Walking the Western Algarve



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Portugal	3 & 5	736kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The Western Algarve offers dramatic coastal walks to secluded coves, golden beaches, and quiet fishing villages. Take in Atlantic Ocean views on the Seven Hanging Valleys trail and visit Cape St Vincent, a spectacular headland that marks mainland Europe's most south-westerly point. We'll also explore the forests around the Serra de Monchique Mountains and spend time in towns and villages where some of history's greatest civilisations have left their mark.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Discovering this wild and western coast on foot
- Exploring charming fishing villages
- Visiting Cape St Vincent, Europe's most south-westerly point
- Heading for the hills of the Serra de Monchique
- Walking the famous Seven Hanging Valleys Trail
- Staying in the charming coastal town of Praia da Rocha

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A choice of two walks a day with experienced local leaders

- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights at the 4-star AP Oriental Beach Hotel
- 7 breakfasts, 5 packed lunches, & 7 dinners
- Welcome drink on arrival & selected drinks with dinner
- All transport to and from walks
- Return flights from the UK with baggage and transfer

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 ARRIVAL DAY

Arrive at your hotel in Praia da Rocha. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 Lagos Coastline

With sandstone cliffs towering over the turquoise sea below, the dramatic coastline to the west of Lagos is one of the most spectacular natural features of the Algarve.

Lagos' lighthouse sits atop the Ponta da Piedade headland, where a network of boardwalks allows visitors to enjoy the impressive display of jagged rock arches, sea stacks, and caves.

Option 1 - Lagos Coastline: Porto de Mós To Lagos

Distance: 4.3 miles (7km)

Ascent: 396ft (121m)

Our easier walk begins in the charming village of Porto de Mós village, known for its vast golden-sand beach. We'll set off on a scenic cliff-top hiking trail that leads to Ponta da Piedade.

After marvelling at the far-reaching coastal views, we'll continue walking along the boardwalks to reach the old quarter of Lagos. This historic town sits at the mouth of the Bensafrim River and bears remnants of Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, and Moorish architecture. If time allows, stop by the beautiful Santo Antonio church, also known as the golden church thanks to its impressive Baroque gilt work. After a short break we'll return to the hotel.

Option 2 - The Algarve West Side: Praia da Luz To Lagos

Distance: 7.4miles (12 km)

Ascent: 908ft (277m)

Descent: 1007ft (307m)

The harder walk option today starts in pretty Praia da Luz, a small village set around a sandy bay, sheltered from the Atlantic by towering cliffs. From here, we'll climb to the Rocha Negra headland, a unique local natural feature of volcanic origin from 150 million years ago.

Take in the views as we follow the cliff tops, before descending into Porto de Mós village. From there, we'll follow the same route as option 1 above, passing through Ponta da Piedade and Lagos on our way back to the hotel.

Day 3 SILVES, THE ORANGE CAPITAL

Sitting above the Arade River, Silves was the first capital of the Algarve during the Moorish period.

Its rich historical past is reflected in the terracotta-coloured Castle, in the ancient mosque converted into a catholic cathedral, and in the centuries-old cobbled streets. The nearby Roman Bridge is another testimony to the town's ancient settlements. The green surroundings of Silves rise gently from the River valley, dotted with citrus orchards and almond groves.

These fertile lands are famed for producing the sweeter and juicier oranges of the Algarve, becoming a symbol of the region.

Option 1 - Ilha do Rosário

Distance: 8km (4.9miles)

Ascent: 45ft (14m)

The levadas of Silves are historical irrigation channels that meander through the fertile countryside, carrying water from the hills to orchards and farmland.v These stone-lined waterways have shaped the landscape for centuries, supporting the region's abundant citrus groves, almond trees, and traditional dry orchards that define Silves' agricultural heritage. Nearby, we find the Ilha do Rosário, a tranquil river island that sits on the junction between the Ribeira de Odelouca and the Arade River.

Option 2 - Sítio das Fontes Walk

Distance: 10km (6.2 miles)

Ascent: 213 ft (65m)

Descent: 229ft (70m)

Our walk starts in Estômbar, a small village winding through dry orchards and fertile farmland, offering expansive views of the fields, groves, and the distant Silves hills. Along the way, you pass the tranquil Sítio das Fontes, a serene spot where natural springs nourish the surrounding greenery. The route follows the contours of the Arade River, creating a scenic corridor of calm waters and riverside vegetation. As you approach Silves, the town's historic skyline emerges, crowned by the imposing Silves Castle, with the Roman Bridge connecting past and present.

Day 4 **Sagres & The History of the Empire**

The soaring sea cliffs of Sagres provide views over some of the Algarve's most dramatic scenery. Europe's most south-westerly point is Cape St Vincent, a wild, windswept headland of jagged cliffs that rise to 70 metres above the crashing waves. Perched atop the churning waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Fort Sagres tells the tale of Portugal's maritime history while Cape St Vincent Lighthouse helps ships avoid disaster by throwing out a beam visible from 60 miles – it's with one of Europe's brightest lighthouses.

Option 1 - Cape St Vincent to Sagres

Distance: 6.2 miles (10 km)

Ascent: 436ft (133m)

Descent: 495ft (151m)

This walk begins from beautiful Cape St Vincent, known by the Romans as *Finis Terrae* - the End of the World. The jagged cliffs here rise up to 70 metres above the waves below and form the most south-westerly point of Portugal and of mainland Europe.

Following clifftop paths used by local fishermen for centuries, our walk passes first by Beliche Fortress before reaching the bigger, and more impressive Fort of Sagres. Built to protect the town from coastal invasion, this 15th century fort sits on a blustery outcrop that has had religious significance since Neolithic times. We'll then continue along the coast, completing our journey in the centre of Sagres.

Option 2 - Telheiro Beach To Sagres

Distance: 8.7 miles (14 km)

Ascent: 485ft (148 m)

Descent: 623ft (190m)

Our harder option today starts at the dramatic Telheiro Beach, the southernmost beach on the west coast of the Algarve.

After taking in the stunning scenery of wild open ocean from atop the cliffs, we'll walk along the Fishermen's Trail, part of the Vicentina Route, until we arrive at beautiful Cape St Vincent. From this point, we follow the same route as option 1, back to the centre of Sagres.

Day 5 FREE DAY

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently, or visit local places of interest. Options include:

Praia da Rocha
Staying in Praia da Rocha, you'll be just moments from one of the Algarve's most impressive beaches. A wide stretch of golden sand, backed by striking cliffs and rock formations, makes it ideal for a relaxing walk or time by the sea. In your free time, you may wish to explore the promenade, where a range of cafés and restaurants offer the perfect spot for a leisurely lunch or an evening drink with views over the Atlantic.

Portimão
Just a short taxi or bus ride from Praia da Rocha, Portimão offers a contrast to the beach with its lively harbour and riverside setting. You may choose to stroll along the marina, browse local shops, or enjoy a meal in one of the traditional restaurants, many serving fresh seafood. It's an easy and enjoyable way to experience local life beyond the coast.

Day 6 MONCHIQUE MOUNTAIN RANGE

A panoramic landscape of sea and mountains scattered with small, whitewashed villages, the Monchique Mountains are almost made for trekking. This igneous rock massif of low mountains is famous for its diverse indigenous wildlife and features two of the Algarve's tallest peaks - Foia and Picota at 997 and 773 metres respectively. Our walking routes take in sections of the Via Algarviana Grand Route and on a clear day, the highest points offer incredible views of the sea.

Option 1 - Monchique Mountain Range: Alferce Circular

Distance: 4.9 miles (8km)

Ascent: 1282ft (391m)

Descent: 1272ft (388m)

After an hour's drive, we'll arrive in Alferce, a quaint village nestled in the landscapes of Monchique. We'll begin our walk by following the boardwalks that cross Barranco do Demo before a steady ascent that leads to the archaeological site of Cerro do Castelode Alferce - an Islamic fortification which was probably erected in the 9th century AD.

Our onward path offers stunning views over the Demo Valley, with small glimpses of the sea, and later, the Odelouca and Arade dams. After a winding descent, we arrive at another junction of Barranco do Demo, where we cross the stream and begin our steady ascent back to Alferce.

Option 2 - The Windmill Path

Distance: 6.2miles (10km)

Ascent: 1282ft (391m)

The Windmill path in Monchique begins at the heart of the village, where charming streets lead past historic squares, the Town Hall, and traditional neighbourhoods. The trail winds into dense vegetation, revealing an abandoned windmill and another visible on the distant hills, surrounded by the lush greenery of the Monchique Mountains. Along the route, the Barranco dos Pisões and the Seixe Stream bring glimpses of the Poucochinho Mill and an ancient plane tree, classified as a monumental natural landmark. The path continues through cool mountain air, passing groves of chestnut trees and offering refreshing natural scenery.

Day 7 HANGING VALLEYS TRAIL

The Seven Hanging Valleys Trail is one of the Algarve's most magnificent trails, recognised as one of the best walks in Europe. In the distant past, each hanging valley was connected to a stream that shaped the coastal cliffs into spectacular rock formations over millenia.

Near the Alfanzina Lighthouse, a small pine forest acts as an ecological haven for owls, rabbits, foxes and other wild species, and will also serve as a resting point during our walks.

Option 1 - Six Hanging Valleys: Marinha Grande Beach to Centeanes

Distance: 4.7 miles (6km)

Ascent: 738ft (225m)

Descent: 1072ft (327m)

We start our walk at the wonderful Marinha Beach viewpoint, the first of many attractive lookout points over the limestone rock formations and natural arches that make this trail an experience to remember.

The path is not technically difficult, but there are a few places where the terrain is slippery, so caution is advised. The trail passes the Alfanzina Lighthouse and rises above Carvalho Beach. Our walk ends at the lovely Centeanes Beach, backed by majestic, golden cliffs.

Option 2 - Seven Hanging Valleys: Marinha Grande Beach To Carvoeiro

Distance: 5.6 miles (9km)

Ascent: 918 ft (280m)

Descent: 1072 ft (327m)

Today's longer option follows the same route as option 1 but continues beyond Centeanes Beach toward the Carvoeiro cliffs.

On the way, we'll see the impressive rock formations known as Algar Seco and the seventh valley, Vale Covo. Our walk ends on the stunning Carvoeiro waterfront, where we will have chance to rest and enjoy the views with a well-earned drink.

Day 8 DEPARTURE DAY

Return to the airport for your flight home. We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 3

Slightly longer walks, mostly on well-trodden paths, with some gentle gradients plus stiles and steps possible. Typically, 5-6 miles (8-10km) with around 650ft (200m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 5

Some walking experience needed. Full day walks which may include some short but steep ascents and descents throughout the day, and varied terrain. Regular stops. Typically, 8-9 miles (13-15km) with around 1,300ft (400m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

AP Oriental Beach Hotel – Western Algarve

This 4-star beachfront hotel offers a relaxing adult-only stay in the quieter, more peaceful part of Praia da Rocha, but

still within easy reach of shops, bars, restaurants. With just 90 rooms, the hotel has a distinctive boutique feel, with décor inspired by Arabic architecture, and an impressive indoor water feature, which adds to its sense of relaxation. Comfortable, well-equipped rooms are traditionally styled, and all have a balcony and come fully air-conditioned. Facilities include an outdoor pool and fitness centre, a contemporary restaurant serving a wide variety of Portuguese and international dishes, plus two bars both boasting exceptional sea views.

FOOD & DRINK

Restaurant & Bars

Restaurante Syrah by Quinta de São Sebastião
Breakfast and dinner are served buffet-style at Restaurante Syrah, which enjoys wonderful views over **Praia da Rocha and the sea.** The restaurant offers a wide variety of Portuguese and international dishes, with themed evenings that may include Oriental, South American, Italian and traditional Portuguese cuisine. An alfresco terrace provides a lovely setting for dining while taking in the coastal scenery.

Khibra Bar*
Khibra Bar has recently reopened with a new concept and offers a stylish, relaxed space to enjoy a drink. With sea views, a refined cocktail menu and a selection of tapas and wines, it's a great place to unwind and enjoy the surroundings.

Nazar Lounge Bar*
Overlooking the golden sands of Praia da Rocha, Nazar Lounge Bar has an oriental-inspired design and a calm, welcoming atmosphere. It's an ideal spot to enjoy a drink while watching the sunset over the ocean, whether relaxing quietly or spending an evening with friends.

On **walking days, pack lunches are included** and are **provided by the hotel**, making it easy to enjoy your day out without extra planning.

Vegetarian and vegan diets can be accommodated; however, choice may be limited. Please ensure any dietary requirements are advised at the time of booking your holiday.

ROOMS

Room

The hotel's rooms are set across three levels and are traditionally styled, comfortable and well equipped. All rooms have a balcony and are air-conditioned.

Our Side Sea View Rooms offer a comfortable seaside setting, each with a private balcony and partial views towards the sea. These rooms are bright and spacious, providing a relaxing place to unwind after a day out.

Rooms accommodate up to two adults and feature either a double bed or twin beds, along with a seating area. Additional amenities include air-conditioning, a flat-screen TV, minibar, safety deposit box, telephone, desk, hairdryer and complimentary Wi-Fi. Tea and coffee making facilities are also provided, along with a private bathroom with shower and toiletries. Upgrade to seafront rooms with direct sea views are available for an additional cost, subject to availability.

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities

- Outdoor swimming pool
- Direct beach access
- Bar and lounge areas
- Lift access
- Fitness Room
- Massage Room

Location

The AP Oriental Beach Hotel is ideally located in Praia da Rocha, with beach, shops and restaurants all within easy walking distance. The working town of Portimão, where you'll find local markets and fish restaurants and a more traditional atmosphere, is around a 40-minute walk, or a short bus or a taxi ride away and well worth a visit. Praia da Rocha itself offers plenty to do, with a lively but well-spread seaside setting.

*Some facilities and services may incur local charges.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Holiday Tips for Western Algarve Guided Walking

Language: Portuguese

Currency: Euro

Changing money: There are several ATM machines in Lagos, with several banks located on the main road alongside the marina.

Electricity: 220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

Tap water: Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

Telephone code: If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.
To dial a UK number 0044
To dial a Portuguese number 00351

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be

prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

Document produced: 24 November 2026