

Self-Guided Walking in Douro

Trip Code: SGDW

Version: SGDW Self-Guided Walking in the Douro



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



LEISURELY



HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy a scenic rail journey from Porto to Peso da Regua, gateway to the Alta Douro
- Stay in welcoming sleepy villages and discover the warm Portuguese hospitality
- Discover Porto, steeped in history and decorated with spectacular Azulejo tiles
- Hike through tranquil orchards, olive groves and vineyards accompanied by spectacular views

AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 6 days walking and sightseeing
- Private airport transfer on arrival
- Private transfer from Pinhao to Porto
- Port wine tasting
- Daily departures available
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Join at Porto Airport

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 5 Lunches
- 2 nights Hotel
- 2 nights Guesthouse
- 2 nights Guesthouse with swimming pool
- 1 nights Hotel with swimming pool

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Discover the magnificent Alto Douro on this one week self-guided walking holiday. The beauty of this rural landscape, punctuated with sleepy villages, is that no matter what the season, the landscape provides the entertainment. Whether it is the colourful blossom and wild flowers which paint the hillside, or watching in fascination as the locals come together for harvesting, you will be sure to fall in love with the Portuguese rural life. A place where life slows down and you can appreciate the simple things; good food, good wine and good company all within a beautiful UNESCO landscape.

Starting your trip with a private transfer to Porto you can enjoy a night in this culturally rich port before slowing things down on a scenic rail journey to Peso da Regua, the gateway to the Alto Douro. Your hikes will take you through orchards and vineyards where you can sample the produce and, to sleepy villages where your welcoming guesthouses await with a friendly face and a pool inviting you for cooling dip. Hiking up to 16km a day at your own pace, you will have plenty of time to pause and appreciate the flora and fauna. Ending your trip in Pinhao, on the northern banks of the Douro, a private transfer will take you back to Porto. You may opt to extend your stay to enjoy the contrasting hustle and bustle, after your week of tranquillity among the vines and pastoral scenes of the Douro valley.

Is this holiday for you?

If you love to get off the beaten track, enjoy great wines and great food, then you are going to fall in love with the Douro. Away from the crowds where life slows down and you can really get to embrace the culture and traditions of rural Portugal. Watch locals busy away in the orchards and vineyards and enjoy the warm hospitality of family run boutique guesthouses and inns. Walking up to 16km a day through tranquil landscapes and enveloped in the birdsong and constant shush of crickets to reach villages and your accommodations. We have included a wine tasting so you can appreciate the produce that has made the region famous. The perfect unwind!

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Take your private transfer to Porto and explore the city.

Arrive in Porto, home of port wine, merchant history and stately bridges joining the city over the River Douro. Your driver will be waiting to transfer you from Porto Airport to your hotel for the evening.

Depending on your arrival time you may wish to explore this beautiful coastal city, we recommend paying a visit to Igreja de Sao Francisco for views over the river and walking through the Ribeira district where the medieval streets house many welcoming cafes and picturesque backstreets.



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Enjoy a scenic rail journey to Peso da Regua.

Waking up to the fantastic Portuguese hospitality, you can enjoy a relaxed breakfast before being collected by your driver and taken to the train station. Here, you will take a scenic rail journey through the northern countryside to Peso da Regua on the banks of the River Douro, watching the landscape change along the way and relaxing into the rural way of life which will shape the rest of your trip. Peso da Regua is a pioneer in the world of wine, and is the founding town of the Royal Company of Vine Growers. Douro now proudly possess a formal demarcation (D.O.C), protecting the heritage of Port wine since 1756. It is from this bustling rural town that the barrels of port were transported down the river to Vila Nova de Gaia for aging in the wine lodge.

You will have time to settle into your hotel, and relax into the Douro way of life. Pay a visit to the Douro Museum, or take a stroll through the town and perhaps enjoy a taste of the regions famed wine at one of the nearby wineries.

Meals: **B**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 3

Say farewell to Peso da Regua and enter into a world of vineyards, birdsong and rural villages as you make your way to Aldeia de Baixo.

Your first walk of the week will take you through this magnificent landscape to Aldeia de Baixo. You'll notice here the contrast of rugged untouched hillside against perfectly cultivated vineyards, olive groves, and orchards of cherry and apple trees.

Crossing the river you will leave Peso da Regua behind you and enter into a world of vineyards, birdsong and welcoming villages. This is 'real' Portugal, away from the tourist hotspots, a place where you can experience authentic rural life and enjoy the simple things; beautiful countryside, great walking and deliciously fresh produce. Along your way you will encounter several sleepy villages where you can stop for coffee and perhaps enjoy a slice of Borrachao, a local speciality cake made with port from the surrounding area.

Arriving at your home for the next two nights, your hosts will be ready to welcome you. You will have time to relax in the gardens and perhaps take a dip in the pool (seasonal) before venturing out to one of the nearby restaurants where you will find hearty stews and home grown vegetables featuring on the menu.

Meals: **B L**


Accommodation

Guesthouse with swimming pool


Ascent

706M


Descent

226M


Distance

16KM

DAY 4

Discover Salzedas Monastery on your tranquil walk from Salzedas to Aldeia de Baixo.

Waking in this idyllic part of the Douro, you can enjoy a relaxed breakfast before taking a short private transfer to the neighbouring village of Salzedas, home to the lovely Cistercian monastery. Dating back to the mid-12th century it was once one of the richest monasteries in Portugal, you will have time to visit and explore the peaceful village, and perhaps enjoy a coffee, before starting your walk. Today's route is particularly beautiful in spring as the apple and cherry orchards you will walk through are in blossom and the wild flowers are in abundance. As you make your way north towards Aldeia de Baixo you can enjoy the mountain views of the Alto Douro and majestic Alvao Natural Park.

Arriving back at your welcoming guest house you can enjoy cooling off in the pool or perhaps relaxing in the garden with a good book before dinner.

Meals: **B L**


Accommodation

Guesthouse with swimming pool


Ascent

348M


Descent

322M


Distance

15KM

DAY 5

Discover the UNESCO landscape of the Douro Valley and enjoy a wine tasting at Quinta do Tedo.

Today begins with a short transfer to the nearby town of Armamar. You will have time to explore the town before setting off through the rural landscape towards today's delight; the UNESCO World Heritage Landscape of the Douro Valley itself. Heading north of Armamar, towards the sleepy village of Vacalar, you will acquire your first taste of the dramatic landscape of the Douro Valley with its endless terraced slopes leading down to the mighty River Douro from which the region has gained its name. You will meander your way through this verdant landscape towards your final goal of the day- Quinta do Tedo. Here, we have arranged a wine tasting for you, after all, part of embracing the culture is sampling the local produce!

When you have finished sampling the fantastic local wines and learning of the wonderful production methods, you will be transferred to the nearby town of Tabuaco where you will be welcomed by your hosts for the next two nights.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Guesthouse		Ascent 356M		Descent 814M		Distance 9KM
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DAY 6

Hike through a contrasting landscape on a circular walk from Tabuaco.

Your route today is one of contrasting landscapes as you make your way through boulder-strewn hillsides above Tabuaco, along the undulating slopes of the Douro Valley and along plateaus providing far reaching views. Leaving Tabuaco you will ascend to Barcos, one of the Douros's six official wine producing villages. You will have time to enjoy a morning coffee before heading on your way towards the Douro River, seeing the landscape change from small independent farms to large, perfectly manicured vineyards. Reaching the half way point of your walk you will be greeted by far reaching views over the UNESCO landscape as the Douro snakes its way through the hillside. A view worthy of a picnic stop!

Passing through the lovely village of Adorigo you return towards Tabuaco accompanied by birdsong and beautiful scent of the wild flowers. Arriving back at your hotel you will have time to unwind and freshen up before enjoying the local delights in one of the nearby restaurants. Roast lamb is a specialty of this area.

Meals: **B L**





	Accommodation Guesthouse		Ascent 417M		Descent 431M		Distance 17KM
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DAY 7

Hike to the bustling town of Pinhao through the tapestry of vineyards.

After a relaxed breakfast you will be transferred to the nearby village of Valenca do Douro with views across to the interesting circular building of the Quinta das Carvalhas estate, dating back to 1759 and still one of the largest producers in the area. You will have time to explore the village and its unique little castle perched on the hill above it, before setting off on your hike. Your walk will take you through the heart of the village to traverse the slopes of this magnificent hillside. The landscape here really is a tapestry of vineyards with each local producer having their own plantation pattern. Arriving in the village of Sarzedinho you can enjoy a morning coffee before continuing to snake your way around the hillside towards the banks of the River Douro. Crossing this meandering river you will arrive into Pinhao and your final hotel of the week where you can enjoy a cooling dip in the pool before exploring this laidback town and appreciate the local produce in a nearby restaurant.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 325M		Descent 635M		Distance 16KM
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DAY 8

Departure Day.

Enjoy a leisurely morning before being collected for your private transfer back to Porto whether that be to the airport in time for your flight or into the city to enjoy a couple of additional nights before your onward journey.

For those who are not rushing back for a flight, we recommend taking time to enjoy a boat ride along the River Douro. There are many options to choose from but the 2 hour excursion offered by the boat companies is usually the best option. Taking you from Pinhao winding through the terraced vineyards of the UNESCO World Heritage Site with an audio guide and a glass of Port included you a enjoy a relaxed insight into the beautiful landscape you have been exploring throughout the week. A stunning end your trip before taking your transfer to Porto.

Meals: **B**

	Ascent 131M		Descent 484M		Distance 9KM
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Holiday Information

What's Included

- Luggage transfers
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- App with trail information for use on a smartphone
- Tour and tasting session at Quinta do Tedo winery
- Private transfer from Porto Airport to Porto hotel on day 1
- Private transfer from Pinhao to Port or Porto Airport on day 8
- Transfers to/from your walks as per itinerary

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to Porto to join the tour
- Travel from Porto at the end of your tour
- Train tickets to Pinhao
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist Taxes may apply and are usually under 5 Euros per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

GPS Travel App

This holiday is led by a self-guided travel app, which contains the personalised details of your complete holiday itinerary. This includes the GPS-led routes for you to follow on your self-guided walking tours, as well as attractions, coffee stops and points of interest in the towns along the way. The app does not need to have Wi-Fi connection to work, you simply follow the instructions we provide you to download the app to your phone before you leave home and you are ready to go.

Each mobile comes with a different expected battery life so we suggest you pack a spare battery pack with you just in case you require it.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

This trip starts at Porto Airport, where your driver will be waiting to drive you to your hotel in Porto. Porto Airport is well connected with many departures from UK regional airports.

The trip ends in Pinhao where you will be collected by your driver for your private transfer to Porto Airport, or, if you have booked additional nights in Porto at the end of your trip you will be taken to your hotel.

For those who wish to book additional nights in Porto you can make your way to Porto Airport via the Metro for approximately €3. The journey takes approximately 30 minutes and the service runs every 20 minutes. For more information please visit www.metrodoporto.pt

Alternatively, we offer a private transfer to Porto Airport from your accommodation. Please ask our sales team for a quotation.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the opportunity to enjoy dining in one of the local restaurants. We have also included 5 packed lunches to allow you to enjoy lunch with a view while out on your walks.

Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The Portuguese are passionate about food. It is a reason for celebration, time with family and socialising with friends, and as is typical in much of Southern Europe, evening meals are enjoyed late into the evenings with a glass of wine. Portugal's national obsession is Bacalhau, a dried salted cod which will feature heavily on menus alongside other delicious seafood. After all Portugal has almost 1800km of coastline. But it is not all just seafood. Porto and the Douro valley are known for their good wines and simple, but delicious, local cuisine. Local specialities include the caldo verde, or 'green soup', a cabbage soup containing chorizo. There are also a variety of sausages and slow cooked casseroles commonly offered- perfect after a day in the vineyards.

Whilst in Porto, you must be sure to sample 'francesinha'. Calorie heavy, but extremely delicious, this glorified sandwich is made from bread, wet-cured ham, sausage, steak and egg, all drowning in melted cheese and served with a spicy tomato and beer sauce! Note that vegetarian options, though available in northern Portugal, will be less varied. When it comes to drink, wine lovers will be in their element. Port wines are of course a must when visiting this region. Ports can be ruby, tawny, white and rosé and during the holiday there will be plenty of opportunity to sample the different varieties of this rich and delicious fortified wine.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

On this trip you will stay in a selection of comfortable guesthouses and 3* or 4* hotels each offering warm hospitality and beautiful locations. Each hotel brings its own charm whether it's a small family run guesthouse offering beautiful gardens to relax or a hotel with a swimming pool to cool down after a day on the go on your feet.

All our accommodations are booked on bed and breakfast basis in a twin or double room and have Wi-Fi available too. Many accommodations have restaurants, perfect for those days when you just want to relax in your hotel after a busy day exploring.

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you wish to extend your time in Porto and enjoy all the buzz of the fabulous port city. Please speak to our sales team for more information.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your ride. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is under 20kg and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning. You will also need a daypack to carry your daily essentials with you.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Travelling with children aged 17yrs and under, who are not with their parent or legal guardian - Portugal

Children aged 17 and under travelling to Portugal alone or in the company of a person who is not their parent or legal guardian, must either:

- be met at the airport or point of entry by their parent or guardian, or carry a letter of authorisation to travel from their parent or guardian. The letter should name the adult
- in Portugal who will be responsible for them during their stay and the identification and contacts details of the parent or guardian.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace however getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking approximately 15 km per day with up to 700m of ascent for consecutive days.

Climate

The climate in this part of Portugal is mild with wet winter months and warm pleasant summers for walking with the cooling breeze of the Atlantic. The hottest months are July and August with temperatures reaching up to 25-30 degrees. From April onwards the green vines will be starting to transform the hillsides in the Douro once again. Mid to late September the grape harvest will be well underway and by early October the hills will be starting to take on a warm autumnal hue.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

The Portuguese: The Land and its People, Marion Kaplan

Pocket Porto, Lonely Planet

Douro Valley: Journeys and Stories, Sergion and Susana Fonseca

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

Equipment Information

Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good grip soles
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Long/short hiking trousers
- Hiking socks
- Waterproof Jacket
- Waterproof Trousers
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses

- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics
- Walking poles
- Headtorch & spare batteries
- Your self-guided route notes

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons on twin/double occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Why Choose KE

Why KE?

Explore one of the quieter regions of Portugal away from the coastal crowds, in the fabulous wine country of the Douro Alto. We have included private transfers from/to Porto Airport so you can relax from the start to end of your trip, and also included a wine tasting so you can appreciate the magnificent Douro region's biggest export.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 29/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change