

Kat's Great Adventures

Portugal – Castles and Wine Bicycle Tour 2023
Individual Self-Guided OR Guided Tour
8 Days / 7 Nights



The Castles and Wine bike tour will live up to its name. Most nights will be spent either in a castle or an old convent, now beautiful charming hotels. Along the way the great ancient city of Évora, world heritage site, and small fortified hamlets will tell the stories of wars with moors and Spain. The border is right there on the other side of Alqueva, the biggest artificial lake in Europe. The loveable Alentejo people, at first shy, the Mediterranean typical gastronomy along with the wonders of cork, marble, olive oil and other crafts will enrich your experience. And the wine... well come and judge for yourself... All this in safe backroads with some easy bits off the asphalt riding, with us by your side.

Itinerary Day to Day

Day 1: Arrival in Portugal

Early arrival to airport. Transfer to Arraiolos, mediaeval village with a beautiful castle. 6 p.m. welcome drink and first briefing (Welcome drink and dinner included in van guided and guided tours only).



Day 2: Arraiolos Route Cycling from Arraiolos to Évora 30 - 45 km + 389 m

The bike tour starts cycling through Arraiolos village, with its rich historical centre. Here you can visit the fantastic carpet museum, where you will learn about the history of this almost 100 year old tradition and try the delicious Pastéis de Toucinho, a local sweet. Climb to the castle, one of the few round shaped in the peninsula, and conquer its unforgettable views from there. On the way to Evora its time to visit the Fita Preta winery, located in a medieval property with a 14th century palace, recently restored after several years left abandoned. A lot of prized wines here! Or alternatively an aromatic herb farm, where you will taste delicious teas, honey and olive oil. Feel the wonderful aromas.

Day 3: Megalithic Route Cycling around Évora 45 km + 500 m

If you are intrigued by the evolution of our kind, puzzled by the enormity of some Neolithic constructions or wondered about the magical meaning of some pre-historical sites, then this bike tour day is for you. The biggest dolmen and one of the most important cromeleques in Europe with over 5000 years of history are waiting for you. The ride finishes in Évora, where you will have the chance to wander around and get immersed in this ancient pre-roman settlement. One of the highlights will be the visit to the surreal XIII century bone chapel. (Picnic and ticket to bone's chapel included in van guided and guided tours only.) Dinner not included.





Day 4: The Valley of the Degebe River Cycling from Évora to Reguengos de Monsaraz 50 - 57 km + 500 m

Leaving Évora toward the rising sun a more barren landscape will keep us company. On this bike tour today ride between olive groves to reach the small and traditional village of Nossa Sr^a de Machede. After a pause for a cold drink or coffee, a visit to an old working leather factory. After lunch the mysterious castle of Valongo will provide shade while it unveils its roman past. A calm ride through easy backroads sets the tone to the day's final destination. Before dinner a visit to a local distinct winery where the scent of the brewing clay pots fills the air with the ancient knowledge that makes great wine. Dinner is an unexpected surprise. (Lunch and dinner included in van guided and guided tours only.)

Day 5: Conquest of the Castle of Monsaraz Cycling from Reguengos to Monsaraz 35 km + 380 m

Today's bike tour destination is the fortified village of Monsaraz, an important stronghold in the defense of our nation just by the border with Spain. On the way we will visit the famous pottery village of S. Pedro do Corval, where you can see the men making magic with the clay, transforming it into beautiful pots and plates, and the ladies painting them with flowers in an impressive speed. Then with Spain in sight, lunch is by the biggest artificial lake in Europe, the Alqueva dam reservoir. Then it's time to conquer the castle, use all your energy to climb up to Monsaraz. Your hotel is either just by the city walls or inside, either option really nice. See the sunset from the tower. (Lunch and dinner included in van guided and guided tours only.)





Day 6: The Sanctuary Route Cycling from Monsaraz to Vila Viçosa 50 km + 680 m

The day's ride will lead to the marble capital of Portugal and one of the biggest in Europe. The marble triangle will mark the landscape for the next bike tour days. The so called white gold is the main economy driver of the region. Its richness is a constant presence in the wide streets and tall buildings. The picnic lunch and the visit to an impressive fortified sanctuary with an interesting tale will close the morning. Then a rare sight over distinct colored lagoons finishing with accommodation in an aristocratic convent. (Picnic and dinner included in guided tours only).

Day 7: The Marble Route Cycling from Vila Viçosa to Estemoz 35 km + 680 m

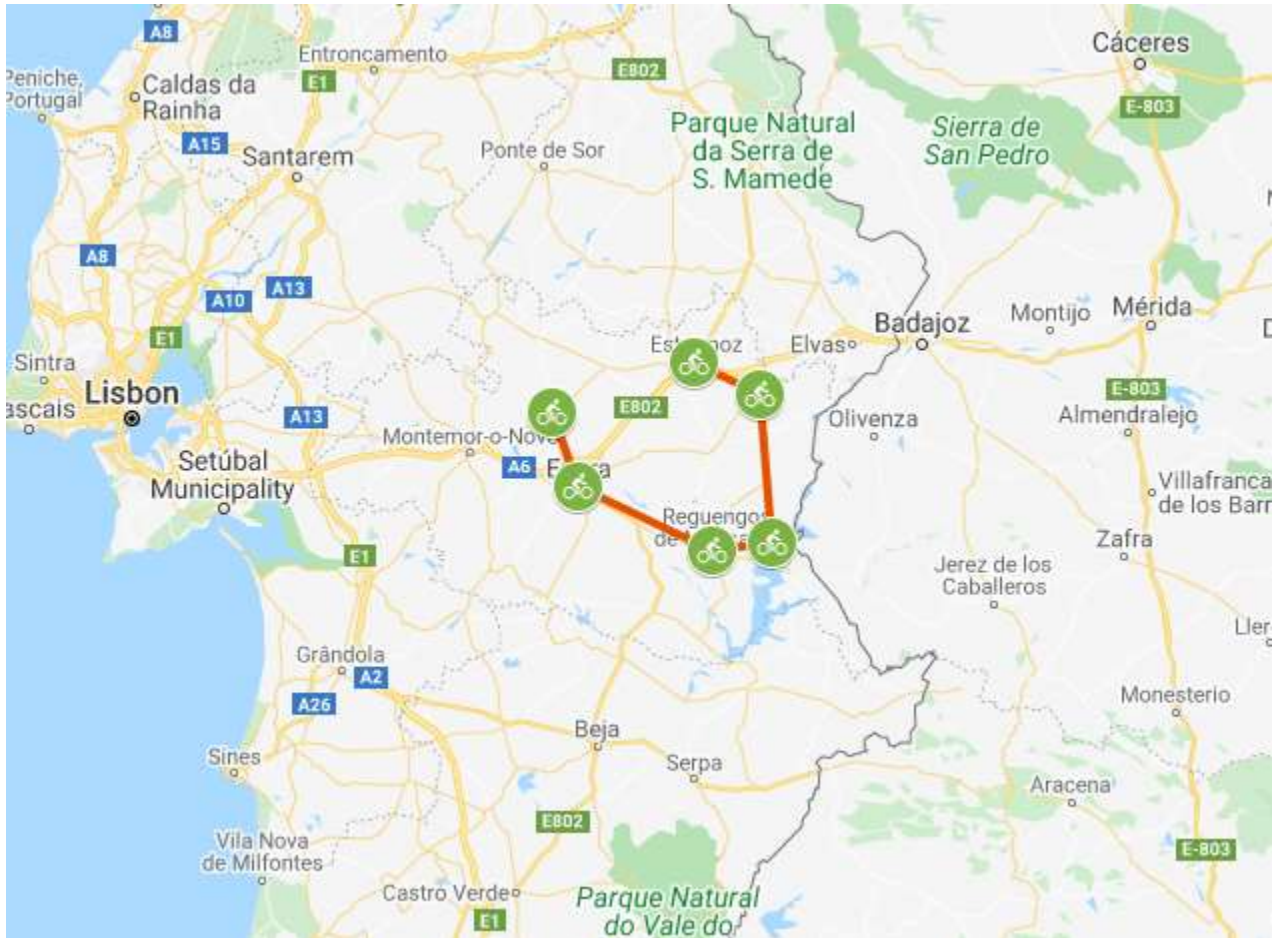
As the song says: 'And now, the end is near...' Today's bike tour ride is soft so take this opportunity to taste some local delicacies: Petiscos. From tavern to tavern the ride will delight your senses. The rest of the day will be spent in contemplation and admiration until the doors of Estremoz, the final destination of the journey. Dinner and closing celebrations with some surprises will be held in an old 15th century jail house - only for the nobles!!! And the journey will not be over until you climb up to the marble Donjon tower of the castle where you will sleep! (Lunch, consisting on several Petiscos/snacks and dinner included in van guided and guided tours only).

Day 8: Departure

Transfer to Lisbon airport.



Route



Route Characteristics:

Route Profile: Medium. Overall terrain is on well paved roads and some dirt roads as well.

Distance: 258 km

Travel Season: Self-Guided: Departures Saturdays from January 8 – December 17, 2023
Guided: Departures March 25; April 15; May 6; October 14 and November 4, 2023
Private Guided tours can be arranged on other dates for an additional fee

Price per Person:

Double Occupancy B&B Self-Guided Tour	€ 1150.00
Double Occupancy Van Guided Tour	€ 2730.00
Double Occupancy Guided Tour Set Departures	€ 2500.00
Double Occupancy Guided Tour Private Dates	€ 3280.00
Surcharge for Self-Guided Departure Sunday - Friday	€ 110.00
Seasonal Supplement June 1 – September 30	€ 77.00
Third Person Supplement	€ 359.00
Third Person Supplement June 1 – September 30	€ 513.00
Single Supplement for one person in a room	On request
Surcharge Specialty Diet (vegan, gluten free)	€ 90.00
Hybrid Bike Rental	€ 100.00
E-Bike Rental on Self-Guided Tours	€ 200.00
E-Bike Rental Upgrade on Van Guided or Guided Tours	€ 100.00
GPS Rental	€ 50.00
Airport Transfer to First Hotel/from Last Hotel	€ 86.00

Accommodation:

Variety of charm hotels, some built in castles, convents or palaces

Included:

Self-Guided:

- 7 nights' accommodation with breakfast in double/twin room
- Basic tools for fixing small problems
- Luggage transfer
- Maps, route instructions and history notes
- Transfer from our farm to megalithic tour if you sleep at our farm
- 24 hour phone support
- Souvenir
- Cycle jersey
- Personal accident insurance
- VAT tax

Guided Tour:

On Guided tours groups are accompanied by one or two cycling guides, besides a guide who takes the support car, prepares the picnics and transports your luggage. Lunches are picnic type with traditional foods from the area where we are cycling. Sometimes we also use local restaurants.

- All that is included on the van-guided
- Guide to ride with the group (one or two, depending on group size)

Van Guided:

On Van guided tours the guide will be the driver. He/she will guide you from a distance. The car will be near enough so that you can see it on the junctions. The guide will stop at important or interesting places to give history explanations or tell a story. Some people call this a supported tour, though in our case it is more than that because you are actually being guided.

- All that is included on the self-guided
- Airport transfers
- Support car with guide
- Bicycle, helmet, back rack and pannier or similar
- Water and fruit
- 2 picnic lunches
- 1 "petisco's"/snack lunch
- 3 lunches at regional restaurants
- 5 dinners with wine
- 2 wine tastings at wineries
- Entrance fee at Bones chapel in Évora
- Entrance fee at Évora's cathedral
- Entrance fee at Vila Viçosa's Ducal Palace
- First aid assistance
- Cycling jersey

Not Included:

- Insurance for bikes – not available in Portugal
- Trip cancellation/interruption insurance
- Personal expenses



Bikes

Ladies Trekking Bike



Men's Trekking Bike



Ladies E-Bike



Men's E-Bike

