



PORTUGAL BIRDING TOUR: BIRDS, WINE, AND CULTURE TOUR

09–19 NOVEMBER 2027
10–20 NOVEMBER 2028



Charismatic Iberian Magpies should be seen on this Portuguese birding tour.

Overview

Sitting in Europe's southwestern corner gives Portugal the perfect position to offer a huge variety of experiences for any visitor and an excellent location for a birdwatching tour. Portugal is sandwiched between the Atlantic Ocean to its west and south, and its north and east borders are occupied by Spain. This relaxed-pace Portugal birding tour will focus on the wonderful birding possible during the late fall (autumn) period. We have timed this Portugal bird tour to give a unique view of the country, as vast numbers of winter migrants arrive in the country.

Continental Portugal's bird list stands at 486 species (following International Ornithological Congress (IOC) v13.1 taxonomy, as of July 2023), a high total for such a small country, and its variety of habitats, climates, ecosystems, as well as its small size make it a fantastic country to go birding in, and our Portugal birding tour gives you the chance to enjoy some iconic Iberian species.

We are delighted to offer this Portugal birdwatching tour at a more relaxed pace than our more typical birding tours (such as our intensive Spain birding tour), by combining the fabulous birding with visits to some of Portugal's best vineyards and cultural highlights. With wine tasting taking place almost every couple of days, and several cultural and geographical highlights to enjoy, we feel this tour has something to offer everyone, from the dedicated birder to the more casual visitor. It is also a great tour for a group of friends who might like somewhere to travel together!



*The handsome **Black-winged Kite** is likely on this Portugal birding tour.*

We begin our Portugal birding tour in the beautiful city of Porto, from here we will head straight into the picturesque Douro River Valley, east of the city, for our first look at rural Portugal and its wonderful vineyards. While in the area we will enjoy not only vineyards but also beautiful scenery from several viewpoints, and we will also get to grips with mountain birding with species such as **Griffon Vulture**, **Blue Rock Thrush**, **Iberian Grey Shrike**, **White-throated Dipper**, and **Black Wheatear** all among some of our first targets.

From here we will slowly meander our way south through the country's interior, observing how the habitat changes from lush river valleys to drier landscapes more like those of neighboring Spain. Along the way we will take in the beautiful town of Marvão before we reach the plains of the central regions of southern Portugal. It is this area that will hold some of Portugal's really special species, with **Spanish Imperial Eagle**, **Great Bustard**, **Iberian Magpie**, and **Black-bellied Sandgrouse** all possible in this region, along with a whole host of other plains species.

We will then continue south to the Algarve, a beautiful coastline and famous among birders and non-birders alike. Here we will enjoy yet more wine tasting and cultural highlights and the birding will also be exciting, with large numbers of wintering shorebirds (waders) and other migrants present at a variety of different locations. We will also visit Portugal's extreme southern corner and look across the vast Atlantic Ocean to see what might be passing Cape St Vincent, with highlights like **Great Shearwater** and **Cory's Shearwater** both possible.

Finally, we will head north to the beautiful city of Lisbon. Here we visit the superb Tagus Estuary, a vitally important area for birds in Western Europe. Highlights here include **Little Bustard**, **Savi's Warbler**, **Calandra Lark**, **Black-winged Kite**, and **Bonelli's Eagle**, plus tens of thousands of shorebirds (waders) and wildfowl which spend the winter in the estuary. We will also have time to enjoy some of Lisbon's cultural aspects before our tour concludes.



Calandra Lark has a restricted range within Europe however is widespread in southern Portugal and is a target bird during our Portugal birdwatching tour.

Detailed Itinerary (11 days/10 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Porto, Quinta de Aveleda wine tasting, travel to Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo

Welcome to Portugal! We will meet for lunch together, afterwards we will travel east, to our first stop on the tour; wine tasting at the superb Quinta de Aveleda, just a 30-minute drive from central Porto. This beautiful estate sits in 100 hectares of vineyards and grows Alvarinho, Loureiro, Arinto, and Fernao Pires grapes. The vineyard has been in the same family since 1870 and offers an incredible experience to get this exciting Portugal tour going.

Our accommodation for the first evening offers breathtaking panoramic views of the region. The area also has plenty of great birds, which we will likely see during our stay.

Overnight: Casa da Cisterna (or similar), Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo

Day 2. Birding in Douro Valley, Douro Valley wine tasting

We will have a leisurely start today with some birding in the beautiful Douro Valley. The Douro Valley is classically Mediterranean and the area around our hotel features iconic species of the region including **Spotless Starling, Black Redstart, Iberian Magpie, Sardinian Warbler, Cirl Bunting, and Rock Bunting.**

Our focus for the day will be the area within the Parque Natural do Douro Internacional. We will travel east, right to the border with Spain, a beautiful area with rolling hills around the fertile river valley. Key species we will look for here include **Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Common Kingfisher, Iberian Grey Shrike, Iberian Magpie, Thekla's Lark, Crested Lark, Eurasian Crag Martin, Black Wheatear, Blue Rock Thrush, Dartford Warbler, White-throated Dipper, European Serin, and Hawfinch.**

We will finish the day with wine tasting at the superb Quinta do Vale Meao, a classic Douro Valley vineyard of 98 hectares, with a variety of superb and famed wines, with olive oil to taste too.

Overnight: Casa da Cisterna (or similar), Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo

Day 3. Transfer to the Alentejo (via Marvão)

Today we will make the journey south through the heartland of Portugal. We will break up the journey by visiting the ancient town of Marvão, a location featured in '1,000 Places to See Before You Die', a New York Times best seller. We will then continue our journey to Terena, where we will spend the next three nights.

Overnight: Herdade D Pedro (or similar), Terena



Seeing the ancient town of Marvão will be a cultural highlight of our tour (photo Lara Broom).

Day 4. Birding Cuba, visit to Évora World Heritage Site

Today we will begin by visiting the special protected area around the village of Cuba. This dry grassland habitat is home to some really special species, including **Great Bustard**, **Little Bustard**, **Black-bellied Sandgrouse**, **Red-legged Partridge**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Western Marsh Harrier**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Iberian Grey Shrike**, **Iberian Magpie**, and **Corn Bunting**.

Other species of note here include **Red Kite**, **Red-rumped Swallow**, **Crested Lark**, **Thekla's Lark**, **Eurasian Blackcap**, **Zitting Cisticola**, **Northern Wheatear**, and **Meadow Pipit**, while nearby wetlands should give us chances to see **Northern Shoveler**, **Red-crested Pochard**, **Common Pochard**, and **White Stork**.

In the afternoon we will visit the town of Évora, the town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, designated for its fantastically preserved Roman ruins. In the Middle Ages, the town reached its golden age as it became the residence of Portuguese kings. We will spend time exploring the town and taking in one of Portugal's cultural wonders.

Overnight: Herdade D Pedro (or similar), Terena

Day 5. Birding Mourão, Herdade do Esporão wine tasting

Today we once again head east towards the Spanish border. We will begin by birding around the town of Mourão. This is an excellent area for raptors (birds of prey) with possible targets including **Griffon Vulture**, **Cinereous Vulture**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Red Kite**, **Common Kestrel**, and **Common Buzzard** all occurring here. **Western Barn Owl** and **Little Owl** also occur and we will be sure to keep our eyes peeled for them too.

The dry grassland here gives us another chance of seeing **Great Bustard**, **Little Bustard**, and **Black-bellied Sandgrouse**, as well as other exciting species like **Common Crane**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Eurasian Crag Martin**, **Red-rumped Swallow**, **Calandra Lark**, **Iberian Magpie**, **Iberian Grey Shrike**, **Mistle Thrush**, **Sardinian Warbler**, **Spanish Sparrow**, **European Serin**, **Corn Bunting**, and many others.

In the afternoon we will visit Herdade do Esporão for some more fantastic wine tasting.

Overnight: Herdade D Pedro (or similar), Terena



Great Bustard may be seen in the grasslands near the town of Mourão.

Day 6. Birding at Castro Verde, transfer to Algarve

Today we will visit the area known as Castro Verde. Classic grassland species here are similar to those on previous days, but we also stand a good chance of adding the iconic **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Golden Eagle**, and **Spanish Imperial Eagle** while in the area. Other species of note here include **Black-winged Stilt**, **Kentish Plover**, **Eurasian Stone-curlew**, **Great Egret**, **Black Stork**, **Cinereous Vulture**, **Short-toed Snake Eagle**, **Hen Harrier**, **Western Marsh Harrier**, **Little Owl**, **Merlin**, **Common Kestrel**, **Dartford Warbler**, **Common Chiffchaff**, **Whinchat**, **Spanish Sparrow**, **Eurasian Tree Sparrow**, and **Western Yellow Wagtail**.

In the afternoon we will transfer to Alte on the Algarve, our base for the next three nights.

Overnight: Alte Hotel (or similar), Alte

Day 7. Birding Ria Formosa Natural Park and Castro Marim

Today we will visit the Ria Formosa Natural Park (this site is also identified as an Important Bird Area by BirdLife International and is a Ramsar site – a wetland of international importance). This fantastic coastal area is one of Portugal's most productive birding spots and the species list here is vast.

The following interesting species are possible: **Booted Eagle, Black-winged Kite, European Nightjar, European Bee-eater, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Iberian Magpie, Woodchat Shrike, Bluethroat, Western Subalpine Warbler, Melodious Warbler, Eurasian Penduline Tit, and Rock Sparrow.**

Today we will also take a boat trip around a section of the park to get us closer to the wonderful wetland birds found here, which include **Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Eurasian Spoonbill, Little Bittern, Purple Heron, Squacco Heron, Western Swampen, Audouin's Gull, Slender-billed Gull, Yellow-legged Gull,** and many others.



European Bee-eater is always such an uplifting species.

In the afternoon we will visit the vast saltpans near Castro Marim. This is a mecca for shorebirds (waders) with beautiful species like **Pied Avocet, Bar-tailed Godwit, Spotted Redshank, Grey Plover, Common Greenshank,** and **Kentish Plover** being the main highlights. Other species of note here include **Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Spoonbill, Slender-billed Gull, Mediterranean Gull, Common Kingfisher, Mediterranean Short-toed Lark, Bluethroat, Western Subalpine Warbler, Spectacled Warbler,** and **Tawny Pipit.**

Overnight: Alte Hotel (or similar), Alte

Day 8. Birding Sagres and Cape St Vincent, visit to Fortaleza de Sagres, Monte da Casteleja wine tasting

Today we will travel west along the Algarve to Portugal's southwestern corner. Our first stop will be the open areas inland of Sagres where we will visit a well-known raptor (birds of prey) watchpoint. Here we will hope to come across many of our target species including **Griffon Vulture**, **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Egyptian Vulture**, and **Booted Eagle**. The area is also usually busy with many other species and is a real migrant hotspot, so we can expect a great range of species here.

We will then make the short journey to Cape St Vincent, a beautiful location and excellent for seabirds. Top species like **Cory's Shearwater** and **Great Shearwater** can be close to shore and if conditions are favorable, we may even be able to see the Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) **Balearic Shearwater**. Many migrants can also be found in the scrubby habitat here during the fall, such as **Ring Ouzel**, **Common Blackbird**, **European Robin**, **Willow Warbler**, **Common Chiffchaff**, and **Eurasian Siskin**.



Cory's Shearwater may be seen during this Portugal bird tour.

After the morning's birding session we will head to the nearby town of Sagres, where we will have lunch and explore the fascinating Sagres Fortress, a stunning headland area where we can combine culture, history, and some birding (at this time of year the joy of visible migration is very much in evidence and looking to the sky is often rewarding!). Later in the afternoon we will visit Monte da Casteleja for wine tasting of traditional Algarve wine. The grapes for this wine are grown using responsible organic agricultural techniques, which works directly with the environment.

Overnight: Alte Hotel (or similar), Alte

Day 9. Birding Lagoa dos Salgados, transfer to Lisbon, Companhia das Lezírias wine tasting

Today we will be birding in the central Algarve, at the bird rich Lagoa dos Salgados. This is another excellent area for relaxed birdwatching and should hold many migrants during our visit, as well as numerous interesting resident species. Species of interest here include **Ferruginous Duck**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, **Little Bittern**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Mediterranean Gull**, **Audouin's Gull**, **Iberian Magpie**, **Bluethroat**, **Eurasian Penduline Tit**, and many others.



Bluethroat is possible in the central Algarve.

In the afternoon we will head north towards Lisbon. This will see us arrive in good time at Companhia das Lezírias, our final vineyard visit of the tour. This vineyard is known for the Tyto Alba wine, a biological wine, named after the **Western Barn Owl**. This bird is extremely abundant on the property, and all steps are taken to assure they thrive here. After our wine tasting session, we will head into Lisbon itself and to our hotel for the final two nights of the tour.

Overnight: Praia do Sal Resort (or similar), Lisbon

Day 10. Birding Tagus Estuary, Fado in the evening

The final full day of our Portugal birding tour will be spent exploring the superb Tagus Estuary on the outskirts of Lisbon. This is one of Europe's premier birding locations and a must-visit for any Portuguese tour. Not only is it the largest estuary in western Europe, but it is also a staging area for hundreds of thousands of wintering and migrating wildfowl and shorebirds (waders).

The list of the more common species found here is vast but some of the highlights of the area include **Little Bustard**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Greater Flamingo**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Pied Avocet**,

Marsh Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Black-winged Kite, Montagu's Harrier, Bonelli's Eagle, Long-eared Owl, White-winged Tern, Savi's Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Iberian Magpie, Calandra Lark, European Stonechat, Eurasian Penduline Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, Spotless Starling, Common Waxbill, and so much more.



Pied Avocet is one of the shorebirds we might see in the Tagus Estuary.

After a leisurely day exploring the Tagus Estuary, we will return to Lisbon for a final group dinner. Here we will experience the traditional Fado of Lisbon, which provides a wonderful send-off after what is sure to have been an enjoyable tour through this enchanting country.

Overnight: Praia do Sal Resort (or similar), Lisbon

Day 11. Departure from Lisbon airport.

Sadly, it will now be time to depart Portugal from Lisbon Airport. After a final breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for your onward flights.

Overnight: Not included

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes must use a different international guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or reasons beyond our control.

Tour Details:

Duration:	11 days/10 nights
Group size:	5–8
Dates:	09–19 November 2027 10–20 November 2028
Start:	Porto, Portugal
End:	Lisbon, Portugal
Prices:	€ 5,990 per person sharing – based on 5–8 participants (2027) € 6,290 per person sharing – based on 5–8 participants (2028)

Single supplements: € 630 (2027)
€ 670 (2028)

Price includes:

All accommodation in a premium 3-star standard or equivalent (Day 1 until Day 10 as described above, or similar)
Meals (from lunch on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 11, most dinners supplied at hotels)
Five wine tasting sessions
Drinking water in vehicle throughout – please bring a refillable water bottle
Expert tour leader
Local bird and wildlife guide fees
Birdwatching site entrance fees and travel permits
All ground transport and tolls/taxes while on tour, including airport drop-off at end of tour in Lisbon
Boat trip in Ria Formosa Natural Park

Price excludes:

Flights to and from Portugal (tour starts in Porto and ends in Lisbon)
Drinks at dinner
Expenditures due to flight cancellations/delays or other causes beyond our control (force majeure)
Visa fees, if visa required
Departure tax, if required
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls etc.
Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing excursions
Personal travel insurance
Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))