
Family holidays

ABOUT



Photo: Zoomarine

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Portugal offers excellent opportunities for a family holiday, as it is a small country on the Atlantic coast, ideal for both outdoor and indoor activities.

Portugal is about 800km from north to south on the mainland, which is easily travelled, providing a wide variety of experiences, always within reach. It is a safe country, it enjoys the highest number of sunshine hours per year in all of Europe, and it has an excellent road network and international airports close to the main tourist destinations, which always makes it the right choice for both kids and adults.

There's a multitude of places that younger visitors will love, starting with the animal parks. The **Vasco da Gama Aquarium** and the **Oceanarium** in Lisbon, the **Mora River Aquarium**, various zoos, particularly the **Lisbon Zoo** and the **Badoca Safari Park** in Alentejo, are just some of the best known. **Zoomarine**, in the Algarve, bridges the gap between a theme park and the popular water parks that abound in the region but are spread all over the country: Nazaré, Amarante, Pombal and Santa Cruz, in Madeira, are just a few of the places where you can find pools and slides of all shapes and sizes with guaranteed fun for the whole family. But they can also have a lot of fun - and learn a lot too - in the various Science Centres on the mainland and on the islands, of which the **Calouste Gulbenkian Planetarium** and the **Knowledge Pavilion**, both in Lisbon, are the highlights. The **Puppet Museum** in Lisbon is also very popular, as well as the toy museums and horse riding centres that are spread throughout the country, and "**Portugal for the Little Ones**" in Coimbra, which has attracted children for generations.

Children will always have a good time having a picnic in the Campo Grande or Monsanto parks in Lisbon, or in Porto's **City Park [Parque da Cidade]** or **Serralves**, and many others from the north to the south of Portugal. Or have a ride on a donkey. Or in a boat. Why not go see the **dolphins** in the Sado estuary? Even history may be the setting for holiday fun when, perhaps in a **castle**, parents and children can learn something of the battles that were fought there, or better understand the lives of the kings and princesses in one of many palaces they can visit.

Educational or not, these places are always lively, and children will love to participate in activities designed for them, with or without their parents.