



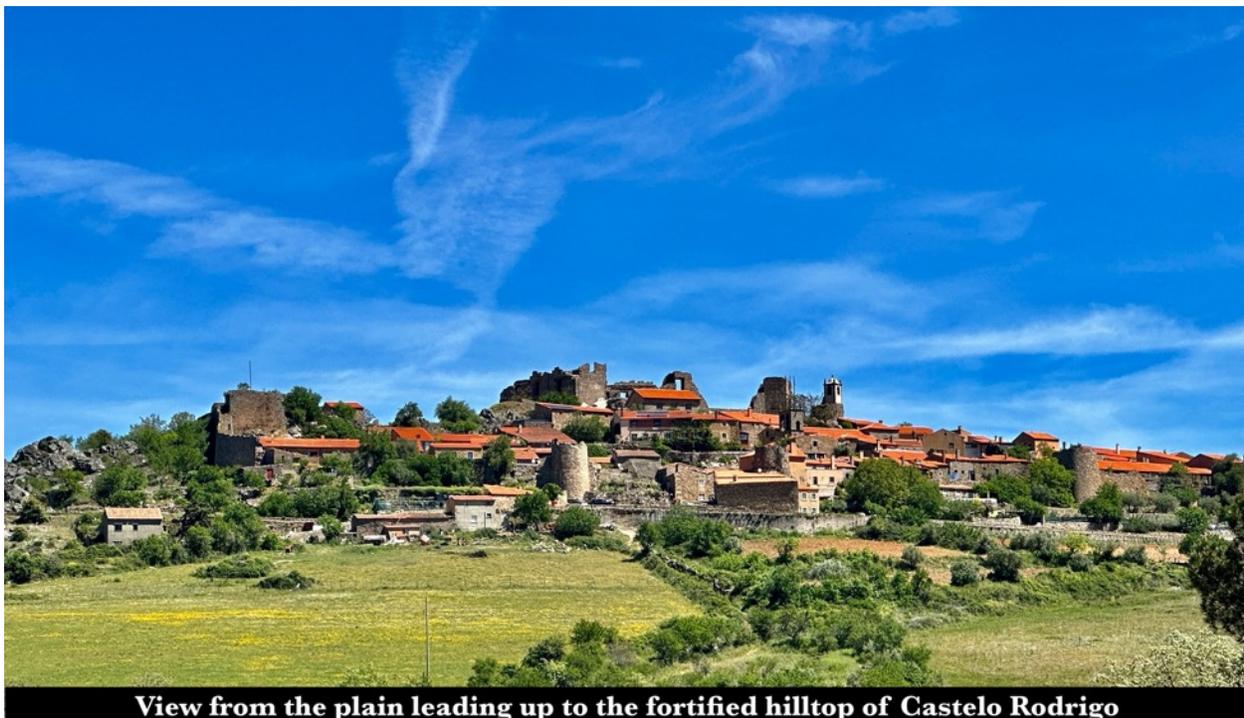
Hidden Treasures of Portugal's Green Coast

A 12-Day Exploratory Journey

Sept. 30 - Oct.12

Sept. 30th	Arrival day - stay in Porto
Oct. 1st, 2nd & 3rd	Castelo Rodrigo and surrounding region
Oct. 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th	Peneda - Geres National Park
Oct. 8th, 9th, 10th	The coastal town of Viana do Castelo
Oct. 11th	Historic Porto
Oct. 12th	Departure day

*The small mountain village of **Castelo Rodrigo**, nestled along the Spanish border, will become the starting point for our adventure. The site of a Romanesque/Medieval castle keep, this quaint village has 360 degree views of the fertile valley below, the Estrela mountains in the southwest, and the Spanish*



View from the plain leading up to the fortified hilltop of Castelo Rodrigo

highlands to the East. Cobbled streets, lots of ups and downs, cozy cafes hidden behind stony facades offering views to the world beyond, wonderful food, and, of all things, craft beer a relative rarity in Portugal. We will be headquartered in the Casa da Cisterna named after the large centrally located village cistern just below the castle heights. The owners have created a lodging experience not in one building but in renovated village homes that lie in a consolidated area of the village. A unique experience to say the least, living amongst neighbors in this quaint mountain enclave. Great food, warm weather, and a warmth of hospitality that can only be experienced in Portugal. What we found most interesting was that there were several notable castles in the region with hiking trails linking some of them together. Great opportunities for biking and exploring the surrounding waterways of the Duoro river valley, before we move on...

Peneda Geres, the country's national park, reflects the reverence the Portugese have for the natural resources of their land. It can be said that Peneda Geres is



the national park of the Portugese people. Only an hour from the coast, Geres epitomizes all the that the Green coast region has to offer. Mountainous woodlands, lush green forest and countless waterfalls are encountered around

every hairpin turn. Torturous mountain roads ascended the heights eventually leading up to an expansive Pousada, the name for the traditional roadhouses that were scattered across the country in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Our Pousada offers wonderful views of the lake and waterways, 2000 feet below. A wonderful patio overlooking the landscape fronting an intriguing post and beam style restaurant with smokey aromas completing the ambience and atmosphere that travelers enjoyed in the past. The park has amazing relief, hiking trails for all skill levels, horseback riding, and thermal hot spring pools to relax in after a day on the trail. Of course, there is paddling of all sorts on the mountain lake from kayaks to paddle boards and even paddle boats for those of us who want a lower body workout. Our on-water time here will get us ready for some serious beach time next.

The Feelviana Resort in Viana do Castelo is a magical wellness retreat offering everything from massage and yoga to surfing, kitesurfing, paddle boarding, biking and e-biking opportunities. This is an outdoor lover's paradise with spacious rooms and impeccable service. Culinary delights abound from unique



local delicacies to traditional Portuguese fare. From our perspective it blends the



finer aspects of recreation and relaxation perfectly. Guests can always find something to do, whether it's a workout with a personal trainer, relaxing in a Turkish bath or just finding a quiet corner or cozy nook on the property to sit and read. The staff is welcoming, always helpful, and more than willing to offer suggestions. Even the short walk on the raised walkways that lead to the beach is pleasurable and if you are not ready to be water active, you can easily find a comfy place in the sand to be "inactive" and just enjoy the breeze, the sun, and the smiling faces of the people you'll meet on the beach. That, in and of itself, is worth a visit to the beach.

We'll wind our way south, back to Porto. Of all Portugal's major cities, Porto, to us is the most authentic, still a little gritty, a reflection of the way things were. Its steep hills and welcoming plazas are complemented by its many cafes and watering holes and infinite choices of food to satisfy any gastronomic desire. It is safe, reeks of history, and offers so much to see and do. Definitely a fitting conclusion to our exploration.

\$7495 per person double occupancy;
\$8300 single occupancy

SIGN UP by 7/18/23, & SAVE 10%
\$6745 each for double occupancy
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