

OUTDOOR TRAVEL

THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

# EUROPEAN CYCLING HOLIDAYS

2024

## PORTUGAL – SOUTHWEST ATLANTIC COAST & ALENTEJO WINES

8-days / 7-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn easy to moderate cycling holidays



Discover the Southwest Atlantic coast and the pristine natural parks of Estuário do Sado, Lagoas de Santo André, Sancha, and Sudoeste Alentejano, finishing in the Costa Vicentina National Park. Learn about olive oil, cork extraction and its many uses, rice fields, pine forests, windmills, Moorish heritage, historic architecture, Portuguese politics, the dictatorship and many other intriguing facts. The tour starts in the peaceful fishing village of Sesimbra and ends in the resort town of Vila Nova de Milfontes.

A week exploring the most wild and beautiful Portuguese landscapes, cycling on quiet roads and the occasional dirt track, these are generally flat, safe cycling routes with the odd challenging undulation. Cycle along the coast of the oldest and sunniest country in Europe and take the opportunity to cool off each day with a refreshing swim in the blue waters of the Atlantic Ocean. See quaint fishing villages, resort towns and local restaurants serving fresh seafood with award winning Alentejo wines.

**SELF GUIDED** cost from: **\$2635** per person twin share

Season supplements \$210 - \$470 per person on selected departure dates

Single supplements \$615 - \$1565 per person (limited availability)

### Departs:

Saturdays, year-round (subject to a minimum of 2 people)

Other departure days may be available on request and at extra cost.

**Grade:** Easy to moderate cycling over undulating terrain with flat roads and some rolling hills, combination of secondary roads and unpaved paths. Distances each day 25 - 60km.

**Includes:** 7 nights' comfortable accommodation with ensuite bathroom, daily breakfast, luggage transport between hotels, briefing; hire of multi-geared touring bike with helmet, pannier and basic repair kit, cycling jersey, transfer Carvalhal to Santo Andre (optional), route notes and maps, 24-hour emergency telephone support.

**Not included:** Meals not mentioned; personal expenses; gratuities; transfers to/from the starting/end points (ask about airport transfers at extra cost); drinks; entry fees; local city taxes (paid locally); or any extras.

**E-bikes:** Available for a supplement, please ask when booking. Numbers are limited so these must be booked and paid in advance.

**Optional Extras:** GPS hire available at extra cost of \$70 + security deposit – please request when booking.

Guided cycling tours are also available. Please ask for details and costs.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**

## **Suggested itinerary:**

### **Day 1 Arrive in Sesimbra**

Plan to arrive mid-afternoon at the hotel in Sesimbra, a picturesque fishing village in the heart of Arrábida Natural Park, about 40 kilometres south of Lisbon. There is an express bus service between Lisbon and Sesimbra that takes about an hour and has frequent daily departures.

### **Day 2 Sesimbra to Setúbal**

**cycling @ 40km**

Our ride starts with a visit to Sesimbra fisherman's market followed by a climb to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century castle for a view over the port. We ride down into the Arrábida Natural Park towards the sea. After a swim we cycle to the city of Setúbal. For those feeling super fit you can cycle more on a mountain route adding 19km with an extra ascent of 250m.

### **Day 3 Setúbal to Carvalhal**

**cycling @ 35km or 71km**

After breakfast we ride into the old town of Setúbal then take the ferry crossing the Sado River, looking out for its resident pods of dolphins. We ride along the Troia peninsula, surrounded by sand dunes, to a place for wine tasting. Take a swim at the 50 kilometre long white sandy beach, one of the biggest in Portugal and a great place to stop for lunch.

After lunch, watch for wild egrets and storks as we pass rice fields and evidence of a prosperous Moorish heritage. Then cycling on to Santo André and the Sado Estuary Natural Park.

### **Day 4 Santo André to Santiago do Cacém**

**cycling @ 36km**

After the initial warm up ride we explore the Santo André and Sancha freshwater lagoons and observe the wildlife especially the birds. We then follow the coast to visit a unique outdoor library made of marble, followed by a picnic in the cork oak forest. We can visit a very nice local family who own a small olive mill that is several generations old. Our ride ends today in Santiago, an interesting small old town with great aristocratic architecture and a castle.

### **Day 5 Santiago do Cacém to Porto Covo**

**cycling @ 35km**

Santiago do Cacém is a peaceful town that was freed from the Moors in 1157 by the Knights Templar. We have time to explore Santiago; the view from the castle is well worth the climb. Santiago also has the last operating windmill in the region, and we can visit it before cycling towards the coast through green oak forests. We picnic again by the sea with a back-drop of picturesque schist cliffs. We ride the last few kilometres to the hotel in the fisherman's village of Porto Covo. There are impressive beach coves just 5 minutes away from the hotel where you can swim in the afternoon.

### **Day 6 Porto Covo to Vila Nova de Milfontes**

**cycling @ 25km**

Our journey visits the Natural Park of southwestern Alentejo and Vicentina coast. We visit the fortification built to protect the natural harbor – with its small islands – against pirate attacks. We can watch the fishermen unloading their catch of local caught fish and see lamprey eels drying in the sun.

In the afternoon go to the beach or to explore the small streets and alleyways and the shops of Vila Nova de Milfontes. We stay at the riverside farm / hotel of Zambujeiro for two nights. You can enjoy sunbathing on the hotel's garden lawn or take a swim the large pool, which has underwater lighting at night.

### **Day 7 Circular Route from/to Vila Nova de Milfontes**

**cycling @ 60km**

On the last bike ride, we follow roads only used by locals, mostly easy dirt roads. An alternative sealed road route is possible, but you would miss the amazing and colourful cliffs and pinnacle rocks standing precariously in the ocean. There are stork nests here, hidden coves to explore and small beaches.

After a lazy afternoon basking in the sun return to Vila Nova de Milfontes. On the way, we stop for a last swim and drink on the fantastic beach of Almogrove.

### **Day 8 Tour ends in Vila Nova de Milfontes**

The tour arrangements end after breakfast.

Vila Nova de Milfontes is one of the larger resort towns on the Alentejo coast with a regular bus service to Lisbon which takes about 3.5 hours (frequent in summer but less so outside the high season).

## **Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:**

- Call toll free on 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: [info@outdoortravel.com.au](mailto:info@outdoortravel.com.au)
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741, Australia



# ALENTEJO TRADITIONAL FARMHOUSE STAY & CYCLING TOUR

8-days / 7-nights CENTRE-BASED **SELF-GUIDED** easy to moderate cycling holiday



For those clients who want to only unpack once and immerse themselves in the ebb and flow of life in the Alentejo region, we offer a week stay at a traditional farmhouse in the Portuguese countryside. Set amongst the cork oaks, vineyards and olive groves, the farmhouse offers modern comforts in a genuine, rustic atmosphere. The house maintains the traditional architecture of the Alentejo, with big chimneys, a picturesque painted blue stripe, air-conditioning and thick walls that keep the house warm in the cooler seasons and fresh in the summer. In the comfortable living room, there is a huge fireplace to sit by in the long winter evenings and a bar from which to buy your drinks, as well as books, music, television, DVDs and games.

Every morning enjoy a delicious breakfast of homemade jams, cottage cheese with olive oil and oregano or with honey and walnuts, homemade bread and cake, while overlooking the orange grove that supplies your breakfast juice. Discuss the range of possible options with your experienced hosts and then head off on your cycling day. The daily bike rides through the scenic, rolling landscape offer a wide variety of experiences including visits to wineries, artisans and producers of local specialties, medieval villages and the Évora historical center, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This tour offers the flexibility to do everything, ride or do nothing except meander around the farmhouse and relax.

**SELF GUIDED** cost from: **\$2265** per person twin share

**GUIDED** cost from: **\$2845** per person twin share

Season supplements \$90 - \$185 per person on selected departure dates

Single supplements \$395 - \$795 per person (limited availability)

**Departs:** Évora

Daily, year round (subject to a minimum of 2 people)

**Includes:** 7 nights' comfortable accommodation with ensuite, daily breakfast, 3 dinners, Welcome wine, cheese and oil tasting, briefing; hire of multi-geared touring bike with helmet, pannier and basic repair kit, cycling jersey, return transfers from Évora bus station, route notes and maps, 24-hour emergency hotline support.

**Guided tour includes the above and also:** 2 wine tastings and 1 cheese and liqueur tasting, water and fruit, English-speaking tour guide, entry to Bones Chapel, Évora cathedral and Ducal Palace, cycling jersey.

**Not included:** Meals not mentioned; personal expenses; gratuities; drinks; other entry fees; local city taxes (paid locally); or any extras. Airport transfers available on request – please ask for details and cost when booking.

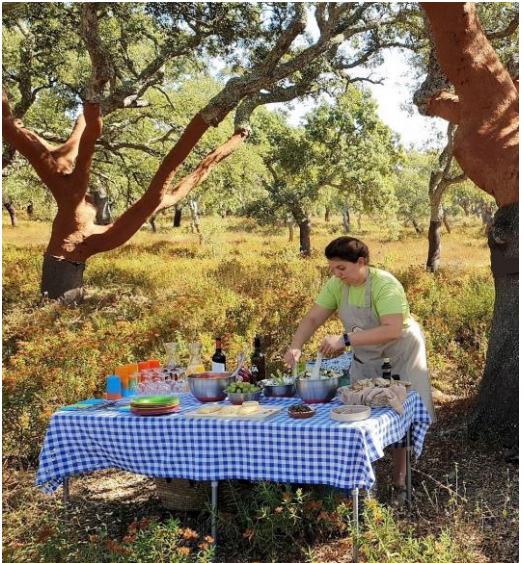
**E-bikes** are available on both the guided and self-guided tours for a supplement, please ask when booking. Numbers are limited so book early.



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There is the option of a cooking class on Alentejo cuisine (at extra cost) and always access to very good Alentejo wine to go with the great food. The tour includes some dinners, but you can always arrange extra dinners at the farmhouse or visit one of the excellent restaurants in the nearby town. This is a holiday ideal for families – children can spend hours playing in the orchards and woodlands that surround the farmhouse.



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