

7-DAY PREMIUM GUIDE

THE ALGARVE

Portugal, Europe

Golden cliffs, sea caves & Europe's finest beaches

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Top Hotels

Best Restaurants

Insider Tips

Welcome to The Algarve

The Algarve — Portugal's southern coast — is home to some of Europe's most spectacular coastal scenery. Dramatic golden limestone cliffs, hidden sea caves, and crystal-clear turquoise water make this a beach destination unlike any other. But the Algarve is more than beaches: charming whitewashed towns like Tavira and Silves, the rugged southwest Cape at Sagres, and the region's outstanding seafood culture all add depth to a stay here. This 7-day guide covers the full stretch from Lagos to Tavira.

BEST TIME TO VISIT May–June & Sept–Oct	TYPICAL BUDGET \$100–\$180/day
COUNTRY Portugal, Europe	GUIDE LENGTH 7 Days

7-Day Overview

- 1 Arrive Lagos — Western Algarve Base
- 2 Ponta da Piedade & Sea Caves
- 3 Sagres & Cabo de Sao Vicente
- 4 Silves & Monchique
- 5 Benagil & Central Coast
- 6 Tavira — Eastern Algarve
- 7 Ria Formosa & Faro Departure

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Days 1 & 2

DAY 1 Arrive Lagos — Western Algarve Base

- Fly into Faro, transfer to Lagos (1.5hrs)
- Explore Lagos old town & walls
- Praia Dona Ana beach (postcard perfect)
- Sundowner at a clifftop bar
- Dinner in Lagos centro — grilled fish

TIP: Stay in Lagos for nights 1-3 — it's the best base for the dramatic western coast

DAY 2 Ponta da Piedade & Sea Caves

- Ponta da Piedade by kayak (best) or cliff walk
- Sea arch & grotto kayak tour from Lagos beach
- Praia do Camilo — staircase-down-the-cliff beach
- Swim in the turquoise coves
- Lagos market & petiscos dinner

TIP: The kayak tour through Ponta da Piedade's sea arches is one of Portugal's top experiences

Days 3 & 4

DAY 3 Sagres & Cabo de Sao Vicente

- Drive to Sagres (45 min)
- Fortaleza de Sagres — where explorers launched
- Cabo de Sao Vicente — most southwestern point of Europe
- Boca do Rio beach (wild and empty)
- Sunset from the Cape — iconic Algarve moment

TIP: Cabo de Sao Vicente at sunset, with the lighthouse silhouetted against the Atlantic

DAY 4 Silves & Monchique

- Medieval Silves & the Moorish castle
- Silves Cathedral
- Drive up Serra de Monchique (highest point in Algarve)
- Foia peak — views to the sea on clear days
- Caldas de Monchique thermal village

TIP: Silves is the Algarve's most historically interesting inland town — the Moorish castle is excellent

Days 5, 6 & 7

DAY 5 Benagil & Central Coast

- Drive east toward Albufeira
- Benagil Cave boat tour (book in advance)...
- Praia da Marinha — frequently voted Europe's most beautiful beach
- Carvoeiro village & Algar Seco rock formations
- Dinner in Carvoeiro or Ferragudo

TIP: Book the Benagil Cave boat tour a day ahead — it's the only way to secure a spot.

DAY 6 Tavira — Eastern Algarve

- Drive to Tavira (1.5hrs from Benagil area)...
- Tavira — most elegant town in the Algarve
- Igreja de Santa Maria do Castelo
- Ferry to Ilha de Tavira (barrier island beach)
- Tavira seafood dinner — the best in the region

TIP: Tavira is the Algarve at its most authentically Portuguese.

DAY 7 Ria Formosa & Faro Departure

- Morning birdwatching in Ria Formosa Natural Park...
- Faro old town — walled island city
- Faro Cathedral tower views
- Bone Chapel (Igreja das Ossos)
- Fly home from Faro Airport (FAO)

TIP: Ria Formosa is one of Europe's most important wetland bird sanctuaries.

Where to Stay in The Algarve

Vila Vita Parc, Porches

★★★★★

Central Coast **\$600–\$1,200/night**
The Algarve's finest resort — clifftop gardens, private beach, and multiple Michelin-starred dining.

Bela Vista Hotel & Spa, Portimao

★★★★★

Central Coast **\$350–\$650/night**
Art Nouveau mansion with breathtaking cliff-top infinity pool and sea views.

Hotel Meia Praia, Lagos

★★★★

Lagos / Meia Praia **\$180–\$320/night**
Beachfront 4-star with direct beach access and excellent lagoon views.

Casa Mae, Lagos

★★★★

Lagos Centro **\$140–\$220/night**
Chic boutique in Lagos town centre with courtyard pool and excellent service.

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Where to Eat in The Algarve

Restaurante Fortaleza da Luz, Lagos Seafood in a Fortress	Must order: Grilled sea bass & cataplana (seafood stew)
Tasca do Celso, Lagos Local Tasca (Cash Only)	Must order: Prego (steak sandwich) & grilled sardines
Restaurante Cacto, Portimao Fresh Seafood	Must order: Amêijoas na cataplana & stone bass
Bon Bon Restaurant, Carvoeiro Michelin Star	Must order: Modern Algarve tasting menu with ocean views
O Compromisso, Tavira Traditional Tavira	Must order: Açorda de bacalhau & fresh Ria Formosa clams
Quatro Aguas, Tavira Waterfront Seafood	Must order: Grilled red mullet & fresh local oysters
Restaurante Avenida, Lagos Neighborhood Gem	Must order: Dourada (sea bream) grilled over charcoal

Tips & Logistics

Getting There:	Fly into Faro (FAO). Car hire is essential — the Algarve is impossible to see without one.
Getting Around:	Rent a car from Faro airport. The EN125 coastal road connects most towns.
Best Beaches:	Praia da Marinha (best), Praia do Camilo, Meia Praia, Ilha de Tavira, Arrifana.
Crowds:	Western Algarve beaches (Lagos, Sagres) are less crowded than Albufeira area in summer.
Water Sports:	Kayaking, surfing, diving, and dolphin watching all available — book at Lagos marina.
Seafood:	Cataplana (traditional copper pot stew) is the definitive Algarve dish — order it for 2.
Off-Season:	May-June and September are ideal — 25C+ temperatures, empty beaches, lower prices.

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