



HONEYMOON

Portugal

Picture you both basking on cliff-fringed beaches, ambling arm in arm along cobbled lanes, joining the fray at lively festivals, admiring incredible history, art and architecture. That’s Portugal, bordered by Spain on two sides and the Atlantic Ocean on the others, offering all this and world-famous custard tarts. You can get your fill of it on an unforgettable trip city-hopping south to north — from Lagos, to Lisbon, to Porto. Lagos is beloved for its beaches, surfing and golfing; the capital, Lisbon, for its café culture and tradition of Fado music; and Porto for its steep streets and port wine. In between, break up the drive from Lagos to Lisbon with a halfway stop at Cabo Sardão, where you’ll find a quaint lighthouse near rocks dotted with nesting storks. On the road from Lisbon and Porto, detour to Disney-esque monument Sintra National Palace; Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point of mainland Europe; and Nazaré, where the brave catch some of the biggest waves on the planet.





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Play: In Portugal’s Algarve region, Lagos is home to beaches for which no filter is needed. Get your bearings by wandering the headlands from Estudantes to Camilo, stopping for a swim at Pinhão, a little cove tucked between golden cliffs. Time your walk so you can watch the sunset from Martin Barranco beach in the west.

Another reason to love Lagos is Benagil Cave, a natural wonder east of the city. The beach within the cave can be reached only by water and is pretty popular, so get up early to rent a kayak and paddle out before everyone else does. Further east of here is Albufeira, a highlight for the candy-coloured buildings along its marina.

In Lisbon, soak up some history at 11th-century castle São Jorge and with a ride on the Bica Funicular, which has been operating since 1892. The latter will transport you to the buzzy neighbourhood of Barrio Alto, where bars, eateries and street art abound. One more must-see is the LxFactory, an industrial complex turned arts centre that’s home to bookstore Ler Devagar, voted one of the world’s best.

When you reach Porto, refresh yourselves with a dip in the tidal Leça da Palmeira pools carved into the rocks by the beach. Marvel at the city’s azulejo tiles at locations including the São Bento railway station and Igreja do Carmo baroque church. Roam the streets of the Ribeira district, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, then cross the Douro River via the Dom Luís I bridge to hilltop Jardim do Morro park, where the view is worth any huffing and puffing.

Stay: Just up from Estudantes beach in Lagos is environmentally conscious stay Casa Mãe. It’s located on what was once an abandoned estate, but there’s nothing derelict about it now — this oasis could have earned its five stars with its décor alone. Choose from rooms and cabanas decorated boho-chic, minimal or vintage-style and eat at the on-site restaurant that champions seasonal, local food, including their own eggs and vegetables grown on site using principles you can learn about in one of their workshops.

You’ll really lean into the honeymoon romance at minimalist dream Santa Clara 1728 in Lisbon, not far from São Jorge and

the Feira da Ladra flea market. Housed in an 18th-century building overlooking the Tagus River, this architecturally designed sanctuary is a calming alternate universe. Amid a serene palette of white, blond timber and concrete, flowing curtains meet bespoke furniture, large-scale classical artworks, deep stone tubs and four-poster beds.

Within walking (or cycling with the bikes provided) distance of key sights in Porto is restored townhouse Duas Portas. This hip family-run property is a succinct edit of pared-back, contemporary décor, with a spiral staircase and on-trend spaces facing the river, sea or garden.

Eat: As well as those unrivalled pastéis de nata tarts, Portugal is renowned for its seafood. Have fun with it in Lagos at Ol’ Bastard’s, a 10-minute stroll from Estudantes beach, where you can order cocktails, craft beer and fish tacos, or fish ‘n’ chips to take down to the sand. Also in Lagos, go to Coffee & Waves for java and juice; The Garden for wholesome fare served in a leafy hideaway; and Goji Lounge Café for vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free food, plus (although neither vegan nor gluten free) excellent pastéis de nata.

Make time for Lisbon’s Time Out Market, a moveable feast of restaurants, bars, shops and stalls (as well as a music venue) curated by the in-the-know magazine of the same name. Other standouts in this city are hole-in-the-wall Tasca Zé dos Cornos for its authentic menu and By The Wine bar, which has a curved ceiling made of bottles. For your Portuguese tart hit here, try Manteigaria, a factory open till midnight that bakes them before your eyes and serves them warm from the oven.

In Portos, Brick Clérigos in Baixa, near Ribeira, is a haven designed to feel homely, with a menu of healthy tapas served on a communal table. Overlooking the Atlantic in the Foz de Douro area, you can have the seafood done differently at Ichiban Restaurante Japonês. Hailed by many as the best Japanese food outside of Japan, it was set up by a chef who once worked for the Japanese embassy in Portugal. For your last hurrah, visit Natas D’Ouro, which sells tarts, tarts and more tarts, some flavoured with port.