

GENERAL INFORMATION

Passport and Visas

A valid passport (or identity card for European Community nationals) is required. Visas are not necessary for citizens of European Union countries, the U.S.A., Canada and most major countries. Please contact your local Portuguese Embassy, Consulate or your Travel Agency for further information.

Health Requirements

With the exception of vaccination certificates for persons coming from areas where yellow fever is endemic presently there are no special health requirements.

How to reach Lisboa by air

Lisboa is just a few hours flying away - 6/8 hours from North America and 2/3 hours from most European cities. TAP Air Portugal, with more than 60 offices around the world and daily flights to and from major cities, covering almost 50 destinations in four continents.

Car rental

Special arrangements are made with the main reliable rent-a-car outlets to grant special discounts to delegates and companions.

Accommodation

The Portuguese Hotel Industry has established a good reputation abroad basically due to the high standard of services rendered. Also good professional teams together with the Portuguese natural warmth and friendliness a combination that will certainly make you feel welcome.

Language

The official language is Portuguese. English and French are widely spoken.

Local time

Mainland Portugal is 1 hour behind European Standard Time.

Currency

As a member of the European Monetary System the € [euro] is the Portuguese monetary unit. At present, the bills in circulation are: € 5,00 ; € 10,00 ; € 20,00 ; € 50,00 ; € 100,00 ; € 200,00 ; and € 500,00. The coins are as follows: 1 cent ; 2 cents ; 5 cents ; 10 cents ; 20 cents ; 50 cents ; € 1,00 and € 2,00.

Tipping

Tipping is optional, but normally 10% is customary in taxis, restaurants and bars.

Exchange

Major credit cards are accepted in most hotels, shops and restaurants. Travellers cheques and currency can be changed at hotels or at a bank - these are open Monday to Friday from 08h30 to 15h00. Automatic changing and cash dispensing machines linked to international networks are also widely available.

Post office

CTT Post offices are open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 19:00. During weekends and holidays the CTT post office located at Lisbon Int. Airport is open (Sat 09:00 to 18:00 | Sun and holidays 09:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 17:00).

Medical Care

Clinics and hospitals provide round the clock emergency service. The national emergency phone number is 112. Hotels have a doctor on call through the reception. Reciprocal European Union cover is available at out-patient departments, otherwise private consultation fees are charged.

Electrical Current

European type 2 pin sockets with 220 volts AC at 50 cycles are used. The phase 380 volt current is normally available in meeting and exhibition rooms.

Smoking

Smoking is forbidden by law in public transportation and in closed public areas.

Shops

Shops are open from 09h00 to 13h00 and 15h00 to 19h00 Monday to Friday, and 09h00 to 13h00 on Saturdays. In major town centers and in many shopping malls, they stay open during lunch hours, and close later at night, including weekends and holidays.

Main Shopping Areas

The Pombaline section at downtown, bordered by the magnificent Praça do Comércio [Black Horse Square] facing the river Tejo, the Rua do Ouro, Rua Augusta and Rua da Prata finishing at Rossio Square, Avenida da Liberdade where you will find most of the upmarket brands and the "Chiado" heading to Bairro Alto. The new areas of Av. de Roma, Praça de Londres and Av. Guerra Junqueiro. Some of the main Shopping malls are Colombo, Vasco da Gama Amoreiras, Monumental, Atrium Saldanha, El Corte Inglés department store, etc.

Shopping

Fine leather goods, lead crystal ware, porcelain, vintage wines, golden and silver filigree, pottery and specialist textiles are considered excellent buys in Portugal.

Driving

Vehicles drive on the right side of the road. The use of safety belts is compulsory, and children under 12 must ride in the back seats. Portugal has actually a large freeway network crossing the whole country from the North to the South in Algarve, and from the Ocean front to the border with Spain. Valid driving licenses from European Union countries, the USA, Canada and other major countries are acceptable for use in Portugal up to 6 months stay.

Public transportation

There is a wide inexpensive network in all towns and cities. In Lisboa, city of the seven hills, you can choose between bus, underground, elevators, electric trams or railway, within the city or to the suburbs. Trains and express bus service also links the main towns of the country.

Meals

Breakfast is normally served between 07.30 and 10.00 hrs., lunch from 12.30 to 15.00 hrs., and dinner from 19.30 to 22.00 hrs.

Dinning

There are a wide variety of restaurants and cafés in Lisboa ranging through the elegant and sophisticated to the casual and inexpensive. Take-away and fast food is also available from many shopping malls.

Entertainment

Lisboa has a variety of theatres and venues catering for most tastes. Opera, ballet, plays, concerts, etc. take place on a regular basis all year round. Portuguese Fado and Folklore shows are popular in many Fado restaurants.

Recreation

Excellent golf courses, tennis and squash courts, water sports and horse riding tempt the energetic delegates. The more relaxed might choose from many noteworthy museums and monuments, sunny beaches and interesting cities to explore.

Religious Services

Portugal is predominantly Catholic, but a wide number of other faiths [Protestant, Christian, Moslem, Jewish, and Hindu, among others] are also followed. Please inquire at hotel reception for times and places of services.

Safety

Lisbon is one of the safest cities in Europe. And not only that: it's the capital city of one of the safest countries in the world. Like most European capitals, the usual precautions should be taken.

Check-in / check-out policy

Should hotel rooms be required for guaranteed occupancy before check-in time, the previous night should be reserved. Check out time is at 12:00.

Accessibility

Lisboa International Airport located 5 kms from the congress venue, 6 kms from the city centre, and about 20 minutes driving time from Estoril, is served by all major international airlines from all over the world.

Climate

The climate in Lisboa is temperate, offering the best of both Atlantic and Mediterranean sea breezes all year round.

V.A.T.

Value added tax (I.V.A. in Portuguese) is included in prices quoted. For non EU residents, tax free shopping schemes are available at many shops.

Water

Tap water is safe to drink. Portuguese and imported bottled mineral water is also available.

Public Hospital

The public hospital nearby meeting venue is Hospital de Santa Maria Avenida Professor Egas Moniz 1649-035 Lisboa Tel: (+351) 217 805 000.

Museums

Most of the Museums are closed on public holidays and open Tuesdays to Sundays, from 10h00 to 17h00.
Some of the most important museums in Lisboa are:

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga

Ancient Art.

Museu Arqueológico, Convento do Carmo

Archaeology.

Museu Nacional dos Coches

The world's best collection of this type, ranging from the 17th century coach of King Philip II to 19th century carriages.

Museu Calouste Gulbenkian

It houses the 17th and 18th century oil-billionaire Gulbenkian's remarkable collection containing Egyptian, Graeco-Roman, Oriental and European art, and a fine selection of works by René Lalique.

Museu do Chiado

Painting and sculpture collection from the romantic period.

Olissipona (at St. George Castle)

Lisboa's Interpretation Centre.

Ajuda Royal Palace

Furniture, tapestry and painting collection.

City Museum

It houses a large collection, including paintings, drawings, engravings, glazed tiles and sculpture, showing the evolution of Lisboa from prehistory until the beginning of the 20th century.

Museu de Arte Moderna

As part of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Museum, it houses the best collection of 20th century Portuguese art.

Museu Militar

Collection of military weapons, armour, paintings and uniforms.

Museu de Marinha

Collection of vessels, paintings and ships rigging. Also the royal barges and sea planes.

Museu Nacional do Azulejo

Collection of decorative tiles (azulejos).

MAAT

Museum Art ArchitectureTechnology.

Museu Ricardo Espírito Santo

Important decorative art collection in the ambience of an old Portuguese manor house.

Museu do Teatro

Collection of costumes and stage props, stage models and costume designs, photographs, posters, programmes, manuscripts, scores, portraits and cartoons. Next to Museu do Traje, amid a beautiful common park.

Museu do Traje

Its collection illustrates the history of court and folk clothing throughout the ages. The museum also mounts temporary exhibitions of fashion design, accessories and jewelry.

Vieira da Silva & Arpad Szenes

Painting Collection

Lisbon Oceanarium

Located at "Parque das Nações", the former Expo 98 site, is the largest in Europe and the second one in the world. Is a vast aquarium recreating four different ocean habitats [the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Indian and the Antarctic], with more than 16,000 living species from all over the world, offers the visitor a spectacular display of light and color.

Parks and Gardens

Jardim Botânico

Alongside the Academy of Sciences, one of the most beautiful in Europe has an usual display of more than 20,000 exotic plant species.

Zoo

Set in the lovely Laranjeiras Park, one of the richest zoos with more than 2,000 animals and the best dolphinarium in Europe, is definitively one of the nicest in the world, also the Animatrix playground for children.

Parque Ecológico de Monsanto

Ecological park covering an area of 300,00 square meters, provides the perfect interplay between man and nature and offers visitors a close contact with wild animals and vegetal species.

Parque Eduardo VII

With its fascinating "Estufa Fria", a magnificent glass plant hot house with magnificent subtropical flora.

Remarkable Churches and Palaces

Sé Patriarcal (Cathedral)

Built in 1150, blends today a variety of succeeding architectural styles.

São Vicente de Fora (Alfama)

St. Vincent. Italianate, rebuilt in the XVI century.

Santa Engrácia (Alfama)

The National Pantheon, with its high dome.

São Miguel (Alfama)

Built in the 17th century, and restored in the 18th.

São Roque (Bairro Alto)

Featuring the most lavishly decorated chapel (baroque) and holding a remarkable Sacred Art Collection.

Palácio da Ajuda

The largest in the city, brimming with art works and curiosities.

Palácio Marquês de Fronteira

Private estate with elegant gardens with remarkable tiles.

Palácio dos Condes de Óbidos

XVIII Palace rich in marble and fine tiles, housing the headquarters of the Portuguese Red Cross.

Palácio Nacional de Queluz

A "rococo" Royal Palace with beautiful gardens, just outside Lisboa.