

Day 1: Porto, Portugal

Our adventure begins in Porto, Portugal's second-largest city and cultural capital of the beguiling North. Scenic Porto sits amid granite cliffs at the mouth of the Douro River and has long been a cosmopolitan trading center. The compact city is rich in architectural heritage from Roman, Gothic, Baroque, Neoclassic and Renaissance eras. This afternoon, take a brief walking tour through the city's historic heart and across the river to Vila Nova de Gaia where we enjoy a private cellar tour and tasting at Cockburn's Port Lodge —the perfect start to a wine-soaked week ahead! We then head over to W. & J. Graham's 1890 Lodge for a welcome dinner at its acclaimed restaurant, Vinum, with its glass atrium and open-air terrace perched high on the southern bank of the Douro overlooking Porto's medieval landmarks. Featuring the best local ingredients of the Trás-os-Montes region, Northern Portugal and the Atlantic Ocean, dishes are created for pairing with fine Douro Valley wines.

Day 2: Pocinho / Felgar—Casa de Santa Cruz

Today we journey by rail 100 miles up the Douro Valley, one of Europe's oldest winemaking areas. UNESCO has recognized the Alto Douro Wine Region as a World Heritage Site, with wine produced here for more than 2,000 years. The Douro Valley, the only place authentic Port wine is made, is the world's first demarcated wine region, established in 1756. This long tradition of viticulture has produced a cultural landscape of outstanding beauty, shaping the social and economic heritage of the region. Paralleling the riverbank on a small local train on the Linha do Douro line, we reach Pocinho, where we disembark and continue to the sleepy village of Felgar and Casa de Santa Cruz, where lunch awaits. This stylish inn on the main square, originally a historic farmstead square, been beautifully restored by the owners, Ana and Jorge, who share a passion for this place that feels lost in time. This afternoon, our Expedition Leader offers an orientation to our kayaking equipment before an optional walk down to the Sabor Reservoir, wandering among almond and cork orchards and learning about life in this bucolic region as we go. Alternately, borrow an e-bike from our innkeepers to explore the peaceful environs around the village, following cobbled lanes past centuries-old stone houses and cycling through the bucolic countryside.

Day 3: Barca d'Alva—Kayaking the Douro / Vila Nova de Foz Coa—Casa do Rio

We greet the morning with anticipation: It's time to meet the river! After breakfast, we drive to the put-in on the Douro where we are fitted to our kayaks and get some helpful paddling instruction from our Expedition Leader. We'll spend approximately 4 to 5 hours on the water, following the slow current from Barca d'Alva to just east of the mouth of the Coa River, a tributary of the Douro. A picnic lunch provides a peaceful interlude. Our paddle ends at the stunning Casa do Rio, an intimate luxury guesthouse surrounded by the vineyards of Quinta do Vallado, one of the premier producers of table wines in the Douro Valley. Set into a steep hillside with panoramic views over the river far below, the contemporary inn enjoys complete solitude. Relax on the terrace or refresh with a swim in the infinity pool following an

afternoon amble through the vineyards. And if the fine accommodations and glorious setting aren't enough, wait till you taste the gourmet dinner that comes out of the Casa's tiny kitchen!

Day 4: Coa Museum & Archaeological Park / Casa do Rio

Today offers an encounter with the layered history and culture of the Coa Valley, which contains one of the world's most important ancient rock art sites. Depart by van for a guided tour of the Coa Museum and Archaeological Park, where we learn from archaeology experts about the extensive Paleolithic drawings near Vila Nova de Foz Coa, discovered in the late 1980s and designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998. The Coa Valley Archaeological Park contains some 5,000 engraved drawings of horses, bovines and other animals, and human and abstract figures, dated from 22,000 to 10,000 B.C. and documenting continuous human occupation from the end of the Paleolithic Age. The entire region was slated to be inundated by a dam under construction at the time of discovery, but after intense public pressure, the project was halted to preserve the extraordinary discovery. After lunch at the stylish museum cafe, we board our vans to meet up with Coa Archeological Park guides to venture to Penascosa, one of the largest collections of rock art that we can experience up close. Penascosa is a tiny sampler of the most remarkable open-air ensemble of Paleolithic art on the Iberian Peninsula. As dusk falls, return to Casa do Rio where another starlit dinner on the terrace awaits.

Day 5: Paddle to Pocinho / Quinta das Mos / Murca do Douro—Bairro do Casal

We're back on the river this morning for 3–4 hours, guiding our kayaks from Casa do Rio to Pocinho. Going ashore, we make a short drive to Quinta das Mos, a boutique winery producing outstanding white and red table wines and acclaimed olive oil. A special lunch and winery tour awaits, and our hosts, the Cabral family, offer a warm and gracious welcome. Before we leave, there's a chance to purchase bottles of both wine and olive oil to take home—you won't find it anywhere else! Continuing to our next accommodation, enjoy a scenic drive through the surrounding mountain countryside, where vineyards are interwoven with chestnut forests, olive and almond orchards, and undulating fields of wheat. Late this afternoon, we reach Bairro do Casal, tucked into the scenic small village of Murca do Douro. Our lodging is a collection of individual stone cottages set high on a hillside with stunning views—no two apartment suites are alike. Capping off a delightful day of discovery, enjoy dinner at a fine restaurant on the banks of the shimmering Douro later this evening.

Day 6: Paddle from Foz Sabor to Freixo de Numao / Bairro do Casal

Paddle this morning from Foz Sabor (the mouth of the Sabor River), a tributary of the Douro, to Freixo de Numao, about 3–4 hours. This scenic stretch of the river narrows considerably and feels a bit as though we're paddling through a rock garden as we guide our kayaks between the granite banks. Occasionally, a

mild current is present, which may help push us along. Be sure to look up periodically, as this area is frequented by an array of raptors—we could see the Egyptian vulture, black vulture and the griffon vulture, Europe's largest vulture species. Other birds of prey in view might include the golden eagle, red kite, peregrine falcon and Eurasian eagle-owl. Return by late afternoon to Bairro do Casal, where there's time to relax by the pool, take a sauna or wander around the narrow village lanes of Murca before dinner on the veranda, lovingly prepared by our hosts.

Day 7: Ferradosa / Paddle to Foz do Tua / Casal de Loivos

This morning we board a motorboat for a relaxing cruise downriver to Ferradosa. Along the way, we pass some of the Douro Valley's most magnificent quintas, including Graham's Quinta do Vesuvio, built in 1565, and Taylor's Quinta de Vargellas, established in 1820. Launching from a small beach, we paddle about 3 to 4 hours through the striking Valera Gorge, a narrow granite canyon carved over millennia by the Douro. Our destination is the village of Foz do Tua, where we enjoy lunch at a traditional riverside restaurant. Then, a spectacular winding drive takes us up and over a hill to Casa de Casal de Loivos, an 18th-century manor house set high above the heart of the Douro Valley wine-producing region. The BBC gave it the accolade of one of the six best hotel views in the world, and we avidly concur as we survey the panoramic vista from the terrace. The Douro appears as a narrow blue ribbon far below, wending its way between steep, vine-covered slopes and rows of rolling mountains marked with the red tile roofs of centuries-old farmhouses. Before a grand al fresco dinner (weather permitting), we'll have a guided tour of this historic manor house that remains in longtime family ownership. And if the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll enjoy an equally appealing repast inside the elegant dining room.

Day 8: Foz do Tua / Paddle to Pinhao / Porto

Our sojourn on the river comes to a close with a paddle from the Tua River to scenic Pinhao, a journey of about 3 to 4 hours. We are in the very center of the Douro demarcated Port wine region, with neat rows of grapevines terracing down the schist mountainsides and stately white stucco quintas dotting the hills high above the river. After lunch, there's time for a walk to see the splendid hand-painted ceramic tilework in the charming little train station in Pinhao, which is decorated with thousands of blue and white early-20th-century azulejos showing pre-dam river and harvest scenes. We drive back to historic Porto for a festive farewell dinner, reveling in the memories we've made on Portugal's famous River of Wine.

Day 9: Porto / Depart

A transfer to the airport is included today to meet your departing flight.