

ITINERARY

***Beyond the Ports of Portugal: A Birds & Wine Tour***

*May 4 - May 15, 2025*



*The colorful European Bee-eater is one of the iconic European birds we'll watch for as we make our way through the lovely country of Portugal. Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.*

*We include here information for those interested in the 2025 Field Guides Beyond the Ports of Portugal tour*

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

*These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:*

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our web site)
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

**P**ortugal, despite its prime location on the southwest coast of Europe, remains off the beaten track. This small country, about half the size of Florida, boasts no "wonders of the world," no huge metropolises and no famous film festivals. Yet there are vibrant and lively small cities, a rich music and food culture, and well-preserved historic sites and nature preserves. More than 22% of Portugal is protected in parks and preserves, compared to just under 14% in the US.

While no endemic birds call mainland Portugal home, it sports an impressive list of more than 600 species, with 441 of them occurring in the continental portion of the country. Included in the list are some of Europe's most iconic birds, like Spanish Eagle, Eurasian Griffon, Eurasian Hoopoe, European Bee-eater, European Roller, Great and Little bustards, as well as seasonal migrants on their way to and from Africa, such as Great Spotted Cuckoo, Common Nightingale, Eurasian Wryneck, Eurasian Turtle-Dove, Greater and European reed warblers, and the handsome Collared Pratincole.

The diversity found in Portugal extends to, or even is surpassed by, the distinct wines and varieties of native grapes. This diversity is so great that folks who have birded Europe before may get more lifer grapes than birds on this tour; included are grapes with exotic names like Touriga Nacional, Antao Vaz, Alvarinho, Loureiro, and many more. The temperate climate and diverse topography support fourteen different wine regions. We will explore wineries and sample wines from several of these regions, but our tour route will focus on three main wine regions, the Douro (including the world-famous Porto!), Alentejo, and Lisbon.

This tour's focus will be on specialty birds and wines of the areas we visit. We have carefully crafted the tour to sample the best that Portugal has to offer, not just in terms of birds, but also in wine, history, and scenery. We have chosen special accommodations in each area: a lodge in a medieval walled village, a modern hotel with a visible archeological dig in the lobby, and in two different wineries, where we can wake to birds singing from the grape vines.

Spring in Portugal is among the world's fairest, with cool nights, and days that range between 70 and 80 degrees F. The rolling hills and pastures, medieval mountain villages and castles, and charming coastal towns, all bursting with new foliage and flowers, would make for a lovely spring getaway.

This tour is designed to give equal weight to the birds, the wines, and the history of Portugal, all at a relaxed pace. While we will probably tally about 160 species on this tour, the tour will be less about the list and more about the experience! We want to savor ALL the flavors of Portugal.

*We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.*

## Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS:** Walking is generally along roads and trails, with several forays into areas of uneven or difficult terrain, particularly in the Douro International Park and around Mértola. While we'll spend very little of our time in the mountains on foot, there are naturally some steeper sections on the trails we'll take. The terrain varies from roadsides and well-trodden paths to occasional (optional) scrambling over rocks and streams, punctuated by frequent stops for birding. Most of our walks will be under two miles in length and at a slow pace so that we can enjoy the birds, plants, and other wildlife we encounter. All walks and excursions are optional.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** There will be some driving on winding roads, and those prone to motion sickness should bring appropriate medication.
- **PACE:** This will be fairly relaxed by bird tour standards. Breakfast won't be any earlier than 7:00 a.m., and there are only two single-night stays. Dinners tend to be a bit late for U.S. tastes, but we will endeavor to start by about 7:30 p.m. each evening.
- **ELEVATION:** The highest elevation we'll reach on the tour will be about 2400', on the hills of Douro Internacional.
- **WEATHER:** Portugal has a warm, Mediterranean climate, with abundant sunshine throughout the year. During the late spring months much of Iberia is (usually) dry; however, wet spring storms are not unheard of, so be prepared for this sort of weather as well. Temperatures are pleasantly warm to hot (60-80 F) in Mértola and the areas around Lisbon; often a little cooler (50-70 F) and breezier on the coast and in Porto. In the mountains, it can be chilly or even cold, especially early in the day. Expect changeable conditions, with anything from warm sun to cold, cloudy, and wet conditions. Showers are possible and there may well be some localized mist or fog, particularly early in the morning.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion. Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Bathroom stops at indoor restrooms will be made regularly; comfort stops in nature are also possible, should the need arise.
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide.



*Most of our birding will occur at a relaxed pace, although we will get to some places where the terrain is a bit challenging. We will have the opportunity for breaks in the field, however.... And we will have time to enjoy the wines of Portugal as well!  
Photograph by participant Wolfgang Demisch.*

## About the Birding Areas

**Porto and the Douro River Valley.** We begin the tour in the coastal city of Porto, birthplace and namesake of Portugal's most well-known export, the fortified wine called port. We will tour and have lunch at **Graham's Winery**, where wine and port have been produced for over two hundred years. Later, we will learn how port is made, and we'll sample the beverage along with a bit of Portugal's unique music, Fado, at the historic **Cálem Port House**. Both of these port houses are among the oldest and most well-known of the many in Porto. Between port house visits, we will sober up with some shorebirding at the **Douro Estuary**, on the south side of the Douro River where it empties into the Atlantic. The park, a small, natural haven created in 2007, has recorded more than 200 species of birds. We should find here our first Zitting Cisticolas, European Stonechats, and Common Kingfishers, as well as Mediterranean, Yellow-legged, and Lesser Black-backed gulls, Common Sandpipers, and many other common species that will help us get a feel for the birding that is to come. Few estuaries are as scenic as this, with lovely views of Porto and its bridges, including the D. Maria Pia Bridge, designed by Gustave Eiffel (of the Paris tower fame) and inaugurated in 1877.

We will head west to the Douro River Valley, a designated UNESCO World Heritage region, making a few stops to do some birding and soak in the spectacular scenery along the road, and we will stop for lunch and a tour of the **Quinta da Pacheca** winery. Running along the Douro River gorge, the granite mountain ranges act as a protective weather barrier for the terraces of vines first introduced by the Romans. Expect spectacular views of the river and valley as we make our way on the decidedly winding road (**Note**: for the weak of heart and stomach, there will be hairpin turns; please plan accordingly!).

**Douro International Natural Park.** The park, on the northeast border with Spain (yet only two hours from Porto), is 85,146 hectares of cork oak forests, towering cliffs, and plains dotted with wildflowers. The region's isolation not only helps to preserve several threatened bird species, including Black Storks, Egyptian Vulture, Eurasian Griffon, Peregrine Falcons, and Golden and Bonelli's eagles, it also has enabled the people of the area to preserve ancient traditions. Don't be surprised if a shepherd and his dog delay us as they move their flock via the small country roads on which we travel. The Douro International Natural Park is one of Portugal's most important birding areas, and a full day of birding here is likely to reward us with great looks at Eurasian Golden Oriole, Iberian Magpie, Red-rumped Swallow, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, White-throated Dipper, and Spanish Sparrow. The unrestricted views from the top of the valley should yield numerous raptor sightings.

Our base for exploring Douro International Natural Park is the medieval walled village of Castelo Rodrigo, perched high on a hilltop above the town of Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo. We will do a walking tour of the village, complete with

castle ruins, a pillory, and a cistern, and we'll spend our nights at the lovely Casa Cisterna Guesthouse. This renovated space includes the old cistern that was joined with a historic house to create a lodging that is quite unique. Rooms are named for local birds, so this is a perfect place for us to spend a few nights while we explore the Douro Valley.



Near Douro International Natural Park, we will visit **Faia Brava Reserve**, an 800-hectare private nature reserve stretching along 5 kilometers of Portugal's dramatic Coa River Valley. Steep canyons, ancient cork oak forests, and *dehesa* plains characterize this region of western Iberia. Previously farm land, but now Portugal's first privately owned protected reserve, Faia Brava is part of the "Rewilding Europe" project, which aims to restore habitats in the Old World, and our visit here is an important contribution to this wonderful conservation initiative. The dramatic landscape supports an abundance of flora and fauna, including more than 180 species of plants, 25 species of mammals, and more than 100 species of birds, including Golden and Bonelli's eagles as well as Egyptian Vulture. Grazers such as the primitive Garrano horses and Maronese cattle have been reintroduced to the landscape, and they occupy the meadow mosaic high above the meandering Coa River, while natural rock pools that carve through the heart of the reserve providing shelter to Sardinian Warblers, Eurasian Hoopoes, Woodchat Shrikes, and even the scarce Black Wheatear.

**Portalegre and Serra de Mamede Natural Park.** Portalegre will provide us with a nice break in our transition from northern Portugal as we make our way to the south. While in Portalegre, we will visit **Cabeças de Reguengo** guest house and winery. The modern guest house is surrounded by forests, vineyards, olive and fruit trees, and a vegetable garden. We'll enjoy a dinner of home-cooked Portuguese specialties and wines made on the premises, and we'll learn more about Portuguese wines from the owner, João Afonso, who has published three books on wines and writes for one of Portugal's most prestigious wine magazines. Cabeças de Reguengo practices polyculture, so in addition to 100-year-old grape vines, we'll see animals such as sheep and chickens on the premises, and we'll have a chance to learn from João Afonso why these practices make better wine and are better for people and the environment.

Located on the western edge of the Serra of the same name, **Serra de Mamede Natural Park** is characterized by extensive areas of Cork Oak, Pyrenean Oak, and Holm Oak, with Sweet Chestnut at higher elevations. We will take some time to bird the area before heading south to Mértola, and we'll hope to find Great Spotted Woodpecker, Eurasian Jay, Eurasian Nuthatch, Short-toed Treecreeper, Dartford Warbler, and perhaps Blue Rock-Thrush, before packing up and continuing south.

**The Alentejo province: Castro Verde Plains, Barrancos, and Mértola.** Mértola makes a great base for exploring the surrounding rural habitats, and birding in this area might remind some of a safari, so rich is the birdlife in this part of Portugal. The area east of Castro Verde town, known as the Castro Verde Plains, holds a nice variety of habitats: gently rolling plains (still farmed traditionally), small reservoirs, patches of *Cistus* scrub, stands of Holm Oaks, and abandoned farmsteads, all of which are attractive to migrants as well as to resident species. The Castro Verde Plains hold most of Portugal's breeding Great and Little bustards, as well as good numbers of Thekla and Calandra larks, and Montagu's Harriers. Lesser Kestrels and Black-bellied Sandgrouse also nest here in small numbers. The remote and striking Pulo do Lobo Gorge, upriver from Mértola, is good for Blue Rock-Thrush and Rock Bunting, and is a site known for Short-toed Eagle and Black Stork, as well as a breeding pair of Bonelli's Eagle.

The road east and north of Mértola, toward Serpa, traverses some wild country that holds small numbers of Black Storks (a difficult bird in southern Portugal), while the more open areas have Eurasian Thick-knee (Stone Curlew), European Roller, Little Bustard, and Calandra Lark. In areas of *montado* and associated scrubland, Great Spotted Cuckoo, European Bee-eater, European Roller, Sardinian and Dartford warblers, and Iberian Chiffchaffs are fairly common.

Our hotel, Hotel Museu, located on the Guadiana River, is modern and comfortable... with an archaeological dig! When the hotel was being built, Roman ruins were discovered. The ruins are the basis for a museum incorporated into the ground floor, which displays the antiquities found. The hotel is located on the Guadiana River as well, so we may even find some interesting birds on the premises.



We'll visit the Tejo estuary near Lisbon, where we should see numbers of shorebirds, including Dunlins, Common Ringed Plovers. Photograph by participant Kathleen John.

**Lisboa (Lisbon) area.** We'll be birding around two river estuaries near the capital city, those of the river Tejo (the Tagus) and, time permitting, the river Sado. These are rich wintering grounds for many shorebirds, some of which will still be present on the mudflats in May, and there are saltpans, salt marshes, and reedbeds on the fringes of the flats, which offer chances at transient shorebirds, and at rarer species such as Purple Heron and Little Bittern. We'll look for Zitting Cisticola, Eurasian and Great reed warblers, and Savi's Warbler in these areas, along with resident Little Egret, Marsh Harrier, Stone Curlew, Snowy Plover, and Black-winged Stilt. In more upland, farmed areas, the floodplain has small numbers of Little Bustard, Collared Pratincole, and Southern Gray Shrike, while Calandra and Greater Short-toed larks may be in evidence nearby. On the east bank of the Tejo, we'll bird in *montado*, a parkland habitat akin to a savannah that has Cork Oaks scattered throughout. In this handsome country, European Bee-eater, Pallid Swift, Woodchat Shrike, and Common Quail can be still found, and Great Spotted Cuckoo can occasionally be seen here. Raptors possible here include Short-toed and Booted eagles, Black Kite, European Honey-Buzzard, and even Black-shouldered Kite, a rare species in Europe. With good fortune, small numbers of Eurasian Spoonbill and Greater Flamingo will be present somewhere, and we'll keep our eyes peeled for a bittern.

While in the area, we will be based at the beautiful **Casa de Palmela**. Casa de Palmela is a fabulous way to wrap up our experience in Portugal and is located in the heart of **Arrabida Natural Park**, which sits next to the sea between Setubal and the fishing town of Sesimbra. The Casa itself is located on a property that includes vineyards and pastures; this will be a lovely location for our last few days together. Arrabida Natural Park is one of the rare examples of Mediterranean *maquis* (scrubland) in Portugal, and a little birding close to the hotel could yield Melodious Warblers, Long-tailed Tit, Cirl Buntings, Firecrest, Iberian Chiffchaff, and many others.



*The lovely Blue Rock-Thrush is a common breeder that we'll watch for in Douro International Natural Park, Photograph by participant Carla Bregman.*

## Itinerary for Beyond the Ports of Portugal

**Day 1, Sun, 4 May. Departures for Portugal.** There are direct flights to Europe from many U.S. cities, with connections on to Porto. Most flights depart the U.S. in the evening and arrive late morning in Porto. We do encourage you to arrive a day (or more!) early if time allows; Porto is a lovely city, and it has been elected three times winner of Best European destination by online voting and featured in Lonely Planet as one of the top 10 best value cities to visit. We will start in earnest on Day 2 and you will find that being rested and ready, with luggage in tow, will enhance your enjoyment of the tour! Night on the plane.

**Day 2, Mon, 5 May. Arrival in Porto; lunch at Grahams Winery, birding the Douro Estuary, evening visit to the Calem Port House with a Fado concert.** Wow, that's a lot for a first day! Of course, all activities today are optional. Porto is an easy and safe city to get around in, and we won't ever be more than a few minutes' taxi ride from our centrally located hotel. Night in Porto.

**Day 3, Tue, 6 May. To the Douro Valley.** We will depart early for birding along the scenic road that winds along the Douro River and we will make strategic stops en route hoping to find Golden Eagle, Eurasian Green Woodpecker, Blackcap, Great and Eurasian Blue tits, Blue Rock-Thrush, and others. We will have lunch overlooking the Douro River at Quinta da Pacheca and visit the winery to learn a bit more about Portugal's iconic Port Wines and table wines of the Douro. We will continue on our way to Castelo Rodrigo, making birding stops that could yield looks at the scarce Black Wheatear. Night at Casa da Cisterna.

**Day 4, Wed, 7 May. Douro International Natural Park.** After an early breakfast, we will head out for a full day exploring Douro International Natural Park, taking advantage of several lookout spots along the river to scan for raptors like Bonelli's Eagle, Eurasian Griffon, Egyptian Vulture, and Common Buzzard, as well as the scarce Black Stork, and we'll have a picnic lunch at one of the many scenic outlooks along the road. The birding here is rich and there will be no shortage of birds to keep us busy throughout the day; we may find the likes of Great Spotted Woodpecker, Woodchat Shrike, Short-toed Treecreeper, and a few Spanish Sparrows. We will then head back to Castelo Rodrigo in time for a short, guided visit of the village and ruins before dinner. Night at Casa da Cisterna.

**Day 5, Thu, 8 May. Faia Brava Reserve, and travel south to Portalegre.** After packing up and loading our bus, we will take advantage of the morning to visit and do some birding at Faia Brava Reserve, a private reserve that is run by a local NGO that is doing some important work in environmental education and conservation in Portugal. The reserve has feeding stations for Eurasian Griffons and Egyptian Vultures, and a resident pair of Golden Eagles, so we may get closer looks than we have had up to this point. We may also find some Eurasian Nuthatches, Melodious Warbler, Western Orphean Warbler, and common species like the European Goldfinch and Common Chaffinch, but one of our main goals here will be to learn about the local conservation project. We will then continue our way to Portalegre, where we will check in to our hotel, and visit Cabeças de Reguengo; a micro-winery owned by João Afonso, winemaker and a renowned specialist in Portuguese wine. We will partake in a tasting of his wines before heading to a very typical restaurant for a traditional Portuguese meal. Night in Portalegre.

**Day 6, Fri, 9 May. Morning birding near Portalegre, and on to Mértola.** This will be largely a travel day, but this morning we will take some time to bird Sao Mamede Natural Park, which is just a few miles away from our lodging. Here, we hope to find common species like Crested Tit, Eurasian Jay, Common and Pallid swifts, Eurasian Golden Oriole, and Black Redstart. We will return to the lodge for breakfast, then begin our drive south towards Adega José de Sousa, a winery that spearheads the efforts to revive the tradition of making wine in Clay Pots known as Amphora, before continuing on to the historic town of Mértola, a small medieval market town perched between two gorges on a hill above the striking Guadiana River valley. A tributary of this river, the Oeiras, flows in from the west. Though its history extends to Roman times, the more recent Moorish influence is evident, both in the towering castle that dominates the town and in the arabesque architecture and winding cobbled streets of the old quarter. We will spend the remaining part of the afternoon birding and visiting the ruins around the town itself, and we might see Blue Rock-Thrush, Eurasian Hoopoe, Eurasian Crag-Martin, and (lots of!) Iberian Magpies. Lesser Kestrels nest in cavities in the walls of the lovely fourteenth-century Franciscan convent, as well as under the bridge over the Oeiras. Night Hotel Museu, Mértola.

**Day 7, Sat, 10 May. Castro Verde Plains.** After an early breakfast, we will depart to spend the day exploring the grassy plains between Mértola and the town of Castro Verde. Open vistas, superb birding, and wonderful spring flowers are inevitable. We will make various stops and short walks during the course of the day. We will be looking particularly for Great and Little bustards, but our travels should bring us into contact with a wealth of bird species including Black-winged Kite, Lesser Kestrel, Red-legged Partridge, Eurasian Thick-knee, Black-bellied Sandgrouse (scarce and shy), European Roller, Calandra and Greater Short-toed larks, Black-eared Wheatear, and Little Owl, as well as many Montagu's Harriers. Night Hotel Museu, Mértola.



*Montagu's Harrier can be common in the grasslands of the Castro Verde plain. Photograph by participant Kathleen John.*

**Day 8, Sun, 11 May. Guadiana Valley Nature Park.** Today we'll travel eastwards towards the Spanish border searching for Dartford and Subalpine warblers, Black-eared Wheatear, White-rumped Swift, Rock Sparrow (Rock Petronia), and other species en route to the Guadiana Valley Nature Park. We'll listen for the first Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin (a May migrant) in this area, and we'll scan the skies for Cinereous Vulture and Spanish Eagle. We will have a memorable dinner paired with a tasting of the wines made in the area and return to Hotel Museu, Mértola for the night.

**Day 9, Mon, 12 May. Morning birding around Mértola and departure to Palmela.** After a leisurely breakfast, we will spend a little time birding the outskirts of Mértola and visit an area where Bonelli's Eagle has been nesting for several years, and we'll enjoy a scenic view of the town of Mértola before heading out to Palmela. En route, we will make a stop at the environmental education visitor center for a local conservation organization (LPN) and enjoy good looks at a nesting colony of Jackdaws and perhaps at Common Quail, and see more Great and Little bustards. We will then continue on to our lovely lodge at Casa Palmela, where we will make ourselves comfortable and do a little birding on the grounds in the afternoon. Night at Casa Palmela.

**Day 10, Tue, 13 May. Birding The Tagus Estuary.** After breakfast, we will head out to do some birding around the farm fields and estuarine areas of the river Tejo (Tagus). The mix of habitats should provide us with good looks at wading birds, field birds, and a few shorebirds. Among the species we hope to see are Zitting Cisticola, Corn Bunting, Little Egret, Eurasian Linnet, European Goldfinch, Great Reed Warbler, Cetti's Warbler, and perhaps Collared Pratincole, Greater Short-toed Lark, or Purple Heron. Introduced species here include Red Avadavat and Common Waxbill. A Little Bittern would be a real bonus! Night at Casa Palmela.

**Day 11, Wed, 14 May. Alcochete and Serra de Arrabida Natural Park.** Today, we will do some birding around Alcochete. A town along the Tagus River estuary, where we'll try to locate some waterfowl and shorebirds. We should encounter Little Grebe, Greater Flamingo, Black-winged Stilt, Kentish Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Dunlin, Common and Green sandpipers, and many more. We will return to the lodge via Serra de Arrabida Natural Park, and we'll stop along the way to search for birds such as Iberian Chiffchaff, Long-tailed Tit, Firecrest, and Wryneck. Night at Casa Palmela.

**Day 12, Thu, 15 May. Departure from Lisbon.** We will depart Casa Palmela in time to meet noon flights out of Lisbon. Lisbon is a lively and fun city, and we are happy to arrange extra nights here for you. *Boa viagem!*

## About Your Guide

**Marcelo Padua** was born in Belem at the mouth of the Amazon River. Growing up he spent his free time at his uncle's farm in an Amazon rainforest reserve observing everything from insects to mammals and birds. Marcelo began studying English at an early age and attended high school in Middletown, Pennsylvania, in a student-exchange program. He is remarkably fluent and even taught English for a couple of years back home in Brazil.

Following university in Rio de Janeiro, Marcelo transferred to law school in Cuiaba, but working as an English-speaking naturalist guide during school holidays soon made it clear to him that birding was much more than a hobby! With just a year to go until his bar exam, he turned his back on the law to hang out his shingle as a birding guide. He met Bret Whitney in 2005 and embarked on a full-time guiding career with Field Guides in 2010. With his great sense of humor, impeccable organizational skills, and love of seeing birds, Marcelo has quickly become a reference for birding in Brazil, spending over 200 days each year in the field. A warning: Watch out if he sees displaying manakins of any kind! Marcelo makes his nest at the crossroads of the Pantanal and the Amazon in Cuiaba with his wife, Ana.

*"I'd go anywhere with **Marcelo Padua** because I know the tour will be seamless, fun, and we will get the birds."  
D. N., *Beyond the Ports of Portugal**

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for Marcelo's complete tour schedule; just click on his photo.

Your Field Guides leader will be accompanied throughout the tour by a local guide.



## Financial Information

**FEE: \$7425 from Porto** (*Please note that the tour begins in Porto and ends in Lisbon.*)

**DEPOSIT:** \$750 per person

**FINAL PAYMENT DUE:** November 5, 2024

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional):** \$925

**LIMIT:** 12

**All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (which includes a booster for those eligible to have one).** Note too, that many travel destinations may still require proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time. Proof of a booster shot, too, may be a requirement for some travel destinations.

## Other Things You Need to Know

**TOUR MANAGER:** The manager for this tour is Christine Boilard. Christine will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact her!

**DOCUMENTS:** A current **passport**, valid six months beyond the date of your return, is necessary for US citizens to enter Portugal. Starting in the first half of 2025 (no specific date provided by the EU), travelers from visa-exempt countries will be required to have a **travel authorization (ETIAS)** to enter most European countries (including Portugal). If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Portuguese consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

**AIR ARRANGEMENTS:** There are connecting flights from several US cities to Porto. You may plan to arrive in Porto the morning of Day 2, and depart after noon on Day 12 from Lisbon. We do encourage you to arrive a day (or more!) early if time allows; Porto is a lovely city. We will start in earnest on Day 2, and you will find that being rested and ready, with luggage in tow, will enhance your enjoyment of the tour!

Field Guides is a full-service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

**Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.**

**LUGGAGE:** Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

**TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS:** The **tour fee** is \$7425 for one person in double occupancy from Porto. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 11, all meals from lunch on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 12, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader. Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does not include your airfare to and from Portugal, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages other than wine tastings included in the tour, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$925. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

**TOUR LIMITS:** Our limits are firm and we don't exceed the limit by one to accommodate a couple when only one space remains open. However, on occasion, we will send along a guide in training on a tour. In these cases, one seat in the van or bus will be taken by the guide in training. Our guides will have a rotation system within the vehicle so that clients share the inconvenience equally. We hope this minor inconvenience will be more than offset by the advantages of having another guide along.

**TOUR REGISTRATION:** To register for this tour, please contact us at [fieldguides.com/contact-us/](https://fieldguides.com/contact-us/). Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of \$750** per person, or see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by November 5, 2024**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.**

Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

**SMOKING:** Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of that insurance is not refundable, so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

**TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs outside of our cancellation policy as published in the itinerary (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive information from us regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

**Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii.** We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

**THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.**

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