

Walking the Eastern Algarve

Trip style: Guided Walking Holidays

Destination: 📍 Portugal

Trip code: EAT07-LCL09

Grades: 1, 2 & 3

Carbon Footprint: 🌱 748kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Spanning a vast space between Olhão to Vila Real de Santo António and the Spanish border, the crowd-free Eastern Algarve is characterised by rolling countryside, vineyards, lagoons, white-washed villages, and the salt pans of Ria Formosa Natural Park. Admire the 13th century Moorish castle as you stroll the cobbled streets of Tavira and learn about the history of Vila Real de Santo António – the Algarve fishing town on the banks of the Guadiana River, which marks Portugal's border with Spain.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Spotting wildlife at Ria Formosa Nature Park
- Spending time on the beautiful beaches of Tavira
- Follow the Ecovia trail, passing orange groves and salt pans
- Exploring villages in the foothills of Serra do Caldeirão
- Enjoying coastal walks with Atlantic Ocean views

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Tavira
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a level 2 and level 3 graded Activity, Easier walks: 5 to 7 miles (8 to 11km) generally through gently undulating scenery. Up to 700 feet (210m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 8 to 10 miles (13 to 16km) with some short but steep ascents. Up to 1,200 feet (360m) of ascent in a day.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival day

Welcome to Hotel Vila Gale Tavira. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2: Along the coast to Tavira

Enjoy an introduction to the local area with your choice of coastal walk around Tavira.

Day 3: The Barrocal the area between the plain and the hills

Day 4: Palácio de Estoi and Roman Ruins

Walk in amongst the ruins of a once luxurious Roman villa at Milreu, one of the most important remains of Roman presence in the Algarve and a national monument. After spending some time at the museum, we'll walk through the old town of Estoi before setting off through the foothills of the Serra do Caldeirão. You'll also get to peruse the Rococo Palácio de Estói, a French-inspired palace and gardens built at the end of the 19th century for a local aristocrat of the Carvalhal family.

Day 5: Free day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. Some options for your free day may include: Day trip to Faro and the Ria Formosa: Explore the old city of Faro, the district capital of the Algarve and visit the cathedral, Gothic and Baroque in style. In the afternoon, depart from the Porto Nova; this gate is also known as Portas do Mar (Doors of the Sea) because it's one of the sites where you can depart on a boat trip to the islands of the Ria Formosa Nature Park. You'll be dazzled by this wonderful landscape with numerous small islands, marshes and barrier islands that separate this coastal lagoon from the sea. Tavira: Spend the day in and around Tavira and/or go to the beach. The beach in Tavira is a 'sandspit' beach, separated from the mainland by the sea and has to be reached by a ferry boat or water taxi. The ferry runs seasonally from Quatro Águas about 1.5km out of Tavira - follow the signs for Ilha de Tavira. An alternative is to use the little tourist "train" which runs every hour. The circular trip lasts for approximately 40 minutes, taking you into the old town of Tavira and out along roads bordering the salt marshes. Local information website: For information on Tavira please visit www.visitalgarve.pt

Day 6: Vila Real de Santo Antonio and the coast

A local interest guide will join us on the coach from the hotel to give us an insight into local history, traditions, and knowledge as we journey to the whitewashed village of Cacela Velha. As you wander around you'll notice time has stood still here. Add on clifftop views over Ria Formosa and the coastal resorts to the east, and you've got one head-turning panorama of the Algarve. Both groups finish in city of Vila Real de Santo António on the Guadiana River, which forms the border with Spain. We'll see remnants of the sardine and tuna fishing industry before taking in the city's architecture – reminiscent of Lisbon – on a short tour.

Day 7: The Guadiana river

Today's walks begin to the north and east of Tavira on the Guadiana river, the border with Spain. They finish in Alcoutim for refreshments before our return to Tavira.

Day 8: Departure day

We hope to see you again soon.

Hotel Vila Galé Tavira - Eastern Algarve

The 4-star Vila Gale Tavira is a stylish hotel in a fantastic location. Bedrooms are decorated in a contemporary Arabian style to reflect the Moorish history of the area. There is a large outdoor pool, wellness centre with an indoor pool, sauna and a range of treatments available. The large dining room serves an extensive buffet with a range of international and traditional Portuguese dishes. A short walk through the narrow alleyways of the town will take you to the centre of Tavira's shops and sidewalk cafes.

Hotel Vila Galé has an attractive outdoor pool (unheated) in an area landscaped with attractive shrubs and potted palms. There are loungers and seating where you can have a snack or drink ordered from the nearby bar. In the large bar area there are more comfortable seats.

The hotel has a shop that stocks English newspapers, basic toiletries, some Tavira souvenirs and beach accessories. Wi-Fi is free throughout.

The Health Club, open from 10am until 8pm, is free to our guests and includes a tepidarium with indoor pool (naturally lit), Turkish bath, Jacuzzi, gym and some treatment rooms (extra charge for any treatments booked).

Vaccinations & health information - SHARED WITH ALL EU NEW 2026

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel. As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure. Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting. For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

Passport & Visa information - SHARED FOR ALL EU NEW 2026

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice. **Passport Requirements** This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long. We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues. If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website. **Visa Requirements** Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling. British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Packing list - Overseas Guided Walking

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing. Essentials Walking boots Waterproof jacket Waterproof trousers Insulated jacket/top Walking clothing Walking socks (plus spares) Sunhat Gloves/mitts and warm hat Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity) Headtorch High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30) Sunglasses with a dark lens Rucksack (15-30 litres) Mobile phone Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.) Passport Visa (if applicable) Copy of your travel insurance policy UK Global Health Insurance Card (formerly known as EHIC) Recommended Collapsible walking poles Swimwear and travel towel Snacks Dry bags Rubbish bags Insect repellent Optional extras Camera Sit mat Flask for hot drinks Durable lunch box Gaiters GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)
