

Portugal

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Óbidos** This walled village was a royal wedding gift from Dom Dinis to his wife (beats a fondue set) and is overrun with tourists but still exquisite (p917)
- **Porto** An intoxicating city, not just for its famous tippie but also for the vibrant street life and heady sights (p921)
- **Best journey** Bask in seagulls-and-seashore scenery from the Algarve train that runs beside the coast for most of the way between Lagos and Vila Real de Santo António (p912)
- **Off-the-beaten-track** Parque Nacional da Peneda Gerês offers exceptional hiking through forests and over high plateaus dotted with ancient stone villages and archaeological sites(p924)

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 92,389 sq km (twice the size of Switzerland as a comparison)
- **ATMs** plentiful
- **Budget** €40-50
- **Capital** Lisbon
- **Country code** ☎ 351
- **Famous for** *fado*, football, port, *azulejos* (tiles), salted cod
- **Head of State** President Anibal Cavaco Silva
- **Language** Portuguese
- **Money** euro (€); A\$1 = €; CA\$1 = €; ¥100 = €; NZ\$1 = €; UK£1 = €; US \$1 = €
- **Phrases** *bom dia* (hello), *obrigado/a* (thank you), *desculpe* (excuse me), *adeus* (good-bye), *faz favor* (please)
- **Population** 10.4 million
- **Time** GMT/UTC. Daylight savings from March to October.
- **Visas** None required for most visitors for stays up to 90 days



TRAVEL HINTS

Be wary of the nibbles provided at the start of a meal as they can cost and you *can* send them back.

ROAMING PORTUGAL

Check out Porto then Lisbon and nearby Sintra. Move on to Óbidos and coastal Nazaré before sidestepping to Évora and heading south to the Algarve.

Portugal is a quieter, calmer place than its exuberant neighbour, Spain. But it's far from dull. Thanks to its relative geographic isolation, Portugal has retained a strong and fascinating sense of identity and culture. In rural areas you still see women carrying shopping on their heads and, despite the increase in tourism, there are relatively few tinsel-town-style attractions. More importantly, the coffee is still the best in Europe and it's *not* served in Styrofoam with cinnamon on top.



The economic base is also very traditional, based largely on fishing, wine and textiles. The flipside is that, although EU funding has vastly improved the infrastructure, Portugal is still a relatively poor country. At least Portugal's brand-new president is good at arithmetic: ex-economist Cavaco Silva has vowed to work with Prime Minister Sócrates in making sweeping social, economic and educational reforms. Gulp. Let's hope he leaves the architecture and landscape well alone. Portugal is pure holiday-brochure cliché, with ancient stone villages, proud historic cities and coastal resorts which still look more like seafaring towns than Gltzville-by-the-sea.

HISTORY

Early settlers of the Iberian Peninsula included the Celts, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans and Visigoths. The Moors conquered Portugal in the 8th century, and their influence lingers in the culture, architecture and dark looks of the people. This is particularly noticeable in the Algarve, where the Moors established their capital in Silves (see p914 for more information). Following the 12th-century Christian conquest, new trade routes were discovered, creating an empire that launched Lisbon as the wealthiest city in Europe.

By 1580 life wasn't so rosy: Spain occupied Portugal's throne for 90 years; Lisbon suffered a massive earthquake in 1755; then, 50 years later, came Napoleon's thwarted invasion, followed by civil war and the abolition of the monarchy in 1910.

Doom and gloom continued in 1926 when a military coup led to the dictatorship of António de Oliveira Salazar. General dissatisfaction with his regime and a ruinous colonial war in Africa led to a peaceful military coup on 25 April 1974. The subsequent granting of independence to Portugal's African colonies led to the arrival of nearly one million refugees.

The 1970s and early '80s saw extreme swings between the political right and left, but Portugal's entry into the EU in 1986 secured, at last, a measure of stability and Expo '98 also gave the country an ego boost. This was furthered by Porto's status as a European Capital of Culture in 2001 followed, in 2004, by Portugal's playing host to the European Football Championships.

The following year there was more bad news, however, with the worst drought in living memory, which devastated agriculture and slashed the sector's financial projections by 35%. It was a critical year for bushfires as well, with 200,000 hectares (about 494,000 acres) burned, mainly in the central Coimbra region and surrounds.

THE CULTURE

Portugal's population of 10.4 million excludes the estimated three million Portuguese living abroad, but includes African and Brazilian immigrants. Since May 2004 there has also been an influx of new immigrants from central and Eastern Europe.

Portugal has a strong Catholic influence and remains a conservative country. In general, the Portuguese are congenial, with an unhurried approach to life that can translate into lack of efficiency and tardiness. Speaking Portuguese, however clumsily, will earn you lots of points.

SPORT

Football is the main crowd-pulling sport here. Lisbon's teams are Benfica, Belenenses and Sporting. Euro 2004 resulted in a whopping new 54,000-seat Estádio Nacional. In the Algarve, golf is big; click on www.portugalgolf.pt for info. Tourist offices also have lists of tennis clubs and riding centres. Water-sports enthusiasts can catch the waves at one of Portugal's many surfing beaches; check out the national federation at www.fps.pt. For the best wind- and kite-surfing head for Praia do Guincho, west of Sintra, or Sagres in the Algarve.

ARTS

The best-known form of Portuguese music is the melancholy, nostalgic songs called *fado* (fate) and the best-known singer, hip young Mariza whose 2005 release *Transparente* was a worldwide top seller. Lisbon's Alfama district has plenty of *fado* houses (see p909 for more details).

Unique to Portugal is Manueline architecture, named after its patron King Manuel I (1495–1521). It symbolises that era's zest for discovery and is hugely flamboyant with spiralling columns and elaborate ornamentation.

The most striking Portuguese visual art are the stunning painted *azulejo* tiles, covering everything from houses to churches. Lisbon has its own *azulejo* museum (p905).

READING UP

Hot names in the Portuguese literary scene include Lídia Jorge and Ana Gusmão, with their evocative novels about contemporary life and culture. For a glimpse into the harsh realities of 20th-century Portugal check out *The Creation of the World* or *Tales from the Mountain* by renowned local writer Miguel Torga.

ENVIRONMENT

Portugal has 25 natural parks, nature reserves and protected landscape areas. These areas total approximately 6500 sq km – just over 7% of Portugal's land area. There are 13 World Heritage Sites in Portugal. Check them out on the web at <http://whc.unesco.org>.

Portugal has been suffering from its worst drought in decades with devastating losses to livestock and agriculture. In many parts of the country, January 2005 was the driest January in more than 100 years.

TRANSPORT**GETTING THERE & AWAY****Air**

Portugal's main gateway airport is **Aeroporto Portela** (code LIS; ☎ 218 413 700), approximately 8km north of Lisbon's city centre. Porto's **Aeroporto Francisco Sá Carneiro** (code OPO; ☎ 229 432 400) also handles international flights, as does the **Aeroporto de Faro** (code FAO; ☎ 229 800 801) in the Algarve. The website for all three airports is www.anaerportos.pt, but it is only in Portuguese.

You can save big bucks by using the UK as a base or transfer point with the various low-cost carriers (see p1206). Airlines flying in and out of Portugal include:

Air Berlin (www.airberlin.com) Regular flights from Berlin and Dusseldorf to Lisbon, Porto and Faro.

Air Portugal (code TAP; ☎ 289 800 218; www.tap.pt, in Portuguese) The main international airline, Air Portugal flies to most European capitals, including Paris, Rome and Madrid.

British Midlands/Bmibaby (code WW; ☎ UK 0870 264 2229; www.bmibaby.com) Inexpensive flights to Lisbon, Porto and Faro.

easyJet (code EZY; ☎ 218 413 700; www.easyjet.com) Flies from London Luton to Lisbon and from several UK airports to Faro.

GermanWings (www.germanwings.com) Frequent services from Stuttgart to Lisbon and Faro.

Iberia (code IB; ☎ 808 261 261; www.iberia.com, in Spanish) Flies into Lisbon and Porto.

Monarch Airlines (code ZB; ☎ 289 889 475; www.flymonarch.com) Flies into Faro.

Portugália Airlines (code PGA; ☎ 218 425 559; www.pga.pt) Primarily a domestic airline, but is increasingly opening up international routes including Manchester, Brussels, Nice and Lyon.

Ryan Air (code FR; ☎ 229 432 400; www.ryanair.com) Flies from London Stansted to Porto.

Spanair (code JK; ☎ 218 4998 578; www.spanair.com) Flies to Lisbon.

Boat

There are no ferries from the UK to Portugal, but you can travel to northern Spain with **P&O** (www.poferries.com) or **Brittany** (www.brittanyferries.co.uk) ferries then hit the road to Portugal.

Bus**UK**

Eurolines (☎ UK 0870 514 3219; www.eurolines.co.uk) offers departures for Portugal twice weekly, with several stops that include Lisbon (42 hours) and Porto (40 hours). Buses depart from Victoria Coach Station, travelling via the Channel ferry and stopping over in Buniel, Spain, and Lille in France. At the time of research, the return fare London–Lisbon was UK£179.

Spain

Eurolines (☎ Madrid 91 506 33 60; www.eurolines.es, in Spanish) operates several services from Spain to Portugal, including Madrid–Lisbon (€40, eight hours), Seville–Lisbon (€36, four hours) and Barcelona–Lisbon (€80, 16 hours), all going at least three times weekly.

ALSA (☎ Madrid 90 242 22 42) has twice-daily Madrid–Lisbon services, while **Damas** (☎ Huelva 95 925 69 00) runs twice daily Monday to Saturday from Seville to Faro and Lagos via Huelva, jointly with the Algarve line EVA.

Train

There are two standard long-distance trains into Portugal. Both take the TGV *Atlantique* from Paris to Irún (in Spain), where you change trains, changing again at Lisbon for the Algarve. You can book directly with **SNCF** (French Railways; www.sncf.com).

All services from London similarly go via Paris. Tickets are available from larger train

stations or from **Trains Europe** (☎ 01354-660222; www.trainseurope.co.uk). The Eurostar service to Paris via the Channel Tunnel cuts several hours off the trip but bumps up the cost. Contact **Rail Europe** (☎ 08705-848848; www.raileurope.co.uk) for details.

GETTING AROUND Bicycle

Mountain biking is a great way to explore the country although, given the Portuguese penchant for overtaking on blind corners, it can be dangerous. Most towns have bike-rental outfits (around €10 a day). Bicycles can't be taken with you on trains, although most bus lines will accept them as accompanied baggage.

Bus

Portugal's most important national network is **Rede Expressos** (☎ 969 502 050; www.rede-expressos.pt, in Portuguese), with connections to 300 locations. Most bus-station ticket desks can provide a print-out of fares and all services and schedules are posted at major stations.

There are three classes of bus service: *expressos* are comfortable, fast, direct buses between major cities; *rápidas* are fast regional buses; and *carreiras* stop at every crossroad. An under-26 card (see p1191) gets you a discount of around 20%, at least on the long-distance services.

Car & Motorcycle

Automóvel Clube de Portugal (ACP; Map pp902-3; www.acp.pt, in Portuguese; ☎ head office 213 180 100, emergency help number for the south 219 429 103, emergency help number for the north 228 340 001; Rua Rosa Araújo 24, Lisbon) provides medical, legal and breakdown assistance and has a reciprocal arrangement with major foreign automobile clubs, such as AA and RAC.

To hire a car in Portugal you must generally be at least 25 and have held your home licence for a year minimum. To hire a scooter of up to 50cc you must be 18-plus with a driving licence. For more powerful motorbikes you must have a driving licence covering these vehicles from your home country.

Drive defensively. Portuguese drivers have invented an invisible – and disconcerting – middle lane. Drivers and front passengers in cars must wear seat belts. Motorcyclists and passengers must wear helmets, and motorcycles must have headlights on day and night.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Ambulance, fire, police (☎ 112)

Using a mobile phone while driving could result in a fine.

Drink-driving laws are strict with a maximum legal blood-alcohol level of 0.05%.

Local Transport

Outside Lisbon or Porto there's little reason to take a municipal bus. For Lisbon and Porto's metros pick up route maps at the respective tourist offices.

Taxis are plentiful and cheap, but don't miss the trams (an endangered species in Lisbon and Porto), or the funiculars and lifts of Lisbon, Braga and Nazaré.

Train

Caminhos de Ferro Portugueses (CP) operates *rápido* or *intercidade* (IC on timetables), *interregional* (IR) and regional (R) services. *Intercidade* and *interregional* tickets cost at least twice the price of regional services, with reservations recommended. A fast IC service called Alfa links Lisbon, Coimbra and Porto. Regional services are slower and cheaper than buses. Youth-card holders get 30% off R and IR services (except at weekends).

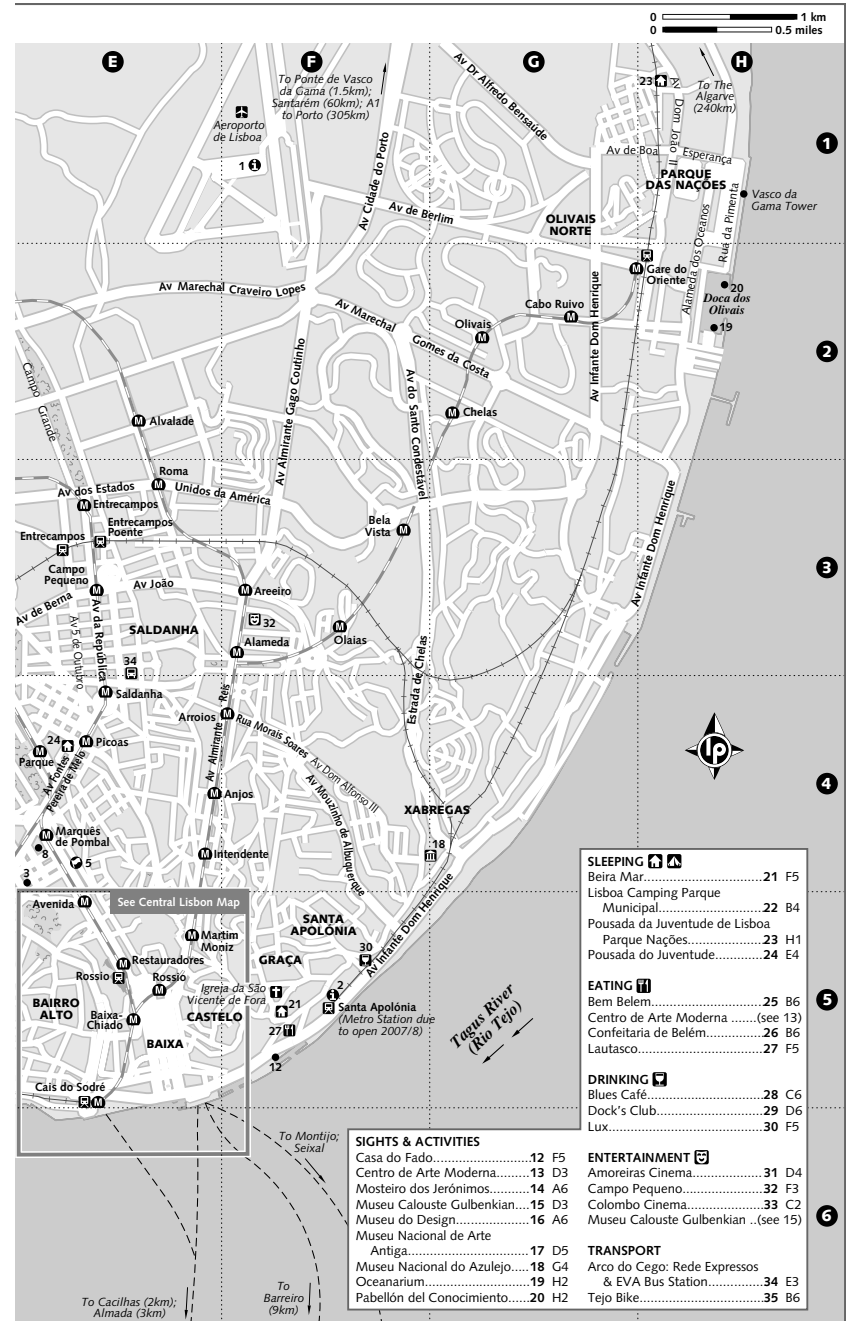
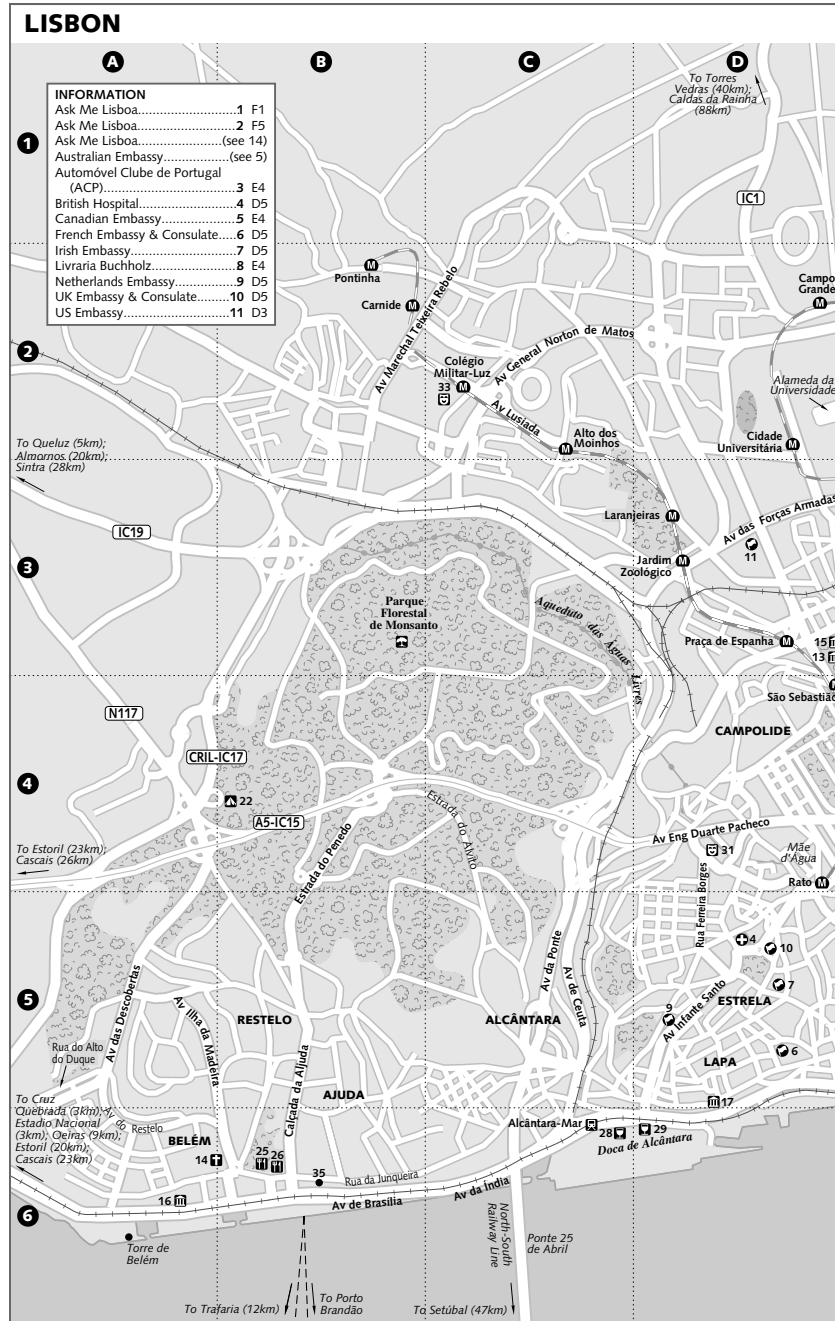
LISBON

pop 565,000

Lisbon is a heady mix of crumbling pastel-coloured houses, grand squares and narrow lanes and alleys. It's a seductive city, rather than gland-slam capital, with a centre that's small enough to walk, and if you're all blistered out you can always hop on one of the vintage street trams that shudder up and down the hills. Providing you avoid the obvious tourist-touting places, you won't need to stress your wallet on food or accommodation here either. Even the spoilt-for-choice nightlife has a big-city buzz for small town prices.

ORIENTATION

North of Rossio train station in Central Lisbon is Praça dos Restauradores, at the bottom of Av da Liberdade. West of the Rossio it's a steep climb to the Bairro Alto district, a good area for drinking bars and nightclubs.



PORTUGAL

PORTUGAL

GETTING INTO TOWN

The **AeroBus** (☎ 808 200 166; www.stcp.pt; one way €3; 🕒 7.45am to 8.45pm) runs every 20 minutes, taking 30 to 45 minutes between the airport and Cais do Sodré; buy your ticket on the bus. A taxi into town is about €10, plus €1.50 for luggage. There are several bus terminals; most international services arrive at Gare do Oriente.

East of the Rossio, it's yet more climbing up to Castelo de São Jorge and the Alfama district with its tangle of ancient lanes. Several kilometres to the west of Rossio is Belém with its not-to-be missed attractions. Parque das Nações, the former Expo '98 site, and Oceanarium lie on the groovily revamped waterfront, located to the northeast of the city centre.

INFORMATION

Bookshop

Livraria Buchholz (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 170 580; Rua de Palmela 4) Has books in English, French and German.

Discount Cards

Lisboa Card (24/48/72 hr €13.50/23/28) Good for unlimited travel on most city transport (and includes the admission to 28 museums, historic buildings and other places of interest). You can buy the Lisboa Card at the airport, tourist offices and from travel agencies.

Emergency

Tourist police post (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 466 802; Praça dos Restauradores) The tourist-oriented multilingual police post is near the ICEP tourist office.

Internet Access

Cyber Bica (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 225 004; Rua Duques de Bragança; per hr €3; 🕒 noon-2am Mon-Fri, 7pm-2am Sat)
Lisboa Welcome Center (Map pp906-7; ☎ 210 312 810; 2nd fl, Praça do Comércio; per hr €3; 🕒 9am-8pm)

Medical Services

British Hospital (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 955 067; Rua Saraiwa de Carvalho 49) English-speaking staff, plus dental care.

Money

Cota Câmbios (Map pp906-7; Rossio 41; ☎ 213 220 470; 🕒 8am-10pm) Offers a good exchange rate.

Post

Main post office (Map pp906-7; Praça do Comércio; 🕒 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) Handles post restante collection.

post office (Map pp906-7; Praça dos Restauradores; 🕒 8am-10pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat-Sun) Opposite the ICEP tourist office.

Telephone

Portugal Telecom (Map pp906-7; Rossio 68; 🕒 8am-11pm) Telephone booths and phonecards.

Tourist Information

Ask Me Lisboa kiosks Palácio Foz (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 463 314; Praça dos Restauradores); Santa Apolónia train station (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 821 606); Belém (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 658 435); Lisbon airport (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 450 660). All kiosks have free maps and the bimonthly guide *Follow Me Lisboa*, and they sell the Lisboa Card.

Gay & Lesbian Community Center (Centro Comunitário Gay e Lésbico de Lisboa; Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 873 918; Rua de São Lázaro 88; 🕒 5-9pm Mon-Sat) Has gay-friendly info on bars, restaurants and clubs. Also check websites www.ilga-portugal.org and www.portugalgay.pt.

ICEP tourist office (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 463 314; www.askmelisboa.com; Palácio Foz, Praça dos Restauradores) Deals with national inquiries.

Lisboa Welcome Center (Map pp906-7; ☎ 210 312 810; www.visitlisboa.com; Praça do Comércio) Concentrates on Lisbon.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Lisbon has an enviable roll call of sights which can be explored by foot. Alternatively, hop on the funicular, tram or metro. Admission is usually half-price for students and free for everyone on Sundays.

Alfama

This ancient district resembles a medieval blockbuster set with its maze of twisted alleys and steeply slanted streets. The terrace at **Largo das Portas do Sol** (Map pp906-7) provides the souvenir city snapshot.

The **Casa do Fado** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 823 470; Largo do Chafariz de Dentro 1; adult €2.50; 🕒 9am-9pm Mar-Oct, 9am-6pm Nov-Feb) provides vibrant audio-visual coverage of *fado*'s history from its working-class roots to a re-created *fado* house.

Dating from Visigothic times, **Castelo de São Jorge** (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 800 620; adult/child €3/1.50; 🕒 9am-9pm Mar-Oct, 9am-6pm Nov-Feb) sits high above the city with spine-tingling views. If you

can't hack the hike, take bus 37 from Rossio or tram 28 from Largo Martim Moniz.

Saldanha

The celebrated **Museu Calouste Gulbenkian** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 823 461; Av de Berna 45; adult €3, free Sun; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun; 📍 Praça de Espanha) has a superb collection which was donated by a wealthy Armenian philanthropist. There are Egyptian, Asian, Greek and Islamic artefacts plus paintings by Renoir, Rembrandt and Monet.

Lisbon's **Centro de Arte Moderna** (Modern Art Museum; Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 823 474; Rua Dr Nicolau de Bettencourt; adult €3; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun; 📍 Praça de Espanha) is prettily approached via the gardens. Enjoy most of the biggies from Portugal's modern-art scene including Paula Rego, famed for her haunting and theatrical themes. Check out the excellent restaurant.

Belém

This quarter, 6km west of the Rossio, is a grand canvas reflecting Portugal's Golden Age and home to Lisbon's most emblematic religious building. It has a mellow vibe with chairs on squares and reputedly the best *pastéis de nata* (custard tarts) in the country (see p908).

The **Mosteiro dos Jerónimos** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 620 034; Praça do Império; adult €3; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) dates from 1496 and is a soaring extravaganza of Manueline architecture with stunning carvings and ceramic tiles.

The **Museu do Design** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 612 934; Praça do Império; adult €3; 🕒 11am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) has a fabulous collection dating from the 1930s, covering Art Deco and Frank Gehry recycled pieces from the '70s.

Outskirts of Town

The following two museums are well worth the detour.

Museu Nacional do Azulejo (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 100 340; Rua Madre de Deus 4; adult €3; 🕒 10am-6pm Wed-Sun, 2-6pm Tue) enjoys a sumptuous 17th-century convent setting. The *azulejo* (tile) exhibits include a stunning 36m panel of pre-earthquake Lisbon.

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (Ancient Art Museum; Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 962 825; Rua das Janelas Verdes; adult €3; 🕒 10am-5pm Wed-Sun, 2-6pm Tue) is in Lapa, Lisbon's moneyed diplomatic quarter, and houses a ripping collection of Portuguese paintings.

Parque das Nações

The former Expo '98 site, a revitalised 2km-long waterfront area in the northeast, includes Europe's largest **Oceanarium** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 917 002; www.oceanario.pt; adult/child €10/5; 🕒 10am-7pm; 📍 Oriente) and the **Pavilhão do Conhecimento** (Map pp902-3; Living Science Centre; ☎ 218 917 100; adult/child €5/2.50; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 11am-7pm Sat & Sun; 📍 Oriente) with over 300 interactive exhibits for kids of all ages.

Alcântara

The old wharves have been slickly revamped into a gilded strip of bars and restaurants with tables sprawling out onto the promenade. After your blow-out brunch, enjoy a waterfront stroll to Belém.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Festas dos Santos Populares Christianised versions of traditional summer solstice celebrations, including the Festa de São João (St John, held on 23 and 24 June) and the Festa de São Pedro (St Peter, held on 28 and 29 June).

Festa de Santo António St Anthony is Lisbon's patron saint and this festa on 12 to 13 June is the climax of the Festas de Lisboa, three weeks of partying that's celebrated with particular gusto in the historical quarters of Alfama and Madragoa.

Festival dos Oceanos This festival runs from 15 to 30 August and has a nautical theme with regattas and water-sport contests.

Festival do Vinho Wine fair plus folk dancing and crafts fair. Runs from 1 to 15 November.

SLEEPING

Lisbon has plenty of small, inexpensive *penas* (guesthouses) throughout the centre. To be within stumbling distance of the nightlife, check into Bairro Alto.

Lisboa Camping Parque Municipal (Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 623 100; Parque Florestal de Monsanto; camp sites per tent €5) This is a well-treed spot 6km

SPLURGE

Sé Guest House (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 864 400; 2nd fl, Rua São João da Praça 97; d €70) Owner Luis is a keen traveller and cultural buff, hence the intriguing clutter of global artefacts at this 19th-century guesthouse. There are neck-cranning cathedral views from several of the romantic rooms and the bathrooms are suitably gleaming and clean. In short, the Sé just oozes charm.

CENTRAL LISBON

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northwest of town. Take bus 43 from Cais do Sodré.

Pousada da Juventude de Lisboa Parque Nações (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 920 890; Via de Moscavide; dm/d €14/37) Just north of Gare do Oriente, this institutional-looking place has good rooms and breakfast but a spoilsport 11am-4pm lockout and no booze policy.

Pousada da Juventude (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 532 696; Rua Andrade Corvo 46; dm/d €17/43) A tidy place in a fine old building, but with no kitchen facilities. Catch bus 46 or 90 from Rossio, or take the AeroBus.

Pensão Globo (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 462 279; www.pglobo.com; Rua do Teixeira 37; s/d €20/30; ☎) Run by friendly English-speaking folk, Globo is a no-frills cheapie. Go for rooms 301, 302 or 303 with their large windows overlooking the leafy street.

Pensão Imperial (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 420 166; 4th fl, Praça dos Restauradores 78; s/d with shared bathroom €25/35; ☎ Restauradores) Just a short suitcase trundle from the main square. Readers have raved about this comfortably worn place, but not the steep stairs to reach it.

Beira Mar (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 871 528; Largo Terreiro do Trigo 16; s/d with shared bathroom €25/35) The river location and views here create an ambience of luxury accommodation for bargain-basement prices.

Pensão 13 da Sorte (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 539 746; www.trezedasorte.no.sapo.pt; Rua do Salitre 13; s/d/tr €40/50/60; ☎; ☎ Avenida) A popular place on a slumbering side street with shiny tiled floors and pretty blue-and-white rooms with fridges.

Residencial Insulana (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 423 131; www.insulana.cjb.net; Rua da Assunção 32; s/d €45/50; ☎; ☎ Baixa) Ignore the shabby entrance, this is a real value-for-money place with good-sized carpeted rooms, satellite TV and a buzzy location in the heart of Baixa.

Hotel Anjo Azul (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 478 069; http://anjoazul.cb2web.com; Rua Luz Soriano 75; s/d €45/55; ☎; ☎) The city's first gay hotel is located in an 18th-century townhouse, a short shimmy from the Bairro Alto's gay bar district. The rooms are colourful, upbeat and modern.

our pick Pensão Londres (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 462 203; www.pensaolondres.com.pt; Rua Dom Pedro V 53; s/d/tr €50/75/90) This friendly and popular place has old-fashioned appeal with large, high-ceilinged, carpeted rooms. Those on the 4th floor have top-of-the-world views of the city. Justifiably popular, book well ahead in summer.

EATING

Seafood is widely available in Lisbon and the locals have an insatiable appetite for all things Brazilian, including *feijoada* (bean stew) and the daily dose of soap operas. Watch out for tourist rip-offs like some of the energetic restaurants on Baixa's Rua dos Correeiros. Bairro Alto has some good-value eateries while Alfama places often have great views.

The main **Mercado da Ribeira** (Map pp906-7; Av 24 de Julho; ☎ 5am-2pm Mon-Sat) is near Cais do Sodré station. A good central supermarket is **Pingo Doce** (Map pp906-7; Rua de Dezembro 73; ☎ 9am-9pm). Ceira Health Shop is right next door selling wholesome grub to go.

Baixa & Alfama

Restaurante O Sol (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 471 944; Calçada do Duque 23; mains €2.50-5; **M** Rossio) A macrobiotic-vegetarian restaurant, up steep steps with heady castle views and healthy soy-burger-style bites.

Arco do Castelo (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 876 598; Rua do Chão da Feira 25; mains €7) Surprisingly reasonable considering the ace position across from the castle; the curries at this Indo-Portuguese restaurant tick all the right succulent/spicy boxes.

Gandhi Palace (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 873 839; Rua dos Douradores 214-216; mains €7; **M** Baixa-Chiado) Good central choice for those suffering from curry-house withdrawal. If you like it hot, ask – local tastes are mild.

Lautasco (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 860 173 839; Beco do Azinhal 7-7a; mains €9; ☎) Full points for atmosphere with seating on a secluded square in the shade of a magnificent rubber tree. The usual suspects are on the menu, including *bacalhau* (cod fritters).

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

A Outra Face da Lua (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 863 430; Rua da Assunção 22; snacks €3; ☎ closed Mon; **M** Rossio)

SPLURGE

La Caffé (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 256 736; Av da Liberdade 129b; mains €10; ☎; **M** Restauradores) Upbeat minimalist décor with lots of steel and glass, plus free internet, giant TV screens and a creative twist on Med cuisine. Try the chicken curry risotto or ricotta mousse with honey, spices and *ruccola* (rocket) for a real taste-bud treat.

Shop for vintage threads then check out the adjacent natty café with its salad range, sandwiches and healthy snacks.

Casa Suíça (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 214 090; Praça Dom Pedro IV 96-104; snacks from €3; **M** Rossio) A wood-pannelled classic with adorably named cream cakes like *susanas* and kisses, plus savoury rolls.

Avenida da Liberdade

Os Tibetanos (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 142 038; Rua do Salitre 117; mains from €6; ☎ closed Sat & Sun; ☎ ☎; **M** Avenida) Doubles as a Tibetan Buddhist school with Zen-style surroundings, a leafy patio and diverse meatless menu. Try the Japanese mushrooms with seaweed and tofu.

Centro de Arte Moderna (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 256 736; Rua Dr Niculaeu de Bettencourt; mains €8; ☎ lunch Tue-Sun; **M** Praça de Espanha) The restaurant at this museum has a tasty lunchtime buffet with more salad choice than you can shake a carrot stick at, plus good-value meat and fish mains.

Bairro Alto & Saldanha

Cervejaria da Trindade (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 423 506; Rua Nova da Trindade 20c; mains €7; **M** Baixa-Chiado) This vaulted restaurant has fairly pedestrian food, but the setting, in a former convent with dazzling tile work, provides serious food for thought.

Rosa da Rua (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 432 195; Rua da Rosa 265; mains €8; ☎ closed Mon) A stylish eatery with minimalist metal-and-stone interior and an innovative menu of dishes, including fried pork with chestnuts and steak with peanut butter sauce.

Belém

Confeitaria de Belém (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 637 423; Rua de Belém 86-88; tarts €1) A classically tiled and elegant café with reputedly the best *pastéis de nata* (custard tarts) in Portugal.

Bem Belém (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 648 768; Rua Vieira Portuense 72; mains €8) This popular meet-and-greet place serves simple calorie-stoking food including mixed kebabs and squid with shrimps.

DRINKING

Lisbon delivers the goods for caffeine and calorie junkies with sumptuous Art Deco cafés, particularly around Bairro Alto and Rossio. The Alcântara and Oriente area bars attract a well-heeled set while Alfama has plenty of gluggable choices, including moody

low-lit places for cocktail hour. Lisbon has a relaxed yet flourishing gay scene; check the Gay & Lesbian Community Centre (p904) for recommended venues.

Portas Largas (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 461 379; Rua da Atalaia 105; ☎ 7pm-late Tue-Sat) A tiled bar with barn-size doors and infamous giant carafes of sangria.

Trumps (Map pp906-7; Rua da Imprensa Nacional 104b; ☎ 11pm-6am Tue-Sat) Not much elbow space in the two bars here; one has a dance floor for smoochers.

Finalmente (Map pp906-7; Rua da Palmeira 38; ☎ 10pm-6am Mon-Sat) A heaving bar space and nightly drag shows.

Cafés & Bars

Café Nicola (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 460 579; Rossio 24; ☎ 8am-10pm Mon-Fri, 9am-10pm Sat, 10am-7pm Sun; **M** Rossio) A world apart from the cookie-cutter homogeneity of the international coffee-shop chains, this Art Deco café is past winner of Lisbon's Café of the Year award.

Martinho da Arcada (Map pp906-7; ☎ 218 866 213; Praça do Comércio 3; ☎ 8am-11pm Mon-Sat; **M** Baixa-Chiado) Former haunt of writer Pessoa; grab a coffee and head for an outdoor table under the arches.

Café a Brasileira (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 469 547; Rua Garrett 120; ☎ 8am-2pm; **M** Baixa-Chiado) A historic watering hole with warm wooden innards and a busy counter serving daytime coffees and pints at night.

A Ginjinha (Map pp906-7; Largo de Domingos; **M** Rossio) A quirky gem specialising in powerful *ginjinha* (cherry brandy); buy a mini tumbler for just €0.70.

Solar do Vinho do Porto (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 475 707; Rua de São Pedro de Alcântara 45; ☎ 11am-midnight Mon-Sat) Expect red carpet treatment with squishy chairs and a lengthy quaffing choice of port.

Café Vertigo (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 423 112; Travessa do Carmo 4; ☎ 10am-late) This place has a bohemian buzz with a fabulous stained-glass ceiling, plus newspapers and chess for kick-back time.

CLUBBING

Lux (Map pp902-3; ☎ 218 820 890; Armazém A, Cais da Pedra; ☎ 6pm-6am Tue-Sat, 4-8pm Sun) Hollywood actor John Malkovich helped bankroll this super-cool club with its peacock crowd of beautiful people; cover charge €12 and up, depending on the DJ.

Dock's Club (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 950 856; Rua da Cintura do Porto; ☎ 11pm-6am Tue-Sat) A riverside dance temple attracting a voguish clientele.

Blues Café (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 957 085; Rua da Cintura do Porto; ☎ 11pm-6am Tue-Sat) Jazz, blues and club nights, plus dockside drinking in a cool former warehouse.

Discoteca Jamaica (Map pp902-3; Rua Nova do Carvalho; ☎ 11pm-4am) Enjoy reggae and '60s and '70s sounds at this pulsating night spot on an otherwise seedy street.

Live Music

Hot Clube de Portugal (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 467 369; Praça da Alegria 39; ☎ 10pm-2am Tue-Sat; **M** Avenida) Hot, sweaty and packed with nightly gigs and raw new jazz sounds.

Ó Gilins Irish Pub (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 421 899; Rua dos Remolares 8-10; ☎ 10-2am; **M** Cais do Sodré) Predictable blarney atmosphere with live music on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Tertúlia (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 462 704; Rua do Diário de Notícias 60; ☎ 7pm-late Mon-Sat) Low-lit bar with newspapers, live jazz, exhibitions and a piano for the occasional tinkling of the ivories.

ENTERTAINMENT

Pick up the free monthly *Follow me Lisboa*, *Agenda Cultural Lisboa* or quarterly *Lisboa Step By Step* from the tourist office for what's on listings. Also, it's worth checking out www.visitlisboa.com (Lisbon tourist office website) and www.lisboaocultural.pt (for cultural events).

Classical concerts and ballets are held at the three concert halls at the **Museu Calouste Gulbenkian** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 823 461; Av de Berna 45; **M** Praça de Espanha).

Casas de Fado


Adega Machado (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 224 640; Rua do Norte 91; ☎ 8.30pm-3am Tue-Sat) Earthy and authentic, run by Rita, goddaughter of the legendary Amália Rodrigues.

Adega do Ribatejo (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 468 343; Rua Diário de Notícias 23; ☎ 8.30pm-12.30am Mon-Sat) A dark, atmospheric place with high-standard nightly *fado*.

Cinemas


Lisbon has dozens of cinemas, including the multiscreen **Amoreiras** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 878 752) and **Colombo** (Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 113 222; **M** Colégio Militar-Luz), both located within shopping centres.

Sport




Lisbon's football teams are Benfica, Belenenses and Sporting, and there are regular matches taking place. Bullfights are staged at Campo Pequeno between April and October, which is scheduled to re-open in June 2006, after extensive reforms. Tickets for both football and bullfights are available at **ABEP ticket kiosk** (Map pp906-7; Praça dos Restauradores;  Restauradores).

GETTING THERE & AWAY


Air

Lisbon is connected by daily flights to Porto, Faro and many European cities; see p900 for details. For arrival and departure information call  218 413 700.

Bus


A dozen companies, including **Renex** ( 218 940 285), operate from Gare do Oriente. The Arco do Cego terminal (Map pp902-3) is the base for **Rede Expressos** ( 707 223 344; www.rede-expressos.pt) and **EVA** ( 213 147 710; www.eva-bus.com), which cover the whole country.

Train

Santa Apolónia station ( 218 816 121) is the terminus for northern and central Portugal, and for all international services. Cais do Sodré station is for Belém, Cascais and Estoril. Note that Rossio station should be reopened in early 2007 after closure during construction of a tunnel. If reopening is delayed and you are heading for Sintra, Óbidos or Nazaré, you will have to leave from the Sete Rios train station. Barreiro station is the terminus for *suburbano* services to Setúbal and for some southern Portugal destinations; others depart from the better-connected Gare do Oriente.

GETTING AROUND

Bicycle

Tejo Bike (Map pp902-3;  218 871 976; Doca Sto Amaro; per hr from €6), 300m east of Belém, provides pedal power for rides along the waterfront.

Car & Motorcycle

On the outskirts of the city there are cheap (or free) car parks near Parque das Nações or Belém. The most central underground car park is at Praça dos Restauradores. On Saturday afternoons and Sunday parking is normally free in pay-and-display areas.

Public Transport

BUS & TRAM

A €3.70/6.90/13.40 ticket known as the *7 Colinas* is good for one/three/five days on all buses, trams, metros and funiculars. Pick it up from Carris kiosks and metro stations. The Lisboa Card is good value as it offers unlimited travel on nearly all city transport (see p904 for more information). A single ticket costs €1.20.

Buses and trams generally run from 6am to 1am. To reach Belém take bus 43 from Cais do Sodré or tram 15 from Praça da Figueira.

FERRY

Car, bicycle and passenger ferries leave from Cais do Sodré to Cacilhas (€0.60, 10 minutes, runs every 15 minutes), a transfer point for some buses to Setúbal. From Terreiro do Paço terminal catamarans zip across to Monijo (€1.65, 30 minutes, runs every 30 minutes) and Seixal (€1.35, 30 minutes, runs every 30 minutes).

METRO

The metro is useful for hops across town and to get to the Parque das Nações. Individual tickets cost €0.70 or you can buy a *caderneta* of 10 tickets for €6.15. A return ticket (*allé et retour*) is €1.25. The metro operates from 6.30am to 1am.

AROUND LISBON



SINTRA

pop 20,000

Sintra is a twinkling tiara of stunning palaces and manors surrounded by lush green countryside. The traditional summer retreat of Portugal's kings, the place is popular and hilly, so visit out of season and leave the high heels at home.



Orientation & Information



The Estefânia train station is 1.5km north-east of the centre. Sintra's bus station, and another train station, are a further 1km east in the new-town district of Portela de Sintra. Frequent shuttle buses run to the historic centre.



The **tourist office** ( 219 231 157; www.cm-sintra.pt; Praça da República 23) has maps. Check your emails at central **Casa Viola** (Rua Dr Alfredo da Costa 4; per hr €2.50;  9am-2pm & 3-8pm Mon-Sat).



Sights & Activities



Although the whole town resembles a historical theme park, there are several compulsory sights. Most are free or discounted with the Lisboa Card (see p904)



The **Palácio Nacional de Sintra** ( 219 106 840; adult/child €4/2;  10am-5.30pm Thu-Tue) is a dizzy mix of Moorish and Gothic architecture with twin chimneys dominating the town.


The **Museu do Brinquedo** ( 219 242 171; Rua Visconde de Monserrate; adult/child €3/1.50;  10am-6pm Tue-Sun) offers serious playtime potential with 20,000 toys from around the world.

An energetic 3km greenery-flanked hike from the centre, the 8th-century ruined remains of **Castelo dos Mouros** ( 219 237 300; adult/child €3.50/2;  9am-8pm Jun-Sep, 9am-7pm Oct-May) provides fine views. Entrance includes the Monserrate Gardens.


Trudge on for 20 minutes to the exuberantly kitsch, treasure-filled **Palácio da Pena** ( 219 105 340; adult/child €6/4;  10am-5.30pm Tue-Sun). Alternatively, take bus 434 (€3.20) from the station.

Monserrate Gardens ( 219 237 116;  9am-7pm, 9am-8pm Jun-Sep) are fabulously lush botanical gardens 4km from town.


En route to the gardens is the World Heritage **Quinta da Regaleira** ( 219 106 650; adult/child €10/5, guided tours €20/10;  10am-4pm Mar-May, 10am-6pm Jun-Sep, 10am-4pm Oct & Nov, 10am-3.30pm Dec-Feb), an early-20th-century neo-Manueline extravaganza that's one of Sintra's highlights. Guided tours must be prearranged.



Cabra Montéz ( 917 446 668; Rua D Mafalda, 19-5 Esq, Belas; www.cabramontez.com) organises canoeing excursions (€35).

Sleeping & Eating


Camping Praia Grande ( 219 290 581; camp sites per adult/tent €2.70/2.60) Across from the beach, this leafy camping ground is 11km from Sintra with frequent buses, and bicycles for hire.

Villa Marques ( 219 230 027; Rua Sotto Mayor 1; s/d €50/60, with shared bathroom €35/45) Fabulous tiled pictures adorn this traditional manor house with its grand staircase, grandmotherly rooms and outside terrace with duck pond views.

Xentra ( 219 240 759; Rua Consiglieri Pedroso 2a; mains €6) A cavernous bar with canteen-style meals, rock music on Sunday nights and (yawn) karaoke on Mondays.

Tulhas ( 219 232 378; Rua Gil Vicente 4-6; mains €7;  closed Wed) Full of happily chomping locals, this friendly place dishes up comfort food

like *bacalhau* topped with mashed potatoes and cream.

O Chico ( 966 894 744; Rua Arco do Teixeira 8; snacks €7) An atmospheric old tavern with pots and pans hanging over the bar and serving salads, sandwiches and the ubiquitous *caldo verde* (green vegetable soup).

Getting There & Around




Until Lisbon's Rosso station reopens, trains run from the Sete Rios station (€1.40, 45 minutes). Buses run hourly from Sintra to Estoril (€3.10, 40 minutes) and Cascais (€3.10, 45 minutes).

A taxi to Pena or Monserrate costs around €15 return. Horse-drawn carriages to Monserrate cost €60 return. Old trams run from Ribeira de Sintra (1.5km from the centre) to Praia das Maças, 12km to the west; the trip costs €1.20.



CASCAIS

pop 33,255


Cascais is a crowded summer seaside resort with elegant buildings, an atmospheric old town, and a happy abundance of bars and restaurants.

The **tourist office** ( 214 868 204; www.visiteestoril.com; Rua Visconde de Luz 14) has accommodation lists and bus timetables. Slurp a soft drink while checking your emails at **Navegue Aqui** ( 214 840 150; Sebastião Carvalho e Melo 17;  10am-midnight Mon-Sat May-Sep, 10am-8pm Mon-Sat Oct-Apr).


Sights & Activities

Estoril is a classy palm-fringed resort 2km east of Cascais with Europe's largest **casino** ( 214 667 700; www.casino-estoril.pt;  3pm-3am, floor show 11pm).

Praia Tamariz beach has an ocean swimming pool. The sea roars into the coast at **Boca do Inferno** (Hell's Mouth), 2km west of Cascais. Spectacular **Cabo da Roca**, Europe's westernmost point, is 16km from Cascais and Sintra (served by buses from both towns). Wild **Guincho** beach, 3km from Cascais, is a popular surfing venue.

Transrent ( 214 864 566; www.transrent.pt; Centro Commercial Cisne, Av Marginal) rents cars, bicycles and motorcycles.

Sleeping & Eating

Camping Orbitur do Guincho ( 214 871 014; Areia; camp sites per adult/tent €4.40/5.50) Buried in pine woods 1km from Guincho beach with playground, tennis courts and grocery.

Residencial Avenida (☎ 214 864 417; Rua da Palmeira 14; d €30) Sparkling-clean, well-placed accommodation efficiently run by English-speaking owners.

Tanya's Palace (☎ 214 846 332; Sebastião Carvalho e Melo 15; mains €7) If you're suffering from hot-and-spicy withdrawal, this place has decent Indian and Thai dishes.

Getting There & Away

Trains run frequently to Cascais, via Estoril (€1.30, 30 minutes), from Cais do Sodré station in Lisbon.

SETÚBAL

pop 114,500

Unsurprisingly, Portugal's third-largest port is famous for its seafood restaurants. Other draws are a stunning Manueline church, a castle with views and an easygoing pedestrian centre packed with shops and cafés. Pity about the in-your-face piped music over the city sound system.

The municipal **tourist office** (☎/fax 265 534 402; Praça do Quebedo) is a five-minute walk east from the **bus station** (Av 5 de Outubro). There's also a **regional tourist office** (☎ 265 539 130; www.mun-setubal.pt; Travessa Frei Gaspar 10) with the oddity of a Roman fish-preserving factory under its glass floor.

Sights & Activities

Portugal's first Manueline building, the stunning **Igreja de Jesus** (Praça Miguel Bombarda; admission free; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2-5pm Tue-Sat) has maritime motifs and twisted pillars that resemble coiled ropes. The **Galeria da Pintura Quinhentista** (Rua do Balneário Rio Paula Borba; admission free; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Tue-Sat), just around the corner, has a renowned collection of 16th-century paintings.

Good beaches west of town include **Praia da Figuerinha** (accessible by bus in summer). Across the estuary at **Tróia** is a more developed beach, plus the ruins of a Roman settlement. On the ferry trip across you may see some of the estuary's 30 or so bottlenose dolphins.

SAL (☎ 265 227 685; www.sal.pt, in Portuguese) organises walks from €5 per person. For hiking and biking in the Serra da Arrábida, or canoe trips through the Reserva Natural do Estuário do Sado, contact **Planeta Terra** (☎ 265 080 176; www.planetaterra.pt; Praça General Luís Domingues 9). **Vertigem Azul** (☎ 265 238 000; www.vertigemazul

.com; Av Luísa Todi 375) offers canoe and dolphin-spotting excursions. There are free wine-cellar tours of **José Maria da Fonseca Succs** (☎ 212 198 940; www.jmf.pt; Rua José Augusto Coelho 11; ☎ 10am-12.30pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri), the oldest Portuguese producer of table wine.

Sleeping & Eating

Municipal Camping Ground (☎ 265 522 475; camp sites per adult/tent €3.30/4) A well-equipped site 1.5km west of town.

Pousada da Juventude (☎ 265 534 431; setubal@movijovem.pt; Largo José Afonso; dm/d €10/23) Adequate hostel with a buzzy vibe.

Pensão Bom Regresso (☎ 265 229 812; Praça de Bocage 48; d €45) Overlooking the main square, this is about as close to church you'll get without attending confession, with monastic-ally basic rooms.

Albergaria Solaris (☎ 265 541 770; Praça Marquês de Pombal 12; s/d €45/50; ☎) Rooms here have all the standard hotel clobber. Go for one with a balcony overlooking the action-packed square.

Peregrina (☎ 265 230 602; Rua dos Almocreves 74; mains €8) One of a surprising three vegetarian restaurants with suitably healthy grub, including quiche, nut rissoles and salads.

O Beco (☎ 265 524 617; Largo da Misericórdia 24; mains €10) Locals rate this restaurant as one of the best. Enjoy a special seafood moment with a lobster dish.

Getting There & Away

Buses leave at least hourly from Lisbon's Praça de Espanha (€3.25, one hour). Ferries shuttle across the estuary to Tróia approximately every 45 minutes (€1.30, 15 minutes).

THE ALGARVE

The Algarve is holiday-brochure heaven with superb beaches, sweeping golf courses and year-round sunshine. Although overdevelopment has blighted some parts of this coast-hugging strip, venture inland and you'll land solidly in Portugal once again. Algarve highlights include the forested slopes of Monchique, the fortified village of Silves and windswept, historic Sagres. Faro is the regional capital.

You can travel the Algarve via the rail line running from Lagos to the Spanish border; local tourist offices have timetables.

FARO

pop 58,000

Faro is an attractive seaside town and makes a good base to explore the rest of this coastal strip. The centre is a picturesque jumble of pedestrian shopping streets, interspersed with pretty plazas and churches. To avoid the crowds visit out of season.

The bus and train terminals are on Av da República just north of town. The **tourist office** (☎ 289 803 604; Rua da Misericórdia) has informative leaflets. Go online at **Planet Cyber Center** (☎ 289 391 974; Ferreira Neto 5; per hr €2.50; ☎ 10am-10pm Mon-Sat).

Sights & Activities

The palm-clad **waterfront** has pleasant kick-back cafés. Faro's beach, **Praia de Faro** (Ilha de Faro), is 6km southwest of town; take bus 16 from the bus station. Less crowded is unspoilt Ilha Desserta in the **Parque Natural da Ria Formosa** (☎ 917 811 856; www.ilha-deserta.com; lagoon tours €20; ☎ tours 11am & 3pm year-round).

Sleeping & Eating

Pousada da Juventude (☎ 289 826 521; Rua da Polícia de Segurança Pública 1; dm/d €10/22) Welcoming low-key accommodation but often filled with groups.

Pensão Central (☎ 289 807 291; Largo Terreiro do Bispo 10; s/d €35/45; ☎) Large bland rooms with floral-and-white décor. The main drawback is the location, with balconies overlooking the jacaranda-fringed square.

Pensão Dandy (☎ 289 824 791; Rua Filipe Alistão 62; s/d €30/40; ☎) Although the public areas resemble a funeral parlour, the silk flowers do not extend to the bedrooms, which are spacious, clean and well kitted out.

Creperia (☎ 964 579 941; Praça Ferreira de Almeida 27; mains €4.50) The crepes are creatively fattened with fillings like Roquefort and hazelnuts or chicken, pineapple and mushrooms.

Velha Casa (☎ 289 824 719; Rua do Pé da Cruz 33; mains €7) Solid traditional grub is served, including kebabs, pork with pineapple and rib-sticking rice pud.

Getting There & Away

Faro airport handles domestic and international flights; see p900 for details. From the airport, catch bus 14 or 16 to the centre (€1.35); a taxi will cost about €12.

There are six daily express coaches to Lisbon (€15, four hours) and frequent buses to

other coastal towns. Five trains run daily to Lisbon (€18.50, five hours).

TAVIRA

pop 12,500

Traditionally tiled façades and a backstreet web of cobbled streets add to the charm of this laid-back town. Tavira is famed for its ecclesiastical history and seafood. The **tourist office** (☎ 281 322 511; Rua da Galeria 9) is helpful. The **town hall** (Praça da República; ☎ 9.30am-2pm Mon-Fri) provides free internet access.

One of the town's 30-plus churches, the Renaissance façade of the **Igreja da Misericórdia** is the most striking in the Algarve. Tavira's ruined **castle** (Rua da Liberdade; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun) dominates the town. Nearby, the 16th-century **Palácio da Galeria** (☎ 281 320 540; Calçada da Galeria; adult €2; ☎ 10am-12pm & 4-7.30pm Tue-Sat) is an informative cultural centre with a rooftop contemporary art gallery and views.

Ilha da Tavira is an island beach connected to the mainland by a ferry at Quatro Águas. Walk the 2km or take the (summer only) bus from the bus station.

Enjoy pedal power with a rented bike from **Casa Abílio** (☎ 281 323 467; Rua Goaa Vaz C Real 23A). For walking or biking trips call **Exploratio** (☎ 281 321 973). Kitesurfers can bounce the waves with **Escola de Kitesurf** (☎ 962 337 285, Av da Ria Formosa; www.kitesurfcoolis.com).

Camping de Tavira (☎ 281 324 455; www.campingtavira.com; Ilha da Tavira; camp sites for 2 people plus tent €8.50) is a summer-only camping option on the Ilha da Tavira. **Pensão Lagoas** (☎ 281 322 252; Almirante Cândido dos Reis 24; s/d with shared bathroom €20/30) has bright rooms around a twee flowery patio. **Residencial Imperial** (☎ 281 322 234; José Pires Padinha 24; s/d €40/60) has benefited from a lick of paint. Front rooms have balconies overlooking the river.

For a belly-filling meal try **Bica** (☎ 281 332 483; below Pensão Lagoas; mains €7; ☎); the fish soup gets rave reviews from readers.

Some 15 trains and at least six express buses run daily between Faro and Tavira (€2.45, one hour).

LAGOS

pop 25,400

In summer, this pretty fishing port has a beach-party vibe; out of season, it's laid back while restaurants and hotels take a siesta until spring. The municipal **tourist office** (☎ 282 764

111; www.lagosdigital.com; Largo Marquês de Pombal) is in the centre of town. Surf a frothy coffee while emailing at cool **Bora Café** (☎ 282 083 438; Conselheiro Joaquim Machado 17; per hr €3; ☎ 9.30am-10pm Mon-Sat).

The **municipal museum** (☎ 282 762 301; Rua General Alberto da Silveira; admission €2; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm & 2-5pm Tue-Sun) houses archaeological finds and ecclesiastical treasures.

The best beach scene is at **Meia Praia** to the east, and **Praia da Luz** and reclusive **Praia do Pinhão** to the west.

Blue Ocean (☎ 282 782 718; www.blue-ocean-divers.de) organises diving, kayaking and snorkelling safaris. On the promenade, fishermen offer motorboat jaunts to nearby grottoes. For horse riding contact **Quinta Paraíso Alto** (☎ 282 687 596, www.qphorseriding.com; 1hr ride €25). Rent windsurfing gear from **Windsurf Point** (☎ 282 792 315, www.windsurfpont.com; per day from €25).

Campismo da Trindade (☎ 282 763 893; camp sites per adult/tent €3.50/4) doesn't have much tent-peg space in summer; it's 200m south of the town walls. **Pousada da Juventude** (☎ 282 761 970; Rua Lançarote de Freitas 50; dm/d €16/44) is up there with the best; rooms are light and airy and there's a cosy kitchen and garden. **Pensão Caravela** (☎ 289 763 361; 25 de Abril 16; s/d €25/37) has unprepossessing rooms with shared bathroom on a busy pedestrian street.

Piri-Piri (☎ 282 763 803; Rua Lima Leitão 15; mains €7) serves a tasty *cataplana* (fish stew) and *piri-piri* chicken or clams. If you're a fan, pick up a bottle of the red-chilli wonder from one of the grans at the market. A serious foodie owns **No Patio** (☎ 282 763 777; Rua Lançarote de Freitas 46; ☎ closed Sun & Mon; mains €8), dishing up steak and beef kidney pie, sticky toffee pudding and lots more home-sweet-home dishes for poor deprived Brits.

Bus and train services depart frequently for other Algarve towns and around eight times daily to Lisbon (€14.50, four hours).

SILVES

pop 10,768

This genteel small town is the former capital of Moorish Algarve. Take a trek to the fairytale **castle** on the hill.

Silves train station is 2km from town with a connecting bus. The **tourist office** (☎ 289 442 255; Rua 25 de Abril; ☎ Mon-Fri & Sat morning) is central. Check your email at **It-Connect** (☎ 282 083 915; Rua Francisco Pablos 13; per hr €1.50).

Sleeping & Eating

Residencial Sousa (☎ 282 442 502; Rua Samoura Barros 17; s/d €15/30) Tired-looking rooms in the centre of town but the owners are friendly and the facilities are adequate and clean.

our pick **Residencial Ponte Romana** (☎ 282 443 275; d €30) An ace location beside a Roman bridge with views of the castle and surrounding orchards. Perks include satellite TV, pleasant modern furnishings and a welcoming bar-restaurant downstairs where you can prop up the counter along with the locals and sample the local wine.

Café Ingles (☎ 282 442 585; mains €8) Below the castle, this English-owned, funky place serves up vegetarian dishes, homemade soups and wood-fired pizza, plus live music at weekends.

Casa Velha (☎ 282 445 491; Rua 25 de Abril 13; mains €8) Snacks include sardine sandwiches for just €2.50. Or push the boat out with *paella Valenciana*.

Getting There & Away

Nine trains run daily from Lagos (€1.50, 35 minutes), and are met by local buses. Eight buses run daily to Silves from Albufeira (€3.30, 40 minutes).

SAGRES

pop 1940

End-of-the-road Sagres was thought to be the end of the world in pre-Columbus days. Still today, the town exudes a bleak sort of drama, the fort perched high above the thundering surf. There is a central **tourist office** (☎ 282 624 873; Rua Comandante Matoso) plus **Turinfo** (☎ 282 620 003; Praça da República), which rents cars and bikes, books hotels, arranges jeep and fishing trips and even provides internet access, bless 'em.

The **fort** (adult/child €3/1.50; ☎ 10am-8.30pm May-Sep, 10am-6.30pm Oct-Apr) has a 12-minute slide show on the history; Henry the Navigator established his navigation school here and primed the explorers who later founded the Portuguese empire.

Hire windsurfers at sand-dune-fringed **Praia do Martinhal**. The **Scubado Diving Centre** (☎ 282 624 594; www.scubado-algarve.com; Porto da Baleira; ☎ dives at 10am & 3pm) organises diving trips.

Visit Europe's southwesternmost point, the **Cabo de São Vicente** (Cape St Vincent), 6km to the west. A solitary lighthouse stands on this barren cape.

Orbitur Sagres (☎ 282 624 371; campsites per adult/tent €3.50/4) 2km from town, is off the Cabo de São Vicente road. **Casa de Pasto A Grelha** (☎ 282 624 193; Rua Comandante Matoso; mains €4) is an informal spot with superb spit-roasted chicken.

Frequent daily buses run from Lagos (€2.75, 50 minutes). Three of them continue to Cabo de São Vicente on weekdays.

CENTRAL PORTUGAL

One of Portugal's poorest regions, this central slice of the country has an outback-meets-the-Med feel with its vast plains of cattle and groves of olive trees and cork oaks. Richly historic, it is scattered with prehistoric re-

mains and contains one of the country's most architecturally rich towns – Évora – as well as several spectacular walled villages.

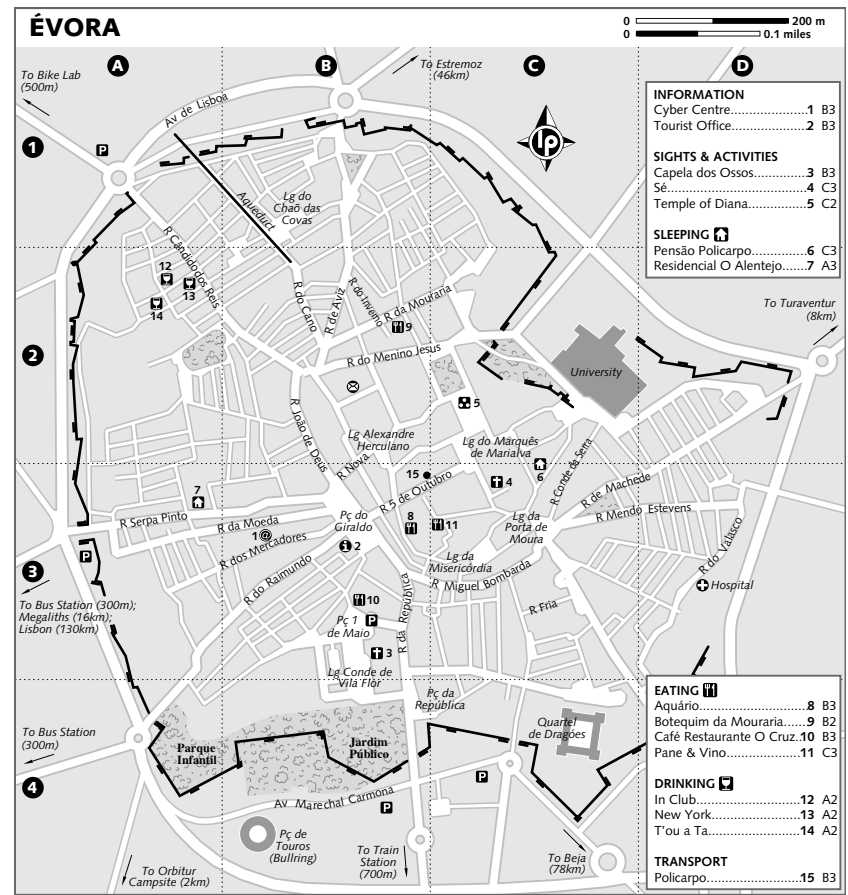
ÉVORA

pop 53,755

A Unesco World Heritage site, this city is easy on the eye with its medieval narrow alleys, juxtaposed with opulent mansions and palaces. These old-fashioned good looks are the backdrop to a lively student town surrounded by wineries and dramatic countryside.

Orientation & Information

The train station is 1km southeast of the centre. Arriving by bus will land you about 1km out; there are regular shuttle buses.



The **tourist office** (☎ 266 702 671; www.cm-evora.pt; Praça do Giraldo 73) has an excellent city map. Log on at the **Cyber Center** (☎ 266 746 923; Rua dos Mercadores 42; per hr €2.50; ☎ 9am-midnight Mon-Fri, 2pm-midnight Sat & Sun).

Sights & Activities

Évora's **Sé** (Largo do Marquês de Marialva; €3; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm) has fabulous cloisters and a museum jam-packed with ecclesiastical treasures.

The **Temple of Diana** was once part of the Roman Forum and is a heady slice of drama right in town.

Capela dos Ossos (☎ 266 744 307; Largo Conde de Vila Flor; €1; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2.30-6pm) provides a real Addams Family day out; this ghoulish Chapel of Bones is constructed from the bones and skulls of several thousand people.

Turaventur (☎ 266 743 134; www.evora.net/turaventur; Qta Serrado, Senhor dos Afritos) runs various adrenaline-fuelled activities, including canoeing (half-day €60) and mountain biking (four hours €35).

Policarpo (☎ 266 746 970; www.policarpo-viagens.pt; Rua 5 de Outubro 63) organises jaunts to prehistoric megaliths and other nearby attractions. **Bike Lab** (☎ 266 735 500; Centro Comercial da Vista Alegre, Lote 14; per hr €3; ☎ summer only) rents bicycles.

Sleeping & Eating

Orbitur Campsite (☎ 266 705 190; camp sites per adult/tent €4.30/3.75) This shady green camping ground is open year-round. It's 2km southwest of town on the N380.

Residencial O Alentejo (☎ 266 702 903; Rua Serpa Pinto 74; s/d €30/45; ☎ ☎) A deeply traditional house, complete with original mosaic-tiled floors and gran on reception; the rooms here are well sized and everything works.

Pensão Policarpo (☎ 266 702 424; Rua da Freiria de Baixo 16; s/d €50/55; ☎ ☎) A palatial place for a (relatively) paltry price; this historic manor is complete with Roman columns and part of the original city wall in the foyer. The rooms won't disappoint.

Aquário (☎ 266 785 055; Rua de Valdevinos 7; mains €6) Vibrant little vegetarian restaurant with just a few daily choices, including a vegan option.

Café Restaurant O Cruz (☎ 266 747 228; Praça 1 de Maio 20; mains €6) Earthy and inexpensive for scoffing plain filling fare such as pork with clams.

Pane & Vino (☎ 266 746 960; Páteo do Salema 22; mains €7) Sunny colours, cheery staff and a vast menu including thin-crust pizzas and creamy tiramisu.

Botequim da Mouraria (☎ 266 746 775; Rua da Mouraria 16a; mains €8) A real insider's place: there are just a dozen bar-stool places and a nightly set menu of creations by the master chef-cum-barman-cum-owner.

Drinking & Entertainment

In Club (☎ 266 706 559; Rua do Escrivão da Câmara 16; ☎ 8pm-1am Mon-Thu, 8pm-3am Fri & Sat) Hits its stride post-dinner time attracting a mix of suits and scruffs.

New York (☎ 266 705 675; Rua do Apóstolo 4; ☎ 8pm-2am Mon-Fri, 9pm-3am Sat) An after-hours hang-out to perfect your hangover. Live music.

Tou a Ta (Rua do Calvário 12-14) Packs them in at weekends, this backstreet club has a frazzled bar staff and fun-loving vibe.

Getting There & Away

Six weekday buses to Lisbon (€9.80, 1½ hours) and two to Faro (€11.80, four hours) run from the main bus station. Three trains run daily from Lisbon (€8.15, 2½ hours).

MONSARAZ

pop 977

In a dizzy setting, high above the plain, this walled village has a moody medieval feel and magnificent views. The **tourist office** (☎ 266 557 136; Praça Dom Nuno Álvares) can advise on accommodation. Eat before 8pm as the town tucks up early to bed.

Museu de Arte Sacra (Praça Dom Nuno Álvares; admission €1; ☎ 10am-1pm & 2-6pm) has a display of religious artefacts; the 15th-century fresco is superb. Three kilometres north of town is **Menhir of Outeiro**, one of the tallest megalithic monuments ever discovered.

Up to four buses run daily to/from Reguengos de Monsaraz (€2, 35 minutes), with connections to Évora.

CASTELO DE VIDE & MARVÃO

pop 4145

A worthy detour, north of Estremoz, is the hilltop spa town, **Castelo de Vide**. Highlights are the **Judiaria** (Old Jewish Quarter), the medieval backstreets and (yet another) castle-top view. Try to spend a night here before heading skywards to **Marvão**, a fabulous mountain-top walled village (population 190), 12km from Castelo de Vide.

The **tourist offices** (Castelo de Vide ☎ 245 901 361; Rua de Bartolomeu Álvares da Santa 81; Marvão ☎ 245 993 886; Largo de Santa Maria) can help with beds.

On weekdays only, three buses run from the larger southerly town of Portalegre to Castelo de Vide (€4.80, 20 minutes) and two to Marvão (€2.65, 45 minutes).

ÓBIDOS

pop 600

This tiny walled village is overly prettified but still worth a visit. Highlights include the **Igreja de Santa Maria** (Rua Direita), with fine *azulejos*, and views from the walls. The **tourist office** (☎ 262 959 231; www.cm-obidos.pt; Rua Direita) can advise on rooms.

Arty English-speaking **Milena** (☎ 919 182 563; Rua Arco da Cadeia; d €30) rents out two light bright rooms behind the church. **Casa dos Castros** (☎ 262 959 328; Rua Direita 83-85; d €35) offers a bargain price for homy large rooms on the main street. At **Casa dos Sabores** (☎ 262 959 729; Rua Direita 62; snacks €3) enjoy homemade daily soup and a spoilt-for-choice sandwich selection.

There's a weekday direct bus from Lisbon (€7.10, two hours) or via Caldas da Rainha, 10 minutes away.

NAZARÉ

pop 16,000

Nazaré is a seagulls-and-sand resort with excellent seafood and a sweeping sandy beach. The locals wear national dress to lure the tourists into buying their wares – handy for impressive pics to wow the folks back home.

The nearest train station, 6km away at Valado, is connected to Nazaré by frequent buses. The bus station is central to town. The **tourist office** (☎ 262 561 194) is located on the seafront.

Beaches are the main attraction here; swimmers should beware of dangerous currents. Climb or take the funicular to cliff-top **Sítio** with its cluster of fishermen's cottages and technicolour views.

Two of Portugal's big-time architectural masterpieces are close by. Follow the signs to **Alcobaça** where, right in the centre of town, is the immense **Mosteiro de Santa Maria de Alcobaça** (☎ 262 505 120; adult/child €4.50/2.25; ☎ 9am-7pm, 9am-5pm winter) dating from 1178; don't miss the colossal former kitchen.

Batalha's massive Gothic **Mosteiro de Santa Maria de Vitória** (☎ 244 765 497; admission to cloisters & unfinished chapels adult/child €3.50/2; ☎ 9am-6pm, 9am-5pm winter), dating from 1388, is home to the tomb of Henry the Navigator.

Vale Paraíso (☎ 262 561 800; www.valeparaíso.com; camp sites per adult/tent €4.20/3.60) is in pinewoods 2km out of town. It has bicycles available to hire. Many townspeople rent out rooms. Doubles begin at €35; ask the tourist office for details.

Stout fishermen's wives dish up tasty seafood dishes at **Casa Marques** (☎ 262 551 680; Rua Gil Vicente 37; mains €5). There are also kebab and pizza takeaways on the same street. Fussy families take note – there's something for everyone.

Nazaré has numerous bus connections to Lisbon (€7.45, two hours).

TOMAR

pop 17,000

A charming town straddling a river, Tomar has the storybook notoriety of being home to the Knights Templar, so you can expect huddles of earnest *Da Vinci Code* aficionados clutching their well-thumbed tomes. Whether or not you are on this particular trail, do check out the Templar headquarters, the outstanding **Convento de Cristo** (☎ 249 313 481; adult/child €4.50/2; ☎ 9am-6.30pm Jun-Sep, 9am-5.30pm Oct-May) monastery.

Other rarities include a magnificent 17th-century **Aqueduto de Pegões** (aqueduct) and a vegetarian restaurant, Gaia. The town is backed by the dense greenery of the **Mata Nacional dos Sete Montes** (Seven Hills National Forest). Tomar's **tourist office** (☎ 249 329 000; www.rtemplarios.pt; Serpa Pinto) can provide maps.

Camping Redondo (☎ 249 376 421; camp sites per adult/tent €3.35/2.80; ☎) is run by English-speaking owners, and has a pool and a leafy setting 10km south of town. **Residencial União** (☎ 249 323 161; Rua Serpa Pinto 94; s/d €25/40) is a gracious older home with antiques and creamy floorboards.

Gaia (☎ 249 311 109; Rua dos Moinhos 75; mains €6) has just a few tables and daily dishes like seitan stew, tofu burgers or meatless *feijada* (Brazilian bean stew). **Bella Italia** (☎ 249 322 996; Rua Everaro 91; mains €5) serves a better class of pizza and pasta. Swooning couples should check out romantic **Bela Vista** (☎ 249 312 870; Rua Fonte do Choupo 6; mains €6-9) with its good food and wisteria-shaded terrace overlooking the river.

There are at least four express buses daily to Lisbon (€6.50, two hours) and even more frequent trains (€6.80, two hours).

COIMBRA

pop 150,000

Coimbra is a dynamic yet comfortably lived-in city, with a student life centred on the magnificent 13th-century university. Aesthetically eclectic, there are elegant shopping streets, ancient stone walls and backstreet alleys with hidden *tascas* and *fado* bars.

Coimbra's annual highlight is Queima das Fitas, a boozy week of *fado* and revelry that begins on the first Thursday in May.

Orientation & Information

There are three train stations: Coimbra A, Coimbra B and Coimbra Parque. Most trains arrive at Coimbra A, a short walk from the centre. The main bus station is 15 minutes' walk northwest of the centre.

Esp@ço Internet (Praça 8 de Maio; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-10pm Sat & Sun) has free internet access for 30 minutes. The **regional tourist office** (☎ 239 855 930; www.turismo-centro.pt; Largo da Portagem) is not as useful as the **municipal tourist office** (☎ 239 832 591; Praça Dom Dinis), which has a second branch on Praça da República (☎ 239 833 202).

Sight & Activities

Mosteiro de Santa Cruz (☎ 239 822 941; Rua Visconde da Luz; adult €1; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm) has a fabulous ornate pulpit and medieval royal tombs. Get here via the lift (one way €1.50; buy tickets from booth or kiosks) by the market.

On the same street as the monastery is the grand **University Velha** (☎ 239 822 941; www.uc.pt/sri; adult €4; ☎ 10am-noon & 2-5pm). Visit the library with its gorgeous book-lined hallways and the 1517 Manueline chapel.

Machado de Castro Museum (☎ 239 823 727; Largo Dr José Rodrigues; adult €3; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm) holds a diverse collection of sculpture and paintings in a gorgeous 12th-century building.

Conimbriga, 16km south of Coimbra, is the site of the well-preserved ruins of a Roman town, including mosaic floors, baths and fountains. There's a good site **museum** (adult €3; ☎ 9am-8pm mid-Mar–mid-Sep, 10am-6pm mid-Sep–mid-Mar) with restaurant. Frequent buses run to Condeixa, 2km from the site; direct buses depart at 9.05am or 9.35am (only 9.35am at weekends) from Coimbra's **AVIC terminal** (Rua João de Ruão 18) returning at 1pm and 6pm (only 6pm at weekends).

Several companies rent canoes and kayaks; the tourist office can provide you with a list.

Sleeping

Pousada da Juventude (☎ 239 822 955; coimbra@movijovem.pt; Rua António Henriques Seco 12-14; dm/d €13/30) A solid, efficiently run hostel; take northbound bus 46 from the Coimbra A train station.

Pensão Santa Cruz (☎ 239 826 197; Praça 8 de Maio; d €32) Threadbare large rooms in an old building overlook one of the city's most dynamic squares.

Pensão Larbelo (☎ 239 829 092; fax 239 829 094; Largo da Portagem 33; s/d/tr €25/40/55; ☎) Well-polished, if dated, rooms with lacy curtains and views of the square with its *bica* break cafés.

Pensão Flôr de Coimbra (☎ 239 823 865; fax 239 821 545; Rua do Poço 5; s/d from €40/45) Enjoy lashings of white linen and *fin de siècle* atmosphere at this renovated family home; the restaurant has a daily vegetarian dish.

Casa Pombal Guesthouse (☎ 239 835 175; casa.pombal@oninet.pt; Rua das Flores 18; d €48, with shared bathroom €40) This place is a gem with pretty rooms painted in pastel colours and roof-top views. Dutch owner Elsa's breakfast is more generous than most.

Eating

Restaurante Jardim da Manga (☎ 239 829 156; Rua Olímpio Nicolau Rui Fernanda; mains €6.50) Better for hot dinners than a hot date, this brightly lit self-service restaurant has a tasty range of dishes, including vegetarian choices.

Zé Manel (☎ 239 823 790; Beco do Forno 12; mains €7-10) Great food, huge servings and a zany atmosphere with walls papered with diners' comments, cartoons and poems.

O Estudante (☎ 239 832 699; Rua da Sota 44-48; mains €7.50) Black-and-white photos of historic Coimbra line the walls at O Estudante, a no-nonsense eatery with its tasty specials including a memorable *arroz de pato* (duck with rice).

Italia (☎ 239 838 863; Parque Dr Manuel Braga; mains €8-10) Expand your midriff at this excellent Italian restaurant on the riverfront with its dishes laden with excellent pizza and pasta.

Café Santa Cruz (☎ 239 833 617; Praça 8 de Maio) A former chapel has been resurrected into one of Portugal's most atmospheric cafés.

Clubbing

Quebra Club (☎ 239 836 038; Parque Verde do Mondego) Live jazz at weekends.

Via Latina (☎ 239 833 034; Rua Almeida Garrett 1) Fires up to a steamy dance pit late at night.

Entertainment

Coimbra-style *fado* is more cerebral than the Lisbon variety, and its adherents are staunchly protective. **Bar Diligência** (☎ 239 827 667; Rua Nova 30) and **Boémia Bar** (☎ 239 834 547; Rua do Cabido 6) are popular *casas de fado*.

Á Capella (☎ 239 833 985; Capela de Nossa Senhora de Victória, Rua Corpo de Deus, Largo da Victória; admission €5; ☎ fado show 9.30pm), housed in a fabulous 14th-century former chapel, has nightly *fado*.

Getting There & Away

At least a dozen buses and as many trains run daily from Lisbon (€9.60, 2½ hours) and Porto (€9, 1½ hours), plus frequent express buses from Faro and Évora, via Lisbon. Other useful connections include eight daily buses to Luso/Buçaco (from Coimbra A).

LUSO & THE BUÇACO FOREST

pop 2000

This region is oh-so-pretty with its dense forest of century-old trees surrounded by countryside dappled all over with heather, wild flowers and leafy ferns. There's even a palace here; a wedding-cake affair which somehow works. Buçaco was chosen as a retreat by 16th-century monks and surrounds the lovely spa town of Luso.

The **tourist office** (☎ /fax 231 939 133; Av Emídio Navarro) has maps and leaflets about the forest and trails, as well as free internet access. The **Termas** (thermal baths; ☎ 231 937 910; Av Emídio Navarro; ☎ May-Oct) offers a range of treatments.

Like that favourite woolly, **Astória** (☎ 231 939 182; Av Emídio Navarro; s/d €30/35) is well worn but snug – all dark wood and beams. You could choose to live a fairy tale and stay at the truly sumptuous **Palace Hotel do Buçaco** (☎ 231 930 101; www.almeidahotels.com; s/d from €145/185; ☎), complete with gargoyles, ornamental garden and turrets. **Restaurante O Cesteiro** (☎ 231 939 360; EN 234; mains €7) is a large dining room with an extensive menu of confident traditional dishes; the grilled chicken is a winner.

There are three buses daily Monday to Friday, two on Saturdays and one on Sundays from Coimbra (€2.60, 50 minutes). Just one train departs Coimbra B at around 10.30am (€1.45, 30 minutes).

SERRA DA ESTRELA

The forested Serra da Estrela has a raw natural beauty and offers some of the country's best hiking. This is Portugal's highest mainland

mountain range (1993m), and the source of its two great rivers: the Mondego and Zêzere Rivers. The **main park office** (☎ 275 980 060; Manteigas; www.rt-serradaestrela.pt) has plenty of information on the Parque Natural da Serra da Estrela; additional offices are at Seia, Gouveia and Guarda.

The park publishes *Discover the Region of the Serra da Estrela*, a walking guide in English with maps and narratives (€4.25), plus a topographic map of the park (€6.60).

Sleeping

Parque Municipal de Campismo (☎ 271 221 200; Rua do Estádio Municipal, Guarda; camp sites per adult/tent €2.50/2.50) Basic tent-peg space, southwest of the town centre.

Pousada da Juventude (☎ /fax 275 335 375; penhas@movijem.pt; Penhas da Saúde; dm/d from €10/25) Located 10km above Covilhã, this is an excellent hostel and good excursion base, providing meals and kitchen facilities. Buses come from Covilhã (€1.25, twice daily July to September only); a taxi costs €12. Seia, Gouveia, Guarda and Covilhã also have an array of modestly priced guesthouses.

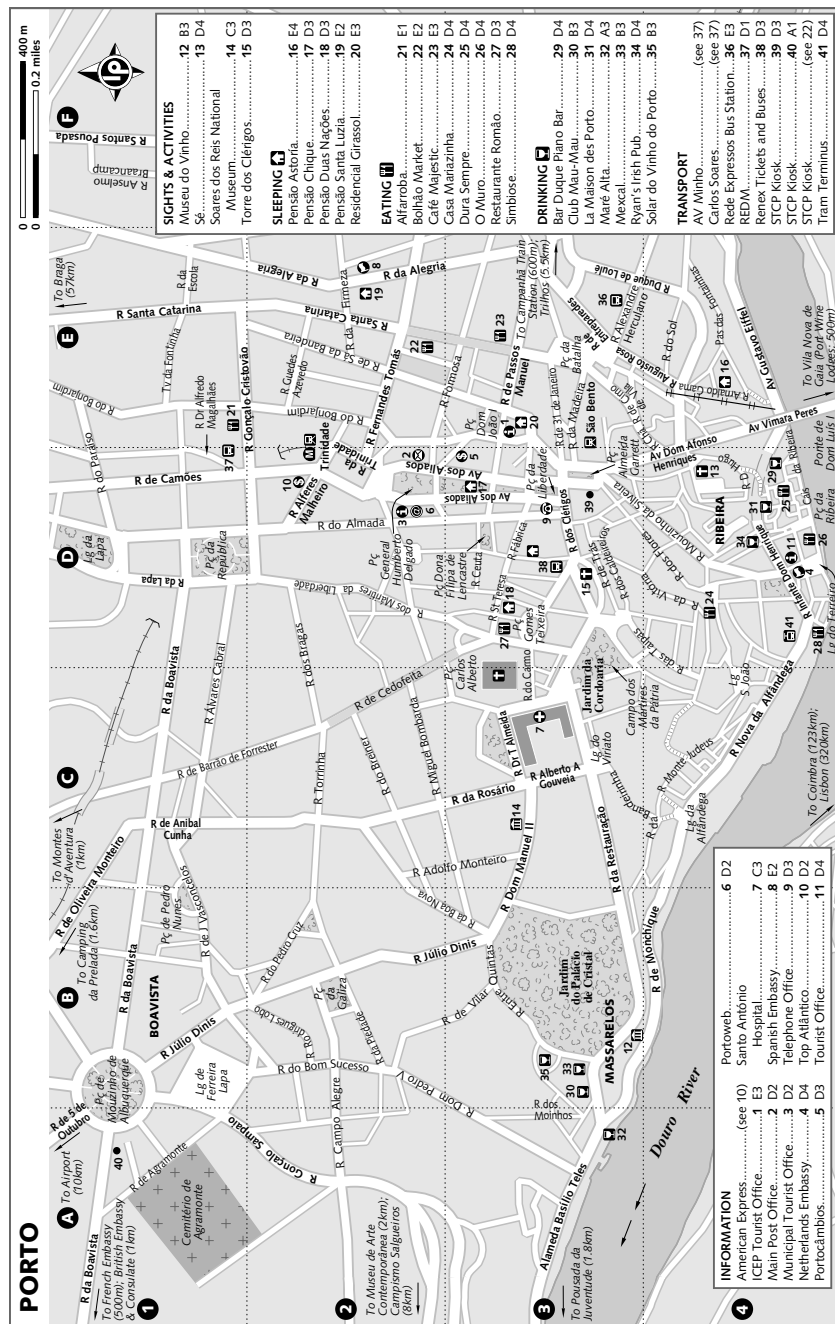
Getting There & Around

Several buses run daily from Coimbra, along the park's perimeter to Seia, Gouveia, Guarda or Covilhã, plus there are others that run via Covilhã (€4, 45 minutes) to Castel Branco (€7.50, 1¼ hours) and Lisbon, and several times daily to Viseu (€6.20, 1½ hours), Porto and Coimbra. No bus services cross the park.

The twice-daily IC Line 110 train links Lisbon and Coimbra to Guarda (€12.80, 4¼ hours).

NORTHERN PORTUGAL

The country's northern region is countryside bumpkin heaven with its rolling landscape interspersed with dense forests and dramatic mountains. This region is also gluttony for wine-lovers: it's the home of the sprightly *vinho verde*, while its capital Porto is named after another tittle and is a beguiling combo of the medieval and modern. Smaller towns similarly have a now-and-then atmosphere including magnificent Braga, the country's religious heart, and the folkloric capital of Viana do Castelo.



PORTO

pop 300,000

Portugal's second-largest city, Porto has a real foreign feel with a gritty old quarter and steep streets lined with lofty houses that have washing strung from their windows. A lively city with chatter in the air and a tangible sense of history, Porto's old-world river-frontage district is a World Heritage Site. Across the water twinkle the neon signs of Vila Nova de Gaia, the headquarters of the major port manufacturers. Tiptle aside, Porto is also home to medieval churches, a clutch of museums and countless eateries and cafés. The city has recently taken a giant stride into the 21st century with the construction of a metro system.

Orientation

Porto centre is small enough to cover mainly by foot. The city clings to the north bank of the Douro River, spanned by five bridges to Vila Nova de Gaia, home to the port-wine lodges. The picturesque Ribeira district lies along the waterfront.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Portoweb (☎ 222 005 922; Praça General Humberto Delgado 291; per hr €2.50; ☹ 10am-2am Mon-Sat, 3pm-2am Sun)

MEDICAL SERVICES

Santo António Hospital (☎ 222 077 500; Largo Prof Abel Salazar) Has English-speaking staff.

MONEY

Portocâmbios (Rua Rodrigues Sampaio 193)

Top Atlântico (☎ 222 074 020; trinidad@topatlantico.com; Rua Alferes Malheiro 96) Doubles as an AmEx representative.

POST

Main post office (Praça General Humberto Delgado) Across from the main tourist office.

TELEPHONE

Telephone office (Praça da Liberdade 62; ☹ 10am-10pm) With fax service.

TOURIST INFORMATION

ICEP tourist office (☎ 222 057 514; fax 222 053 212; Praça Dom João I 43) National tourist office.

Municipal tourist office (☎ 223 393 472; www.portoturismo.pt; Rua Clube dos Fenianos 25)

Tourist office (☎ 222 009 770; Rua Infante Dom Henrique 63; ☹ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri)

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Montes d'Aventura (☎ 228 305 157; Alameda Dr Antonio Macedo 19) Organises walking, cycling and canoeing trips.

Trilhos (☎ /fax 225 020 740; www.trilhos.pt; Rua de Belém 94) Another option for canoe and hydro speed excursions.

Sights & Activities

Head for the riverfront **Ribeira** district for an atmospheric stroll around, checking out the gritty local bars, superb restaurants and river cruises.

Torre dos Clérigos (Rua dos Clérigos; adult €1.50; ☹ 10am-noon & 2-5pm) rewards the 225 steep steps with the best panorama of the city.

The **Sé** (☎ 222 059 028; Terreiro da Sé; cloisters adult €2; ☹ 9am-12.15pm & 2.30-6pm Apr-Oct, to 5.15pm Nov-Mar, closed Sun morning) dominates Porto and is worth a visit for its architecture and vast ornate interior.

Many of the port-wine lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia run daily tours and tastings, including **Osborne** (☎ 223 757 517; www.osborne.es; admission free).

The **Museu de Arte Contemporânea** (☎ 226 156 571; www.serralves.pt; Rua Dom João de Castro 210; adult €5; ☹ 10am-7pm Tue-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat & Sun Apr-Sep, 10am-7pm daily Oct-Mar) has works by contemporary Portuguese artists.

Museu do Vinho (Wine Museum; ☎ 222 076 300; museuvinhoporto@cm-porto.pt; Rua de Monchique 45-52; adult €2; ☹ 11am-7pm Tue-Sun) traces the history of wine and port with informative films, exhibits and tastings.

Soares dos Reis National Museum (☎ 223 393 770; Rua Dom Manuel II 44; adult €3; ☹ 10am-6pm Wed-Sun) presents masterpieces of 19th- and 20th-century Portuguese painting and sculpture. Take bus 78 from Praça da Liberdade.

Festivals & Events

Porto's big festivals are the **Festa de São João** (St John's Festival) in June and the international film festival **Fantasporto** in February. Also

GETTING INTO TOWN

The **AeroBus** (☎ 808 200 166; www.stcp.pt; one way €4; ☹ 6.45am-6.15pm) runs every half-hour between Aliados and the airport. TAP Air passengers get a free ride. A taxi costs around €18.

worth catching are the **Celtic music** festival in April/May, and the **rock festival** in August.

Sleeping

Campismo Salgueiros (☎ 227 810 500; fax 227 718 239; Praia de Salgueiros; camp sites per adult/tent €2/2.50) This is one of three sites near the sea; all get packed in summer.

Camping da Prelada (☎ 228 312 616; Rua Monte dos Burgos; camp sites per adult/tent €3.20/2.70) Basic and big, this site is 4km northwest of the centre. Take bus 6 from Praça da Liberdade or bus 54 from Jardim da Cordoaria.

Pensão Duas Nações (☎ 222 081 616; Praça Guilherme Gomes Fernandes 59; s/d/tr from €13.50/21.50/24; ☑) A backpackers' favourite with walls washed in bright primary colours and comfortable clean rooms.

Pousada da Juventude (☎ 226 177 257; porto@movijovem.pt; Rua Paulo da Gama 551; dm/d €18/42; ☑) A tastefully spruced-up hostel 4km west of the centre. Reservations are essential. Take bus 35 from Praça da Liberdade.

Pensão Santa Luzia (☎ 222 001 119; Rua da Alegria; s/d €20/25; ☑) A tramp from the centre but a bargain, these pleasant, spotless rooms are run by an elderly *senhora* who is still charging escuda-era rates.

Pensão Astória (☎ 222 008 175; Rua Arnaldo Gama 56; d €35) In an evocative location hugging the ancient city walls high above the river, this *hostal* has elegant old doubles. Approach via the steep steps (or funicular) from the river front.

Residencial Girassol (☎ 222 001 891; Rua Sá da Bandeira 133; s/d €35/45) Well named for its sunflower theme including umpteen prints and plastic flowers. Front rooms are small but comfortable and overlook an enticing *pasteleria* (cake shop) window.

Pensão Chique (☎ 222 009 011; Av dos Aliados 206; s/d €35/45) Smiley owner and refurbished rooms with carpeting and pale paintwork;

SPLURGE

Casa Mariazinha (☎ 222 009 137; Rua de Belomonte 2-4; meal €60) Think five tables and four courses served with a flourish – and the accompanying wines – by sommelier Antonio. The food is delicious: gourmet and good to look at, prepared by Brazilian wife Neide. This place is an exclusive so reservations are essential.

the bathrooms are old fashioned but everything works.

Eating

Dura Sempre (☎ 222 008 488; Rua da Lada; mains €4.50) Fluorescent lighting, cramped tables but sound belly-filling fare such as steak or breaded veal with piles of rice and chips.

O Muro (☎ 222 083 426; Muro dos Bacalhoeiros 88; mains €7) Top-notch, well-priced restaurant on the river with delicious, filling food, including several vegetarian choices. Delightful wacky décor ranges from dried *bacalhau* to Che Guevara.

Restaurante Romão (☎ 222 005 639; Praça Carlos Alberto 100; mains €7.50) Small check-tablecloth place serving up tasty northern specialities such as tripe and roast kid. Leave room for the *torta de noz* (walnut tart).

Simbiose (☎ 222 030 398; Rua Infante Dom Henrique 133; mains €11) This is a swooning-couples kind of place with a candlelit dining room overlooking the river. The cuisine is no-surprises Portuguese, with a reasonable daily buffet (€7.50).

For a snack or self-catering:

Café Majestic (☎ 222 003 887; Rua Santa Catarina 112) An extravagant Art Nouveau relic where powdered ladies enjoy afternoon tea.

Alfarroba (☎ 222 088 720; Rua do Bolhão; snacks €2.50) Excellent vegetarian buffet and takeaway.

Bolhão market (Rua Formosa; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Sells fruit and veggies in season, plus cheese and deli goodies.

Drinking & Clubbing

Solar do Vinho do Porto (☎ 226 094 749; Rua Entre Quintas 220; ☎ 2pm-midnight Mon-Sat) Sophisticated setting for tasting the port made just across the river.

La Maison des Porto (☎ 936 057 340; Rua São João 46) This vinothèque gets the thumbs up from readers; taste and learn about port from the charming multilingual owner.

Ryan's Irish Pub (☎ 222 005 366; Rua Infante Dom Henrique 18; ☎ 6pm-2am) There's a suitably blarney atmosphere here for enjoying the usual range of gluggable beer.

Bar Duque Piano Bar (☎ 223 320 848; Rua da Lada 98; ☎ closed Sun) On a street back from the Douro, this place has a nicely low-key ambience, aside from karaoke nights.

Mexcal (☎ 226 009 188; Rua da Restauração 39; ☎ 10pm-4am Tue-Sun) The Latino music here is good for a little late-night hip swinging.

Club Mau-Mau (☎ 226 076 660; Rua do Outeiro 4; ☎ 11pm-4am Wed-Sat) A dodging-elbows disco with live music on Thursday nights.

Maré Alta (☎ 226 162 540; Alameda Basílio Teles; ☎ closed Mon & Tue) Nail-bitingly trendy disco with occasional live gigs.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are daily flights from Porto to Lisbon and London, and almost-daily direct links to other European centres; see p900 for details. For flight information call ☎ 229 413 260.

BUS

Porto has a baffling number of private bus companies; the main tourist office has a designated department for transport which can assist with information. For Lisbon and the Algarve, there's **Renex** (☎ 222 003 395; Rua das Carmelitas 32) or **Rede Expressos** (☎ 222 052 459; Rua Alexandre Herculano). Three companies operate from or near Pracetto Régulo Magauanha, off Rua Dr Alfredo Magalhães: **REDM** (☎ 222 003 152) goes to Braga; **AV Minho** (☎ 222 006 121) goes to Viana do Castelo; and **Carlos Soares** (☎ 222 051 383) goes to Guimarães.

TRAIN

Porto is a northern Portugal rail hub, with three stations. Most international trains, and all intercity links, start at Campanhã, 2km east of the centre. Interregional and regional services depart from either Campanhã or the central **São Bento** (☎ 225 364 141) station.

Getting Around

Central hubs of Porto's extensive bus system include Jardim da Cordoaria, Praça da Liberdade and São Bento station (Praça Almeida Garrett). Tickets are cheapest from STCP kiosks or newsagents and tobacconists: €1.55 for a return within Porto and from €1.95 for outlying areas. Tickets bought on the bus are €1.30 for a single.

Porto's **metro** (www.metroporto.pt) currently comprises four lines converging at the Trindade stop. An additional line running from the airport is scheduled to open in 2007. For an update and metro map, check the website. Tickets cost €1.30 for a single ride, or save money with a €0.50 Andante card which can be recharged with more credit at vending machines located at metro, train and bus stations.

ALONG THE DOURO

Portugal's best-known river flows through the country's rural heartland. In the upper reaches, port-wine grapes are grown on steep terraced hills, punctuated by remote stone villages and, in spring, splashes of dazzling white almond blossom.

The Douro River is navigable right across Portugal. Highly recommended is the train journey from Porto inland to Peso da Régua (€6.75, 2½ hours, about 12 trains daily), the last 50km clinging to the river's edge; four trains continue daily to Pocinho (4½ hours). **Douro Azul** (☎ 223 393 950; www.douroazul.com) and other companies run one- and two-day river cruises, mostly from March to October. Cyclists and drivers can choose river-hugging roads along either bank. A detailed *Rio Douro* (€3) map is available from Porto bookshops.

VIANA DO CASTELO

pop 36,545

Portugal's folkloric capital specialises in making (and selling) the traditional embroidered costumes but is far from twee. This elegant port town has grandiose 16th-century buildings, superb restaurants and beaches.

Arriving by bus, it's a 20-minute walk southwest via Rua da Bandeira to the town centre. The train station is closer, located at the north end of the main Av Combatentes da Grande Guerra artery. The **tourist office** (☎ 258 822 620; www.rtam.pt; Rua Hospital Velho; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 2.30-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) is helpful. In August Viana hosts the Festas da Nossa Senhora da Agonia (see p926).

Sights & Activities

The stately heart of the town is Praça da República, with its delicate fountain and elegant buildings, including the 16th-century **Misericórdia**.

Atop Santa Luzia Hill, the **Templo do Sagrado Coração de Jesus** (Temple of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; ☎ 258 823 173; admission free; ☎ 8am-7pm Apr-Sep, 8am-5pm Oct-Mar) offers a grand panorama across the river. Take the steps – or a taxi – roughly 2km to the top.

Sleeping & Eating

Pousada da Juventude Gil Eannes (☎ 258 821 582; navigileannes@movijovem.pt; Gil Eannes; dm €11) This hostel is located in the bowels of a grand ship: *QE2* it ain't, but it's comfortable and the novelty factor is high.

Pensão Verde Minho (☎ 258 822 386; Rua do Anjinho 34-36; s/d €25/35) Ace location for foodies on a cobbled restaurant-flanked side street; the spotless rooms are pretty slick for the price.

Residencial Viana Mar (☎ 258 828 962; Av Combatentes da 6 Guerra 215; s/d €35/45) Well positioned with comfortable chintzy rooms and a sunken bar that dates from the 1960s, when it was Viana's first nightclub.

A Gruta (☎ 258 820 214; Rua Grande 87; mains €7) This is a snug place with half-tiled walls and a reasonable daily menu of solid local dishes. Nip across to the *pasteleria* for dessert.

Dolce Vita (☎ 258 820 214; Rua do Poço 44; mains €7) Wood-fired pizza and innovative pasta sauces make this *the* obligatory refuelling spot in town.

Zip (☎ 258 826 594; Rua Luis Jácome 17; mains €7) This buzzy restaurant with its red-and-wicker décor has an excellent international menu for those tired of *bacalhau* – including crepes, pasta dishes and salads.

Getting There & Away

Half a dozen express coaches go to Porto (€5, one hour) and Lisbon (€14, 5½ hours) on weekdays, fewer at weekends.

BRAGA

pop 110,000

Lovely Braga's ecclesiastical architecture has the contemporary contrast of pedestrian streets flanked with classy cafés, shops and boutiques. The only downside is the Big Mac eyesore in the middle of the town's most beautiful square.

Orientation & Information

Arriving at the train station, it's a 15-minute walk to the old town via Rua Andrade Corvo. The main bus station is five minutes closer. The **tourist office** (☎ 253 262 550; www.cm-braga.pt; Praça da República 1) has a good map.

Sights & Activities

In Braga's centre is the **Sé** (museum & chapels adult €2; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm), an elegant cathedral complex and treasury museum.

At Bom Jesus do Monte, a hilltop pilgrimage site 5km from Braga, is a striking stairway, the **Escadaria do Bom Jesus**, with allegorical fountains, chapels and a superb view. Buses run frequently from Braga to the site, where you can climb the steps (pilgrims climb them on their knees) or ascend by funicular railway (€1).

It's an easy day trip to **Guimarães**, considered the cradle of the Portuguese nation, with a medieval town centre and a palace of the dukes of Bragança.

Sleeping

Pousada da Juventude (☎ 253 616 163; braga@movijovem.pt; Rua de Santa Margarida 6; dm/d €10/27) This bland but lively hostel is a 10-minute walk from the centre.

Hotel Francfort (☎ 253 262 648; Av Central 7; s/d €25/35) Check out the massive antique bed heads at this atmospheric *pensão* with its vintage feel – and owners. There are plans for a makeover so visit soon.

Grande Residência Avenida (☎ 253 609 020; fax 253 609 028; Av da Liberdade 738; s/d incl breakfast €30/40; 🚽) A variety of rooms including the dowdy, the floral and several with Olympic-sized bathrooms; check them out before you check in.

Eating & Drinking

Ruby (☎ 253 263 030; Av da Liberdade 74; mains €3.50) About as atmospheric as a railway waiting room, but good for burgers, pizza, sandwiches and all kinds of sugary treats.

Gosto Superior (☎ 253 217 681; Praça Mousinho de Albuquerque 29; mains €4.50) A rare vegetarian restaurant with just two daily menus. The soups are better than the belly filling, but stodgy, mains.

Adega Pregão (☎ 253 277 249; Praça Velha 18; mains €7) Earthy local with outdoor tables on a scenic side street. Dishes include a recommended roast lamb with chestnuts.

A Brasileira (☎ 253 262 104; Largo do Barã de S Martinho) Mildly decadent corner bar attracting effortlessly scruffy students.

Getting There & Away

Intercidade trains arrive twice daily from Lisbon (€15, five hours), Coimbra (€10, 2¼ hours) and Porto (€2, 1¼ hours), and there are daily connections north to Viana do Castelo. Daily bus services link Braga to Porto (€4.50, 1½ hours), Guimaraes (€2.45, 40 minutes) and Lisbon (€14.50, five hours).

PARQUE NATURAL DA PENEDA-GERÊS

This stunning national park is popular with Portugal's happy campers and has trekking appeal with its wilder northern region around Serra da Peneda. It's also fascinating historically with dolmens, stone circles and standing stones.

The park's main centre is at Caldas do Gerês, a sleepy, hot-spring village. Confusingly, Campo do Gerês is a separate place; a small hamlet to the west of Caldas and a popular base for hiking.

Information

Caldas do Gerês' **tourist office** (☎ 253 391 133; fax 253 391 282) has leaflets on activities. Other park offices are at Arcos de Valdevez and Montalegre. A detailed topographical map can be bought in Lisbon or Porto, or ordered online (www.igeoe.pt, in Portuguese).

Activities

CYCLING

Incentivos Outdoors (☎ 914 863 353; Campo do Gerês) or the German-run **Pensão Carvalho Araújo** (☎ 253 391 185; ☎ May-Sep) hire out mountain bikes.

HIKING

There are trails and footpaths through the park; leaflets detailing these are available from the park offices.

Day hikes around Caldas do Gerês are popular. An adventurous option is the old Roman road from Mata do Albergaria (10km up-valley from Caldas do Gerês by taxi or hitching), past the Vilarinho das Furnas reservoir to Campo do Gerês. More-distant destinations include Ermida and Cabril, both with simple cafés and accommodation.

Guided walks are organised by several outfits, including **Incentivos Outdoors** (☎ 914 863 353) at Campo do Gerês and **Trote-Gerês** (☎ /fax 253 659 860) at Cabril.

HORSE RIDING

The **national park** (☎ 253 390 110) organises horse riding from beside its Vidoeiro camping ground, near Caldas do Gerês. **Equi Desafios** (☎ 253 352 803; www.equidesafios.com; Rua Dr. Francisco Xavier de Araújo) in Caldas do Gerês also organises treks.

WATER SPORTS

Rio Caldo, 8km south of Caldas do Gerês, is the base for water sports on the Caniçada reservoir. Equi Desafios (see above) rents out canoes and other boats. For paddling the Salomonde reservoir, Trote-Gerês (see above) rents out canoes.

Caldas do Gerês' **Parque das Termas** (€1; ☎ Sat & Sun Apr, daily May-Oct) has a **swimming pool** (Mon-Fri €3.50, Sat & Sun €5).

Sleeping & Eating

Caldas do Gerês has plenty of *pensões*, though many are block-booked by spa patients in summer.

Cerdeira Camping Ground (☎ 253 351 005; fax 253 353 315; Campo do Gerês; tents €4) Cerdeira has shady tents, a laundry and a mini-supermarket.

Pousada da Juventude (☎ /fax 253 351 339; Campo do Gerês; d with/without toilet €28/25) This former dam workers' camp has comfy, sprawling accommodation (no dorms).

Pensão Adelaide (☎ 253 390 020; fax 253 390 029; d €40; 🚽) It's a bit of a trek from the centre of Caldas do Gerês but the views are suitable reward. Clean, bright rooms.

Most of Caldas do Gerês *pensões* serve hearty meals, to guests and nonguests. There are several restaurants, plus shops in the main street for picnic provisions.

Getting There & Away

From Braga at least six coaches daily run to the Caldo River and Caldas do Gerês, and seven to Campo do Gerês (fewer at weekends). Coming from Lisbon or Porto, change at Braga.

PORTUGAL DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

Most tourist offices have lists of accommodation to suit all budgets, and can help with reservations.

Camping is always the cheapest option, although some camping grounds close out of season. The multilingual, annually updated *Roteiro Campista* (www.roteiro-campista.pt; €5), sold online or in larger bookshops, lists Portugal's camping grounds.

The most common types of guesthouse are the *residencial* and the *pensão* which are usually family owned and comfortable; many have cheaper rooms with shared bath.

Portugal has 46 *pousadas da juventude* (youth hostels), within the Hostelling International (HI) system. If you don't already have a card from your national association, you pay a €2 supplement per night (and have a one-night, six-night or year-long 'guest card').

Another cheaper option is a *quarto particular* (private room); ask at tourist offices.

Pousadas are government-run former castles, monasteries or palaces, often in spectacular locations. Contact tourist offices or **Pousadas de Portugal** (☎ 218 442 001; www.pousadas.pt).

The following websites should be useful:

Inatel (www.inatel.pt) Slightly less swish camping association.

Movijovem (www.pousadasjuventude.pt) Portugal's youth hostel association.

Orbitur (www.orbitur.pt) Private camping association.

ACTIVITIES

Off-road cycling (BTt; *bicyclete tudo terrano*, all-terrain bicycle) is booming in Portugal, with bike trips on offer at many tourist destinations; see Tavira (p913), Setúbal (p912), Évora (p916) and Parque Natural da Peneda-Gerês (p925).

Water sports include surfing, windsurfing, canoeing, water-skiing and white-water rafting. For local specialists, see Lagos (p913), Sagres (p914), Évora (p916), Tavira (p913), Coimbra (p918) and Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês (p925).

BUSINESS HOURS

Usual business hours in Portugal:

Banks ☎ 8.30am to 3pm Monday to Friday

Bars & Clubs ☎ 8pm to midnight Monday to Thursday, to 3am or 4am on Friday and Saturday; hours vary and they're generally closed on Sunday or Monday

Internet cafés ☎ 10am to 10pm; hours vary

Post offices ☎ 8.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 1pm Saturday

Restaurants ☎ lunch noon to 2.30pm, dinner 7pm to 10pm

Shops ☎ 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday; 9am to 1pm Saturday

Tourist offices ☎ 9am to 7pm Monday to Saturday; in smaller towns they close for lunch between 1.30-3pm

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Embassies & Consulates in Portugal

Australia (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 101 500; Av da Liberdade 200, Lisbon)

Canada Lisbon (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 164 600; Av da Liberdade 196); Faro (☎ 289 521 120; Rua Frei Lourenço de Santa Maria 1)

France Lisbon (Map pp902-3; ☎ 226 939 292; Calçada a Marques de Abrantes 123); Porto (Map p920; ☎ 226 094 805; Rua Eugénio de Castro 352)

Germany (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 810 210; Campo dos Mártires da Pátria 38, Lisbon)

Ireland (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 929 440; Rua da Imprensa à Estrela 1, Lisbon)

Spain Lisbon (Map pp906-7; ☎ 213 472 792; Rua do Salitre 1); Porto (Map p920; ☎ 225 101 685; Rua de Dom João IV 341); Vila Real de Santo António (☎ 281 544 888; Av Ministro Duarte Pacheco)

Netherlands Lisbon (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 914 900; Av Infante Santo 43); Porto (☎ 222 080 061; Rua da Reboleira 7)

UK Lisbon (Map pp902-3; ☎ 213 924 000; Rua de São Bernardo 33); Porto (☎ 226 184 789; Av da Boavista 3072); Portimão (☎ 282 417 800; Largo Francisco a Maurício 7) The UK consulate also oversees consular matters for New Zealand.

USA (Map pp902-3; ☎ 217 273 300; Av das Forças Armadas, Lisbon)

Portuguese Embassies & Consulates Abroad

Australia (☎ 02-6290 1733; 23 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley, Canberra ACT 2606)

Canada (☎ 613-7290 883; 645 Island Park Dr, Ottawa Ont K1Y 0B8)

France (☎ 01 47 27 35 29; 3 Rue de Noisiel, 75116 Paris)

Germany (☎ 030-590 063 500; Zimmerstrasse 56, Berlin 10117)

Ireland (☎ 012-894 46; Knocksinna House, Foxrock, Dublin 18)

New Zealand (☎ 09-309 1454; PO Box 305, 33 Garfield St, Parnell, Auckland)

Spain (☎ 915 617 800; Calle Castello 128, 28006 Madrid)

Netherlands (☎ 070-363 02 17; Bazarstraat 21, The Hague 2518)

UK (☎ 0207-235 5331; 11 Belgrave Sq, London SW1X 8PP)

USA (☎ 202-328 8610; 2125 Kalorama Rd NW, Washington DC 20008)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Holy Week Festival Easter week in Braga features colourful processions, including Ecce Homo, with barefoot penitents carrying torches.

Festas das Cruzes Held in Barcelos in May, the Festival of the Crosses is known for processions, folk music and dance, and regional handicrafts.

Feira Nacional da Agricultura In June Santarém hosts the National Agricultural Fair, with bullfighting, folk singing and dancing.

Festa do Santo António The Festival of St Anthony fills the streets of Lisbon on 13 June.

Festas de São João Porto's big street bash is the St John's Festival, from 16 to 24 June.

Festas da Nossa Senhora da Agonia Viana do Castelo's Our Lady of Suffering Festival runs for three days, including the weekend nearest to 20 August, and is famed for folk arts, parades and fireworks.

HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day 1 January

Carnival Shrove Tuesday February/March

Good Friday and the following Saturday March/April
Liberty Day 25 April (commemorating the 1975 revolution)

Labour Day 1 May

Corpus Christi May/June (the ninth Thursday after Easter)

National Day 10 June

Feast of the Assumption 15 August

Republic Day 5 October

All Saints' Day 1 November

Independence Day 1 December (celebrating independence from Spain in 1640)

Immaculate Conception 8 December

INTERNET RESOURCES

Portugal Tourism (www.portugal.org) Portugal's official tourism site.

Portugal's Yellow Pages (www.paginasamarelas.pt) Portugal's phone numbers.

MONEY

Banks and bureaux de change are free to set their own rates and commission, so be cautious.

If you are satisfied with the service, tip 5% to 10%. Taxi drivers are generally not tipped.

POST

Stamps can be bought over the counter from post office or alternatively from any

automatic dispensing machine (*Correio de Portugal – Selos*).

TELEPHONE

To call Portugal from abroad, call the international access code (☎ 00), then Portugal's country code (☎ 351), then the number. All Portuguese phone numbers have nine digits, the first two being the area code in or around Lisbon and Porto, the first three anywhere else in the country. For international inquiries dial ☎ 179, for reverse-charge calls dial ☎ 120.

Phonecards are the most reliable and the cheapest way of calling from a telephone booth. They can be purchased at post offices, newsagents and tobacconists in denominations of €5 and €10.

VISAS

EU nationals need only a valid passport or identity card for entry to Portugal, and may stay indefinitely. Citizens of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA can stay for up to 90 days in any half-year without a visa. Citizens of other countries should check out the www.travisa.com website for more information.

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