OUTDOOR TRAVEL
THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

EUROPEAN CYCLING HOLIDAYS

2027

PORTUGAL – SOUTHWEST ATLANTIC COAST & ALENTEJO WINES

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

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: **$3,525** per person twin share
Season supplements $300 - $745 per person on selected departure dates
Single supplements $965 - $2330 per person (limited availability)

Departs: Sundays, year-round (subject to a minimum of 2 people)
Other departure days may be available on request and at extra cost.

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, transfer Carvalhal to Santiago do Cacém (optional), digital APP with 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; printed route information (at extra cost); 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.

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

Grade: Easy to moderate cycling over undulating terrain with flat roads and some rolling hills, combination of secondary roads and unpaved paths.

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. Or book a 45 minute transfer from Lisbon Airport (extra cost ask for details). Welcome briefing and introduction to your bikes at 6pm at your hotel.

Day 2 Sesimbra to Setúbal **cycling @ 45km**
Today's ride starts with a visit to Sesimbra fisherman's market followed by a climb to the 12th Century castle for a view over the port. Cycle down into the Arrábida Natural Park towards the sea. After a swim head to the city of Setúbal. There is an optional 10km ride to the beach. For those feeling super fit you can cycle a mountain route adding 19km with an extra ascent of 250m.

Day 3 Setúbal to Carvalhal / Santiago do Cacém **cycling @ 40km or 80km**
After breakfast ride into the old town of Setúbal then take the ferry crossing the Sado River, looking out for its resident pods of dolphins. Cycle 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. On the afternoon, watch for wild egrets and storks as you ride past rice fields and evidence of a prosperous Moorish heritage. This leads to a transfer stop, or if you are keen cycle through the Sado Estuary Natural Park to your hotel at Santiago do Cacém.

Day 4 Circular Route from/to Santiago do Cacém - Santo André and Sancha Lagoons **cycling @ 50km**
After the initial warm up ride, explore the Santo André and Sancha freshwater lagoons and observe the wildlife especially the birds. Then follow the coast to visit a unique outdoor library made of marble, followed by a picnic in the cork oak forest. You can visit a very nice local family who own a small olive mill that is several generations old. The 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. You 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 you may visit it before cycling towards the coast through green oak forests. Picnic again by the sea with a back-drop of picturesque schist cliffs. Then 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.

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Day 6 Porto Covo to Vila Nova de Milfontes cycling @ 30km

Today's journey takes in the Natural Park of southwestern Alentejo and Vicentina coast. Visit the fortification built to protect the natural harbor – with its small islands – against pirate attacks. You 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. Stay at the riverside farm / hotel of Zambujeiro for two nights. 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, 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, stop for a last swim and drink on the fantastic beach of Almograve.

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). A private transfer to Lisbon Airport can be pre-booked at extra cost, ask for details.

SUPPORTED and **GUIDED** cycling tours are also available. Please ask for details and costs.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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