

USEFUL INFORMATION

**Access**  
**By plane**  
Portugal has international airports all around the country at Lisbon, Porto, Faro, Funchal (Madeira) and Ponta Delgada (São Miguel – Azores).

**By train**  
there are international train connections, from Lisbon to Paris and Madrid – the Sud–Express and the Lusitânia hotel train, respectively – and from Porto to Vigo.

**Transport within portugal**  
**Urban Transport**  
All of Portugal's major towns and cities have a full public transport network. In Lisbon and Porto this network includes buses, trams and an underground/light railway system, for which it is possible to buy combined tickets for the whole network, valid for one or more days. They also offer special tourist cards that combine transport tickets with the right to enjoy discounts on admission charges to museums and monuments and on various tourism services.

**Taxis**  
These are normally beige in colour, although it is still possible to see some carrying the old, traditional taxi colours of black cabs with green roofs. The price is shown on the meter and the respective fares are either displayed inside the vehicle or may be requested directly from the driver. Booking taxis by phone and carrying luggage in the boot will bring additional charges. Outside built-up areas, the taxi fare is based on the distance travelled in kilometres, the full fare being previously agreed between the driver and the passenger.

**Trains**  
CP – Comboios de Portugal has a vast network of trains covering the whole of mainland Portugal. There is a range of different train services, which include the “Alfa Pendular” – the fastest and most comfortable link between the north and the south of the country – and the “Intercidades (Intercity)” service, connecting the country’s major towns and cities. There is also a vast network of regional, interregional and suburban trains.

**Buses**  
Regular services connect all cities, towns and main destinations in Portugal.

**Road network**  
This is composed of Motorways (Auto-estradas – AE), Principal/Main Routes (Itinerários Principais – IP), Complementary/Secondary Routes (Itinerários Complementares – IC),

National/Trunk Roads (Estradas Nacionais – EN) and Municipal/ Regional Roads (Estradas Municipais). All motorways are signposted with their own international symbol and have toll booths. These offer a reserved express lane known as Via Verde, which use an electronic transponder. This has to be installed on the windscreen of your vehicle and registers the toll electronically, allowing you to pay by direct debit from your bank account. The system is only available to those who have previously purchased this device from Brisa, the company responsible for the building and maintenance of motorways in Portugal.

**Car hire**  
There are self-drive car hire services available at airports and international train terminals, and in all of the country’s main cities and towns. Precise terms and conditions offered by each car rental company differ slightly but to hire a car you will need to be over 21 to 25 years of age, present some means of identification (an identity card in the case of EU citizens or a valid passport for other nationalities) and to have had a valid driving licence for more than a year.

**Driving in Portugal**  
All traffic drives on the right in Portugal. At roundabouts, crossroads and junctions, you must give way to traffic coming from your right (unless otherwise indicated). Traffic signs comply with established international standards. Fines are paid on the spot. The wearing of seat belts is compulsory and the use of mobile phones while driving is strictly forbidden.

**Maximum speed limits**  
for passenger vehicles without trailers and motorcycles the maximum speed limit is 50 km/ hour in built-up areas, 90 km/ hour on normal roads, 100 km/hour on roads restricted to the use of motor vehicles and 120 km/hour on motorways.

**Legal alcohol limits**  
Driving is not permitted at or above the legal alcohol limit of 0.5 grams per litre of blood. Anyone found driving over this limit is subject to a fine, which will vary according to the level of alcohol in their blood.

**Climate**  
In mainland Portugal, the climate is influenced by factors such as relief, latitude and proximity to the sea. Winters are mild, particularly in the Algarve, where the average temperature is 17°C. Further inland, in the north and centre of the country, average winter temperatures range between 5º

and 11°C, while in the summer the average is around 28°C. Along the coast, the heat is tempered by the cooling influence of the sea. In Madeira, the climate is mild and average temperatures range between 19°C in winter and 25°C in summer. In the Azores, average temperatures range between 17°C in winter and 23°C in summer. In both archipelagos, sea temperatures range between 17°C in winter and 22°C in summer.

**Standard time**  
In mainland Portugal and Madeira, standard time coincides with Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) between 1 am on the last Sunday in October and 1 am on the last Sunday in March. From then on, clocks are put forward one hour and summer time comes into force, continuing until the last Sunday in October. In the archipelago of the Azores, standard time is always sixty minutes behind the rest of the Portuguese territory; in other words, when winter time is in force, it is one hour behind universal coordinated time, while in summer it is two hours behind UTC.

**Currency**  
Portugal belongs to the group of 16 European Union countries where the Euro is the official common currency. Foreign currency can be exchanged at banks, foreign exchange offices and ATMs (these can only be used for operations involving the sale of foreign currency).

**Opening times**  
**Banks**  
Banks are open to the public on weekdays between 08.30 and 15.00. There is a national network of ATMs, identified by the sign MB (Multibanco), where cash withdrawals can be made 24 hours per day.

**Museums**  
Museums are normally open from 10.00 to 13.00 and from 14.00 to 17.00, and are closed on Mondays.

**Shops**  
Shops are open from Monday to Friday, generally opening between 09.00 and 10.00 and closing at 19.00. Some shops close for lunch from 13.00 to 15.00. On Saturdays, most shops close at 13.00, although some shops in city centres remain open in the afternoon. Shopping malls have longer opening hours, with shops generally remaining open from 10.00 until midnight every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays.

**Restaurants**  
Restaurants normally serve lunch from 12.00 to 15.00 and are open for dinner between 19.00 and 23.00, although many of them may have longer opening hours, especially in large cities and in areas where there is greater nightlife.

**Emergencies**  
The national telephone number to be dialled in the case of emergencies is 112, which may be rung at any time of the day or night, from anywhere in the country.

**Health**  
If you need medical care, you should go to one of the local Health Centres (Centros de Saúde). Emergency services at hospitals should only be used in serious cases. In the event of an accident or illness during their stay in Portugal, citizens from the 27 European Union countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland are entitled to free or low-cost healthcare, provided that they exhibit the European Health Insurance Card (issued in the country of origin) and their passport or any other proof of identity.

**Electricity**  
The electric current in Portugal is 230/400 volts, 50 hz, and sockets are in keeping with European standards. The use of American standard plugs also requires the use of a 230-volt transformer, as well as an adaptor plug.

Tourist information

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<b>Ireland</b>	1800943131*
<b>Italy</b>	848391818*
<b>Netherlands</b>	09002658999*
<b>Portugal</b>	808781212*
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\* Calls are charged at local rates

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