

# Touring Bike

## TRACK LISBON > FARO

### LISBON - SETÚBAL 105 KM

From Lisbon airport, head towards Estação de Comboios do Oriente (Oriente Train Station) and continue along the Tagus River to Estação Fluvial de Belém (Belém Fluvial Station), where you will take a boat to Trafaria. The route through Lisbon is mostly along bike lanes and it offers the opportunity to enjoy many emblematic points of the Portuguese capital.

On the South bank, take the bike path to Costa da Caparica and from there, along picturesque roads and paths, you will pass Charneca da Caparica, the popular Fonte da Telha Beach, Verdizela, Fernão Ferro, Alfarim, Aldeia do Meco and the vicinity of Sesimbra.

Just a little distance after Aldeia do Meco, when you reach the N379, it is possible to make a 10 km round trip to Cape Espichel, where there is a shrine and a lighthouse worth visiting! This deviation is, however, not advisable on windy days.

After Sesimbra comes the main challenge not only of the stage, but also of the whole route: the climb to the Serra da Arrábida. This adventure offers unforgettable panoramic views of the Atlantic and the Tróia Peninsula.

The last 15 km is almost always downhill! Then you arrive in Setúbal, where you can tour the bustling riverside area with its popular restaurants, famous for fried squid, the fishing harbours and shops.

### **Half Stage: The village of Meco (km 50)**

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### SETÚBAL - CERCAL DO ALENTEJO 105 KM

This stage begins with the ferryboat crossing from Setúbal to Tróia: a kind of mini-cruise across the Sado River, which is set against the backdrop of the city and Serra da Arrábida, with Tróia and its river beaches on the other side.

With luck you might see some bottlenose dolphins doing stunts in the middle of the river, where their presence is relatively common.

Then you can follow the route almost all the way from the Tróia Peninsula to Comporta, heading towards Santiago do Cacém (the beginning of the Rota Vicentina), before passing Carvalhal, Melides and Costa de Santo André, where you cross inland and into the mountains.

After Santiago do Cacém continue the climb up the mountain until you can make the descent towards Vale de Éguas and Campilhas Reservoir.

A few more kilometres and you will arrive at the end of the stage. Welcome to Cercal, a major road junction between Sines and the southwest of the country.

### **Half Stage: Costa de Santo André (km 50)**

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### CERCAL DO ALENTEJO - CARRAPATEIRA 112 KM

Follow along the N120 until São Luís, returning shortly afterwards to the coast in Vila Nova de Milfontes. Continue to Longueira, Almogrove and Cabo Sardão, where you can enjoy the lighthouse, curiously built with the tower on the side to the land rather than the ocean, and the famous storks' nests on the cliffs.

Here begins a popular 6 km stretch of earth road, which offers magnificent views of the Alentejo Coast. Watch out for the sand that can suddenly appear on the way! Next comes Zambujeira do Mar, Carvalhal Beach and Odeceixe village and beach.

Further ahead, through pleasant country roads, you will reach Aljezur and the difficult climb to its medieval castle. From there, almost exclusively via dirt roads and with a succession of open views to the hills on one side and the ocean on the other, you reach the village of Carrapateira, most famous for its surf and its wild beaches.

### **Half Stage: Zambujeira do Mar (km 50)**

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### CARRAPATEIRA - SILVES 117 KM

From Carrapateira head south towards Vila do Bispo and Sagres, passing close to several almost wild beaches.

Around 16 km, as you approach the coast again, it is possible to make a 3 km round trip to Ponta de Aspa, where you will be rewarded with a view that compensates for this little adventure!

On the South coast, near Beliche Beach, when you reach the N268, if the wind is not very strong, you can consider making another 5 km (round trip) detour to the mythical and crowded Cabo de São Vicente, the point where the poet said that the earth ends and the sea begins.

Next destination: Sagres. Here you can stop to contemplate the fishing port and its famous Fortress before heading to Vila do Bispo, Salema, Burgau, Luz and the tourist town of Lagos.

After Lagos, continue along the coast for a few miles before heading inland through Odiáxere, almost always passing along quiet roads, through a remote area where human presence is becoming increasingly rare.

Almost at the end of this stage follow the Arade River along its winding route, until you reach Silves, in ancient times the capital of the Algarve and one of the oldest Portuguese cities, notable for its old city centre with its narrow and sometimes steep streets, original and authentic houses and Islamic Castle.

### Half Stage: Burgau (km 50)

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#### SILVES - FARO 70 KM

This stage begins with the crossing of the pedestrian bridge built in the 15th century and follows along the left bank of the River Arade for 3 km.

After speeding along this stretch you then make your way along the quiet, small asphalt roads through numerous orange groves and other orchards. You will pass close to Algoz and the important Tunes railway junction, where trains connecting Lisbon, Lagos and Faro stop.

Head again in the direction of the South coast, arriving at Vilamoura and Quarteira.

Pass Vale do Lobo, Quinta do Lago and Ludo, where you will enter the Ria Formosa Reserve, sometimes following small dirt tracks in a beautifully preserved natural landscape and, next to the river, in the presence of a range of birds species. Please note that next to the luxurious Quinta do Lago, there is a stretch by the water that can be impractical when there is a very high tide. Then make an almost complete tour around Faro airport before passing the passenger terminal.

If you want to take the train or visit the city, the route continues in the direction of Faro, following the railway to the CP station.

#### **Half Stage: Olhos D'Água (km 50)**