
Day 2

At Porto

An optional, return cycle route takes you north of Porto following cycle paths, first along the river and then the ocean. You'll pass beaches, restaurants, the 16th century castle of Sao Joao da Foz, the fishing village of Matosinhos and the Boa Nova Tea House of the famous Portuguese architect Siza Vieira, which belongs to Chef Rui Paula (from the Portuguese Masterchef). Alternatively, relax in Porto for the day, strolling along the narrow alleys and along the riverfront. A port wine tasting and cellar visit across the Douro River is included in the afternoon, while your evening meal has been left free so you can choose from one of the many restaurants on offer. **(Staying at the Hotel Vincci Porto, Breakfast Only)**

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 20 km / 13 miles

Day 3

Porto to Furadouro

Take your time this morning, cycling along the south bank of the Douro River, where the rabelo boats line up along the quay. Perhaps stop for a tasting in one of the famous cellars before a glorious waterfront cycle path leads you from the Natural Reserve of the Douro Estuary, with its birdwatching hides, to the Atlantic coast. You exchange bays for beaches for the rest of the day, with many seafront restaurants to stop at for lunch. Relax on the sands at Espinho before hopping on the train (13 mins) to Ovar. For the longer route, continue cycling from Espinho to Ovar, making sure to visit the Parque de Bucaquinho. It's then flat cycling to your beachfront hotel at nearby Furadouro where you'll dine in the hotel restaurant. **(Staying at the Furadouro Boutique Hotel, Half Board)**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 30 km / 19 miles

Day 4

Furadouro to Aveiro (Estarreja)

Leaving Furadouro, pedal south along the protected Aveiro Lagoon past rickety pontoons, where plover and sandpiper tiptoe amid golden wattle and parrot feather in search of lunch. Hop on the train from Estarreja (14 mins, pay locally) or Salreu (another nearly 10km further on for those looking for a longer cycle) to the heart of Aveiro and your luxury mansion hotel. For dinner tonight you're free to choose from one of the many famous fish restaurants nearby. **(Staying at the Hotel Moliceiro, Breakfast Only)**

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 34 km / 22 miles

Day 5

At Aveiro

Aveiro is known as 'Portugal's Venice'. Alleyways are lined with churrasqueiras for lunch, and gondola-style boats cruise below swaying palms on the latticework canals. The noisy fish market is a daily event, and the excellent museum is set in a beautifully preserved Augustinian convent. A short bus trip (30 mins) leads to neighbouring Costa Nova; streets of wooden houses are squeezed between the beach and the lagoon, painted in candy floss pink, summer yellow and sailor-blue stripes. **(Staying at the Hotel Moliceiro, Breakfast Only)**

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 6

Aveiro ro Praia de Mira

The Aveiro Lagoon narrows as you cycle south today. Vista Alegre is Portugal's oldest fine porcelain producer and has a fascinating museum and factory in Ilhavo. Head for lunch in Costa Nova (extends the day's route by a round-trip cycle of 1.2km) if you wish. Next, cross the lagoon to meet the ocean again in Vagueira where oxen were once used to pull fishing nets up the beach. You then turn inland, pedalling past pears, lemon orchards and strawberry fields to your beachfront hotel at Praia de Mira with its inviting rooftop pool. **(Staying at the Macarico Beach Hotel, Half Board in a local restaurant)**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 33 km / 21 miles

Day 7

At Praia de Mira

A leafy trail leads east into lagoons and acacia forest this morning, and sun-dappled routes cross timber, New England-style, covered bridges spanning clear-water canals. Kingfisher and blue heron are common here, and bright cistus and iris splash colour along the route leading past several perfect picnic spots. Have lunch by the sea and enjoy a final paddle before dinner back at your hotel. **(Staying at the Macarico Beach Hotel, Half Board in a local restaurant)**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 24 km / 15 miles

Day 8

Leave Praia de Mira

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation

Hotels





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