



# Alentejo – the gastronomic soul of Portugal



Inland, beyond the mountains of Monchique and the Serra do Caldeirão, stretch the plains of the Alentejo, a magnificent landscape of wheat and sunflower fields dotted with tiny whitewashed villages, hilltop

medieval castles and forests of pine and cork.

The coastal region of the Alentejo, the Costa Azul, is still practically deserted and like the Algarve 40 years ago, with just a handful of pretty seaside villages such as Vila Nova de Milfontes, Zambujeira do Mar and Porto Covo with their fine sandy beaches.



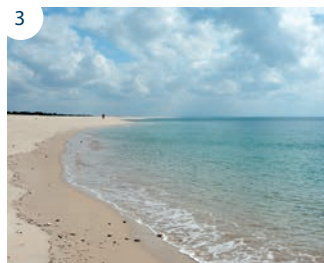
## Gastronomic Experiences

Home-cooked, traditional Alentejo fare can be enjoyed across the region. Try 'A Escola', Alcácer do Sal; 'Herdade da Malhadinha Nova', Alentejo; 'La Tasca do Celso', Vila Nova de Milfontes and 'Faião', Évora.



## Alentejo Wine Routes

Alentejo wines are gaining a reputation with connoisseurs around the world. Whether white, red or rosé wines are filled with aromatic liveliness and can be enjoyed young or aged.



## Beaches

Uncrowded, undeveloped, glorious golden sandy beaches can be found all along the Alentejo coastline. Even in the height of season it is possible to find a secluded spot.



## Fortified Villages

Along the Spanish border you will discover atmospheric, historical fortified villages of which Marvão, Castelo de Vide, Monsaraz and Évora are all worth a visit.

# Coastal Alentejo

The Costa Azul offers fine, and relatively deserted, sand beaches, pretty whitewashed villages and two distinct walking trails – the Rota Vicentina.

## Herdade das Barradas da Serra, Grândola

This family-run property, set within two 800 hectare estates, has about 600 sheep as well as many wild boar and hectares of cork oak and olive trees. The guest rooms are located in two converted farm buildings and are beautifully appointed and furnished in a rustic style. With the town of Grândola a short drive away (5-minutes), marked walking trails, bicycle hire (payable locally), an outdoor swimming pool and large grounds, a stay here can be as active or relaxed as desired.

**Accommodation:** 10 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms, superior rooms and two suites.

- Airports: 115km Lisbon
- Turismo Rurale
- Bed & Breakfast
- Rural location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Swimming pool

Guide price from **£740 per person\***



## Herdade do Freixial, Vila Nova de Milfontes

Located just 2km from the centre of Vila Nova de Milfontes, the grounds of the Herdade do Freixial overlook the estuary of the River Mira, a view that can only be described as stunning. The infinity outdoor swimming pool seemingly merges with the waters of the estuary and the rural setting in open countryside, wooded hills and meadows where sheep and cattle graze offers peace and tranquillity. This property is in a wonderful location and owner-managed by a very friendly and helpful family.

**Accommodation:** 10 air-conditioned units including standard rooms, a superior room, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments.

- Airports: 167km Faro / 187km Lisbon
- Rural hotel
- Bed & Breakfast
- Rural location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Swimming pool

Guide price from **£720 per person\***

## Herdade do Touril, Zambujeira do Mar

Set on a 365 hectare estate within the Costa Vicentina National Park, the Herdade do Touril provides an ideal place to relax and escape from the stresses of everyday life. With its whitewashed walls tinged with blue, tiled roofs and ceramic floors, the property retains all the rustic charm of the Alentejo, without forsaking any of the modern comforts. The twelve guest rooms, located in five separate houses, are simply but tastefully decorated and have French doors which lead out onto a private terrace.

**Accommodation:** 12 rooms including standard rooms, suites, one-bedroom and two-bedroom houses.

- Airports: 221km Lisbon / 142km Faro
- Manor House
- Bed & Breakfast
- Coastal location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Swimming pool

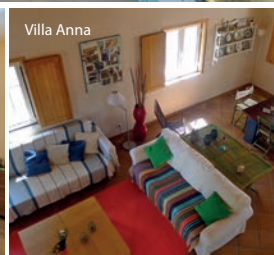
Guide price from **£945 per person\***



\* Guide prices based on 2-sharing a leading room type for 7 nights, flights from London to Lisbon (other airports on request) and car hire. Note: We cannot guarantee that any of our featured properties are suitable for all levels of disability so please ask if you have specific issues. Please visit our website for further information on these and other featured properties.

# Private Villas

The Villas are located on a 1,000 hectare estate in a nature reserve along the Sado River, between Alcácer do Sal and Comporta, and surrounded by diverse and abundant flora and fauna. This private village, with 24 hour security, is set within a forest of pine and cork trees where over a hundred species of birds including storks, mallards, herons, moorhens, marsh harriers and turtle doves, can be found.



## Herdade de Montalvo, Alcácer do Sal

Hidden away along the trails of the estate is a natural dam fed by two streams that form a tranquil lake where you can take a picnic, go for a swim or enjoy a canoe ride. Guests can cycle or walk along the many nature trails or head to the coast, only 15km (15 minutes drive) to the long stretches of beautiful sand beaches at Comporta and Troia, and the golf courses of Troia and Montado.

There are 102 specially designed houses on the estate with a restaurant onsite and a choice of traditional Portuguese cuisine on offer in Alcácer do Sal and the surrounding villages. Just 1 hour drive from Lisbon, these villas provide an ideal retreat for a family or group of friends.

- Airport: 102km Lisbon
- Self Catering Villas
- Car hire recommended
- Complimentary WiFi
- Private swimming pool

**Accommodation:** 4 air-conditioned 3-bedroom villas. Note: Each villa can be rented as a two bedroom villa by closing off one room and bathroom.

**Lake Villa (sleeps 6+2)** has three bedrooms (two doubles and one twin), 3 bathrooms (two with bath and shower and one with shower only), fully equipped kitchen (microwave, dishwasher, fridge-freezer, gas hobs and oven, coffee maker and toaster), spacious living room with air-conditioning, wood burning fireplace, complimentary WiFi, hairdryer, two sofa beds for two adults or children, satellite or cable TV, stereo, CD player, pool table, washing machine, tumble dryer, iron and ironing board, vacuum cleaner, sunbeds and private parking. There is a furnished outdoor garden area, barbecue and private swimming pool (5 x 10m). Housekeeping and cleaning is carried out mid and end of each week, with a change of sheets and towels.

**Villa Sado (sleeps 6+2)** has three double bedrooms (plus twin beds in the attic), 3 bathrooms (two with bath and shower and one with shower only), fully equipped kitchen (microwave, dishwasher, fridge-freezer, gas hobs and oven, coffee maker and toaster), spacious living room with air-conditioning, wood burning fireplace, complimentary WiFi, hairdryer, sofas, satellite or cable TV, stereo, blu-ray player and film library, washing machine, iron and ironing board, vacuum cleaner,

sunbeds and private parking. There is a furnished outdoor garden area, barbecue and private swimming pool (6 x 10m). Housekeeping and cleaning is carried out mid and end of each week, with a change of sheets and towels.

**Villa Princesa (sleeps 6+2)** has three bedrooms (three twins), 3 bathrooms (two with bath and one with shower), fully equipped kitchen (microwave, dishwasher, fridge-freezer, gas hobs and oven, coffee maker and toaster), spacious living room with air-conditioning, wood burning fireplace, complimentary WiFi, hairdryer, sofas, satellite or cable TV, stereo, CD player, pool table, washing machine, iron and ironing board, vacuum cleaner, sunbeds and private parking. There is a furnished outdoor garden area, barbecue and private swimming pool (6 x 10m). Housekeeping and cleaning is carried out mid and end of each week, with a change of sheets and towels.

**Villa Anna (sleeps 6+2)** has three bedrooms (two doubles and one twin), 3 bathrooms (two with bath and shower and one with shower only), fully equipped kitchen (microwave, dishwasher, fridge-freezer, gas hobs and oven, coffee maker and toaster), spacious living room with air-conditioning, wood

burning fireplace, complimentary WiFi, hairdryer, sofas, satellite or cable TV, stereo, CD player, washing machine, tumble dryer, iron and ironing board, vacuum cleaner, sunbeds and private parking. There is a furnished outdoor garden area, barbecue and private swimming pool (5 x 10m). Housekeeping and cleaning is carried out mid and end of each week, with a change of sheets and towels.

### General Information

- Minimum stay is 4 nights (all season) except for 01 Jul-31 Aug, Easter and Christmas which is 7 nights stay.
- A security deposit is required in the amount of 250 Euros (in cash), to be paid at check-in. This deposit is to cover any damage to the property during your stay and is fully refundable on departure.

### Amenities/Leisure

- Health & Sports Club with communal 25m swimming pool (Jul-Aug – with lifeguard), restaurant, volleyball and basketball courts, two tennis courts, an equestrian centre and children's playground.
- 3 blue flag beaches – Comporta beach, Pego beach and Carvalhal beach

Guide price from **£640 per person based on 4\***

\* Guide price based on 4-sharing a villa for 7 nights, flights from London to Lisbon (other airports on request) and car hire. Note: We cannot guarantee that any of our featured properties are suitable for all levels of disability so please ask if you have specific issues. Please visit our website for further information on these and other featured properties.

# Évora

There is plenty to explore in this UNESCO World Heritage city. Évora is one of Portugal's oldest and most interesting cities, full of narrow streets, fine buildings, old palaces, churches and fountains.

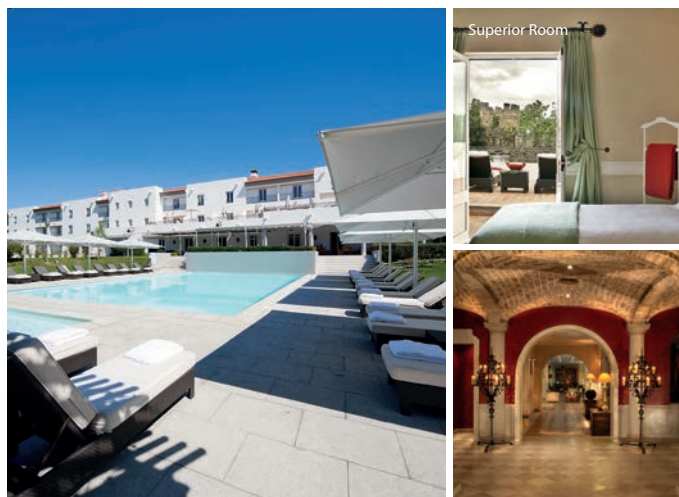
## M'Ar de Ar Muralhas Hotel, Évora

This charming hotel is located within the ancient 14th century city walls of Évora, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The hotel has been decorated in a modern simple style, employing vibrant colours to create an inviting atmosphere of warmth and comfort. Novel objets d'art adorn the walls, adding further to the charm of the hotel by reflecting the rural life of the Alentejo region. The restaurant serves traditional Alentejo cuisine with a good choice of Portuguese wines to complement any dish.

**Accommodation:** 91 air-conditioned rooms including classic rooms, superior rooms and suites.

- Airports: 131km Lisbon / 226km Faro
- 4-star hotel
- Bed & Breakfast
- City location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Swimming pool

Guide price from **£744 per person\***



## Pousada Convento de Évora, Évora

The Pousada, originally a 15th century monastery, is located in the centre of the city, next to the Roman Temple of Diana - one of the highlights of Évora - and between the Palace of the Counts of Basto and the house of the Dukes of Cadaval. This beautiful property has been carefully restored, maintaining many original features. A wide marble staircase leads to the first floor, where the original monks' cloisters are now wide airy corridors filled with antiques and portraits.

**Accommodation:** 36 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms, superior rooms and suites.

- Airports: 131km Lisbon / 288km Faro
- Historic Pousada
- Bed & Breakfast
- City location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Swimming pool

Guide price from **£970 per person\***

## Convento do Espinheiro Hotel, Évora

The property is a national monument and one of the most famous monasteries in Portugal. Legend has it that there was an apparition of the Virgin Mary, above a thorn bush (espinheiro) in the early 1400s. By 1458 the site had become a centre of pilgrimage and a church and monastery had been built. Now a luxury hotel and spa, the hotel is set in 20 acres of herb gardens, olive groves and vineyards and has been sensitively renovated to reflect the splendour of the original building.

**Accommodation:** 92 air-conditioned rooms including deluxe rooms, design rooms and junior suites.

- Airports: 135km Lisbon / 219km Faro
- 5-star hotel
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Rural location
- Swimming pools
- Spa
- Wine Estate

Guide price from **£880 per person\***



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# Alqueva Lake

Alqueva is the largest artificial lake in Europe (93km long), built on the Guadiana River. You can go kayaking, sailing and water-skiing on the lake as well as sunbathe on one of two artificial sand beaches at Monsaraz and Mourão.

## Live-aboard Motorboats, Amieira Marina

The motorboats, on Lake Alqueva, sleep from 2 to 10 people and have one to five bedrooms. They are easy to use, have a top speed of 6 miles per hour and the Marina staff offer training (c.90-minutes) before setting off. The majority of the beds are doubles and there are only two models which have single beds. All the villages have docking facilities and each night after mooring the boat you can walk to the village (c.1-2km) to enjoy the delightful local cuisine. Note: Some restaurants will also deliver meals to the boats on request.

**Accommodation:** 7 boat types (sleeping 2 to 10 persons), each equipped with GPS, sonar and a communication system.

- Airports: 194km Lisbon / 206km Faro
- Live-aboard motorboats
- Self Catering
- Lake Alqueva location
- Kayaks and bikes can be rented and taken onboard the boats

Guide price from **£1,345 per person\***



## Pousada Convento de Beja, Beja

This impressive Pousada, originally built in 1268, was a Franciscan monastery and is centrally located in the city of Beja. Today, after major repair and restoration, the São Francisco provides comfortable lodgings in a splendid centuries-old structure which still retains its former chapter house and cloister dating back to the 1300's.

**Accommodation:** 35 air-conditioned rooms, converted from the original monastic cells, including standard rooms and one suite.

- Airports: 148km Faro / 174km Lisbon
- Historic Pousada
- Bed & Breakfast
- City location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Swimming pool

Guide price from **£836 per person\***

## Herdade do Vau, Quintos

The original 19th century manor house was in ruins and in 2012 the owner decided to renovate the property and has brought to life the traditional building in the most sensitive manner. Interestingly, parts of the structure which were added - bathrooms for instance - are finished in smooth, polished concrete to indicate a departure from the original. The result is an airy cool structure with large bedrooms from which there are wonderful views over the surrounding landscape. From the terraces and the large swimming pool the views are to the Guadiana River, vineyards and pastures.

**Accommodation:** 12 air-conditioned units including standard rooms, superior double rooms and apartments (one-bedroom and two-bedroom)

- Airports: 159km Faro / 233km Lisbon
- Manor House
- Bed & Breakfast (BB)
- Self Catering (SC)
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Rural location
- Swimming pool
- Wine Estate

Guide price from **£756 per person\***



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# Alentejo wines

The unspoiled landscape of the Alentejo, boasts 22,000 hectares of un-drenched vineyards, eight separate DOC accredited sub-regions and 250 independent wineries. Currently, one in every two bottles of wine consumed in Portugal is produced in the Alentejo.

## Herdade da Malhadinha Nova, Albernoa

Malhadinha Nova is a family-owned, 450 hectare country estate set in the heart of the Alentejo region. The estate produces traditional, regional products of the highest quality including award-winning wines, the famous Alentejo black pork and pureblood Alentejo beef. Guest accommodation is offered in an Alentejo-style country farmhouse which affords stunning views over the estate.

**Accommodation:** 10 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms, junior suites and suites.

- Airports: 127km Faro / 211km Lisbon
- Country House
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Rural location
- Swimming pool
- Spa
- Wine Estate

Guide price from **£1,189 per person\***



## Wine Boutique Hotel do Sobroso, Vidigueira

This 1,660 hectare estate (4,100 acres) consists of wild landscape, some of which borders Lake Alqueva, craggy, forested hills and hidden valleys with breathtaking views as far away as Beja (43km). Personally and passionately managed by Sofia and Filipe, this is a tribute to Alentejo's local cuisine, olive oil, honey, jams, wines and high standard of accommodation. As an introduction to this wonderful herdade, a guided tour of the hidden areas of this vast estate, with chances to see wild boar, mouflon and deer is included in the holiday price.

**Accommodation:** 11 air-conditioned units including standard rooms, a suite and two-bedroom apartments.

- Airports: 188km Faro / 202km Lisbon
- Boutique Hotel
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Rural location
- Swimming pool
- Wine Estate

Guide price from **£831 per person\***

## Torre de Palma Wine Hotel, Monforte

Located in Monforte, this luxury hotel is set in a village in the upper Alentejo, in the Portalegre municipality. Dating back to 1338, the remains of the ancient house were restored in 2014 and inspired by Alentejan customs and the old traditional lifestyle of the prominent Basilio family, the former inhabitants of nearby Torre de Palma Roman ruins. Unique architecture is complemented by stylish décor in neutral colours and beautifully furnished rooms located either in typical Alentejan houses, in converted barns or in a 14th century Manor house surrounded by vineyards.

**Accommodation:** 19 air-conditioned rooms including classic rooms, superior rooms, family suites and a master suite.

- Airport: 193km Lisbon
- 4-star hotel
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant
- Rural location
- Swimming pools
- Spa
- Wine Estate

Guide price from **£964 per person\***



\* Guide prices based on 2-sharing a leading room type for 7 nights, flights from London to Lisbon (Monforte) or Faro (other airports on request) and car hire. Note: We cannot guarantee that any of our featured properties are suitable for all levels of disability so please ask if you have specific issues. Please visit our website for further information on these and other featured properties.

# Medieval Mountain-top Towns

Visit Monsaraz, which overlooks vineyards and the Alqueva Lake; Marvão with an incredible 360 degree panorama; and Castelo de Vide with its atmospheric medieval Jewish Quarter, where time seems to have stood still.

## SL Hotel Santa Luzia, Elvas

The Santa Luzia hotel was the first pousada built in Portugal in 1942. Today, it is a smart, contemporary hotel with 25 rooms and very good restaurant in keeping with the old traditions. It is very well located within 2,000 square metres of gardens and only a 6 minute walk to the city walls and the centre of Elvas. For those who want to explore Elvas on foot yet maintain a 'country feel' about their accommodation then this is the place to be. An elegant and sophisticated hotel.

**Accommodation:** 25 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms and superior rooms.

- Airport: 206km Lisbon
- 4-star hotel
- Bed & breakfast
- City location
- Complimentary WiFi
- Restaurant

Guide price from **£720 per person\***



## Casa Amarela, Castelo de Vide

The stylish main square of Castelo de Vide, dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, is surrounded by Baroque buildings and is the location of the Casa Amarela. Beautifully restored, this 19th century building, dating from the French invasion of the town, is in an ideal location from which to explore the centre and offers a variety of comfortable rooms with either square or mountain view. This charming manor house is personally managed by the owner, Victor Guimarães and his family.

**Accommodation:** 11 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms and two suites.

- Airport: 218km Lisbon
- Manor house
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Hilltop town location

Guide price from **£732 per person\***

## Pousada de Marvão, Marvão

At an altitude of 1000 metres, the village of Marvão enjoys magnificent panoramic views across the Alentejo plain as far as the Spanish border. The Pousada, surrounded by 13th century castle walls, is made up of a small group of village houses and many of the original medieval features have been maintained. The Pousada offers a good base from which to visit other places of interest such as the Roman town of Ammaia (6km), Castelo de Vide (13km) and the mountain range and Natural Park of São Mamede.

**Accommodation:** 31 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms, superior rooms and suites.

- Airport: 231km Lisbon
- Charming Pousada
- Bed & Breakfast
- Complimentary WiFi
- Hilltop town location
- Restaurant

Guide price from **£782 per person\***



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# Pousadas of the Alentejo

## Alcácer do Sal – Vila Viçosa – Marvão

Itinerary: 8 days / 7 nights

The beauty and diversity of the Alentejo landscape is second to none in Portugal. Combined with the quality of archaeological, monumental, architectural and ethnographic heritage, it makes the Alentejo a delight to explore. Our suggested itinerary below is not set and can be amended to suit individual requirements.

**Day One:** On arrival at Lisbon airport, collect your hire car and drive to the town of Alcácer do Sal (88.8km).

**Day Two:** Day at leisure. Explore the undeveloped Atlantic coastline between Troia and the Cape of Sines with its kilometres of uninterrupted beaches. Further south is the charming coastal resort of Porto Covo (80km) of which the main square is considered one of the jewels of popular Portuguese architecture. There is also a fine sand beach, an abundance of excellent fish restaurants and magnificent sunsets over the Atlantic.

**Day Three:** After breakfast, drive across the plains of the Alentejo – especially beautiful in spring when the wild flowers are in bloom – to Vila Viçosa (155km). The route

will highlight the diversity of the region from coastal villages in the west, to the agricultural plains and vineyards of its centre and the lofty mountain peaks and historic hilltop villages in the east.

For those interested in learning more about Alentejo wine, the Cartuxa Winery on the outskirts of Évora is worth a visit. In the vineyards, Roupeiro, Antão Vaz and Arinto grapes are cultivated to produce white wines, whilst Aragonze, Trincadeira and Tinta Caiada grapes are used for making red wines.

**Day Four:** Day at leisure. Visit the medieval hilltop town of Monsaraz, one of the most picturesque settlements in the region with white-washed houses, many adorned with colourful flower boxes, narrow cobbled streets and wonderful panoramas.

**Day Five:** After breakfast, head to Marvão (95.9km), perched high on the mountainside and affording spectacular views of the surrounding natural landscape.

**Day Six:** Day at leisure. The area of Marvão offers dramatic scenery, ancient villages and fortified towns – an ideal location for keen photographers and painters to practice their art.

**Day Seven:** Day at leisure. For outdoor enthusiasts the Natural Park of Serra de São Mamede, close to Marvão (8km) is ideal for hiking, cycling and bird watching. Birds such as Bonelli's Eagle, the Griffin Vulture, Sparrow hawks, the Short-toed Eagle, Black Kites and Eagle Owls can all be spotted within the reserve.

**Day Eight:** After breakfast, drive to Lisbon airport for your return flight home.



Pousada Castelo de Alcácer do Sal

\*Guide price based on 2-sharing includes:

- Flights from London Heathrow to Lisbon (other airports on request)
- 8-days car hire
- 2-nights Pousada Castelo de Alcácer do Sal, Alcácer do Sal BB - See website
- 2-nights Pousada Convento de Vila Viçosa, Vila Viçosa BB - See website
- 3-nights Pousada de Marvão, Marvão BB - Page 36

### Departures

Daily

### Duration

7 nights

### Guide price from

£603 per person\*

Pousada Convento de Vila Viçosa







\*Guide price based on 2-sharing includes:

- Flights from London Gatwick to Faro (other airports on request)
- 8-days car hire
- 4-nights Herdade do Touril, Zambujeira do Mar BB - Page 31
- 3-nights Aldeia da Pedralva, Pedralva SC - Page 41

**Departures**  
Daily

**Duration**  
7 nights

**Guide price from**  
£628 per person\*



# Rota Vicentina: Self-guided walks

## Zambujeira do Mar – Pedralva

Itinerary: 8 days / 7 nights

With fabulous beaches, isolated fishing villages and 75-hectares of protected flora, fauna and coastline, this is a destination with immense appeal for nature lovers and best explored on foot. The Rota Vicentina has two walking trails: the Historical Way (240km) stretches from Santiago do Cacém (Alentejo) to Cabo de São Vicente (Algarve); and Fisherman's Trail (110km) which meanders along the Atlantic coast from Porto Covo (Alentejo) to Cabo de São Vicente (Algarve). Each walk has been divided into shorter trails to allow for a day's exploration.

**Day One:** On arrival at Faro airport, collect your hire car and drive to the Herdade do Touril (142km).

**Day Two – Almogrove to Zambujeira do Mar (22km):**

After breakfast, take a taxi from Herdade do Touril to Almogrove (payable locally). At Almogrove the 'Fisherman's Way' runs along the coastline to Zambujeira do Mar passing by small fishing harbours, reddish sand dunes and lunar landscapes. The marked trail is 22km (7 hours), and although steep and soft underfoot in places, is a pleasure to navigate.

**Day Three:** Day at leisure. Discover the cork fields, olive trees and vineyards of the Alentejo interior.

The region, which covers a third of the country, is remarkably unspoiled and has a carpet of vibrant wild flowers in the spring.

**Day Four – Zambujeira do Mar to Odeceixe (18km):**

Depart, on foot, following the marked 'Fisherman's Trail' to Odeceixe. On this 18km trail (5½ hours) you will pass four beaches before reaching the fishing harbour of Azenha do Mar. One of the most outstanding views in the entire region – Odeceixe beach seen from the majestic Ponta em Branco - can be enjoyed during the walk. Return by taxi (payable locally).

**Day Five:** Drive south to Pedralva (67.4km). The philosophy at the Aldeia da Pedralva is about 'switching-off' and relaxing: reading, playing cards, talking to fellow guests, swimming and walking. The property offers a range of activities from dolphin watching and boat excursions to birdwatching.

**Day Six – Carrapateira to Pedralva (11km):**

Take a taxi to Carrapateira (payable locally). The 'Fisherman's Trail' is marked back to Pedralva, a walk of 11km (4 hours), passing through small coastal and rural communities.

**Day Seven – Pedralva to Vila do Bispo (21km):**

Today's 21km walk (6½ hours) is to Vila do Bispo where you will see deep ravines, verdant hills, sheltered white sand beaches and the wild Alentejo coastline. Return by taxi (payable locally).

**Day Eight:** After breakfast, drive to Faro airport for your return flight home.

# Alentejo Family Holiday

## Alcácer do Sal & Lake Alqueva

Itinerary: 11 days / 10 nights

Portugal is the perfect choice for a family holiday with an abundance of activities that can be enjoyed by all age groups. Explore the nature reserve with its variety of wildlife, cycle or walk along nature trails, explore historical towns or simply head to the coast and enjoy the fine sand beaches. The live-aboard motorboats on Lake Alqueva, the largest artificial lake in Europe, at 193km long, allow you to potter around on the water with the opportunity to swim and kayak.

**Day One:** Arrive at Lisbon airport, collect your hire car and drive to Alcácer do Sal (102km / c.1 hour drive). Herdade de Montalvo is located on a 1,000 hectare estate in a nature reserve along the Sado River and surrounded by diverse and abundant flora and fauna.

**Days Two & Three:** There are several trails on the estate where you can go for a nature walk through pine and cork trees and where over a hundred

species of birds including storks, mallards, herons, moorhens and turtle doves, can be found. The area is also home to foxes, otters, badgers, boars, hares and rabbits. Walk to a tranquil lake where you can take a picnic, go for a swim or enjoy a canoe ride. The estate also offers volleyball and basketball courts, two tennis courts and an equestrian centre.

**Days Four to Seven:** Head to the coast, only 15km (15 minute drive) to the long stretches of beautiful sand beaches at Comporta and Troia (30km / 25 minutes drive). Troia also has a golf course, the ruins of a Roman archaeological site and a small marina. From here you can take a passenger or car ferry - departs every half hour, across the Sado estuary to Setubal, often seeing the resident pod of dolphins en route. Setubal has many harbour-front restaurants where you can enjoy a good fish lunch.

Take a day and head south to the coastal town of Sines (76km / 56 minutes drive), where Vasco de Gama set sail to the New World, and explore the fascinating castle. Spend a day in the capital, Lisbon for a cultural day.

**Day Eight:** After breakfast, pack the car and head to Amieira Marina on Alqueva Lake (118km / c. 1 hour 40 minutes drive). The boats are easy to use, have a top speed of 6 miles per hour and the Marina staff offer training (c.90-minutes) before setting off. Kayaks and bikes can be taken onboard the boats. No driving licence required to navigate the boats - minimum age to steer is 18 years.

**Days Nine & Ten:** Spend time on the water visiting the other villages and generally enjoying the lake and its surrounding landscape of olive and cork trees. By mid-May, the water temperature of the lake is around 25 degrees and reaches 32-36 degrees in August, easily matching the Mediterranean. The water is clean and ideal for swimming and kayaking. All the villages have docking facilities (free) and each night after mooring the boat you can walk, or cycle, to the village (1-2km) to enjoy the delightful local cuisine.

**Day Eleven:** After breakfast, drive to Lisbon airport (192km / c.2 hours drive) for your return flight home to the UK.

\*Guide price based on 4-sharing includes:

- Flights from London Gatwick to Lisbon (other airports on request)
- Car hire for the duration
- 7-nights Herdade de Montalvo, Alcácer do Sal SC - Page 32
- 3-nights Live-aboard Motorboat, Amieira Marina SC - Page 34

#### Departures

Daily (all year)

#### Duration

10 nights

#### Guide price from

£1,225 per person based on 4 people\*

Live-aboard motorboat, Lake Alqueva

