



Lisbon to Porto

Sintra and Estoril Coast. Among the sites you shall not miss in Portugal there's Sintra, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO for the great beauty of its nature and architecture, with fairy tale palaces and lush vegetation. Estoril Coast is a place of charm and aristocratic traditions that you'll meet along the Atlantic Ocean, the white sandy beaches and magnificent fortresses from the 17th century.

Porto is at the same time the name of a city and a fortified wine, one of the most famous in the world, aged at the wine cellars of Vila Nova de Gaia, next to the Douro River. Its historical center has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and preserves many beautiful monuments, namely from the Baroque period which is contemporary to the glory and wealth achieved with the trade of Port Wine. You shall not miss a visit to the Cathedral (Sé), the Church of Saint Francis and the Clérigos Tower.

Douro Valley is where the terraced hill slopes hide one of the country's most valuable treasures: the beautiful vineyards from where the worldwide famous Port wine is still nowadays produced. Driving through Marão Mountain range get prepared to enjoy one of the most wonderful landscapes in the world, with endless rows of vines dotting the slopes in the banks of the Douro River. We advise you to visit one of the wineries in the region and taking a river cruise.

Coimbra is the city of the students because it was here that the first university in Portugal was created, nowadays the oldest and one of the most important in the country. You shall not miss the Baroque Library from the 18th century that is one of the highlights of the visit to Coimbra. In its city centre you'll wander among Romanesque and Manueline churches at the same time you stroll across its commercial busy area.

Óbidos is for sure one of the loveliest medieval villages in Portugal, still surrounded by walls and whose traditional whitewashed houses are decorated with blue and yellow trims around doors and windows. The multicolored

flowerbeds decorating the houses prove the female touch in this village that used to be the wedding gift of our kings to their queens.

Day 1 & 2 in Lisbon or Porto, then.....

Day 3: (Monday) LISBON – SINTRA – CASCAIS – LISBON

Meet your private English-speaking driver at the lobby and leave towards Sintra

Arrive and walking guided visit to Sintra historical centre, classified as world heritage by Unesco. Choose between a visit to the colourful hilltop Pena Palace or the older National Palace

Lunch at local restaurant in Sintra (not included)

Leave towards Colares after lunch

Arrive and visit with wine tasting at a local winery

Return to Lisbon following the beautiful Cascais – Estoril coastline via Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point in mainland Europe.

Day 4: (Tuesday) LISBON – COIMBRA

Meet your private English-speaking driver/guide at the lobby and leave towards Coimbra

En-route stop at Alcobaça and visit the amazing Alcobaça Monastery where the elaborately carved tombs of Pedro and Inês lie

Continue towards Coimbra

Check in at a 5-star hotel in Coimbra in a former palace where Pedro and Inês conducted their affair

Learn the full, tragic story of Portugal's real life Romeo and Juliet on a private guided tour of the sites relevant to their story.

Day 5: (Wednesday) COIMBRA

Go back 2000 years and learn how the Romans lived in this area on a private guided Roman Legacy tour. Visit the (now underground) cryptoporticus, the astonishingly well-preserved open air mosaics at Conimbriga and take a guided tour of the relevant museums to help you make the most of your visit.

Learn what makes Coimbra Fado music unique during a late afternoon performance.

Day 6: (Thursday) COIMBRA – BUSSACO – AVEIRO – PORTO

Meet your private driver at the hotel lobby and leave towards Bussaco national forest, palace and convent. Arrive and enjoy a shaded walk in Bussaco and visit the stone-studded Carmelite convent. Leave towards Aveiro, city of canals and Art Nouveau. Lunch on your own at a local restaurant (not included) in Costa Nova, the fishing village of houses painted in colourful stripes with ocean beach on one side and the lagoon on the other. Drive towards Porto.

Arrive and check in at 4-star hotel located in Porto city center (upgrade possible)

Evening at leisure

Day 7: (Friday) PORTO

Meet your expert local guide at the hotel lobby and set off for Porto's historical centre, classified as World Heritage by UNESCO (taxi included). Enjoy a half-day private walking guided tour with visit to Lello Bookstore, Stock Exchange Palace and St. Francis Church. Walk to the other side of the river crossing the D. Luis I Bridge. Private visit with wine tasting at local port wine cellar to learn about the Douro's famous fortified wine. Lunch on your own at a local restaurant (not included). Afternoon at leisure to shop for quality souvenirs, visit art galleries or museums or simply soak up the atmosphere of the Ribeira district. Evening at leisure

Duration: 7 days

Perfect for: First time visitors to Portugal with limited time.

Cities and places visited: Lisbon and Porto, with stops in Sintra, Óbidos, Nazaré, Alcobaça, Batalha, Fátima (or Leiria), Tomar, and Coimbra.

Arrival Airport: Most people will fly into Lisbon Airport and do this itinerary. But Porto Airport has flights to more than 50 European cities. Actually, it doesn't matter greatly if you start there and end in Lisbon, as you can easily do this itinerary in reverse order.

Best Season: Any time of year, but ultimately late spring (April to June) and late autumn (September to November) is when the weather is comfortable and crowds are smaller.

5-Day Lisbon to Porto Road Trip Itinerary

A 5-day itinerary will be really fast-paced, but you will be able to see some of the main attractions in Central Portugal.

Cascais or Ericeira (1 night) – Sintra – Obidos (1 night) – Batalha or Alcobaca – Coimbra (1 night) – Santar or Bussaco – Aveiro (1 night).

Itinerary notes: Following this itinerary means you'll get a taste of everything. If you'd like a bit more hiking and national parks, we'd skip Aveiro in favor of Arouca Unesco Global Geopark.

7-Day Road Trip Itinerary

You can either add two nights in Serra da Estrela or a night in Tomar or follow the same 5-day suggested itinerary but spend more time in Coimbra, Obidos, or Aveiro and travel at a slower pace while taking day trips.

10-Day Road Trip Itinerary

Suggested Itinerary for Beach Lovers

For beach lovers, pick at least two locations on the Silver Coast (Ericeira, Nazare, Figueira da Foz, or any other beach town) where you can spend four nights. But make sure to visit Sintra, Obidos, Coimbra and Aveiro.

Óbidos

Sights & Landmarks Points of Interest & Landmarks

Óbidos is a town and a municipality in the Oeste region, historical province of Estremadura, and the formerly Leiria district. The town proper has approximately 3100 inhabitants. The municipality population in 2011 was 11,772, in an area of 141.55 square kilometres.

On your way between Lisbon and Porto, you may be tempted to skip the stop to Obidos, but I highly suggest you don't. This small village is the perfect place for a time-travel to middle age and to drink Ginjinha.

Portugal 12 days itinerary: Complete Itinerary to Visit Portugal in 12 Days Without a Car

43% as popular as Coimbra

9 minutes off the main route, 31% of way to Porto

Nazaré

Nazaré is a Portuguese municipality in Oeste region and Leiria District, in historical Estremadura province of Portugal.

It is one of the most popular seaside resorts in the Silver Coast, Portugal. The population in 2011 was 15,158, in an area of 82.43 km².

32% as popular as Coimbra

14 minutes off the main route, 40% of way to Porto

Alcobaça

Sights & Landmarks Sacred & Religious Sites

Alcobaça is a Portuguese city and municipality in the Oeste region, in the historical province of Estremadura, and in the Leiria District. The city grew along the valleys of the rivers Alcoa and Baça, from which it derives its name.

15% as popular as Coimbra

15 minutes off the main route, 40% of way to Porto

Fátima

Sights & Landmarks Sacred & Religious Sites Points of Interest & Landmarks

Fátima is a central Portuguese town that's home to the Sanctuary of Fátima, a Catholic pilgrimage site. The Capelinha das Aparições marks the spot where the Virgin Mary allegedly appeared in 1917. Other sacred sites include the Basílica de Nossa Senhora do Rosário, with its golden angels, and the modern church of Igreja da Santíssima Trindade. The Museu de Arte Sacra e Etnologia exhibits religious artifacts.

43% as popular as Coimbra

7 minutes off the main route, 41% of way to Porto

Tomar

Tomar, also known in English as Thomar, is a city and a municipality in the Santarém district of Portugal. The town proper has a population of about 20,000. The municipality population in 2011 was 40,677, in an area of 351.20 km².

Day 7 – Tomar to Lisbon

Portugal 12 days itinerary: Complete Itinerary to **Visit Portugal in 12 Days**
Without a Car

27% as popular as Coimbra

12 minutes off the main route, 42% of way to Porto

Coimbra

Sights & Landmarks Monuments & Statues

Coimbra, a riverfront city in central Portugal and the country's former capital, is home to a preserved medieval old town and the historic University of Coimbra. Built on the grounds of a former palace, the university is famed for its baroque library, the Biblioteca Joanina, and its 18th-century bell tower. In the city's old town lies the 12th-century Romanesque cathedral Sé Velha.

Most popular city on this route

8 minutes off the main route, 62% of way to Porto

Aveiro

Sights & Landmarks Architectural Buildings

Aveiro is a city on the west coast of Portugal set along a lagoon called Ria de Aveiro. It's distinguished by its canals navigated by colorful boats (barcos moliceiros), traditionally used to harvest seaweed. Not far from its core, known for art nouveau buildings, is the Cathedral of Aveiro, with its prominent bell tower. The Museu de Aveiro, housed in a former convent, has a lavish tomb made of marble.

26% as popular as Coimbra

10 minutes off the main route, 75% of way to Porto

1. Moderate Pace – Where to Go in Portugal Itinerary

With this moderately paced itinerary, you can opt to stay in Portugal from 7 to 10 days.

Porto: Spend 2 to 3 days

With two days in Porto, you can see the city's top historic attractions, enjoy Douro Valley port wine tastings in Vila Nova de Gaia across the river, and linger in a riverside cafe below spectacular soaring cliffs while dining or sipping wine.

With an additional day in Porto, you can day trip to any one of these top spots: Braga & Guimaraes, Coimbra, Aveiro, or the Atlantic Ocean beaches north of Porto.

Porto's best experiences

Things to See & Do in Porto

Lisbon: Spend 2 to 3 days

With two days in Lisbon, you can visit the capital's historic center, sightsee Alfama by tram (Lisbon's oldest neighborhood), visit St. George Castle, bask in breathtaking views from several miradouros (look-out points) throughout the city, and visit the Tower of Belem & Jeronimos Monastery, 20 to 30 minutes outside Lisbon.

With an added day in Lisbon, you can day trip to the stunning Sintra Castle, less than an hour outside Lisbon, or go to picturesque Cascais Beach & Estoril, 30 minutes outside Lisbon.

The Algarve: Spend 3 to 4 days

With three days in the Algarve region, you can explore your selected home base (such as Lagos or Albufeira), visit a few other top towns and beach spots along the coast, and enjoy kayaking or cruising the beach coves, caves, and grottos. With an added day in the Algarve, you can day trip the Algarve's west coast to Cape Sagres or explore the Algarve's east coast to historic Tavira and beyond.

The Algarve's best experiences

Things to See & Do in the Algarve

Lisbon is the favorite spot for where to go in Portugal itineraries.

View of Lisbon hills and castle from an upper neighborhood just outside the iconic and beautiful city. Lisbon is definitely a favorite spot on where to go in Portugal itineraries.

2. Live Like a Local Pace – Where to Go in Portugal Itinerary

With the Live Like a Local itinerary, you can choose to stay longer – from 14 to 21 days – as you adventure through Portugal at a slower, more immersive pace.

Porto: Spend 3 to 4 days

With three days in Porto, you can see the city's top historic attractions, enjoy Douro Valley port wine tastings in Vila Nova de Gaia across the Douro River from Porto, linger in a riverside cafe below spectacular soaring cliffs while dining or sipping wine, and take a day trip to Braga & Guimaraes.

For each additional day in Porto, you can explore Coimbra, Aveiro, or the Atlantic Ocean beaches and coastal promenades north of Porto. Another

tempting option is to cruise the Douro River while you dine, wine taste, and enjoy postcard-worthy views of rolling vineyards, traditional wineries, and perched villages dotting the fertile Douro Valley.

Lisbon: With five days in Lisbon, you can visit the capital's historic center, sight-see Alfama by tram (Lisbon's oldest neighborhood), visit St. George's Castle, check out breath-taking panoramic views from several miradouros (look-out points) throughout the city, visit the Tower of Belem and Jeronimos Monastery, discover the splendid Sintra Castle and village and visit the picturesque Cascais Beach & Estoril.

For each additional day in Lisbon, your day trip options include the famous holy site Fatima, the quintessential village of Obidos, the medieval Batalha Monastery, the famous surfing beach Nazare, and the Roman ruins in Evora.

Best experiences in Lisbon & surrounding areas

Things to See & Do in Lisbon & on day trips

Beautiful Algarve on Atlantic ocean coast is a must-see in most where to go in portugal itineraries.

Portugal's Algarve region along the Atlantic ocean coast will literally take your breath away. Hidden coves, dramatic caves, beaches, water activities, golf and sun-soaked beaches top the list of most Portugal itineraries.

The Algarve: Spend 6 to 10 days

With six days in the Algarve region, you have time to explore your chosen Algarve home base (such as Portimao, Lagos, Alvor or Albufeira), see a few other top beach spots along the coast, and enjoy a couple days of glorious outdoor activities such as kayaking around the caves & cliffs or exploring hidden beach coves, dramatic cave formations, and secluded grottos by small boat.

For each additional day in the Algarve, there are many amazing spots for day tripping along the Algarve's slightly rugged west coast all the way to Cape Sagres and the Algarve's picturesque east coast to Tavira. (For exploring Algarve cities, my personal favorites are Lagos, Carvoeira, Alvor, Tavira, and Portimao). Another great discovery option is to hike or bike hilly trails a bit inland from the coast, or hike incredible coastal trails winding along some of the most famous caves, beach coves, grottos, and soaring cliffs.

1. Lisbon, Porto, and the Algarve each have their own airport (the Algarve's airport is in Faro). Regardless of which airport you choose, you can easily continue your journey from one home base to the next either by car, train, or bus – or a combination.
2. If you rent a car rather than fly, bus, or train between home bases, you will have more flexibility in your travel itinerary.
3. Overall, Portugal is an easy country to navigate whether by car, train, or bus. For negotiating within Lisbon and Porto, there are good metro, tram, and bus systems. In the Algarve, you can travel between local towns by car and train but the bus connections can be a bit challenging. If traveling by bus in the Algarve, it's a good idea to first visit either the TI (Travel Information office) or the main bus station to pick up some bus schedules for local bus transportation.
4. Choosing the 'Live Like a Local' itinerary often results in a more affordable budget, thanks to potential long stay discounts for lodging, such as condo-hotel or city apartment accommodations.
5. Lisbon, Porto, and the Algarve have some steep streets and wide stairs scattered around the more hilly neighborhoods. In Lisbon and Porto there are some elevators, if you want to avoid the hilly spots. Also, Lisbon and Porto have a good metro system for navigating the city and provide a work-around to some of the steeper areas. (Personally, I always stayed on the streets and took the stairs. That way, I wouldn't miss anything along the way – like the outdoor cafes lining the broad steps and the incredible city views.

Days 1-2: Lisbon

Day 3: Sintra

Day 4: Óbidos – Alcobaça

The picturesque town of Óbidos is small and easily navigated on an early morning stroll to see the whitewashed houses with their bright bands of yellow and blue. But the town's main attraction is walking the city walls which enclose the city. There are several entry and exit points so you can choose how much of it you wish to walk – just beware some sections of the wall have no railings or safety barriers.

With stunning views across the medieval village and the hills around, make sure to allow two to four hours to explore Óbidos Castle, the defence wall, as well as the Porta de Vila (the town's main gateway) and the Santa Maria Church.

After a late lunch in Óbidos, it's time to continue north towards our next stop of Alcobaça. The easy 39 kilometre drive from Obidos to Alcobaca takes a mere 30 minutes.

The small town of Alcobaça is dominated by the Alcobaça Monastery, one of the oldest monasteries in Portugal. With its stunning gothic architecture, orange-tree lined courtyard and tombs of Dom Pedro, it's no wonder the monastery is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Allow around two hours to visit the Monastery – and don't miss the Room of the Kings with its frieze of hand-painted azulejos representing historic moments in the town's narrative.

Day 5: Batalha – Grutas de Mira de Aire – Nazare

fter exploring Batalha in the morning, we now depart for the fascinating caves of Grutas de Mira de Aire, just a 30 minute drive from Batalha.

Having visited many caves around the world, I was prepared to be underwhelmed – but that turned out not to be the case at all! The caves are impressive, descending over 110 metres, through various colourfully lit chambers to culminate in a large lake-filled cavern.

The caves of Grutas de Mira de Aire

Particularly enjoyable for families and those travelling with children, the caves can only be visited with a guide. Check out opening times, tours and other practical information on their officialwebsite.

After such a long day, it's time to take the 50 minute drive (44 kilometres) west to the coastal town of Nazaré, our stop for the next 36 hours.

Day 6: Nazare

Situated on the coast, the traditional fishing village of Nazaré, is full of charm and character. Set around a large crescent-shaped bay, the town lies at the base of an enormous cliff overshadowing the entire area. With white sandy beaches, the summer months are full of sunseekers lounging under brightly coloured umbrellas, but being winter in Nazare, we had the beach all to ourselves.

Today is a day to stroll the beachfront promenade, where you'll find local fisherman drying their freshly-caught fish as their wives sit chatting nearby. Head up to the seawall in the late afternoon to watch the fisherman carry out

traditional “Arte Xávega” or drag net fishing and take a close-up view of the traditional fishing boats with their painted eyes helping to ward off bad weather.

Take the opportunity to explore the cliff-top village of O Sítio in Nazare

Don't miss the O Sítio district, perched on top of the cliffs overlooking the town of Nazaré for one of the most famous views of the Portuguese coast. Ride the historic Nazaré Funicular up the escarpment to discover the tiny Ermida da Memória Chapel perched precariously atop the cliff.

When evening arrives, take the opportunity to stroll the narrow streets to enjoy a delicious meal of fresh fish and seafood at one of the many fabulous restaurants. I would have to say that after Porto, Nazaré turns

Day 7: Mata Nacional do Buçaco – Costa Nova – Aveiro

The walled national park of the Buçaco Forest (currently on the tentative UNESCO world heritage list) is home to several short hikes as well as the unexpected Buçaco Palace hotel.

Located just a 15 minute drive (10 kilometres) from Costa Nova, you'll find the quaint town of Aveiro. Often referred to as the “Venice of Portugal”, Aveiro sits around a small network of canals running through the town. A highlight of Aveiro is taking a boat ride on one of the brightly painted traditional boats known as moliceiros.

Depending how much time you have, one of the best things to do in Aveiro is explore the canals on foot or by bicycle, taking in a stop at the traditional Aveiro Salt Farms. With plenty of interesting museums, art nouveau architecture and fresh seafood restaurants, Aveiro is worth spending a good few hours exploring.

Days 8-10: Porto.

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