

# Cycling Europe

## PORTUGAL- PORTO TO LISBON

### CYCLING THE ATLANTIC COAST

#### SELF-GUIDED CYCLE TOUR 12 DAYS/11 NIGHTS -2019



Your tour commences in colourful Porto, Portugal's second city and the gateway to the Douro region, home of Port wine. Follow the Atlantic Coast discovering cultural and natural beauties along the route. There are beautiful beach resorts and small towns that give a glimpse of Portuguese culture and life. You'll cross the Sao Jacinto Dunes Nature Reserve, the Ria de Aveiro and the estuary of the Vouga River to reach Aveiro City, a little 'Venice' with canals and waterways. Further south cycle through pine forests and across the dunes system with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the seaside at typical fishing villages. Arrive Obidos, the most well preserved medieval village in Portugal then bike to Sintra, a UNESCO World Heritage site and a land of castles and palaces. End your journey at Cape Roca and transfer to Lisbon.

#### Day 1: Arrive Porto

You will be met and transferred to your hotel on arrival.

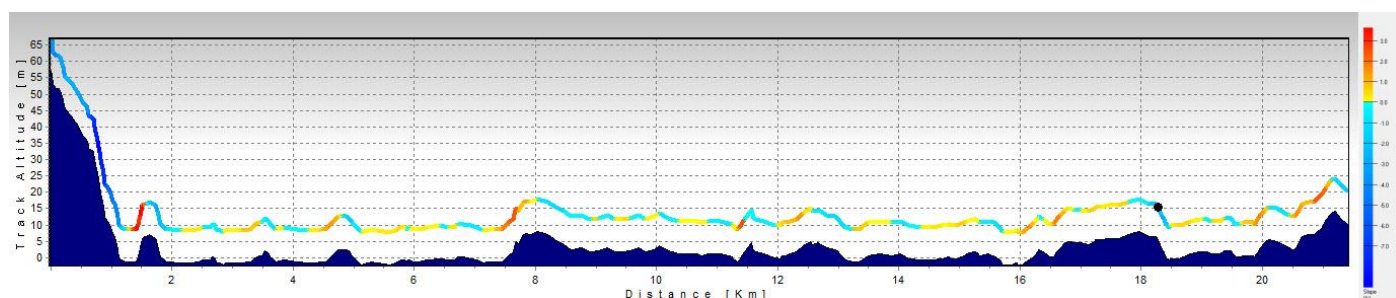
Porto is very accessible with many pedestrian areas. Explore the Old Town where there are fine buildings, some in a crumbling state that simply adds to their charm. Many styles and periods mix in Porto: Romanesque churches, baroque gold, Portugal's classic Manueline style, art nouveau cafes and shops and also contemporary art such as the work of world-famous Alvaro Siza Vieira, one of the world's best architects and Porto's most celebrated son. Don't miss the Dom Luis bridge over the Douro River, Igreja dos Clérigos and the beautiful architecture of Sao Bento

Station. The river front and old fishermen district, Ribeira, is a patchwork of colourful tiled buildings. Of course you will find tiles covering many other buildings all over the city and indeed across Portugal: churches, floors, fountains. Port wine and more - even if you don't like to drink it, you will still admire the big Port cellars and 'rabelo', traditional boats of Gaia that ply across the Douro River. Names like Sandeman and Taylors are common as much of the Port wine trade was done with Britain. Porto is also very close to the coast and the beach at Matosinhos is easily connected with the centre of town by metro. For foodie fans, a visit to the city's most emblematic market is a must: Mercado do Bolhão.



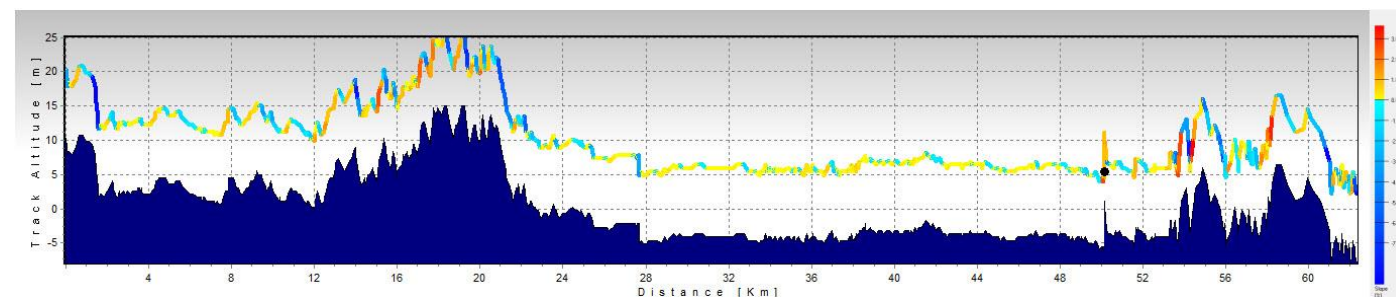
## Day 2 Porto to Espinho (21 km, +100m)

Leave Porto through the Old Town and cross the Don Luis Bridge, designed and planned by Gustave Eiffel. Almost all the way to Espinho you follow a cycle path near the coastline, crossing numerous small beaches. Praia de Valadares, Francelos and Miramar are good spots to stop for a swim and to enjoy the sun. Praia de Miramar is also worth a stop to visit the Church os Senhor da Pedra, a small chapel at the sea edge. Lodging at Espinho in a 4\* hotel



## Day 3: Espinho to Aveiro (63km, +200m)

An easy and enjoyable day by the sea, almost completely flat. Cycle through pine forest to reach Ria de Aveiro. The River Vouga Delta (Ria de Aveiro) was formed in the 15th century, when the sea retreated. Nowadays it's a favourite place to collect shellfish and enjoy water sports. The dune system of São Jacinto is a natural reserve for walks along the beach and to view the abundant birdlife. From São Jacinto catch the ferry to Aveiro. Lodging in Aveiro in a 4\* hotel.

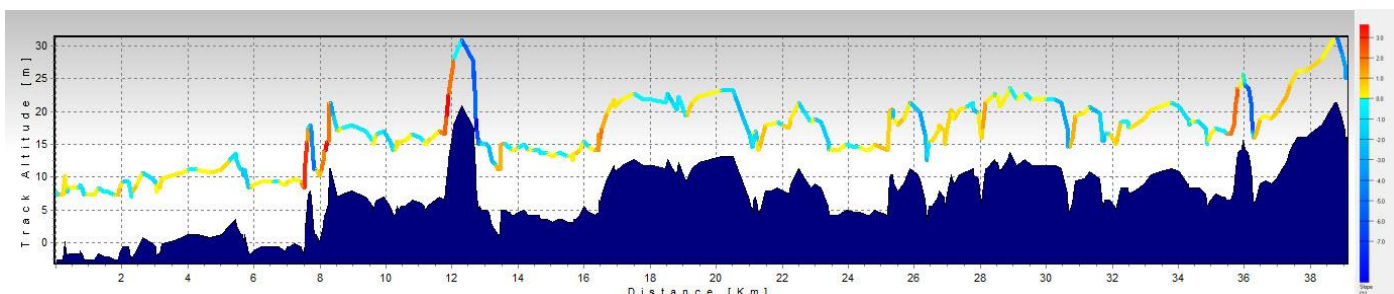


## Day 4: Aveiro to Praia da Mira (40km, +150m)

Cycle out of Aveiro and its canals to reach a dune system close to Ria Aveiro. You will follow this huge dune system by an inner road that passes small villages overlooking the river. Stop along the way and climb the dunes, just a few metres from the road, to see the sea. At the end of the river circuit, bike through small fields and vegetable gardens to arrive the village of Praia da Mira. Lodging at Praia da Mira in 4\* hotel



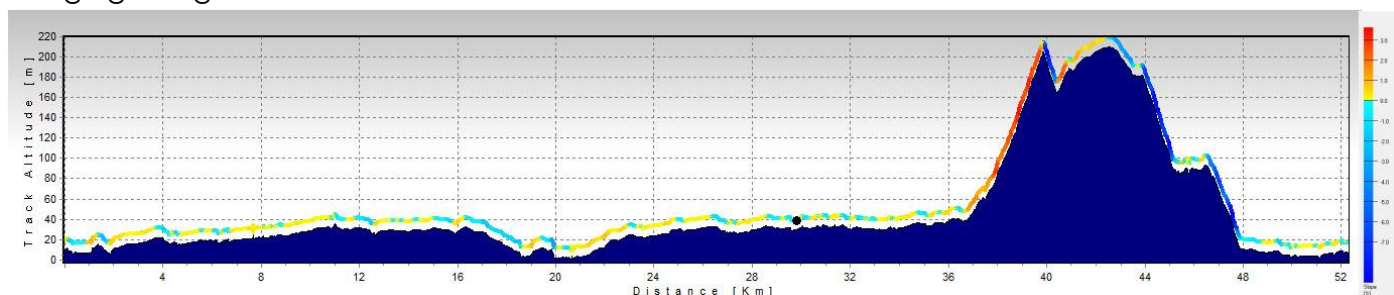




### Day 5: Praia da Mira to Figueira da Foz (57km, +400m)

Enjoy the peace and tranquillity of today's route crossing a massive dune system covered in pine forest. Cycle through this immensely scenic area where roads are empty and distances between points are longer than previous day's. Near Figueira da Foz is the big climb of the day. You cycle up to the Serra da boa Viagem and then down to the lighthouse of Cape Mondego. Follow the slopes of the hill into Figueira da Foz and its huge sandy beach.

Lodging at Figueira da Foz in 4\* hotel



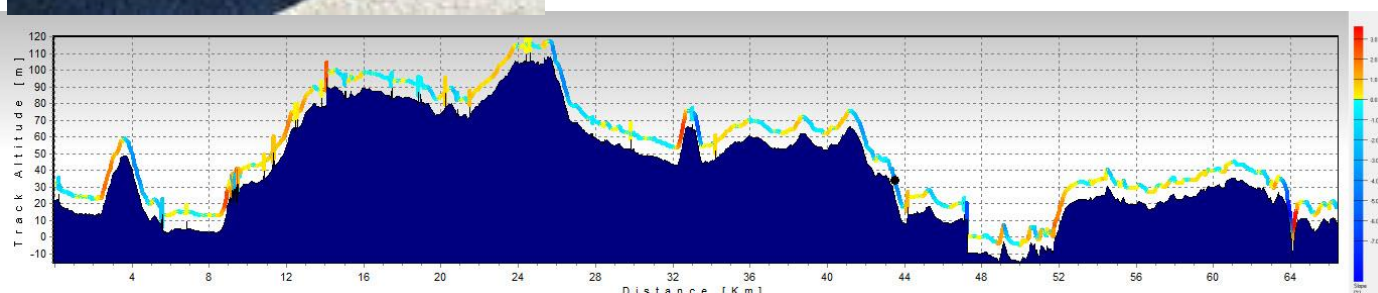
### Day 6: Figueira da Foz to Sao Pedro de Moel (62km, +550m)



Cross the bridge over the Mondego River. After a few kilometres on a once important road, you will join a cycling path, the Atlantic Way near Carriço, that leads through the Pinhal de Leiria, a pine tree forest which was planted by a king in the 14th century to provide the timber to build ships. The fleet built from these trees was the one that discovered the New World and the sea route to India (hundreds of years later). There are numerous small beaches along the cycle path in this immense pine forest. Distances are not as long as the day before.

Seaside towns like Praia do Pedrogão and São Pedro de Moel are like oases in this countryside of pine forest covered dunes.

Lodging at 4\* hotel São Pedro de Moel

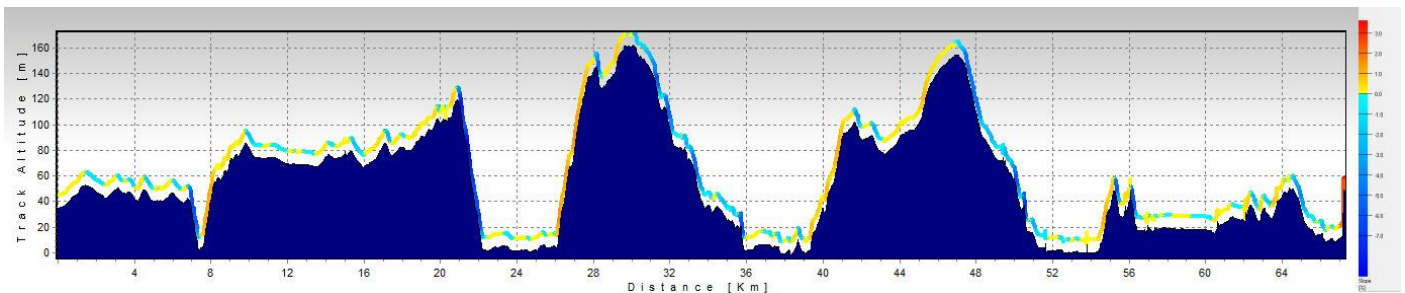




### Day 7: Sao Pedro Moel to Obidos (67km, 850m+)

Ride through pine forests passing beautiful beaches to arrive at Nazaré, a typical Portuguese fishing village and famous surf spot. Follow a scenic route along the coast to Óbidos, the most beautiful and well preserved medieval village in Portugal, with an incredible castle guarding over it. Wander the cobbled lanes and streets to soak up the delightful atmosphere.

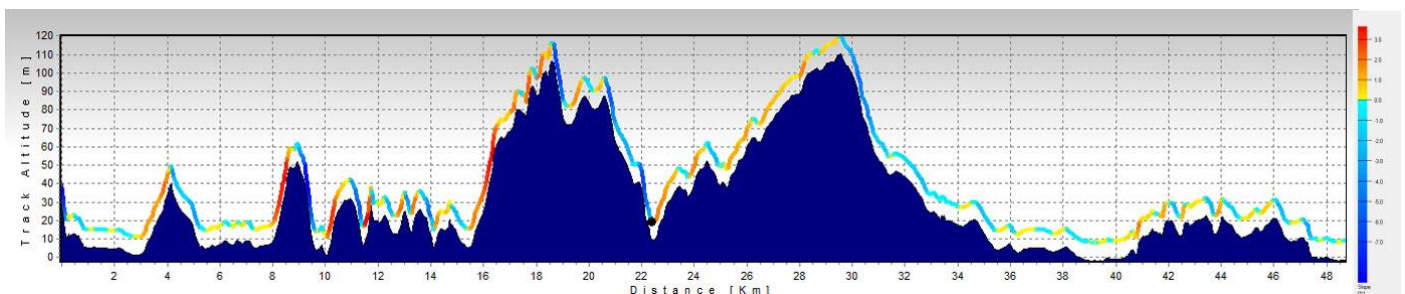
Lodging at 4\* hotel



### Day 8: Obidos to Peniche (52km, 550m+)

Ride to the coast passing a beautiful lagoon. Discover Peniche Peninsula, an area full of fishing traditions and incredible rock formations and cliffs. Finish the day at wild and beautiful Carvoeiro Cape then return to Peniche, spectacularly set on a headland surrounded by sea, for overnight accommodation.

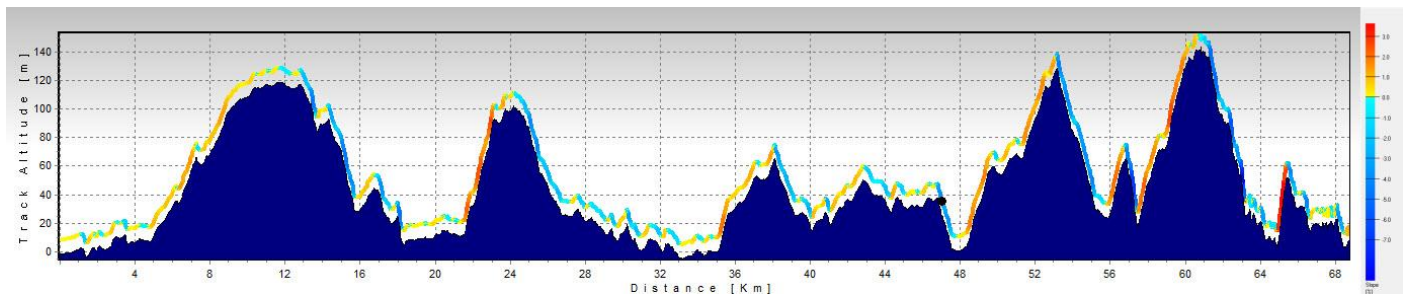
Lodging in a 4\* Hotel



### Day 9: Peniche to Ericeira (73km, 900m+)

Today you ride both seaside and inland through a hillier region punctuated by fields of different crops and colours to reach whitewashed Ericeira, picturesquely draped across sandstone cliffs above the blue Atlantic. Lodging 4\* hotel



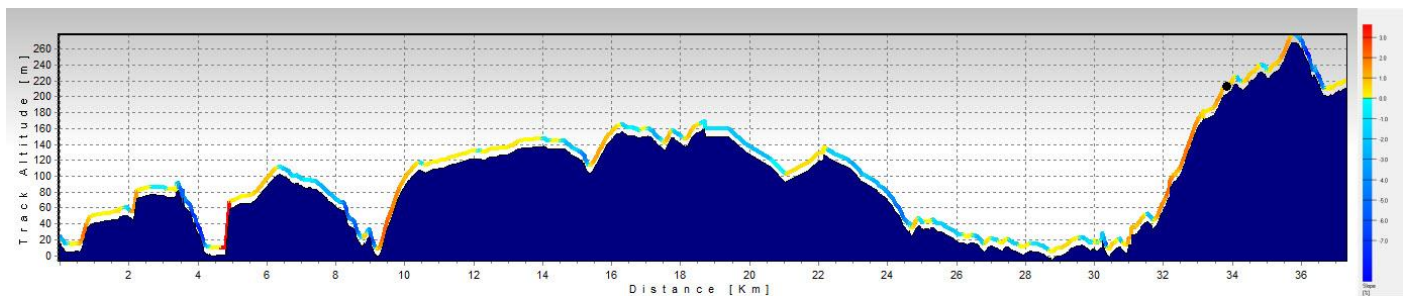


### Day 10: Ericeira to Sintra (43km, 850m+)

On your way to historic Sintra you'll pass some beautiful beaches and small, seaside villages. Enter the hilly Sintra region and explore the scenic hills above Sintra village, passing by castles, palaces and old manor houses. Such is the grandeur and importance of these buildings and monuments that Sintra was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995.

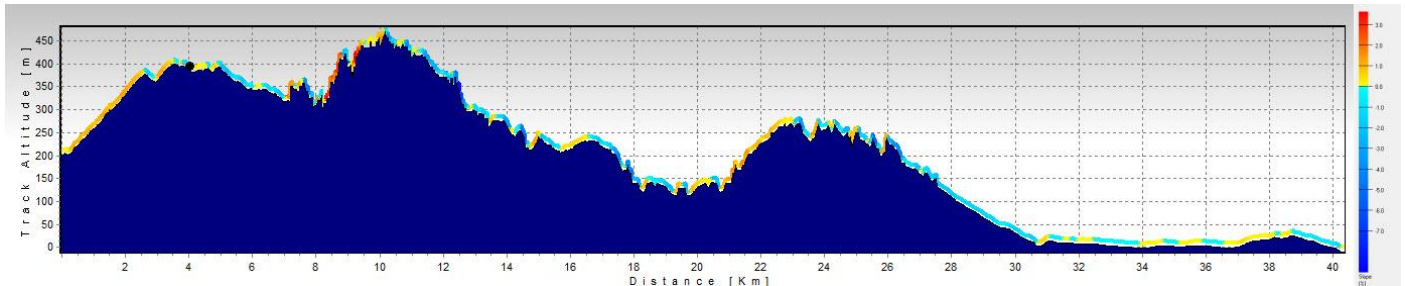
Two of the most important monuments of Sintra are the amazing Moorish Castle and the Pena Palace situated high on a hilltop. With impressive multi-coloured turrets, dramatic architecture and exotic gardens it is well worth a visit. From the gardens you can also access the highest point in the Sintra Hills, Cruz Alta. Many of these castles and palaces were built by Portuguese aristocracy in the 13th century.

Lodging in a 4\*hotel in Sintra



### Day 11: Sintra to Cascais (44km, 750m+)

Your ride this morning takes you to an old Capuchin monastery. Continue to Cape Roca, the westernmost point on the European mainland. Your last ride of the tour is an easy, scenic route along the coast to get to the delightful seaside town of Cascais with its trio of beautiful bays. Wander through the delightful old town and along the marina before lingering to eat alfresco in a local fish restaurant. Lodging 4\* Hotel



### Day 12: Tour ends with Transfer from Cascais to Lisbon Airport or Lisbon City (30min).

**ADDITIONAL NIGHTS** Before or after the tour additional nights can be reserved in Porto & Lisbon, or we can add extra nights at any town along the way (Sintra and Obidos are particularly attractive old towns).

**GRADE: Moderately challenging** - 100% cycling on quiet roads and dedicated cycle paths. Mostly flat, but many short, steep hills in the Sintra region. Demands a good standard of fitness gains through regular exercise/cycling. Average daily distance 60 km

### 2019 SCHEDULE

Start any day from 27 March – 31 October 2019 (prices for earlier & later on request). During the summer months the Atlantic West Coast is a little windy and usually not too hot for cycling (try to avoid July/August - hot and busy with the school holidays).

### 2019 COST PER PERSON IN EURO

#### Low Season: 27 March-13 April, 21 April -26 May, 27 September-31 October

Double/twin share	€1785
Single Supplement	€ 529

#### Mid Season: 14-20 April, 25 May-26 June, 30 August-26 September

Double/twin share	€1942
Single Supplement	€ 629

#### High Season: 27 June-29 August

Double/twin share	€2120
Single Supplement	€ 699

**Solo traveler supplement** + €339 to the single supplement

### BIKE HIRE

21-speed hybrid	€200
Road Bike	€300
Electric Bike & helmet	€400

Bike rental includes: helmet, tool kit, pump, lock, handle bar bag or saddle bag and flat/standard pedals (spd pedals on request)

## **2019 COST INCLUDES**

- Transfer from Porto Airport to your hotel upon arrival
- Transfer from last hotel to Lisbon (Airport or City)
- 11 nights in 4\* hotels (subject to availability, 3\* boutique hotels may sometimes be used).
- 11 Breakfasts
- Luggage transfers between tour hotels
- An orientation meeting upon arrival at your hotel in Porto
- Detailed maps, information pack, route notes, and GPS track – 1 set per room
- Organisational assistance and backup from our area manager in Portugal and our office
- GPS & Mobile phone (free calls to local support person, 24 hrs)

## **2019 COST DOES NOT INCLUDE**

- Hotel in Lisbon
- Travel insurance (required)
- Lunches and dinners
- Drinks and snacks
- Personal equipment

**Book through:**

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