

The Algarve Rediscovered

28 February 2017



With more than 100 miles of sun-kissed coastline, Portugal's southernmost region, the Algarve, enjoys a well-deserved reputation for its idyllic beaches, beautiful bays and ever-changing seascapes.

Just inland, the Algarve has even more to offer, with delightfully varied landscapes: think rolling plains, cork oak forests and verdant mountain ranges. Boasting 300 days of sunshine a year, with mild winters and delightful spring and autumn months, the Algarve is perfect for visiting at any time of the year.

Rediscover the Algarve, off season and away from the crowds – from walking and cycling adventures to wellness, spa and cultural highlights, here is a selection of holidays to the Algarve from the AITO experts.

Rediscover... on foot

Find a coast of many colours at the Costa Vicentina National Park – from £628 pp with Inntravel

Discover the quiet side of the Algarve on a leisurely self-guided, hotel-to-hotel walking holiday in the Costa Vicentina National Park. Staying in a delightful blend of modern and traditional accommodation – including the unique village-hotel of Pedralva – explore a fabulous variety of scenery, from the turquoise sea on the dramatic south coast, through the pastoral heartland of the Algarve. Here, tranquil farmsteads are scattered among lush green valleys and wooded hills coated in acacia blossom and wildflowers and, in the west, there are seemingly endless golden sands. [A Coast of Many Colours](#) costs from £628 pp (two sharing), including seven nights' B&B accommodation, four dinners, three picnics and detailed route notes and maps. Flights extra. Departures are available from March to May and from September to December 2017. Call Inntravel on 01653 617 001 (www.inntravel.co.uk).

Walk the remote coastal trails of historic Sagres – from £870 pp with Explore

This eight-day [Remote Coastal Trails of Portugal](#) trip offers easy-graded walking, based in the small coastal and historically significant town of Sagres. Enjoy the views from the beautiful coastal paths, discover impressive cliffs and quiet sandy beaches, plus walk the last section of the long-distance *Rota Vicentina* path to Cabo Sao Vicente – the lighthouse at the most south-westerly point of Europe. Then pass the remarkable rock formations at Ponta de Piedade near Lagos and explore the historic harbour town of Sagres. The holiday costs from £870 pp (two sharing), including flights (London), seven nights' B&B at Hotel Navigator, transport and the services of an Explore leader and driver. Departures are available from March to May and from September to November 2017. Call Explore on 01252 884 723 (www.explore.co.uk).

Explore truly charming Tavira, the pearl of The Algarve – from £875 pp with Ramblers Walking Holidays

With its ancient castle and historic fishing harbour, cobbled streets and shady plazas, Tavira is one of the most attractive towns along the Algarve coast. The ancient Ponta Romana bridges the Rio Sequa, separating the two sides of the town, narrow streets lead between whitewashed buildings and, at the centre, lies the lovely Parca da Republica square, bordered by trees, water and restaurants. This seven-night walking holiday explores the National Park, with rambles leading to pretty coastal villages including Santa Luiza, Cabanas and Cacula Velha. Inland, trails wind between hills and valleys to the low peak of Zimbral, which offers extensive views. [Tavira Pearl of The Algarve](#) costs from £875 pp (two sharing), including flights (Gatwick), half-board hotel accommodation, transfers and the services of a leader. Call Ramblers Walking Holidays (offers escorted group tours) on 01707 818 458 (www.ramblersholidays.co.uk).

Rediscover... by bicycle

Algarve Cycling Week – from £590 pp with A Cycling Experience

Based in the lively town of Albufeira, this seven-night guided holiday is ideal for enthusiastic cyclists looking to improve their fitness, whilst enjoying the excellent cycling conditions the Algarve has to offer. The action-packed itinerary includes five guided tours which follow specially-picked scenic routes, and accommodation at a four-star hotel situated on Albufeira's main beach. Enjoy coastal cycling through Armação de Pêra, Benagil, Carvoeiro and on to Ferragudo – a pretty village on the eastern bank of the Arade river – as well as inland routes away from busy tourist resorts, including the historical town of Silves, the small town of

Benfim and rural Tor. Guests can recuperate after each day's cycling in the hotel's outdoor pool, gym, wellness and spa facilities, including hydro massages and a Turkish bath. For travel in March, [Algarve Cycling Week](#) costs from £760 pp (two sharing), including BA flights (Heathrow) and four-star B&B accommodation. Call A Cycling Experience on 01494 875 164 (www.acyclingexperience.com).

Rediscover... a health and wellbeing destination

Banish stress at the brand new Anantara Vilamoura Resort – from £1,043 pp with Classic Collection

Less than a three-hour flight from the UK, and with its spectacular beaches and year-round warm climate, the Algarve offers the perfect wellbeing break for those seeking sun, stunning scenery and relaxation. In April 2017, the prestigious Anantara brand launches in Europe with the Anantara Vilamoura Resort, specialising in Asian-inspired therapies based on centuries-old techniques. Rooted in the timeless healing traditions of the world's richest cultures, Anantara Spas aim to restore balance and harmony between body and mind in an oasis of beauty, grace and tranquillity. The world's most exotic elixirs and oils are used in treatments designed to deliver radiance, healing and a quiet sense of inner and outer well-being. Departing in May, a seven-night holiday costs from £1,043 pp (two sharing a deluxe room), including flights (Gatwick), B&B and private transfers. Call Classic Collection Holidays on 0800 294 9323 (www.classic-collection.co.uk).

Rediscover... cultural Algarve

Explore the hidden Algarve on an eight-night fly-drive holiday – from £720 pp with Sunvil

Combining two properties to highlight the unspoilt sides of both the western and eastern Algarve – with distances surprisingly short and easy to navigate – this eight-night itinerary includes car hire so that travellers can explore and immerse themselves in the culture, history and landscapes of the region. Split equally between Quinta Bonita, a boutique property just outside Lagos in the west of the Algarve, and Quinta do Marco, a family-run, 45-acre estate with thousands of fruit and olive trees in the east, near Tavira, there's much to enjoy while exploring rural byways and villages. Spring flowers appear in March, and the westernmost coast in particular is stunning, and will challenge keen photographers to capture the never-ending vistas of empty beaches, bays and Atlantic waves. [Hidden Algarve](#) costs from £720 pp (two sharing), including flights (Gatwick), eight nights' B&B and car hire. Departures are available from March to October. Call Sunvil on 020 8758 4722 (www.sunvil.co.uk).

Ends

Note to Editors:

AITO, established in 1976, is an alliance of over 120 specialist holiday companies, all of which offer full financial protection to their clients and all of which are proud of their expertise and knowledge, the quality of service offered and the emphasis which they place on Sustainable Tourism. AITO members together offer holidays and travel arrangements around the globe, with a huge array of niche holiday ideas that simply can't be found elsewhere. Visit www.aito.com for a full list of members and the destinations which they serve.

Press: For more information about AITO (www.aito.com), please contact Sue Ockwell or Rebecca Milne at Travel PR (020 8891 4440, s.ockwell@travelpr.co.uk or r.milne@travelpr.co.uk).

For the latest Directory of AITO members' PR contacts, please [click here](#).

Travel PR will happily email all AITO members with any queries that travel writers may have – it's a great way to receive speedy feedback or information from AITO experts via just one email request.

Issued by Travel PR on behalf of
The Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO),
18 Bridle Lane, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 3EG
Telephone: +44 (0)20 8744 9280

www.aito.com