

Hiker's Journey to Portugal

PILGRIM TRAILS, CASTLE TOWNS, AND DOURO VALLEY VINEYARDS



Wilderness Travel

Overview



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length: 10 days
Arrive: Porto, Portugal
Depart: Porto, Portugal
Lodging: 9 nights charming accommodations
Meals: All meals included except 1 dinner
Activity: Cultural, Hiking & Trekking

Trip Level: 1 2 ③ 4 5 6

7 hiking days on moderate to strenuous trails (some steep sections), 3-6 hours a day with two longer days, van support

QUESTIONS?

Our Area Specialists are your single point of contact and would be happy to answer any questions about your trip!

800.368.2794 | 510.558.2488

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike on the Camino Portugués, the famed medieval pilgrim trail to Santiago de Compostela
- Meet a Douro Valley vintner, ride the Linha do Douro (Portugal's historic river-hugging train), visit medieval Guimarães, discover castle-topped towns
- Taste delicious port wines and vinhos verdes
- Enjoy unique lodgings, including a 17th century manor house

Introduction



Exploring Portugal's gorgeous rural landscapes, our hikes bring us into the craggy Serra da Estrela mountains, through Douro wine country, across the fragrant forests of Peneda-Gerês National Park, and along part of the Camino Português pilgrim trail. Along the way, we'll taste wines in a family-owned quinta, explore 13th century castle towns, take an incredibly scenic train ride along the Douro River past age-old vineyards, and of course, try the velvety port wines. Our lodging is a delight, including a charming converted wine warehouse in picturesque Pinhão and a 17th century manor house where the Count of Calheiros himself welcomes us!

TRIP DATES

August 28-September 6, 2024

September 4-13, 2024

October 1-10, 2024

October 14-23, 2024

March 19-28, 2025

April 15-24, 2025

April 29-May 8, 2025

May 13-22, 2025

May 27-June 5, 2025

September 4-13, 2025

October 1-10, 2025

October 7-16, 2025

October 14-23, 2025

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Berne

Located at the foot of the Serra da Estrela mountain range, this small, family-run hotel overlooks the quiet town center in the pretty village of Manteigas. The staff is welcoming and the hotel's restaurant is the top place to eat in town. For cooling down after a day of hiking, there is a large outdoor swimming pool.

Meals: L, D

Hiking Details: 6.5 miles, 3-3.5 hours, 2,000' descent

Driving Details: 3.5 hours

DAY 1 PORTO / PARQUE NATURAL DA SERRA DA ESTRELA / ZÊZERE GLACIAL VALLEY / MANTEIGAS

We meet this morning at the Yeatman Hotel in Vila Nova de Gaia, situated on the southern banks of the Douro River in Porto. Across the waters, the panoramic views are fabulous. Porto is the country's second largest city, with narrow, cobbled streets, excellent wine bars, and terracotta rooftops. We head to Sabugueiro, a small village in the Parque Natural da Serra da Estrela ("Mountains of the Stars"). At an elevation of 3,937 feet, it's considered the highest village in Portugal and it's famous as a breeding center for the local mountain dogs (we will try to visit a breeder). After lunch in a local restaurant, we drive to Torre, the highest point in the country. Torre gets its name from the stone tower built on the king's orders in 1817 to boost the summit from 6,538 feet to 6,561 feet. In winter, these mountaintops are deep in snow and provide the only winter sports area in the land. Our afternoon hike takes us down a perfectly U-shaped valley scoured out by glaciers 20,000 years ago. We follow the flow of the Zêzere, one of Portugal's longest rivers, which starts on a plateau and eventually joins the Tagus to spill into the Atlantic at Lisbon. Our path passes by rich grazing pastures that sustain the local hardy sheep, whose milk is made into popular cheeses and whose wool is woven into highly prized blankets. Traditional wool has been produced for centuries by the residents of the Serra da Estrela.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Berne

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 8.5 miles, 4.5-5 hours, 2,000' ascent/descent

“This is a comprehensive, well-designed, and expertly executed journey through Portugal. It provides beautiful hikes, unique experiences, and interesting insights into this enchanting country.”

-Diana R., Laguna Beach, CA

DAY 2 PARQUE NATURAL DA SERRA DA ESTRELA / HIKING THE TRILHOS VERDES

Walking straight from our hotel's front door, we first visit the Burel Factory, where antique machinery is still used to prepare and weave the local wool into high-quality products sold worldwide. We then head up the hill behind the hotel following one of the many trails laid out in the Parque Natural da Serra da Estrela. They are known as Trilhos Verdes or green trails. Our trail today is called “the boar trail” and this loop hike takes us past once-important forestry houses. In 1880, the local community recognized the need to replant trees on their hillsides that had become wastelands. Local shepherds resisted the changes so strongly that at one point, military intervention was necessary. Today, as we walk amid the trees, listening to the birds singing and hearing the water of the Leandres stream, it's hard to imagine those troubled times. Arriving at the Poço do Inferno, Hell's Well, a 30-foot waterfall cascading down through dramatically needle-shaped rocks, we enjoy views down into the Zêzere Valley, now far below. Passing through the hardwood and softwood forest and up onto the grassy plateau, we keep an eye out for wild boar and rabbits, while overhead we may see kestrels and harriers hunting their prey. Traversing at an altitude of 4,300 feet, we see huge granite boulders resting where the glacier left them thousands of years ago. Our descent follows an ancient cobbled trail used to move the sheep and cattle to the summer pastures.

Itinerary



Overnight: The Vintage House

Originally a wine warehouse, the Vintage Hotel is located right on the river in the tiny town of Pinhão. Each guestroom has its own private balcony with views of the river while the rest of the property offers beautiful public spaces both inside and out and a lovely breakfast terrace along the river. Find time to enjoy a wine tasting at their Wine Academy and peruse their wine shop for gifts.

Meals: B, L, D

Driving Details: Approximately 2.5 hours, plus 1 hour scenic train ride

DAY 3 BELMONTE / PALAEOLITHIC ROCK ART / TRAIN RIDE ALONG THE DOURO RIVER / PINHÃO

After a short drive following the Zêzere as it flows through cherry and almond orchards, we arrive at the small but historically important town of Belmonte. An expert local guide will spend the morning with us, introducing the many stories of the town. It was here in 1467 that the “discoverer” of Brazil, Pedro Álvares Cabral, was born inside the walls of the town’s now-ruined 13th century castle, which still dominates the skyline. Below its walls lies the restored Jewish Quarter, with its small, compact stone houses with colorful window boxes. The presence of a Jewish community was first recorded here as early as the 13th century and in the small museum dedicated to their history, we’ll find out about their lives. Finally, we visit the tiny Olive Oil Museum and, after hearing how the precious oil is extracted, we’ll get to taste some of the delicious locally produced oils. After lunch in a local café, we drive north to the Côa Valley and travel back in time. In 1992, a vast number of engravings from the Paleolithic Age, 23,000 years ago, were discovered here. Their uniqueness lies in the fact that despite being carved out in the open, they have survived to this day. They are designated both a National Monument and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and we’ll visit the site to see the many different animals immortalized on the rocks. Continuing a short distance north, we arrive at Pocinho station to board the train and travel along the “Linha do Douro,” which follows the river westwards. With the Douro’s glittering waters below and the rich green of the valley’s famous vineyards stretching up the hillsides, this has to be one of the most scenic train rides on the Iberian Peninsula. After an hour, we arrive at Pinhão and walk straight into our hotel, set along the river.

Itinerary



Overnight: The Vintage House

Meals: B, L

Hiking Details: 7 miles, 3 hours, 900' ascent/1,300' descent

Transportation Details: 20 minutes by taxi to Covas da Douro; 1 hour by boat on the Douro

“A good variety of experiences—cultural, social, culinary, nature—that allowed an excellent introduction to northern Portugal.”

—Patricia M., Asheville, NC

DAY 4 HIKE TO QUINTA DO CRASTO / WINE TASTING / BOAT RIDE ON THE DOURO

The Douro River Valley is the most famous port wine area of the world, and became the world's first demarcated wine region in 1756. Sheltered from the damp Atlantic air by a string of mountains, the valley has hot, dry summers and cold, wet winters. Together with rich shale soils, this provides ideal grape-growing conditions. Our hike will follow a small hillside road that winds its way along the north side of the river, passing the layers of vine terraces that stretch from the river's edge to the hilltops. Our destination is Quinta do Crasto, which is perched up high with stunning views to the Douro below. First established in 1615, this family-run estate produces not only top quality ports and wines but also extra-virgin olive oil. During our visit, we learn about all the stages of wine production, from planting and harvesting, which is still done by hand, to blending and bottling. Later we enjoy lunch and sample some of the quinta's fine wine and port. Following all your exertions, you may wish to take a refreshing dip in their famed infinity pool. Later, we descend to the Douro and board a traditional flat-bottomed wooden boat. In the past, these “barcos rabelos” transported wine barrels down the river to the warehouses in Porto. We'll cruise back to our hotel, and the evening is free for dinner on your own. The Trip Leader will be happy to make suggestions.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Fonte Velha

Hotel Fonte Velha or “Hotel Old Fountain” is a lovely restored mansion set along the Lima River. The location is ideal—it’s right in the heart of the small village of Ponte da Barca, just outside of Peneda-Gerês National Park. Each of the hotel’s 16 guest rooms have private bathrooms and views of the garden, city, or river. There’s also a comfortable bar, a sunny breakfast room, and a game room with a pool table.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 5.5 miles, 2.5 hours, 118' ascent

Driving Details: 2.5 hours

DAY 5 GUIMARAES / HIKE ON THE ECOVIA ALONG THE LIMA RIVER / PONTE DA BARCA

Leaving port wine country behind, we head north to Guimaraes, the first capital city of Portugal. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001, this well-preserved medieval city, with a solid granite 10th century castle—the birthplace of Dom Afonso Henriques, the first king of “Portugale”—is linked with the emergence of the Portuguese national identity in the 12th century. The locals are very proud of the city’s motto, “Portugal nasceu aqui” (Portugal was born here). We’ll stroll along its cobbled streets, past traditionally built townhouses, palaces, and a convent to the Largo da Oliveira, hearing stories of its past glories and struggles. We’ll have lunch at a lovely restaurant in a bustling square before heading north to the Lima River, arguably one of Portugal’s most beautiful rivers. We’ll hike along the southern bank of the tree-lined river on an excellent trail. Many herons and kingfishers fish in its waters, so we’ll do a bit of birdwatching along the way. This peaceful route takes us directly to our hotel in Ponte da Barca, set on the banks of the Lima River. Now graced by an arched 15th century stone bridge, the town was a well-used crossing point for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela before it was built. Travelers were ferried in a barca (boat), hence the town’s name. Our hotel is a restored mansion and tonight we’ll dine in a restaurant restored from an old watermill.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel MiraCastro (or Peneda Hotel)

Perched on a hilltop with spectacular mountain and valley views, each room at the MiraCastro has a private balcony—ideal for taking in the scenery. The restaurant serves local cuisine such as breaded codfish and smoked meats, and there's a bar and lounge area for gathering with other travelers. But the highlight of your stay here is sure to be your surroundings, in the heart of Peneda-Gerês National Park.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 9.5 miles, 6.5-7.5 hours, 3,000' ascent/1,500' descent (Less strenuous option: 6.6 miles, 4-4.5 hours, 2,100' ascent/950' descent)

Driving Details: 30 minutes

DAY 6 HIKE THE PILGRIMAGE ROUTE FROM SOAJO TO PENEDA

We head to northern Portugal and the country's sole national park, Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês. We first stop in Soajo, famed for its picturesque collection of espigueiros. These 19th century granite grain stores, rectangular in shape, are elevated above the ground on granite pillars that look like mushrooms. The narrowly vented sides of the stores allow for airflow through the grain and maize, drying the crop, preventing mold, and keeping vermin away from the village's precious larder. Each roof is crowned with a small stone cross, making the whole site appear like a raised necropolis. Our hike follows a pilgrimage route that is used to this day by the Portuguese, primarily in the first week of September to join major festivities at the splendid Santuário da Nossa Senhora da Peneda. Fortunately, we'll be traveling at a quieter moment! We ascend out of Soajo to the Alto de Tibo where, at 3,000 feet, the views of the surrounding wilderness areas and small traditional villages are breathtaking. Our track dates back to medieval times, and in places the original granite pavements still survive. Descending into the valley, we pass many long-horned cattle grazing the hillsides unattended. They instinctively saunter back home to be milked as evening falls. Just before our arrival at the Sanctuary, we glimpse the white 19th century church tucked below a soaring granite rock face. To approach, we'll mount the "staircase of virtues," which extends for 1,000 feet, lined on either side by chapels.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel MiraCastro

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 7 miles, 5 hours, 1,200' ascent/descent

Driving Details: 30 minutes

“ It was a very satisfying blend of substantive hiking in interesting, off-beat locales and cultural activities that provided a glimpse into the people and life of the country.”

-Ellen R., New York, NY

DAY 7 PARQUE NACIONAL DA PENEDA-GERÊS

Established in 1971, the park covers a mountainous border region of about 17,000 acres, has 18 endemic plant species, and is the last place where Garrano horses, a Lusio-Galician breed, live in the wild. On our hikes in this dramatic boulder-strewn region, we'll probably meet no one else on the trail, except perhaps a goat herder and his Castro Laboreiro, or Portuguese watchdog, a breed that originated in a northern Portuguese village. These impressive dogs protect the flocks against the wild boar and wolves that still survive in this remote region. Today's hike brings us along the Trilho Castrejo, a circular route following paths—some of which date back to the middle ages—and crossing two medieval bridges that span the Laboreiro River.

Itinerary



Overnight: Paço de Calheiros

The Count of Calheiros will welcome us at this gem of a 17th century palace that he is pleased to call home. Each room in the palace is unique, with antique furnishings, and we can wander anywhere in the house. A must-see is the vast stone-floored kitchen where dinner is prepared. Fresh vegetables are provided from the garden below. There is a terrace overlooking the Count's vineyards as well as an outdoor pool and sauna.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 3 miles, 2.5-3 hours, 1,378' ascent/425' descent

DAY 8 THE PILGRIMAGE ROUTE ACROSS THE SERRA DA PENEDA / PONTE DE LIMA

We'll climb the stairs to Nossa Senhora da Peneda Church and continue up the cobbled path that ascends steeply through a mixed forest of oaks and holly to emerge into a hanging valley with vast granite boulders dotted about the landscape. Deposited thousands of years ago when the glaciers receded, they create fascinating sculptures resting in the landscape. In the center of the valley is a cool, refreshing lake, the water supply for the small settlement we've just left behind. Moving through this startling arena, we may have a chance to see golden eagles riding the thermals above. On reaching the top of the valley we follow a narrow trail that traverses behind the vast hill we have been walking alongside before heading down to Bouca dos Homens, where we'll be met by our vehicle.

After lunch in a nearby restaurant, we'll drive out of the national park and through the increasingly lush countryside of the Lima Valley to Ponte de Lima. Here a local guide will introduce us to the town's stories as we walk over the graceful stone bridge dating back to Roman times to the open squares and narrow back streets of this picturesque riverside settlement. Our overnight accommodation is just a few miles away at the Paço de Calheiros. This palatial manor house has been in the same family for more than 600 years. The Count of Calheiros will welcome us to his home with great hospitality—he really enjoys showing visitors around his lovely estate.

Itinerary



Overnight: Pestana Vintage Porto

The Pestana Porto, set in the heart of Porto's Old Town, occupies part of a block of 16th, 17th, and 18th century former wine warehouses that is recognized as a World Heritage Site. Spacious guestrooms have French-style windows and doors with views across the waterfront to the Port wine warehouses. Be sure to take a stroll along the riverfront or enjoy a glass of port in their chic lounge.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 4 miles, 2-2.5 hours, 1,300' ascent/800' descent

Driving Details: 2 hours

DAY 9 HIKING THE PORTUGUESE CAMINO / PORTO

We'll be *peregrinos* (pilgrims) this morning as we hike along one of the most beautiful sections of the Portuguese Camino, or "The Way," which follows a Roman military road that connected Portugal to Spain and France, and eventually leads to Santiago de Compostela. In medieval times, thousands of pilgrims followed this route to the shrine of Sant Iago, St. James the Apostle. After Rome and Jerusalem, Santiago was the third holiest city in the Christian world. We start out by hearing the story of Saint James inside the tiny, picturesque chapel of Our Lady of the Snows. From there, we follow the many painted yellow arrows and the scallop shell motifs, the symbol of St. James, that dot the trail as we ascend through the Labruja Valley to a high pass with fabulous views back into the Lima Valley and on to the Coura Valley. We journey through forest, past orchards, and alongside fields of grazing animals to finish our journey in Agualonga, enjoying a barbecue lunch along the way. In the afternoon, we drive back to Porto. Set at the mouth of the Rio Douro, this UNESCO World Heritage Site houses acres of port wine warehouses. In the early evening, we'll meet for our Farewell Dinner in a small nearby restaurant, where we'll be entertained by fado singers. This unique music, with its hauntingly poetic songs, is accompanied by the Portuguese 12-string guitar and tells of love, loss, and farewells. Overnight at the Pestana Vintage Porto hotel along the banks of the Douro River in Porto.

Meals: B

DAY 10 DEPART

Transfer on your own to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flight.

Pricing

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, based on double occupancy

2024

\$5,595 (10-15 members)

\$5,995 (4-9 members)

Single supplement: \$740

Please contact us for future years' pricing

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

PAYMENT TERMS

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION & TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No Charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader
- Accommodations in charming hotels
- All meals included except 1 dinner as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner
- All ground transportation and baggage handling from meeting until departure
- All activities as indicated in Detailed Itinerary

TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Travel to and from the arrival and departure location as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Additional hotel nights outside the trip's scheduled dates
- Optional gratuities to Trip Leaders or staff
- Optional travel insurance
- Other expenses of a personal nature (some alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.)

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Because the prices published for our program are set so far in advance of the trip dates, we are occasionally faced with exceptional cost increases and/or currency fluctuations that affect the actual cost of running the trip. In most years, no price changes are necessary. However, we do reserve the right to raise or lower the trip price if there is a significant change in costs or exchange rates. If this is the case, your final invoice will reflect the difference in trip cost.

Arrival & Departure

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Suggested Airport: Francisco Sa Carneiro Airport (OPO)

Suggested Date & Time: Anytime prior to Day 1

Meeting Place: Your Trip Leader will meet you in the lobby of the Yeatman Hotel in Vila Nova de Gaia (across the water from Porto) at 9:00 am on Day 1. Please be dressed for hiking, as we will head out on a hike in the afternoon. Due to the early morning rendezvous time on Day 1, we recommend arriving in Porto the night before, where there are many hotel options to book on your own. Otherwise, if you wish to stay at the Yeatman Hotel before the start of the tour, where we will be meeting on Day 1, we suggest you book a room directly from the hotel website at www.the-yeatman-hotel.com.

DEPARTURE

Suggested Date & Time: Day 10, anytime

Suggested Airport: Francisco Sa Carneiro Airport (OPO)

Trip members are responsible for transferring to Francisco Sa Carneiro Airport on their own. Your Trip Leader can help you arrange for a taxi that takes about 30 minutes and will cost between €25-35.

Trip members with trains to catch can easily do so by taxi. The ride is about 10 minutes from the hotel and costs about €10-15. Your guide can help you arrange your taxi.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Portugal. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

RECOMMENDED HOTELS

We recommend overnighting at the OPO Hotel the night before the trip begins: opohotel.com/en/airport

If you wish to stay in a more central location in Porto, please contact our office for details.

Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit wildernesstravel.com/leaders.



ALEXANDRA CLARO

Alexandra was born in the central mountains of Portugal, the heart of the country. She is an avid world traveler, but says "home is where your heart is," and hers is in the history, culture, and landscapes of her native land. "Traveling allows us to know the world, but much more than that it's definitely the best way to know our place in it." Alexandra is passionate about Portugal, and her spirit will get you involved in the interesting facets of her country. With her easy smile, she will definitely make you feel at home.



JORGE RUBEN MARTINS

Jorge Ruben was born in Luanda, Angola, but was raised in Portugal from an early age. His abiding passion is nature, from the highest peaks (he loves to climb mountains) to under the ground (he's also a speleologist). In addition to Portugal, Jorge Ruben has trekked the mountains of the Alps, Pyrenees, and Spain's Picos de Europa, and has a special interest in other cultures and customs. His mantra is "Wild is not who lives in nature...wild is who destroys it!" Jorge Ruben is fluent in Portuguese and English, and speaks some Spanish.



SKYE MCDONALD

Skye McDonald lives in Scotland's Highland capital, Inverness. She has worked as a Trip Leader in 35 countries since the millennium and lived in Germany, France, and Tanzania. "Bringing understanding between peoples of very different cultures and backgrounds is one of the joys of being a Trip Leader, and of course, the chance to make friends around the world." Closer to home, she delights in sharing the glories of her native Scotland, and says that a good day scaling some of the beautiful Scottish mountains is hard to beat. Skye speaks German, French, beginners' Portuguese, and unusually, a smattering of Swahili from earlier years as a volunteer agricultural officer in Tanzania. Life continues to be an adventure for Skye, who has recently taken up bee-keeping, wild-water swimming, and scuba diving.



DAVID MONTEIRO

David Monteiro was born in Mindelo, Cape Verde, an archipelago on the west coast of Africa, and moved to Portugal with his family when he was a child. After working as a CPA for more than 20 years, he felt the need for a change and began to lead hiking, mountain biking, and rock-climbing trips, all sports he had enjoyed since his childhood. When not guiding, David indulges in his passion for photography, literature, and history.

Trip Leaders



PATRICIA RACZKOWSKI

Patricia Raczkowski was born in Canada of a Spanish mother and Polish father and has lived in Spain since she was ten months old. Her first taste of the mountains came in high school, when she went on monthly hikes with the nuns from her school in Madrid, and she spent her senior year as an exchange student in Washington State, living with an American family. After going to veterinary college in Madrid and practicing as a veterinary nurse in England, her love of nature pulled her back to Spain. You can often find Patricia engaging with the locals along the trail and in towns, as she often she knows everyone along the way, from hotel and restaurant staff to local guides. She lives in the south of Spain in the high mountains of Granada (Sierra Nevada), and when not guiding, she heads out on her own adventures, hiking and traveling around the world.

What to Expect

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated a **Level 3+, Moderate**, according to our trip grading system. You will need to be comfortable hiking 8.5 miles a day and being on your feet for up to 7 hours a day. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing.

Average Hiking Day

- 6 miles
- 3-4 hours
- 1,100-1,200 feet gain/loss

Challenge Day

- Day 6 - 9.5 miles, 6.5-7.5 hours, and 3,000 feet gain/1,500 feet loss

TERRAIN

Despite its small size, Portugal packs in a lot of varied scenery and rich history. Our hikes guide us through picturesque slate villages in the Serra da Lousã, the scenic Zêzere Valley, pilgrimage routes in the Peneda-Gerês National Park, and vineyards of the famous Douro Valley. Some trails have wide, gravelly paths with moderate elevation change and some have steep, narrow, and uneven terrain involving downhill sections over loose scree.

WEATHER

Temperatures are generally mild in Portugal, reaching the mid-70s°F during the day in most locations on the trip. When we are in the mountains, daytime temperatures can be slightly cooler, and nighttime temperatures are typically in the 50s°F. April is the start of the dry season, but rain and cool weather are always a possibility, so raingear and warm layers are necessary items to carry with you on every hike.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The hotels we've chosen are charming, well located, and comfortable, and include a hotel with a spa, a converted pilgrimage hostel, a revamped wine warehouse, and an 18th century manor house. Since they are in historic buildings, the rooms are not always of uniform or international size. Our leaders do their best to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. Single rooms can be requested but are not always available, due to the limited space in the hotels. If you prefer a single room, please make your request as early as possible.

CUISINE

Portugal has excellent cuisine. Portuguese specialties include locally-caught octopus, sardines, bacalhau (salted cod, said to be prepared in 365 different ways!), and vinho verde (green wine). Lunches are taken at local restaurants or hotels or served picnic-style during one of our hikes. Dinners will be at the hotel or a local restaurant and are accompanied by local wines, and we'll become connoisseurs and ambassadors of Portugal's distinguished products! Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than what it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but most often the evening meal will be at 7:30 pm.

What to Expect

TRANSPORTATION

Our van will transport the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack for items you need during the day (rain gear, sweater, camera, water bottle, etc.). Trip members are always free to skip a day's hike and travel to the next destination in the support vehicle (or remain at the hotel if we are not transferring that day).

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	MILES	HOURS	ELEV. ASCENT/DESCENT	HOURS
1	6.5 miles	3-3.5 hours	+2,000'/-2,000'	3.5 hours
2	8.5 miles	4.5-5 hours	+2,000'/-2,000'	
3				2.5 hours, plus 1 hour scenic train ride
4	7 miles	3 hours	+900'/-1,300'	20 minutes by taxi; 1 hour by boat
5	5.5 miles	2.5 hours	+118'	2.5 hours
6	9.5 miles	A) 6.5-7.5 hours	+3,000'/-1,500'	30 mins
	6.6 miles	B) 4-4.5 hours	+2,100'/950'	
7	7 miles	5 hours	+1,200'/-1,200'	30 mins
8	3 miles	2.5-3 hours	+1,378'/-425'	
9	4 miles	2-2.5 hours	+1,300'/-800'	2 hours

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Manteigas	51/39	55/40	58/43	60/44	67/49	77/55	81/57	82/59	75/56	65/51	55/43	51/40
Porto	56/41	58/42	62/45	64/47	67/52	73/57	77/60	77/59	75/57	69/53	62/47	58/44
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Manteigas	11.5	9.7	7.8	5.2	4.7	3.6	0.6	0.5	2.9	6.6	11.1	7.1
Porto	6.2	5.5	3.5	4.6	3.8	1.8	0.7	1.1	2.8	5.4	6.2	7.7

Additional Information

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 or email us at info@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Condé Nast Traveler*, 2024, 4-time winner

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 11-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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