

Alentejo Beach Trail

Discover the beauty of Portugal's Atlantic coast, beginning in the lush coastal mountains of Grandola before reaching the deserted beaches and lagoons of the Alentejo region.

PORTUGAL
8 DAYS | 7 NIGHTS
5 DAYS RIDING
Intermediate

A stable of Lusitano horses await with accommodation in a lovely rural hotel with a swimming pool. A fantastic holiday in the sun for intermediate riders onwards.

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 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. The riding is not fast-paced, there are long periods of walking and trotting when in the hills but also opportunities for long relaxed canters both in the hills and on the beach.

Highlights:

- Deserted Atlantic beaches, sand dunes, lagoons & ancient cork forests
- Ride beautiful Lusitano horses, Portugal's legendary breed
- Feast on Alentejo cuisine with picnic lunches & local wine included
- Charming rural hotel with pool, hammocks & yoga deck
- Optional dolphin watching tour on your rest day – Portugal at its finest!



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 long canters on the many sandy trails which cross this area. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

ITINERARY

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 back through the dunes before being transferred back to your hotel. Dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 5

Today is a rest day for the horses so you can relax at the hotel, book onto an optional dolphin tour (highly recommended!), 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 long canters through the pine forests. 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.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Level of Riding & Fitness

This trail is suitable for intermediate riders who are happy at walk, trot and canter. Riders must be able to mount and dismount from the ground unaided. All participants must be confident and in control riding outside an arena. A reasonable level of current riding fitness is required as you'll be spending 4 hours in the saddle each day.

The weight limit is 85kg.



Guides & Group Size

Luis, the owner of the company is your host for this holiday and guides this trail. His family have run riding holidays here for decades and the trail begins from the steep slopes of his family farm. Luis will also join riders for restaurant dinner on the first and last night. On the other nights one of his guides will transfer riders to dinner. All guides are Portuguese natives with a deep knowledge of the region and speak English and Portuguese.

Group size 4-8 riders

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Horses

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



Tack & Riding Equipment

You will ride in Portuguese military-style saddles (very comfortable and designed for long days in the saddle) and English style bridles. There are no saddlebags provided for these trails so we recommend bringing a bumbag or similar to carry sunscreen, camera, sunglasses etc.

ACCOMMODATION

The hotel usually used for this trail is the Ponte Pedra close to Melides.

The hotel offers really comfortable accommodation so you can fully relax and unwind when not in the saddle. Both double/twin and single rooms are available and the hotel has a swimming pool, yoga deck, and each room have their own outside area with comfortable chairs and hammocks.

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 in local restaurants (not included) and you can choose from the daily menu which 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.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

Price includes:

- Accommodation in twin or double rooms with private bathrooms
- Breakfasts
- Picnic Lunches
- Mineral water and juice with lunch
- 4 hours riding on 5 days
- Airport transfers at set times

Price excludes:

- Tips
- Lunch on the rest day
- Dinners
- Airport transfers at set times
- Optional dolphin tour on the rest day



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. If you arrive later than the transfer a private transfer can be arranged for an extra fee.

The transfer on the final day leaves the hotel at 10:30 am. Your departure flight should be in the afternoon to allow time for the road transfer, which takes 1.5 hours.

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.

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.



WHAT TO BRING

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your riding hat 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 (available to borrow if required)
- Lightweight trousers/jodhpurs/riding tights
- Riding shoes/boots that you can walk in
- Casual wear for evenings
- Casual shoes/flip flops/sandals
- Bumbag
- Reusable water bottle
- Swimwear
- Waterproof jacket
- Sunglasses, suncream
- Toiletries
- Passport and a copy of your travel insurance

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.

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 canters 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.

PAYMENT & CANCELLATION TERMS

SaddleTravel.com holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before 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% refund
- 28 days or more: 30% refund
- less than 28 days before booking date: no refund.

TRAVEL 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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