

Bom Jesus do Monte, Braga – Baroque beauty

The elegant baroque staircase that leads up the forested hillside to Portugal's most spectacular sanctuary seems to go on forever. While hiking up on foot is enough to earn you both bragging rights and a

rest in the colourful sculpted gardens at the top, spare a thought for the numerous pilgrims who make the climb on their hands and knees each year. (If you're feeling really lazy, just ride up in the funicular!)



Hertz recommend taking this roadtrip in a cool convertible!

Need to know information

- **Round circuit:** 192 miles (308 km); 7 hours' driving time approx.
- **Tips:** Motorways are prefixed with an "E" on signs and maps and there is a toll charge of around €0.06 per kilometre to travel on them.
- **Best season:** For the best weather, travel between mid-June and mid-September.
- **Soundtrack:** Dazkarieh – Dazkarieh (2004).
- **Essential item:** Contour 2 Person Picnic Backpack (John Lewis).



Top five must see places...



Northern Portugal Must Sees

If you find yourself with some free time on your hands or you can just squeeze in one trip then take your pick from the following five gems. Roll mouse over picture to enlarge it.



Peneda Gerês National Park – Extreme exploration

You can discover this lush unspoiled landscape of mountains, gorges and rivers as daringly as you like, with everything from hiking to hang-gliding on offer at one of the adventure centres. To really get back to nature, try a winding mountain bike trail through the forest, with a picnic pit-stop thrown in.



Pinhão – Port and peacefulness

Many of the famous names in port production have quintas close to this small town. The terrace of the luxury **Vintage House**, with marvellous views of the River Douro and the surrounding vineyard-smothered hills, is a perfect place to enjoy this traditional tippie. The hotel serves as a perfect departure point for exploring the Douro valley by day.



Côa Valley Archaeological Park – Rock-ing art

A trip to an art gallery is the perfect ingredient for any romantic excursion, even if it's only accessible by a bumpy 4WD ride like this one. Discovered a stone's throw from the River Côa in 1990, these 20,000-year old engravings – depicting bulls, horses, fish and humans – are well worth the ride.



Amarante – Fall-in-love food

The delicious warm décor of the Michelin-starred restaurant at the **Casa da Calçada** – a glamorously renovated noble house on the Tâmega River – perfectly complements head chef José Cordeiro's mouthwatering menu. To get the very most from your visit, the very decently-priced *degustação* (taste of everything) menu is a must.



Aveiro – Virtually Venice

It's easy to see why Aveiro, with its network of blue canals and humpback bridges, is known as the "Venice of Portugal". You'll find it just as romantic too. Meander through narrow streets lined with pastel buildings before hopping into one of the brightly painted, gondola-like *moliceiro* boats for a dreamy cruise to the lagoon.

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