



ALGARVE

The Portugal's
most popular
region for holi-
day-makers.

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MAIN CITIES AND DESTINATIONS

Algarve. The Portugal's most popular region for holiday-makers.

It was here that, in the 15th century, the Portuguese set off on the epic journey that led them to discover other peoples and cultures.

There's no shortage of high quality beaches in Algarve. Sandy stretches as far as the eye can see, framed by golden cliffs, virtually deserted islands marking the boundary between Ria Formosa and the sea, and small coves sheltered by the rocks. The ocean, in every shade of blue and mostly calm and warm, invites you for long swims and to indulge in water sports.



And there are also the mountains, where people live in harmony with nature and maintain traditions that they love to share. And the cities. Silves preserves traces of its Arab past and Lagos from the time of the Discoveries. More cosmopolitan Portimão and Albufeira are bustling towns by night and day. Tavira is a showcase for traditional architecture and Faro deserves a long stop to discover its beautiful historic center. There are many internationally acclaimed golf courses as well as hotels, tourist villages and resorts, from the simplest to the most sophisticated.



Gastronomy: The Algarve is a region of sun, fish and seafood. The quality and variety are so great that a grilled fish or some barnacles eaten on the Vicentine coast can seem a true delicacy from the Gods. There are also the region's own recipes worth mentioning, with cataplanas, caldeiradas or fish soups. Try some horse mackerel (carapaus) or the traditional char-coaled sardines in Portimão. Or tuna steak in Tavira or octopus from Santa Luzia. The Algarve is an excellent place for delicious clams, cockles, razor clams, and oysters from Baleeira, Alvor and the Formosa River or the little squid and cuttlefish. However, the Algarve also has a sierra and recipes coming down from the land such as boiled chick peas, or the fruits which flavor desserts, such as almonds, oranges and figs, as well as the morgados and Dom Rodrigues cakes which nobody can resist! Among these fruits are those which provide flavor to the liqueurs and spirits (aguardentes) such as medronho da serra and amêndoa amarga.

Suggested trips: A day out in Ria Formosa - on the long strip of sand that separates the Ria Formosa from the sea you will discover some beautiful, almost deserted, beaches, while the Natural Park, which extends over 60 km between the Ancão Peninsula and Manta Rota Beach, is frequented by about 1,500 species of living creatures. **Cruising the Algarve coast** - with about 200 km of coastline, great weather and calm waters, the Algarve is ideal for sailing, even if you don't own a boat, since there's always the option to rent one or to join the cruises that explore the beauty the coastline. **Nightlife in Albufeira** is a must - take a stroll down the strip or downtown, have a dinner in one of the many restaurants in the area, or dance all night in its discos and bars.

Explore Portugal's preferred landmarks: Ponta da Piedade - possibly the most beautiful natural feature of the Algarve coastline, where the shoreline is formed of heavily weathered cliffs that have been carved into rock pillars, natural tunnels and hidden grottos. **Vilamoura's Marina** - modern, lively and sophisticated, Vilamoura has developed around its marina, and is today one of the largest leisure resorts in Europe. **Faro's Old Town** - is, to use that hackneyed phrase, a little gem. It's small, quiet and wonderfully atmospheric. **River Gilão, Tavira** - Tavira is very seductive, and from the streets along the River Gilão to the castle walls from which you have the best view over the town, it makes you want to discover its hidden corners and unlock its secrets.