



The Great Canadian Travel Group Inc.

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Cycle Through Portugal's Douro Wine Region



This cycling holiday in the Douro Valley of Portugal will acquaint you with fascinating and magical surroundings, delicious cuisine and some of the world's finest wines (including Port Wine, for which the region is famous). Enjoy unique accommodation along the way, including delightful rural homes. Self-guided tour with support of an on-call representative.



7 days/6 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive Porto - transfer to Castelo Rodrigo



After arrival at Porto airport you will join an included, shared transfer to the easternmost point of your holiday; Castelo Rodrigo. Enjoy the beautiful landscape and scenery that unfolds along the way, entering the fascinating landscape of the Douro River Canyon and its 200 metre high cliffs. The historical village of Castelo Rodrigo deserves an exploratory walk, with its cobbled streets, palace ruins, old walls and ogival arched gates, 16th century pillory and medieval church. Your hotel is located in Castelo Rodrigo with great views over the surrounding plains, mountains and all the way to the border with Spain.

This holiday is self-guided, for those who like to cycle independently but with a backup. Activity level is considered moderate. The average daily ride is 41 km (25 miles) on terrain that is undulating. The route is 85% paved roads. Minimum suggested age to participate is 14 years. A company representative will meet you and is available throughout the trip. A GPS device loaded with the tracks is provided to participants.



Day 2: Almeida - Escarigo

The first day of cycling takes you across high plains to the historical village of Almeida, one of the most important strongholds in Portugal's history. Although it had been occupied by humans since the Palaeolithic era, it was only during the Arabic period that the name of the village came about - Al Meda meaning "the table". There is an ancient tale that a sumptuous table embedded with precious stones once stood in this spot. However, Almeida's military importance was yet to come...taken and re-taken many times during battles between the Portuguese and the Castilians, in 1296 a new castle was built by the Portuguese, then in 1640 an enormous star-shaped fortress was built around the town to defend against Spanish and French attacks. Eventually falling to Napoleon's armies it was later used by the Portuguese as a political prison. Also visit the village of Vilar Torpim, with its chapel and manor house, and Escarigo, right on the Spanish border. Return to Castelo Rodrigo for your overnight. Meals: (B)

Distance covered: 53 km / 33 miles

Altitude gain (m): 684 / Altitude loss (m): 681



Day 3: Aldeia do Juizo

At the beginning of the day, cycle around the Serra da Marofa mountain range. Experience stunning views over the Iberian Plateau and from the top you can also see the Douro river system (which, beyond this river, includes Côa and Águeda rivers), to the East. Continue on to Aldeia do Juizo, a rural village with 2 chapels, several wineries and a community oven that is surrounded by vineyards, olive groves and almond orchards. On the banks of the river, there are vegetable-gardens, where the locals produce a wide variety of agricultural products. Stay in a delightful village house, part of a rural tourism complex of restored houses, all with private bathroom facilities. Meals: (B)



Distance covered: 30 km / 19 miles

Altitude gain (m): 416 / Altitude loss (m): 739

Day 4: Marialva - Meda - Penedono

On the ride today you cycle through two historical villages, Marialva and Meda before your approach to Penedono,



with views of its almost hexagon castle, perched on an outcrop. After the first 10 km you will be able to see the Castle of Marialva. When you reach the village, explore the streets, lined with buildings that have stood the test of time and which lead to the citadel surrounded by ancient walls. The next highlight is Meda – in medieval times this village was essentially a border town and the setting for hard-fought skirmishes between Christians and Muslims. The watchtower was one of the most important strategic defence points in the region and combined with the castles of Marialva and Longroiva. Today the village is quiet and the main activity is farming and wine-making. Continue on to Penedono and its medieval castle, a unique example of military architecture that dominates the surrounding countryside. Meals: (B)

Distance covered: 39 km / 24 miles

Altitude gain (m): 934 / Altitude loss (m): 497

Day 5: Douro Valley - UNESCO World Heritage vineyards



The Alto Douro winemaking region is most famous for its Port wine, but the region also produces world-famous wines from the Touriga grape. The terraced vineyards are so typical of the region that they are listed a UNESCO World Heritage site and are a delight to behold. The neatly-kept wine estates rise proudly amidst the vineyards, their names clearly visible to everyone who passes. In the afternoon enjoy a boat trip on a 'Rabelo', a traditional 'gondola-shaped' boat that in earlier days transported up to 50 barrels of wine at a time, downriver, to Porto. The Port wine town of Pinhao is your next stop, with its exquisite train station, the ceiling covered in azulejos (traditional Portuguese blue ceramic tiles). You spend the night in Pinhao. Meals: (B)

Distance covered: 40 km / 25 miles

Altitude gain (m): 590 / Altitude loss (m): 1361



Day 6: Pinhao Loop - Douro River

The route today takes you along the magnificent and enchanting Douro Valley. The views are nothing less than breathtaking, as if the Douro Valley is ensuring that you will never forget its magical beauty! Head along the riverside and enjoy a guided visit of an 18th century wine estate, at the confluence of the Douro and Tedo rivers, and a wine tasting at Quinta do Tedo. At the end of today's cycle you will arrive back in Pinhao. Meals: (B)

Distance covered: 40.5 km / 25 miles

Altitude gain (m): 842 / Altitude loss (m): 919



Day 7: Depart Porto

This morning you check out of your hotel and are transferred back to Porto airport. Or, you can choose to add some nights in this cosmopolitan city. We will quote you on extra nights in Porto at the time of booking. Meals: (B)



Details

Trip Code:

009390-W20

INCLUDED

- Transfers from Porto airport and return
- 6 nights in hotels, guesthouses, and rural tourism houses
- 5 days cycling with luggage transfer
- Breakfast daily, days 2-7
- Luggage transfers

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to/from Porto
- Electric bikes (available at a supplement)
- Optional tours and entrance fees
- Gratuities to local guides
- Travel insurance
- Passport and visa fees, vaccinations as required
- Items of a personal nature

TOUR NOTES

Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.

ROUTE MAP





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