



Photo: European Bee-eater, by Pedro Marques

Short-break Birdwatching Programme in Portugal

Algarve and Alentejo

Birds & Nature Tours Portugal

Overview

Portugal possesses a fantastic diversity of habitats and consequently of birds in a relatively small area, so the birding programmes designed by Birds & Nature Tours enable you to visit several species rich areas without needing to travel long distances.

In practical terms, only 20 and 40 minutes drive from Faro city centre and its International Airport, one can visit respectively the Ria Formosa Nature Park and the Castro Marim Nature Reserve, two remarkable protected wetlands with extensive bird lists that include species like Greater Flamingo, White Stork, Glossy Ibis, Squacco and Purple Herons, Little Bustard, Pallid Swift, Bluethroat, Spotless Starling and an excellent selection of ducks, waders, gulls and terns. Some of the places visited are unique in Portugal as sites for rare and highly localized species, like Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls and Lesser

Short-toed Lark. Other places visited here are excellent spots for obtaining close views of scarce species like Purple Swamphen and Little Bittern. Red-necked Nightjar, Eurasian Hoopoe, European Bee-eater, Sardinian and Spectacled Warblers and Iberian Magpie are particularly abundant here.

A further one hour's drive takes you to other complementary biotopes and consequently new bird species in the Alentejo. Here, you will visit both the rolling plains of Castro Verde (the home of Great Bustard, Montagu's Harrier, Lesser Kestrel, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Great Spotted Cuckoo, European Roller, Calandra Lark, Rufous Bush Robin, Black-eared Wheatear, etc...) and the bluffs and hills of the Guadiana Valley Nature Park, noted for species like Iberian Imperial, Golden and Bonelli's Eagles, Eurasian Black and Griffon Vultures, Black Stork, Eurasian Eagle Owl, White-rumped Swift, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Blue Rock Thrush, Golden Oriole and Rock Bunting.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Transfer from Faro Airport (or from your Algarve hotel). Travel to the Hotel Vila Galé Albacora or to the Hotel Monte do Álamo (Tavira), in the Algarve region. Visit the complex of canals, saline flats and salt pans of the Castro Marim Nature Reserve and of the Tavira area (Ria Formosa Nature Park). Overnight stay at the Hotel Vila Galé Albacora or Hotel Monte do Álamo.

Day 2 – Visit several habitats such as dunes, open water, inter-tidal mudflats, salt marshes, salt pans, reed beds, lagoons and pine woods of other areas of the Ria Formosa Nature Park (Quinta do Lago and Ludo). Overnight stay at the Hotel Vila Galé Albacora or Hotel Monte do Álamo.

Day 3 – Travel to the Hotel Museu (Mértola) or Casa de Campo da Herdade da Apariça (Castro Verde), in the Alentejo region. Visit the great Castro Verde rolling plains. Overnight stay at the Hotel Museu or Casa de Campo da Herdade da Apariça.

Day 4 – Visit the bluffs and hills of the Guadiana Valley Nature Park, including the Mértola, Mina de São Domingos and Alcaria Ruiva areas. Overnight stay at the Hotel Museu or Casa de Campo da Herdade da Apariça.

Day 5 – Return to Faro, visiting on the way the Salgados lagoon. Visit other interesting sites at the Ria Formosa Nature Park. Transfer to Faro Airport for return flight (or to your Algarve hotel).

Note: If you prefer to arrive at and depart from Lisbon Airport, we also have a Short-break Programme including the Lisbon estuaries and the Alentejo, available from there.

Prices

1.290 euros per person (2 people). Price include guide fees, transfer from/to the airport/hotel, ground transport (in vehicles with air-conditioning), accommodation (including breakfast), free use of optical equipment (quality binoculars and telescopes) and field guides, bird list, entrance fees to private or protected areas, participant's accident insurance and VAT. Single supplement: 130 euros. Not included are flights, meals and items of a personal nature. Meals in selected restaurants can be included if you wish. Please note the price per person will be reduced as the number of participants increases.

For enquiries, please contact us:

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