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Travel Information for Portugal

A. Transportation Information

International airports are located in Lisbon, Porto, and Faro. Both Lisbon and Porto are interesting cities to spend time in before or after your tour, as is Faro although it is smaller in size. For price and logistical convenience, we recommend flying into Lisbon, or if you are interested in visiting northern Portugal, flying into Porto and then making your way south to the tour is an option. If you are interested in spending time on the south coast after the tour ends, leaving from Faro is an option.

The general airport website www.ana.pt/en-US has a section detailing how to access any Portugal airport by taxi, train or metro.

Air Travel within Europe and Portugal

European carriers such as Alitalia, British Airways, Sabena, TAP and Lufthansa service some cities in Portugal. It is also possible to fly into smaller airports from other European cities as well as a domestic flight from Lisbon, Porto and Faro.

Try the following national airlines:

- TAP Portugal: <http://www.flytap.com>
- Portugalia Airlines: <http://www.portugalia-airlines.pt>

There are also many low cost airlines that fly in and out of Portugal, see the list below. Remember these airlines have restrictions on luggage and may also have other “quirky” policies, but are at times great options for one way flights to and from smaller cities in Portugal.

- Vueling www.vueling.com
- RyanAir www.ryanair.com
- EasyJet www.easyjet.com

Lisbon: Name and airport code: Portela airport (LIS), located 7km from the Lisbon city center
Website: www.lisbon-airport.com/. Most international flights arrive at Portela International Airport in Lisbon. If you have a connection on a domestic flight, you may have to go through customs in Lisbon, pick up your luggage and re-check your luggage. The Lisbon airport is well connected to downtown Lisbon by taxi, metro, and bus. Your choice of transportation will most likely be determined by the amount of luggage you have. See www.golisbon.com/transport/transport.html or www.lisbon-airport.com/

To and From the Lisbon Airport

By Taxi: Taxis are available outside the arrival and departure areas. Expect a trip length of approximately 15 minutes and a cost of 10-15 euros (status 2017) to the city center. Charges may vary depending on the time of the day and the destination, and amount of luggage. Expect prices to be higher at night.

By Bus: Aerobus, the Lisbon Airport Bus connects the airport and the city center passing by many popular hotels. Hours of operation from the airport are 7:00 am to 11:00 pm with frequent departures. www.golisbon.com/transport/airport-shuttle.html.

By Metro: Lisbon has a modern underground metro system. Hours of operation are 6:30 am to 1:00 am and it connects the city center (Saldanha) to the airport with a trip length of 21 minutes. www.metrolisboa.pt/eng/.

Porto: Name and airport code: Porto Airport, El Aeropuerto Francisco Sá Carneiro de Oporto (OPO), located 10 km from the Porto city center. Website: www.porto-airport.com/. While few trans-Atlantic flights fly into Porto, if you are connecting from another European country and you want to spend some days in this famous area, it is an arrival option.

To and From the Porto Airport

By Taxi: Taxis are available outside the arrival area. Expect a trip length of approximately 20-30 minutes and a cost of 20-30 euros (status 2017) to the city center. Charges may vary depending on the time of the day and the destination, and amount of luggage. Expect prices to be higher at night.

By Metro: Porto has a modern underground metro system. The purple line connects the city center to the airport and the fare is determined by your destination. Hours of operation are 6:00 am to 1:00 am with frequent departures. There is a ticket office at the airport. www.metroporto.pt/#sthash.c6RXdU1E.dpuf.

Faro: Name and airport code: Algarve or Faro Airport (FAO), located 4 km west of Faro. Website: <https://www.aeroporto Faro.pt/en/fao/home>

To and From the Faro Airport

By Taxi: Taxis are available outside the airport. The cost will vary depending upon the time of day and traffic, should be around 12 euros (status 2017). Expect to pay more for oversized luggage.

By Bus: The Proximo bus stop is outside the Airport terminal to the left of the arrivals area as you exit, under the concrete roof-like structure. Take Bus 16 in the direction of Avenida or Jardim. Journey time is 15-17 minutes.

Train Transportation Information

You do not have to purchase train tickets in advance, especially if they are for post-tour travel plans (your tour leaders can help you with those). However, if you do decide to make your arrangements ahead of time, we suggest using the following companies:

- Rail Europe: Website: www.raileurope.com/index.html.
- Portugal National Trains: Website: <https://www.cp.pt/passageiros/pt>.

Other Types of Transportation

Taxis: Taxis can easily be found outside airports and train stations. It is good practice to ask for an approximate fare before the ride and pay meter start. Keep in mind that the cost may vary depending on traffic in the city, also if it is day or night and during the week or weekend. Note that taxis from airports add extra for luggage.

Rental Car: If you decide to rent a car, we suggest arranging this from the U.S. - it's cheaper. Be sure to find out the exact address of the location to pick up your rental car (preferably at your arrival airport).

Bus: ALSA Buses www.alsa.es; EVA Buses. www.eva-bus.com/. Bus travel in Portugal is more comprehensive and at times easier than train travel. You can buy tickets at bus stations, which are usually connected to metro or train stations, at airports, or online at the company website.

Metro: Both Lisbon and Porto have modern metro systems.

B. Language Tips

Basic Portuguese Phrases

- Good morning - *Bom dia.*
- Good afternoon - *Boa tarde*
- Good evening. (greeting) - *Noite boa. (cumprimento)*
- Hello, my name is John - *Hello, meu nome é John*
- What is your name? - *Que é seu nome?*
- How are you? - *Como é você?*
- I am fine - *Eu sou muito bem.*
- Goodbye - *Adeus.*
- I am lost. - *Eu sou perdido.*
- Where is the restroom? - *Onde está o banheiro?*
- Excuse me - *Desculpar-me.*
- Please - *Por favor.*
- Thank you – *Obrigado*

C. How to Dial Telephone Numbers

The International Access Code (IAC) for the US and Canada is 011 and for Portugal it's 00.

The Country Code (CC) for Portugal is 351 and for the US and Canada it's 1

To call Portugal from the US or Canada, dial IAC + CC + LN.

Example: The local telephone number of the Museo Chiado in Lisbon, Portugal 21 343 2148. The number could also be listed as +351 21 343 2148. In both cases, you would dial 011 351 21 343 2148.

To call the US or Canada from Portugal, dial IAC + CC + LN.

Example: The local telephone number of the ExperiencePlus! headquarters in Colorado is 970-484-8489. You would dial 00-1-970-484-8489.

To call Portugal from another European country, dial IAC + CC + LN.

Example: The local telephone number of the Museo Chiado in Lisbon, Portugal 21 343 2148. You would dial 00351 21 343 2148.

To call Portugal from within Portugal, dial LN

Example: The local telephone number of the Museo Chiado in Lisbon, Portugal 21 343 2148. You would dial 21 343 2148. Unlike the US there is no need to differentiate local and long distance by dialing a 1.

D. Hotel Recommendations

Beja

[Pousada de Beja, Sao Fransisco](http://www.pousadasofportugal.com/pousadas/beja/) (<http://www.pousadasofportugal.com/pousadas/beja/>)

Largo D. Nuno Alvares Pereira, 7801-901 Beja

Lisbon

[Internacional Design Hotel](http://www.widesignhotel.com) (www.widesignhotel.com)

Rua de Betesga 3, 1100-052 Lisboa

[Memmo Alfama](http://www.memmohotels.com) (www.memmohotels.com)

Travessa das Merceiras, 27 – Alfama, 1100-348 Lisboa

[NH Liberdade](http://us.etrip.net/Hotel/NH_Liberdade.htm) (http://us.etrip.net/Hotel/NH_Liberdade.htm)

Avenida da Liberdade, 180 B, Sao Mamede

[Tivoli Jardim City Center Hotel](http://www.tivolihotels.com/pt/hoteis/lisboa/tivoli-jardim/o-hotel.aspx) (<http://www.tivolihotels.com/pt/hoteis/lisboa/tivoli-jardim/o-hotel.aspx>)
Rua Júlio César Machado, 7/9 1250-135 Lisboa

[Hotel Do Chiado](http://www.hoteldochiado.com/index.html) (<http://www.hoteldochiado.com/index.html>)
Rua Nova do Almada, Nr. 114, 1200-290 Lisbon

Sagres

[Pousada de Sagres, Infante](http://www.pousadasofportugal.com/pousadas/sagres/) (<http://www.pousadasofportugal.com/pousadas/sagres/>)
Ponta da Atalaia, 8650-385 Sagres

[Memmo Baleeira Hotel](http://www.memmohotels.com/baleeira/Home.html) (<http://www.memmohotels.com/baleeira/Home.html>)
Sítio Da Baleeira, Sagres, 8650-357

E. Eating and Drinking

Portuguese standard fare is comparable to other southern European food. Spain still holds the record in late dinners but dinners in Portugal are usually no earlier than 7:00 pm. Tap water is safe to drink everywhere, but the further you move south along the coast, the less nice it tastes. Be ready to expect large portions within the Alentejo region, offering even larger meals than the Algarve.

Hotel breakfasts generally include coffee, tea, bread, butter, jam, paté, cheese, and ham. We make sure that our hotels on tour provide a substantial breakfast suitable for cycling, and ask them to include fruit, cereal, milk and maybe yogurt. If you are on your own and need more sustenance, you can always go to the supermarket to buy yogurt or cheese.

There are several meal options along the way. Most of the towns have small markets where varied supplies can be found to prepare a snack or a sandwich (cheese, bread, cured meats, fruit etc.). Bakeries offer mainly sweet pastries. If you are looking for something prepared, bars offer sandwiches and “petiscos”, which are tapas-style snacks (e.g. olives, bread, butter, paté, sardine paté, etc.). In small bars, ask for “petiscos” instead of “food” because “food” will largely be interpreted as a full hot meal. Note that “petiscos” will also be served at restaurants before the meal and they will be brought to the table without being ordered. However, you will be charged, even if you only nibble. Turn them down if you do not want them. Other than bars and getting food at supermarkets and markets, you will of course also be able to enjoy full meals at numerous restaurants.

Lunch is usually served between noon and 2.00 pm.

Drinks: Portugal is better known for its wines rather than beer. The most popular beer types are “Sagres” (pilsener style) and “Super Bock” (dark beer). They are served in different sizes, bottle or draft. You will find excellent local wines everywhere and you might want to explore a little beyond the famous “Douro”. Another popular traditional alcoholic beverage is the “Medronho”, a strong fruit brandy made from the fruit of the Medronho tree.

Coffee: There is a whole world of coffee to be discovered in Portugal and coffee is a huge part of the local culture. Espresso-type coffee is common, but don’t expect frothed milk. If you prefer a larger milk than coffee ratio, then order “*um galão*”. If you prefer it a little bit stronger, e.g. something more like a *caffe latte*, order an “*um galão directo*”. Remember that ordering a “*galão*” is usually a morning thing. “*Um pingo*”, also called “*um pingado*” is an espresso with a drop of hot or cold milk. If you are looking for pure espresso, order “*um café*” or “*um bica*”, whereas the latter only applies in Lisbon. Coffee is usually consumed during breakfast, after lunch, and sometimes mid-afternoon and after dinner.

F. Reading and Movie List

Literature on Portugal and Portugal History

- *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus* by Hugh Kennedy. An overview of eight centuries of history. (Addison-Wesley, 1997)

- *Rick Steves' Portugal* is a travel guide that tells you what you really need to know when traveling in Portugal.
- *The Portuguese Empire, 1415-1808: A World on the Move* by A. J. R. Russell-Wood is a lively account of the Portuguese sea voyages and discoveries in the 15th and 16th centuries.
- *Food of Portugal* (Anderson) or *Lonely Planet's World Food Portugal* (Scott-Aitken and De Macedo Vitorino) are great reads about Portugal cuisine.
- *The Portuguese: The Land and Its People* by Marion Kaplan (Viking, 2006) gives a detailed history of Portugal and also discusses politics, the economy, literature, art, and architecture.
- *Journey to Portugal: In pursuit of Portugal's History and Culture* by José Saramago. This Nobel Prize-winner traveled across his homeland to better understand Portugal's history and culture.
- *New Portuguese Letters* by the "Three Marias" (Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta, and Maria Fátima Velho da Costa), first published in Portugal in 1972. The Portuguese government banned and confiscated all copies and arrested the authors for "outrage to public decency". They were acquitted 2 years later, and the case became a cause célèbre for feminist organizations around the world.

Fiction Literature showcasing Portugal

- *The Lusíads (Os Lusíadas)* by Luís de Camões is one of the greatest epic poems of the Renaissance, immortalizing Portugal's voyages of discovery.
- *Baltasar and Blimunda* by José Saramago is a romance novel that offers a surrealistic reflection on life in 18th-century Portugal.
- *Distant Music* by Lee Langley is about a love affair between Catholic Esperanca and Jewish Emmanuel that lasts through six centuries. This novel describes Portugal's maritime empire, Sephardic Jews, and Portuguese immigrants in London.
- *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon* by Richard Zimler is a thriller novel about the persecution of the Jews in Portugal in the early 1500s.
- *Night Train to Lisbon* by Pascal Mercier is an extraordinary and fascinating story about a Swiss teacher's discovery of a book through a chance encounter that leads him to an adventure in Lisbon to learn about its dictatorship past and heroes fighting in the resistance, and also changes his own life. Also available as a movie!

Movies About or Set in Portugal That We Have Enjoyed

- *Capitães de Abril* (2000) relates the 1974 coup that overthrew the right-wing Portuguese dictatorship, from the perspective of two young army captains.
- *Fados*, a 2007 documentary about the soul music of the Portuguese working class.
- *Bone* (Ossos; 1997; Pedro Costa) A grim and gripping tale of life in the slums on the outskirts of Lisbon, dealing with poverty, suicide and the struggle of love and death.
- *In Vanda's Room* (No Quarto da Vanda; 2000; Pedro Costa) This award-winning film provides a close-up of the lives of Cape Verdean slum dwellers and drug addicts in Lisbon.
- *The Letter* (La Lettre; 1999; Manoel de Oliverira). This classic drama won the Jury prize at Cannes.
- *The Winter in Lisbon* (El Invierno en Lisboa; 1992; Jose Antonio Zorrilla) This crime drama is about a disillusioned US jazz pianist who flees to Lisbon where he befriends an artist.
- *The Mutants* (Os Mutantes; 1999; Teresa Villaverde) Nominated for four Golden Globes, this film focuses on four teenagers rejected by the system and fall into a life of petty crime and pornography.

G. Other Travel Resources

If you'd like to explore more transportation options, we find that <https://www.rome2rio.com/> is a helpful resource.