

Lisbon, Cascais and Sintra- all the passion of the city plus chic beaches and misty mountain retreats

Lisbon can't fail to seduce its visitors. Built over seven hills rising from the River Tejo, stunning views hit you at every turn. Its districts meld a tapestry of cultural and architectural cues, but it's a city on a human scale and you can easily explore on foot or by the bright yellow trams (take the Number 28 for a trundling run over four of the hills). The Alfama Arabic quarter, with narrow winding streets and patterned cobbles, rises to the medieval Castelo Sao Jorge, beautifully floodlit at night. Below, the bohemian Bairro Alto area is a mecca for artists and poets and comes to life at night, with trendy eateries, clubs and bars. Next door is fashionable Chiado, with wide avenues lined with ritzy designer shops, and beyond is the elegant diplomatic quarter of Lapa, with its palazzo facades covered in the typical azure tiles of the region. And head for the Baixa district in August and September, where Lisbon's long running jazz festival happens and hear some of the world's leading exponents improvise "rough jazz" in the streets. Gothic cathedrals, majestic monasteries and quaint museums and galleries are all part of the colourful cityscape, but the real delight is in losing yourself the narrow lanes of Lisbon's lovely backstreets.

Just west along the Tejo estuary, you reach Estoril and Cascais, Lisbon's glamorous and very cosmopolitan beach resorts. Cascais has a youthful, swish air and boasts fantastic golden sandy beaches, designer shops, smart restaurants and bars. Palm-fringed Estoril, its neighbour, is equally chic, and its casino was Ian Fleming's inspiration for James Bond's adventures in "Casino Royale".

Sintra, the town set in cool mountain redwoods just north of Lisbon, is a fairytale jewel. Holiday home to the kings and nobility of Portugal, it also inspired Lord Byron. "To see the world and leave out Sintra is to go blind about", he enthused. The town is crammed with botanic gardens, enchanting castles and whimsical palaces with turrets and intricate spires that could have sprung straight from the pages of folklore. Most are open to the public and rambling, Moorish inspired Monserrate Palace is one the best and most romantic to visit.

Sintra and the beach resorts of Cascais and Estoril make a marvellous getaway from the city, whether just for a day, or as part of a longer holiday.

We encourage compassion for animals. If you go for a carriage or horse ride, please opt for services offering healthy animals. We encourage you not to support the "sport" of bullfighting. In Portugal, whilst the bull is not killed during the public fight, he is slaughtered afterwards and is tortured during the display.

Getting There

Fly from the UK to Lisbon with BA, TAP, Easyjet, Monarch, BMI, Aer Lingus amongst others. Take the frequent trains to Cascais or Sintra from the city centre.

Combine With

Each other for a city break with that extra wow-factor. Or include Lisbon as a mid-way city break in a top to toe tour of Portugal with the Silver Coast in the north and the Alentejo and Algarve in the south.

Golf

There are several championship golf courses around Lisbon, plus the many golf courses of the Algarve are within a few hours' drive.

For more images & hotel details see c-boutiquehotels.com

To book call **08717 500070**

Lisbon, Portugal's capital, steeped in history, but packed with clubs, bars and serious nightlife, is fast gaining a reputation as one of Europe's hippest cities. Holidays in Lisbon reveal a cultural fusion of Latin, Arabic and African influences with colourful people and a passionate soul. For the Portuguese, romance is as important as the air they breathe and nowhere is their appetite for life and love better expressed than in the bluesy "fado" songs that fill Lisbon's streets at night. But city breaks in Lisbon aren't all about the city. Join the well-heeled "Lisboetas" at some of Portugal's best beaches, chic resorts and misty mountain hideaways, all on Lisbon's doorstep.

Our Recommended Hotels in the Lisbon area

Lady of the Light Hotel & Spa

The Cascais Fort

The Sintra Manor

The Lisbon Boutique Hotel

Lisbon House

