



Northern Portugal: Laid-back tour



TOUR DESCRIPTION

Discover the North of Portugal

From the National Park along the Spanish border and on the Atlantic Ocean to Porto Small streets in the only national park in Portugal, bike paths on a former railway track through beautiful wine growing areas and wooden stilts through the vast dune landscape on the Atlantic, these are your perfect companions in this varied tour through the north of Portugal. You start at 1000m altitude surrounded by light oak forests and roll down into the northernmost tip of Portugal to the border river Minho. Here in the valley you cycle relaxed to the sea and then follow the diverse coastline on flat paths to the Douro estuary in Porto. Small bastion-like border towns, beach resorts, down-to-earth restaurants and sun-drenched beach bars make up the cultural highlights of this journey of discovery through the mostly unknown north of Portugal on mostly flat and well-developed paths.



1. day Porto arrival

This journey begins and ends in Porto, allowing a carefree arrival and departure. From many European airports, there are inexpensive direct flights to Porto and the airport is 30 minutes by metro, directly connected to the old town. In this way you can get to know the beauties of this lively city right at the beginning of this tour. The narrow nested old town is dominated by the baroque bishop's palace and the cathedral and beautiful pedestrian streets invite you to stroll. The picturesque waterfront on the Douro attracts with many cafes, the famous bridge spans the river and the port wine cellars on the opposite side complete the cityscape.

2. day Transfer to Castro Laboreiro

The morning you spend in Porto, you have time to stroll through the city, visit monuments, shop or relax. In the afternoon the bikes are adjusted and the transfer (2.5 hours) from Porto to Castro Laboreiro in the north of the country takes place. Here you are in the middle of Portugal's only national park, the "Parque Nacional Peneda-Geres", which since 2009 is also classified as a UNESCO protected biosphere reserve. Deer, wolves and golden eagle are still at home here and the large number of streams, waterfalls and reservoirs makes the evergreen park one of the most beautiful on the Iberian Peninsula. The historic center of Castro Laboreiro is completely listed with its traditional houses with granite walls and offers with its village flair a nice contrast to the lively city of Porto.

3. day Castro Laboreiro – Monção 50 km

In Castro Laboreiro, at 1000m altitude, you start for the first stage of cycling through the wooded mountainous landscape of the National Park. The first 25 km you roll almost continuously downhill to Melgaço on the river Minho at 200m altitude, located in the northernmost tip of Portugal. Again, the historic center as a whole is a listed building and is determined by its medieval streets, churches and buildings. Two unusual museums in town are worth a visit, the curious museum Espaço Memória e Fronteira, which is dedicated to the history of smuggling in the border area and the in 2005 opened film museum Museu de Cinema de Melgaço - Jean Loup Passek. After this beautiful break, the route leads to the thermal bath of Peso with its beautiful Art Nouveau pavilion and the wooded spa park. From here you continue through an exceptionally green landscape dominated by the vineyards of the famous Vinho Verde. Here is the center of the cultivation of Alvarinho grape, which produces particularly full and high quality white wines and thus makes this region for wine lovers so unique. On small roads you finally cycle to the old fortified city of Monção, whose hot springs were already used by the Romans to relax and heal.

4. day Monção – Caminha 48 km

Today, the Minho characterizes the beautiful and flat cycle stage. Since Melgaço, this river has been the centuries-old border between Spain and Portugal and flows through the wide valley between the two countries. Historically fought over again and again, many villages were fortified defensively and especially in the places lying on the route Valença and Cerveira, the old city centers are still completely surrounded by thick fortification walls. You cycle quite relaxed through the river valley on the Minho-cycle path, which runs on a former railway line and was awarded in 2017 as an excellent example of the expansion of a cycle track in Europe. Hence you cycle in the best mood to Caminha, whose pretty old town is completely listed and is traversed by narrow streets.

5. day Caminha – Viana do Castelo 30 - 40 km

Today the first kilometers lead directly to the mouth of the Minho into the Atlantic and the contemplative river valley merges into the wide coastal landscape. In Moledo, old mansions testify to the historic splendor of this northernmost seaside resort in Portugal, and soon afterwards Vila Praia de Ancora is reached with its long promenade, which still lives on fishing today. New bike paths, the so-called 'Ecovia', run wonderfully and flat through the dune landscape and after a rather short stage, the port city of Viana do Castelo is already reached, which is considered one of the prettiest cities in Portugal. The car-free old town with its numerous Renaissance palaces and charming squares has almost Italian flair and is dominated by the pilgrimage church of Santa Luzia. 742 steps lead up here and also a historic cable car - but it is also possible to ride there by bike and enjoy the view of the city, the mouth of the Lima, the wide sandy beaches and the infinite Atlantic: truly one of the most beautiful panoramas of Portugal!

6. day Viana do Castelo – Vila do Conde 57 km

A full day along the Atlantic coast awaits you today! Varied the route leads on new bike paths through nature, sometimes on small roads through the flat hinterland. In Esposende with its historic center is worth a leisurely lunch break. Then in the afternoon cycle to the place Povoia de Varzim with its 2 km long beach promenade, the old waterfront and the venerable casino that was opened in 1934 in a remarkable classicist building and since then enriches the nightlife. Right on the coast you can cycle the last few meters to Vila do Conde with its special "Museum of Wooden Shipbuilding", which also includes a walk-in old caravel in the harbor.

7. day Vila do Conde – Porto 37 km

Once again, the route runs along the flat coast and you cycle on the well-built stilts and bike paths along the beautiful sandy beaches through the vast dune landscape. The picture changes from Matosinhos and the varied route leads through the imposing harbor and then into the middle of the old harbor district with its typical and inexpensive restaurants for seafood. Here you should definitely take a break in one of the restaurant before the Douro estuary is reached in the afternoon and you will cycle always along the shore to the bustling old town of Porto.

8. day Porto departure

By now you have got to know the north of Portugal in the bicycle saddle and learned to love the national park inland, along the Minho on the Spanish border and on the Atlantic to Porto. Nice to know that you can go even further on the Atlantic to Coimbra or equal to Lisbon with Velociped!

WORTH KNOWING

Worth knowing about the bike tour "In the North of Portugal"

Below you will find specific information about the bike tour "In the North of Portugal ". If you have further questions about this trip, just call us: Tel: 06421 - 886890.

Arrival by plane

Porto can be reached from many German and European airports. From the airport in Porto you will reach downtown Porto by metro (journey time approx. 30 minutes).

The individual bike routes

This tour in the north of Portugal is the easiest of our cycling tours in Portugal. Only a few short climbs await you. You will find flat stages along the Minho River and along the Atlantic coast most of the time, which has hardly any gradients. On the first day you will roll from over 1000m down to almost sea level. You cycle 95% on paved roads, bike paths or small roads. Along the Minho runs a bike path, which won a 3rd place at the European Greenway Awards in 2017. Along the Atlantic Ocean you cycle single sections on beautiful wooden stilts through the dunes. [European Greenways Award](#)

Available rental bikes

We provide touring bikes (unisex), hybrid bikes (females/men's) an electric bikes (unisex) with a pannier and a lock. The bikes are available with freewheel and in different frame sizes Please specify your wishes with your booking.

[Rental bikes](#)

Your contact person on site

Also in Portugal we offer you a reliable all-round service. Our english- and german-speaking, born in Porto partner takes care of your well-being on the spot. He welcomes you on the day of arrival in Coimbra, takes care of the rental bikes, knows all the bike routes personally and is always available for advice and action if needed.

Navigation with your mobile phone

You often cycle on small roads and paths with many branches in a very varied landscape. There are only a few bike path signs or information signs. Therefore we recommend to use our GPS files in addition to our tour book with maps. We are happy to send you the GPS files free of charge by email. You can save all day tours on your smartphone to follow them easily. On request, we will also provide a GPS device with the files on site for a rental fee (50.00 EUR). GPS device is subject to availability, so please contact Velociped at least 1 week before your journey starts.

A short video for handling can be found here [tutorial](#).

Climate

Starting in April, daytime temperatures are well suited for leisurely cycling, but cooler temperatures may still occur. From May is high season and then in June shady areas are already sought. The bathing season is in July and August, then even the locals are in large numbers on the waterfront. From September, the pleasant temperatures for cyclists are predominant again. Also October is still a good travel month for bike tours.

Extra costs which are not included in the price

A possibly applicable city tax is not part of the price and has to be paid at the hotel locally

7 days hotline service

If the bike chain is torn, flooding makes it impossible to continue or any other unpleasant surprises await you: we are available for you 7 days a week and will help you as soon as possible.

PRICES & SERVICES

TOUR	Northern Portugal: Laid-back tour
tour:	00447
tour type:	individual
duration:	8 days
dates of arrival:	10.04.2022 / 08.05.2022 / 19.06.2022 / 17.07.2022 / 11.09.2022 / 09.10.2022
level:	beginners-intermediate  Velociped-Partner-Tour
min. participants:	2
please note:	Velociped can withdraw from the tour twenty-one days before the starting date of the tour, at the latest, in case the minimum number of participants stated under the tour description is not attained. You will duly be informed without any delay in case of a withdrawal. Velociped will of course refund the paid tour price immediately. Please note our General Terms and Conditions.

TRAVEL SERVICES

- Personal welcome and information package
- Transfer Porto - National Park (Day 2)
- GPS files on request
- Special dates on request

All-carefree service:

- accommodation incl. breakfast
- room with shower/bath/WC
- luggage transport
- map of bike trails with marked route
- detailed route description
- tips for tour preparation
- touristic information
- 7 days hotline service

PRICES 2022

Prices are per person.

SEASON 1

10.04.2022 - 10.04.2022

Cat. A	Double room 809,00 €	Single room 1.129,00 €
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SEASON 2

08.05.2022 - 08.05.2022

09.10.2022 - 09.10.2022

Cat. A	Double room 839,00 €	Single room 1.159,00 €
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SEASON 3

19.06.2022 - 19.06.2022

11.09.2022 - 11.09.2022

Cat. A	Double room 869,00 €	Single room 1.189,00 €
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SEASON 4

17.07.2022 - 17.07.2022

Cat. A	Double room 899,00 €	Single room 1.219,00 €
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CYCLES

tourer	80,00 €
electric bike	180,00 €

BOOKABLE ADDITIONAL NIGHTS

Porto Category A	Double room 70,00 €	Single room 130,00 €
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