

Travel report – Lisbon/Cascais & Estoril – October 2017 – Karen Swann

Day 1:

I was lucky enough to be taken on a three night trip to Portugal with Classic Collection Holidays in October along with a small group of Premier Travel staff. We all met at Stansted airport at 10 a.m. for our flight with Ryanair to Lisbon.

We arrived at The Hotel Tivoli Avenida Liberdade, Lisbon at 4 p.m. and after quickly checking into our rooms we were met outside the hotel by 12 segways!! After a brief instruction, we were let loose on the streets of Lisbon. It really is a great way to get around the city especially as the old town is very hilly it saved our energy and legs as we were able to manoeuvre around with little effort!

The hotel is at the heart of the city and there is an outdoor pool which is a bonus during the warmer months. The “The Sky Bar” is a roof top bar which boasts fantastic views over the old town as well as being a lovely place to enjoy a cocktail or two!

Day 2:

The following day we did a walking tour of the city and the first stop was at a Pastelaria. Here we sampled their offering of Portugal's most famous and emblematic sweet: the pastel de nata (or pastel de Belém), a small egg-tart pastry made by a recipe used by 18th century monks at Jerónimos Monastery in Lisbon's Belém district.



After negotiating the steep cobbled inclines around the old town, trying to work off some of the calories from breakfast and our morning snack we stopped for a drop of Ginjinha. This is a favourite liqueur of many Portuguese and a typical drink in Lisbon. It is traditionally served in a shot glass and can be served with a variety of additions; we opted for a few cherries, which gave it some extra flavour.

We were then taken to visit The Eduardo VII Park which is a public park. It occupies an area of 26 hectares to the north of the Avenida da Liberdade and the Marquess of Pombal Square, in the centre of the city.

Our next stop was the Hotel Pestana Palace for a site inspection and lunch. The hotel is set in truly beautiful surroundings of the carefully restored 19th century palace Valle-Flôr and has many famous stars spending time there including Madonna. This hotel features a wedding chapel for those interested in tying the knot!

This luxurious and elegant hotel has wonderful views to the Tagus River, is a privileged member of the 'Leading Hotels of the World' group and is listed as a Portuguese National Landmark. An exuberant private park surrounds the grounds with an abundance of subtropical plants and trees presenting a magnificent panoramic vista over the city of Lisbon.



After lunch we visited the area of Belem. We went to the top of the Padrao dos Descobrimentos also known as the Navigators monument. It is a stunning monument that represents the front of a vessel and built in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Henry the Navigator's death.





From here there are magnificent views of Lisbon including the 25 de Abril Bridge and St Jeronimos Monastery (a heritage monument) built in the 16th century.

We left Lisbon after a busy day sightseeing and had a 35 minute drive to our next destination Cascais. We stayed at The Hotel Quinta Da Marinha which is a 5 star property with its own golf course. It is approximately 2 km from the town and beach but the hotel does provide a shuttle bus which I would recommend booking in advance.

For our evening meal we walked along the road to the nearby Sheraton which is surrounded by world renowned golf courses. For families they offer two bedroomed suites which will sleep up to six and come with a fully equipped kitchen. This hotel also offers a shuttle bus to the town and beach.

Day 3:



The following morning we were taken to the beach at Cascais and walked along the promenade to Estoril. Cascais, originally a picturesque fishing town has developed into a fashionable holiday resort. It's known for its sandy beaches and busy marina. The old town is home to the medieval Nossa Senhora da Luz Fort and the Citadel Palace, a former royal retreat.

Estoril is a stylish and cosmopolitan beach resort. It strikes the perfect balance between Portuguese charm and excellent tourist facilities, to create the ideal destination for those tourists who want more than just great beaches for their holiday.

We stopped for a site inspection and lunch at The Grande Real Villa Italia Hotel & Spa. This 5 star property overlooks the seafront in Cascais and is close to the marina plus town centre.

After lunch we went to the most westerly point in mainland Europe, Cabo Da Roca. It has a wild, rugged headland and the windswept cliffs were believed to be the edge of the world up until the late 14th century. The spectacular, desolate scenery adds to the allure of the location. The isolated atmosphere of Cabo da Roca is enhanced by the very limited development in the area; there is a lighthouse, coffee shop and gift shop but not much else.

We then drove to Sintra, a picturesque town that is set amidst the pine-covered hills of the Serra de Sintra. The variety of fascinating historic buildings and beautiful scenery has established Sintra as a fantastic tourist destination and has since become the most popular day trip from Lisbon.

For our evening meal we visited the 5 star Palacio De Estoril Hotel in Estoril. This was centrally located just a five minute walk from the beach. The hotel features a Wellness centre offering a range of facilities including Banyan Tree Spa as well as a 9 & 18 hole golf course.



Later that evening, we took a short stroll to the nearby casino in Estoril, the largest of the Iberian Peninsula. Be prepared for a smoky atmosphere if you decide to visit. Although there are smoking and non-smoking sections these were not adhered to!

Day 4:

After a leisurely breakfast we relaxed by the pool until midday when we were collected for our flight back from Lisbon to Stansted. We were extremely lucky with the weather as we had temperatures of 27 – 30 degrees the duration we were away, which is warmer than expected for that time of year.

Many thanks to Classic Collection, for an informative and most enjoyable four days.

Mrs Karen Swann (Senior Travel Consultant)