

EMBARK ON AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY: TREK THE FISHERMAN'S TRAIL

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Departure: May 2nd, 2024

Completion: May 11th, 2024

Cost: Sponsored; donations encouraged on a sliding scale of 1% of annual household income, with a maximum fee cost of \$2,250. Includes guides, facilitation, accommodations, breakfast each day and participants carry a light day pack while their luggage is transported daily!

Discover the hidden gems of Portugal's southern coastline on this exclusive trek along the renowned Fisherman's Trail. As a proud part of the Rota Vicentina network, this trail is celebrated as one of the globe's most picturesque coastal paths. Prepare to be captivated by the diverse and dramatic landscapes that unfold along your journey.

Experience the rugged beauty of towering cliffs and the serene allure of sandy beaches. Each step offers a new perspective, from breathtaking lookouts to the tranquil vistas of the Atlantic Ocean.

“Prepare to be captivated by the diverse and dramatic landscapes...”

This trek is more than a walk; it's an immersion into the heart of nature and culture. Wander through enchanting towns, each with its unique charm, and encounter an array of wildlife in their natural habitats.

Join us from May 2nd to May 11th for an adventure that promises not just a journey through stunning landscapes, but a voyage into the soul of Portugal's coastal wonders.

Following is a detailed itinerary highlighting the towns, locations, and unique experiences of the trek.



GUIDES



Bruce joined the TrekEpic team in 2012. He brings 25 years of experience in community leadership, training, coaching and organizational development to the TrekEpic format. Bruce is renowned for bringing important timeless traditions from international cultures along with personal stories, humor and honed interpersonal skills to his role providing insights and guidance to others.



Leslie resides in California with her husband and numerous animals and has four grown children. Her vision for TrekEpic originated through insights and fond memories experienced while hiking along Northern California trails with family and friends. She recognized that many young adults seeking their path in life would benefit greatly from a reflective experience that integrates movement and nature as a vehicle for personal exploration and transformation.



Andrew's expertise is in guiding and supporting emerging young adults and those in transition toward their next steps. As an independent educational consultant with a focus on college and early career guidance, his purpose is to help people understand more of "who they are" and "what they have to offer the world around them". Through a process of exploration, his clients come to more fully understand their purpose and their core gifts, such that they may discover and live within their purpose and experience meaning in their lives.



TREK SCHEDULE

May 2nd, Thursday

Departure for a Memorable Adventure

May 3rd, Friday: Arrival in Lisbon & Journey to Porto Covo

Gather in Lisbon and set off to Porto Covo.

- Check-in at the Mermaid Retreat, a serene haven nestled in Porto Covo.
- Evening meet-and-greet dinner with fellow trekkers.

We start our adventure in Porto Covo, before exploring the coast to the south. It won't take long to see that the area is renowned for its distinct charm and natural beauty, which make them special. This small fishing village is characterized by its traditional white houses with blue trim, cobbled streets, and a relaxed, authentic Portuguese atmosphere. It's a quintessential example of the Alentejo region's rural charm.

May 4th, Saturday: Discovering Pessegueiro Island Beach

- From the Mermaid Retreat, explore the rustic Alentejo countryside.
- Walk a scenic section of the Rota Vicentina to the serene Pessegueiro Island Beach.
- Overnight stay at Mermaid Retreat, with an option for star-gazing after gathering as a group for our evening facilitation together.

Today we explore the coastline south of Porto Covo, part of the Alentejo region, known for its dramatic cliffs, hidden coves, and stunning, often deserted beaches. This area remains relatively untouched by mass tourism, offering a more serene and natural experience. The region is also home to a variety of wildlife, especially bird species, making it a great spot for birdwatching. The diverse habitats, from coastal cliffs to sand dunes and scrubland, support a rich array of flora and fauna.



May 5th, Sunday: Coastal Wonders of Vila Nova de Milfontes

- Walk to Monte da Corça Nova in Vila Nova de Milfontes.
- Delight in a guided coastal walk, showcasing breathtaking views and local wildlife.
- Evening relaxation at Monte da Corça Nova, a charming retreat.

Vila Nova de Milfontes is known for its stunning coastal wonders. The town is famous for its gorgeous beaches, such as Praia da Franquia and Praia das Furnas, known for their golden sands and crystal-clear waters. We will also see the Mira River Estuary that provides a picturesque setting where the river meets the ocean, offering unique landscapes and opportunities for birdwatching. The rugged cliffs offer breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, and are also ideal for our scenic walks and photography. As we will experience, with its whitewashed buildings, cobble streets, and relaxed atmosphere, Vila Nova de Milfontes exudes a traditional Portuguese charm.

May 6th, Monday: Almogrove's Coastal Splendor

- Stay at the Almogrove Beach Hostel, a cozy coastal spot.
- Experience the stunning coastal route to Almogrove.
- Participate in the "Lodge & Hike Almogrove" by Stay in Alentejo.

Next on our walk will be Almogrove, a small coastal village known for its serene beauty and natural appeal. The walk to Almogrove from the north, a part of the Rota Vicentina's Fisherman's Trail, is a remarkable experience filled with scenic vistas. As the trail meanders towards Almogrove, it passes through small fishing communities and agricultural fields, offering insights into the traditional ways of life in rural Portugal. Upon arrival in Almogrove, trekkers are greeted by a quaint village with a peaceful atmosphere. The village offers basic amenities, charming local restaurants, and is known for its friendly locals.

May 7th, Tuesday: Zambujeira do Mar's Beachside Beauty

- Progress southward, enjoying pristine beaches en route.
- Check-in at Hostel Nature and Alojamento Local Mira Mar in Zambujeira do Mar.
- Explore the local beachside culture and culinary delights.

Trekkers walking into Zambujeira do Mar can look forward to experiencing the quintessential beauty of Portugal's southwest coast, complete with breathtaking landscapes, welcoming village life, and delightful culinary experiences. After a day of walking, the village offers a relaxing environment to unwind, with the sound of waves and the serene setting contributing to a sense of calm and rejuvenation.

May 8th, Wednesday: Odeceixe's Bohemian Charm

- Journey to Olinda House in Odeceixe.
- And at the Bohemian Antique Guesthouse, a unique and artistic lodging.
- Explore the quaint streets and vibrant life of Odeceixe.

Spending the day walking to Odeceixe, Portugal, continuing along the Rota Vicentina, is an experience filled with diverse landscapes, natural beauty, and cultural insights. Odeceixe is a quaint village right at the border with the Algarve, and is known for its picturesque settings and tranquil atmosphere.

May 9th, Thursday: Rural Bliss in Odeceixe

- Walk to Monte Joao Roupeiro - Turismo Rural.
- Indulge in local culinary wonders at a recommended restaurant.
- Enjoy the rural serenity and comfort of Monte Joao Roupeiro.

As we depart Odeceixe, the path takes us to the renowned Praia de Odeceixe, a spectacular beach where the Seixe River meets the ocean. This area is known for its unique landscape and is a great spot for a relaxing break. The walk today passes through areas that showcase traditional Alentejo culture. We might see typical rural houses, agricultural lands, and locals going about their daily lives, offering a glimpse into the authentic Portuguese countryside.



May 10th, Friday: Celebration at Mermaid Retreat

- Return to the Mermaid Retreat for a festive celebration of our journey.
- Share stories, experiences, and enjoy a special farewell dinner.

May 11th, Saturday: Fond Farewells and Return to Lisbon

- Departure from Mermaid Retreat.
- Reflect on an unforgettable trek as we return to Lisbon.

As we arrive in Lisbon, trekkers will either depart for their return home, or other destinations in Europe, or settle in for the rest of the weekend in Lisbon and explore the city and all of its attractions! Each day is designed to offer a blend of scenic beauty, cultural immersion, and comfortable accommodations, making this trek a truly remarkable experience.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will the weather be like?

Of course, the weather is unpredictable, but the historical weather maps show an average July temperature in the lower to mid 80s during the day on the Portugal coast.

Will I need to get a lot of special gear?

No. You'll need some layered clothing, rain-gear, some trail or walking shoes, and a few other things. Once registered, we'll send you a standard detailed packing list.

Will I be carrying a heavy pack?

No. Your luggage will be transported each day by courier to our destination for that night. You will be bringing a small day pack to carry your snacks, rain-gear, and whatever else you might need for the day's walk.

What is the age range?

Participants age range between 23-32 years, post college age, early career twentysomethings oriented toward their next steps in life!

I need to make my travel plans. What time do I need to be in Lisbon on May 3rd to meet the group, and what time will I be able to depart on May 11th?

People will arrive and depart at different times due to individual travel itineraries, but plan on departing the USA on May 2nd, and arriving at Lisbon, Portugal no later than 1pm on May 3rd. You can depart anytime on Saturday, May 11th after 1pm, from Lisbon. You will receive information about our arrival hotel prior to departing the U.S.

How large is our group?

We are limiting the group to 8 participants and 2 guides. We have found over the past twelve years of trekking that this size allows for people to really get to know each other, yet is large enough for lots of variety of ideas and personal styles. Perfect size to maximize fun and learning.

Is this going to be physically demanding?

This is a walk, not an endurance test. Trek participants are generally tired at the end of the day, but not exhausted. We want you to still have energy at the end of the day so we can meet for our evening sessions without you falling asleep!

How many miles do we walk each day?

The daily mileage varies from 6-12 miles. We generally are walking between 9:00am-4:00pm, so we can cover the miles without feeling like we are rushed. Some days we will only walk for ½ day, since we will have other activities to do. Past experience says we generally walk about 2 mph during the trek. This is the average speed of somebody walking down the street in your town.

When you say “average fitness,” what do you mean?

The primary determiner for you should be whether or not you experience physical symptoms that would make daily walking uncomfortable or unsafe. Certainly, if you have heart, joint, or other serious medical conditions you should not apply. If you are not a regular exercise walker, we suggest that you purchase an inexpensive pedometer and wear it for several days prior to coming. Many people are surprised to discover how far they walk during their average days while at home. We have never had a trekker who was unable to complete the journey because of the physical demands.



What happens during the evening sessions?

We will meet most evenings for 1-1 ½ hours, either before or after dinner. The sessions are designed to help you reflect on who you are, your hopes for the next period of your life, and commitments you want to make involving activities, careers, relationships, and personal development. They are designed with a variety of short activities including telling stories, writing short reflections, silence, and sharing ideas. This is not therapy! This is not forced sharing of stories you are not comfortable telling the world! We want you to look forward to gathering with other participants and getting and giving inspiration.

What other costs might I have beyond the registration fee?

We cover accommodations, in-country travel which is part of our itinerary, breakfasts, guides, and evening facilitation. The registration fee does not include your airfare, and you are responsible for your lunch and dinner costs. Trekkers often bring a little extra money to purchase mementos along the way.

What is the “in-country travel” you refer to in the previous question?

Our route involves us taking several short bus, train, and ferry rides. Previous trekkers have told us they enjoy these rides as another way to see the countryside and also to spend time with local residents. Some of us like the chance to rest our legs!

Is it possible for us to get lost?

We are not in remote wilderness. We are walking between towns on established trails, across farmland or woodlots, on country lanes, and beaches.

Will my health insurance cover me in Portugal and Spain?

Many health plans cover travelers going outside the USA, but you should check with your specific provider for coverages and what to do in case of illness or accident in order for your insurance to cover the costs. Most health insurance websites have information for foreign travelers. It's a good idea to bring your health insurance card. The organizers of this trek do not provide insurance of any type for participants.

What are the accommodations?

We are staying in a variety of different hotels and inns, all of them average quality. This is not a luxury tour! The registration fee is based on double-occupancy. Note: With the exception of couples who may come on this journey together, we try to switch roommates each night so you have more opportunity get to know everyone.

What about getting money when I am trekking?

There is easy access to ATM machines in most towns, and credit or debit cards are widely used. We recommend participants notify their bank of travel plans prior to departure.

What about bringing electronic gadgets?

There is no right answer to this. Many trekkers come on trips specifically to get away from the usual demands of staying connected all the time, and believe bringing a cellphone offers the basic contact, email, and emergency connecting they need. Other trekkers are so dependent on their laptop they can't imagine leaving home without it. One additional note: If your electronic devices are stolen, we will not cover the cost of replacement. We have never had a problem with thievery, but it is always a possibility when traveling.



What about getting work done while I am trekking?

We strongly recommend you NOT plan on getting significant work done while on this trip. You will not have the available time, and experience tells us it usually interrupts a trekkers ability to really be present with other trekkers and the beauty we will be surrounded by. Many trekkers do some brief checking in with home or work in the evening to catch up with important details.

If I choose not to bring electronics, what do I do about emergencies?

The guides will have cellphones with international calling plans and laptops which you can use in an emergency.

Do you have recommendations about setting up my phone for foreign use?

Most of the places we will stay have wi-fi available at no cost, so you do not need to purchase an expensive data plan for your phone prior to departing. Many trekkers add international texting to their phone plan for the time they will be gone, since it's a reasonable cost to do so. It's difficult to find inexpensive international calling plans, so most trekkers rely on texting and email, and use phone apps like WhatsApp to make internet phone calls.

Why is this trek Sponsored by Trek Epic?

Trek Epic has a focused mission of serving emerging adults, so this adult trek is part of its established mission or activities. The Trek Epic guides are doing this trek as an activity for twenty something adults who have told us over the years they would like to go on a trek to explore their futures. We encourage participants to either donate or have supportive people in their lives make donations to our non profit in lieu of fees.

If you have other specific questions,
don't hesitate to contact:

Andrew Bryan, Trek Guide
Call or Text +1-208-484-5835

Registration and Deposit
Please contact Andrew Bryan
for details on registration and deposit.
As we say in Portugal, "*Bom Caminho*"

