

# ROOS TRAVEL NEWS

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Colourful fishing boats, sandy beaches and fishermen mending nets are familiar sights along Portugal's southern coast, the Algarve. Portugal, the bargain of

Europe is the only country in Europe which is increasing its Canadian tourists.

## PORTUGAL An Outstanding Tourist Value

Canadians have become sophisticated and fussy travellers. And, with the whole world to choose from, more and more are sold on the pleasures—and reasonable prices—of Portugal. Climate, the quality of accommodation, historic attractions and sporting facilities, above all the friendliness and courtesy of the people, all combine to create an outstanding tourist value.

Portugal is a small country, measuring only 227 kilometres at its widest point and slightly over 580 kilometres north-south. However, its diminutive size in no way diminishes the quality of a vacation in Portugal. In fact, it enables tourists to see a great deal of the country in a short space of time.

Portugal is a diverse and scenic land. Its fascinating history and culture and the warmth of her people make it one of the most hospitable destinations in Europe.

There are six main and distinct tourist regions in Portugal. Cosmopolitan Lisbon and the jet-set resorts of Estoril and Cascais; the charm and quaintness of northern Portugal; the Algarve's sun-drenched beaches and the beautiful islands of Madeira and the Azores.

Most Canadians holidaying in Portugal usually start in Lisbon and later spend time in one or two other regions. Three or four days in Lisbon followed by a more extended stay in the Algarve or Madeira is a popular formula.

Lisbon, the picturesque and historic capital of Portugal, is a fast-paced and exciting city. As the financial, political, communications and artistic centre of the country, this bustling city has modern hotels, superb restaurants and an electric

nightlife. All that one expects to find in one of the world's major cities.

Lisbon is built on seven hills on the banks of the Tagus River. Historians trace its origin to the Phoenicians or the Carthaginians long before the birth of Christ and it was once known as the "6th Wonder of the World" because of the vast riches accumulated during the golden years of the Portuguese empire.

Although most of Lisbon was destroyed by a devastating earthquake in 1755, sections of the city survived intact and today present a unique glimpse of life in another age.

The Alfama, the oldest part of the city, is one such district. It is a delightful medieval confusion made up of winding cobblestone streets, busy fish and vegetable markets and traditionally-dressed inhabitants living life as they have for centuries.

A special feature of a visit to Lisbon is listening to Fado, the traditional folk music of the country. A haunting and mournful musical form, Fado represents and articulates many of the Portuguese people's inner thoughts and feelings. Fado can be heard in many of Lisbon's nightclubs and restaurants, but it is, perhaps, best enjoyed in a quaint taverna or adega in the older part of town.

The sophisticated resorts of Estoril and Cascais are just a few kilometres west of Lisbon at the mouth of the Tagus River. Estoril and Cascais are an imaginative blend of old and new.

Lavish hotels, restaurants and sandy beaches have long lured visitors. The famed Estoril Casino, the largest in Europe, is here.

Sportsmen and the more athletically

inclined take advantage of the resort's excellent facilities. Golf, tennis and deep-sea fishing are just a few of the activities available.

Visiting northern Portugal is becoming increasingly popular with Canadians. Many are attracted by the magnificent scenery and the gentle and relaxed way of life to be found in this part of the country.

Northern Portugal is a pleasant hodgepodge of charming villages and towns, small farms and vineyards and a friendly hardworking populace. Many of the vineyards welcome visitors and usually offer a tour and explanation of the facilities. Oporto, Portugal's second city and home of the nation's famed Port wine industry, serves as a good base for exploring the area. Coimbra, site of the second oldest university in the world, and Aveiro, the Venice of Portugal, are of special interest.

The Algarve, which is located on Portugal's sunny southern coast, is very popular as a vacation destination. Luxurious hotels, villas and apartments, marvellous beaches and a perfect climate make the Algarve one of the premier holiday areas in Europe.

For the energetic, the Algarve offers a complete range of sporting facilities. Golf, tennis, windsurfing, swimming and horseback riding are the preferred tourist pastimes.

The Algarve is a great place for shopping and browsing. Many of Portugal's finest handicrafts and porcelain are made in the region and most factories welcome visitors.

Sightseeing in the Algarve is also a treat. Vestiges of the province's Roman, Moorish and Christian past are everywhere. Sagres,

where the illustrious Henry the Navigator's teachings eventually led to the discovery of the New World, is of particular interest.

Madeira, a tropical volcanic island 800 kilometres southwest of Portugal, is one of the most beautiful and exotic places in the world. Jagged mountains, waterfalls cascading into the sea and multitudes of flowers are typical features.

As a leading tourist destination, Madeira is equipped with fine hotels and restaurants, many deeply steeped in tradition. The ritual of afternoon "high tea", complete with silver service and thinly sliced Hovis bread, lives on in Madeira.

Madeira, like the rest of Portugal, produces excellent wines. Bual, Sercial and Malmsey wines are the best known. The Madeira Wine Association sponsors tasting sessions and informative tours.

The Azores, Portugal's other island province, is really nine different islands. Although not specifically geared for large scale tourism, a visit to the Azores should not be overlooked.

Life on the Azores is tranquil and sedate. For the most part, it is an agricultural and fishing community.

Accommodations on the Azores are limited, but it is possible to stay on all of the islands except Corvo. The Estalagem de Santa Cruz, a restored 18th century fortress, has been converted to a charming inn on the island of Faial. Cost? A mere \$35.00 for double room with continental breakfast.

All this in a country about the size of New Brunswick. No wonder Canadians are returning in greater numbers each year. For further information contact Roos Travel at 877-0138, Georgetown.