

### PORTUGAL THE ALENTEJO COAST



#### overview

#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRIP

- The variety of activities
- The fabulous beaches and coastline
- A hidden lagoon to explore
- Learning to surf
- The great sunny climate
- Some fantastic barbeques
- The fantastic guides

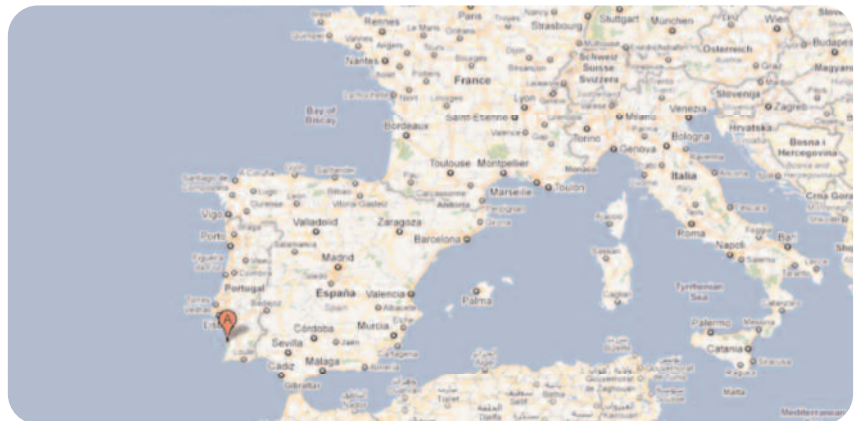


#### MAP

#### WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Portugal's Alentejo Coast remains a well kept secret here in the UK but this is where the Portuguese choose to spend their holidays rather than on the Algarve's crowded shoreline.

The town of Milfontes is located on the south west coast of Portugal



# TRIP DOSSIER

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

**8 DAYS, 7 NIGHTS**

## AGENDA

### **SATURDAY: FLIGHTS, ARRIVAL & WELCOME**

You will be met at the airport by a local representative to transfer to Milfontes. You will be given a kit list and meeting time for tomorrow.

### **SUNDAY: CANOEING & ORIENTEERING CHALLENGE**

Today's activities have been designed to help you explore your local surroundings. You will be given a map and you must find the harbour and canoes waiting for you. After your paddle across the river, a short walk up into a pinewood forest will lead you to the picnic spot. After lunch there is the opportunity for some archery before an orienteering race to find the treasure. From here you will paddle back to the harbour in your canoes.

**Suggested Kit:** Shorts, T-shirt and suitable walking shoes.

### **MONDAY: SURFING**

Today is a highlight of everyone's holiday. A full day's tuition from our expert instructors will make sure that everyone has the basics of surfing mastered by the end of the day. When taking a break from surfing you can enjoy the beautiful views from the clear sandy beaches (and enjoy laughing at everyone else falling off!).

**Suggested Kit:** Swim wear, T-shirt, old trainers, beach towel, shower kit and flip flops

### **TUESDAY: LAGOON ACTIVITY DAY**

Today is based at the "Pêgo das Pias" lagoon; a stunning spot set in a steep sided river valley. Your guides will help you to find some special hidden spots around the lagoon. There is also an area to practise your climbing and abseiling skills nearby. After lunch you will be divided into teams and given raft building materials before testing your handiwork on the water.

**Suggested Kit:** Swim wear, T-shirt, old trainers, beach towel, shower kit and flip flops

### **WEDNESDAY: FREE DAY**

Many families choose to simply relax on the beach or around the pool today. Alternatively, surfing, canoeing, horse riding and fishing are all available for those feeling a little more active (payable locally).

### **THURSDAY: CANOEING AND CYCLING**

After breakfast you will be transferred to the beautiful Zambujeira Velha on the banks of the River Mira. From there you continue your journey by canoe, paddling downstream whilst enjoying the local flora and fauna within this preservation area. After lunch a short transfer takes you to the start of the cycling, pedalling on a gentle track along the stunning coastline. This is a wonderful way to explore a different part of the coast.

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**Suggested Kit:** Swim wear, T-shirt, old trainers, beach towel, Shorts, T-shirt and suitable walking shoes.

### FRIDAY: ZIP WIRES, CLIMBING AND ABSEILING

For a real adrenaline rush today is the one you have been waiting for! Today's activities will include zip wiring, a small climbing wall and a huge 40 metre abseiling wall. You can also try your hand at archery during lunch time and in the afternoon an orienteering game will round up the week's activities in this beautiful area. This evening a delicious farewell dinner will be served in the hotel.

**Suggested Kit:** Shorts, T-shirt and suitable walking shoes.



### SATURDAY: DEPART OR EXTEND YOUR STAY

Think you could spend another week relaxing in this wonderful part of the world? Or do you need another week to crack your surfing skills? We can arrange extensions in the local area if you wish but otherwise it's time to transfer to the airport for your return flights home.

#### Please Note:

These itineraries are subject to change: please confirm your timetable with the activity providers on arrival at the resort.

### GROUP SIZE AND GUIDES

The approximate group size for this programme will range between 4-24 people.

Your guides for the week are all thoroughly qualified, highly experienced outdoor enthusiasts who are all always highly knowledgeable about the area in which they live and the activities they instruct. The feedback from clients is fantastic every year.

The guides main role is to make sure that everybody enjoys the experience as much as possible but also to ensure the whole groups comfort and safety.

### HOW TO GET THERE

Our airport transfer time is included in your holiday documents and you must be at the designated meeting point at that time. If you do not arrive on time we cannot guarantee that the transfer can be delayed as this means holding up the entire group. If you do miss your transfer then you will need to make your own arrangements to your accommodation. If your flight is delayed, please telephone either your local representative or our UK emergency number. Emergency numbers are provided in your final travel letter.

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## IMPORTANT info

### BOOKING YOUR OWN FLIGHTS CANCELLATION DISCLAIMER

If you have chosen to book your own flights we will write to you once your trip is 'guaranteed to run'. In other words, once it has reached the minimum number of bookings necessary for us to operate the holiday. When the trip is 'guaranteed to run' you will be free to make your flight arrangements. Before you book your flights you should check whether airport transfers are included in your trip. If they are then please phone our office for airport transfer times.

Once your flights are booked, please send us a copy of your detailed flight itinerary.

Please be aware that most of the cheaper airline tickets available for sale on the internet or from low cost carriers are non-refundable in the case of cancellation. For this reason we strongly advise you check the rules of the ticket when you make a flight booking and check the limitations of any cancellation insurance policy you have. We cannot be held liable, in the unlikely eventuality that we should be forced to cancel your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made yourself.

## Useful info

### LOCAL FOOD – OUR OPINION

The Duna Parque offers a continental buffet style breakfast. The restaurant offers an excellent range of local and international cuisine including freshly caught seafood and, the local speciality, 'steak on a stone'. There are lots of restaurants in Milfontes again catering for all tastes.

### ATOL PROTECTION

If you book a flight inclusive holiday with us then everything on your invoice from flights to accommodation, activities to meals is fully covered under our ATOL Licence No 6865.

In the highly unlikely event of our financial failure (please be assured that we are very happy with our current position and forward bookings are strong) then all elements of your holiday are covered. If you are abroad, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) will arrange for your repatriation and if you are yet to travel you will be fully reimbursed, again by the CAA.

Two of our staff have previously worked for the CAA's ATOL Licencing so are pretty knowledgeable in this area. If you do have any questions then please contact either Alistair McLean or kate McLean (yes, they met while working for ATOL and subsequently fell in love and married) on 01670 789 991.

# TRIP DOSSIER

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

## Useful info

### SUGGESTED GENERAL KIT LIST

Your guides will provide you with a suggested kit list per day but you should come prepared for all weather conditions.

The list below is not a comprehensive packing list simply a guide line of suggestions that you might find useful on the trip.

#### Item check:

- Rucksack with plastic bag liner per family, for lunches and spare clothes
- Reasonably strong pair of walking boots or trainers
- Waterproof jacket and trousers (just in case)
- Sweatshirt or fleece top
- Comfortable lightweight trousers or shorts for land based activities (not jeans)
- Casual clothing for evenings
- Swimming gear and beach towels for water based activities
- Sunhat, sunglasses with cord attached and sun block
- Large water bottle (min. 1 litre) per person
- Old clothes and trainers (no open-toed shoes) for getting wet during some of the activities (especially for canoeing and canyoning)
- Insect repellent and sting relief cream
- Camera – a disposable waterproof type is useful for water based activities

Please note that all safety equipment (helmets, life-jackets, harnesses, wetsuits etc) is provided on this trip.

### SUGGESTED GENERAL PACKING LIST

#### Item check:

- Passport Glasses/Contact Lenses
- Air Tickets
- Toiletries
- Car Hire Voucher and full driving licence (for driver)
- Driving Instructions, Map
- Small Sewing Kit
- Trip Dossier and Itinerary
- Sweets & Snacks for the journey
- Insurance Documents
- Notebook, Diary, Pen
- Money, Travellers Cheques, Credit Card, Guide Book
- Money Security Belt
- Games, Books, toys for your kids



### Useful info

#### SUN PROTECTION

Please be safe in the sun. Wear protective clothing (ideally tops and trousers made of tightly woven fabrics that you can't see through when held up to light) and a hat that shades the face, neck and ears when out in the sun. Use a high factor sunscreen and remember to reapply after swimming. You should also bear in mind that you are just as likely to get burnt up a mountain as on a beach. **Please also ensure that you carry a minimum of 1 litre of water per person per day.**

#### CLIMATE / TEMPERATURE

The average daytime temperatures for this region are as follows

May to October	20-30°
June to September	30-35°

#### TIPPING GUIDELINES

At your discretion you may wish to tip your guides at the end of your stay as a gesture of appreciation for their efforts during your holiday.

#### PARENTAL SUPERVISION

Our family holidays are designed to be just that, family holidays. During activities, our guides are there to provide advice, tuition and supervision but we must stress that you are responsible for the child or children in your care. We do not employ qualified child minders and you should not put our guides or other group members in a position where they are responsible for the care of your child or children.

#### BOOKING ACTIVITIES LOCALLY

In almost all of our destinations you can book and pay for additional activities locally. Our guides will normally discuss the options available at your welcome meeting. Please note that we cannot be held responsible for any injury or loss that occurs through any activities that are booked in your destination. If you intend to go hill walking in any part of Portugal you should ensure that you are well prepared and equipped to cope both with the terrain, high temperatures and a lack of shade in summer

### Useful info

#### HEALTH CARE INFO

There is currently a reciprocal agreement between Portugal and the UK which provides access to free or reduced cost, state-provided, emergency medical treatment in State facilities to British passport holders visiting Portugal. However, this agreement was replaced on 1 September 2008 with the requirement to produce a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) in order to be eligible for the same level of service at State medical facilities. You should obtain this card before travelling.

The EHIC is not a substitute for medical and travel insurance, but entitles you to emergency medical treatment on the same terms as Portuguese nationals. It also does not cover you for medical repatriation, on-going medical treatment or treatment of a non-urgent nature.

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Portugal and ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are up-to-date. For further information on vaccination requirements, health outbreaks and general disease protection and prevention you should visit the websites of the National Travel Health Network and Centre and NHS Scotland's Fit for Travel or call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47.

#### CARD FRAUD

We recommend that you tell your bank or card issuer where you're going abroad and what dates you will be travelling. This avoids the embarrassment of having your card refused because your bank thinks you could be a fraudster yourself! Give the bank or card issuer your contact details so that they can call you if they spot an unusual transaction.

#### CURRENCY AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE

The currency of Portugal is the Euro.

Legislation on the controls of cash entering or leaving the EU applies in all Member States. Any person entering or leaving the EU will have to declare the cash that they are carrying if this amounts to 10,000 Euros or more; this includes cheques, travellers' cheques, money orders, etc. This will not apply to anyone travelling via the EU to a non-EU country, as long as the original journey started neither outside of the EU nor to those travelling within the EU.

In Portugal, such declarations should be made to the Customs authorities on entry or departure.

### Useful info

#### TRAVEL SAFETY

The safety of our clients is of paramount importance at all times in terms of activity participation and destination. We always follow the advice of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and should they advise against travel for any reason you will be contacted with a view to making alternative arrangements. We monitor this advice on a daily basis and you can access the up to date advice at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

#### TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you obtain comprehensive travel and medical insurance before travelling. You should check any exclusions and that your policy covers you for the activities you want to undertake.

For more information on Travel Insurance please see our website – [www.activitiesabroad.com](http://www.activitiesabroad.com) under the 'preparing for your trip' section.

#### MEDICAL HISTORY AND ADVICE

It is vitally important that you advise us prior to departure of any medical or dietary condition relating to any member of your party so that we may notify our local staff before you arrive. We recommend only drinking bottled water from bottles with unbroken seals and be vigilant about the use of ice in drinks and ice cream.

#### LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS

Under Portuguese drug legislation, if you are caught consuming or in possession of drugs for personal use you may be subject to a fine or other sanction (including the seizure of personal belongings). Selling or trafficking of drugs is a criminal offence and subject to severe penalties.

There is a legal requirement for foreign nationals to be able to show some form of identification if requested by the police or judicial authorities. For UK nationals this means a passport. This requirement is rigorously enforced in the case of those driving cars in Portugal. In other cases, it should be sufficient to carry a photocopy of the data page of your passport, but be prepared to produce the original document, if necessary. This may mean being accompanied by the police to collect it from your hotel. All UK visitors are in any case advised to keep a photocopy of the data page separate from the original.

#### AIRPORT INFORMATION

Flights are included from London Gatwick to Lisbon (regional departures available on request and may be subject to supplement)

### Useful info

#### PASSPORTS AND VISAS

**Visas:** As an EU national, you may remain in Portugal as a tourist for a period not exceeding three months.

**Passport validity:** There is no minimum passport validity requirement for Portugal

#### ROAD TRAVEL

In Portugal, you drive on the right (opposite to the UK). If hiring a car, you should ensure that the vehicle insurance is fully comprehensive and covers you and your passengers for all eventualities.

As a holidaymaker, you can bring your own vehicle to Portugal for a maximum of 183 days in any 12-month period. You must not use your vehicle for any other purpose or loan it to anyone else during that time. If you intend to stay longer, you must apply to the Portuguese Customs authority to have the car legally imported. You will be fined if you leave the country without your car.

The minimum age for driving is 18. You must possess a UK driving licence or an International Driving Permit. UK-issued provisional licences are not valid for driving in Portugal. In addition to your licence, you must also carry your vehicle logbook or rental contract, proof of insurance and MOT certificate (if appropriate) together with all other relevant documentation. There are heavy on-the-spot fines for those who fail to do so.

You must carry a red warning triangle to place behind the vehicle in case of accident or breakdown and a reflective vest for use if you have to get out of your car. The wearing of seatbelts is compulsory in the front and rear of vehicles. Children under 12 must not travel in the front passenger seat. You must not carry spare (full) petrol cans in the vehicle.

Fines for traffic offences are substantial in Portugal. Such infringements as speeding, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, the use of mobile phones whilst driving and illegal parking are heavily penalised. The use of appropriate child safety seats and seat belts in the rear of the vehicle is compulsory. The police have the authority to fine on-the-spot and most of their vehicles are equipped with portable ATM machines to facilitate immediate payment.

As in many other European countries, there is a toll system in operation on Portuguese motorways. Heavy fines are imposed on those who do not or cannot pay toll fees. You should take care not to use the green lanes reserved for motorists who subscribe to the automatic pay system.

Driving regulations and customs are different from those in the UK and the accident rate is higher. You are advised to take extra care when crossing busy roads, especially late at night. This includes crossing at zebra crossings which are often badly lit and poorly marked. UK organisations such as the AA or RAC should be able to provide detailed advice.

# TRIP DOSSIER

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

## Useful info

### GENERAL IDEA OF LOCAL COSTS FOR DRINKS ETC

There are several bars, restaurants and cafe's in Milfontes for you to enjoy. Prices are similar to those in the UK.

### TOURIST BOARD DETAILS

For further information on Portugal visit [www.visitportugal.com](http://www.visitportugal.com)

### LOCAL TIME AND DIFFERENCE

Portugal's time zone is GMT + 1.00hrs, so if you are in the UK count 1 hour ahead.

### USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES IN NATIVE LANGUAGE

#### English

Yes  
No  
Please  
Thank you (very much)  
Hello  
Good day  
Good evening  
Good night  
Good bye  
See you soon  
How much / many?  
Excuse me

#### Portuguese

Sim  
Nao  
Se faz favor / Por favor  
(Muito) obrigado / obrigada  
Ola  
Bom dia  
Boa tarde  
Boa noite  
Adeus  
Ate logo / Ate a vista  
Quanto / Quantos?  
Com licenca / Desculpe



### ACCOMMODATION

#### OUR OPINION

Our 3-star apartments are located behind sand dunes and are just a stones throw from the expansive, golden and sandy beach. They are also within easy walking distance (5 to 10 minutes) of Milfontes town centre which is situated on the estuary of one of Europe's cleanest rivers. In Milfontes you will find all the amenities you might need during your stay.

Each apartment has a twin or double bedroom, a lounge/dining area with sofa bed and television, a bath or shower room and a fully equipped kitchen. All apartments have either a terrace or veranda. For larger families or small groups, 2 and 3-bedroom apartments are available on request.

The complex has plenty of sporting facilities to keep you occupied outside our activity schedule including: 2 swimming pools (indoor and outdoor), tennis, a gymnasium, mini-golf and sauna.

For those who prefer to relax after an active day there is also a bar and a very good restaurant specialising in seafood and local meat dishes - carnivores are advised not to leave without trying the "steak on a stone."



### RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

#### RESPONSIBLE TOURISM POLICY IN THE ALENTEJO COAST

This holiday is based in the centre of a natural park where our local suppliers work in conjunction with the park wardens to ensure that our clients are aware of their surrounding environment and when walking / cycling on demarcated paths they do not stray or leave waste onto ecologically sensitive areas. This is particularly relevant on the coastal sand dunes.

Our local partners are heavily integrated into the local community. All our guides and drivers are from the area and we have instigated many initiatives with the county council supporting cultural and sporting events - even maintaining the only grass football pitch in the locality.

The lower Alentejo area is undiscovered by northern Europeans mass tourism as it is too far from international airports. It is very popular with the native Portuguese and we are working to create holidays not just for northern European families but with the Portuguese to enable an exchange of cultural information.

All our accommodation is run by family units who often offer additional meals to our customers using locally grown produce from their own kitchen gardens. Our tours include visits to working windmills, potteries and linen weavers to help keep these traditions alive in the locality and make any souvenirs bought more meaningful to the client and local community alike.

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#### Please Note:

The information given in this trip dossier covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Please refer to the foreign office website for more up to date information on your chosen destination. Abnormal conditions or events beyond our control can prevail at any time, therefore all holidays can be subject to unexpected changes. In order to enjoy and be safe in all activities you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary.