



Lisbon and Evora, Portugal **April 19 - 28, 2018**

The trip begins in Lisbon and ends in Evora, Portugal. Fly to Lisbon where we'll spend 3 days. We'll take the train to Evora, a journey of 1.5-2 hours. After the minimum of 10 reservations is reached, we will advise you to make your air travel reservations. We will meet at the Hotel Lisboa Plaza in Lisbon.

Trip Start: April 19, 2018 – Hotel Lisboa Plaza, Lisbon
Trip Finish: April 28, 2018 – Hotel ADC (Albergaria Do Calvario), Evora, Portugal
Trip Length: 10 days, 9 nights
Trip Cost: \$3,000 per person sharing a room
\$3,250 for a single room

(Trip cost does not include airfare, Hotel Lisboa Plaza nights, train tickets from Lisbon to Evora to Lisbon, meals indicated as on your own, beverages and tips.)

Day by Day Overview - Lisbon City Days

Thursday, April 19 – Meet at 9:30AM in the lobby of the Hotel Lisboa Plaza for a half day walking tour of Lisbon. You'll have the afternoon free to explore on your own.

- Lunch and Dinner on your own.

Friday, April 20 – We'll take a 20-30 minute bus ride to the historical district of Belem. Many of the great Portuguese explorers embarked on their voyages from here, including Prince Henry the Navigator, Ferdinand Magellan and Vasco da Gama. All are memorialized in Belem's Monument to the Discoveries. We'll visit St. Jeronimo's Monastery (15th century), enjoy the scenic waterfront views and treat ourselves to the special Belem custard tart. You'll have the afternoon free to explore on your own. Evening entertainment is a Fado music performance and dinner.

- Lunch on your own. Dinner together.

Saturday, April 21 – A one hour bus ride will take us north to the town of Sintra. Sintra, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is a town of marvelous historic mansions, all set against the backdrop of lush hills. We'll visit Sintra's National Palace where Portuguese royalty lived until the early 20th century. We'll slowly make our way back to Lisbon via the coast and the town of Caiscais, returning to our hotel in the late afternoon.

- Tapas lunch included. Dinner on your own.

Day by Day Overview - Evora Hiking Days

Sunday, April 22 – In the morning travel by train to Evora and then take a taxi from the train station to the hotel. Check in at the Hotel ADC (Albergaria do Calvario). We'll begin this part of the trip with a welcome reception in the Hotel patio at 6:30PM followed by a buffet dinner at the hotel at 7:30PM.

- Tapas lunch together in Evora. Dinner together.
- Lodging: Hotel ADC (Albergaria do Calvario)

Travessa dos Lagares, 3
<http://adcevara.com/>

Monday, April 23 - Megalithic Trail. We take a bus from the hotel this morning to the Megalithic trail. Our walking takes us through a Holm Oak and Cork Oak Forest. This area is dotted by impressive granite boulders which, over 6,000 years ago, were used to build burial sites and magical cult sites. We will visit the Dolmen of Zambujeiro...the biggest in Europe, the Cromlech of Almendres and the Church of Mitra. Transport back to our hotel. Distance today: 8 miles; Elevation: mainly flat with a few small hills.

- Picnic lunch. Dinner together.

Tuesday, April 24 - Evora town tour. Today we have a guided tour of the UNESCO World Heritage city of Evora. We will visit the historical center of this walled city. Evora was an important trading and religious center which is reflected in its buildings and monuments: The Roman temple (the best preserved Roman structure on the Iberian Peninsula), Capela Dos Ossos (the Chapel of Bones) and the main square of Evora which was the site of many executions in the Spanish Inquisition of the 16th century. As we are already in the town center you are on our own for lunch and a free afternoon.

- Lunch on your own. Dinner together.

Wednesday, April 25 - Castelo de Valongo. Today, enjoying gorgeous views along the way, we walk along the lovely river, Degebe. Our destination is the surreal castle of Valongo. Surrounded by vineyards, the castle was built in 1283 and is now a National Monument. The castle is not open. After our picnic lunch we visit the winery of Ervideira for an unusual experience of wine tasting (<http://www.wonderfulland.com/ervideira/>). Not to spoil the surprise for you, but a blind tasting is part of the challenge! Distance today: 8 miles; Elevation gain 500 ft.

- Picnic lunch. Dinner on your own.

Thursday, April 26 - Monsaraz. Today our destination is the medieval fortified village of Monsaraz. Sitting high on a hill and near the border with Spain, its white houses with red tile roofs can be seen from quite a distance. Our walk takes us on tracks gradually climbing to the village gates. Monsaraz is car free, has narrow streets and tiny village squares. It has remains of a castle, a bullring and many interesting shops and cafes. From Monsaraz we have spectacular view of the surrounding landscape. We will visit the village then have free time to walk around on our own or shop.

Distance today: 7 miles; Elevation gain 450 ft.

- Picnic lunch. Dinner on your own.

Friday, April 27 - Silver Water Aqueduct. This morning we walk along the town aqueduct. It was built in the 16th century to solve water shortages in the city. Our route is through beautiful scenery of the Alentejo plain with its small farm holdings. At lunch time we arrive to our guide's farm and are treated to a gourmet picnic lunch! Afterwards we are returned to Evora for last shopping and preparation for tomorrow's departure. Return by bus to our hotel. Distance today: 6 miles; Elevation is mainly flat.

➤ Picnic lunch. Farewell dinner together.

Saturday, April 28 - Breakfast and departure.

Please Note: The above schedule is subject to change due to weather or other circumstances beyond our control.

Flight and Airport Info

Getting to Portugal—Fly from the U.S. to Lisbon, Portugal. American Airlines has direct service to Lisbon from several US East Coast cities. (I usually go through Washington Dulles.)

In Lisbon we stay at the Hotel Lisboa Plaza which is nearest the Sete Rios Station. There will be time to buy your train ticket to Evora once you are in Lisbon. The current train schedule departs Lisbon at 9:50 a.m. and arrives in Evora at 11:25 a.m. and a single ticket is around 13 Euro. This gets you there in ample time to check into your room and get settled, explore the town, have a tapas lunch and have some time to rest before our 6:30PM meeting.

Getting to Hotel Lisboa Plaza - In front of the Lisbon Airport is the Aerobus to the City Center. You can buy the ticket on the Line 1 bus (3-4 Euro). Avenida Liberdade stop is less than 5 minutes' walk from Hotel Lisboa Plaza. The bus takes about 20-30 minutes from the Lisbon airport to the Avenida Liberdade stop. You can also take a taxi from the airport (about \$30 depending on time of day/traffic).

<https://www.aerobus.pt/en-GB/Home-2.aspx>

Weather: Mild spring weather with some possible rain. Daytime temps are low 70's F and nights are low 50's F.

Helpful Websites:

Hotel in Lisbon: <http://www.lisbonplazahotel.com/>
Hotel in Evora: <http://adcevora.com/>
Belem: <http://www.visitbelem.pt/Default/en/Homepage>
Evora information: <http://www.evora-portugal.com/index.php>
Train: <http://www.cp.pt/passageiros/en/train-times>

Reading:

The Portuguese—Barry Hatton (non-fiction) - 2011 (excellent!)

Rick Steves Guide and the Lonely Planet Guide -- travel guides with good information

Skylight - Jose Saramago (fiction) - 2014

Isabella: The Warrior Queen—Kristin Downey (historical fiction) -2014

I have read positive reviews on the following titles, but I have not read the books. I will continue to look for good reads on Portugal. Please share with the group any good titles you find.

The Return of the Caravels and The Inquisitor's Manual - Antonio Lobo Antunes (fiction) - 2003

Night Train to Lisbon—Pascal Mercier (fiction) - 2008

Raised from the Ground—Jose Saramago (fiction) - 2013

Childrens Section of your local library offers good books on Portugal; Henry the Navigator, Vasco de Gama. (I am suggesting this as I don't find adult books very available on the explorers.)