



Walking Highlights of Northern Portugal



Grade:	Gentle/moderate		
Trip duration:	9 days / 8 nights	Average daily altitude gain:	1300ft / 400m
Walking days:	7 days	Average daily walk:	9 miles / 15 km

Minimum numbers: Requires just 2 walkers to guarantee this holiday

Dates and prices: 1 March to 31 October.

UK tel
email:
web:

+ 44 7713 628763
info@trekmountains.com
www.trekmountains.com



TRIP OVERVIEW:

This is a selection of the best walks from 3 of the region's favourite areas – there are walks in the famous **Douro Valley**, the **Peneda-Geres National Park**, and part of the **Atlantic coastal Camino de Santiago de Compostela** -- surely the best walking that Northern Portugal can offer.

Your experience of this ancient landscape starts from Porto with a transfer to the spectacular Douro Valley, where the conditions are perfect for growing the grapes for port wine. This stunning landscape has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Your 2 days here will encompass the vineyards which have been tended by generations of families, beautiful scenery above the Douro River, and ancient villages built from the local stone.



Then you will be taken by private transfer north-west to the Peneda-Geres National Park which is more rugged and offers excellent hill-walking in the mountainous landscape.



The third, and very different, area to be visited will be part of the Camino pilgrim route which stretches from Porto to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. You will be walking for 2 days from Vila Nova de Cerveira to the vibrant fishing port of Viana do Castelo.



Your accommodation will be in carefully-selected 3* and 4* hotels and village country cottages, all with character and a warm welcome. And, of course you will be dining on the delicious cuisine of Northern Portugal, with seafood a speciality at the coast. You will be persuaded to taste the excellent wines and port which make this region unique.

We offer this walk as a 9-day, 8-night self-guided trek, which includes 7 walking days totalling 65 miles / 105 km.

A memorable addition to your holiday could be a special lunch outdoors in a vineyard and under the shelter of overhanging vines. We also strongly recommend an extra day exploring the vibrant and historic city of Porto, to visit both the old quarter and the lively café culture, as well as taking time for a tour of the port wine houses which dominate the riverside area.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

Walking and journey times are approximate

The following itinerary is to be taken as a guide only. Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions, and the arrival time of your flight.

Day 1 Arrival at Porto Airport and travel to Douro Valley.

You will be met by our representative and transferred to the train station for the 2.5 hour scenic train ride to Pinhao in the Douro Valley. This is a marvel of engineering, requiring 50 tunnels and bridges for the journey.

Our driver will then take you to your hotel in Alijo, where you will be given a book of comprehensive route notes for your holiday

Accommodation: 4* hotel in Alijo.

Day 2 Circular walk to Sao Mamede da Ribatua and back to Alijo. 9 miles/15km, 370m ascent.

The paths guide you through vineyards, woods and fields to the village of Sao Mamede da Ribatua, high above the reservoir. Take another route back to your hotel to relax by the pool.

Accommodation: 4* hotel in Alijo

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch.

Day 3 Linear walk from Alija to Pinhao.

12 miles/20km, 280m ascent.

With spectacular views along the ridge above the Douro wine region's vineyards, gradually walk down to the river at Pinhao,

Accommodation: 3* hotel, Pinhao

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch.



Day 4 Travel to the Penedes-Geres National Park, short walk to Castro Laboreiro Castle. 1.5 miles/2km.

Meet your driver at the hotel for a private transfer of approx. 2.5 hours to the Penedes-Geres National Park at Castro Laboreiro. Explore this historical village, the ruins of its granite castle and the history of the village. We recommend the short walk around the castle.

Accommodation: 3* hotel at Castro Laboreiro for the next 2 nights

Meals: breakfast.

Day 5 Circular walk round Castro Laboreiro.

8 miles/12.5km, 440m ascent.

Today is a tour of the area around the village, encompassing woodlands, the rocky granite plateau overlooking the village and magnificent views beyond.

Accommodation: 3* hotel, Castro Laboreiro

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch.

Day 6 Walk from Castro to the extraordinary Sanctuary at Peneda, then vehicle transfer to the coast at Vila Nova de Cerveira. 9 miles/15km, 300m ascent.

The route to Peneda Sanctuary climbs up to rocky highlands before descending through forests. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Peneda is a stunning building built in the 19th century, flanked by massive steps, and built against a 300m cliff. Its approach has 20 small chapels denoting the life of Christ. After experiencing this place of pilgrimage, the driver will take you to the coastal town of Vila Nova which you can explore to find a restaurant for your evening meal.

Accommodation: country hotel

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch.



The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Peneda

Day 7 Walk south along the pilgrim route to Vila Praia de Ancora. 14 miles/23km, 170m ascent.

This walk initially follows the Minho River estuary, with Spain across the water, to the town of Caminha at the sea. This is a great lunch stop, and a chance to visit the beautiful Gothic church. Then continue down the coast through pine forests to the pretty town of Praia de Ancora.

Accommodation: 4* hotel, Praia de Ancora

Meals: breakfast.

Day 8 Walk south from Vila Praia to Viana do Castelo. 12 miles/19km, 130m ascent.

Continue the coastal camino south from Vila along sandy beaches and forests, passing stone fortresses and windmills to the historic port of Viana do Castelo., 12 miles.

Accommodation: 4* hotel, Viana do Castelo

Meals: breakfast.

Day 9 Departure for Porto

After the hotel breakfast, travel back to Porto (we recommend by train) or the airport in time for your onward flight.

Meals: breakfast

Pre-tour briefing: Most people choose to meet with a member of the Portugal team online before departure. However, if you prefer to have a personal Welcome Briefing on arrival this can be arranged for you for an additional charge. During the briefing, the member of our staff will be delighted to answer any questions that you have before starting your holiday.

Whichever briefing method you choose, you will receive your Welcome Pack both by email prior to your departure and physically on arrival at your first hotel. Your Welcome Pack contains all the materials you'll need as a walker: a roadbook with maps and route descriptions, a tracking App for your smartphone, plus a few other goodies for the trail!

Accommodation: A combination of restored manor houses, village cottages, farmhouses and charming hotels. All rooms have their own bathrooms. We've chosen these accommodations for their hospitality, comfort, and location.

Meals: All breakfasts are included with your accommodation. We also include packed lunches for walking days where buying lunch on the trail is not an option. Let us know if you have any dietary restrictions and we can ask our hotels to accommodate these.

Luggage transfers: We will arrange for the transfer of 1 suitcase/piece of luggage per person between your hotels on your walk.

Travel: The best airport to fly into is Porto, which many European airlines use.

No flights or fixed travel arrangements should be booked until you have received written confirmation from the trekMountains office that your holiday is guaranteed to run.

The Price Includes:

- 8 nights accommodation with breakfasts as per the itinerary above
- 4 packed lunches during the walks (days 2, 3, 5 and 6)
- Detailed route notes
- App with route information for your smartphone
- Private transfer from Porto Airport to Porto train station, and transfer from Pinhao to Alijo on day 1
- Private transfer from your Pinhao hotel to Castro Laboreiro on day 4
- Private transfer from Peneda to Vila Nova de Cerveira on day 6
- Luggage transfer between your accommodations.
- 24-hour emergency contact service in English

Not Included:

- Flights and insurance (Porto is the closest airport to fly into)
- Train journeys between Porto and Pinhao, and from Viana to Porto
- Transfer from Viana do Castelo to Porto city or airport at the end of your holiday
- Any meals not mentioned above
- Tourism taxes
- Gratuities
- Personal expenses
- Anything not mentioned in the "included" section above

Options:

- River cruise from Regua near Pinhao to Porto with lunch included
- Special outdoor lunch in a vineyard
- Extra night in a Porto hotel
- Visit a winery and wine tasting in the Douro Valley or Porto



Our prices are always competitive and the trek itinerary is built carefully in discussion with you, because we have found that each trip is different. This will be especially so with flight times that suit you. So please email us at info@trekmountains.com, or use the Contact Form at <https://www.trekmountains.com/contact/>, and our Portugal Adventure Specialist can work with you to design the trek and give a price quote.