

YOUR COMPLETE PORTUGAL TRAVEL GUIDE



If you want to go to Portugal, it's probably because you have noticed how beautiful it is. Every part seems to be picturesque online, and I can promise you that it is! I would definitely go back to every single place that we visited. This post will cover general Portugal, and you can go to my other posts for more information on **Lisbon**, **Sintra**, and **Algarve**. But first thing's first, why should you go to Portugal? Portugal can be summed up as a country with beautiful architecture and coastlines, rolling hills with great views and sunsets, colorful castles and palaces, tiles and azulejos, fado music, cove beaches, seafood and pasteis de nata and canned fish, vinho verde and port, fado music, hip culture and friendly people.

WHERE TO GO IN PORTUGAL



porto + douro valley

lisbon + sintra

algarve

Portugal

Lisbon

Porto

Coimbra

Braga

Viseu

Guarda

Cáceres

Badajoz

Seville

Huelva

Faro

Albufeira

Estoril

Setúbal Municipality

Evora

Figueira da Foz

Plasencia

E-90

E-803

E802

E1

E1

E-80

E801

E82

E1

E-5

This is always such a hard part of any trip! Portugal is a small country, but oh my gosh does it have so many beautiful places to visit. For our one week trip, we did the top 3 which is usually my strategy. We did 2 nights in Lisbon, 3 nights in Algarve, and 3 nights in Porto. In my opinion, 2 nights is not enough in Lisbon if you want to make a day trip to Sintra. We knew this, but had to leave Algarve by a certain day. On the other hand, 1.5 days in Porto would have been enough to see everything and still relax.

Other areas you'll read about include the west coast, Evora, Cascais, Alentejo, and Douro Valley. I originally had a trip here planned with my husband and we were going to take a week and a half and tack on the Douro Valley as well. Reading each of my city posts will definitely give you a better feel for which ones you want to tackle, or if you think you want to look into some other regions. I have made little pictorial representations of each city below!





Sintra

DAY TRIP, CASTLES, GARDENS





Algarve

CAVES, BEACHES, CLIFFS, COLOR





Porto

PORT, VIEWS, AZULEJOS



As far as choosing what to do in what order, I would start in Lisbon as that's likely where you will be flying into. We ended in Porto, but I think it would make just as much sense to end in the Algarve. Being in the Algarve on weekdays rather than the weekend really helped with crowds, I can imagine. So something to think about.

WHEN SHOULD I VISIT PORTUGAL?

If you are on this site, you may want to spend some time on the beach. That will narrow your window down to late May – early October. The water will be too cold in any other months. We went in July which is high season, but not as high season as August. The crowds were not bad at all. We did spend more for our lodging, so if you want to save some money, try one of the shoulder months.

Lisbon and Porto can also be seen year round. We made a second trip in late November and the weather was perfect. Sunny, cool days.

IS THERE A LANGUAGE BARRIER IN PORTUGAL?

We never had any language barriers. Everyone spoke English here. Some of the Ubers didn't but there was no need to be able to talk to them.

WHAT SHOULD I PACK FOR PORTUGAL?

The streets in Lisbon and Porto are very, very steep. And everything is cobblestone pavement. So wear shoes that don't slip, and I don't recommend heels or wedges at all. The dress in Portugal is pretty laid

back. No one was ever super dressed up. At night it does get chilly since it is on the water so bring a light jacket, sweater, or scarf. Sintra was also colder than Lisbon since it is in the mountains. People look pretty cute at night and during the day, but walking shoes and casual outfits are perfect for the days.

HOW DO I GET TO PORTUGAL?

The main airport is in Lisbon, but the Porto and Faro airports are popular too. I speak in each city post about how to get there, so use those posts for more detailed information about how to get from city to city – basically you can either drive, train, or fly.

Check out Google Flights to book your flight

WHAT SOUVENIRS SHOULD I BUY IN PORTUGAL?

Portugal has absolutely beautiful ceramics everywhere. The best place for buying ceramics was Lisbon for us, so check out that post for our awesome find. Also if you are checking a bag, vinho verde or port is a very popular thing to take back.

SAFETY TIPS IN PORTUGAL

All the usual things apply – don't wear flashy jewelry, try and wear a purse that closes, stay away from alleys. One girl in our group actually had her wallet stolen out of her purse, and she had been vigilant about keeping it closed and holding her hand over the top. Just be careful and bring a zip up purse if you can! I love Longchamp bags for traveling.

MY PERFECT PORTUGAL ITINERARY

ONE WEEK

Saturday – arrive in Lisbon

Sunday – explore Lisbon

Monday – day trip to Sintra

Tuesday – train to Algarve

Wednesday – Algarve

Thursday – Algarve

Friday – Fly/train to Porto

Saturday – Porto

Sunday – Fly home

SLIGHTLY LONGER

Monday – Thursday same

Friday – Train to Douro Valley

Saturday – Douro Valley

Sunday – Train back to Porto

Monday – Porto

Tuesday – Fly home

HONESTLY, HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND IN PORTUGAL?

8 nights

Total – \$1665 (about \$2400 if I came from the US)

Flight – \$267

Disclaimer: this is because I was flying from London! I would budget in \$800-\$1000 for round trip flights from the US

Accommodation – \$532

Transportation – \$193

Food – \$509

Entertainment – \$36

Shopping – \$128

This is pretty on par with all my other 1 week European trips from the US. It's actually the cheapest of the 4 that I have been on, and that's factoring in a hypothetical \$1000 flight.