

# "KNOW BEFORE YOU GO"

# Portugal

**Passports:** A U.S. Passport valid for 6 months beyond your intended return date is required for travel. Your passport should have at least 2 empty visa pages. If you have not sent a copy of your passport to Carol's Travel Service, please do so. This helps us in case of any emergencies. Without your passport, you will be denied boarding of your flight.

**Health:** There are no required immunizations for Portugal. Always check with your own physician for any health travel advice. They normally will want you to be up to date with your tetanus shot. Bring your own medications and pain reliever of choice (Tylenol, Aleve, etc.). Many doctors will recommend you bring Pepto-Bismol along for an upset stomach. Tap water in Portugal may be safe to drink, however, we recommend drinking bottled water which may be offered as fizzy (gas) water or still water.

**Currency:** The monetary currency in Portugal is the Euro. The Euro is divided as follows: currency bills of 5, 10, 15, 100, 200, 500 and coins of 1, 2, 5, 10 Euros, 20 and 50 cents. If you would like to have Euros on you before departing the USA, you can order them through your bank (most likely for a fee). For initial convenience, we recommend you bring approximately EUR100 cash with you from home. Tourists reaching Portugal without foreign currency can obtain Euros through any bank or ATM machine. One of the best ways to get local currency is to use a debit card in an ATM. Usually, the bank rate will be given for exchange rather than the local tourist rate. The ATM will give the option to charge your account in Euros or your home currency; select Euros to obtain the most preferential rate. It is advisable to keep receipts of currency exchanged in case it is necessary to reconvert Euros back into dollars before leaving the country. Always check with your bank before your departure to find out their fees and in case they have special instructions for your usage of an ATM in another country. Let them know the country you will be in, and the dates you will be there. Don't forget to include any connecting airports. There are currency exchanges in the airport and towns of Portugal. Fees will vary, but these are usually not the most economical.

It's handy to have a currency converter app on your mobile device and there are several to choose from in the App Store. If you wanted a printed copy of current currency conversions from USD to EUR or vice versa, you could find a good chart on the Oanda website. [www.oanda.com/currency/converter/](http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/).

**Budgeting:** To help you budget, food and drink can often cost more than at home. As in the US, prices are changing frequently, so what is shown here is just a guide. The approximate cost of soft drinks, mineral water or coffee is EUR2-5; salad or sandwich with soda or water, EUR16 and upward; dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and non-alcoholic beverage, EUR25 and upward. Be aware that butter, olives, & cheese that might be brought to your table by your server, are often an additional cost, they might not be complimentary. If you do not want them, let your server know, they will not set them out, and you will not be charged for these nibbles. You will need money for meals that are not included as well as beverages, local guide gratuities, shopping, and incidental expenses. You might want to budget approximately EUR60 per day per person. It's a good idea to have plenty of EUR1, EUR2, and EUR5 with you. A good back up can be USD singles and fives. In a pinch, you can use these for tips although they are not preferred, and you will not be able to use them in shops and restaurants.

**Credit Cards & Travelers Checks:** Mastercard, Visa, and American Express are widely accepted. If bringing an American Express, you may want to bring a second type of card in case an establishment does not accept American Express. Before you travel, be sure to let your bank know the country(s) that you may use your card in to avoid a fraud alert. You will need a PIN number for any ATM cards or to use a credit card for a cash withdrawal. Do not bring travelers checks, they are increasingly difficult to use.

**Electricity:** The electrical current in Portugal is AC - the cycle is 230 volts 50 cycles. If you are carrying electrical appliances with you, you will need to bring a converter (if your appliance is not dual voltage) and plug adapter for USA prongs to fit into their sockets. These may be purchased at most hardware stores, luggage sections of retail stores and Amazon, and other online stores. In most parts of the world, electrical plugs and sockets (outlets, points) are termed male and female: the male is the one with the prongs, the female with the receptacles for the prongs. In Portugal, plugs and outlets are hermaphroditic (both sexes in one), meaning that both plugs and sockets have prongs and receptacles.



Portugal Outlet Adapter Type C

European Country Multi Adapter Type C

**Weather:** Fall is a beautiful time to be in Portugal as September temperatures are generally fairly moderate. The high temperature averages from 75-80F depending on your location and the average low is in the low 58-63F. It can be cooler along the coast, but layering can help with this. Take along a portable umbrella in case rain showers develop.

**Calling Home:** Check in advance with your cell phone service provider to make sure you can use it in Portugal. Most service providers will let you convert your phone to an international plan for short amounts of time or sell you a SIM card.

**Packing/Baggage:** Be sure to label your luggage both inside and outside with your name and phone number. Your tour allows one check-in piece of luggage per person due to the capacity on the motorcoach. You are also allowed one soft sided carry on; a carry on with wheels will not be allowed on board (inside) the motorcoach as it will not fit in the overhead bin or under your seat. We suggest that you pack lightly and save some room or bring a collapsible carry on that you can put souvenirs in.

To save room in your suitcase, wear a light jacket during your flight in case you find the plane cool. A pair of comfortable, worn-in walking shoes are a must for days out and a comfortable pair of evening shoes are recommended. To minimize the amount of clothing needed, consider packing dark colored bottoms that can be worn more than once. You can pack up to two tops for each day, one for your daytime touring and one for your evening out. Evening out tops can be worn more than once and often daytime tops can be as well. Bring clothing that can be layered to help with temperature variances. Today's savvy traveler packs light and easy - less is more. We all wear everything more than once! We will advise you of any special dress code for dinner.

**Airline Baggage Information:** Most airlines allow you to check one bag free on international flights with the following restrictions. Calculate the size limits of your checked bag by adding the total outside dimensions of each bag, length + width + height. Sample economy class guidelines are:

Your checked baggage allowance usually is, Dimension: 62in/158cm; Weight: 50lbs/23kgs

You can bring 1 carry-on bag and 1 personal item as follows:

Your carry-on bag usually is: Up to 45 inches (22x14x9 in) or 115 centimeters (23x36x56 cm) including handles and wheels; able to fit comfortably into the sizer box provided at the airport so it fits in the overhead bin onboard. Your personal item must be smaller than your carry-on, able to fit under the seat in front of you and can include a purse, briefcase, laptop bag, or similar items such as a tote. Please check on your air carrier's website for exact details, rates, and restrictions for checked baggage.

**Time Zone:** In terms of standard time zones, Portugal is 6 hours ahead of our Central Time in the United States and 5 hours ahead of our Eastern Time.

**Safety:** The violent crime rate in Portugal is generally low. Make use of the hotel safe and leave non-essential valuables and money locked up. It is recommended to keep your passport, credit cards, travel documents, and money separately from each other. To protect against pick pocketing, keep your money hidden preferably in an inside pocket or money belt. Keep a copy of your passport in a separate area or on your phone as a picture.

---

---

---

**Tax Refund/Tax Free Shopping:** After visiting Portugal, non-European citizens can apply for a tax refund on the goods bought within the country. A sales tax (VAT) of 23% is added on to most goods and services in Portugal. Most countries specify a minimum amount that must be spent in a particular shop to claim a refund. In Portugal, the minimum purchase to qualify for a refund is EUR50.00, in one shop. To reclaim tax, request a VAT refund request form when making a purchase, which states the amount of the refund due. You will then have to present your merchandise, passport, and paperwork from the merchant to the appropriate office in the airport before departing home. You will need extra time for this process. These documents must be stamped by customs officials as you leave the country, and the refund will be processed and sent to you or applied to your credit card. Additional ways to claim your tax refund may apply and you can always ask merchants not to include VAT tax, some are able to take it off a purchase. Your Tour Director may be able to answer questions regarding VAT tax refunds.

**Tipping Guidelines:** Tips in Portugal are at will but are expected. If the service you have experienced has not been up to your expectations, there is no need for you to leave a tip. On the other hand, if you have been fully satisfied with the service provided, the following is a tipping guideline.

- Taxis:** Round up to the next 1-2EUR
- Restaurants:** 10%
- Luggage:** 1-2EUR per piece to a porter
- Tour Guide:** 5-8EUR per full day - yours are included on your Cooper's Hawk tour for the tour guide and driver. Local guide gratuities cannot be collected in advance. 1-3EUR is a customary tip for a local guide who spends a couple hours to half day tour with you.
- Driver:** 2-4EUR per day - yours are included on your Cooper's Hawk tour

**Language:** In the larger cities of Portugal and even smaller towns that cater to tourists, it should be fairly easy to get by speaking English. However, it is always useful to know some basic words or phrases in Portuguese. Here are a few! There are also a variety of language translator apps you can download for use on your phone if you choose to do so.

- Hello: Olá
- Goodbye: Adeus
- Please: Por Favor
- Thank You: Obrigado(a)
- Yes: Sim
- No: Não

