

## Green Portugal | Minho and Porto | Self-guided | Portugal - 8 Days

The Minho and Porto biking holiday will give you an almost surrealistic “change of scenery” experience. Starting high in the mountains area, you will literally cycle down to the Atlantic Ocean stretching before you as far as you can see. This land is also blessed by the Minho, Lima, and Douro rivers, each of which will accompany you at one stage or another of your ride. This is a proud land, proud of its maritime history and of the remains of the fortifications that helped keep the Spanish well within their borders. It is the land of fine mountain cuisine and, along the coast, a wealth of fish and seafood dishes, best enjoyed with a glass of Vinho Verde wine. Best of all, it is a biking journey that will put you in touch with some of the nicest Europeans. Do take every opportunity to meet the local inhabitants: fishermen and their wives, farmers, the kind lady at the local shop; listen to the stories of the owners of your accommodations. Cycle across the ancient Roman bridge at Ponte de Lima, famous for its beauty and its importance to medieval pilgrims as they made their way from Porto to Santiago de Compostela. Enjoy biking through the North of Portugal at its most authentic.

### Highlights

- Peneda-Gerês National Park filled with unique species such as the Iberian wolf
- Lodging on traditional estates and in stately farmhouses
- Mountain villages with ancient traditions
- Fortified towns and beautiful historic city centres
- Crisp and aromatic Vinho Verde wine, and extensive vineyards
- Fishing villages frozen in time, plenty of traditions
- Wine and food experiences shared with welcoming estate owners
- Unbeatable fish and shellfish, caught daily in the Atlantic
- Barcelos and its fair, a principal centre of handcrafts and hand-painted pottery
- Cycling along the coast with its golden sandy beaches
- Porto, voted Best European City Destination in 2012, 2014 and 2017, renowned for the Port Wine
- Transfer from the airport to the first accommodation and from the last accommodation to the airport, included
- Possibility of choosing between two distances in multiple cycling stages

### Itinerary

- Day 1: Castro Laboreiro | Ancestral village inside the Peneda-Gerês National Park
- Day 2: Castro Laboreiro to Monção | Cradle of Alvarinho, the finest Portuguese white wine (45-53km by bike)
- Day 3: Monção to Vila Praia de Âncora | Traditional fishing town by the river and the sea (58km by bike)
- Day 4: Vila Praia de Âncora to Ponte de Lima | The charm of the most ancient village in Portugal (46km

### services:

#### SERVICES

- Organization of the program
- Accommodation, 7 nights BB, in double standard room
- Luggage transfer daily
- Porto airport transfers to the start and from the ending points of the programs in a car, van, or minibus
- Per person: Standard Touring bicycle, cargo rack, 1 pannier bike bag, handlebar bag, 1 spare inner tube.
- Per group/reservation: GPS loaded with the tracks, toolkit, first aid kit, puncture repair kit, pump, lock (one per two bicycles)
- Overnight storage of bicycles at the hotels
- Login access to the app where the route is published
- Digital support, including map, points of interest and route details; the client must download it beforehand to its own smartphone, using it online/offline to guide himself during the journey
- Not included:
- Guide and support vehicle (price on request)
- Meals, wine experiences and all the optional experiences
- stated in the chapter with the same name “Optional”
- E-Bike supplement (optional)
- Helmet
- Insurance
- Personal expenses
- Pre-paid mobile phone (on request)
- Other items not mentioned
- Mechanical bike interventions made on the bikes without Vinitur’s permission
- The damages caused by bad use or accident are the client’s responsibility and so the cost associated will be charged directly to them. However, Vinitur will provide assistance for the situation to be resolved in the clients’ best interest.
- Small repairs such as a tire repair or inner tube change are done by clients. For that, we provide 1 toolkit per group with the necessary gear
- Please note: Clients are advised to bring their own helmets, although we can provide a limited number of second-hand helmets, if required, at no extra charge. Clients may purchase a brand-new helmet from us for an additional 60 euros. If required, these must be requested when booking your journey, otherwise we cannot guarantee availability
- Shared transfers
- A transfer service from the airport until the starting point and from the ending point until the airport is available.
- All tours that respect the designated departure day have shared transfers. They can be at the beginning, middle or end of the tour. The schedules are the following:

by bike)

- Day 5: Ponte de Lima to Barcelos | An ancient city and one of the most emblematic cities of popular Minho art (32km by bike)
- Day 6: Barcelos to Vila do Conde | Traditional old town that retains its small fishing port and historic buildings (36-43km by bike)
- Day 7: Vila do Conde to Porto | UNESCO World Heritage city, world-famous for Port Wine (34-49km)
- Day 8: Departure or Extension

All distances are approximate. Due to circumstances beyond control, weather conditions or provisions issued by local authorities, the itinerary may be subject to some changes before and/or during your holiday. For example, along the way you may find temporary deviations/detours caused by roadwork. In this case, please follow the directions posted on site.

### Itinerary:

#### Day 1: Castro Laboreiro | Ancestral village inside the Peneda-Gerês National Park

Transfer by car from Porto airport to Castro Laboreiro, inside the Gerês National Park. As you are driven across the hills and mountains of the countryside, past extensive vineyards, you will observe small villages dotted here and there, like pieces of mosaic, on the distant hills. This is the land for recapturing your peace of soul; for leaving behind the hustle and bustle and stress of modern life. Without a doubt, cycling here will be sheer bliss. As we reach the Serra de Laboreiro mountains where you will spend the night before beginning your biking holiday, a hush descends over all as we slowly climb up to the village through forests of long-needled pines. This is a tiny hamlet with beautiful wind and watermills and just few shops in the centre, the hub of village life, where we buy a few goods

#### Day 2: Castro Laboreiro to Monção | Cradle of Alvarinho, the finest Portuguese white wine

The first stage of your biking holiday is exceptionally beautiful, a pleasant downhill journey past the Spanish border, past a landscape of stark granite outcrops and few trees, across the northern regions of the Gerês National Park and into the land of the Serra de Peneda Mountain range. The 72,000 acres of the Gerês National Park provide one of the last natural refuges for wolves and golden eagles. Don't be too surprised if you come face-to-face with a deer or a wild boar! Continue cycling through totally silent villages where you will always find a kind person to help you find the road when needed. The community ovens where villagers gathered to bake their bread, some of them still in use, are fascinating. Particularly striking are the traditional espigueiros, the granite maize stores on stilts. By the time you arrive in Monção, the fortified town on the river Minho, you will understand why the Portuguese are so proud of the fact that the Spanish were never able to conquer them

#### Day 3: Monção to Vila Praia de Âncora | Traditional fishing town by the river and the sea

Today, you will travel eastwards, along the River Minho to the Atlantic Ocean. Your journey will take you through the demarcated Vinho Verde winemaking region and the vineyards that produce the dry white wine for which it is famous. Enjoy the elegant Brejoeira Palace which is still inhabited by the family, a leading producer of top quality Vinho Verde, and pick up a bottle of this wine for dinner. Along the route, you will cycle past landmarks of the battles between Portugal and Spain, especially the impressive 17th century stronghold at Valença and the Vila Nova de Cerveira fort. That evening, you will stay in Vila Praia de Âncora, a traditional fishing town by the river and the sea.

#### Day 4: Vila Praia de Âncora to Ponte de Lima | The charm of the most ancient village in Portugal

Cycling along the mighty Atlantic Ocean is an extraordinary experience, especially when the ocean is showing its friendliest face as you ride past fishing villages that appear unchanged for centuries. As you arrive in Viana do Castelo the peace and quiet is replaced by the buzz of this lively city at the estuary of the river Lima. Dating back to Roman

Day 1

Hour: 14h00

From: Porto airport

To: Castro Laboreiro – starting point

Day 8

Hour: According to the clients' flights

From: Hotel in Porto

To: Porto airport

### added options / discounts:

Additional night in Porto doubleroom	115 €
p.P. high season from	
Additional night in Porto singleroom	195 €
p.P. high season from	
Additional night in Porto singleroom	185 €
p.P. off season from	
Additional night in Porto double room	195 €
p.P. off season from	
Flight to Porto	300 €
Wine tasting	65 €
6x picnic package	125 €
Wine & Dine	135 €
premium service-package	275 €
extra transfer from Porto city to the airport	65 €
e-bike	195 €

### dates & prices:

01.10.2024 - 30.11.2024 - Accomodation Minho

Double room - Price per person	1295 €
Single room - Price per person	1650 €



times when it was the principal port for the north of Iberia, Viana's impressive history includes that of its merchants who supplied the naval provisions for the ships that took part in the Portuguese discoveries during the 16th century and later built the ships that sailed to Newfoundland for codfish. With their wealth, they built the numerous stately town houses whose architectural beauty is a hallmark of the city. A must-see is the 19th century byzantine Santa Luzia Church on the hilltop overlooking the city. This will take some climbing, but the reward is a breath-taking view. From here you will cycle inland again, following the river Lima until you arrive in Ponte de Lima. The oldest village in Portugal, it is famous for its beautiful 24-arch Roman bridge famous and its importance to medieval pilgrims as they made their way from Porto to Santiago de Compostela. After arriving at your accommodation, a little outside the town, although you might be tempted to stop and enjoy the charming setting, we recommend that you first stretch your legs with a stroll around the picturesque city. The next morning, you will be able to sweeten your breakfast with the finest honey from the bees on the estate.

#### **Day 5: Ponte de Lima to Barcelos | An ancient city and one of the most emblematic cities of popular Minho art**

Whether you are religious or not, following the medieval Portuguese route to Santiago de Compostela is a special experience. Possibly because one is so aware that this has been a pilgrims' way for centuries and that so many have trod these paths with such fervour and dedication. It is a route that those who walk it still today, do so knowing they will meet challenges, experience great joy and forever learn the lesson of life. This is a pleasant, not complex, bike ride through cornfields and vineyards to the city of Barcelos on the River Cavado. The centre of the pottery industry, it is also of religious importance. You must visit the 13th century Mother Church. Every hour on the hour, you will hear the pealing of the church bells of the many parishes for which the city is famous.

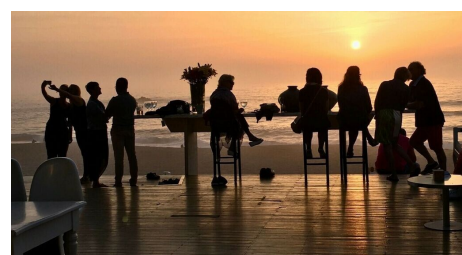
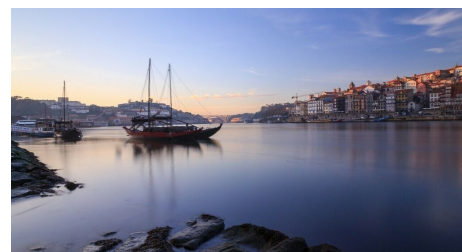
#### **Day 6: Barcelos to Vila do Conde | Traditional old town that retains its small fishing port and historic buildings**

Today you cycle back to the Atlantic, a sight we genuinely look forward to. You can take some extra time to enjoy a great lunch: a leisurely, several-course meal that again reminds you why the Portuguese people are so proud of their cuisine. Of the finest nature, it can only be made by those who genuinely worship the wealth of what the earth has to offer. Vila do Conde is famous for its shipbuilding past, as we can see by the replica of a ship used during the Discoveries and built here. The city centre is dominated by gracious manors and small palaces. The importance of its fishing harbour is not just evident in the port. That evening, you may enjoy a wonderful seafood dinner (not included) in the town and a leisurely stroll along the beach before you go to bed, refreshed by the sea air.

#### **Day 7: Vila do Conde to Porto | UNESCO World Heritage city, world-famous for Port Wine**

The last stage of your holiday will take you on quiet cycle paths along the coast, through a sea bird reserve, along dunes and across fishing villages. It is remarkable how hard these fishermen (and their wives!) work and even more their good spirits. You are approaching Porto and you will soon enter the city via the estuary of the river Douro. This city, famous for Port Wine past and present, is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. A UNESCO World Heritage City, its historic centre boasts more than 1500 listed monuments. Still, as you meander on your bike alongside the river Douro, you cannot help but become aware of the gifts this city and this region have to offer. As we have said, a breath of calm, peace of the soul and a love of life.

#### **Day 8: Departure or Extension**



**Total Distance:** 251-281km (156-174 miles)

**Daily Distance:** 32-58km (19-36 miles)

This tour is available between March 1st and November 30

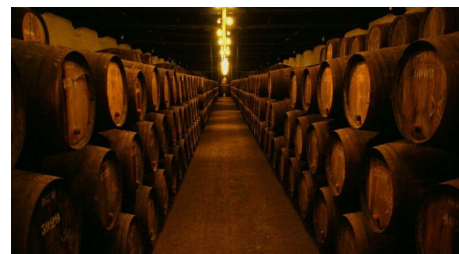
Starts every Sunday



## Accommodation Minho

**Castro Laboreiro:** [Castrum Villae Hotel](#) \* \* \*

Castrum Villae is a welcoming hotel at the cosy and typical village of Castro Laboreiro situated at 1000 m altitude inside the Peneda-Gerês National Park. The hotel's mountainous location makes it a privileged accommodation for those who want to spend some time in the mountain particularly in the Peneda- Gerês National Park, the most important protected area in Portugal. The hotel has 32 rooms and suites with air conditioning, satellite TV, internet, minibar and private bathroom. Guests can relax with a game billiards in the leisure room or enjoy an aperitif at the bar.



**Monção:** [Manor House Solar de Serrade](#)

This magnificent manor house from the Minho region dates to the 17th century and preserves all its charm and history from the architecture to the classic decoration and details.

The 10 rooms are elegantly decorated with stone and wood that give a special and cozy touch, all with private bath, TV and heating and views of the gardens or vineyards. The family run estate also produces excellent Vinho Verde wines that the owners will gladly invite you to taste (optional). Strolls through the gardens or relaxing in the sauna are ideal for free time activities.



**Vila Praia de Âncora:** [Hotel Meira](#) \*\*\*\*

Nestled among coffee shop and a bar, nearly a 10-minute drive from Moledo Sandy Beach, this pleasant 4-star Hotel Meira Vila Praia de Âncora comprises 54 rooms. The Meira restaurant and the pool bar are available at the traditional hotel boasting a unique location in Vila Praia de Âncora. Near a charming beach, the family run accommodation is set close to Fort of Lagarteira. The hotel is set in the heart of Vila Praia de Âncora. In these spacious rooms you can enjoy high-speed internet and a flat-screen TV with satellite channels together with a mini bar fridge, coffee and tea making equipment. Providing a shower and a heated towel rail, the spacious bathrooms have a hairdryer and towels.

An assorted breakfast is served daily at Hotel Meira. The restaurant menu offers a wide range of Portuguese dishes.



**Ponte de Lima:** [Rural Farm House Quinta da Agra](#)

Quinta da Agra is a private rustic manor house which foundation dates to the 16th century. The house faces the green valley of river Lima, with a relaxing rural scenario. A gate in stone gives access to the two houses restored with good taste and comfort. The owner will warmly greet you to his home and 7 hectares of farm including vineyards, secular olive trees and winery, stables, and small ponds. The house has 3 double rooms and 3 twin rooms, all with private bathroom and central heating. Guests can also enjoy the games room and swimming pool.

**Barcelos:** [Bagoeira Hotel \\*\\*\\*](#)

Located in Barcelos historic center, right in front of the city's main square this modern hotel is built inside the walls of a municipal heritage building. The 54 rooms have air conditioning, private WC, mini bar, Internet and Satellite TV. On the 4th floor is a lounge Bar with a terrace with probably the best view in the town. Also, inside the hotel is a renowned 400 year old restaurant serving traditional Portuguese food such as "Caldo Verde" soup, a major soup in the national culinary traditions or "Rojões à moda do Minho" (pork meat at regional style).

**Vila do Conde:** [Hotel Brazão \\*\\*\\*](#)

The charming Brazao Hotel is located in a historic building of this fisherman's town. The interior with its decoration and architectural details illustrates the town history. The hotel has 30 rooms, all with private bath, TV, air conditioning, mini bar and hair dryer. Relaxing at the hotel bar is an option or exploring the city, the beach and local restaurants specialized in fresh fish dishes.

**Porto:** [Neya Porto](#) or [Ribeira Hotel](#)

Perfectly located hotels in the center of the city and yet easily accessible by airport cab.

