

# **Tasters Guild's Riverboat Adventure Douro River Valley October 16-26, 2008**

## **A TASTE OF PORTUGAL AND SPAIN**

Portugal, a small country tucked into a corner of the Iberian Peninsula, surrounded by its much larger neighbor, Spain, changed the course of world history, leading to the "discovery" of many new lands. The Portuguese invented the navigation of the seas, so it's only fitting for you to discover the warmth and friendliness of these very proud people as you travel along the Douro River.

Portugal offers distinctive Old World flavor

The river Douro, rising in Spain and reaching the Atlantic Ocean in Porto, has created a valley of spectacular beauty with hills falling steeply down to the water's edge, and stone terraces made by generations of men and women to give the vines a sheltered hold on the steep rocks. This is Port country, the first and oldest demarcated wine region in the world, established in 1756. Enjoy the privilege of seeing this pristine and remote river valley the best possible way, on a Douro Valley Grand River Cruise.

Historic places, gentle beauty, rich wines and hearty meals

Before embarking on your cruise, enjoy the capital city of Lisbon, set on seven low hills bordering the River Tejo and a treasure house of old world architecture, a colorful entree to what lies ahead as you sail the beautiful vine-clad Douro River Valley. Stop in Coimbra, "Birthplace of Kings," and Porto, the beautiful "City of Bridges." Taste new wines from old, village vineyards - Régua, Pinhão and Lamego.

Taste a home-cooked meal at the Alpendurada Monastery. Stroll the UNESCO World Heritage city, Salamanca, Spain, and all along the way uncover a land of unspoiled beauty and charm.

Who will enjoy this cruise: Those wanting to discover Europe's best-kept secret in river cruising: the amazing natural and cultural heritage of the Douro Valley. The Douro Valley is a hidden gem for true river cruise connoisseurs. And true wine connoisseurs will enjoy indulging in this regions most celebrated beverage, Port. Cruise Highlights include:

- \* 7-night cruise in an outside stateroom on the intimate Grand Douro Queen
- \* 2 nights hotel stay in Lisbon with breakfast
- \* Classical European cuisine with a twist of contemporary elegance
- \* 8 excursions fully hosted by English-speaking guides and 2 local dinners ashore
- \* Captain's Dinner
- \* Enriching onboard entertainment and insightful lectures
- \* Services of a Uniworld Cruise Manager and attentive all English-speaking staff
- \* All transfers

## **DETAILED ITINERARY: LISBON TO PORTO – 11 DAYS**

**DAY 1:** Depart Home Gateway City to Lisbon Departing Flight

**DAY 2: Lisbon**

Arrive in Lisbon where you'll be greeted by a Uniworld representative and transferred to your hotel.

**DAY 3: Lisbon**

Featured Excursion: Lisbon city tour  
 Irresistible Optional Tour: Spend the afternoon exploring the Portuguese communities of Sintra and Cascais

Your guided exploration of the city takes you to one of the most historical districts of the city, Belem, where you'll see the Belem Tower, a fortress that kept careful watch over the great navigators who left Portugal to seek their fortunes elsewhere. You'll relive the opulence of the former times with a visit to the Royal Coaches Museum and the 16th-century ornate Jerónimos Monastery. (BB)

**DAY 4: Lisbon, Coimbra, Porto (embark)**

Featured Excursion: Coimbra tour with family style lunch  
 En route from Lisbon to the Douro Queen in Porto, you'll learn about Portugal's third largest city on a tour of Coimbra, the birthplace to six of Portugal's kings and home to one of the oldest universities in Europe. Be amazed by the Biblioteca Joanina, the jewel of Coimbra University. You'll enjoy lunch in a local pousada before continuing on to Porto to meet the ship. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 5: Porto, Bitetos**

Featured Excursion: Porto city tour and dinner at Alpendurada Monastery

The “City of Bridges,” Porto, is Portugal’s second largest city. Its charm stems from its dramatic position above the river, with gabled houses closely terraced on the hill. You’ll be guided through the medieval city center, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, then on to see the Romanesque cathedral. During the afternoon, we’ll sail to Bitetos, where you’ll spend an evening dining at the former 14th-century Benedictine Monastery of Alpendurada, perched high above the river in a stunning setting. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 6: Bitetos, Régua (Lamego), Pinhão**

Featured Excursion: Lamego tour

Be amazed by the breathtaking scenery of the Douro Valley as we cruise from Bitetos to Régua in the morning. During the afternoon, tour the old Episcopal city of Lamego, with a wealth of baroque buildings, including the 18th-century pilgrimage church Nossa Senhora dos Remédios and an 11th-century castle. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 7: Pinhão, Barca d’Alva,**

Featured Excursion: Lecture and Port wine tasting at the Vintage House Wine Academy

The small town of Pinhão is the epicenter of the Port winemaking area, and a place where the soil and climatic conditions are considered to be at their very best. Visit the famous Wine Academy at the Vintage House and learn more about the history of Port which goes back to the 17th century. Find out about the unique climate conditions of the Douro Valley and the Port wine making process, and of course, you’ll get to indulge in some of this country’s most celebrated beverage. You’ll have some leisure time before sailing to Barca d’Alva in the afternoon. (BB, L, Captain’s Dinner)

**DAY 8: Vega de Terrón (Salamanca, Spain)**

Featured Excursion: Full-day Salamanca city tour with typical Spanish lunch

The ship will dock in Vega de Terrón, Spain, in the morning, and from here, you’ll travel overland to the Spanish city of Salamanca, one of the best preserved medieval cities in Spain. You’ll visit the historic university founded in 1218 by Alfonso IX of León, and you’ll stroll through one of Spain’s largest and grandest squares—Plaza Mayor with its warm, gold-colored sandstone. After a typical Spanish lunch at one of the city’s wonderful restaurants, enjoy some free time before returning to the ship in Vega de Terrón. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 9: Vega de Terrón (Spain), Pinhão**

Featured Excursion: Tour of medieval Castelo Rodrigo, dinner at the Vintage House Hotel

Visit the small town of Castelo Rodrigo, a medieval walled city with a parish church perched high on a hilltop that dates back to the 12th century. In the evening, you'll visit the Vintage House Hotel, set in a magnificent 18th-century mansion overlooking the Douro River. Here you'll be treated to a delicious and hearty dinner. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 10: Pinhão, Régua, Porto**

Featured Excursion: Mateus Palace and Gardens

Today, you'll be enchanted with a visit to the Mateus Palace and Gardens, a perfect example of baroque architecture, with an impressive facade made up of beautiful pinnacles on the roof and an ornate stairway, all reflected in a pond in front. The gardens are among the most beautiful in Europe, with a tunnel of cypress trees shading the path. (BB, L, D)

**DAY 11: Porto** (disembark), transfer to airport Return Flight

Disembark the ship and transfer to the Porto Airport for your flight home.