

## Cycle Portugal



### ACTIVITY

Cycle

### ACCOMMODATION

Hotel

### CHALLENGE FACTORS

Long Day

### DURATION:

8 days

### GRADE



Cycle the length of Portugal! This classic journey follows the fabled N2, Portugal's answer to Route 66, for over 700km from historic Chaves in the north to Faro in the sunny south.

This extraordinarily scenic ride takes us through terraced vineyards and fields of olive and cork trees, along river-banks and over winding hills with sweeping valley views. The undulating landscapes of the Alentejo, with its traditional white-painted houses, give way to the citrus orchards of the Algarve and the breeze of the Atlantic Ocean.

With long days in the saddle offset by shorter ones, and the long, steady climbs rarely steep, this challenge ticks all the boxes – the epic achievement of pedalling the length of a country, at an achievable pace with a hefty dose of cultural discovery!

This trip generates around **136 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per person**. Because of our commitment to responsible travel, **we offset 100% of these emissions**, including flights booked with us.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1: Fly to Porto; transfer to Chaves

On arrival in Porto, we meet our vehicle and drive inland and north to historic Chaves, just a few kilometres south of the Spanish border. Settled before Roman times, the fortified town is known for its hot springs and ancient Roman bridge; the historic quarter is a joy to wander if you have time. We gather for dinner and a briefing, and ensure our kit and bikes are fully prepared for the start of our challenge tomorrow. Night hotel.

*(Lunch not included)*

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## Day 2: Chaves – Lamego

A wonderful first day on the bike as we head south through this traditional area of northern Portugal. We pedal through small villages and towns, many of which are fortified with thick walls of castles. The abundant spa towns grew up around the mineral water treatments – popular in the 19th Century despite the lack of paved roads. The road surfaces are good now! Our route is rolling with very little flat and, although there are a few sharper inclines through the day, most hills are fairly steady with plenty of freewheeling descents to keep it varied. Pedalling among the sloping terraced hillsides of the photogenic Alto Douro wine region forms one of today's highlights; the micro-climate here is perfect for port wine grapes. This is the oldest controlled wine region in the world and has World Heritage status. After crossing the wide Douro River itself, which flows from Spain into the Atlantic at Porto, it's uphill to the lovely town of Lamego, dominated by its hilltop medieval castle. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx 101km (62 miles)**

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## Day 3: Lamego – Barragem Aguieira

Lamego sits part-way up Montemuro, a low, green mountain which dominates the countryside between the rivers Douro and Paiva. Though a gradual climb, it is one of the longest of our trip and brings us to the highest point on our trip near Bigorne (960m) - though we continue to undulate across the plateau until a wonderful descent with far-reaching views brings us to the bridge over the Paiva River. The rest of the day undulates, with more downhill than up, as we pass through countryside of woods and farmland dotted with palm trees and white-painted terracotta-roofed villages. As we head south we pass through outskirts of larger towns, seeing a more modern Portugal, still with the ever-present backdrop of rolling green hills. As we near the end of our day we cross the River Mondego and end our day near the impressive Aguieira Dam. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx 127km (78 miles)**

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## Day 4: Barragem Aguieira – Sertã

Some very lumpy terrain awaits us today as we head through central Portugal. Riding alongside the Mondego, Portugal's longest river, for a short stretch, winding roads and short climbs bring us to the pretty village of Góis, where the first significant climb of the day beckons. The wooded slopes are beautiful, and every now and then the trees open up to views over the surrounding remote hills and green valleys. Descending, we traverse this ruggedly beautiful central region, crossing the impressive Cabril Dam and tackling a series of hills through the Serra da Lousã range. Well-preserved villages nestle between granite hillsides and pine forest; though tough at times, today motivates us with its stunning wild scenery. We finish in the attractive riverside town of Sertã. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx 112km (69 miles)**

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## Day 5: Sertã – Montemor-o-Novo

Our longest day sees us leaving the mountains of northern Portugal and crossing into flatter southern Portugal. First, however, we tackle Melriça Peak, where a monument marks the geodesic centre of Portugal. With the day's

main challenge behind us so soon, we can enjoy a long stretch of predominant descent (with a few small climbs just to keep it varied!) to Abrantes, on the banks of the River Tejo. The longest river on the Iberian Peninsula, the Tejo marks a change in scenery and terrain as we ride south on rolling roads through the beautiful Alentejo region. Known for its undulating fields of wheat and cork trees, olives groves and vineyards, it's wonderful cycling country through small towns and villages – and although still hilly, the hills are considerably lower and easier! We pass another reservoir at Montargil, crossing the dam, and head south and gradually uphill to the historic town of Montemor-o-Novo, overlooked by its crumbling castle. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx. 176km (109 miles)**

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### Day 6: Montemor-o-Novo – Castro Verde

Typically described as flat, the Alentejo disproves that myth today as we continue through beautiful, rolling landscapes which have no significant hills, but very little flat either! As we progress further south, cork becomes more prevalent though we still pass the ubiquitous olive groves and sun-parched corn fields. It's a tiring day, but the charming villages and small towns of white-painted houses, often featuring impressive cathedrals and hermitages, give us plenty of excuses for photo-stops as we head gradually uphill towards historic Castro Verde. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx. 127km (78 miles)**

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### Day 7: Castro Verde – Faro

We make the most of the predominantly flat morning as we ride through the lower Alentejo, and start ascending once we cross into the Algarve. The landscape becomes greener and wilder again as we cross our last mountain range, the Caldeirão, and enjoy the views from Barranco do Velho, which has featured many times in the Tour of the Algarve professional cycle race and is a fitting place for our last challenge. From here it's downhill to Faro, a wonderful cruising descent of approx 30km, all the way to the end of our ride. Our finish lies on the banks of the Formosa River, where you can smell the salt of the Atlantic Ocean! We meet again for our final dinner together to mark our achievements this week. Night hotel.

**Cycle approx. 96km (60 miles)**

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### Day 8: Fly Faro - London

After a leisurely breakfast, you are free to explore (depending on flight times) until it's time to transfer to the airport.

*(Lunch and Dinner not included)*

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flights to Porto and from Faro
- All transfers as part of itinerary
- All accommodation in hotels on a twin-share basis

- All meals except where specified
- Discover Adventure crew (number dependent on group size)
- Vehicle support throughout the trip
- GPX files for each day to load onto your bike computer/navigation device (not included)
- **We offset 100% of the carbon emissions from your trip, including flights booked with us**

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Bike - bring your own, or hire a carbon frame bike; please contact office for details
- If flying with your bike, any associated costs to/from Portugal (bike box, sports luggage, etc....)
- Travel insurance
- Cycle helmet (compulsory) and water bottle
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

## GRADE | ORANGE

All our trips are designed to provide a challenge. Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **ORANGE** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors. Trip duration, accommodation and living conditions are also taken into account. Some sections will feel more challenging than others, but the grade reflects the overall trip. Unusual weather conditions can also have a significant impact.

The Accommodation icon indicates the living conditions while trekking/cycling. While there are usually several factors that present a challenge, the Challenge icon indicates the trip's most challenging element, for most people.

[Trip grading explained](#)

## CHALLENGE INFORMATION

### DETAILED INFORMATION

#### Leaders & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced crew. The in-country crew know the area and conditions well, and are a great source of knowledge about the regions we pass through. The crew work closely with the group to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely. Crew are selected for their knowledge and experience, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises; they are also trained in first aid. The crew will have

mobile phones, medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. The number of crew and support vehicles looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but the team will be looking after every aspect of your trip whether that's transporting your luggage, making sure you are well-fed, and sorting out any mechanical problems. Support vehicles are with the group for the whole trip.

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## Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with appropriate communication devices (eg phones, radios), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

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## Flight Information

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick but may also depart from regional airports, and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure. We do not always use the same airline for each destination and low cost airlines may be used for short haul flights. If you wish to know the probable carrier and flight times, please call for details.

By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline. If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost.

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## Accommodation

Accommodation is usually in well-located, comfortable 2-3\* hotel(s); standards are generally very good though there may be some variation.

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## Roomshare Arrangements

Our trips are sold on a shared accommodation basis, usually twin-share, in hotels convenient to our route.

You can tell us if you are travelling with someone else on the trip when you book or within your passenger portal, and we will do all we can to accommodate this request. It is important that both people complete the room share request on their bookings. For customers booking and travelling together, including same-sex couples, a double bed can be requested if available.

If you're not familiar with anyone in the group, rest assured, we always pair you with someone of the same gender (as per the information you provided when booking, or passport markers), and a similar age where possible. We're actively working to improve our system's gender restrictions to be more inclusive, and we've recently made significant strides in this area. If you identify differently from the gender marker on your passport and would like to discuss this before booking, please feel free to reach out to us.

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## Single Supplements

In most standard hotels, we can usually offer a limited number of single rooms. This is upon request, on a first-come, first-served basis, and additional charges apply. In more communal accommodation, single rooms are rarely an option. We do not charge a single supplement if you are a solo traveller in a shared room.

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## Food & Dietary Requirements

We like to support local businesses and will source food locally wherever we can. Lunches will be a mix of restaurants along the route or supplies will be purchased from local shops; dinners are usually eaten at the hotel. For larger sized groups we may opt to cater the lunches ourselves with a buffet style provision. Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Having said that, despite working very hard with the hotels, it doesn't always translate into what we'd like for you. If this is the case on your trip, please chat to the crew at the time and they will do their best to find a solution. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply.

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## PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

### Challenge Grading

## GRADE | ORANGE

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[Trip grading explained](#)

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## Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough

training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

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## Terrain

Cycling is on tarmac roads, over predominantly rolling terrain, though there are some more challenging ascents of low mountains. While the climbs are generally long and gradual rather than steep, expect some hair-pin bends and steeper gradients. There are few flat sections. Distances are fairly moderate, averaging about 60-80 miles per day; hillier days tend to be shorter - with the exception of our longest day, which racks up over 100 rolling miles. Traffic is usually light away from the towns, but we strongly recommend you are used to cycling in some traffic, as you will feel more confident.

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## Electric Bikes

On this particular challenge it is possible to upgrade to an electric bike, at additional cost.

In the last few years e-bikes have become increasingly popular. At Discover Adventure we see them as a great tool for inclusivity, and a great enabler for people to get out cycling - at home and on our trips - especially when continuing riding (or starting again) in older age or through health problems.

With charity challenges being at the heart of our business, we know that e-bikes are being used by beneficiaries of various charities to aid recovery, and that they enable participation in events raising funds for those charities.

E-bikes must, however, be used with caution on a multi-day, high-mileage trip and are in no way a substitute for training. Please talk to us well in advance if you are interested in using an e-bike on this challenge, so we can ensure you are aware of the pros and cons. There are a limited number available in-country, and we need plenty of advance notice (two to three months in many destinations) to be able to reserve one for the ride.

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## Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

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## Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be

sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you will all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check the [NaTHNaC Travel Health Pro](#) website for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

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## Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

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## Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

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## Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by email or post. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration, administration and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

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## Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical London to Paris groups run with approximately 30-40 participants whilst all other Euro cycles run with approximately 15-20, however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run however occasionally it may be possible to still to run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

**Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.**

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## Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).

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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 24 Jun 2026, and the challenge is subject to change.