

algarve

IDEAS
&
INSPIRATIONS

A TRIP STARTS WHEN
YOU DREAM
ABOUT IT.



algarve

Imagine a place overlooking the Atlantic Ocean where you cannot escape a “Mediterranean” feel all around, with over 300 days of sunshine and a mild climate.

A place where every day is different and time seems to have a different pace.

A place with 200 km of beaches to discover where you can witness some of the most breath-taking sunsets you can imagine. So amazing that your heart almost stops.

A land with incredible nature and diverse landscapes, remarkable golf courses, quality cuisine, wines, spas, thermal treatments, theme parks for the whole family and different accommodation options.

All of this and much more easily reached.

Welcome and discover by yourself why the Algarve is still the best kept secret in Europe.

ABOUT THE ALGARVE

AREA	POPULATION	AVERAGE TEMP.	COASTLINE	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
5 412 km ²	451 005 Censos 2011	Air Summer: 24°C to 29°C Winter: 15°C to 18°C Sea Summer: 21°C to 24°C Winter: 15°C to 19°C	200 km bordering the Atlantic Ocean	Portuguese

KEY

BEACHES	SEA	CULTURE	GOLF	NATURE	GASTRONOMY & WINES	WELLNESS	THEME PARKS
							
BEACHES	SURF/ WINDSURF	HISTORIC HERITAGE	GOLF	NATURAL AREAS	TRADITIONAL CUISINE	THERMAL TREATMENTS	THEME PARKS
							
DIVING	HANDICRAFT	WALKING/HIKING /TRAIL	FINE DINING & MICHELIN STARS	SPA			
							
BOAT TOUR	EVENTS	BIKING/CYCLING	WINE TASTING				
							
DOLPHIN & WHALE WATCHING	NIGHTLIFE	BIRDWATCHING					
							
FOLK & FADO	SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION	AIRPORT					
							
		ECOVIA					
		VIA ALGARVIANA					

An aerial photograph of a tropical beach. The top half shows the deep blue ocean with gentle waves. A narrow strip of white sand beach curves from the left towards the right. The bottom half of the image is a semi-transparent orange overlay. The word "BEACH" is written in white, stylized, hand-drawn capital letters in the center of the orange area. Two short white horizontal lines are positioned above and below the word. The background of the orange area is a lighter, yellowish-orange color, suggesting the sand.

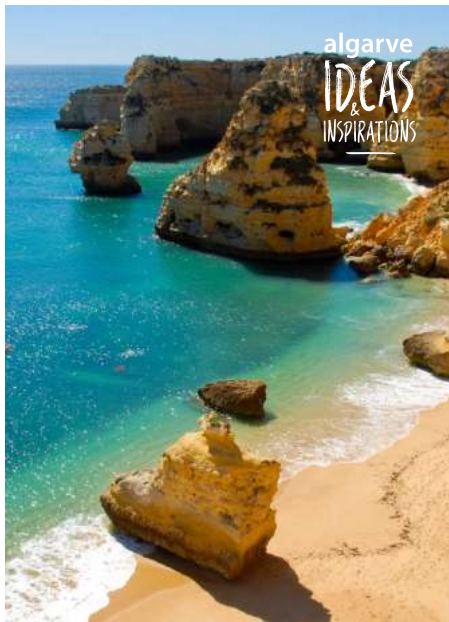
BEACH

*White sandy beaches with clear waters.
A dream trip cannot exist without them.*



In the Algarve you find all sorts of beaches. At the west point you have Sagres and Costa Vicentina (Vicentina coast), rocky and wavy, a truly paradise on Earth for surfers. Here you can also watch the most famous sunset in Europe, at Cape St. Vincent.

Going east, secluded beaches surrounded by cliffs of incredible shapes and golden shades, amazing for water sports. And the vibrant blue waters and colourful cliffs will follow you till the East part of the Algarve. Great extensions of white sand dominate the landscape in the east where the shallow peaceful waters are a perfect match for families with children. And if you want to take a boat to romance in deserted islands, not accessible by car or foot, your destination is Ria Formosa.



There are more than one hundred beaches waiting for you, perfect to be with your family, to practise sports, for those with reduced mobility or for those looking for the Blue Flag, a symbol for excellence. Or even for those who enjoy a walk, feeling the water on their feet and are fascinated by the soft light in the mornings or sunsets, turning each corner into a magical haven.

COME AND FIND OUT WHY WE HAVE MORE THAN ONCE BEEN CONSIDERED THE BEST BEACH DESTINATION IN EUROPE.





SEA

*The beautiful Algarve is known for its turquoise ocean,
for its waves on the west coast and amazing spots
for swimming, fishing and even diving.*





*If you are into surf or windsurf follow the waves of Costa Vicentina; there is always a perfect spot, no matter if you are a rookie or an experienced surfer. Try asking the local surfers for their hidden paradises – **you'll be amazed.***

Don't worry if you need lessons, there are plenty of surf schools both in Costa Vicentina and in Portimão, willing to help you get started and find your balance to ride your first wave.



IF YOU ARE A WATER SPORT ENTHUSIAST LOOK FOR PRAIA DA ROCHA IN PORTIMÃO, RIA FORMOSA OR ILHA DE TAVIRA, IN THE EAST.



For the diver in you, Portimão is the place to be. Four ships of the Portuguese Navy were sunk here and transformed into artificial reefs. Today they are inhabited by the most amazing species of flora and marine fauna you can imagine. This unique spot in Europe is heaven for all scuba divers and those who aspire to be.

Further east, shoals of tuna await you in the open sea near Olhão. **A diving experience like no other.**



AND WHAT ABOUT SEAHORSES IN RIA FORMOSA?
DID YOU KNOW THESE WATERS HOLD THE LARGEST COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD OF THESE AMAZING BEINGS?



To complete the whole sea experience, take a boat to reach spots all over the Algarve coast. It is a nice way to discover all the different landscapes that make this a unique destination.

You will be amazed with how the sea changes its colours as you go from small to bigger waves or in some places to a kind of peaceful lake.

And if you are lucky, you will get to meet dolphins and whales along your journey.
Look carefully as you pass Lagos, Albufeira, Faro and Olhão.



**IF YOU WANT TO GET
EXTRAVAGANT GO ON A SAIL
BOAT RIDE FOR TWO,
WITH ON BOARD MASSAGE.
RELAXED ALREADY?**





CULTURE

If you are a history lover you would want to know that The Algarve name comes from the Arabic "Al Gharb" meaning "The West".



But even before the Moors were driven out by Sancho II, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Goths, Maghrebins and Mauritians crossed these lands leaving their marks. **The result, inevitably, was a mix of cultures, traditions, heritage and art.**

You can still be a part of this historical heritage within the walls of a convent or a church, inside a fortress or visiting several museums. The traces of these ancient people can be found both on the coast, where the sea dives into the horizon, and in the inlands, where the mountain takes shelter.



TAKE YOUR MAP AND MARK THESE PLACES: ALJEZUR, SAGRES, LAGOS, SILVES, LOULÉ, VILAMOURA, FARO, ESTOI, TAVIRA, CASTRO MARIM. FIND OUT WHY THEY ARE THE KEY TO UNDERSTAND THIS REGION. THE LOCALS WILL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU.





If you ever wondered how basket and pots are made, look no further. Loulé recently created the Creative Tourism concept, which allows you to learn the craft working side by side with real artisans. And the best thing is that you can take your work of art home with you.

Did you know that Portugal is the world's leading cork producer?

Plenty of it is found in the Algarve. Remember this while opening your next bottle of champagne... Cork, along with pottery and basketry, are the source of much of our craft, which continues to be produced. You can find it mainly in the towns of Porches, São Brás, Loulé and Alcoutim.



If you want a piece of local action, we have something for you on our calendar of festivals and events. Fans of music, gastronomy, medieval history, sports, Carnival, religious celebrations, or sand sculptures, go to Portimão, Silves, Lagoa, Loulé, Faro, Olhão, Tavira and Castro Marim. **Come and hang out with the locals.**





Enjoy a folk dance group performing, try your hand (and foot) at a “corridinho algarvio” (Algarve traditional dance), or experience a fado concert and try to find the essence of the typically Portuguese *saudade* (a state of mind). Don't worry if you do not understand the words: **you will be amazed anyway.**



In the Algarve, we take the night life very seriously. Whether you prefer drinking with a group of friends, or in an exclusive bar of a luxury hotel, there are options for every taste and wallet.

**SPEAKING OF WALLET...
OUR CASINOS ARE A MUST GO.**

GOLF

*Are you a golfer?
If so, you will be a happy golfer in the Algarve.
We have been repeatedly named Best Europe Golf
Destination and it's easy to understand why.*





It's hard to imagine the Algarve without thinking of golf, yet golf wasn't born on this sunshine coastal area until 1966.

Fast-forward half a century and our alluring region has not only become one of Europe's premier holiday spots, but also an award-winning golf destination.

WITH A STAGGERING 42 NINE OR 18-HOLE LAYOUTS THAT CAN BE PLAYED ALL-YEAR-ROUND, IT'S NO WONDER THE ALGARVE DRAWS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF GOLFERS TO ITS FAIRWAYS EACH YEAR. ALL SPECTACULAR COURSES,

MOST OF THEM DESIGNED BY RENOWNED INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTS, AND SOME AMONG THE TOP 100 BEST COURSES IN THE WORLD.

More than half of its courses decorate the 150-miles coastline.

Flight connections are easily available through out several cities in Europe and you will be spoiled by choice in what accommodation is concerned, hotels and self-catering of any type are the finest one can dream of.

The Algarve is the perfect destination for golfers of all ages and abilities, with something to suit every taste and budget. A real ALL-in-one destination, where you will experience the shot of your life!





NATURE

*Have you tasted our canned fish?
It is an amazing delicatessen
and definitely worth a try.*





But apart from fishing and fish processing, the Algarve has never been an industrial region. This has made it easier to adopt good sustainability practices, with strong environmental concerns.



THIS EFFORT IS SHOWN ON NATURAL RESERVES AND PARKS, INCLUDING COSTA VICENTINA, RIA DE ALVOR, THE NATURAL PARK OF RIA FORMOSA AND THE SALT MARSHES OF CASTRO MARIM.

Costa Vicentina Natural Park, with its steep cliffs, beaches, sand dunes and mountains is a wild life sanctuary with 750 identified plants, 200 species of birds, including the Bonelli eagle and the Peregrine falcon. The Park is an exceptional spot for birdwatchers, along with the other natural areas in the Algarve.

Further ahead in the Monchique Mountains, near Pico da Fóia (the highest point in the Algarve), you will find the home of some animal species like otters, foxes, wild boars, badgers, wild cats and the famous iberian lynx.





THE RIA FORMOSA NATURE PARK IS A UNIQUE LAGOON SYSTEM THAT IS CONTINUALLY CHANGING DUE TO THE MOVEMENTS OF WINDS, CURRENTS AND TIDES.



Birdwatching in Algarve Guide | www.visitalgarve.pt



So no wonder that it became an habitat for wildlife: flamingos, vultures, woodcocks and kingfishers. The purple swamphen, a rare species which, in Portugal, only breeds in these lakes, is a sort of mascot of this wonderful natural park. Another inhabitant of this wetland is the chameleon, sadly at risk of extinction elsewhere in Europe. You can find out more going for a trail or a boat ride.

And if we think of indigenous species, we must not forget the friendly water dogs. Bo and Sunny, who live with Obama at the White House, are the best ambassadors of our local breed.

On the mouth of the Guadiana River lies the Nature Reserve of Castro Marim and Vila Real de Santo António, that shelters some 153 different species throughout the year. They include the charming flamingos, but also storks, pied avocets, dunlins, sand plovers and redshanks. Prepare your camera!





Fancy a walk? Walking, hiking or trail lovers find in the Algarve a wide range of choice. Equipped with signs, guides and support materials, if you follow these routes you can find a deep and interior Algarve. Landscapes, gastronomy, history, culture, traditions, habits, cork production all lie a couple of steps from each other.

Via Algarviana is a great pedestrian route that links Alcoutim and Cabo de São Vicente, which means that you can literally get to know the Algarve from east to west. In addition there are small routes connected to Via Algarviana if you are looking for something specific.



The Rota Vicentina route totals 400 km along the most beautiful coastline of Southern Europe. No doubt about that. There is the Historical Way, the Fishermen's Trail and circular routes. You can choose one or, why not, try them all.

And let us not forget the Cork Route. You can go to São Brás de Alportel, and walk through the process of cork making, starting at the oak groves, follow the extraction and finish with the industrial transformation for end use.



www.vialgarviana.org | www.rotavicentina.com
www.rotadacortica.pt



If you are tired of walking, get a bike and cycle through our famous routes, most of them are near the shore, so you can cycle feeling the sea wind on your face. Cycling is an important sport in the Algarve. You can even book a cycling tour.



www.visitalgarve.pt



GASTRONOMY & WINES

*Along with your suitcase, bring your
apetite to the Algarve. You will fall head over
heels with the gastronomy.*



It is an incredible mixture between the light Mediterranean diet and the more robust food eaten all over Portugal.

Visit restaurants in the coast and then move to the mountain areas and spot the major differences. The richness of the gastronomy will make your taste buds smile.

200 km of coastline are a good sign that the fish and seafood are great. In the Algarve the fish is so fresh it seems it jumped from the sea to the plate. If you want to eat like a local, you can try the fish stew, “caldeirada” as we know it, the famous cataplana (seafood steamed in a traditional pan), the clams or the octopus, cooked properly by expert hands in a dozen ways.

FURTHER INLAND, IN MOUNTAIN AREAS, YOU WILL FIND THE HOME MADE STYLE FOOD THAT MAKES YOU FEEL COMFORTED.


Olives, cheese and bread are always at the table, along with traditional ham known here as “presunto” and cured sausages from Monchique. Try the traditional stewed chickpeas and cabbage. Or the wild boar with beans. Or the “xerém with toucinho”, or ... we just can't stop naming delicious dishes.

GASTRONOMY & WINES

And there is one classic, which tastes like Algarve all over: frango da Guia, or chicken piri-piri like the tourist like to call it. That is our famous spicy grilled chicken. It attracts large crowds from all over the region and you have to find out why. It is an explosion of flavours.

Still have room for a dessert? The Algarve is a sweet place. One of the many advantages of the Algarve's mild climate is the ability to produce the most important ingredients of the Mediterranean cuisine, including olive oil, figs, almonds, oranges and honey. They are combined according to old recipes, some of them tested and put together behind the walls of monasteries and convents, and the result is magical. The most famous dessert is the Dom Rodrigo, one of Portugal's culinary wonders, made from egg yolks, sugar and the very typical almonds.

 Regional Cooking Guide | www.visitalgarve.pt

 Restaurants | www.visitalgarve.pt

IN THE END, TO HELP WITH YOUR DIGESTION, DRINK THE FAMOUS MEDRONHO, ALSO KNOWN AS FIREWATER, MADE WITH THE FRUIT OF THE ARBUTUS TREE. THE NAME IS A HINT OF WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT.





Michelin stars shine bright in the Algarve.

There are two restaurants with two stars, and four with one star, located in Albufeira, Almancil, Alporchinhos, Carvoeiro and Vilamoura. Needless to say, here you will find a refined cuisine made from the finest ingredients, most of them from the Algarve. We advise you to book your reservation well in advance.



When you eat in the Algarve you must drink accordingly.

In recent years the quality and consistency of the wines produced in the region has undergone a remarkable evolution. Produced from an extensive range of regional varieties, resulting in well balanced white, rosé and red wines, they are ideal for an aperitif, to drink with your meal, any sweet dessert or cheese.

Particularly in Algoz and Lagoa areas, you can visit the vineyards and cellars where the wines are produced, discovering the origin and the methods that lead them to your glass. Some producers may send your home a box or two of these fine wines, letting you catch your flight quietly and travel carefree back home.



A photograph of a spa room. In the foreground, a white towel is neatly folded on a light-colored surface. To the right, a massage table is partially visible, with a white pillow and a white towel resting on it. The towel has a logo that reads "Koyoko Hotel". In the background, a white lantern sits on a small table. The room is softly lit, and there are some red rose petals scattered on the floor.

WELLNESS

Thalassotherapy. It is a long word with a simple meaning: the therapeutic use of seawater, algae and marine climate to promote health and well-being.



In the Algarve these ingredients are never lacking. And there are many modern Spas, some of them in hotels where you can relax, reduce stress, feel cleansed. Combine it with rest and a healthy diet and you will feel brand new.



In the interior, in Monchique, in addition to the Spa you can take advantage of the natural thermal treatments at Caldas de Monchique, rich in bicarbonate, sodium and fluorine, perfect to treat or prevent some diseases and health conditions.

In the end, the Algarve has something that you should really look for – sun and vitamin D. It is no secret the importance of the sun for producing vitamin D and here in the Algarve we have plenty of it.



TAKE OUR ADVICE: LET THE ALGARVE INDULGE YOU ONCE MORE AND GET LAZY UNDER THE SUNSHINE THAT WILL HELP YOU STRENGTHEN YOUR IMMUNITY SYSTEM, ESSENTIAL FOR A HEALTHIER LIFE.



THEME PARKS

*Slide to a happy place in the Algarve's Theme Parks,
a great source of family entertainment.*

Looking for Adrenaline?



IN QUARTEIRA YOU HAVE THE BIGGEST WATER COASTER IN EUROPE AND FURTHER WEST, OTHER FUN WATER SLIDES. YOU CAN MEET FRIENDLY DOLPHINS IN GUIA AND WATCH AMAZING SHOWS.

If you are lucky you can actually swim with them. It is an experience you will not forget. Also you can learn about the marine species that share the planet with us. Or you can just relax by the pool. But if you're into other species, there are also other theme parks with animals and even a zoo that offer all-day programs that guarantee a day well spent, be sure of that.

Thinking about the parents, the Algarve has one racetrack where you can watch championship races on two or four wheels, or just for the fun, try an unforgettable driving experience. And if you take the kids with you, there is also a karting circuit suitable for the whole family.





ACCOMMODATION

*Sleep in style, no matter how much money you have to spend.
Book a room in a cozy three or four star hotel or enjoy
extreme luxury in a five star accommodation.*





If you enjoy nature, stay in a rural hotel and if you are a private person enjoy our self-catering villas and apartments. Golfers, of course, can practice a few steps away from their rooms, in one of our golf friendly hotels.

Little ones were not forgotten, as Algarve offers several hotels especially designed for families that assure everything you might need when traveling with babies, children or teenagers.

If you are here for business, you must know that the hotels in the region offer excellent conditions that will make your event unforgettable.

YOU CAN FIND YOUR STYLE OF ACCOMMODATION IN EVERY CORNER OF THE ALGARVE, FROM THE FUNKY VIBE URBAN AREAS, TO THE MORE QUIET PLACES.

All this for the best value for money you can find in Southern Europe.



THE ALGARVE SOUL

We can tell you that the Algarve soul is made up of people, sounds, colours, scents, summer flirts and friends for life.

It is charming traditional villages like Aljezur, Querença, Alte, S. Brás de Alportel, Vila Real de Santo António, or Alcoutim, where the houses are white, each with its own original chimney and the locals meet every Sunday, for church.



It tastes like sweet potatoes that grow in our lands, sweetened by the sun and so packed of flavour that major chefs can't resist to use in their creations.

It has the kick of the medronho (arbutus), a fruit grown in the mountains that once caught, fermented and processed is turned into the medronho liquor.



It smells like fresh oranges, juicy and sweet, a quality brand known all over the country and in Europe. An unforgettable flavour.

It is carved all over the sea rocks, where barnacles and mussels are harvested. And they taste like the sea on your plate.



THE ALGARVE SOUL



It smells of almond blossom, little white flowers on delicate trees, that in ancient arab legends saved the love of a beautiful northern princess and her "algarvian" prince.

It breezes in the terraces of traditional houses, where voluptuous figs and dried carob give way to more living space in our days.



It tastes like salt flower, a seasoning made from fine crystals collected from the Algarve salt pans. An healthy gourmet product that enhances flavour.

It swims with seahorses, an endangered species that has its largest existing community in the world in the Algarve.



It changes colour with the chameleons, those little beings that look straight out of the Jurassic Age.



And it tells tales of the Portuguese Discoveries. Fortaleza de Sagres brings us to the iconic Henry the Navigator. And one of the most beautiful cities in the region, Lagos, owes its monumentality to the maritime expansion. 600 years ago, the strategic location of the region and the tradition of the Algarve sailors brought the world to Europe.



WITH ALL THESE AMAZING INGREDIENTS AND OTHERS WE LEFT OUT FOR YOU TO DISCOVER ON YOUR OWN, YOU HAVE THE PERFECT EXCUSE TO COME TO THE ALGARVE. AS IF YOU NEED ONE! WE AWAIT YOU!

USEFUL CONTACTS

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER

INTOXICATIONS LINE

RED CROSS (FARO)

CIVIL PROTECTION

FOREST PROTECTION LINE

FARO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

CP - PORTUGUESE RAILWAYS

EVA TRANSPORTS

SOS 112

(+351) 808 250 143

(+351) 289 899 903

(+351) 289 887 510

117

(+351) 289 800 800 | www.ana.pt

(+351) 808 208 208 | www.cp.pt

(+351) 289 899 700 | www.eva-bus.com



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Algarve Tourism Bureau
Registered Office:
Av. 5 de Outubro, nº 18
8000-076 Faro, Portugal

Tel: (+351) 289 800 403
Fax: (+351) 289 800 466
E-mail: ata@atalgarve.pt
www.algarvepromotion.pt

Coordination

Marketing Department
hcruz@atalgarve.pt

Texts

Event Point

Photography

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