

LONDON, LISBON, & THE ALGARVE

March 1 – 21, 2023



Wednesday, March 1 San Francisco – Phoenix – London

Depart San Francisco on a morning flight to Phoenix. On your 4-hour layover at PHX, you can relax, dine, and imbibe at the American Airlines Lounge and browse the shops in the international terminal. Board the evening flight for London, and settle in to your Premium Economy seats – an elevated travel experience with wider, adjustable leather seats and more legroom; chef-inspired premium dining with complimentary spirits; personal on-demand entertainment with larger monitors and noise-reducing headphones; a comfy pillow and soft blanket; deluxe amenity kit with all the essentials (slippers, eye mask, lotion, chapstick, toothbrush, etc.). Watch movies, enjoy the food and drink, and rest comfortably on your overnight flight to London.



Thursday, March 2 London

Arrive at London Heathrow late morning. Go through Passport Control, and collect your luggage. Take a taxi to The Lime Tree Hotel, a renovated classic Georgian Townhouse centrally located in the neighborhood of Belgravia, walking distance to Buckingham Palace. After settling in to your private ensuite room, explore the neighborhood. The elegant streets of Belgravia are lined with terraced townhouses, garden squares, international embassies, antique shops, trendy galleries, and designer fashion and jewelry boutiques. Stroll Elizabeth Street, considered the loveliest street in London. With many of its buildings dating back to the 1860's, the street is full of heritage architecture, traditional British shops, restaurants, and tea houses – many with fresh floral facades. Have dinner at a neighborhood pub and enjoy your choice of pork scratchings, whitebait, bangers and mash, toad in the hole, pork belly, pie and mash, the ploughman's, Lancashire hot pot, or fish & chips. Over the next four days, you can also frequent the hotel's charming restaurant, *The Buttery*. Dine indoors in the rustic-chic café or outdoors in the lovely garden. The casual menu offers traditional English breakfasts, brunch favorites, afternoon tea, and homemade pastries complimented by the finest London-roasted coffee.

[The Lime Tree Hotel \(5 nights\) limetreehotel.co.uk](https://www.limetreehotel.co.uk)



Friday, March 3 London

This morning, take a leisurely 20-minute walk to Buckingham Palace. If open on this day, you will first visit the Palace Gardens, the largest private garden in the capital. Then stroll to the front of the Palace to watch the Changing of the Guard. Accompanied by a brass band, the stone-faced, bearskin-hatted royal guards change posts with much fanfare while the captain of the Old Guard hands over the keys. Continue your royal ramble to Westminster Abbey for a visit to the most famous English church in Christendom, where royalty have been wedded, crowned, and buried since the 11th century. From Westminster Bridge get a good look at Big Ben, the 315-foot high clock tower at the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) named for its 13-ton bell, Ben. Gape in wonder at the massive Houses of Parliament, once the palace of kings and queens, now the meeting place of the legislative branch of the government. Stop for lunch at the nearby Red Lion Pub, so frequented by members of Parliament that an 8-minute warning bell is rung to remind them to return to work. Enter Britain's most important street, Whitehall, the center of British power, and stroll past #10 Downing Street, the traditional home of the Prime Minister since the early 18th century. Wander past the Horse Guards, who have guarded this arched entrance to Whitehall for 200 years, before ending your walk in Trafalgar Square, London's central meeting place. Find a place to sit and watch the world go by, literally, before taking a taxi back to your hotel.



Saturday, March 4 London

The highlight of your visit to London! Rest up and dress up for the final matinee performance of the Tony Award-winning smash hit musical, *Hamilton*, which made its West End debut in 2017 to rave reviews. The musical is performed in the historic Victoria Palace, built in 1911. After a multi-million pound refurbishment, the Broadway musical, *Hamilton*, reopened the splendid Victoria Palace Theatre in 2017. In the early afternoon, stroll to the Victoria Palace Theatre and enjoy drinks and appetizers in the theater's elegant café before the show. Following this fabulous musical experience in London's famous West End theatre district, enjoy dinner at a nearby restaurant frequented by theater-goers.



Sunday, March 5 London

This morning, visit the Churchill War Rooms, a fascinating walk back in time through the underground headquarters of the British government's WWII fight against the Nazis in the darkest days of the Battle of Britain. Then walk or take a short taxi ride to Harrods, London's luxury shopping destination for more than 160 years. This iconic department store has eight floors showcasing the finest products in food, fashion, homeware, and branded souvenirs. From there, stroll through Kensington Gardens on the way to Kensington Palace, birthplace of Queen Victoria and home to young royals for over 300 years. In the palace, view the Queen Victoria tribute, "Victoria: Woman and Crown", and the King's and Queen's regal state rooms. After visiting the palace, stay for Afternoon Tea at the Kensington Palace Pavilion, the only place in London where you can enjoy tea on the grounds of a royal palace. Surrounded by more than 300 years of royal history, treat yourself to traditional tea sandwiches and sip a selection of high-quality tea.



Monday, March 6 London

In the morning, take a taxi to the British Museum, the first public national museum in the world, established in 1753. Its collection was widely amassed during the 19th century era of the British Empire when the British flag flew over one-fourth of the world. Walk downhill to St. Paul's Cathedral, England's national church and the site of Charles and Diana's wedding and Churchill's funeral. Wander the interior and marvel at the famed architecture and memorials to generations of war heroes. The next stop is the Tower of London. Built by William the Conqueror, this mighty tower and royal palace is soaked in history and blood. Over the centuries, the tower has served as royal residence, the Royal Mint, the Royal Jewel House, and the prison and execution site of those who dared oppose the Crown. Yeoman Warders (Beefeaters), whose original duty was to guard the Tower, its prisoners, and the royal jewels, now guard the Tower from tourists. Taxi back to the hotel and prepare for the next stop on your journey – Lisbon. This evening, partake in one last visit to your local pub.



Tuesday, March 7 London – Lisbon

Take a taxi to the airport for your late morning, 3-hour flight to Lisbon. After navigating Passport Control and collecting luggage, meet your private driver who will chauffeur you to Hotel Avenida Palace located in the Baixa (lower) neighborhood in central Lisbon. Built in 1892, Lisbon's first luxury hotel combines opulent elegance with modern comfort. Afternoon teas and classical music recitals add to the regal atmosphere of the hotel. After settling in to your private ensuite room, meet your friends for an interesting walk to the waterfront. Along the way, learn about Lisbon's defining historical event, the Great Earthquake of 1755. The Lisbon earthquake impacted the entire Iberian Peninsula and Northwest Africa on November 1st, All Saints Day, at 9:30 in the morning. Follow the course of the disaster, beginning at the Church of Sao Domingos, as you walk through the Baixa neighborhood to Praca do Comércio on the riverfront. Long ago, ships from all corners of the world used to dock and trade goods at this port, one of the busiest in Europe, where the Atlantic and Tejo River meet. Once the site of Portugal's royal palace for 200 pre-earthquake years, the palace was destroyed by the earthquake and the ensuing tsunamis that crashed on this square. At the end of your introduction to 18th century Lisbon, have dinner at nearby Trobadores, a medieval-themed taberna serving traditional Portuguese food and a special do-it-yourself cooking experience.

Hotel Avenida Palace (4 nights – breakfast included) hotelavenidapalace.pt



Wednesday, March 8 Lisbon

After breakfast, take the trolley to Belém, a district five miles west of downtown Lisbon that has important sights from Portugal's Golden Age of Exploration when Vasco da Gama and others turned Portugal into Europe's wealthiest power. Belém was the sending-off point for voyages in the Age of Discovery. Climb the Belém Tower for a view of the Rio Tejo connecting to the Atlantic. The Tower was the last sight the sailors saw as they sailed into the unknown and the first sight they saw if they were fortunate to return. Visit the grand Monastery and Church of Jerónimos where sailors would stay and pray before embarking on a dangerous voyage. View the Monument to the Discoveries in the shape of a huge caravel ship in full sail with Prince Henry the Navigator at the helm and the many great navigators, sailors, and explorers on board behind him. You can also visit the National Coach Museum and Maritime Museum. Take a coffee break at Casa Pastéis de Belém, the birthplace of the famous custard tart, *pastel de Belém*, whose recipe has been a closely guarded secret since 1837. This evening, ride the funicular to the Barrio Alto neighborhood for dinner accompanied by a Fado performance. Fado, the music of the sea, love and loss expresses Portugal's sad, romantic tradition. Experiencing the nostalgic sounds of Fado in song, accompanied by Portuguese guitar, is essential to comprehending the Portuguese soul.



Thursday, March 9 Lisbon

This morning, you will explore the ancient Alfama, the colorful quarter that dates back to the age of Visigoths, the 6th to 8th centuries. This was a bustling district during the Moorish period, and eventually became the home of Lisbon's fishermen and mariners. The Alfama's tangled medieval street plan that survived the 1755 earthquake and its azulejo tiled buildings make this one of Europe's most photogenic neighborhoods. Start your exploration at the highest point in town – Sao Jorge Castle. Take the bus to the Castle gate and enter a castle dating to the 11th century when Moors built it to house their army and provide a safe haven in times of siege. After the Moors, Portugal's royalty lived here for several centuries before moving down the hill and making the castle a military garrison. In the 20th century, it became a national monument. Just below the castle is Castle Town with buildings that once housed Moorish elites and, later, Portuguese noble families, now taken over by cute shops and cafés. The heart of the Alfama is the square, Largo de Sao Miguel, and is the best place to observe a slice of Alfama life. Many families have lived in the same homes for generations and favorite saints still decorate doors to protect the family. Visit the amazing Azulejo Tile Museum, located in the former Convento da Madre de Deus. The presentation focuses on the beauty and diversity of this traditional handicraft.



Friday, March 10 Lisbon

Today, experience more of the city's cultural highlights, with a focus on shopping. Ride the iron Elevador de Santa Justa up the hill to the Chiado neighborhood, known for its sophisticated shops and cafés. At the top, enter the Convento do Carmo, a convent destroyed in the 1755 earthquake with its remains left standing as a permanent reminder of that disastrous event. Stop for a coffee break at Café A Brasileira, a 100-year-old Lisbon institution frequented over the years by the city's poets, writers, and philosophers. Order a *bica* (espresso) and a *pastel de nata* and discuss your philosophy of life. After experiencing this local tradition, wander down Rua Garrett, a lovely shopping street with mosaic sidewalks, ironwork balconies, and fine shops including the old Bertrand Bookstore and the A Vida Portuguesa gift shop. Continue down the hill to The Ceramic Heart, one of Lisbon's finest ceramics shops. Many ceramic shops sell quality replicas of Lisbon's iconic colored tiles (azulejos) for souvenirs and gifts. Portugal is also famous for its variety of products made of cork, from handbags to umbrellas, sold in shops throughout the city.



Saturday, March 11 Lisbon – Faro

After breakfast, taxi to the Lisbon airport for your 50-minute flight to Faro in the maritime province of the Algarve. The Algarve is the southwestern-most part of Europe with coastline stretching 100 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the Spanish border. Pick up your rental car at the small Faro airport and drive west about 30 minutes to the Dunas Douradas Beach Club, a 5-star resort in the heart of the Algarve's Golden Triangle. The resort is situated in a privileged setting away from the crowds, overlooking the ocean and endless golden beaches of the Atlantic coastline. After checking in to your deluxe 3-bedroom apartment, take a walk on the club's private beach, and then enjoy dinner on the terrace while listening to the sounds of the sea.

Dunas Douradas Beach Club (3 nights) www.ddbc.pt



Sunday, March 12 Dunas Douradas

After a leisurely morning, drive north to the neighboring inland villages of Almancil and Loulé, offering an authentic Portuguese atmosphere and historic sites. Almancil is noted for the Sao Lourenco Church, dating back to 1730, decorated with characteristic blue tiles telling the life story of its patron saint. Almancil is also renowned for its local pottery and its three Michelin-star restaurants, the most of any town in the Algarve and a good choice for lunch today. Fifteen minutes away, the village of Loulé is filled with Arabian-inspired markets, tree-lined plazas, traditional craftsmen's houses, and a warren of alleys barely altered since the medieval period. Visit the Gothic church and the medieval castle, built atop the ruins of a Moorish mosque and fortress.



Monday, March 13 Dunas Douradas

Spend the day hiking the cliffs along the ocean, relaxing on the terrace or the beach, and/or having a spa treatment at the resort's luxury spa. If you're feeling adventurous, discover the rural Algarve on an off-road adventure in the Algarve Mountains. With a private driver, cross valleys and rivers; visit ancient villages, Arab castles, and waterfalls; stop at a traditional farm to taste *medronho*, a local liqueur, and homemade honey.



Tuesday, March 14 Dunas Douradas – Salema

After a leisurely morning, depart the resort for the 1-hour drive to Salema, a simple fishing village on the Atlantic Ocean with a dozen restaurants, a few hotels, a couple of bars, a paved promenade, and year-round sunshine. Most notable, Salema has a long, broad, gorgeous beach with powder-fine sand, framed off by steep vivid-yellow cliffs. Settle in to your 3-bedroom sea view villa and walk to town for dinner at a beachside seafood restaurant. [Salema Beach Village \(5 nights\) salemabeachvillage.com/en/rooms.html](http://salemabeachvillage.com/en/rooms.html)



Wednesday, March 15 Salema

Settle in to your home for the week -- stock the kitchen with provisions from the local market and catch up on laundry with the in-house washing machine. In the afternoon, rent a palapa on the beach, discover three-toed dinosaur footprints on the western edge of Salema Beach, follow a coastal cliff-top path to stairs that lead to two beautiful deserted beaches. In the evening, cook a spaghetti dinner in your gourmet kitchen, and dine on your spacious terrace overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.



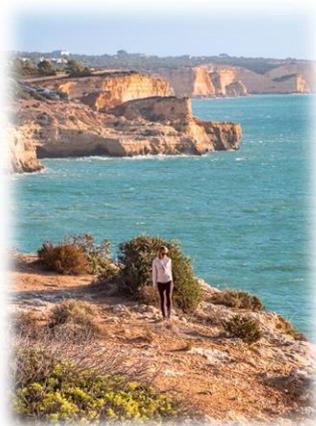
Thursday, March 16 Salema – Cape Sagres – Salema

This morning take a scenic coastal 30-minute drive west to Cape Sagres, Portugal's "end of the world". The cape is a craggy, windswept point that juts into the Atlantic. In 1420, Prince Henry the Navigator established a school here for navigators. Today, an 18th century fortress, built on the school's original battlements, dominates the cape's entrance. Stroll the cliff-top paths and have lunch in the seaside town of Sagres.



Friday, March 17 Salema – Lagos – Salema

This morning, drive the 30-minute eastern coastal route to the ancient port city of Lagos, first settled by the Carthaginians. Always an important seaport, Lagos later became the region's capital in the 13th and 14th centuries. The first great Portuguese maritime expeditions embarked from here. Lagos is today a whitewashed jumble of pedestrian streets, craft shops, outdoor restaurants, and artistic fountains and sculptures. From the marina in Lagos, take a boat ride to the Ponta da Piedade, the most beautiful point on the coast to get an up-close view of the awe-inspiring grotto and cave formations.



Saturday, March 18 Salema

Today is the last full day in Salema. Take a scenic hike along the coast through the Boca do Rio nature reserve, and on to Boca do Rio Beach. This 3-km hike offers stunning views of the surrounding coastline. Continue on to the Fort of Almádena, a 17th century fort located cliffside above the beach. Built in 1632, the fort served to protect the coast and the valuable tuna fisheries from pirates. From its cliff top position, the fort offers views from Sagres all the way to Lagos. In the evening, splurge on dinner at Agua na Boca, Salema's finest restaurant.



Sunday, March 19 Salema – Faro -- Lisbon

Bid *adeus* to Salema and the spectacular Algarve. This morning, drive to the Faro airport, turn in the rental car, and take the short flight back to Lisbon and the Hotel Avenida Palace. Enjoy the evening at your leisure.

Hotel Avenida Palace (2 nights) www.hotelavenidapalace.pt



Monday, March 20

Enjoy your final full day in Portugal relaxing and repacking. Do some last-minute shopping, take one more walk to the waterfront, and have a seafood dinner at a seaview restaurant.

Tuesday, March 21 Lisbon – San Francisco

After an early breakfast at the hotel, taxi to Lisbon airport. Depart Lisbon for the late morning flight to London. After a short layover, board your British Airways flight and settle in to your Premium Economy seat for the flight to San Francisco. SFO is your first point of entry in the US, so upon arrival: go through Passport Control, retrieve your luggage, pass through Customs, and meet your driver at the Airport Shuttle Pick-up area.



FLIGHT ITINERARY

Tuesday, February 28

03:00 Check in to the Westin SFO Hotel

Wednesday, March 1

09:06a Depart SFO AA1164

12:15p Arrive PHX

04:30p Depart PHX AA194

Thursday, March 2

09:40a Arrive LHR: Passport Control – Retrieve Luggage – Customs – Taxi to hotel

Tuesday, March 7

12:00p Depart LHR BA0518

02:55p Arrive LIS

Tuesday, March 21

10:40a Depart LIS AA6575

01:40a Arrive LHR

03:10p Depart LHR AA6998

07:25p Arrive SFO: Passport control – Retrieve Luggage – Customs – Shuttle pick-up

