

Self-Guided Hiking Tour

Portugal



Tour description

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|--------------------|-------------|
| Day 1 | |
| Arrival Algarve | |
| Day 2 | 21 km |
| To Zambujeira | |
| Day 3 | 20 km |
| To Odeceixe | |
| Day 4 | 17 or 22 km |
| To Aljezur | |
| Day 5 | 15 or 24 km |
| Arrifana | |
| Day 6 | 19 km |
| To Vila do Bispo | |
| Day 7 | 14 km |
| To Cap Sao Vicente | |
| Day 8 | |
| End of Tour | |

Algarve

Soaring cliffs, sea caves, golden beaches, scalloped bays and sandy islands draw visitors to the Algarve each year. Spend one week on the self-guided walking holiday and you will understand the allure.

The Algarve is the beautiful southern coastline of Portugal. It is a region blessed with stunning beaches, picturesque fishing towns and a glorious climate, all of which combine to create the perfect holiday destination.

A highlight of walking in the Algarve is surely to be taking in the Natural Park Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina, a route which is on the Atlantic Coast on the GR-11 Rota Vicentina.

On this trip you will explore the idyllic landscapes with beaches, dunes and steep cliffs along the route. This tour takes in the relatively little-known west coast known for its delicious seafood, excellent wines and the relaxed Portuguese life-style.

You will end your adventure in Europe's southwestern most point, a barren headland that was the last piece of home that Portuguese sailors once saw as they launched into the unknown. It's a spectacular spot: at sunset you can almost hear the hissing as the sun hits the sea.

Tour Details

Departs: Daily Year round

Cost: \$1250 per person
Single room upgrade: On Request

Length: 8 days / 7 nights
Grade: Moderate
Start: Zambujeira do Mar
Ends: Vila do Bispo

Fast Facts

What's Included:

- 7 nights using charming accommodations throughout with breakfast included
- Road book, luggage transfers and GPS
- Internal transfers as described

What's Not Included:

- Other transfers not outlined
- Meals not outlined
- Wine tours and tastings, museums
- Personal expenses

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Day 1: Arrival in the Algarve

On your own to the coastal village of Zambujeira do Mar.

Day 2: Almogrove – Zambujeira

This morning you start off with a short taxi transfer to the village of Almogrove. Your 7-hour walk along the way-marked foot path "Rota Vicentina" takes you along the coast, via Cavalheiro and the lighthouse at Cape Sardao, enjoying the spectacular cliffs on the way back to Zambujeira de Mar. If you feel a bit tired, just ask the taxi driver to drop you off in Cavalheiro (cutting out 9 km)
Challenge: 5-6 hrs. 20.7 km, 175m ascent.

Day 3: Zambujeira - Odeceixe

Today you follow again part of the Rota Vicentina along the coast. Rolling dunes alternate with rocky shores where storks nest. Along beaches, by way of the fishing village at Azenha do Mar, you do a 5-hour walk to reach the rural town of Odeceixe.
Challenge: 5-6 hrs 20 km, 220m ascent.

Day 4: Odeceixe - Aljezur

Today you follow the Rota Vicentina inland to the Medieval town of Aljezur. First you follow rural tracks and quiet tarmac lanes, winding through farmed fields. Then through an open landscape of heather and fragrant shrubs. If you prefer the coast, you can take a detour to Praia Amoreira, spend some time there and then order a taxi (not incl. only 5km). Your modern hotel in Aljezur has a small swimming pool and is conveniently close to one of the best restaurants in town.
Challenge: 5/6 hrs, 17.5/22km, 145/150 m ascent.

Day 5: Walking route from Arrifana

Again, your route choice for the day will depend on the tides, but whatever you do, the day starts with a short taxi ride to the fishing village of Arrifana. If tides are low, you can walk along rocky strands and sandy beaches. If water levels are high, you take an alternate route further inland via Bordeira to Carrapateira. Afternoon transfer to your accommodation
Challenge: 5/7 hrs, 15.5/19/24 km, 175/325 m ascent.

Day 6: From Carrapateira to Vila do Bispo

After a short transfer to Carrapateira, you walk from the hotel in Carrapateira to the hotel in Vila do Obispo. In between sections on the coast and others inland, depending on the tides. Near the start of the walk, you'll have a good chance of spotting fishermen perched high on the cliffs. Your route ends in historic Vila do Bispo, where you spend the night at a lovely hotel with indoor swimming pool and sauna.
Challenge: 6-6.5 hrs, 19 km, 400 m ascent.

Day 7: Cape Sao Vicente

The last hike takes you through pastures and fields to the most South-western point of Portugal. You walk along a flat track and narrow fishermen's paths above rocky shores. If the weather is warm, option of stopping for a swim at 'Praia do Ponto Ruiva'. This last walk of the trip ends at windy Cape Sao Vicente with sweeping views of the ocean. Taxi transfer back to your hotel in Vila do Bispo. Challenge: 4-4.5 hrs, 14 km, 150 m ascent.

Day 8: End of program

After breakfast your arrangement ends.



What to Expect

What will the weather be like?

The daytime temperature will be warm and sunny. In Spring and Fall, you can expect high 70's (high 20's C), and cooler evenings. Sunscreen is a must during the day, as is a sweater for the cooler nights. Traditionally it does not rain, but it is recommended to bring some rain gear in case. Summers are hot and sunny.

How many hours of walking a day?

Be prepared to walk between 4-7 hours daily, rarely on flat terrain. The Portuguese countryside is all hills. You are either going up or down almost all the time; however, these are shorter rolling ascents and descents - very do-able with short distances in order to enjoy your day.

How fit do I need to be?

The fitter the better, and some long distance hiking experience is recommended but not required. If you think you cannot do all of the mileage, we can add some internal transfers (at a cost) to shorten the route.

What are the hotels like?

We use mostly 3* accommodations, with twin-bedded rooms, all with private facilities in the standard itinerary, some have pools.

Getting There

The main airport closest to the starting point is Lisbon International Airport or Faro. Take a local bus to town. We can also arrange private transfers from and to the airport. Contact us for cost.



How to book your holiday

- Contact our office to make sure there is space available. One of our travel planners will walk you through the entire booking process.
- Download the reservation form from our website and send in completed form by fax or email. Once this is done, your space is confirmed and a pre-departure packet will be sent immediately or simply complete it online.
- Deposit is required immediately, and final payment is due 60 days prior to departure. Terms & conditions are outlined on the back of our Reservation Form.
- Plan your air travel as soon as possible.
- We encourage you to purchase travel insurance, either through us or directly a travel insurance provider.
- Ensure that you are in proper health for the trip chosen. Contact us for more information on vaccinations, inoculations, and fitness requirements.