



Walk the Heart and Soul of the Northern Portugal Douro Valley wine region



Grade:	Gentle/moderate		
Trip duration:	8 days 7 nights	Average daily altitude gain:	1300 feet 400m
Walking days:	6 days	Average daily walk:	8 miles 13 km
Minimum numbers:	Requires just 2 participants to guarantee this holiday		
Dates & price per person	1 March to 31 October.		

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TRIP OVERVIEW:

This is a one-week gentle exploration of the stunningly beautiful Douro Valley wine-producing region in Northern Portugal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The walk encompasses the hillside vineyards, ancient villages and lovely mountainous scenery, and is best experienced in spring or autumn to see the country flora at their best.

This trip is offered each year from 1st March to 31st October.

Your accommodation will range from carefully-selected hotels to rural village houses, all with a warm welcome. You will be dining on the delicious cuisine of Northern Portugal, and every opportunity should be taken to taste the extraordinary wines and port which makes this region unique.

We offer this walk as an 8-day, 7-night self-guided trek, with 6 walking days totalling 48 miles. Porto Airport is the nearest airport to fly into, and you will start from Porto, travelling by train or river cruise up the Douro River to Pinhao. The routes chosen for you are a combination of linear and circular walks around the Douro valley, ending back at Pinhao. All accommodation is booked for you, with comprehensive walk notes, luggage transfers and with help available 24/7 should you need it. But this trip can be tailored to your individual requirements and timing, for example spending an extra day taking the river cruise instead of the train.

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 particularly the arrival time of your flight into Porto

Day 1 Arrival at Porto Airport, explore Porto

You will be met at the airport for a private transfer to your Porto hotel. Depending on your arrival time, you can spend the rest of the day exploring the vibrant city of Porto, its cathedral and old quarter, the Ribeira. Not to be missed is a guided tour of one of the port wine cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia on the other bank of the river.

Accommodation: 4* hotel in Porto

Day 2 Travel to the Douro Valley

There are two ways to journey to the beginning of your walking holiday: either take the scenic train along the spectacular railway line, bordering the river, to Pinhao, the heart of the Douro Valley, or you can choose to take the boat peacefully up the Douro River.

If travelling by train, you will be picked up from your hotel and taken to the very grand Porto railway station, which is a painted inside with wonderful scenes of the region.

If you choose to take the boat, you will be sailing up the Douro which has been engineered with two locks to allow boats to travel safely between the wine producing areas and the warehouses of Porto.

Accommodation: 3-star hotel in Pinhao.

Meals: breakfast



Day 3 Walk from Pinhao north to Vilarinho de Sao Romao. 6 miles/10km, 590m ascent.

You will be climbing up from the river valley, through ancient villages and the vineyards which sustain them. The vines on these steep slopes have been cultivated for generations, using traditional manual methods. The vines themselves have developed extensive root systems to stabilise them on the steep ground, and this imparts a unique flavour to the wines.

Accommodation: country house hotel with outdoor pool

Meals: breakfast, packed lunch, dinner



**Day 4 Circular walk to the Rio Pinhao and return to the country hotel in Vilarinho.
8 miles/13km. 500m ascent**

Today's walk takes you back down to the river through villages, vineyards and established wine estates. The Rio Pinhao is a tributary of the Douro and a beautiful place for lunch before you walk up to the village of Celeiros where there are a couple of places for wine-tasting. Then make your way back to your country hotel for dinner.

Accommodation: country house hotel with outdoor pool

Meals: breakfast, packed lunch, dinner



**Day 5 Walk from Vilarinho to Alijo village.
10 miles/16km. 630m ascent.**

There are beautiful views across the hills as you walk to the old town of Sabrosa, and from there you take the ancient pack road down to the river. Find a restful spot for your packed lunch, then you will be passing through the village of Favaios and climbing towards your destination for the next 2 nights, the small town of Alijo. You can eat in the hotel or in a restaurant in town.

There is a shorter walking option if preferred which halves the ascent.

Accommodation: 4* hotel in Alijo

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch

Day 6 Circular walk to Sao Mamede da Ribatua and back to Alijo.

9 miles/15km, 370m ascent.

This is a day of paths undulating through vineyards, with ever-changing views of mountains above towards the village of Sao Mamede to the south. This is high above the reservoir which feeds into the River Douro. Take another route back to your hotel to relax by the pool.

Accommodation: 4* hotel in Alijo

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch

Day 7 Linear walk SW from Alijo through vineyards to Casal de Loivos

9 miles/14km. 220m ascent.

Today the walking is through vineyards and wine estates, where you would be welcomed for wine tasting. Then up to the ridge and the historic village of Casal, high above the Douro and Pinhao rivers.

Accommodation: 17th century country house with pool

Meals: breakfast and packed lunch

Day 8 Walk down to Pinhao on the Douro River, then return to Porto by train.

4 miles/7km.

An easy day walking down to Pinhao. You should have time before your train back to Porto to explore the village and try the wines and port. Return to Porto by the scenic train, and travel back to the airport.

Meals: breakfast

If you need a hotel night in Porto to fit with your return flight time, please let us know.



There is always the option of extending your holiday, perhaps with an extra day to explore Porto – just get in touch and let us know your wishes, and we will be happy to arrange it for you.

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:

- Accommodation as shown in the itinerary above
- Breakfasts, packed lunches and dinners as shown in the itinerary above
On the days when dinner is not included, there are options available locally to suit all budgets
- Welcome Pack
- Detailed route notes
- App with route information for your smartphone
- Private transfer from Porto Airport to Porto hotel on day 1
- Private transfer from Porto hotel to Porto train station on day 2
- Luggage transfer between your accommodation on days 3 to 7, and to Pinhao train station on day 8
- 24-hour emergency contact service in English

Not Included:

- Flights (Porto is the closest airport to fly into)
- Return train journeys between Porto and Pinhao – these cost a few euro bought at the station.
- Transfer from Porto to the airport
- Any meals not mentioned above
- Travel insurance
- Tourism taxes; gratuities; personal expenses and anything not mentioned in the “included” section above

Options:

- Day 2: Optional river cruise from Porto to Regua near Pinhao with lunch included (€140 per person)
- River cruise from Regua near Pinhao to Porto with lunch included to replace last walking day (€140 person)
- Private transfer from Porto to Pinhao €270 up to 3 people, €370 4 – 7 people
- Special outdoor lunch in a vineyard above the river valley
- Extra night in Porto 4* hotel
- Visit a winery and wine tasting in Pinhao (€40 per person)