

# Pyrenean Group Holidays

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## Guided hiking holiday in Portugal The Rota Vicentina 13 nights (8 nights half board, 5 nights B &B)

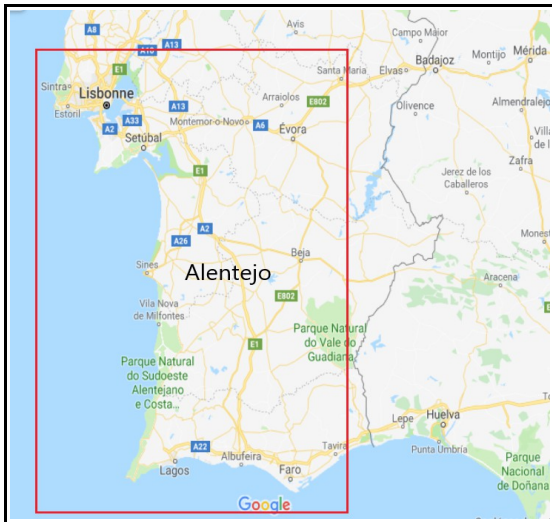
### Introduction

The Rota Vicentina is a long-distance footpath which opened in 2013 in a relatively untouched region of Portugal.

The trail is mainly in the Alentejo region which covers a third of Portugal's land mass but has just 4% of its population. Quiet villages and small well kept towns add colour and interest to each day.

We will be following the Fishermen's Trail along the coast and the Historical Way which is more inland, walking the best of both trails. We complete our hike at the majestic Cape St Vincent, the extreme South West corner of mainland Portugal.

### South West Portugal



### The routes



## **Trip highlights**

- Wild and unspoilt coastal scenery
- Dramatic cliffs and sandy beaches
- Attractive villages
- Luggage transferred

## **Suitability**

The trip is graded Moderate to Challenging. Some long days but generally well graded ascents and descents.

## **Itinerary**

### **Day 1**

#### **Arrive at Lisbon**

Private rooms at local hotel.

Free day.

Orientation meeting in the evening.

Evening meals available at hotel restaurant (not included in holiday price)

### **Day 2**

#### **Transfer to Santiago do Cacem**

A morning transfer by private coach, about 2 hours.

Afternoon exploring the town.

Meals included: Breakfast

Evening meal at nearby restaurant (not included in holiday price)



*Fortified castle at Santiago do Cacem*

### **Day 3**

#### **Vale Seco to Santiago do Cacem**

A short drive with private transport to Vale Seco and then return on foot to Santiago do Cacem following the Historical Way through well-kept farmland and cork oak woods.

10 miles/16 kms, 5 hours. Total ascent 1300 ft/400 metres. Total descent 1150 ft/350 metres

Meals included: Breakfast

Evening meal at nearby restaurant (not included in holiday price)

### **Day 4**

#### **Vale Seco to Cercal do Alentejo**

A short drive with private transport to Vale Seco and then continuing on foot along the Historical Way to Cercal do Alentejo via rolling countryside and the Campilhas dam.

13½ miles/22 kms, 6 hours. Total ascent 650 ft/200 metres. Total descent 800 ft/250 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## Day 5

### Transfer from Cercal do Alentejo and half day walk to Vila Nova de Milfontes

Private transport to start the first section of the coastal trail to Vila Nova de Milfontes. A free afternoon to explore the attractive town and perhaps enjoy the magnificent beach.



#### *Vila Nova de Milfontes*

7 miles/11 kms, 3 hours. Total ascent 350 ft/100 metres. Total descent 350 ft/100 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## Day 6

### Vila Nova de Milfontes to Almogrove

We cross the Mira river using a small passenger ferry before following the gently undulating coastal path passing between farmland and small coves. A short stretch along the beach can be done barefoot before continuing along the coast and cutting inland to the small village of Almogrove where we will have transport arranged to take us back to Vila Nova de Milfontes for a second night at the hotel.



#### *Brejo Largo beach walk*

9 miles/14 kms, 4 ½ hours. Total ascent 300 ft/100 metres. Total descent 300 ft/100 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## Day 7

### Almograve to Zambujeira do Mar

We take a short ride back to Almograve to continue along the Fishermen's Trail with small fishing harbours and rocky cliffs. This section is famed for the storks which nest along the cliffs.



14 miles/22 kms, 6 hours. Total ascent 650 ft/200 metres. Total descent 650 ft/200 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## Day 8

### Zambujeira do Mar to Odeceixe

From Zambujeira do Mar we follow the Fishermen's Trail past the dramatic cliffs of folded sedimentary rocks. We spend the night in the attractive village of Odeceixe where we will eat out in the evening.



13 miles/21 kms, 6 hours. Total ascent 1000 ft/300 metres. Total descent 1000 ft/300 metres

Meals included: Breakfast

Evening meal at nearby restaurant (not included in holiday price)

## **Day 9**

### **Odeceixe to Aljezur**

This day on the inland Historical Way we cross farmland where sweet potatoes, maize, peanuts and tomatoes are growing, interspersed with areas of pine and eucalyptus trees. We follow a section of an important irrigation canal and pass through the village of Rogil which has a very attractive café before going through the Costa Vicentina Parque Natural which abounds in endemic plants and information panels. We finish at Aljezur which is dominated by a legendary castle, one of the seven depicted on the flag of Portugal.



14 miles/22 kms, 5½ hours. Total ascent 300 ft/100 metres. Total descent 300 ft/100 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## **Day 10**

### **Day off at Aljezur**

Time for some local walks and/or to visit the Aljezur Castle that was occupied and renovated by the Moors in the 10th century . Later the castle was fortified by the Christians after the town was retaken in 1249 by the army of the Portuguese king, D. Afonso III. Aljezur was the last castle in the Algarve to be taken by the Christians.



A second night at Aljezur

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal



## **Day 11**

### **Aljezur to Carrapateira**

After a short taxi ride we continue hiking on the inland Historical Way passing vineyards, cork oak woods, wild olives and meadows before returning to the coast and the gorgeous Bordeira beach with the chance of a swim before heading along red rock cliffs to the village of Carrapateira where we finish.

12 miles/20 kms, 5 ½ hours. Total ascent 800 ft/250 metres. Total descent 800 ft/250 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## **Day 12**

### **Carrapateira to Vila do Bispo**

Continuing from where we left off yesterday we return to the dramatic coast before heading inland crossing mixed farmland to our hotel at Vila do Bispo.

The small town has a range of small shops, bars and restaurants and is where we spend the night.



10½ miles/17 kms, 5 hours. Total ascent 1100 ft/350 metres. Total descent 800 ft/250 metres

Meals included: Breakfast

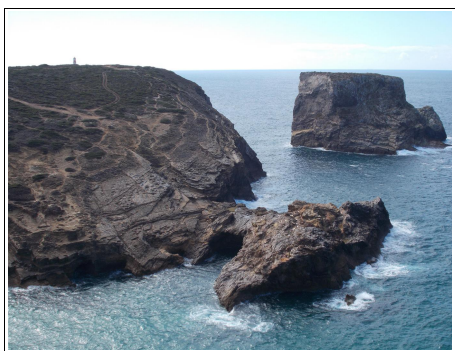
Evening meal at nearby restaurant (not included in holiday price)

## **Day 13**

### **Vila do Bispo to Cabo de St Vicente**

This short walk leads us back to the dramatic red cliffs which we follow towards the beckoning lighthouse set high on the cliffs of Capo de St Vicente. The Historical way and the Fishermen's trail combine to this magical place which signals the end of the journey.

We will use private transport to take us the 6 kilometres to the small town of Sagres giving us time to enjoy the delights of the luxury hotel where we will spend the night.



### ***Capo de Vicente***

9 miles/15 kms, 4 hours. Total ascent 650 ft/200 metres. Total descent 650 ft/200 metres

Meals included: Breakfast and evening meal

## **Day 14**

### **Transfer to Lisbon**

After breakfast we have private transport arranged for the return to Lisbon – about 4 ½ hours

### **Accommodation**

A mixture of hotels and small guest houses, all with private rooms and usually private bathrooms.

### **Baggage transfers**

During the trip all baggage transfers will be arranged between accommodations. 1 bag per person.

### **Local transport**

It is planned to use local transport on some days and the price of this is included in the holiday price. This includes mainly private hire minibuses or taxis.

### **What is not included**

Evening meals on 5 days when we eat out at local restaurants  
Lunches. It will be possible to buy food or packed lunches in all the villages/towns where we stay.  
Medical & travel insurance.  
Personal expenses including drinks at the hotel.  
Entrance fees

### **What is included**

Accommodation and meals as detailed above  
Lisbon transfers at beginning and end of trip  
Local transport as detailed above – 7 journeys  
All baggage transfers between hotels  
Experienced guide for the whole trip