TOUR CODE

PS1

ADVENTURESABROAD

PORTUGAL

'Land of Discovery'

7 days

Updated 22/11/2013

Day 1 *Arrival in Lisbon*

Today we arrive in Lisbon.

The capital of Portugal since its conquest from the Moors in 1147, Lisbon is a legendary city with over 20 centuries of history. This was the centre of Europe's first and largest overseas empire and, as a result, the city still has a feeling of colonial elegance.

Overnight in Lisbon. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Lisbon: City Tour*

Lisbon is an enticing tangle of past and present -- funky and old-fashioned, unpretentious and quirky, restored and revitalised, booming with new confidence. With cultural diversity combined with a laid-back ambience and an architectural time-warp, this is one of Europe's most enjoyable cities.

Today's half-day city tour takes us along the banks of the River Tagus and the Belem Tower guarding the mouth of the river. We visit Jeronimo's Monastery with the tomb of Vasco da Gamma. We continue by bus to see the Henry the Navigator Monument, Praca do Comercio Square, and lower Alfama District.

We also drive along the Avenida da Liberdade, a fashionable tree-lined street through the centre of town. We continue on a walking tour through the oldest quarter -- Baixa, Rossio, and Restauradores. Afternoon at leisure.

Overnight in Lisbon. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 3 *Lisbon - Obidos - Nazare - Fatima - Leiria*

Today we travel by road northward to Obidos, a medieval symbol of narrow streets surrounded by walls. Obidos is known for its typical white houses with blue trim, flowered windows, narrow streets and steps paved with beautiful stone. On arrival in Obidos we embark on a walking tour, passing through the 18th century entry arch covered in glazed tiles (azulejos). Small bright white houses lining narrow cobblestone streets, flower pots on window-sills, Gothic and Renaissance churches -- especially the beautiful Church of Santa Maria -- reminds of the importance of Obidos's past.

We continue to Nazare, the most famous fishing town in Portugal. Among the brightly coloured rowing-boats moored on the beach bathed by the Atlantic Ocean, one may watch the fisherfolk bring in the nets. A superb view is enjoyed from the "Sitio" for where you may observe women still wearing the traditional seven-skirted costumes near the Nossa Virgem de Nazare Basilica, an important pilgrimage centre.

Our final stop is nearby Fatima, the well-known Roman Catholic Marian shrine. We visit the Basilica and the Chapel of Apparitions that marks the spot where the three shepherd children had visions in 1917. We continue to Leiria, a

charming town with small homes over archways and behind graceful arcades.

Overnight in Leiria. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Leiria - Coimbra - Bussaco - Urgeirica*

This morning we travel to the university town of Coimbra, known for its twisting streets and terraced houses. We visit the 12th century Se Velho Cathedral, and 13th-century university with its magnificent library, Manueline doors and chapel. We also visit the Alameda Gate, the Cathedral and Santa Cruz Church.

We continue through the lovely Bussaco, a mountain forest located just northeast of Coimbra. Bussaco is a delightful refuge of cypress groves, ferns, statues, fountains, and formal gardens.

Overnight in Urgerica. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Urgerica - Douro Valley - Porto*

We depart today for a picturesque drive through a landscape speckled with granite houses with wooden or wrought-iron balconies, before entering the Port Wine region, the Douro Valley, a UNESCO protected site. En route we have a brief stop in Viseu to walk through the historical zone. This is port country and was, in fact, the world's first demarcated wine region, established in 1756. Evidence of the port industry can be seen along the valley with all the famous company names -- Cockburns, Taylors, Sandeman and others -- appearing on large placards on the hillsides. En route we will stop for a cellar tour and tasting.

We will also stop in Amarante to visit the local market before continuing to Porto.

Overnight in Porto. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 6 *Porto: City Tour - Braga - Guimaraes - Porto*

This morning we enjoy a tour of Porto, a World Heritage city. We will see the Church of Sao Francisco which dates to the 13th century. This was originally a Gothic church and has a fine rose window at its entrance. Walls, vaulting, and pillars are generously covered with carved and gilded wood vines, grapes, birds, angels, cherubs; a forest of carved, gilded wood covers the high altar. We will also see the Old Quarter, the modern section of the city, and the low section, fronting the River Douro.

We continue to Braga, a city famous for its churches, last count surpassing 300! As the religious centre of Portugal, Braga boasts the highest number of churches per capita in Christendom. The strategic location has always made it ripe for occupation and development. The Goidelic Celts, also known as the Bracari, are believed to have founded the city and given it a name several thousand years ago. The Romans occupied it in 250 BC and made it the hub of five major roads, all leading to Rome. Through them Christianity and the first Bishops of Braga eventually came. The Suevians over ran the city in AD 409, but were replaced in 485 by Visigoth invaders, who, in turn, were vanquished in 711 by a Moorish army. For more than three centuries, the Christians and the Moors jousted over Braga, until the Muslims were finally expelled at the end of the 11th century. In the old quarter of Braga, you can explore the ornate Renaissance and Manueline palaces, baroque churches, and narrow medieval streets.

After lunch we proceed to Guimaraes, birthplace of Portugal's first king and for 2012, European Capital of Culture. In this charming town (a UNESCO site) we offer a walking tour of the old mediaeval quarter. We begin in the Largo da

Oliveira, with its varying styles of architecture. As we walk through the Old Quarter, notice the window boxes with fresh, colourful spring flowers. On our walk you will see workshops, bakeries, stores, and the like operating like time has never passed.

Overnight in Porto. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 7 *Departure*

Departure from Porto.

VIAGEM BOA!! Meal plan: Breakfast.