

## PORTUGAL – EASTERN ALGARVE

8-day / 7-night centre-based group guided walking tour in the sunny South of Portugal



Portugal's premier holiday destination is the Algarve and this walking holiday focusses on the laidback and less touristic Eastern Algarve. Based in the charming, historic town of Tavira, this tour will take you to picturesque fishing villages, through the incredibly beautiful and unspoilt Mata Nacional de Conceição (Tavira National Forest) and along a sunny and spectacular coastline teeming with wildlife.

The Algarve is renowned for the beauty of its glorious coast; however a deeper exploration of the region reveals a land rich in history, culture and scenic contrasts. Groves of figs, oranges and almonds are found in abundance between the cork-oak clad slopes of the northern mountains and the golden sands and red cliffs of the south.

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.

**Cost from:**            **\$3430** per person (twin share)            Single room supplement from \$670

**Departures:**        30 November, 7 December 2023  
22, 29 February, 7, 14, 21, 31 March, 7 April 2024

**Includes:**            7 nights' comfortable hotel accommodation with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader, 5 guided walks and local transport to and from the walks.

**Not Included:**      Meals and drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, transport / excursions on your free day. Airport transfers from Faro are not included but these are recommended and can be pre-booked at extra cost - ask for details when you make your reservation.

**Accommodation:** **Hotel Vila Galé Tavira**, a 4-star hotel situated on the banks of the Ria Formosa, in the centre of the town of Tavira, has 268 ensuite bedrooms, simply decorated in a distinctive Arabian theme reflecting Tavira's rich history. The hotel has an indoor/outdoor pool, a spa pool and Turkish bath. Surrounded by Parque Natural da Ria Formose, it is still within easy walking distance to the shops and sidewalk cafés of Tavira.



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

**Suggested itinerary:** *The walk itineraries may change and walk leaders will decide about the walks each day.*

### **Day 1: Arrival Day**

Plan to arrive at the hotel by mid-afternoon. Your guides will meet with you and your fellow walkers after dinner tonight to discuss the walking routes planned for this week.

### **Day 2: Ria Formosa**

This walking route allows us to explore the saltpans and lagoons of the Ria Formosa. Walking along the coast on tracks and small roads we pass through the tiny resort of Pineiro before turning inland and making our way to the resort village of Pedras de El-Rei (Stones of the King). Here we cross over the lagoon and then walk beside the small railway that runs to the vast expanse of Barril Beach. We take a water taxi from Terra Estreita to the delightful fishing village of Santa Luzia then we walk along the promenade before returning to Tavira along the Eco Via – a long distance cycle track that runs the length of the Algarve.

### **Day 3: The Barrocal**

From the banks of the River Alportel we climb up to the fertile plain of citrus trees and vines to the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Church of Santa Cantarina, along tracks between isolated houses and small hamlets. Option to take the longer route via the hamlet of Porto Carvalhoso.

### **Day 4: Palace and Ruins**

We start our walks in the small town of Estói in the foothills of the Serra do Caldeirão. The Rococo Palácio of Estói, with its French inspired gardens, was built at the end of the 19th century for a local aristocrat, and is now a Pousada (state owned hotel). At the other end of the historical scale are the Milreu Ruins, amongst the most important remains of the Roman presence in the Algarve, and now classified as a national monument. After visiting the ruins we walk on quiet tracks and roads through sleepy villages in the low hills of the Serra, returning to Estói where we may like to have afternoon tea in one of the cafés.

### **Day 5: Free Day**

No walks are organised. You may like to take an excursion to historic Faro, perhaps enjoy a leisurely day around Tavira, or just laze by the pool at the hotel.

### **Day 6: Vila Real de Santo António and the Coast**

We travel to the city of Vila Real de Santo António on the Guadiana River. Built in 1773 by the Marquês de Pombal on the site of a small fishing village, we may see remnants of the sardine and tuna fishing industry, which was once its economic mainstay, in a short tour of the city. From the seafront at Vila Real we walk through the Mata Nacional das Dunas Litorais (sand dune woodland) to the tourist resort of Monte Gordo. Walking along the back of the beach on boardwalks, we come to Sertão where we can see the typical fishing boats of the community.

### **Day 7: The Guadiana River**

A coach transfer takes us to the Guadiana River, which forms the border with Spain. We follow a path along the riverbank, then we ascend to Miradouro do Pontal with wonderful views down to the river. We pass through orchards and vineyards on our return.

### **Day 8: Departure Day** Tour ends after breakfast.

**Please Note:** This suggested itinerary should give you a good feel for the walks on this tour, but is subject to change. The final selection of walks during each week will be made by your walking leaders.

### **Footpath and walking information:**



**Easier Walks:** From 8 to 11km on gently undulating paths. Up to 210m of ascent in a day.



**Harder Walks:** From 13 to 16km over undulating terrain with occasional short but steep ascents. Up to 350m of ascent in a day.

**Outdoor Travel** offers similar centre-based guided walking holidays in France or Italy including **Provence** or the **Alps**, in the beautiful **Cinque Terre**, the **Dolomites**, or the **Amalfi Coast**. Other European destinations include **Croatia**, **Turkey** and **Ireland**. Walks are available in many areas of England and Scotland including Wainwright's challenging **Coast-to-Coast** walk, the scenic and wild **West Highland Way** or the **South Downs Way**.

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

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