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Alentejo Beach Trail

Weight limit: 85 kilos

Nearest airport: Lisbon

8 days / 7 nights / 5 days riding



Discover the beauty of Portugal's Atlantic coast on this varied trail, beginning in the lush and green coastal mountains of Grandola before reaching the deserted beaches and lagoons of the Alentejo region. Beautiful, well behaved, Lusitano horses await with comfortable hotel accommodation and a swimming pool for evening relaxation.

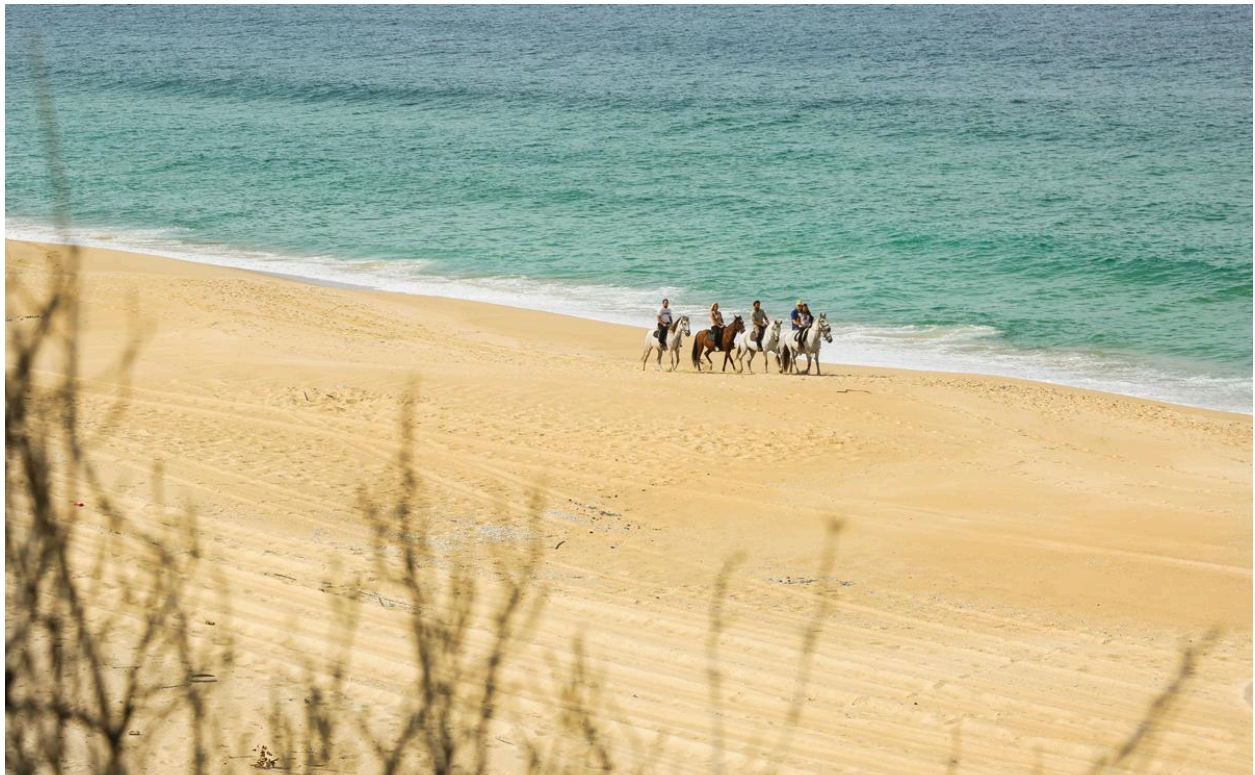
The Riding

The stables are only 15km from the pristine sandy beaches of the Atlantic, set amongst the Serra de Grandola hills. This combination of hills with long, sandy tracks and beaches provides some of the most perfect trail routes for you to explore. There are many parts of the route that allow for long canters and gallops as well as some technical walking terrain with spectacular views.

Riding into the hills you'll pass cork trees which have grown for centuries, as well as eucalyptus and pine forests. In the opposite direction lie the beaches, sand dunes and lagoons of the coast. There are plenty of opportunities for long relaxed canters and occasional gallops while you enjoy the varied scenery the trail provides.

Level of riding and fitness

This trail is suitable for intermediate and experienced riders. Riders must be able to mount and dismount from the ground unaided. All participants must be competent, confident and in control at all paces including gallop. A reasonable level of **current** riding fitness is required as you'll be spending 4-6 hours in the saddle each day.



Guides & Groups sizes

Luis is your host for this holiday and is one of the friendly guides that accompany this trail. All guides are Portuguese natives with a deep knowledge of the region and speak English, French and Portuguese.

Group size 3-10

Horses & Tack

Horses are mostly Lusitano and Lusitano/Arab crosses, all the horses are calm, responsive and easy to ride.

You will ride in Portuguese military-style saddles with comfortable sheepskin seats and English style bridles.



Accommodation and Dining

You'll be staying in two different hotels during the trail, both of which have been handpicked to offer comfortable accommodation so you can fully relax and unwind when not in the saddle. Both double/twin and single rooms are available and both the hotels used have swimming pools.

Meals are typically Alentejo cuisine, the region is known for its gastronomy of simple yet mouthwatering dishes. Fresh-baked bread, olives, wild mushrooms, asparagus, salted cod, wild boar, olive oil and some excellent cheeses form the basis of many recipes. Lunch is usually a picnic out on the trail, and includes grilled fish or meat alongside plenty of freshly prepared salads and bread. Local wine is included with lunch (the Alentejo region produces half of the country's wine). Dinner is either served in local restaurants or provided at the hotels and the daily menu includes lots of regional specialities. Water and soft drinks are provided with dinner, wine and other alcoholic drinks are available to buy if you would like them.

Allergies and special dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice.

Itinerary

Day 1

You will be met at Lisbon airport at 17:30 and transferred to your accommodation in Grandola, close to the Atlantic coastline. Check in to the hotel and then relax before dinner which is at a typical Alentejo restaurant where you can get to know your fellow riders and hosts before the trail begins.

Day 2

After breakfast you'll be transferred to the stables and matched with one of the horses before setting off through the hills of Grandola with beautiful panoramic views of the ocean. Lunch will be a picnic on the trail before you continue riding through the forest to your hosts base where the horses spend the night.

You are transferred back to your hotel where you can refresh or take a swim before dinner at a restaurant in Melides.

Day 3

Today's ride heads through eucalyptus forests before reaching the Santo Andre lagoon where you'll stop for lunch. After lunch there are some fast canters on the many sandy trails which cross this area. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 4

Your ride this morning is along the beach as the sun rises so be prepared for an early start. After some exhilarating canters along the beach (depending on the tides), you'll reach the shade of a pine forest where you'll stop for a long, relaxing lunch. You'll have time for a dip in the sea or a siesta before getting back into the saddle. After lunch, ride through the dunes until reaching your next hotel Nomade where you'll have dinner and spend the night.

Day 5

Today is a rest day for the horses so you can relax at the hotel, take a walk through the pine forest or hire a bike. There is an optional visit to the old village of Alcacer do Sol where you can visit one of the oldest handmade saddlery establishments in Portugal.



Day 6

Today you'll head off on horseback through rice fields and down onto the beach of Comporta. Be prepared for an early start so you can enjoy the beach before most people get there. Ride among the sand dunes until you reach the picnic spot for today's lunch. After lunch, you'll ride back to the hotel and dinner will be in a local restaurant.

Day 7

Today is the last day of riding and you will ride to the Sado River where there are many opportunities for fast riding through the pine forests on alternating red earth or pale sand paths. Lunch is at a local restaurant at Carvalhal before you ride back to your hotel for a farewell dinner and overnight.

Day 8

After breakfast you are transferred back to Lisbon airport for your flight home.

Flights & Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

Please plan your flights to/from as follows:

You should arrive by 4.30pm to allow time to collect your luggage before the transfer which departs at 5.30pm.

Your departure flight should leave at midday or later to allow time for the road transfer, which takes 2-3 hours.

What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your helmet in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

Please use the packing list as a guideline, bearing in mind the time of year you are riding.

- Riding hat
- Long trousers/jodhpurs
- Riding shoes/boots that you can walk in
- Casual wear for evenings
- Swimwear
- Waterproof jacket
- Sunglasses, suncream
- Toiletries
- Passport and a copy of your travel insurance



Climate

The Alentejo region has a Mediterranean climate, typically warm to hot and dry for a large part of the year, with summer temperatures reaching up to 40 °C (104 °F), while winters are relatively mild and wet.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at the National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Portugal for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/portugal/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

We recommend bringing some local currency for extra drinks or souvenirs. Meals are not included on the rest day so you will need to bring enough money to cover this although most places accept cards. The local currency is the Euro, tipping is at your discretion and is appreciated.

Riding Declaration

"I am an intermediate or experienced rider and able to mount & dismount unaided. I have a firm seat and I'm confident and in control at all paces (including rising trot, light seat canter and gallops) and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others."

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms saddletravel.com

Holidays are confirmed with a 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If the ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.



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