



Photo: Great Spotted Cuckoo, by Fáisca

Short-break Birdwatching Programme in Portugal

Lisbon Estuaries 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, you will find within half an hour's drive from Lisbon city centre and its International Airport the Tagus Estuary and the Sado Estuary Nature Reserves. These two remarkable protected wetland areas have extensive bird lists that include Greater Flamingo, White Stork, Glossy Ibis, Squacco and Purple Herons, Black-winged Kite, Purple Swamphen, Little Bustard, Collared Pratincole, Pallid Swift, Eurasian Hoopoe, European Bee-eater, Bluethroat, Iberian Chiffchaff, Iberian Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Iberian Magpie, Spotless Starling, Rock Sparrow and European Serin and an excellent selection of ducks, waders, gulls and terns.

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 Lisbon Airport (or from your Lisbon hotel). Travel to the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes (Alcochete) or Hotel do Sado (Setúbal). Visit several areas and a variety of habitats within the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of Hortas, the salt pans of Atalaya, Ribeira das Enguias and Samouco and the Barroca d'Alva rice fields and pastures. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes or Hotel do Sado.

Day 2 – Visit other interesting sites of the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the open fields, rice fields, reed beds, lagoons, inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of the Ponta da Erva area and the cork oak woodlands of Pancas. During the breeding season, we visit a heronry on the Tagus river. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes or Hotel do Sado.

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 Lisbon, visiting on the way the inter-tidal mudflats, salt marshes and rice fields of Comporta and Carrasqueira (Sado Estuary Nature Reserve). Cross the river Sado by ferry, with a good chance of seeing small pods of Bottle-nosed Dolphins. Transfer to Lisbon Airport for return flight (or to your Lisbon hotel).

Note: If you prefer to arrive at and depart from Faro Airport, we also have a Short-break Programme including the Algarve 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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