

# Destination Guide for Portugal



## Overview

### Destination Guide Content

## Destination Risk Levels

 Low Medical Risk for Portugal

 Low Travel Risk for Portugal

## Standing Travel Advice

- Travel to Portugal can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take basic security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty and street crime.
- Avoid all gatherings to minimise inconvenience. These are likely to cause localised disruption.
- Strikes in the transport sector can disrupt travel. Keep abreast of any planned industrial action and plan your itineraries accordingly.
- Familiarise yourself with natural disaster response procedures, particularly for wildfires and flooding, and follow all directives issued by the authorities. See our Mitigating Natural Hazards section for additional advice.

## Active Alerts (2)

 Notice

24 October 2024 at 14:32

Lisbon: Exercise caution, expect disruption in coming days during protests linked to fatal police shooting

**Location:** Portugal

**Category:** Civil unrest, Protest/Rally, Police/security operation, Shooting, Road disruption

**Situation:**

Expect disruption **in the coming days** in the capital Lisbon during protests linked to a fatal police shooting on 21 October. Various groups, including the Vida Justa movement, have called for related gatherings from **15.00** (local time) on **25 October** at [Palacio de Sao Bento](#) and from **15.00** on **26 October** at [Marques de Pombal](#). Previous such events have degenerated into nightly riots and scuffles between participants and the police. In response, the authorities have implemented heightened security measures, including increased surveillance efforts and police deployment in flashpoint areas. The police are liable to forcibly disperse demonstrators in the event of further unrest, posing incidental risks to bystanders. Exercise enhanced caution and follow official directives.

### Advice:

- Liaise with local contacts to remain apprised of any related protests in your area. Expect associated disruption and plan journeys accordingly.
- If travelling near a protest, ensure routes are clear prior to setting out and allow extra time to complete journeys.
- Exercise enhanced caution and leave an area at the first sign of unrest.
- Expect heightened security around protests and follow all official directives.
- Monitor our Portugal alerts for updates.

### More Detail:

On 21 October, a 43-year-old man was fatally shot by the police in the [Cova da Moura](#) neighbourhood after allegedly attacking officers with a bladed weapon. Vida Justa and other activist groups are calling for an impartial investigation into the shooting. Related protests have been reported throughout the capital since the incident, concentrated in the Cova da Moura and [Zambujal](#) neighbourhoods. Demonstrators have reportedly set vehicles and other objects alight, and at least three people have been injured. The police have so far arrested at least 13 people in connection with the unrest.

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### Notice

23 October 2024 at 20:10

Expect travel disruption on 24 October-3 November during nationwide strike by railway workers

**Location:** Portugal

**Category:** Strike, Rail disruption

### **Situation:**

Expect travel disruption between **24 October and 3 November** during a nationwide strike by unionised railway workers demanding better working conditions. On **31 October**, a 24-hour strike has been scheduled, while on **28-30 October** the strike will

last for two hours each day. Travel disruption is also expected on the other days of the strike. Reconfirm itineraries and allow additional travel time.

**Advice:**

- **We do not hold information on specific rail schedules.** Consult the national rail operator Comboios de Portugal's [website](#) to reconfirm bookings. In the event of cancellations, your travel agent will be able to assist with alternative arrangements.
- Expect increased demand for alternative modes of transport during the strike. Allow extra time for travel.
- Liaise with local contacts for information on potential strike-related protests. Plan journeys bypassing such gatherings to minimise travel delays.
- Monitor our Portugal alerts for updates.

# Destination Guide for Portugal



## Before You Travel

### Destination Guide Content

## Visa Requirements

### IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

#### British

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

#### Australian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

#### Canadian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

#### USA

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

## Visas

Not required by all nationals referred to in the chart above for tourist visits of up to 90 days within a six-month period. Business travellers planning to stay longer than three months must procure a registration certificate from the nearest Portuguese immigration office or from the town hall. Additionally, citizens of countries mentioned in the [list](#) do not need a visa to enter Portugal. Schengen visas are issued to people planning onward travel to other EU member states. It takes two to 21 working days to get a Schengen visa for short-term stays. Transit visas are not required if continuing the journey by the same or first connecting flight and holding onward tickets and not leaving the airport. Nationals of most other countries must apply for visas before travelling to Portugal. The visa-issuing policy is generally straightforward. From mid-2025, nationals of [visa-exempt countries](#) must obtain an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) travel authorisation to visit any of the European countries mentioned [here](#) for up to 90 days within any 180-day period.

The exact date of its implementation is yet to be announced. For updates on the ETIAS launch date and new requirements, check the [ETIAS website](#). ETIAS applications can be made via the official ETIAS website or the official ETIAS mobile app once it is operational. Information on travel documents required to apply for ETIAS and payment exemptions is available [here](#).

ETIAS travel authorisation is valid for three years or until the travel document you used in your application expires, whichever comes first. It is for short-term stays and allows business travellers and foreign nationals to stay up to 90 days within any 180-day period. Most applications will be processed within minutes, however, in some cases it may take up to 30 days.

If your application is rejected, the email will provide the reasons for this decision. It will also include information about how to appeal, details of the competent authority and the relevant time limit to appeal. Rejected applicants can also apply for ETIAS travel authorisation with limited validity. More information about this is available [here](#).

## Procedures

Non-European nationals entering Portugal from another Schengen country need to register themselves with the local immigration officials within three days of their arrival in the country.

## Entry/Exit Requirements

## Entry/Exit requirements

A valid return/onward ticket and proof of sufficient funds may be required along with a valid passport. There is no restriction on the import or export of local and foreign currencies. However, business travellers should declare amounts exceeding 10,000 euros or its equivalent in another currency on arrival to avoid difficulties while leaving the country.

Non-EU business travellers who have transited via a Schengen country by air and staying in non-commercial accommodation must register at any immigration office within three working days of entering Portugal.

## Cultural Tips

### CULTURAL ISSUES AND ETIQUETTE

- There are no legal restrictions for LGBTQ individuals. Societal attitudes towards the LGBTQ community are generally tolerant.

## Getting There

### METHOD OF ARRIVAL

#### By air

Humberto Delgado Airport ([LIS](#)), three miles (5 km) north-east of the capital Lisbon, is the main international gateway for business travellers. Faro Airport ([FAO](#), Algarve region), four miles (7km) west of Faro, and Porto Airport ([OPO](#), Norte region), around nine miles (15km) north-west of central Porto, also handle significant international traffic. There are also international flights to Funchal (Madeira), Ponta Delgada (Azores) and Lajes (Azores). Security standards are similar to those at other western European airports. There is no history of security problems.

Airlines have variable security standards. You may wish to consult the European Commission's website for a list of [airlines](#) banned within the EU and the US Federal Aviation Administration's [website](#) for a database of aviation accidents and statistics.

### Procedures

Non-European nationals entering Portugal from another Schengen country need to register themselves with the local immigration officials within three days of their arrival in the country.

## Getting Around

### BY AIR

The flag carrier [TAP](#) Portugal operates flights between Lisbon, Porto, Faro, Azores and Madeira. It also connects the islands of Madeira and Porto Santo. There are regular flights within the Azores as well from Azores to Madeira and mainland Portugal. Charter flights are available.

### BY ROAD

Driving is on the right. International car hire agencies such as [Avis](#), [Europcar](#) and [Hertz](#) offer services. While the road system in mainland Portugal is modern, some roads in the Algarve region and on Madeira Island are old, narrow and badly maintained. As a result of difficult driving conditions, Portugal has a high rate of road deaths. Driving can be difficult in the Azores due to narrow cobblestone streets and blind corners.

Some motorways are toll roads; avoid the green lanes reserved for cars using the automatic payment system. Foreign nationals may drive with their national drivers' licence for 90 days accompanied by an international driving permit. The national licence can be exchanged for a Portuguese one after the stipulated period from Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes Terrestres ([IMTT](#)). Licences issued by EU countries are valid in the country. The minimum age for driving is 18 years.

Foreign nationals can bring their own vehicle to Portugal without paying a tax for a maximum of 183 days, consecutive or otherwise, during a 12-month period. They are required to use such vehicles only for tourism purposes. Foreign nationals planning to stay longer should apply to the customs authority to have their vehicles legally imported.

Automobile accidents are particularly frequent on the Lisbon-Porto and Lisbon-Algarve motorways. Roadside assistance is available on highways. Foreign nationals should be aware that erratic driving, poor signage and speeding by local drivers can make driving dangerous. The use of mobile phones while driving is strictly prohibited. Passengers should not leave valuables in hire cars, as they are a common target for thieves. It is a requirement for motorists to carry a high-visibility vest and a red warning triangle, which should be used immediately after an accident or if the vehicle is stopped on the road. Driving on low-beam headlights is required.

### BY TAXI

Taxis are widely available; they are reliable and inexpensive. Travellers are encouraged to use only metered taxis. If the meter is non-existent, members should negotiate the fare prior to starting the trip. There is also a surcharge for luggage. When travelling out of the city, taxis charge by the kilometre and the fare will include a charge for the driver's return journey.

Smartphone taxi applications or ride sharing services such as Uber are a reasonably safe and reliable form of transport for business travellers in major cities in Portugal.

## **BY TRAIN**

The Portuguese railway company, Comboios de Portugal ([CP](#)), provides a vast regional, inter-regional and suburban train network within the country. Alfa Pendular trains are the fastest express trains. Rail tickets are relatively cheap. Rail services are good and reliable.

## **BY OTHER MEANS**

Portugal is served by an extensive network of intercity bus and train services. These are efficient and cover all the main destinations. Ferries also operate between Madeira and Porto Santo.

## **Business Women**

### **BUSINESSWOMEN**

Women are well represented in business, though they are rarely seen in managerial positions in Portuguese-owned organisations.

Women can safely travel alone throughout Portugal, but it is advisable not to take trains alone late at night. Caution should be exercised when travelling on foot after dark; more generally, standard security precautions apply.

## **Working Week**

### **WORKING WEEK**

- Working Week: Monday- Friday
- Office hours: 09.00-13.00 and 15.00-19.00
- Banking hours: 08.30-11.45 and 13.00-15.00 and closed on public holidays and Saturdays



## Language & Money

### LANGUAGE

Portuguese is the official language. Many people in the main cities speak English and French, though everyone will appreciate an effort to render basic courtesies in Portuguese.

### MONEY

The euro is the official currency. Foreign nationals are advised to carry Euro-denominated traveller's cheques, which can be readily exchanged at banks. ATMs are widely available, identifiable by the symbol MB (Multibanco). International credit cards such as American Express, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted.

## Tipping

### TIPPING

Although service charges are generally included in the bill, it is customary to also leave a tip of around 5-10%. This applies in restaurants, hotels and for taxis.

## Geography & Weather

### GEOGRAPHY

Portugal occupies the south-western part of the Iberian Peninsula and shares borders in the north and east with Spain, while the Atlantic Ocean lies to the south and west. The country is divided into various provinces, including the Atlantic islands of Madeira and the Azores. The Douro, Guadiana and Tagus rivers flow into Portugal across the border from Spain. Northern Portugal is mountainous and includes the peaks of the Serra da Estrela. South of Lisbon stretch the vast rolling plains of the Alentejo region. A range of mountains divides the Alentejo from the Algarve, which runs along the south coast and is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Europe. The capital is Lisbon, and other important cities include Porto, Braga, Evora, Coimbra and Faro. Portugal is administratively divided into 18 districts and two autonomous regions: Aveiro, Beja, Braga, Braganca, Castelo Branco, Coimbra, Evora, Faro, Guarda, Leiria, Lisboa (Lisbon), Portalegre, Porto, Santarem, Setubal, Viana do Castelo, Vila Real, Viseu and the autonomous regions of Acores (Azores) and Madeira.

## **CLIMATE**

### **Climate overview**

- Portugal experiences significant variations in climate.
- In general, Portugal has mild winters (November-March), with high levels of rainfall throughout the country and snowfall in the north, particularly in Serra da Estrela.
- Summer months (May-September) are fairly hot and dry and the temperature rises to as high as 40°C (104°F) in the interior parts and 35°C (95°F) in the north.
- The subtropical weather on Madeira and Azores means that the temperature remains mild throughout the year and the islands receive more rainfall than the rest of Portugal.
- Consult the website of the [Portuguese Institute for Ocean and Atmosphere](#) for the latest weather information.

### **Wildfires**

- Wildfires are common in the forested areas during the summer season, as temperatures are high and winds are strong, which can make them dangerous and unpredictable.
- Forest fires often occur around national roads and motorways, prompting their closure.
- Wildfires can threaten residential areas, leading to evacuations.

## **Flooding and landslides**

- The country, including the capital Lisbon, is prone to floods and landslides following heavy rain.
- Areas located along the Douro, Sado and Tagus rivers are particularly susceptible to flooding.
- Flooding and landslides can disrupt overland and air travel, as well as essential services.

## **Earthquakes**

- Tremors of varying magnitudes are common but rarely cause damage.

## **Volcanic activity**

- Volcanic activity is a concern on the Azores archipelago, comprising nine volcanic islands.
- In March and August 2022, earthquake swarms raised concerns over the possible eruption of the Bocas de Fogo (Sao Jorge island) and Santa Barbara (Terceira) volcanoes, respectively.
- The earthquake swarms prompted the authorities to raise the alert levels of Bocas de Fogo and Santa Barbara.
- Monitor the website of the [Azores Seismovolcanic Information and Surveillance Centre](#) for updates on volcanic activity.

## **Droughts**

- The country is prone to droughts, which can cause water shortages.
- In January 2024, the authorities imposed restrictions on water usage in Algarve region amid a severe drought.

## **International Dialing & Power**

### **DIALLING CODES**

Country Code 351

IDD Prefix (International Direct Dialling) 00

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Telecommunications and the postal services are relatively modern and reliable. Long-distance direct calls can be made using calling cards or through a hotel desk (though hotels charge a large surcharge for international calls). Local calls can be made with standard pay telephones or credifones, which accept telephone cards bought at post offices or telephone centres. Cellular network coverage is good, and Portugal enjoys roaming agreements with most major international mobile phone companies. Major GSM based mobile network providers are TMN, Vodafone Portugal and S.A. (OPTIMUS). Internet cafes are widely available; major hotels, restaurants and shopping centres offer Wi-Fi facilities.

### **Information Security**

Portugal benefits from a well-developed national infrastructure for cyber security and has implemented a number of laws and institutions to address some of the nation's principal cyber infrastructure challenges. Nonetheless, the country experiences a very high number of cybercrime incidents.

As with elsewhere in Europe, the most prominent threats are likely to stem from users being misled or deceived, with malware and phishing attacks constituting the principal risks in the country's cyber space. A lack of training, awareness and professional standards have been cited as reasons for this, along with the small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up the country's economy not prioritising cybersecurity.

Portugal has adopted a national cyber security strategy in line with the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity. It also has approved a new national cyberspace security strategy. The strategy aims to expand the scope of the present law without infringing on civil liberties.

Portugal does not have any punitive or otherwise harsh penalties for cybercrimes, with most crimes such as the fraudulent use of computers carrying sentences of up to five years in prison.

### **Advice**

- Minimise the number of devices you bring in-country and avoid carrying sensitive data with you.
- Ensure anti-virus software is up to date prior to travel and conduct a thorough check of all devices post-trip
- Exercise caution connecting to insecure Wi-Fi networks such as in hotels, airports, and train stations.
- Use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to protect communications and secure data. Always familiarise yourself with the legal status of any VPN or application in your destination country prior to travel.

- Use the 'forget network' setting upon your return if you connected to any public Wi-Fi networks while travelling.
- Obtain profile-specific advice considering your industry and position in the company.

## **ELECTRICITY**

This is the most common plug type used:

## **Calendar**

### **Holidays & Security Dates**

#### **2024**

**01 Nov** All Saints Day

**01 Dec** Independence Day

**08 Dec** Immaculate Conception Day

**25 Dec** Christmas Day

In some countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

#### **2025**

**01 Jan** New Year's Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

**25 Apr** Liberation/Liberty Day

**10 Jun** Portugal Day

**13 Jun** Saint Anthony's Day

In Lisbon only

**24 Jun** St John's Day (Summer Solstice)

**05 Oct** Republic Day

# Destination Guide for Portugal



## Medical

### Destination Guide Content

## Medical Care

### Excellent

#### Standard of Health Care

The standard of medical care in Portugal is high, and the country has two medical care systems: one is public and the other private. The public hospitals are generally better equipped and staffed to handle major trauma and emergency cases. Emergency departments in public hospitals are often overcrowded. Waiting time for diagnostic and elective procedures may be long.

English-speaking physicians can be found in both private and public facilities. Many Portuguese physicians have trained in other European countries or in the United States.

The expatriate communities tend to use the private hospitals for elective and non-urgent treatment. Private hospitals are smaller than the public hospitals (usually 40 to 150 beds) and may not have an Emergency Department. Patients are usually admitted to private hospitals under the care of their private specialist.

#### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance 112

Fire service 112

Police 112

Contact International SOS for help with your medical situation. [Contact us](#)

## Hospitals & Clinics

### **Hospital da Luz Lisboa**

Category: Hospital

Address: 100 Avenida Lusitana, Lisbon

Phone: [351217104400](tel:351217104400)

### **Hospital Santa Maria**

Category: Hospital

Address: Avenida Professor Egas Moniz, Lisbon

Phone: [351217805333](tel:351217805333)

Email: [administracao@chln.min-saude.pt](mailto:administracao@chln.min-saude.pt)

## **Vaccinations**

### **COVID-19**

Vaccination is recommended for all travellers.

### **Hepatitis A**

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis A vaccination for all travellers regardless of destination, especially those who are at higher risk (see [US CDC](#)), such as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, people who use illicit drugs or those with liver disease.

### **Hepatitis B**

Recommended for health care workers and anyone who may have a new sexual partner, share needles or get a tattoo or body piercing.

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis B vaccination for all travellers and international assignees, regardless of destination.

## **Routine Vaccinations**

## Influenza

### Influenza occurs in:

- Temperate southern hemisphere: April to September.
- Temperate northern hemisphere: November to March.
- Tropics: year-round.

**Annual vaccination is recommended. Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk of severe disease.** People who are at higher risk for severe disease include:

- People over the age of 65.
- People with underlying health conditions.
- Pregnant women.

## Measles-Mumps-Rubella

Vaccinations against measles, mumps and rubella are routine in childhood, and are usually available as a combined vaccine "MMR". See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)  
All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need to be vaccinated.

## Polio

Vaccination against polio is routine in childhood in many countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)  
All adults should ensure they are immune to the disease before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or a *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

## Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis

Vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are routine in childhood.

See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)



All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

## **Varicella**

Varicella (chickenpox) vaccinations are included in the routine childhood immunization schedule of some countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to varicella before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional.

## **Malaria**

**None**

## **Yellow Fever**

**Routine only**

## **Health Threats**

### **Rabies**

Rabies is a viral disease contracted when bitten or scratched by an infected (rabid) animal, often a dog. Once it enters the body, the virus travels along nerves and causes paralysis. As it reaches important organs like the spinal cord and the brain, it causes coma and death.

In countries where rabies is present in animals or bats, ALL animal / bat bites, scratches and licks to broken skin must be treated seriously. Rabies vaccination is very effective in preventing rabies, even after a bite/scratch by a rabid animal.

## **Rabies vaccination**

Pre-exposure vaccination is often recommended for expatriates and long-term visitors to destinations where rabies is present. It's especially recommended if quality medical care may not be available after being bitten or scratched by an animal. Pre-exposure treatment can be especially useful for children, since they may not tell their parents that they have been bitten/scratched.

Pre-exposure vaccination makes it easier to treat a bite or scratch. That's important because some types of rabies treatment can be in short supply in many countries, even in cities.

### **If bitten, scratched or licked (on broken skin) by an animal:**

- Immediately cleanse the wound with soap and water and a povidone-iodine solution if available.
- Seek medical advice from a qualified source or your assistance company.
- Notify local health authorities immediately. You may need *post-exposure vaccination*, even if you have had pre-exposure vaccination. (THIS CAN BE LIFE SAVING.)

Rabies is present in bats only and the risk of exposure for average travellers is low.

## **Leishmaniasis**

Leishmaniasis is a disease caused by a parasite that can infect humans, dogs, rodents and other small animals. It is transmitted by sandflies that bite mainly between dusk and dawn and can occur in both rural and urban environments. Sandflies breed quickly in unsanitary conditions, and the spread of the disease is exacerbated by war, chronic food shortages and urbanisation activities like deforestation and building of dams and irrigation systems, changes in temperature, heavy rainfall and population movement. The disease can manifest in one of the three forms, cutaneous (is the most common form and causes skin ulcers), mucocutaneous (is a rare form which affects the inner parts of the nose and mouth) or visceral (which is the more severe form and can lead to death). There is no vaccine or drug to prevent leishmaniasis.

### **Prevention**

The only way to avoid leishmaniasis is to prevent sandfly bites.

- Minimise outdoor activities from dusk to dawn- this is when sand flies are most active.

- Use protective clothing and insect repellent.
- Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net with *fine mesh* if there are sandflies in your living quarters. The standard bed nets used to prevent malaria are not effective, as sandflies are about one-third the size of mosquitoes and can fly through the malaria nets.
- Note that sandflies are small and do not make noise while flying. This makes it difficult to determine whether they are in your environment. Their bites cause mild symptoms and might not be noticed.

## **Lyme disease**

Lyme disease occurs in North America, Europe and Asia. It is transmitted to humans by the bite of a particular species of tick. Lyme disease can cause an expanding rash at the site of the bite, fever, arthritis and nerve problems such as facial palsy.

To prevent tick bites:

- Avoid tick habitats
- Use insect repellents
- Check daily for ticks

Lyme disease vaccination is no longer available.

If you develop a rash at the site of a tick bite or other symptoms of Lyme disease, seek medical attention. A course of antibiotics can cure Lyme disease.

## **West Nile Virus**

Primarily a disease of birds, West Nile virus (WNV) can infect humans. The most common route for a human infection is via mosquitoes. The mosquito feeds on an infected bird or other animal, then bites a human and introduces the virus into their body.

Most people who get WNV develop no symptoms. Of the 20 percent who do get ill, most develop mild symptoms 3-14 days after being bitten: fever, head and body ache, nausea and vomiting. Sometimes the lymph nodes swell or a rash appears on the trunk.

In fewer than one percent of all human cases, the person develops a serious, possibly fatal, infection. Symptoms may include high fever, headache, stiff neck, disorientation, muscle weakness, tremors and paralysis. The brain and membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord may get inflamed, which can cause coma and death. Patients who recover from a serious WNV infection may suffer permanent brain damage.

There is no specific treatment for the disease, or vaccine to protect against it. To avoid infection, prevent mosquito bites in areas where the virus circulates. Wear long sleeves and long pants, and use insect repellents.

The first cases of locally transmitted infection were recorded in 2004 in the Algarve. Cases are very sporadic, transmission has been more common in the south of the country.

## **COVID-19**

COVID-19 is predominantly a respiratory illness, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Transmission is from person to person via contaminated respiratory droplets. People are infected when these droplets are inhaled or land directly on the mouth/nose/eyes, or indirectly when transferred by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the mouth/nose/eyes.

Most people will develop a mild to moderate illness only which lasts up to two weeks, or have no symptoms. Symptoms vary greatly. Common symptoms include fever, cough and sore throat. Sometimes there is a loss of or change in the sense of smell or taste. The illness can progress to being severe and can be fatal. Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk of severe disease and death. Antiviral treatment is available and is particularly important for people at higher risk of severe illness.

Some people may continue to have symptoms that last for weeks or months after the initial infection has gone.

Prevention is through vaccination, hand hygiene, and physical distancing. Wearing a mask, and ensuring adequate ventilation in enclosed spaces can reduce the risk of infection.

The first imported COVID-19 case was reported in March 2020. See the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 website](#) for the latest information.

## **Volcano**

There are several types of volcanic eruptions and some pose a major threat to health. One such eruption is volcanic ash fall. Ash is made of fine particles of rock and minerals and is gritty and abrasive. It can carry for many kilometres through the air. Approaching ash clouds resemble ordinary weather clouds, and are sometimes accompanied by lightning or thunder. They bring a sulfur smell into the air.

When the ash finally falls, it settles in a dust-like covering. The "dust", however, is hard and abrasive. It does not dissolve in water, and it conducts electricity. It becomes more conductive when wet. Heavy ash falls can cause roofs to collapse and can lead to high levels of respirable ash in the air people breathe.

Most commonly, people get a runny nose and sore throat, sometimes with a dry cough. Because the ash is gritty, it can cause skin and eye irritation. People should minimize exposure to ash, those with chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asthma and other respiratory conditions should be especially vigilant since their symptoms can worsen.

### **HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and STIs**

HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C are spread by contact with bodily fluids (especially blood and semen).

- unprotected sex,
- needle sharing during IV drug use, or
- unsafe blood or medical/dental instruments.

Genital herpes (HSV), genital warts (HPV), gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis and most other sexually transmitted diseases are spread by genital contact.

Prevention:

- In many countries, hepatitis B is now a routine childhood immunisation and need not be repeated. All non-immune travellers should consider vaccination.
- Always use new condoms (preferably brought from your home country).
- IV drug users should not share needles.
- Avoid having tattoos or piercings done.
- In healthcare settings, make sure that needles and syringes are sterile and not shared between patients.

- Call International SOS or your corporate medical department if you are hospitalised.
- Be aware of your risk when assisting anyone with an injury. Protect yourself from contact with bodily fluids.
- Seek medical attention within 24 hours if you accidentally come into contact with someone else's bodily fluids.

## **Food & Water**

### **Generally safe**

#### Food Risk

Food is considered safe.

#### Water and Beverages

Water supply is generally considered safe.

# Destination Guide for Portugal



## Security

### Destination Guide Content

## Personal Security

### STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Travel to Portugal can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take basic security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty and street crime.
- Avoid all gatherings to minimise inconvenience. These are likely to cause localised disruption.
- Strikes in the transport sector can disrupt travel. Keep abreast of any planned industrial action and plan your itineraries accordingly.
- Familiarise yourself with natural disaster response procedures, particularly for wildfires and flooding, and follow all directives issued by the authorities. See our Mitigating Natural Hazards section for additional advice.

## Crime

### Limited to hot spots

### CRIME

Overall crime rates are low across the country. Petty crime such as mugging, bag-snatching and pickpocketing pose the main risk to business travellers and foreign nationals. Such crime can be a problem in areas popular with tourists, particularly during the summer holidays when there is a jump in visitor numbers in main cities and the southern Algarve region. Pickpockets are known to operate in transport hubs and other crowded areas, and caution should also be exercised on crowded beaches. Burglaries targeting holiday properties can occur in main tourist areas. Ensure that all doors and windows are securely locked and alarms activated. Levels of violent crime are low. Sexual assaults are also rare but can occur; do not accept food or beverages from strangers as they might be laced with sedatives.

Rental cars or those with foreign licence plates are targeted by robbers. Car thieves may place sharp objects on roads to deflate a passing vehicle's tyres, before robbing the driver when they get out to inspect the damage. Never leave any valuable items or documents inside your vehicle and keep car doors locked at all times. Remain alert to your surroundings when stopping at fuel stations or any other places.

## **Terrorism**

### **Minimal risk to foreigners**

#### **TERRORISM**

No domestic terrorist groups are known to operate in Portugal. However, individuals suspected of links with international Islamist militant cells are known to have been present in Portugal. Though no international terrorist cells are thought to be based within the country, arrests made by counter-terrorist forces in Spain and other European countries in recent years have established links with Islamist groups in Portugal. In spite of these concerns, the overall risk to business travellers remains low.

## **Social Unrest**

#### **SOCIAL UNREST**

Strikes and protests over socio-economic issues are common. The General Confederation of the Portuguese Workers (CGTP) and the General Union of Workers (UGT) are the two main labour groups, with the former – the largest union in the country – tending to adopt a more radical stance with regards to perceived infringements on workers' rights. Protests and associated strikes tend to be sector-specific, such as strikes and marches by public sector workers or environmental activists, or involving fishing or aviation industries. Strikes by aviation sector workers are also common and can cause flight delays and cancellations.

Protests can cause disruption to city streets (rallies) and to transport services (work stoppages). Most demonstrations are peaceful, though clashes between protesters and the police have occurred on some occasions.