towns with their rich history and customs. Relax and embrace the views, taste the local cuisine or buy some locally made souvenirs. Continue through this historic region to discover the ancient castles or visit one of the many fascinating museums which hold the key to old Portugal. Throughout your travels in Portugal, you will likely discover grand celebrations and festivals hosted in small, otherwise unassuming towns, which cannot be seen anywhere else in the world.

Attractions

Alfama - Spend a day strolling through this quiet, traditional village sitting right in the heart of Lisbon

Jerónimos Monastery - A stunning monastery located near Belém

Torre de Belém - A gorgeous fortified medieval tower located right on the water near the monastery

Castle de São Jorge - A Moorish castle situated in the heart of Lisbon

Get a lift - Take a ride on the iconic Santa Justa Lift, connecting the lower streets of Lisbon with the higher

Bask in the glow - Relax on some of the country's unparalleled beaches in the Algarve region

Monsaraz - This fantastic hilltop village is brimming with medieval homes now operating as guest houses

Sintra - A decorative and colourful town filled with lavish palaces and estates

Savour the flavour - Try Pastéis de Belém, a flaky custard tartlet famous in this region

Events

April

Flower Torches Festival - Celebrated on Easter Sunday, this event in São Brás de Alportel involves a mesmerizing, flower-filled procession through town

May

Rock in Rio - A massive music festival in Lisbon complete with international acts

June

Alkantara Festival - This international festival in Lisbon aims to demonstrate a world without borders, welcoming traditions and displays from a vast array of nations

July

Évora Clássica Festival - An annual festival which explores classical music from a different country each year

August

Oceans Festival - This annual event fills Lisbon with music, parades, exhibitions and entertainment of all sorts

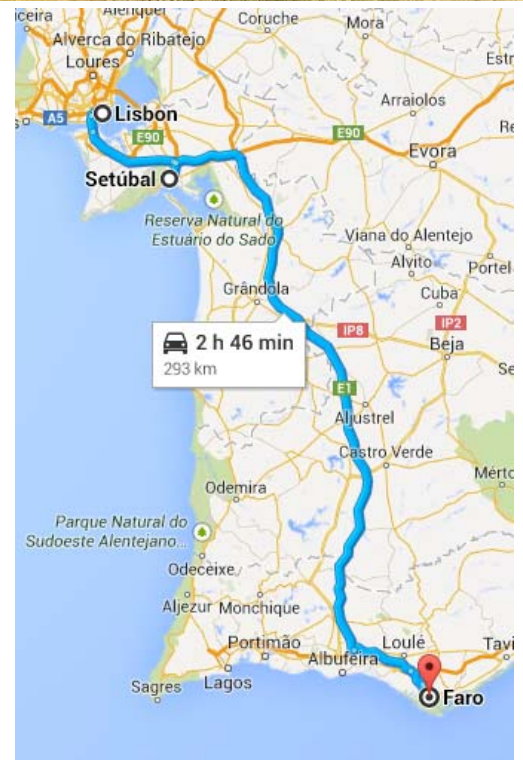
November

Arte Lisboa - An international art fair featuring some of the most renowned Contemporary Art galleries in Europe



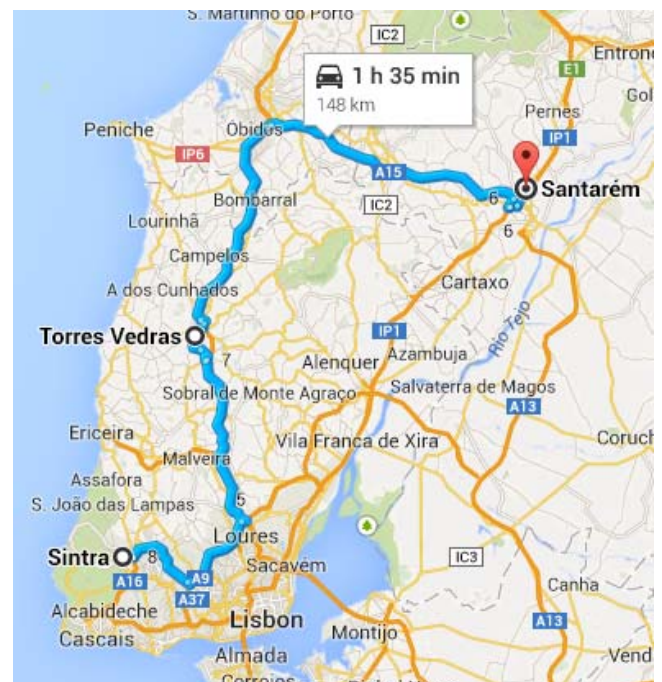
West to South

Begin in the capital city of Lisbon, located on the east coast of the country. Spend a day visiting the famous St. Georges Castle, Belem Tower and Jerónimos Monastery. Another great stop off is Alfama, with its charming side streets, colourful buildings and great bars and restaurants to unwind in. Take the short journey south to Setubal where you can walk along the coast, watch the locals going about their day and enjoy one of the local dolphin watching tours. One hour east is the little town of Evora, home to the well known Chapel of Bones and The Roman Temple. From Evora, continue your journey south until you reach Faro, a city with an abundance of Moorish architecture. While in Faro, visit the local beaches or take a day trip on one of the regular ferries to Ilha da Barreta, a quiet and relaxing beach nearby. Other great attractions to see while visiting Faro include the Carmo Church (Igreja do Carmo), the Obelisk Ferreira d'Almeida and Queen Square Garden, both of which are beside the local Marina. From here you can continue your journey to Portimao or return to Lisbon.



A Great Day Trip North

Your voyage starts in Sintra, a town of romance, historical buildings and lush surroundings. Kick off your trip by heading over to the Quinta da Regaleira, a palace said to provide visitors with a feeling of mystery and magic. Other great attractions are the Moorish Castle and Palacio da Pena. From Sintra, continue your journey north to Torres Vedras, known for its refreshing wines and hilly landscape. Visit the famous Lines of Torres Vedras, which are said to be built in 1809 to keep out troops during the Peninsula War. One hour north east of Torres Vedras, you will find Santarem, a very religious town in Portugal. While here, don't miss Marvila church, beautiful Moorish Castle, and many other historical buildings.



Stay Healthy & Stay Safe



Stay Safe

Crime

Portugal a very safe country to visit. The main thing to watch out for is petty theft. Stay vigilant and beware of scams. It's always wise to employ the same safety methods you use at home when travelling.

Beaches

To stay safe while visiting Portugal's many beaches, follow these precautions:

- Many beaches in Portugal have beach safety flags. A green flag means it's safe to swim, yellow signals caution and requires swimmers to stay close to the shore, and red means that the water conditions are dangerous and you should not swim at all
- Animals are not allowed on beaches and fines are given for violation
- First-aid can be found at Red Cross stations posted along the beaches
- Rock beaches can have hidden sea creatures that can bite or sting, so it's recommended to bring rubber shoes for swimming

Stay Healthy

Portugal's water quality is quite good and drinkable in some major cities, however we do recommend that you keep to bottled water.

During the summer months it can get quite hot with high UV rays. Always use sunscreen and carry a bottle of water.

Portugal has some lovely cuisine which is very enjoyable to cook and eat. However, when eating out try and avoid undercooked meat or fish as it may contain toxins or bacteria. Additionally, avoid unpasteurized milk as this can contain micro-organisms that can cause disease or infection.

Hospitals are well maintained and are easily accessed in major cities. It is always advisable to obtain travel health insurance prior to departure to guarantee coverage in a foreign country.

In Case of Emergency

Police, Ambulance and Fire: 112 or 061



Money Matters

Currency

The local currency in Portugal is the Euro.

ONE EURO (€) = 100 cents.

Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5.

Coins are in denominations of €2 and €1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Currency Exchange

Money can be changed at any bank and at most travel agencies, major hotels and airports.

Banking Hours

Generally banks are open Mon-Fri 0830-1400. During the months of October - April, some banks will open on Saturday as well.

Credit & Debit Cards

Most credit and debit cards are accepted throughout Portugal, including Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diners Club. Contact your credit card company immediately if your credit card is lost or stolen. Major credit card companies:

American Express: www.americanexpress.com/portugal/homepage.shtml

Diners Club: www.dinersclub.com

Discover: www.discovercard.com

MasterCard: www.mastercard.com/pt

Visa: www.visa.com

ATMs

ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines) are located in almost all towns and cities, especially in most banks, and accept major credit and debit cards.

Tipping

Tipping is not normally expected, though a service charge may be added to the bill in heavily trafficked tourist areas. Locals tend to leave small change, generally around 5% when dining at restaurants.

Tax

In Portugal, a Value Added Tax (VAT) of 16% is applied to the cost of goods and services.



Useful Information

Geography

Bordering on the Iberian Peninsula and the Atlantic Ocean, Portugal has a vast range of coastal beaches and bays. The mainland of Portugal is also divided by the Tagus river which flows from Portugal's neighbouring country Spain. Throughout Portugal you will find seaside towns, endless plains and mountainous ranges. The geography of the land varies in each of the five different regions. During the summer in Portugal the climate is usually warm and dry while the winter season can be cold and wet.

Time Zone

Portugal is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT 1)

Telephone

The phone system in Portugal is good and well maintained, with mobile coverage provided throughout the country. Most international mobile companies have roaming agreements within Portugal.

- Country Code: +351
- Area codes are included within a nine digit number dialled from wherever you are.
- Mobile numbers in Portugal begin with +01

Internet

Internet cafés are generally available in most urban areas. Wireless access can be accessed at the majority of hotels and cafes/restaurants.

Language

Portuguese is the official language of Portugal, however English is also used as a second language within the country.

Where To Get Help

New Zealand Consulate
Rua da Sociedade Farmaceutica
nº 68 1º Dto. 1150-341
Lisbon
Ph: +351 21 314 07 80
Fax: +351 21 314 07 80
pfhlucena@hotmail.com



Drive the World with Auto Europe!

Auto Europe are New Zealand's leaders in self drive holidays. Established over 60 years ago, we offer more than 60 self drive suppliers at over 20,000 global locations. We boast an extensive choice of worldwide car hire as well as luxury and budget motorhome rentals. Our expertise brings you highly competitive prices alongside outstanding customer service and efficiency.

Plan your next self drive adventure with Auto Europe. Enjoy the freedom of having your own rental car and discover the world at your own pace.

Booking is easy!

Once you have planned your self drive itinerary and are ready to book, simply visit www.autoeurope.co.nz
Alternatively, call our dedicated reservations team on 0800 885 052.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Auto Europe New Zealand hope that you find the information in this guide helpful for your self drive holiday in Portugal.
This touring information has been created to be used as a guide only.

© Auto Europe - all rights reserved.

Updated: June 2014