The best of Portugal

ABOUT

The best of Portugal
The highlights of Portugal's attractions are culture, gastronomy and wines, beaches, golf, history, variety of landscapes and above all the hospitality of the Portuguese people, considered to be affable, open and honest.

LISBON AND PORTO

Lisbon is the capital of Portugal and Porto is the second largest city, in the north of the country. They are both vibrant cities filled with history that retain a human dimension, with their historic districts, monuments and tile façades.

Lisbon is known as the white city due to the sunlight that reflects off the River Tagus. Winner of the Travellers' Choice title in 2014 on TripAdvisor, for the second year running, it was also awarded Europe's Leading City Break Destination 2014 by the World Travel Awards.
Porto, which gave its name to a wine enjoyed all over the world, was elected Best European Destination in 2012, 2014 and 2017 and is one of the top 14 cities chosen by British Airways to visit. Previously, it was Number 2 on TripAdvisor’s 2013 Travellers’ Choice list for emerging destinations in Europe.

SUN AND SEA

The Portuguese coast almost comprises a single beach 850km long, made more picturesque and beautiful by rocks dotted here and there, but with vast stretches of golden sand or small coves nestled in the cliffs.
The Algarve, the most popular destination for sun and sea in Portugal, was awarded the prize for the **best beach destination in Europe** in the 2013 and 2015 World Travel Awards. But in a country teeming with sun and sea, there are many other excellent beaches. In the Southwest Alentejo, the beaches are almost wild, typical of Europe’s most pristine stretch of coastline, while the Lisbon region has the bustling beaches of the Estoril Coast and the endless beach at Costa da Caparica.

From north to south, there are countless blue flag beaches and the variety is huge for holidays spent sunbathing or whatever other pursuit visitors may have.

**SURF**

With such a long coastline on the continent and in the islands of Madeira and the Azores, it's easy to understand the ideal conditions Portugal enjoys for surfing. Ericeira is **Europe's 1st Surf Reserve** and the 2nd in the world, with beaches known to every surfer. We have perfect waves for everyone, with barrel waves on the beaches of Peniche, giant waves in Nazaré, and the longest in Europe at Figueira da Foz.
The most acclaimed international surfers under its various modalities find in Portugal the largest number of spots, with less distance between them, and they are the setting for some of most important championships in the world, such as Rip Curl Pro Portugal. And we have broken records too, like the 30m wave surfed by Garrett McNamara in 2011!

GOLF

For five years, between 2014 and 2018, Portugal was named the World’s Best Golf Destination and the Best Golf Destination in Europe, awards handed out by the World Golf Awards. This is not surprising if we remember that the country’s climate is mild and temperate throughout the year. What is more, in the Algarve and Lisbon regions, in particular, we find quite a number of courses where some of the major competitions on the professional circuit are held that have won several awards.
Many have been designed by names such as Robert Trent Jones, Rocky Roquemore, Sir Henry Cotton, Arnold Palmer and other renowned golf course legends. But what best defines them is their undisputed quality and natural beauty, often located in preserved areas with the sea as a background.

Besides the many awards that the region’s golf courses have won, the prestigious IAGTO also elected the Algarve a World Golf Destination of the Year for 2020.

WORLD HERITAGE

The history and culture of Portugal, its people and the people who lived here from time immemorial is reflected in the country’s 24 sites classified as having World Heritage status.

The Convent of Christ in Tomar, the Monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha, the Monastery of Jerónimos and the Belém Tower in Lisbon, owe their ranking to their historical and artistic importance.
The historical centres of Guimarães, Porto, Évora and Angra do Heroísmo are also classified, and there are many other monuments and architectural elements worthy of note, such as the University of Coimbra and other classified areas of the city, or like the fortifications of Elvas. It is important to also mention the Cultural Landscapes of the Alto Douro Wine Region, Sintra and the Vineyards of the Island of Pico, which offer some of the most breathtaking natural sceneries in Portugal.

It remains to mention the archaeological interest of the rock engravings of Vale do Coa and the exuberance of the Floresta Laurissilva da Madeira (laurel forest of Madeira), thus completing the list with icons that define a way of existing and being: Fado, Alentejo Song and the Mediterranean Diet, elements of the intangible heritage typical of the soul of a people and its times of socialising and celebration. More recently, other arts and crafts have merited the classification of Intangible Heritage of Humanity: Making Rattles, in Alentejo, the Manufacture of Black Pottery in Bisalhães, in the municipality of Vila Real, and Arte da Falcoaria Real (Royal Falconry art), still preserved in Salvaterra de Magos.

CUISINE

The greatest champion of Portuguese food is its fish, since its location and the Atlantic waters make it the best fish in the world. However, there are countless reasons why Portugal is a gastronomic destination of choice.

The fish and the seafood, which are best enjoyed by the seaside under the pleasant Portuguese sun, are joined by a huge variety of good quality table wines, enhanced by a Mediterranean climate that also offers ideal conditions for olive oil.
That’s why Port Wine has, for centuries, been a great ambassador for Portugal, and nowadays it is joined by other genuine Portuguese products like the pastel de nata (custard tart) and other convent sweets, the cataplana and the mastery of Portugal’s talented chefs who, with this casserole pan and many others tools, have elevated our gastronomy to the heights of the best cuisines in the world.

Olive oil is also one of the foremost ingredients of Portuguese culinary tradition, as the basis of a varied and healthy diet in Portugal which also includes bread, olives and other fruits, vegetables and herbs. These ingredients of the Mediterranean Diet imprint a strong identity on Portuguese gastronomy, raising it to World Heritage status.

Combined with a list of exceptional gastronomic products are the freshest and most natural vegetables and fruits, and meat with Protected Designation of Origin status, and mountain cheeses that will make you feel grateful for what Portugal has to offer.

USEFUL INFORMATION
Tourist information on the Lisbon region: www.visitlisboa.com
Lisboa Card – card that provides access to public transport and reductions on monuments and other city services.
Information and Tourism Offices at www.askmelisboa.com
Tourist information on the Porto region: visitportoandnorth.travel
Porto Card - card that provides access to public transport and reductions on monuments and other services for getting to know the city: www.portoturismo.pt
Surf: www.portuguesewaves.com
Golf: www.visitportugalgolf.com
www.portugalgolfmembership.com
For more information:
Centro de Portugal: www.visitcentrodeportugal.com.pt
Alentejo: www.visitalentejo.pt
Algarve: www.visitalgarve.pt
Madeira: www.visitmadeira.pt
Azores: www.visitazores.com