



PREPARING TO GO TO PORTUGAL

CAPITAL

Lisbon

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Portuguese

RELIGION

The most predominant religion in Portugal is Christianity, mainly is **Catholicism**. According to the 2011 Census, 81% of the population of Portugal is Catholic, though only about 19% attend Mass and take the sacraments regularly. Other religion in Portugal are: other Christian 3.3%, other (includes Jewish, Muslim, other) 0.6%, none 6.8%, unspecified 8.3%.

ELECTRICITY

Electrical sockets (outlets) in Portugal usually supply electricity at between **220 and 240 volts AC**. If you're plugging in an appliance that was built for 220-240 volt electrical input, or an appliance that is compatible with multiple voltages, then an adapter is all you need.

PASSPORTS

A passport valid for three months beyond the length of stay and issued within the past 10 years is required by all nationals (i.e. Australian, British, Canadian & USA), except other EU nationals holding a passport or national ID card which is valid for the duration of stay.

If travelling from one border-free Schengen country to another however, EU nationals are not required to show a passport or national ID card. It is still recommended that you travel with your passport or ID card to prove your identity if necessary though. Note that Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania, and the UK are not part of the Schengen area, so a passport or ID card is required if travelling to/from these countries.

EU nationals are not required to possess a return ticket or show sufficient funds.

Visas for Portugal are not required by all nationals. Nationals of Australia, Canada and the USA can stay for up to 90 days without a visa. EU nationals can stay for an unlimited period, but must register with the local authorities after three months.

Currency information:

Euro (EUR; symbol €) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Credit cards:

American Express, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted, even outside cities, while petrol stations usually take credit cards and cash.

ATM:

There are ATMs (Multibanco) at most of the larger supermarkets and shopping areas in most towns with instructions available in English if required. You can only take out a maximum of €200 and if you see six asterisks, not four, just put in your normal four numbers and hit continue. If you receive a 'service unavailable' message, it is most likely that the machine is out of cash - especially at weekends and on Monday mornings. The machine will have an icon with a cross though it.

You can also find Multibanco machines in every small town and even villages all around Portugal. You will be charged for an international transaction. Currency conversion booths spring up wherever there is a steady flow of tourists but, be warned, the closer they are to tourist attractions, the worse the rates they offer.

Banking hours:

Generally, Mon-Fri 0830-1530 (certain banks in Lisbon are open until 1800). In smaller towns a bank may close for lunch, while many branches no longer offer a foreign exchange service.

Currency restriction:

There are no restrictions on the import or export of local or foreign currency.



Currency exchange:

You can buy or exchange Euros very easily at cambios (bureaux de change), hotels and shops. Many banks no longer offer foreign exchange, while the best rates and commissions are normally found at the bureaux in larger towns. The worst rates by far are at the airports and hotels. The best thing is to keep an eye out while you're shopping and always check the commission rates.

CLOTHING

Portugal has so much to offer and what you pack will depend on when and where you go. In the cities, you will find the locals dress in a smart, casual and understated elegant style. Opt for a smart casual look with nice shoes. Jeans are very popular everywhere in Portugal, especially with younger people, because they are always smart and clean. On the coast and especially in the tourist resorts of the Algarve, dress is far more casual. Shorts, t-shirts and camisoles are perfectly acceptable.

COMMUNICATION & EMAIL

Telephone

National Emergency is **112**
National Enquiries is **118**
International Enquiries is **171**
Pre-paid Calls is **172**

Public telephones are to be found in the street in major towns and in the Post Offices. The national service is run by a State company named "Telecom" (TLP). Telephones can be used according to the two ways of paying other than with cash. One is by a card named "Credifone" and the other is by "TLP card". Cards can be purchased at shops displaying signs advertising their sale.

Mobile phones in Portugal use the GSM telephone service. Visitors using this system will have the benefit of Roaming.

Internet

Internet access in Portugal is possible via dial-up service, dedicated lines, DSL and cable-modem. Dial-up service is the largest part of the market (88% of Internet connections in 2004). Broadband Internet is available, but not as prevalent as in some other European countries.

For those without a computer, there are many Internet Cafes that offer hourly rates for Internet access.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

Best time:

For the centre and north: May to September. (June is a good month, before the crowds.)

For the south, the Algarve: March to November. (The Algarve busiest season is June to September.)

May to September: Summer. Sunny. Weather starts warming up in May and stays hot until September. July and August are the driest and hottest, 28 C (82 F). The Algarve on the southern coast is popular longer, from March to November, because it is dry, sunny and warm, 31 C (88 F), and the sea temperature is higher than the western coast.

October: Sunny, mild, 21 C (70 F), and light rain.

November to March: Winter. Temperatures start dropping everywhere. This is the wet season. The north and centre are rainier than the south. The rainfalls can be heavy or light. In the northern mountains, Serra de Estrela, snow falls. Waters off the western coast are a cool, uninviting 16 C (61 F). The south-facing Algarve has sunny days in winter, but the air temperatures are a cool to mild 10 to 15 C (50 to 60 F).

April: Changeable month with a mix of sunny and rainy days. Rain is heavier in the north. The south has little rain.

Lisbon, Portugal: Altitude 95m (312ft)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Sunrise C (F)	8(47)	9(48)	10(50)	11(51)	13(55)	16(60)
Mid-afternoon C(F)	15(59)	15(60)	18(64)	19(66)	22(72)	25(77)
Days with precipitation	11	11	8	8	6	3
Precipitation mm	110	111	69	64	39	21
Precipitation inches	4.3	4.4	2.7	2.5	1.5	0.8
Daily hours of sunshine	5	5	7	8	9	10



	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunrise C (F)	17(62)	18(64)	17(62)	15(59)	11(51)	9(48)
Mid-afternoon C(F)	27(80)	28(82)	26(78)	22(72)	18(64)	15(59)
Days with precipitation	1	1	4	8	10	10
Precipitation mm	5	6	26	80	114	108
Precipitation inches	0.2	0.2	1.0	3.2	4.5	4.3
Daily hours of sunshine	11	11	9	7	5	5

MEAL COSTS

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant	-	7.00 €
Meal for 2 People, Mid-range Restaurant, Three-course	-	30.00 €
McMeal at McDonalds (or Equivalent Combo Meal)	-	5.50 €

FOOD & DRINKS

Specialities:

There are some fascinating local dishes dotted throughout the country, which are either variations on culinary favourites or unique creations.

- *Bacalhau á bràs* (scrambled eggs with salted cod, potatoes and onions; popular in Estremadura).
- *Lulas recheadas à lisbonense* (stuffed squid; a Lisbon speciality).
- *Tripa à moda do Porto* (tripe; available for those of a meaty disposition in Porto).
- *Queijadas de Sintra* (cheese tart found in Sintra).
- *Açorda de mariscos* (shrimp stew cooked in a bread bowl).
- *Caldo verde* (green soup made with finely shredded green kale leaves in broth).
- *Pastéis de nata* (traditional custard-filled tarts typical of Lisbon).

Regional drinks:

A trip to Portugal would not be complete without sampling some of the wonderful drinks native to certain regions.

- Portugal's most famous tittle is port. Porto, naturally, can boast a wide selection, along with the Douro valley to the east of the city.
- Wine is also a forte in this part of the world. Vinho Verde from Minho in the north together with Vinho do Dão and Vinho da Bairrada stand out from the usual favourites.
- *Aguardente* (a sugar cane based drink).
- Beirão and Ginjinha (or Ginja) are distinctly unique liqueurs to cap off an excellent meal.

SUGGESTED TIPPING SCALE

More often than not, a service charge is not added to hotel and restaurant bills, so tip around **10 to 15%** if you are satisfied with your experience. A couple of Euros for hotel maids and porters is considered appropriate. Round up your taxi fare to the nearest five or 10 Euros if it isn't far off the full fare should you not wish to hand over 10%. Service charge is more casual in the less touristy north than the busy south.

Tipping is a way of showing your appreciation and will be welcomed by the recipient, although if you decide not to tip in a particular circumstance, this doesn't mean you'll receive a lower level of service. Ultimately, tipping is discretionary and should be done at a level that feels comfortable.

Here are some guidelines that you may find helpful:

Service

- 1 - Drivers per/ day
- 2 - Guides per/day
- 3 - Bellmen at hotels per/check in or check out

Tipping amount per/person

- U\$D 05.00 per person
- U\$D 08.00 – 10.00 per person
- U\$D 01.00 per person

HEALTH & MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

As a general recommendation, it is advisable to check with your family doctor or travel clinic for latest health information.

TRAVEL INSURANCE



It is highly recommended that you purchase travel insurance. Your home country health plan may only provide limited coverage while traveling outside of the country. Indus Travels can offer you a complete travel insurance package. Some credit cards do offer travel insurance; however they do not always provide adequate coverage. Review and understand the terms of your credit card insurance policy. Extra travel insurance can be purchased. Most insurance companies do have exclusions in their coverage. Pre-existing medical conditions are not insurable.