

LISBON TRAVEL GUIDE – LOGISTICS AND ITINERARY



Lisbon has my heart. I have been twice to Lisbon – once with friends and once with family. Both trips were completely different and both were completely amazing. The combination of incredible seafood, views, and colors makes it one of my favorite places I've ever been (maybe THE favorite??). I've written about **Portugal in general**, **Sintra**, and **Algarve**, but was saving this post for my second trip in November! Enjoy!

SHOULD I VISIT LISBON?

Absolutely yes. Lisbon is such a great city for so many reasons. Whether you are an architecture, food, beauty, or culture lover – your needs will be met by Lisbon. All of the needs!!!

[Check out my complete Portugal guide to hear about other locations](#)

WHAT TIME OF YEAR SHOULD I VISIT LISBON?

Go from March – September for the best weather, but it's honestly great year round. I have been in both July and November. There was a little rain in November and the rooftop bars don't have quite the same appeal, but you can still do everything. A local told us that Lisbon is sunny 300 days of the year, so your odds are looking good.

HOW DO I GET TO LISBON?

Fly! When you land, you can either do the metro, a taxi, or Ubers.

The taxi will be your most expensive option, but there is a stand right outside of Arrivals. Expect to pay €30 to get into the city.

Ubers are very cheap in Lisbon, but you will need to find the right spot for them to pick you up at – outside the Departures section in the terminal (it tells you in the Uber app). Expect to pay €12ish to get into the city. Please note that with both taxis and Ubers, it can be hard to find your correct accommodation with all the winding, hilly streets.

The metro will be your cheapest option, and it's pretty easy to figure out. You can get your ticket from a machine (consult google maps to see what station you need to go to). The problem with the metro is that when you get off, the cobblestone pavements and steep hills do not make it very easy to roll luggage.

Out of all the options, I would recommend doing an Uber.

[Book your flights to Lisbon using Google Flights](#)

IS THERE A LANGUAGE BARRIER IN LISBON?

At some places, yes. Tourism is actually relatively new for this country, so English is not spoken by everyone. In my experience, not all your Uber drivers will speak English and some waitstaff will be rusty as well.

WHERE SHOULD I STAY IN LISBON?

I would definitely recommend the Alfama area. I have stayed there both times and wouldn't recommend anywhere else. It's quiet and central. Chiado and Bairro Alto are also pretty central, but since they are busy they are loud. The edge of Bairro Alto might be okay from a noise perspective.

I fell in love with this food shop in Lisbon this last time, and they told us they own apartments right above the shop. They look amazing and well priced, so I'll definitely be staying there next time.

[Click here to look at AirBnBs](#)

[Check out The Lisboa's apartments here.](#)

HOW DO I GET AROUND LISBON?

Public transportation is an easy and cheap option. You can buy your tickets onboard with cash for an upcharge or you can buy day passes from the metro stations that can be used on the trams. I am a huge public transportation fan, but honestly Ubers just make the most sense because they are cheap. There are classic trams that run throughout Lisbon as well, Tram 28 being the most famous, but they look really crowded and touristy and are prime pickpocket spots.

Getting anywhere around Lisbon via Uber will cost you about €5 per trip. Belém is further outside the city and may cost more, so we did tram 15 to Belem.

And the best way to get around is by walking!! But you will get tired because of the steep hills!

HOW MANY DAYS SHOULD I SPEND IN LISBON?

At least 1.5 days, but 2 full days is perfect. Add on a trip to **[Sintra](#)** on a third day. If you really were trying to just see all the best hits, then you could do it in 1 day. If you are into food, specifically seafood, I would give yourself 2 nights at least to have good dinners.

[Check out my guide to Sintra to see if you want to go!](#)

WHAT IS THERE TO DO IN LISBON?

MIRADOUROS

My favorite part of Lisbon is not the food, not the beautiful ceramics shopping, not the tiles, but actually the miradouros. These are "viewpoints" all over the city where locals grab a glass of wine and chill while they watch the sunset. It is the perfect way to end your day – bring a bottle of wine and plastic cups or buy a glass of wine at the kiosks and enjoy the views and the people watching. The ones I have been to are below, but there are lots of smaller ones throughout the city.

MIRADOURO SANTA LUZIA

This was my favorite miradouro hands down because of the beauty. It's covered in bougainvillea and azulejos with gorgeous views of the river and the orange rooftops. It is a very central location in Alfama so it's great to do right before a fado dinner. The closest wine shop is at blank address. The guy provides plastic cups for free if you ask and will open the bottle of wine for you. There is a small restaurant / wine bar on the lower terrace as well.



MIRADOURO DE SANTA CATERINA

A very popular, large miradouro. Unfortunately when I went in November, it was closed off. Here's an [article](#) talking about the closure. It sounds like nobody knows why it was closed or when it is coming back, but it really was a special place so hopefully it reopens. The views of the bridge are so great. It's the perfect place to go if you're eating at Pharmacia since it's right across the street. It's also a great place to spot before Park Bar. While this miradouro is closed, maybe Park Bar is the best alternative.

MIRADOURO DE SÃO PEDRO DE ALCÂNTARA

This one has a great location that looks over the city mainly without an ocean view. The kiosk serving wine is really fun and always bustling with people. It also helps that this miradouro is so close to so many great restaurants and bars in Bairro Alto. Come here for sunset before A Cevicheria, Tapisco, or O Solar dos Presuntos.

MIRADOURO DO CASTELO

This one is probably the most out of the way, but it is so beautiful. It's a narrow terrace with views over the whole city, a wine kiosk, and a beautiful church. We were told that this area is where a lot of the locals have moved because of higher prices in the city center. This is a great spot to go before Ramiro.



ALFAMA

Alfama is kind of like the “old town” with very narrow alleys and loads of charm. During the great earthquake in Lisbon that destroyed most of the city, only Alfama and Belem remained.

WANDER AROUND

I have a pretty good route that I would recommend of Alfama I think, though of course I have not seen the whole thing so don't really know how thorough it is. This walk is best to start right before sunset. The beauty of Alfama is to see all the things during the day, but also to hear all the fado at night around 8-9 PM. So maybe do the walk twice.

The Sé cathedral marks the western boundary, so start there. Go in if you would like! It's not super pretty on the inside, but it means a lot to all the locals. If it is near sunset, start by walking along the high street (to the left if you are looking at the front of the church) and walk all the way to Miradouro da Santa Luzia.

Stop at this fun wool shop to pick up a blanket called **ChiCoração** – there are two locations along the road. Also stop at Minimercado da se to pick up wine, cheese maybe, maybe prosciutto. Ask the guy for plastic cups and to open the bottle for you.

Enjoy the miradouro. When you are done, map yourself to Fado Maior for your 7:30 fado reservation. If you're not doing fado, just plan to walk the next part of this tour sometime after 7:30 to hear the music floating through the streets from all the fado places. It's so cool.

Continue your way along the path towards Ginja de Alfama to try the famous Lisbon liqueur (this place's is particularly delicious in my opinion). After that, you've pretty much seen what I think are the best parts, so continue to get lost and wander if you would like to find more gems.







FADO

Alfama is where fado music was born, so I think it is the best place to listen to it. Fado is a Portuguese music genre that is full of emotion. It really is beautiful to listen to. Be wary that most of the places you pass are cheesy AF. A local told us that the shadier the place looks, the better. We ended up going to Fado Maior on a friend's recommendation and really loved it. Call them or walk by before to make a reservation for 7:30. I think they have fado every night at that time. They have lots of delicious plates to share, wine, and beer. I would recommend the shrimps with garlic, the cod a bacalao (it was spelled something like that), and the octopus salad. There is a male and female singer that each sings two songs before taking a ~30 minute break. After two rounds of this, we politely asked for our check and they didn't seem to be offended. Just be courteous.

CASTELO DE SÃO JORGE

This castle has a beautiful view over the city and some old castle walls. Note that if you plan on going to Sintra, this is probably not worth your money or time. The views can be replicated all over Lisbon for free, the castle is definitely not as spectacular as Sintra, and it's a pickpocket hot spot! It's a great idea if you're not going to Sintra, and there are peacocks. I think it's €12 per person.

PRADO MERCERARIA

This is my favorite little market I've ever been into!!! It's super beautiful and they are so nice. We went in for cheese and wine to enjoy in our Airbnb before dinner, and the guy there practically gave us a food tour of the whole market. He let us sample all the cheeses and salamis and helped us pair it with wine and the right bread. I am in love with this place. Stop by for a treat – I hope you get the same helper as us!!

BELÉM

Belém is the other area that survived the earthquake, but it is a completely different feel from Alfama. Think beautiful sites on the water away from the steep hills of the city. It's about a 30 minute ride from Lisbon via Uber or Tram 15. You can purchase your tram ticket onboard with cash for €2.90 I believe.

PASTÉIS DE BELÉM

This is the perfect first stop for your trip to Belém. It's super touristy, but you have to eat a pastéis de nata at some point. They're about €1 each.

JERÓNIMOS MONASTERY

Then mosey on over to the monastery. It's so beautiful on the outside. There is a church that is free to enter with some great bits of culture inside – tombs of two famous Portuguese explorers. We opted not to enter the monastery and pay the €10 fee, but I'm sure it's beautiful.

MONUMENT TO THE DISCOVERIES

Or if you're cool enough, Padrão dos Descobrimentos. It's basically a really cool monument right on the water that is worth checking out after the monastery. It's also a super trendy area! They have Lime electric scooters over there.





BELEM TOWER

Finally, what I think is the best part of Belém and one of my favorite parts of Lisbon! It's a very old, very cool (how many times have I said cool, sorry) tower right on the water. I don't think there's a way to get tickets in advance, but I think lining up to go inside (€6 each) is worth the wait. Note that when you get your ticket, you turn right around to enter the main area of the tower. Also note that there's one tiny staircase to take to the top, and there's a little digital sign that you have to obey to see when you are allowed to climb and descend. The views from the tower are so pretty!





BAIRRO ALTO

This area is known for its nightlife and bars that are filled with people. And on the north side of the neighborhood, Rua Dom Pedro V is a super trendy street with lots of great shops, bars, and restaurants. I'll cover restaurants below, but for shops make sure to check out Embaixada and REAL Slow Retail. For bars check out Lost In, Pub Lisboaeta, or The Decadente.

CHIADO + DOWNTOWN

This area has the least character, the most chain shops, the most tourists, and the least authentic food. BUT, it has the best shopping IMHO. My favorite place on the earth that will be your favorite place too is called Cerâmicas na linha. You essentially walk in to the most beautiful ceramics shop of your life where everything is about 1/3 of what you will expect to pay for it. It's dangerous because of how big the items are and how much you will want to buy that will most likely not fit into your suitcase – but it's SO worth it.

Right around the corner, there's a gorgeous shop perfect for picking up stocking stuffers or beautiful souvenirs called A Vida Portuguesa.

In this area, you will also find Rua da Augusta and Praça do Comercio which are essentially a giant plaza on the water with a giant archway that's hard to miss. These are great places to walk around, and there's always something going on in the plaza.

Another attraction you read about in guide books is the Elevador de Santa Justa which is essentially an iron elevator in the middle of downtown that takes you to a viewing platform for €6 I think. I do not quite understand the desire to stand in a long line to ride an elevator for a view that you can get for free all over the city, so I would not recommend it. There is a free work-around though if you're dying to see the view (if you're dying to ride in the iron elevator, feel free to stand in line). We learned from our Sandeman

guide that you can go on the platform for free by going up to Carmo Convent and around the right side to the restaurant on the side. Walk up the stairs to the restaurant, through the restaurant, and then you are on the viewing platform! It's very windy up there.



LX FACTORY

This new, trendy development right outside the city is actually pretty cool. If you're into trendy warehousey turned hipster spots (I am...), then it's worth an Uber out this way. There are lots of little shops and restaurants, and if you can handle the sketchy staircase up 4 floors, Rio Maravilha is achingly hip with gorgeous views of the water and bridge.



TIME OUT MARKET

Also known as Mercado da Ribiera, the time out side is essentially a collection of amazing restaurants and food places from around the city in one place. It's a great place to stop for lunch and people love it. The prices are mostly high with several Michelin Star chef outposts, but there are some yummy croquette and fries place and a burger spot as well. I would recommend Manteigara for a pasteis de nata, santini for dessert, and anything else for your meal.

WHERE DO I EAT IN LISBON?

So the first time I went to Lisbon, I was with girlfriends and we went to some trendy restaurants. They were delicious! My style is more the hole-in-the-wall, locals only spots – so that's where I went my second time. I think doing a little of both is the perfect mix.

IF YOU LIKE FEELING TRENDY...

Tapisco, **A Cevicheria**, or Pharmacia are your best bets. All of them are located in cool parts of town near and around Chiado and Barrio Alto. Tapisco and A Cevicheria are on the same street. All three of them will be packed with gorgeous, trendy, young people so be prepared for a wait. They all have awesome outdoor areas to enjoy a bottle of wine or a cocktail – so that's part of the fun. Tapisco and Farmacia are Portuguese-inspired small plates and A Cevicheria is mainly small fish dishes / ceviche.

IF YOU LIKE TO EAT WITH THE LOCALS...

Ramiro or **O Solar dos Presuntos** are great bets.

Ramiro was honestly one of my favorite meals I've ever had in my life. It is packed and a little bit touristy, but very efficient. You take your number from a screen and buy your beer from an automated beer dispenser and hang out until your number is called. You can be like the locals and go inside to order a plate of pao (bread) and salami if you need a little snack. Once inside, it is no frills, lots of butter, lots of butter, and nothing special about the service. You have to get the clams with garlic and one tiger prawn per person and the rest is up to you. Know that you will pay for whatever bread you eat, but we couldn't stop eating it!!



O Solar dos Presuntos is definitely somewhere that the Portuguese go for a special occasion. It's all white tablecloths and fantastic service with some cool Portuguese dishes that are dished at your table. It's not quite as "fun" as Ramiro, but a great place to go if you are with parents.

Bairro do Avillez was another Portuguese restaurant recommended by lots of locals, but we spent our last night eating at the fado restaurant.

IF YOU LIKE DESSERT...

Pasteis de Nata is something you have to try while you are here!! These custard tarts are so much better than they look and are super unique to Lisbon! Pasteis de Belém is probably the most popular, but Manteigaria is just as delicious and much more centrally located (there's one in Time Out Market too!).

Santini has the best ice cream I've ever had in my life (also in Time Out Market...). Get the mini Bolo too which was maybe one of the best desserts I've ever had.



Gijinha / ginja is a cherry liqueur also unique to Lisbon. Make sure you try it while you are here. Gijinha Sem Rival and Ginja de Alfama are both places I have tried, and the Alfama one was a lot yummiier in my opinion (which probably means it's not as authentic – whatever!).

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING ELSE BESIDES DINNER OR DESSERT...

The best snack in Lisbon is canned fish!! Comur is really centrally located and beautiful. They have samples of the flavors in the store and they're really nice. Miss Can has the cutest packaging and is up near the castle.



Time Out Market as mentioned above is great for lunch.

Pão pão queijo queijo is a great little sandwich shop near Pasteis de Belém if you need some salty after your sweet.

IS THERE A PLACE TO GO OUT IN LISBON?

Bairro Alto as a neighborhood is full of small bars with people spilling out onto the street. It's fun to just walk around at night and take it all in. Rua Dom Pedro V is a street with great bars as mentioned above in the what to do section. Park bar is a great place to hang out on the rooftop at night. Lux is a huge nightclub that stays open until 6 AM, if you're into that.

WHAT SHOULD I PACK FOR LISBON?

Flat shoes. Flat shoes. Flat shoes. You will want to look really cute and trendy in Lisbon, but resist bringing anything with a heel! It is not only difficult to walk with the slopes but the cobblestone pavement would make it near impossible.

Lisbon is a laid-back city so you shouldn't need anything too fancy. I wore walking shoes and jeans in the winter with a top and light coat. In the summer I wore skirts / shorts / dresses with walking shoes or espadrilles.

MY PERFECT 3 DAY LISBON ITINERARY

HALF DAY 1

Time out market for a snack if you are arriving in time. If you are interested in some history / historical tidbits, try to make the 2 PM free walking tour by Sandeman. Afterwards, miradouro and dinner of your choice!

FULL DAY 1

Take an Uber or a tram to Pasteis de Belém. Get your pasteis de nata and a ham and cheese sandwich at pão pão queijo queijo. Walk to the monastery and enter the church for free. Decide if you want to also enter the monastery. Walk to the monument to the discoveries and take pictures. Walk to Belém tower and go in. Uber to LX Factory. Walk around, shop, and grab a bite to eat or a drink at the cool rooftop restaurant Rio Maravilha.

Free time to either go to Castelo de São Jorge, shopping at Cerâmicas na Linha and A Vida Portuguesa, walk along Rua Dom Pedro V and pop in and out of shops, or go to Prado Mercearia for picnic supplies for your miradouro / Airbnb balcony. Find a miradouro close to your dinner choice for a sunset, and have dinner at your choice.

DAY 2

If you want a bit of history, do the free Sandeman walking tour of Lisbon. If you're not up for it, either visit the castle if you haven't done so, spend the day at a museum, do the Elevator de Santa Justa trick, or just wander around. I would recommend Time Out Market for lunch. End your day doing my wandered path through Alfama including gijinha and a fado dinner at Fado Maior.

OPTIONAL: If you do not care for the walking tour, then visit Sintra today! Finish the day back in Lisbon doing the Alfama tour.