

PORTUGAL – WESTERN ALGARVE

8-day / 7-night centre-based group **GUIDED** National Park & coastal walks in the south of Portugal



Portugal's premier holiday destination is the Algarve and this walking holiday takes you away from the beach crowds to focus on the spectacular National Parks. Explore the wild Atlantic coast with dramatic cliffs, secluded coves and unspoilt beaches, and the most south-westerly point of the European mainland, Cape St Vincent. From the town of Lagos, with its colourful tiled buildings, old town wall and fishing port, walk well-made paths through a variety of landscapes; green hills with eucalypts and colourful wild flowers with prolific bird life and the many typical and historical towns. Savour the fabulous local food and immerse yourself in Portuguese culture as you meander the cobbled streets of the old towns.

Our one-hotel walking holidays offer a choice of two guided walks each day – usually an easier walk or a more challenging option – you decide which one best suits your interests and fitness levels. There is also a free day midweek for you to explore or relax and an excursion may be arranged to local places of interest.

Cost from: **\$3965** per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$1010

Departures: 21 January, 4 February, 18 February, 8 April, 22 April, 2027
High season supplement \$50 - \$330 per person applies to select dates, ask for details.

Includes: 7 nights in comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathrooms, 7 breakfasts, 5 packed lunches, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader, 5 guided walks, local transport to and from the walks.

Not Included: Meals and drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, transport / excursions on the free day. Airport transfers from Faro can be pre-booked at extra cost and we recommend you take these – ask for details.

Accommodation: The 4-star beachfront **AP Oriental Beach Hotel** is in the quieter part of Praia da Rocha, within easy reach of shops, bars, restaurants. The 90 room boutique hotel has décor inspired by Arabic architecture. Comfortable, well-equipped rooms are traditionally styled, and all have a balcony and full air-conditioning. Facilities include a pool and fitness centre, a contemporary restaurant, plus two sea view bars.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on (03) 5750 1441 for details or reservations

Trip Grading: Walking easy to moderate distances. Some sections of rough or rocky terrain. Choice of easier walks of 6-10km on good paths with some rough sections, or harder walks of 9-14km with some rough and rocky paths and ascents up to 390m ascent in a day.

Suggested itinerary (Routes are determined by the walk leaders each day and are subject to change):

Day 1: Arrival Day

Arrive in Praia da Rocha by mid-afternoon. Meet with your guides and fellow walkers after dinner to discuss the week's walks.

Day 2: Lagos Coastline

We explore the impressive Lagos coastline from Porto de Mós to Lagos. There is an option to start in the pretty village of Praia da Luz, a small village set around a sandy bay, sheltered from the Atlantic by towering cliffs, then climb to the Rocha Negra headland, a unique local natural feature of volcanic origin from 150 million years ago. After a descent to Porto de Mós village, enjoy a scenic cliff-top hiking trail that leads to Ponta da Piedade, before walking along the boardwalks to reach the old quarter of Lagos, at the mouth of the Bensafrim River. Lagos bears remnants of Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, and Moorish architecture, including the beautiful Santo Antonio church, also known as the golden church thanks to its impressive Baroque gilt work.

Day 3: The Orange Capital

Silves, the historic capital of the Algarve during the Moorish period, sits above the Arade River, with its terracotta-coloured Castle, former mosque and cathedral, ancient cobbled streets and Roman Bridge reflecting its rich cultural heritage. Our walk either follows historic levadas through fertile countryside, passing citrus orchards, almond groves and traditional farmland before reaching the tranquil Ilha do Rosário, where the Ribeira de Odelouca meets the Arade River; or starts in Estômbar and winds through dry orchards and farmland, passing Sítio das Fontes and following the Arade River towards Silves, with its castle rising above the historic town.

Day 4: Around Sagres

The soaring sea cliffs around Sagres provide views over some of the Algarve's most dramatic scenery. Europe's most south-westerly point is Cape St Vincent, a wild, windswept headland of jagged cliffs rising 70 metres above the crashing waves. Cape St Vincent Lighthouse throws out a beam visible from 60 miles – it's one of Europe's brightest lighthouses. From Cape St Vincent we follow ancient clifftop fishermen's paths and pass Beliche Fortress en route to Fort Sagres, perched on a blustery outcrop over the churning waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The 15th century fortress was built to protect the town from coastal invasion, and ships often sheltered here while waiting for calmer seas to round Cape St Vincent. We continue along the coast to the town of Sagres. The longer walk departs from Telheiro Beach, and follows the Vicentina route to Cape St Vincent where we join the route to Sagres.

Day 5: Free Day

No walks are organised. You may like to take an excursion to visit Lagos and walk the town trail or take a boat trip from Luz or Lagos. Perhaps enjoy a leisurely day and just laze by the pool at the hotel.

Day 6: Monchique Mountains

A panoramic landscape of mountains scattered with small, whitewashed villages, the Serra de Monchique seems made for trekking. This igneous rock massif of low mountains features diverse indigenous wildlife and two of the Algarve's tallest peaks, Foia (997m) and Picota (773m). Our walks provide great views over the Demo Valley and the Monchique range, as well as glimpses of the sea and the distant Odelouca and Arade dams. We visit the archaeological site of Cerro do Castelode Alferce, an Islamic fortification likely erected in the 9th century.

Day 7: Seven Hanging Valleys Trail

Named for the seven watercourses that have shaped the coastal cliffs into spectacular formations, the Seven Hanging Valleys Trail is one of the Algarve's most magnificent hikes. We begin our walk through these undulating valleys at Centeanes. The path is not technically difficult, but there are a few places where the terrain is slippery. The coastal trail passes the Alfanzina Lighthouse and rises above Carvalho Beach. Along the way, there are many lookout points for striking views of limestone stacks and natural arches.

Day 8: Departure day

Tour ends after breakfast. Group transfer to Faro airport is available at additional cost.

Outdoor Travel offers similar centre-based guided walking holidays in Spain, France or Italy including in **Catalonia**, **Provence** and the **Cinque Terre**. Other European destinations include **Croatia**, **Turkey**, and **Ireland**.

Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

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