

Wine Barrels for a Bed, Port Cellars After Dark — A 7-Day Porto & Douro Valley Itinerary

Seven days between two very different sides of northern Portugal: a UNESCO riverfront city built on the Port wine trade, and the terraced vineyard valley upriver where that wine is grown. A cellar tour at a 19th-century Port lodge, a night sleeping inside a converted wine barrel, a scenic train ride along the Douro, and day trips to a Baroque hilltop sanctuary and a canal town nicknamed the “Portuguese Venice.” Real hotels, real wine estates, and 2026 prices for every stop.

DURATION	BEST TIME TO GO	FROM
7 Days	May – June & September – October mild temperatures and blooming vineyard terraces in spring, the grape harvest in the Douro each September; July–August is hot and the river towns are heavily touristed, and some smaller quintas trim their hours in winter	\$1,650 USD / person for 2 people, incl. a rental car for the Douro leg, 6 nights' lodging split between Porto and a Douro Valley quinta, and two wine estate tastings

Day 1

Porto Arrival & the Ribeira

A first evening along Porto's UNESCO-listed riverfront, with a Port wine toast across the river before the deeper cellar tours begin tomorrow.

Transfer — Porto Airport (OPO) to City Center

~25 min · taxi/Uber from \$25 USD, or Metro Line E from \$2.50 USD

Porto's Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport sits about 7 miles northwest of downtown. Taxis and rideshares run a short, flat-ish fare into the center; the purple metro line also reaches the historic core in around 45 minutes for a few euros.

Ribeira Riverfront & Cais da Ribeira

~1.5 hrs, self-guided · free

Porto's UNESCO World Heritage riverfront district: a tangle of pastel townhouses, rabelo wine boats moored along the Douro, and the Dom Luís I Bridge arcing overhead between Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia. The obvious first orientation walk, and best timed for golden hour.

Port Wine Welcome Tasting — Sandeman Cellars

~1 hr · ~\$18 USD / person

One of the best-known Port houses in the world, instantly recognizable by the caped, wide-brimmed silhouette of “The Don” above its door on the Gaia waterfront across the bridge. A relaxed introductory flight of ruby, tawny and white Port before tomorrow's deeper cellar tour.

Sandeman Cellars · www.sandeman.com

Overnight — PortoBay Flores

From \$175–\$215 USD / night, for 2 people

A boutique hotel inside a restored 18th-century townhouse on Rua das Flores, one of Porto's prettiest pedestrian streets and a short walk down to the Ribeira.

PortoBay Flores · www.portobay.com

Day 2

Landmarks & the Port Lodges of Vila Nova de Gaia

A morning through Porto's grandest interiors, then an afternoon crossing the river for the working cellar tour Port wine is actually named for.

Livraria Lello

~45 min, timed entry · ~\$6 USD (credited toward a book purchase)

One of the world's most ornate bookstores, its carved wood staircase and stained-glass skylight are said to have influenced J.K. Rowling while she lived in Porto in the early 1990s. Book a timed-entry slot online — the walk-up line wraps around the block by mid-morning.

Livraria Lello · www.livrarialello.pt

São Bento Railway Station & Porto Cathedral

~1 hr, self-guided · free

Roughly 20,000 hand-painted azulejo tiles cover the entrance hall of this still-working train station, depicting scenes from Portuguese history. The hilltop Sé cathedral a few minutes' walk uphill has its own tiled cloister and a sweeping view back over the Ribeira's rooftops.

Graham's Port Lodge — Cellar Tour & Tasting

~1.5 hrs · ~\$28 USD / person

A working cellar built into the hillside above Vila Nova de Gaia in the 1890s, still owned by the same Symington family five generations on. The tour winds through barrel-lined tunnels stacked with aging Port and ends with a tasting on a terrace looking back across the river at Porto's skyline.

Graham's Port Lodge · www.grahams-port.com

Overnight — PortoBay Flores

From \$175–\$215 USD / night, for 2 people

A second night in the same Rua das Flores rooms before tomorrow's train into the Douro.

PortoBay Flores · www.portobay.com

Day 3

Into the Douro Valley

The rail line that follows the Douro east is regularly ranked among the world's most scenic train rides — a slow climb from Porto's granite into terraced vineyard country.

Douro Line Train — Porto (São Bento) to Pinhão

~2.5 hrs · from \$14 USD / person

A regional CP (Comboios de Portugal) train hugs the Douro's north bank for the last hour of the ride, with vineyard terraces climbing straight up from the tracks. Window seats on the right-hand side heading east catch the better river views.

CP – Comboios de Portugal · www.cp.pt

Douro River Cruise — Pinhão Round Trip

~1 hr · ~\$18–\$22 USD / person

A short cruise out of Pinhão's riverfront past the Douro's steepest terraced vineyards, many belonging to the historic Port houses whose quintas dot the surrounding hillsides.

Quinta da Pacheca — Wine Tasting & Tour

~1.5 hrs · ~\$25 USD / person

One of the Douro's oldest wine estates, dating to the 18th century. A walk through the vineyard and cellar ends in a tasting of the estate's own reds, whites and Ports on a terrace above the river.

Quinta da Pacheca · www.quintadapacheca.com

Overnight — The Wine House Hotel, Quinta da Pacheca

From \$230–\$270 USD / night, for 2 people

Rooms built inside a row of converted wine barrels and a restored 19th-century wine warehouse, on the same estate as the afternoon's tasting — one of the more novel places to spend a night in Portugal.

The Wine House Hotel – Quinta da Pacheca · www.quintadapacheca.com/en/wine-house-hotel

Day 4

Vineyard Terraces & Miradouros

A full day inside the Alto Douro Wine Region, UNESCO-listed for over 2,000 years of continuous winemaking, ending at one of its best sunset viewpoints.

Quinta do Crasto — Vineyard Walk & Tasting

~2 hrs · ~\$30 USD / person, incl. a light lunch

A family-run estate on a bend of the river with some of the Douro's most-photographed terraces and a small infinity pool overlooking the valley. The tasting flight runs through several single-vineyard reds.

Quinta do Crasto · www.quintadocrasto.pt

Scenic Drive — the N222 Along the Douro

~1.5 hrs, self-guided · rental car

Frequently rated among the world's best driving roads, the N222 traces the river's south bank between Peso da Régua and Pinhão through terrace after terrace of vines.

Sunset — São Leonardo da Galafura Viewpoint

~1 hr, self-guided · free

A hilltop miradouro above Régua with a sweeping view over the river's hairpin bends and vineyard terraces stacked to the horizon. Arrive 30–45 minutes before sunset for the best light.

Overnight — The Wine House Hotel, Quinta da Pacheca

From \$230–\$270 USD / night, for 2 people

A second night among the barrel rooms before heading west toward Braga tomorrow.

The Wine House Hotel – Quinta da Pacheca · www.quintadapacheca.com/en/wine-house-hotel

Day 5

Braga & Guimarães

West out of wine country to Portugal's religious capital and the walled hill town where the country itself was founded.

Braga & Guimarães Day Tour — Living Tours

~8 hrs · ~\$95 USD / person, or self-drive via the A4 & A7 in ~1.5 hrs each way

A full-day guided tour covering both towns is the simplest way to see them without picking up a second rental car for a single day; independent drivers can cover the same loop via the A4 and A7 motorways in about 90 minutes each way from the Douro.

Living Tours · www.livingtours.com

Bom Jesus do Monte

~1.5 hrs · funicular ~\$4 USD round trip

A Baroque hilltop sanctuary reached by a zigzagging granite staircase lined with fountains and chapels — or by Europe's oldest working water-powered funicular, climbing the same 383-foot slope since 1882.

Guimarães Castle & Historic Center

~2 hrs, self-guided · castle grounds free, small museum fee ~\$5 USD

A 10th-century hilltop castle regarded as the birthplace of Portugal, overlooking the walled medieval center where the country's first king was born — a UNESCO World Heritage site in its own right.

Overnight — PortoBay Flores

From \$175–\$215 USD / night, for 2 people

Back to the same rooftop-view rooms on Rua das Flores for the trip's final two nights.

PortoBay Flores · www.portobay.com

Day 6

Aveiro & Costa Nova

A day trip north along the coast to a canal town nicknamed the “Portuguese Venice,” and a beach lined with candy-striped fishing houses.

Day Trip — Porto to Aveiro

~1 hr each way · CP train from \$8 USD each way, or a guided day tour from ~\$75 USD / person

The regional train is the cheaper, simpler option for anyone comfortable navigating on their own; a handful of small-group tour operators also run the route with Costa Nova included.

CP – Comboios de Portugal · www.cp.pt

Moliceiro Canal Cruise

~45 min · ~\$14 USD / person

Flat-bottomed, brightly painted boats once used to harvest seaweed now carry visitors along Aveiro's central canals, past Art Nouveau facades and under low arched bridges.

Costa Nova's Striped Houses

~1.5 hrs, self-guided · free

A row of candy-striped wooden beach houses (palheiros), originally built by local fishing families to spot their homes from the water, now one of the most photographed stretches of coastline in Portugal.

Overnight — PortoBay Flores

From \$175–\$215 USD / night, for 2 people

A final night back in Porto before tomorrow's departure.

PortoBay Flores · www.portobay.com

Day 7

Porto Market & Departure

A last morning through Porto's covered market and a francesinha lunch before the trip closes out at the airport.

Mercado do Bolão

~1 hr, self-guided · free to browse

A restored early-20th-century iron-and-glass market hall in the city center, selling fresh fish, cheese, flowers and pastries under one roof.

Francesinha Lunch — Café Santiago

~1 hr · ~\$13–\$16 USD / person

Porto's signature sandwich — layers of meat and melted cheese drowned in a spiced beer-and-tomato sauce — at one of the city's most argued-about “best francesinha” addresses, serving the dish since 1959.

Café Santiago · Rua de Passos Manuel 226, Porto · +351 22 205 5797 · cafesantiago.pt

Departure Transfer — City Center to Porto Airport (OPO)

~25 min · taxi/Uber from \$25 USD

A straightforward final ride back to Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport to close out the week.