

PORTUGAL

Douro River Cruise

Optional Extension
Hidden Delights of Portugal

Portugal—Douro River Cruise

April 15–22, 2019 🍷 8 Days 🍷 \$3650

DAY 1 ~ April 15: Arrive Porto, Portugal – Embarkation (D)

Travelers arrive from across The Pond today. We rendezvous this evening aboard the *MS Vasco de Gama*, looking forward to a welcome dinner and to the next 7 days exploring the heart of Portugal with some of our favorite walking friends!

Optional Castro de São Lourenço Celtic Welcome Walk: Our friends from the Borealis walking club offer a “Welcome to Portugal” hike today for travelers who arrive a day early (Arrive April 14 to participate). This experience offers a memorable combination of natural beauty with an archeological introduction to northern Portugal’s Celtic past. We depart by bus from a central hotel in Porto for the Iron Age fortified village of Castro de São Lourenço. The walk is about 4 KM in length with a difficulty rating of 3B, and about 500 feet of cumulative ascent/descent. Along the trail we’ll see funerary structures, Esposende miniature houses, and a couple of lovely old chapels, with views of the Atlantic Ocean. A Celtic lunch is included. ~Estimated price: \$140 per person

DAY 2 ~ April 16: Activities from Porto (BD)

Porto Walk ~ 7 km, rated 2A

Before sailing up the beautiful Douro, we spend the day exploring Porto, a venerable northern Portugal town that gave its name to the famous wine. Porto’s history and development is closely linked to the Douro River, and today the city is the primary city in the north of Portugal. Our walk winds down narrow streets, past 16th century arcaded buildings and Baroque churches, and crosses the city’s iconic 19th century iron bridge. Towards the end of the walk, we visit one of the Port wine cellars that has been storing and shipping Port wine for over 200 years. We enjoy dinner aboard ship this evening, followed by an evening of Fado entertainment, a uniquely Portuguese expression of pathos connected to the sea, fishing, or the fate of the poor.

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YOUR WAI GUIDES

Roger's business background connecting buyers and sellers, and Jana's career as a teacher provide this couple with a gift for connecting with people. Privileged to explore destinations on 5 continents, they appreciate the experiential, paradigm-expanding value of travel. Since retirement, their commitment has increased to discovering the world, fostering a growing desire to share cultural and historical insights as part of the WAI guide team. They look forward to sharing the trails of Portugal with you!



YOUR PORTUGUESE GUIDES

A few years ago, while planning our first Douro River Cruise tour, we were introduced to a merry band of Portuguese hikers who welcomed us to northern Portugal with open arms and uncorked wine bottles! We've established a warm relationship with these fun and friendly foodies, who always seem to blend Portugal snacks with walking! In addition to our own research and walk planning, they are the ones we look to for new ideas and out of the way unknown gems.



DAY 3 ~ April 17: Cruising: Porto to Peso da Régua (BLD)

Villa Nova de Gaia Walk ~ 3 km, rated 1A (unsanctioned)

Before leaving Porto, we explore more of the fascinating scenes and history of Villa Nova de Gaia on a short walk with our Borealis walking friends. Late morning, our ship, the *MS Vasco de Gama*, sets sail up the Douro cruising beneath Porto's impressive ensemble of bridges. These postcard panoramas are a prelude to our first vineyard views of the Douro, which end in the little town of Peso da Régua, our home for the evening.

DAY 4 ~ April 18: Cruising: Régua to Vega de Terrón (BLD)

Corgo Valley Vineyards Walk ~ 7 km, rated 2B

A short bus ride from Régua connects us once again with our Borealis friends for an easy walk down the Corgo River Valley, our first official walk in the famous Port wine region. The Corgo is a tributary of the Douro and the trail begins in the quiet village of Alvações, far from the tourist track. The walk serves as a great introduction to the wine culture of the Douro region and northern Portugal, and the panoramas of this relaxing experience are a wonderful introduction to the rest of the journey. Around lunch time, we join our shipmates upstream in Pinhão and savor an afternoon of sailing further east to Vega de Terrón. Tonight's after-dinner entertainment is flamenco, an expressive and sometimes intense form of dance originating in the south of Spain.

DAY 5 ~ April 19: Activities from Vega de Terrón:

Excursion to Salamanca, Spain (BLD)

Salamanca Spain Walk ~ 7 km, rated 1B

Situated in the center of Spain's Castilla y León region, the tapestry of Salamanca's story is ancient and includes threads from Celtic-Iberian tribes, Romans, Moorish invaders, the Christian kingdom of Leon, and the Iberian Peninsula's oldest university, founded in the 13th century. A guided walking tour showcases the highlights of this UNESCO World Heritage Site including the university, the House of Shells, and the beautiful Plaza Mayor (Main Square), formerly a site of bullfighting and now a popular gathering point for locals and



visitors alike. Our day in Salamanca is punctuated in the middle by a locally themed lunch on the Plaza Mayor. At the end of the day, we look forward to dinner back aboard ship and an evening of entertainment.

DAY 6 ~ April 20: Cruising: Barca d'Alva to Pinhão (BLD)

Provesende Walk ~ 6 km, rated 3B

Our morning cruise takes us back downstream as we begin our westward return toward Porto. Following lunch on board ship, our Borealis friends meet us in Ferradosa and transport us high above the Douro to the village of Provesende, one of the first to take advantage of the official 18th century demarcation of this part of the valley for the exclusive production of Port wine. Today's trail is nearly all downhill and offers more magnificent views of vineyard-covered slopes as far as the eye can see. The walk concludes with a wine and cheese tasting before we board our ship in Pinhão and prepare for a gala dinner this evening.

DAY 7 ~ April 21: Cruising: Pinhão to Porto (BLD)

We kick off our final cruise day with a visit to the dramatic palace of Casa de Mateus, constructed between the 15th and 17th centuries. The Counts of Vila Real were wealthy nobles whose legacy extends from the unique Palace and Gardens of Mateus to the famous Mateus Rose wine. After a tour of the home and gardens, some of Portugal's finest, we enjoy another sample of local wine before rejoining our ship in Régua. The Douro adventure is completed with an afternoon of sailing, a farewell dinner to reminisce about our voyage along this quiet but historic river, and an evening full of traditional folk entertainment.

DAY 8 ~ April 22: Depart from Porto (B)

Our Douro River Cruise comes to an end this morning. Travelers not continuing on for the Hidden Delights of Portugal trip say a reluctant farewell to walking friends made over the past 7 days.



Portugal—Douro River Cruise

April 15–22, 2019 🍷 8 Days 🍷 \$3650

What's Included

- All land travel as outlined
- Port fees and cruise fuel surcharges (subject to change)
- Accommodations for 7 nights in Twin Cabins on Lower Deck aboard our ship, the *MS Vasco de Gama* (Pricing is based on double occupancy ~ Call us for info on single accommodations.)
- 19 meals: All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 7 dinners as denoted (BLD)
- All inclusive drink package: mineral water, soft drinks, white and red wines, local beer, coffee/tea
- Evening entertainment aboard ship at least 3 nights
- 5 walks as listed, with commentary by local guides
- Fees for walking credit (IVV sanctions requested)
- Two WAI tour leaders throughout
- Cultural and historical expertise of local guides at ports of call
- Customized shore excursions at most ports with WAI private coach and walk program
- Tips for local guides/coach drivers and group meals (*tips for on-ship personnel not included*)

Activities/Visits to

- Historic Porto (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Port wine cellar visit
- Corgo River Valley
- Douro Wine Region (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- All day visit to Salamanca, Spain
- Special Plaza Mayor lunch – Salamanca
- Provesende with wine and cheese tasting
- Vila Real Tour with visit to Mateus Palace and wine tasting
- More fun stops than we can list!

Optional Excursions

- Castro de São Lourenço Celtic Welcome Walk (Day 1 – requires arrival one day early)

CABIN UPGRADES

The Adventure price includes cabins on the Lower Deck with large (non-opening) picture windows just above water level.

Upgrades are available to the Middle Deck and Upper Deck, both cabin types featuring large picture windows that open. Space in all categories is limited. See pricing options below:

- MIDDLE DECK: \$225 per person upgrade
- UPPER DECK: \$350 per person upgrade



WAI is a registered seller of travel in Washington (601 677 299) and California (2039567-40). Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the state of California.



Hidden Delights of Portugal Extension

April 22–28, 2019 🍷 7 Days 🍷 \$2290

DAY 1 ~ April 22: Porto – Ponte de Lima (BD)

Guimarães Walk ~ 3 km, rated 1A; Ponte de Lima Walk ~ 8 km, rated 1B

After stopping to gather travelers joining us only for Hidden Delights of Portugal, we drive north to Guimarães, another ancient town whose primary story relates to the Middle Ages. In 1128, the key battle in the movement for independence from Spain was fought in the fields surrounding Guimarães Castle. In the decades that followed, Guimarães became the center of the young nation of Portugal. The city is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and our walk explores the historic core, including the 10th century castle and the picturesque medieval lanes and baroque palaces of this wonderful walking town. Farther north, Ponte de Lima is a delightful small town just a stone's throw from the Spanish border. Its claims to fame are twofold: a dramatic Roman bridge (renovated in the Middle Ages) over the Lima River and the first official town charter offered by the queen of the new Portuguese nation in the 12th century. Our walk here parallels the river, crosses the bridge, and explores the charms of this attractive village far off the radar of American travelers.

DAY 2 ~ April 23: Ponte de Lima – Bussaco Forest (BLD)

Gerês National Park Roman Roads Walk ~ 7 km, rated 3C

Today's experience takes us deep into the hills of Gerês National Park in northern Portugal. Borealis leads us on a trail that features tiny, traditional granite villages, photogenic old grain storage structures (Espigueiros), and a Roman road, demarcated by impressive granite Roman mile markers, that was a significant link between major Iberian Peninsula cities during the Roman period. Highlights of the day include a corn bread workshop in one of the villages and a traditional rural lunch. We continue south this afternoon to the delightfully surprising Bussaco Forest for a two night stay in a lovely royal hunting lodge, converted into a luxury hotel and adjoining the walls of a 17th century monastery.

DAY 3 ~ April 24: Activities from Bussaco Forest (B)

Bussaco Forest Walk ~ 8 km, rated 2C

Bussaco Forest is an enigma. It lies at a confluence of weather forces from the Atlantic and Mediterranean, giving it the ability to host plant species from both spheres. Catholic orders discovered the unique climate, and solitude, of the forest centuries ago, and it was barefoot Carmelite monks who gave it much of its current character. The other, more recent, contributor was Portuguese royalty, who moved in when Catholic orders were abolished in the early 19th century. Both monks and kings planted exotic trees from around the world, samples from Portugal's far flung naval empire, resulting in a lush and diverse botanical garden. Our walk here explores the forest, and passes many remnants of the Carmelite period, including a 20-station Way of Suffering route. The afternoon takes us to nearby Coimbra. The university here is Portugal's oldest (13th century), is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, and boasts a delightful Harry Potter-esque library as well as abundant examples of impressive Old World architecture. One of our favorite attractions in Coimbra, however, is the plethora of mouth-watering pastries!

DAY 4 ~ April 25: Bussaco Forest – Lisbon (BD)

Bidding farewell to our forest palace this morning, we depart Bussaco and chart a course to the Atlantic Ocean and the village of Nazaré, known for the world's largest waves and for its rich history of fishing. Continuing south to Óbidos, we encounter a picturesque example of a recurring European theme. A city is favored by royalty or geography and prospers during the medieval period, building fine palaces and squares and other public edifices. Favor fades, wars and plagues take a toll, and the town drifts into obscurity, falling into a slumber which preserves its monuments from the natural impacts of change and development. Óbidos was discovered in the modern age of tourism, awakened from its slumber to welcome visitors with its charming old palaces, majestic stone churches, winding cobblestone lanes, and fully intact fortifications. Following lunch and free time in Óbidos, we continue south to Lisbon for check-in and a tasty local dinner.

DAY 5 ~ April 26: Activities in Lisbon (B)

Lisbon (Alfama, Rossio, Chiado, Bairro Alto) Walk ~ 6 km, rated 2B

Lisbon Belém Walk ~ 2 km, rated 1A

Lisbon is a delightfully unique taste of Old Europe. A morning transfer takes us first into the Alfama, Lisbon's oldest quarter and the only part of town to survive the catastrophic 1755 earthquake. A visit to St. George Castle introduces us to the medieval story of Lisbon and its struggle against the Moors of northern Africa. But the walk through the picturesque, winding lanes of this district, laundry flapping in the breeze, provides the images of Alfama most likely to last. Our walk continues through the newer Baixa district, as well as the cobblestone lanes of historic Bairro Alto before ending in Rossio Square for lunch. The afternoon features historic Belém with visits to Belém Tower and the Monument to the Discoveries, testament to the vision and strength of mariners and conquerors that made Portugal Europe's first major colonial power. Nearby Jerónimos Monastery, also on UNESCO's list, is an architectural wonder, Portugal's preeminent example of the Manueline style popularized during the golden age of The Discoveries. Built of warm yellow sandstone, the cloisters are a study in symmetrical beauty.

Fado Dinner & Show: Travelers with a yen to dive deeper into Portuguese culture are invited to join us this evening for a Fado experience. Fado is the melodic but soulful music of Portugal, initially developed as an expression of the angst of fisher wives awaiting the overdue homecoming of their men. The experience includes an excellent meal along with the show and runs from approximately 8 pm to 10 pm. ~Estimated price: \$80





DAY 6 ~ April 27: Activities from Lisbon (BD)

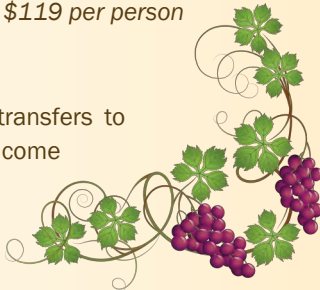
Optional Sintra Pena Palace Gardens Walk ~ 4 km, rated 2B

Our final day in Portugal is a free day. Lisbon has much to offer and we encourage you to explore its attractions on your own. We do, however, have an excursion available for those who would like us to plan the day.

Pena Palace Gardens Walk & Sintra Palace Tour: We depart by bus this morning for an hour-long ride into the hills surrounding Lisbon. Long a summer hideaway for Portuguese royalty, Sintra offers several worthy attractions. Our visit begins with a short walk in the gardens of Pena Palace, bursting with botanical immigrants transplanted from all corners of Portugal's far-flung empire. Just below Pena Palace is cute-as-a-button Sintra Old Town, where we enjoy a guided tour of the Royal Palace (predecessor to Pena Palace) and an intriguing catalog of Portuguese history from the 14th century, through the golden Age of The Discoveries, and up until the transition of the royal residence to Pena Palace in the 19th century. We return to Lisbon in the late afternoon with enough time to prepare for our Farewell Dinner. ~Estimated price: \$119 per person

DAY 7 ~ April 28: Depart from Lisbon (B)

After breakfast, travelers can arrange their own transfers to the nearby airport at their leisure. We hope you come away from this Iberian experience with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the many Hidden Delights of Portugal!



Optional Extension Hidden Delights of Portugal

April 22-28, 2019  7 Days  \$2290

What's Included

- All land travel as outlined
- Superior tourist-class or better hotel accommodations
- 12 meals: All breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 4 dinners as denoted (BLD)
- 6 walks as listed
- Fees for walking credit (IVV sanctions requested)
- Two WAI tour leaders throughout
- Cultural and historical expertise of local guide throughout
- Tips for guides, coach drivers and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy.
A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$400.

Activities/Visits to

- Guimarães (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Ponte de Lima
- Gerês National Park with corn bread workshop
- Bussaco Forest
- Coimbra University Library (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Coimbra walking tour
- Coastal town of Nazaré
- Óbidos walled city
- Castelo St. George
- Belém Tower
- Jerónimos Monastery (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- More fun stops than we can list!

Optional Excursions

- Fado Dinner & Show (Day 5)
- Pena Palace Gardens Walk & Sintra Royal Palace Tour (UNESCO World Heritage Site) (Day 6)



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