

BEST OF PORTUGAL

10 Nights / 11 Days

Day 1 Lisboa/Óbidos/Alcobaca/Nazaré/Batalha/Fátima

Arrive Lisboa and proceed to Óbidos, which is surrounded by medieval walls where we can admire the harmony of the architecture, the diversity of the handicrafts and taste the famous gínginha (bitter cherry liqueur). We proceed towards Alcobaca, which has the first and largest gothic church in Portugal with the tombs of D. Pedro and Inês de Castro, known by its love story. We then continue our journey to Nazaré, a typical fishing village and seaside resort, with its traditions and legends. We continue to Batalha - visit the Monastery of Santa Maria de Victoria, a masterpiece of the gothic in Portugal where we can find the tomb of Henry the Navigator, the promoter of the maritime discoveries. We proceed to Fátima, the famous Marian Shrine. Possibility to assist the Candle procession. Overnight at the hotel in Fátima.

Day 2 Fátima/Coimbra/Aveiro/Oporto

After Breakfast, we depart towards Coimbra – visit of the University, one of the oldest in the world, with its magnificent baroque library and its unique atmosphere characterised by ancient traditions and customs such as the black cape of the students and the melancholic fado music. Stop at St Clara Church, where lies the tomb of Queen St. Isabel, the protagonist of the “miracle of the roses”. In the center you can admire the exclusive ceramic of Coimbra. In afternoon, we continue our journey to Aveiro, city of the canals, known as the “Portuguese Venice”, where you shall have time to see the graceful boats “Moliceiros” and taste the local sweets “Ovos Moles”. Drive to Oporto. Overnight at the hotel in Oporto.

Day 3 Oporto

After Breakfast, Oporto the 2nd city of Portugal and UNESCO heritage site – visit the living amphitheatre inviting us to make a morning visit to discover the riverside area, old houses, palaces, churches that history has made eternal and Port wine, known worldwide. Afternoon free to explore the city on your own. Overnight at the hotel in Oporto.

Day 4 Oporto/ Guimarães/ Braga/ Barcelos/Oporto

Breakfast at the hotel. We proceed for full day tour to the Minho, the northwest region of Portugal, that offers natural green sceneries and the sparkling “green wine”. Our first stop will be at Guimarães - the cradle of the nation, birthplace of the first king of Portugal, where, walking along the historic center, for moments one is plunged back into medieval times, visit the sacred hill, crowned by the castle, as well the Palace of the Dukes of Bragança, which original building dates back to the 15th centuries. Drive to Braga, known as the "Portuguese Rome" for its concentration of religious architecture, houses the oldest Cathedral of the country and the Bom Jesus do Monte Sanctuary with famous baroque stairway and gardens. We then continue to Barcelos - an historical city rich in popular handicraft where the Galo de Barcelos (the rooster of Barcelos) legend was born becoming, the rooster, a Portuguese icon. Overnight at the hotel in Oporto.

Day 5 Oporto/Amarante/Vila Real/Douro Valley/Lamego/Visu/Urgeirica

After Breakfast, we proceed to Amarante - a pretty town proud of São Gonçalo, known for the promotion of love and marriage were the monastery facing the river houses his tomb and his lively bustling market where you can find fruit, vegetables, chickens, cloths, and an immense variety of other popular items. We then proceed to Vila Real – visiting the gardens of the manor of Mateus, which façade is still depicted on the well-known Portuguese Rose wine bottles, we enter in the Port wine region, travelling through the vineyards and the breathtaking landscapes of the Douro Valley, we take a stop in Lamego, which overlooks, one of Portugal's most important shrines N.S. Remédios with its magnificent baroque style staircase. Try some of the local delicacies such as the local ham or the famous “Bola de Lamego” (a loaf baked in the oven with smoked ham). We then continue to the mountainous hinterland to Visu - center of the Dão Vineyards and a city connected with Portugal's oldest hero, Viriato, the Lusitanian chief. In the shadow of the Cathedral, narrow streets and doorways with coats of arms carved in granite make up the

ancient town of Viseu. Along the center we find a busy commercial area. Arrival to Urgeiriça. Urgeiriça, Overnight at the hotel.

Day 6 Urgeiriça/Bussaco/Tomar/Lisboa

After Breakfast, drive through the heart of Portugal till Bussaco well know for the luxuriant forest, made up of a selection of rare trees and plants of exotic beauty, where was built a charming and romantic hotel, before a royal hunting lodge. We continue our journey to Tomar - the development of the city is closely linked to the Order of the Templars, which received these lands in 1159 as a reward for the assistance they gave Dom Afonso Henriques (the First King of Portugal) in the Christian reconquest of the territory. It was Dom Gualdim Pais, the first Grand Master of the Order in Portugal, who founded the castle and the remarkable Convent of Christ inside. Enlarged and altered over the centuries, this retains the influences of various architectural styles; it is the centrepiece of the city and classified as a World Heritage site by UNESCO. We follow the journey till Lisbon, overnight at the hotel.

Day 7 Lisboa/Sintra/Cabo da Roca/Cascais/Estoril

After Breakfast, We depart towards to Sintra for a luxury day, visit the palace of Sintra and walk through this charming village. Enjoy a the amazing view from the westernmost point of Europe (Cabo da Roca). Along the cost we pass by one of the most famous surfing beaches, the incredible Boca do Inferno, the cosmopolitan Cascais and the gardens of Estoril Casino. Return to Lisbon, overnight at the hotel.

Day 8 Lisboa/Évora

After Breakfast, we proceed for the exciting day discovering the town of Évora, mosaic of culture, history and traditions. Leaving Lisboa, we cross the bridge over the river Tejo where by a beautiful and bucolic landscape of olive trees, cork oak trees and vineyards we arrive at Évora – World Heritage of UNESCO. In the narrow streets of the whitewashed town of Évora, we walk along the time visiting some of the most important monuments, the Roman Temple, the Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral, Saint Francis Church whit the “Bones Chapel“, and the University. At the market we see and feel the richness of product used to prepare one of the most elaborated and appreciated gastronomies of Portugal. Along the visit we also admire the diversity and authenticity of local handicraft with cork, ceramic and copper objects. Time for lunch. In the afternoon, free time for a better discover of the city. Overnight at the hotel in Evora.

Day 9 Evora /Beja/Silves/Lagos

After Breakfast, morning to free to explore the city of Evora. Later in afternoon, we drive towards southward passing Beja - where the highest tower of Portuguese Medieval castles dominates the town and the region. Crossing small mountains we enter in the Algarve, by fields of orange trees we arrive to Silves - the renowned town dominated by its red sandstone castle dating back mainly to Moorish times and by the memory of its former cork industry. We then continue to the golden sands of the Algarve, passing by Praia da Rocha to Lagos, overnight at the hotel.

Day 10 Lagos/Ponta da Piedade/ Sagres/Cabo de S. Vicente/ Lagos

After Breakfast, we proceed to Ponta da Piedade - and admire the magnificent view over the Atlantic Ocean and cliffs whose shapes have been sculpted by the erosive action of both the sea and time. We continue to Sagres - a fishing port, for a visit to the fortress was the mythical “navigation school” forever linked with the presence of Prince Henry, the Navigator during the first days of Atlantic navigation and the discovery of the African coast, continuing our journey along the cliffs to Cabo São Vicente - the most southwestern point in Europe. The city of Lagos, a cosmopolitan town with marina and fishing port where you can taste the delicious Algarve dishes, such as the fish and shellfish cooked in a copper pan (cataplana), - never forgetting the fine sweets such as the famous marzipans, almond and fig cakes. Return to the hotel, where, the afternoon at leisure invites you to take a dip in the warm sea. Overnight at the hotel in Lagos.

Day 11 Lagos/Setúbal/Serra da Arrábida/Lisbon

After Breakfast, A last look at the water while traveling along the coast, to say farewell to the Algarve. The return trip to Lisbon will take you by the city of Setubal - a major port and industrial centre on the north bank of the Sado Estuary. Then we proceed to the scenic route over the Arrábida Mountain Range,

an area preserved as a Natural Park, with an amazing scenery and unique vegetation at the gates of Lisbon, and savour the sweeping views of the Tróia Peninsula. Crossing the bridge over the Tejo River, arrivw at Lisboa. Overnight at hotel.