**Portugal**

**Overview**

Like the Atlantic Ocean that laps upon its shores, Portugal throws up one or two surprises. A rich and varied land of vibrant cities and traditional villages, visitors are astounded by the country’s stunning beaches, rolling countryside and cornucopia of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which range from prehistoric drawings at Foz Coa to the 15th-century port of Angra do Heroísmo.

The country’s lively capital, Lisbon, and its vibrant northern sibling, Porto, are a joy to discover. They are cities where trams rattle up and down hills and along promenades, trundling past narrow side streets and majestic plazas, bohemian cafés and pumping nightclubs, eye-catching boutiques and restaurants both hip and homespun.

It’s not all about Lisbon and Porto, though. Sintra plays host to the stunning National Palace, a Moorish castle and the dramatic villa of Quinta da Regaleira, while the cities of Coimbra, Guimarães, Braga and Évora all boast beautifully preserved medieval quarters. Unusually, the latter is home to a chapel made exclusively of human bones, which is a tad creepy.

Travellers in search of a rural respite can wander around ancient vineyards, trek to stone villages perched in the mountains and take full advantage of the country’s warm and sunny weather on the magnificent southern shoreline. Drop in on sleepy sulphur spas and hop around the Pousadas – a collection of exquisite convents and monasteries, which have been lovingly converted into off-beat accommodation.

Imposing cliffs and secluded beaches line the Portuguese coast, a dazzling stage for all manner of outdoor adventure. Visitors can ride horses, surf waves, paddle rivers, dive shipwrecks, hike hills and explore Moorish castles and Roman ruins between rounds of golf. Madeira and Berlenga Islands beckon off shore, while the elusive remains of Atlantis await discovery in the Azores Archipelago.

Those seeking a more unique slice of Portuguese culture can discover the melancholic music of *fado* (Portugal's answer to the blues), study the captivating detail of Manueline architecture, get involved in a traditional festival or quaff port wine along the meandering Douro river.

**Getting There**

**Air**

Portugal's national airline is TAP Air Portugal (TP) ([www.flytap.com](http://www.flytap.com)) which runs direct flights from London and New York to Portugal, as well as from other UK cities. Alternative airlines flying to Portugal from the UK include British Airways ([www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)) and easyJet ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)). Prices tend to increase in July and August.

**Air Notes**

XXX

**Flight Times**

From London to Lisbon is 2 hours 30 minutes and from New York is 7 hours.

**Air Passes**

XXX

**Departure Tax**

None.

**Road**

The quickest route from the UK is via ferry from northern Spain. For the more adventurous, there is the option of taking the ferry or Channel Tunnel to France and driving down. Brittany Ferries (tel: 0871 244 0744, in the UK;[www.brittany-ferries.co.uk](http://www.brittany-ferries.co.uk)) runs from Plymouth to Santander, and from Portsmouth to Santander and Bilbao. Eurotunnel (tel: 0844 335 3535, in the UK; [www.eurotunnel.com](http://www.eurotunnel.com)) operates 24 hours per day through the Channel Tunnel between Folkestone in Kent (with direct access from the M20) and Calais in France.

Coach travel to Portugal from the UK and other countries is possible, although it can be a long, hot and laborious journey. Eurolines (tel: 0871 781 8178, in the UK; [www.eurolines.co.uk](http://www.eurolines.co.uk)) runs services to Portugal from Victoria coach station in London, but you’ll need to change in France and often in Spain too.

**Road Note**

XXX

**Rail**

Travelling from the UK, the quickest way is to travel by Eurostar through the Channel Tunnel to Paris (journey time - 2 hours 20 minutes) and, from there, to Portugal. The Sud-Expresso runs between Hendaye/Irun (linked to Paris by TGV) and Lisbon, offering first- and second-class seats, sleepers and a restaurant car. For further information and reservations, contact Eurostar (tel: 0843 218 6186, in the UK or +44 1233 617 575, outside the UK; [www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)), Rail Europe (tel: 0844 848 4064, in the UK; [www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)) or book the 20-hour trip from Paris to Lisbon directly with French railway SNCF (tel: +33 805 700 805, in France; [www.sncf.com](http://www.sncf.com)). Caminhos De Ferro Portugueses (tel: 808 208 208, in Portugal or (707) 201 280, outside Portugal; [www.cp.pt](http://www.cp.pt)) offers an international rail service to Vigo, Madrid and Paris.

**Rail Passes**

**InterRail:** Offers unlimited first or second-class travel in up to 30 European countries for European residents of over six months with two pass options. The Global Pass allows travel for 15 days, 22 days, one month, five days in 10 days or 10 days in 22 days across all countries. The One-Country Pass offers travel for three, four, six or eight days in one month in any of 25 European countries. Travel is not allowed in your country of residence. Travellers under 26 years receive a reduction. Children's tickets are reduced by about 50%. Supplements are required for some high-speed services, seat reservations and couchettes. Discounts are offered on Eurostar and some ferry routes. Available from Rail Europe ([www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)).

**Eurail:** The Eurail Global pass offers unlimited train travel in 22 European countries. Select, Regional (Portugal is grouped with Spain) and One-Country Eurail passes are also available. Tickets are valid for two months or three months and allow between three and 10 days’ travel in those periods. The passes cannot be sold to residents of Europe. Available from The Eurail Group ([www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com)).

**Rail Note**

Portugal is not noted for its train services like France and Spain, therefore be prepared to take it easy. A good book or people watching are the best way to avoid frustration.

**Water**

Main ports: Lisbon ([www.portodelisboa.com](http://www.portodelisboa.com)), Leixões (Porto) ([www.apdl.pt](http://www.apdl.pt)), Funchal (Madeira) ([www.portosdamadeira.com](http://www.portosdamadeira.com)) and Portimão (Algarve).

**Water Note**

XXX

**Cruise Ships**

Portugal is not known as a major cruise destination; nevertheless you can join cruises that head around the Mediterranean and up the coast which stop off in Lisbon.

**Ferry Operators**

There are no international ferries into Portugal, so if travelling from the UK, you’ll need to take the ferry to France or Spain and continue down to Portugal using other transport means.

**River Routes**

XXX

**Getting Around**

**Air**

TAP Air Portugal (TP) (www.flytap.com) runs services between Lisbon, Faro, Madeira, Porto Santo, Porto and the Azores. Charter flights are also available. The airline for the Azores is SATA (Sociedade Acoriana de Transportes Aereos) ([www.sata.pt](http://www.sata.pt)), which operates its Air Açores service between the various islands. Portugal is not a huge place, therefore it is probably wiser to drive between the mainland cities unless you want to fly between Porto and Faro at the opposite ends of the country.

**Air Notes**

XXX

**Air Passes**

XXX

**Departure Tax**

None.

**Road**

The routes between the main cities and towns along the coast are of sufficient standard. Some of the smaller roads further into the countryside can be rough and ready at times however, though you’ll get there eventually. Portuguese drivers themselves can be erratic too, so be watchful at all times.

Petrol stations generally open 0700-2000, although some are open 24 hours.

Travel by motorway is subject to a Via Verde electronic toll system in your car or the usual cash and card payments, according to distance covered and type of vehicle.

**Side Of Road**

Right

**Road Quality**

XXX

**Road Classification**

There are around 3,000km (1,860 miles) of autoestrada (motorways) in Portugal connecting the main inland cities and towns, which are designated with ‘A’ and sometimes ‘E’ codes. There are also nine itinerários principais (principal routes) known through the ‘IP’ code and 37 *itinerários complementares* (complementary routes) with the ‘IC’ code. *Estradas nacionais* (national routes) can be located using the ‘N’ code, *estradas regionais* (regional routes) through the ‘R’ code and *estradas municipais* (municipal routes) with the ‘M’ code for ease of use around the country.

**Car Hire**

Available from major and local providers in main towns and airports, with or without driver. You must be at least 21 to 25 to hire a car.

**Taxi**

Taxi drivers are not generally tipped, but passengers commonly round up the fare.

**Bike**

You can take bikes to Portugal by plane and train, but not by coach. The European cycling boom is well catered for in Portugal, with several operators offering tours if you prefer to cycle in a group. Bikely ([www.bikely.com](http://www.bikely.com)) provides a handy list of routes. Local bike hire is commonplace if you just want to ride for a morning or afternoon.

**Coach**

You can travel internally by bus using operators InterCentro (tel: (21) 330 1500; [www.intercentro.pt](http://www.intercentro.pt)) and its affiliates InterNorte (tel: (22) 605 2420) and InterSul (tel: (21) 330 1500).

**Regulations**

The minimum age for driving is 18. Cars may be imported for up to six months. Traffic signs are international. Drivers should dip headlights in built-up areas and use side lights when parking in badly lit areas. Children should not travel in the front seat. Seat belts should be worn. Warning triangles are compulsory. It is forbidden to carry cans of petrol in vehicles. Speed limits are 50kph (30mph) in built-up areas, 90kph (56mph) outside built-up areas and 120kph (70mph) on motorways.

**Breakdown Service**

Automóvel Club de Portugal (ACP) (tel: 707 509 510, within Portugal only; [www.acp.pt](http://www.acp.pt)) operates a 24-hour service.

**Documentation**

International Driving Permits or foreign driving licences are accepted. Third Party insurance is compulsory. Under the requirements of the Portuguese Road Code, those wishing to drive a car must possess a valid national/international driving licence, other official documentation with photograph, log book or rental contract and adequate car insurance. Failure to produce, on request to the authorities, any of the above will result in an on-the-spot cash fine. A Carnet de Passage is needed for a van.

**Road Note**

XXX

**Towns And Cities**

Metropolitano de Lisboa operates Lisbon's extensive underground system, while trams and Companhia Carris de Ferro de Lisboa (Carris) buses also provide efficient ways of getting around. The city's suburban rail lines, operated by Portuguese Railways, are useful for covering longer distances and Transtejo ferries ply the Tagus. Porto also has an underground (Metro de Porto), trams and buses. Taxis are readily available in both cities, much like the rest of the country.

**Rail**

town. Alfa Pendular trains offer the fastest rail link from Lisbon to the Algarve and from the capital to the north (Porto, Braga or Guimarães, with stops in Coimbra and Aveiro); the Intercidades (Intercity) service covers Lisbon, Porto, Alentejo and Lisbon to Algarve routes.

A vast network of regional, inter-regional and suburban trains covers the country. The tourist areas of Cascais and Sintra are connected to Lisbon by frequent express trains. High-speed Alfa trains run between Lisbon and Porto via Coimbra and Aveiro. Trains heading from Lisbon south depart from Sete Rios station, cross the Ponte 25 de Abril over the Tejo to Pragal on the south bank and continue to points beyond.

**Rail Passes**

**InterRail One-Country Pass:** Offers travel for three, four, six or eight days in one month within Portugal. Travel is not allowed in your country of residence. Travellers under 26 years receive a reduction. Children's tickets are reduced by about 50%. Supplements are required for some high-speed services, seat reservations and couchettes. Discounts are offered on Eurostar and some ferry routes. Available from Rail Europe (tel: 0844 848 4064, in the UK; [www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)).

Tourist tickets (***Bilhetes turísticos***): Valid for seven, 14 or 21 consecutive days and available from main railway stations.

**Cheap fares:** Children under 12 and senior citizens get discount fares of 50%, group travel (10 or more people) by 20%, return tickets by 10% and youth travel (Cartão Jovem or Euro[www.cp.pt](http://www.cp.pt)) for current promotions.

**Rail Note**

XXX

**Water**

Naviera Armas Ferries (+34 928 300 600, in Spain; [www.navieraarmas.com](http://www.navieraarmas.com)) runs ferries from Portimão to Funchal, Madeira. Several tour operators run cruises along the spectacular River Douro.

**Water Note**

XXX

**Business**

**Business Etiquette**

Business people are expected to dress smartly and English is widely spoken in business circles, although when visiting a small family business it is best to check in advance. When addressing someone, it is customary to use their title followed by their full name. Regardless of their degree, university graduates are usually referred to as 'Doctor’ and co-workers often refer to each other as 'colleague'. Business cards are only exchanged by senior members of a company. It can be considered rude to write anything official in red ink. Business socialising focuses on eating and drinking in bars and restaurants. July and August are best avoided as many are on holiday.

**Office Hours**

Mon-Fri 0900-1300 and 1500-1900.

**Economy**

Portugal was traditionally an agrarian economy, but since it joined the EU in 1986 its industrial and service sectors have grown considerably by comparison. Agriculture still employs around 10% of the workforce (unusually high by Western European standards) and contributes around 8% of GDP, producing wheat, maize, potatoes, tomatoes, olives, grapes, fish and meat and dairy products. The manufacturing sector is dominated by the textile, footwear and machinery industries.

Portugal joined the Eurozone upon its inauguration in 1999. Unfortunately, since then, the economy has struggled. It is expected to contract further in 2012 amid spending cuts to comply with a €78 billion bailout from the EU and the International Monetary Fund. Unemployment stands at around 12.3%, while inflation is about 3%.

**GDP**

US$236.2 billion (2010).

**Main Exports**

Clothing and footwear, machinery, chemicals and cork.

**Main Imports**

Machinery/transport equipment, chemicals, petroleum, leather and textiles.

**Main Trading Partners**

Spain, Germany, France, UK and Angola.

**Sightseeing**

**Parque das Nações**

This museum ([www.parquedasnacoes.pt](http://www.parquedasnacoes.pt/)) in Lisbon houses a weird and wondrous collection of public art.

**Torre de Belém**

The striking Torre de Belém is near the fabled spot where Vasco da Gama set sail during the Age of Discoveries. Other Belém attractions include the glorious Jerónimos Monastery ([www.mosteirojeronimos.pt](http://www.mosteirojeronimos.pt)).

**Sintra**

A UNESCO World Heritage site, Sintra is an idyllic town surrounded by wooded hillsides. Don't miss the former summer residence of the Portuguese royal family and the beautiful Monserrate gardens.

**Cabo de São Vicente**

The cliff top heights of Cabo de São Vicente outside of Sagres are Europe's southwestern-most point. Lying near some spectacularly rugged and windswept beaches, the views are dramatic.

**Évora**

Évora is a virtual museum of a town that reached its golden age in the 15th century. The walled old centre contains a Roman temple, a looming cathedral and picturesque plazas for taking in the architectural splendour.

**Mosteiro de Santa Maria**

The Mosteiro de Santa Maria (Monastery of Batalha) is a gothic Manueline masterpiece built to commemorate the 1385 victory over Spain in the Battle of Aljubarrota. Its elaborately carved exterior is one of the icons of Portugal.

**Braga's baroque churches**

Portugal's spiritual heart, Braga is a lively little city with an exquisite assortment of baroque churches, a sprawling cathedral and Roman ruins. It hosts traditional religious festivals throughout the year, including Portugal's most colourful Holy Week.

**Knights Templar castle**

The Knights Templar castle in Tomar contains intriguing medieval relics. The Convent of the Order of Christ at the heart of the castle complex is one of Portugal's premier artistic and historical structures.

**Ribeira**

This UNESCO World Heritage site in Porto has history lurking round every corner, from its neo classical Stock Exchange Palace to its romanesque-gothic Cathedral, with spectacular views along the vibrant waterfront of Cais da Ribeira ([www.portoturismo.pt](http://www.portoturismo.pt/)).

**Guimarães**

The medieval capital of Guimarães ([www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com/)) was the birthplace of the Portuguese nation. Looming above its narrow, cobbled lanes lie castle ruins and the former palace of the Dukes of Bragança.

**Côa Valley Archaeological Park**

The Côa Valley Archaeological Park ([www.igespar.pt/en/patrimonio/mundial/portugal/117](http://www.igespar.pt/en/patrimonio/mundial/portugal/117/)) is home to a magnificent collection of rock carvings from the Upper Palaeolithic period (22,000-10,000BC). The UNESCO World Heritage site only narrowly escaped destruction during a proposed dam-building project.

**Coimbra**

This charming town is home to Portugal's oldest and most venerated university, full of Portuguese culture. It is set amid a splendid old town of historic churches and medieval alleyways, with the buzz of student life all around.

**Tavira**

Tavira is one of the Algarve's oldest and most unspoiled towns. Constructed on the banks of the River Gilhão, the picturesque settlement a smattering of gothic and Renaissance churches, a seven-arched Roman bridge, old fortifications and a pristine island beach.

**Alfama**

Head to the Alfama district for a maze-like district of steep staircases, hidden churches and traditional taverns with an old tram that still rattles through the streets.

**Peneda-Gerês**

Portugal's only national park, Peneda-Gerês ([www.visitportugal.com/peneda-geres](http://www.visitportugal.com/NR/exeres/8F70E7E1-D757-44C1-BE5C-A4D74493C228,frameless.htm)), is 70,000 hectares (170,000 acres) of dramatic mountain scenery, old stone villages and unrivalled adventure for outdoor enthusiasts.

**Watersports**

Have a go at scuba-diving, surfing, windsurfing or kitesurfing at one of the watersports centres dotted along the coast. Contact the Portuguese Federation for Underwater Activities ([www.fpas.pt](http://www.fpas.pt/)) for diving information.

**Horse riding**

Portugal has scores of riding centres. Hit the beach with a Lusitano thoroughbred to canter along the sand in the Atlantic surf, or if you're an experienced rider, try taking dressage lessons in Estremadura.

**Festivals**

Traditional festivals with dancing, drinking and feasting, occur throughout the year. Top picks include Lisbon's festival of St Anthony (12 and 13 June) and Braga's festival of St John (23 and 24 June).

**Fado music**

The melancholic Fado music, Portugal's best-known traditional musical form, can be heard at atmospheric bars and clubs in Lisbon or Coimbra.

**Vila Nova de Gaia**

The picturesque port houses of Vila Nova de Gaia across the river from Porto offer a taste of the country's best port wines.

**Douro Valley**

Enjoy the splendid vineyards and picturesque river of this UNESCO World Heritage site with a taste-busting wine tour or delightful river cruise. It is one of the most underrated tourist trips you will find in Europe and one to treasure forever.

**Go golfing**

Portugal has a great selection of popular championship golf courses in the Algarve and around Estoril, but Quinta da Lago is arguably the pick of the bunch.

**Estoril racetrack**

Petrolheads may want to check out the world-famous Estoril racetrack ([www.circuito-estoril.pt](http://www.circuito-estoril.pt/)), which is located a short distance from Lisbon on Portugal's Atlantic coast. Visitors can go along to watch car or motorcycle races.

**Attractions**

**Attraction**

XXX

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

XXX

**Website**

XXX

**Opening Times**

XXX

**Admission Fees**

XXX

**Disabled Access**

XXX

**UNESCO**

XXX

**Shopping**

Just like any self-respecting tourist destination, Portugal has a vibrant shopping scene to take advantage of the native enterprise. Thanks to the fascinating ethnic mix inherent in the country, you can pick up Arraiolos carpets, dazzling jewels and Madeira embroideries. There is a thriving lace industry in Vila do Conde outside Porto, with Coimbra playing host to delightful blue and white pottery.

Should you have a penchant for metal, head down to the Algarve to buy enchanting lanterns or outdoor furniture. The jewel in this country’s crown though is the leather industry, which centres around Lisbon for the most part.

If you want to pick up local leather goods a bit more cheaply than in the capital, then you can often buy them for 20% less outside Lisbon, but beware of nasty knock-offs. Some of the smaller cities and larger towns have thriving industries, which use medieval techniques passed down through generations to produce goods for tourists.

**Shopping Hours**

Large shopping malls are open daily 0900-2300 and often provide a welcome respite from the hot summer sun. Other than that, shops are open Mon-Fri 0900-1900 and Sat 0900-1300.

**Note**

Visitors who live outside the EU can reclaim the sales tax of 23% which is included in prices (minimum spend per shop €61.35). Travellers wishing to take advantage of this must ask for a tax free form at the time of purchase (available at participating stores only). This must be stamped by customs and a refund claimed before passing through passport control. See Global Blue ([www.global-blue.com](http://www.global-blue.com)) for details.

**Nightlife**

Not surprisingly in a country that dances to a different tune, night-time is when Portugal comes alive. Up and down the land you can wander into places that showcase native music from down the years or contemporary beats that will get your feet tapping, not to mention the other cultural treats on offer until dawn.

First take time to chat or people-watch at the lovely bars or cafés, whether they overlook the sea or town square, before having a sumptuous dinner in peace or to the sound of the traditional fado. Move on to your entertainment of choice at the broad selection of nightclubs, theatres, cinemas and operas before you head to Espinho, Estoril, Figueira da Foz or Monte Gordo’s casinos to cap off an evening with a cheeky punt.

Should you prefer a street parade, June is your best bet to soak up the open-air festivities, which celebrate local patron saints. With 800km (500 miles) of coastline to visit, there is also the chance to take it a notch down by watching the sunset with a glass or knife and fork in your hand at the fantastic array of beachside bars and restaurants.

Fling off your flip-flops or sandals at the nightclubs too. Specific gems standing out from the crowd include taking a stroll down the Bairro Alto in Lisbon ahead of some classic DJ sets at the Docas on the banks of the River Tagus. Further north in Porto, seek out the Ribeira district over the River Douro for fun and frolics before carrying on to Matosinhos and Vila Nova de Gaia with your dancing shoes. Elsewhere in Portugal, you can join the lively student population in Braga, Coimbra and Evora to party the night away.

**Events**

**Madeira Wine Festival**

The Madeira Wine Festival starts in Funchal with the European Folklore Week and continues in Câmara de Lobos with the live grape harvest. Festival goers enjoy the picking of the grapes, the pickers’ parade, treading of the grapes and Madeirean folk traditions.

**Theme**

Culture

Entertainment

Exhibitions

Food & Drink

**Start Date**

01 Sep 2013

**End Date**

08 Sep 2013

**TBC**

No

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Madeira Islands - Funchal

**Thoroughfare**

Funchal

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Funchal

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.visitmadeira.pt/festasdovinhomadeira/?lang=en

**Frequency Period**

XXX

**Frequency Number**

XXX

**Cost**

XXX

**Importance**

High

**Festival del Mar**

La Asociación de Pescadores de Cascais organiza este interesante espectáculo con tema marinero, como no podía ser menos. Juegos, comida, música, baile y fuegos artificiales. No se puede pedir más.

**Theme**

Culture

**Start Date**

01 Aug 2015

**End Date**

31 Aug 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

XXX

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Cascais

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Gratis

**Importance**

High

**Praia Grande Beach Games**

A great way to stay in shape and enjoy the beautiful beach at Praia Grande, during the summer months beachgoers are invited to participate or watch a series of beach games. Games are open to men and women, young and old, and include such classic beach contests as boules and volley ball; Praia Grande is also great for a number of different watersports. And when all the activities get too much, retire to the shade and tranquillity of the popular beach side cafe bars.

**Theme**

XXX

**Start Date**

01 Jun 2015

**End Date**

31 Aug 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

The games are organised during the summer months.

**Venue Name**

Praia Grande.

**Thoroughfare**

Pc da Republica, 23

**Neighborhood**

2710-616

**Locality**

Sintra

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Many events are free.

**Importance**

Low

**Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima**

Each year thousands of religious pilgrims travel to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima on the 12 and 13 May. The pilgrimage celebrates the date when in 1917 it is said that apparitions of the Virgin Mary (also known as Fatima in Portugal) appeared before three young shepherds on 13 May. Visitors can join in the ceremonies including the night time Candles Procession which sees thousands of visitors carry lighted candles to the site.

**Theme**

XXX

**Start Date**

12 May 2016

**End Date**

13 May 2016

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Various venues in and around Fatima.

**Thoroughfare**

Various locations including the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Fatima

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**Madeira Film Festival**

The Madeira Film Festival, one of Europe’s most exclusive and independent film events, will showcase feature, short and documentary films by directors from around the world. will start on a high with a concert by American Jazz sensation Kyle Eastwood, followed by an opening party at Reid’s Palace. During the consecutive days guests will be able to participate in a series of workshops and film events with highlights including screenings in the hotel’s lush gardens and a celebration of fashion and cinema, with the hotel terrace providing the catwalk.

**Theme**

Theatre & Film

**Start Date**

02 May 2012

**End Date**

06 May 2012

**TBC**

No

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Reid’s Palace

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

XXX

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

XXX

**Importance**

XXX

**Atlantic Festival**

The Atlantic Festival marks the beginning of the summer season in Madeira. This year there will be pyromusical shows, the Madeira Music Festival and the Regional Arts Week. The pyromusical shows combine fireworks and music, and will be held on four consecutive Saturdays in June at 10:30pm at the pier outside the Pontinha. This will be the second time that the Regional Arts Week will be included in the Atlantic Festival.

**Theme**

Art & Literature

Culture

Entertainment

Music

Spectacle

**Start Date**

08 Jun 2013

**End Date**

29 Jun 2013

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Madeira Islands - Funchal

**Thoroughfare**

Funchal

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Funchal

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.visitmadeira.pt/festivaldoatlantico/?lang=en

**Frequency Period**

XXX

**Frequency Number**

XXX

**Cost**

XXX

**Importance**

Medium

**Carnaval**

The festival builds up in the period leading up to Lent to the much-anticipated climax of entrudo. Lisbon’s Parque Nações truly comes alive from mid-afternoon through to the evening with street parades, theatre and other entertainment. Some of the costumes, floats and elaborate masks have to be seen to be believed.

**Theme**

XXX

**Start Date**

21 Feb 2016

**End Date**

21 Feb 2016

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Lisbon, Loulé, Nazaré, Ovar, Viana do Castelo and Funchal.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Medium

**International Hot Air Balloon Festival**

Witness these wonders from early morning to early evening, by which time the balloons have travelled from town to town down the country. Teams from different continents take part, culminating in the final day that sparks a huge party at the finish line.

**Theme**

XXX

**Start Date**

01 Nov 2015

**End Date**

30 Nov 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Route varies from year to year.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**Easter**

This is one of the highlights of the religious calendar across the country. Braga hosts the biggest celebration, with Holy Week processions featuring marchers holding torches and charming floats. These lead to the parish church where flowers are laid on the floor for the priest to walk over on Easter Sunday. Fireworks and folk dancing also take place.

**Theme**

XXX

**Start Date**

01 Apr 2016

**End Date**

07 Apr 2016

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Throughout Portugal.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

XXX

**Super Bock Super Rock**

Not exactly known as a haven for rock music fans, Portugal hosts this fun festival bringing in chart and critical favourites from all over the world to play three days of excellent music. The concerts take place in Sesimbra, just south of Lisbon, and there are plenty of other diversions to keep you occupied.

**Theme**

Music

**Start Date**

01 Jul 2015

**End Date**

31 Jul 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Sesimbra.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Sesimbra

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Setubal

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.superbocksuperrock.pt

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

€80 for three days.

**Importance**

Low

**Fatima Pilgrimage**

On 13 May 1917 the Virgin Mary made her first visit to three shepherd children. Fatima was the place, and now 4 million Roman Catholics make the pilgrimage here each year. White handkerchiefs are waved to bid farewell to the Virgin Mary after she has made her way through the town in a candlelit procession. Book your accommodation well in advance.

**Theme**

Religion

**Start Date**

11 May 2016

**End Date**

13 May 2016

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Fatima.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

Fátima

**Locality**

Ourém Municipality

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Santarem

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.santuario-fatima.pt

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**National Agricultural Fair**

For nine days in June, you can take in the best countryside entertainment, be it bull fighting, bull running or folk dancing.

**Theme**

Culture

**Start Date**

02 Jun 2016

**End Date**

10 Jun 2016

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Centro Nacional de Exposições, Santarém.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Santarem

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Santarem

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.cnema.pt

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**Sintra Festival**

Piano lovers should make this an essential stop on their trip; the summer programme is made up entirely of a piano repertoire from the Romantic period. Concerts take place in churches, country estates, palaces and parks to amazing effect.

**Theme**

Music

**Start Date**

01 Jun 2015

**End Date**

31 Jul 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Sintra.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Sintra

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.festivaldesintra.pt

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Prices vary; some concerts are free.

**Importance**

Medium

**Festival of the Sea**

The Fishermen’s Association in Cascais puts on a great spectacle with young fishermen turning on the charm for the ladies before facing bulls running rampant down the beach in order to win the prize of dried codfish. Fireworks and music round it off.

**Theme**

Dance

**Start Date**

01 Aug 2015

**End Date**

31 Aug 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Cascais.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Cascais

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**Tall Ships Races - Lisbon Leg**

The capital welcomes around 100 captivating sailing boats at the end of July as part of the Tall Ships Races. In 2012, the races begin in St Malo, France in early July, finishing at Port Dublin, Ireland in late August. Miss it at your cost.

**Theme**

Sport

**Start Date**

19 Jul 2015

**End Date**

22 Jul 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Lisbon.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://sailtraininginternational.org

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Low

**All Souls' Day (Dia de Finados)**

Portuguese families gather together all day and night to mourn their dearly departed with masses, processions and flowers laid at graves.

**Theme**

Culture

**Start Date**

01 Nov 2015

**End Date**

01 Nov 2015

**TBC**

Yes

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Throughout Portugal.

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

Lisbon

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

XXX

**Frequency Period**

yearly

**Frequency Number**

1

**Cost**

Free.

**Importance**

Medium

**Madeira Nature Festival**

The third annual Madeira Nature Festival offers a week of land, air and sea activities for all ages to promote the islands' rich natural heritage.

**Theme**

Culture

Kids' Stuff

Nature & Wildlife

Sport

**Start Date**

29 Sep 2013

**End Date**

06 Oct 2013

**TBC**

No

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Madeira Islands - Funchal

**Thoroughfare**

Funchal

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Funchal

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.visitmadeira.pt/madeiranaturefestival/index.php?id=1&lang=en

**Frequency Period**

XXX

**Frequency Number**

XXX

**Cost**

XXX

**Importance**

Medium

**Madeira Christmas and New Year Festivities**

The arrival of decorative lights and multi-coloured flowers in the streets of Funchal's city centre every December marks the beginning of Christmas and New Year festitivies. These commemorations consist of cultural, religious and artistic programmes that take place throughout the entire month of December and end with the celebration of the Twelfth Night. There are performances by philharmonic bands and folklore groups and Christmas exhibitions that depict authentic Madeirean traditions. At the beginning of December Madeireans set up the “lapinha” (crib) and prepare various delicacies, such as honey cake, corn bread, homemade liqueurs and a famous dish of pork in wine and garlic. Other traditions to experience are the celebration of the "Childbirth Masses" and the "Market Night" on 23 December. New Yew Year festivities include a fireworks show that was officially recognized by the Guinness World Records in 2006 as the greatest display of fireworks in the world.

**Theme**

Culture

Entertainment

Exhibitions

Food & Drink

Music

Religion

Spectacle

**Start Date**

01 Dec 2013

**End Date**

06 Jan 2014

**TBC**

No

**Date Description**

XXX

**Venue Name**

Madeira Islands - Funchal

**Thoroughfare**

Funchal

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Funchal

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Portugal

**Website**

http://www.visitmadeira.pt/fimdoano/index.php?lang=en

**Frequency Period**

XXX

**Frequency Number**

XXX

**Cost**

XXX

**Importance**

Medium

**Food and Drink**

**Introduction**

Portuguese cooking is not too well known in other parts of Europe, or the world for that matter; nevertheless it is definitely worth exploring properly. Seafood is a regular staple, especially the salt cod that is very much a love it or hate it choice. It forms the base of hundreds of recipes and you should try it at least once. Anchovy, bass, clams, mussels, salmon, sea bream, sole and swordfish are easier on the palate and also popular.

Brazilian spice peri-peri is widely used to flavour chicken and shrimp, while Goan curry spices also add extra flavour to a variety of dishes and broths eaten widely. Meat lovers can gorge on *espetada* (grilled skewers of beef with garlic), *leitão* (suckling pig) and *cozido à portuguesa*, which mixes beef, pork, sausage and vegetables in a delicious dish. Another traditional delicacy is *porco à alentejana* (pork and clams Alentejo-style).

Sweets such as chocolate mousse, *arroz doce* (lemon and cinnamon-flavoured rice pudding), together with classic egg-yolk and sugar-based cakes, can be seen on tables up and down the country to finish off a superb meal. As you would in many other smaller European countries, take the time to seek out local shops, bars and restaurants to ask what the locals eat and drink, then dig in!

**Specialities**

There are some fascinating local dishes dotted throughout the country, which are either variations on culinary favourites or unique creations.

• *Bacalhau á bràs* (scrambled eggs with salted cod, potatoes and onions; popular in Estremadura).  
• *Lulas recheadas à lisbonense* (stuffed squid; a Lisbon speciality).  
• *Tripa à moda do Porto* (tripe; available for those of a meaty disposition in Porto).   
• *Queijadas de Sintra* (cheese tart found in Sintra).   
• *Açorda de mariscos* (shrimp stew cooked in a bread bowl).  
*• Caldo verde* (green soup made with finely shredded green kale leaves in broth).   
• *Pastéis de nata* (traditional custard-filled tarts typical of Lisbon).

**Things To Know**

Table service is normal. There are no licensing hours.

**Tipping**

More often than not, a service charge is not added to hotel and restaurant bills, so tip around 10 to 15% if you are satisfied with your experience. A couple of Euros for hotel maids and porters is considered appropriate. Round up your taxi fare to the nearest five or 10 Euros if it isn't far off the full fare should you not wish to hand over 10%. Service charge is more casual in the less touristy north than the busy south.

**Regional Drinks**

A trip to Portugal would not be complete without sampling some of the wonderful drinks native to certain regions.

• Portugal’s most famous tipple is port. Porto, naturally, can boast a wide selection, along with the Douro valley to the east of the city.  
• Wine is also a forte in this part of the world. Vinho Verde from Minho in the north together with Vinho do Dão and Vinho da Bairrada stand out from the usual favourites.  
• *Aguardente* (a sugar cane based drink).  
• Beirão and Ginjinha (or Ginja) are distinctly unique liqueurs to cap off an excellent meal.

**Drinking Age**

The legal age to buy and drink alcohol is 16, not 18 as is often reported.

**History**

Portugal has a rich and varied history that dates back to the Middle Ages. Along with the British, Dutch, French and Spanish, it was hugely influential thanks to its strong seafaring capabilities. Portugal built up a vast empire at one point across the world, but its competitors gradually eroded its hold on the slave and spice markets.

Disastrous campaigns at the Battle of Alcácer Quibir in 1578, for example, did not help matters, nor did the 1755 earthquake, Napoleonic occupation and loss of colony Brazil. Furthermore, between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries, nearly 2 million people left Portugal’s shores for North and South America.

The monarchy ended in 1910, with the rest of the 20th century notable for corruption, bankruptcy, military coups and dictators. Portugal entered the European Union (then Community) in 1986, which brought some stability.

The Socialist Party headed by Prime Minister José Sócrates, a former environment minister, was elected into power in 2005 but struggled to spark growth or check unemployment. Sócrates’ government resigned in 2011 and was replaced by a centre-right coalition led by Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho. The current leadership is focusing on cutting spending and raising taxes to meet the terms of a €78 billion aid plan from the EU and the International Monetary Fund, as the country’s borrowing costs have surged.

Portugal has been at the forefront of renewable energy development in Europe in recent years, with roughly 20% of its energy coming from renewable sources.

**Data**

**Calling Code**

+351

**Area**

92345

**Population**

10799270

**Population Density**

117

**Population Year**

2013

**General**

**Area**

92,345 sq km (35,655 sq miles).

**Population**

10.6 million (2013).

**Population Density**

116.9 per sq km.

**Capital**

Lisbon.

**Geography**

Portugal juts out into the Atlantic in the far southwest of Europe otherwise known as the Iberian Peninsula. The only country it shares a border with is neighbouring Spain to the north and the east, with the Atlantic Ocean hugging its 800km (500-mile) coastline to the south and west.

The country also comprises the Portuguese islands of the Azores and Madeira. The Azores lie around 1,100km (700 miles) west of Lisbon, while Madeira sits just north of the Canary Islands to the west of Morocco.

Outside the large urban areas, the countryside is a great deal more rural and sparse than in many other European countries. Portugal is crossed by several rivers which have their origin in Spain. These flow from east to west out into the Atlantic or north to south, the main rivers being the Minho and Douro in the north, and the Tagus and Guadiana in the south.

Portugal possesses a high plain of varying height intersected by deep valleys. The north of the country is rugged, mountainous and dotted with vineyards. The high northern point of the Serra da Estrela proves a popular area for skiing, while Serra de São Mamede further south on the Spanish border is a hiking favourite.

After the stunning slopes of the central regions, the vast plains of the Alentejo region stretch south of Lisbon, with a range of mountains dividing the Alentejo from the Algarve, whose wide sandy beaches and attractive bays run along the south coast. Approximately half the country is used for agriculture.

The capital, Lisbon, sits about two-thirds down the west coast. Porto is also situated on the coast in the northwest of the country. Smaller Faro nestles on the southern end of the country, its airport a busy hub for Algarve sunseekers and swathes of golfers looking for year-round sun. Braga, Coimbra and Setubal are also near the coast and rivers.

**Government**

Republic since 1910.

**Head Of State**

President Anibal Cavaco Silva since 2006.

**Head Of Government**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho since 2011.

**Electricity**

230 volts AC, 50Hz. Continental two-pin plugs are in use.

**Note**

XXX

**Travel Advice**

Last updated: 10 June 2015

The travel advice summary below is provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK. 'We' refers to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. For their full travel advice, visit [*www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice*](http://www.worldtravelguide.net/e/www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).Crime

Crime rates are low but pickpocketing, handbag snatching and theft from cars and holiday properties are common in major tourist areas and can be accompanied by violence. Be alert, keep sight of your belongings at all times and beware of thieves using distraction techniques. Be especially vigilant on public transport (particularly the popular numbers 16 and 28 trams in Lisbon) and at busy railway and underground stations and crowded bus and tram stops.

Do not carry all your valuables together in handbags or pockets. Leave spare cash and valuables in a safe place. Avoid leaving items in an unattended car, even for a short period; if you have no alternative, hide them in the boot before you reach your destination. Remember that foreign-registered and hire cars are often targeted by thieves.

Report the loss or theft of your passport immediately to the local police and obtain a police report. You will need the report for insurance purposes and to obtain a replacement travel document from the British Consulate.

Make sure your holiday accommodation has adequate security. Lock all doors and windows at night and when you go out. If you’re worried about security at your accommodation, speak to your tour operator or the owner.  Familiarise yourself with the [contact details of the local police.](http://www.psp.pt/Pages/defaultPSP.aspx)

Sexual assaults are rare, but you should be alert to the possible use of ‘date rape’ and other drugs, including ‘GHB’ and liquid ecstasy. Buy your own drinks and keep sight of them at all times to make sure they aren’t spiked.  If you are going to drink, know your limit and remember that drinks served in bars overseas are often much stronger than those in the UK. Avoid splitting up from your friends, and don’t go off with people you don’t know.Road travel

Driving is on the right. If you hire a car, make sure the vehicle insurance is fully comprehensive and check how you will pay for any toll charges.

As a tourist, you can bring your own vehicle to Portugal for a maximum of 183 days in any 12-month period. You must not use your vehicle for any other purpose than tourism or loan it to anyone else during that time. If you intend to stay longer, you must apply to the Portuguese Customs authority to have the car legally imported. You will be fined if you leave the country without your car.

In 2013 there were 650 road deaths in Portugal ([source: Department for Transport](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359311/rrcgb-2013.pdf)). This equates to 6.2 road deaths per 100,000 of population and compares to the UK average of 2.8 road deaths per 100,000 of population in 2013.

See the [European Commission](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm),[AA](http://www.theaa.com/motoring_advice/overseas/general_advice.html) and [RAC](http://www.rac.co.uk/travel/driving-abroad/countries/portugal/) guides on driving in Portugal.Local travel - Madeira

Walking the levadas (ancient irrigation channels) can be challenging. Choose only the ones that are suited to your own standard of fitness and experience. Be prepared for narrow, uneven paths and heights. Wear suitable clothing and walking boots. Leave details of where you are going with your hotel reception and take your mobile telephone with you. Better still, join a group of walkers and go with a guide. Take extra care if it has rained as the ground may be slippery and unstable.

Forest fires have destroyed some of the mountain areas where walking and other tourist activity is popular. Check with your tour guide or local organiser that it is safe to visit before setting off.

Further information about road and walkway closures and access restrictions can be found on the website of the [Civil Protection Authority](http://www.procivmadeira.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=274&Itemid=213&lang=en) and the [Regional Forestry Commission](http://www.sra.pt/drf/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=444&Itemid=152&lang=en)Beaches and swimming

Deaths by drowning occur every year on Portuguese beaches and in swimming pools. The Maritime Police have the authority to fine bathers who disobey the lifeguard’s warning flags.

Take warning flags on beaches seriously. The red flag indicates danger: never enter the water when the red flag is flying. If there is a yellow flag, you may paddle at the water’s edge, but not swim. The green flag indicates that it is safe to swim, and the chequered flag means that the beach is temporarily unmanned. Follow local advice if jellyfish are present.

Take care when walking along unmanned beaches close to the water’s edge as some waves can be of an unpredictable size and come in further than expected on to the beach with strong undertows.

Don’t swim at beaches that link to/from rivers, or those without lifeguards. Don’t dive into unknown water as hidden rocks or shallow depths can cause serious injury or death.

Look out for signs warning of cliff erosion. Falling rocks are a hazard, particularly in the Algarve, and the authorities can fine those who ignore warning signs.

**Passport Visa**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Passport Required** | **Return Ticket Required** | **Visa Required** |
| Other EU | 1 | No | No |
| USA | Yes | No | No |
| Canadian | Yes | No | No |
| Australian | Yes | No | No |
| British | Yes | No | No |

**Table Note**

XXX

**Passports**

A passport valid for three months beyond the length of stay and issued within the past 10 years is required by all nationals listed in the chart above except (**1**) EU nationals holding a passport or national ID card which is valid for the duration of stay.

If travelling from one border-free Schengen country to another however, EU nationals are not required to show a passport or national ID card. It is still recommended that you travel with your passport or ID card to prove your identity if necessary though. Note that Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania and the UK are not part of the Schengen area, so a passport or ID card is required if travelling to/from these countries.

EU nationals are not required to possess a return ticket or show sufficient funds.

**Passport Note**

XXX

**Visas**

Visas for Portugal are not required by all nationals referred to in the chart above. Nationals of Australia, Canada and the USA can stay for up to 90 days without a visa. EU nationals can stay for an unlimited period, but must register with the local authorities after three months.

**Visa Note**

Nationals not referred to in the chart are advised to contact the embassy/consulate to check visa requirements for Portugal.

**Types And Cost**

Schengen visa: €60; temporary stay visa: €75 (usually issued for study, medical or work purposes).

**Validity**

Schengen visa: 90 days within a six-month period; temporary stay visa: multiple entries within a four-month period.

**Transit**

Australian, Canadian, US and EU passport holders do not require transit visas.

**Application To**

In person at the consular section of their nearest Portuguese Embassy. Some embassies (including London) also accept online applications; see [www.secomunidades.pt/vistos](http://www.secomunidades.pt/vistos) for further information.

**Schengen Visas**

Portugal is currently part of the Schengen visa scheme.

**Temporary Residence**

Registration certificates issued to visitors from EU countries who wish to stay for longer than three months are valid indefinitely. Non-EU residents planning on staying longer than three months must apply for temporary residence permits.

**Working Days**

Allow up to 15 days for visa processing. Applications from some nationalities may take up to two months however.

**Sufficient Funds**

Visitors requiring a Schengen visa must prove sufficient funds to cover their stay.

**Entry Documents**

XXX

**Extension Of Stay**

Schengen visa holders can only extend their stay in exceptional circumstances such as *force majeure* or for humanitarian reasons.

**Entry With Children**

XXX

**Entry Restrictions**

Non-EU passport holders can stay within the Schengen zone for up to 90 days within a 180-day period. After their 90-day stay, they cannot return to these countries for at least another 90 days.

**Entry With Pets**

Pets travelling to Portugal from other EU countries need a microchip for identification, an EU pet passport, and stamp to prove they have been vaccinated against rabies (within between four weeks and one year of date of entry into Portugal). Pets arriving from outside the EU need a health certificate completed by a vet in either Portuguese or English.

**Healthcare**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Special Precautions** |
| Yellow Fever | Sometimes\* |
| Typhoid | No |
| Tetanus | Yes |
| Rabies | No |
| Malaria | No |
| Hepatitis A | Sometimes |
| Diphtheria | No |

**Table Note**

\*A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers over one year of age if coming from infected areas and arriving in the Azores or Madeira Islands. No certificate is required from passengers transiting through Funchal, Porto Santo and Santa Maria.

**Healthcare**

If suddenly taken ill or involved in an accident during a visit to an EEA country or Switzerland, free or reduced-cost necessary treatment is available for European travellers - in most cases on production of a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This does not cover you for medical repatriation or ongoing treatment however, so you should also purchase travel insurance; you’ll need extra cover if you’re planning on taking part in any extreme sports. Non-EEA nationals are covered in Portugal, but again, comprehensive insurance is advised. While there are full state-provided health facilities, private practices are allowed to co-exist. The emergency telephone number is 112.

**Food And Drink**

You can drink tap water in major cities and towns, although you should be cautious in small villages. Thankfully, bottled water is widely available but if it’s not then any questionable water should be boiled for five minutes or treated with iodine. Salads and fruit are safe to eat anywhere in Portugal. Take care with shellfish such as cooked mussels that have not opened properly and avoid undercooked meat, particularly minced meat. Ice cream is fine, unless it has been melted and refrozen.

**Other Risks**

You will be treated on the same basis as a Portuguese resident, but you might have to make a patient contribution to the cost of your care. If you have to make such a payment, you may be able to seek reimbursement for this cost when you are back in the UK if you are not able to do so in Portugal. It is important that you ensure you are treated by a state healthcare provider, as you will not be covered for private healthcare.

You should be particularly careful if the healthcare arrangements have been made by a hotel or travel representative. There are state health centres throughout the country (generally open from 0800 to 2000) where you can receive treatment for minor ailments and injuries, and major emergency hospitals in large towns which remain open throughout the night.

Even though pharmacies are well stocked, take a decent supply of medication with you, and be aware pharmacies are usually closed for two hours over lunchtime. Carry a legible prescription with you to show that you legally use the medication. If you wear glasses, take a spare pair and your prescription just in case you need to get new glasses made up quickly.

Be sure to take the usual precautions against sunburn and sunstroke, as the sun in Portugal can be blisteringly hot in the height of summer: wear high-factor sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses, and drink plenty of water.

Vaccination against hepatitis B is sometimes recommended.

**Money**

**Currency Info**

Euro (EUR; symbol €) = 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.

**Credit Cards**

American Express, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted, even outside cities, while petrol stations usually take credit cards and cash.

**ATM**

There are ATMs (Multibanco) at most of the larger supermarkets and shopping areas in most towns with instructions available in English if required. You can only take out a maximum of €200 and if you see six asterisks, not four, just put in your normal four numbers and hit continue. If you receive a ‘service unavailable’ message, it is most likely that the machine is out of cash - especially at weekends and on Monday mornings. The machine will have an icon with a cross though it.  
  
You can also find Multibanco machines in every small town and even villages all around Portugal. You will be charged for an international transaction. Currency conversion booths spring up wherever there is a steady flow of tourists but, be warned, the closer they are to tourist attractions, the worse the rates they offer.

**Travellers Cheques**

These are readily exchanged. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take traveller's cheques in Euros.

**Banking Hours**

Generally, Mon-Fri 0830-1530 (certain banks in Lisbon are open until 1800). In smaller towns a bank may close for lunch, while many branches no longer offer a foreign exchange service.

**Currency Restrictions**

There are no restrictions on the import or export of local or foreign currency.

**Currency Exchange**

You can buy or exchange Euros very easily at cambios (bureaux de change), hotels and shops. Many banks no longer offer foreign exchange, while the best rates and commissions are normally found at the bureaux in larger towns. The worst rates by far are at the airports and hotels. The best thing is to keep an eye out while you’re shopping and always check the commission rates.

**Language**

**Language**

European Portuguese is spoken in Portugal with different dialects throughout the country. Açoriano, Alentejano, Algarvio, Baixo-Beirão, Beirão, Estremenho and Madeirense are spoken in the central regions and south, with Alto-Minhoto, Nortenho and Transmontano in the northern parts. Barranquenho, Minderico and Mirandese are either spoken rarely or in a concentrated area like Barrancos and Miranda do Douro.   
  
Brazilian Portuguese and languages native to Cape Verde, Ukraine, Angola, Guinea, the UK and Romania are also spoken widely due to the larger immigration of people from these particular places, along with other mostly European countries. Spanish can be understood and spoken in those areas nearer the Portuguese border.

**Phrases**

Beer = Cerveja

Closed = Fechado / Fechada

Danger = Perigo

Do you speak English? = Você fala inglês?

Doctor = Medico

Eight = Oito

Eighty = Oitenta

Entrance = Entrada

Exit = Saída

Fifty = Cinquenta

Five = Cinco

Forty = Quarenta

Four = Quatro

Friday = Sexta-feira / Sexta

Goodbye = Adeus / Tchau

Hello = Olá

Hotel = Hotel

How are you? = Como está?

How much does it cost? = Quanto custa?

I'm very well = Estou bem

I don't understand = Não percebo

I feel ill = Sinto-me doente

Menu = Menú / Ementa

Monday = Segunda-feira / Segunda

My name is  = Chamo-me

Nine = Nove

Ninety = Noventa

No = Não

One = Um / uma

One Hundred = Cem

One Thousand = Mil

Open = Aberto / Aberta

Please = Por favor

Restaurant = Restaurante

Saturday = Sábado

Seven = Sete

Seventy = Setenta

Six = Seis

Sixty = Sessenta

Sunday = Domingo

Ten = Dez

Thank you = Obrigado / Obrigada

Thirty = Trinta

Three = Três

Thursday = Quinta-feira / Quinta

Today = Hoje

Toilets = Casa-de-banho / WC / Toilette / Quarto de banho

Tomorrow = Amanhã

Tuesday = Terça-feira / Terça

Twenty = Vinte

Two = Dois / Duas

Wednesday = Quarta-feira / Quarta

Where is ? = Onde é ? / Onde está ?

Wine = Vinho

Yes = Sim

**Duty Free**

**Overview**

If you are travelling from within the EU, there is no limit on the amount or value of goods you may import, providing your goods are for personal consumption. Goods imported for commercial purposes are subject to duty and the following guideline amounts are in place to determine whether this is the case:

• 800 cigarettes or 400 cigarillos or 200 cigars or 1kg of tobacco.  
• 10L of spirits over 22% volume, 20L of alcoholic beverages less than 22% volume, 90L of wine (no more than 60L of sparkling wine) and 110L of beer.

If you are arriving from a non-EU country, the following goods may be imported into Portugal by persons over 17 years of age without incurring customs duty:

• 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco.  
• 4L of wine and 16L of beer and 1L of spirits over 22% volume or 2L of alcoholic beverages less than 22% volume.  
• Other goods up to the value of €430 for air and sea travellers and €300 for other travellers (reduced to €150 for children under 15).

**Banned Imports**

Prohibited and restricted imports include drugs, radioactive products, offensive weapons, firearms, explosives and ammunition, and protected plants and animals.

**Banned Exports**

XXX

**Important Addresses**

**British Embassy in Portugal**

**Thoroughfare**

Rue de São Bernardo 33

**Neighborhood**

Santa Isabel

**Locality**

Lisbon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

1250

**Country**

Portugal

**Telephone**

2139 24000.

**Website**

http://www.gov.uk/government/world/portugal

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 0900-1700.

**Embassy of the Portuguese Republic in the UK**

**Thoroughfare**

11 Belgrave Square

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

London

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

SW1X 8PP

**Country**

United Kingdom

**Telephone**

(020) 7235 5331.

**Website**

http://portuguese-embassy.co.uk

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 0900-1730.

**Portuguese Consulate General in the UK**

**Thoroughfare**

3 Portland Place

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Paddington

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

W1B 1HR

**Country**

United Kingdom

**Telephone**

(020) 7291 3770.

**Website**

XXX

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 1000-1300.

**Embassy of Portugal in the USA**

**Thoroughfare**

2012 Massachusetts Ave NW

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Washington

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

DC 20036

**Country**

United States of America

**Telephone**

Tel: (202) 332 3007.

**Website**

http://www.embassyportugal-us.org

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 0900-1700; Mon-Thurs 0830-1500 and Fri 0900-1300 (consular section).

**Tourist Offices**

**Portuguese National Tourist Office in the UK**

**Thoroughfare**

11 Belgrave Square

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

London

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

SW1X 8PP

**Country**

United Kingdom

**Telephone**

(020) 7201 6666 (brochure request).

**Website**

http://www.visitportugal.com

**Opening Times**

XXX

**Portuguese Trade and Tourism Office in the USA**

**Thoroughfare**

590 Fifth Avenue, 3rd Floor

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

New York City

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

NY 10036

**Country**

United States of America

**Telephone**

(646) 723 0200.

**Website**

http://www.visitportugal.com

**Opening Times**

XXX

**Communications**

**Telephone**

There are call boxes in most villages and all towns; there are also public telephones in many cafés and bars, from which you can make international calls. Internet cafés in the main tourist areas are usually set up for Skype.

**Mobile Phone**

Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies and coverage exists across the whole country, but you can buy a cheap phone on arrival.

**Internet**

Wi-Fi access is available in various hotels, restaurants and public buildings. There are internet cafés in most urban areas, and some rural ones, while post offices offer web facilities.

**Post**

Airmail to European destinations from continental Portugal and the Azores takes three days; from Madeira, up to five days. Post to the USA can take up to two weeks.

**Post Office Hours**

Open Mon-Fri 0900-1800, while some are also open on Saturday and Sunday. The post office at Lisbon Airport is open 24 hours a day.

**Media**

Rádio e Televisão de Portugal (RTP) operates public TV and radio services, with two domestic TV channels plus two foreign ones on the mainland and in Madeira. SIC and TVI are the other commercial TV channels with TV Cabo the main pay-TV operator. Rádio Comercial and Rádio Clube Português are two of the commercial radio channels with Rádio Renascenca the very popular Roman Catholic Church owned channel. Each region has its own Portuguese-language daily newspaper alongside nationals *Diario Noticias*, *Público* and *Expresso*. *The Portugal News* is an English-language newspaper published in print and online, and English newspapers are available from airports. In 2004 Madeirans were granted access to standard (RTP) services without having to pay satellite subscription charges.

**Press**

• Diario de Noticias and Jornal da Madeira are among the most important local newspapers in Madeira.

**Television**

• Channels in Madeira include RPT1, dios, SIC, TVI and RTP Madeira.

**Radio**

• The public broadcaster Rádio e Televisão de Portugal (RTP) operates RDP Madeira. • Even some of the small villages in Madeira have their own radio stations; these include Radio Journal de Madeira.

**Where to stay**

**Hotels**

Hotels in Portugal cover the whole range from very basic accommodation to stylish luxury, using familiar rating systems. The bulk of tourist accommodation is in the Algarve, Lisbon and Porto. You can snap up bargain rooms during the low season, especially deals involving meals and extra beds for children. The large classier chains like Four Seasons, Hilton, Ritz-Carlton and Sheraton are prominent in the more built-up areas, while the cheaper chains can soften the blow on your wallet throughout the country. Comfort Inn, Holiday Inn and continental favourite Ibis all cater for families and travellers on a budget.   
  
Of course, there are plenty of Portuguese hotels across the country that will give you more of a flavour for Portugal’s famous hospitality. Vidago Palace near Porto, Tiara Park Atlantic Porto, Zenit Lisboa in the capital Lisbon and Hotel Quinta do Lago in the Algarve are higher-end examples to pamper to your every need. Seek out forums, websites and word of mouth for more reasonable gems.   
  
**Grading:** Hotels are classified according to the international 1- to 5-starsystem and prices are officially approved. Apartment hotels are classified 2- to 4-star, motels 2- to 3-star and boarding houses 1- to 3-star (1-star is the best); there are also 4-star *albergarias*. During the low season hotels often grant substantial reductions. Children under twelve are usually entitled to a 50% reduction on the price of meals and an extra bed, if sharing a room/apartment with parents.

**Bed And Breakfast**

Portugal has its own unique form of bed and breakfast called a pousada, which is government-owned. Pousadas are essentially historic buildings like castles, convents and palaces. They are not cheap, but special terms are granted for honeymoon couples, plus they are largely located in areas not well served by normal hotels, making your stay more interesting. Beware, though, that there are waiting lists and you can only stay for five days or fewer. Contact Pousadas de Portugal ([www.pousadas.pt](http://www.pousadas.pt)) to find out more about availability and choice, or arrange a stay through a travel agent.

**Camping**

Portugal has well over 100 campsites, many with facilities such as swimming pools, games areas, supermarkets and restaurants. For further information, check www.campingportugal.org, [www.roteiro-campista.pt](http://www.roteiro-campista.pt) or [www.orbitur.pt](http://www.orbitur.pt). Several UK operators, such as Eurocamp ([www.eurocamp.co.uk](http://www.eurocamp.co.uk)), offer luxury tents and mobile homes in campsites around Lisbon, Porto and the Algarve. These are great for families and those looking for daily sports and activities.

**Other**

Youth Hostels: One of the great ways to travel around Portugal is by staying in youth hostels. The Portuguese Youth Hostel Association, Pousadas de Juventude ([www.pousadasjuventude.pt](http://www.pousadasjuventude.pt)), provides affordable accommodation in over 50 great locations throughout the country.

Self Catering: Self-catering accommodation is mostly consigned to the Algarve to take advantage of the sunseekers and golfers that flock there, but you can also book up places in the major cities should you wish to stay longer and cook for yourself. Owners Direct ([www.ownersdirect.co.uk](http://www.ownersdirect.co.uk)) and HomeAway ([www.holiday-rentals.co.uk](http://www.holiday-rentals.co.uk)) are two of several reputable companies you can use to book ahead.

Unique Accommodation: *Turihab* are a charming collection of privately owned guest houses that allow visitors a chance to stay overnight in a manor house, a farm house, a country estate or a rustic cottage. Properties are divided into *casa antigas* (historic) , *quintas e herdades* (estates and heritage) and *casas rústicas* (rustic) categories ([www.turihab.pt](http://www.turihab.pt)).

Mountain Huts: Mountain huts are a fun way to experience the higher parts of Portugal. For places like Alto Douro, seek them out online or when you arrive.

**Culture**

**Religion**

Roman Catholics make up around 85% of the population, but only about 20% of these regularly attend mass and take the sacraments. The remaining 15% is a mixture of Agnostic, Anglican, Atheist, Jewish, Muslim and Protestant communities, together with other religions that have been brought in through immigration over the years.

**Social Conventions**

Portugal is a fascinating mix of culture and folklore, depending on what part of the country you are visiting. Traditional *ranchos folclóricos* folklore, which is often illustrated with dance and song, tends to dominate the smaller towns and villages, with art and drama bigger in the larger towns and cities.

The Portuguese are warm, hospitable people who revel in exhibitions, films, crafts, concerts, plays, café culture and also shopping malls (to combat the summer heat!). The summer festival season is a particularly pleasant experience, with football and bull fighting also enjoyed, along with the traditional religious activities that cater for the majority Catholic population.

Casual wear is widely acceptable, but you shouldn’t wear beach clothing in towns. Smoking has been prohibited in public indoor spaces since 2008 and the ban includes cinemas, theatres, buses and most restaurants.

**Weather**

**Best Time To Visit**

Not surprisingly, considering its close proximity to northern Africa, Portugal is one of the warmest European countries with an average temperature of 15°C (55°F) in the north and 18°C (64°F) in the south, while the Azores and Madeira are wetter and hotter respectively off the coast. It can become rainy and windy during autumn and winter, but spring and summer see temperatures soar to as high as 40°C (104°F) around the interior and 35°C (95°F) in the north.  
  
The northwest has mild winters with high levels of rainfall, and fairly short summers. The northeast experiences longer winters and hot summers. In the south, summers (May to October) are warm with very little rain except in early spring and autumn. Snow will fall in the north, but melts quickly.

**Required Clothing**

Light- to mediumweights and rainwear are advised (Portugal has one of the highest rainfalls in Europe). In summer, wear very light fabrics, preferably linen, as temperatures can soar and prove very uncomfortable if you have packed wrongly. Should you travel in spring or autumn, pack a combination of both.