



algarve.
europe's
most famous
secret

You have probably heard about the Algarve. A friend may have told you about one of its magnificent beaches, maybe you've seen a report about its cuisine or perhaps you've picked up a brochure like this one before. But there is an Algarve that you haven't seen, tasted or explored before: it's the Algarve that the local people know and love.

For almost three thousand years Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Goths, Maghrebins and Mauritians did what you do - they passed through the Algarve. Until, in 1249, the Al-Gharb ("the West") was finally taken from the Islamic world by Sancho II, who took the title of King of Portugal and the Algarve.

Since then, the pride shared by the inhabitants of the Algarve has compelled them to reveal their region's greatest secrets to visitors – about their favourite beaches, hidden hamlets, natural walks and even recommending the best restaurants.





St. Vicent Lighthouse



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Sun and Sea

The Horizon as a meeting point









Sun and Sea

Let us reveal a secret: the word Algarve comes from the Arabic "Al Gharb", meaning "West", but if you've been here before you know that it could also mean sun and sea. The sun shines brightly in the Algarve for around 300 days a year, during spring and summer naturally, but in autumn and winter as well.

The sea is always ready to welcome swimmers, surfers, body-boarders, divers, fishermen, yachtsmen, sailors and any other lovers of clear, warm waters.

You'll find a coastline almost 200 km long, over 100 beaches, more than 50 of which fly the blue flag, and better still, a huge variety of landscapes, cliffs, endless stretches of sand, inlets, islands, lagoons, some of them well-known, others still secret and accessible only to those who know the way.

Take our advice: ask the locals. More than anyone else, they know the secrets of this land that gazes out to sea and is eternally bathed in sunlight.



Hi, my name is Marta and I have chosen to live in Sagres, the most south-westerly point in Europe. I believe I have the best of both worlds here: the southern coast, with its white sandy beaches hidden among the cliffs, and the western coast, with perfect surfing beaches and footpaths that take you to sleepy fishing villages, seemingly frozen in time, with migrating birds flying overhead. I would recommend my favourite beaches, all of them untouched by man and surrounded by breathtaking scenery, but I would be denying you the thrill of the discovery. Grab a 4x4 to explore and find your very own deserted paradise, it's all about discovering your very own secret- this is the best local advice I can share with you.

Marta Mealha
Surfer

- Vila do Bispo, Telheiro Beach
- Costa Vicentina, Surf
- Local Fisherman

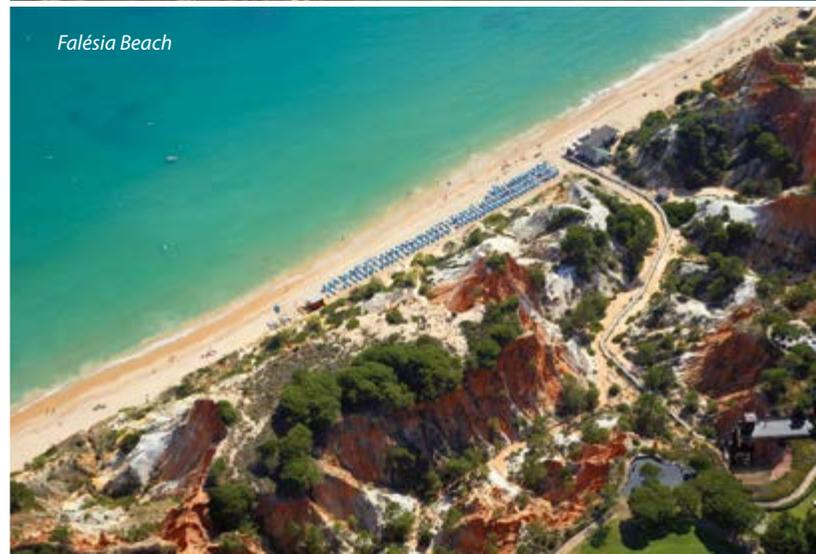
Martinhal Beach



Ponta da Piedade - Lagos



Falésia Beach





Golf

Greens with a sea view









Golf

Between the blueness of the sea and the sky, there's another colour that'll catch your eye in the Algarve: green. It's the best kind of green, the green of around forty golf courses covering the whole region, which has been twice named the best golf destination in the world by the most prestigious golfing organisations and publications.

When you play golf in the Algarve you'll discover the pleasure of playing to the sound of the waves, the birds and the wind rustling through the leaves of the trees shading you from the strong rays of the sun that shines all year-round. Whatever your level – beginner, amateur or professional - the Algarve has the right course for you, with the official seal of approval of the greatest names in the sport.

Take up the challenge of playing on one of them.





Hi, my name is Jimmy. When I first came to the Algarve, I realised that I just had to stretch my hand out of the car to touch a golf course. Since then, I have never left. Here's a tip for all golfers and caddies: bring an extra club. When you see the size of the greens and the most challenging holes combined with the climate of the region, you'll understand what I mean. There are only three things that will make me leave the green: when I'm tired of beating the competition, when I want to eat the best fish the sea can provide or when I want to take a break to drink the wine that Portuguese often refer to as their 'water.' Of course I shouldn't be spreading this information but we're too proud around here to keep it a secret any longer.



Jimmy Tarbuck
Comedian and Golfer

- Algarve Wine
- Cataplana
- Seafood Rice

Health and Wellness

Sanus per Algarve (SPA)









Health and Wellness

SPA stands for Sanus Per Aqua, but it could also stand for Sanus Per Algarve, such is the diversity and quality of the spas you'll find around the region.

Whether you want to relax or restore your energy, you'll find a multitude of options, from thalassotherapy, therapeutic massage, sports massage, manual lymphatic drainage and hot stone massage to alternative therapies like reflexology, yoga, tai-chi or reiki.

Caldas de Monchique, for example, is a natural spa in the Serra de Monchique and has been renowned since Roman times, when it was known as "Aguas Sagradas" (Sacred Waters). An epithet which centuries later remains entirely appropriate, and which could be extended to all the other waters of the Algarve, both fresh and salt, they all perform miracles after all.



Hi, my name is Luís, and I'm an incurable know-all. To begin with, let me make it clear that there is more to the Algarve than just sun and beaches. Yes, the sun does shine all year round, and yes, there are beaches for every taste, but the secret is variety. After you've topped up your tan (perhaps on the deserted island where I got married), why not continue to enjoy the salty waters of the sea but this time with a thalassotherapy spa treatment? For another way to find tranquillity take a stroll to the Barbelote waterfall in Monchique and find out more about the Algarve's interior. The truth is that the Algarve is sun and sea, beach and mountain, fresh and sea water, good fish and great wine, every treatment you could desire for the body, mind and soul - all of them secrets that I haven't been able to keep.

Luís Coelho
Product manager

- Monchique, Barbelote Waterfalls
- Ria Formosa
- Algarve Inland





Culture – History, Food and Wine

A round of applause for the Algarve!









Culture – History, Food and Wine

We must confess that many others have been here before you - Arabs, Lusitanians, Romans, Greeks, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Celts and Tartessians, as far back as the Neolithic period. Thankfully the passing of time has not diminished our cultural heritage, which continues to harbour secrets to be discovered in-between your trips to the beach.

Monuments, century-old customs, religious rites and craft markets are a living heritage handed down from father to son and from local people to visitors.

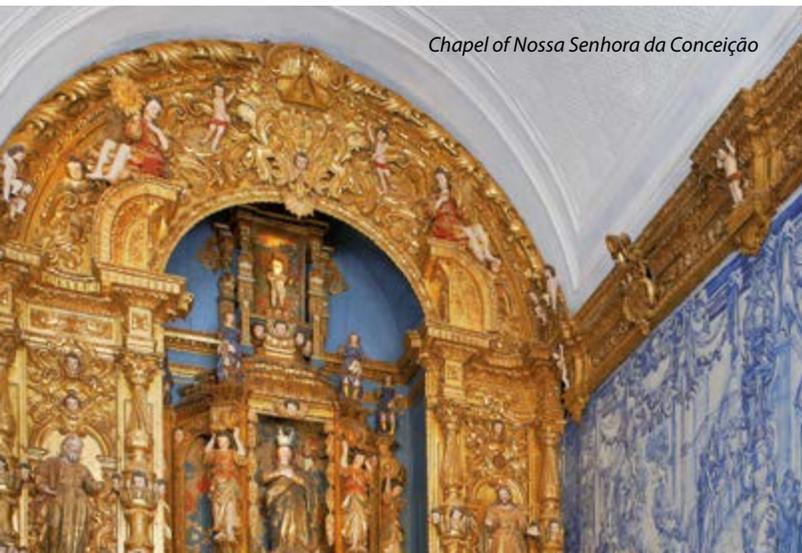
As for the food, it's all about gathering the best that the sea and the land have to offer: fish and shellfish stews, clam cataplanas, sweets based on figs and almonds and wines from the DOP sub-regions of Lagos, Portimão, Lagoa and Tavira, although not everything is traditional: the Algarve is the Portuguese region with the highest number of Michelin stars.

Look up from all this entire heritage and you will discover the symbol of the region, the result of five centuries of Islamic occupation: the chimneys of the Algarve. Just like our own individual experiences in life, no two of them are alike.





Grilled Sardine



Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição

My name is Luís Vicente and I live in Faro, a city with two unmissable monuments: the Roman ruins of Ossónoba, the historic birthplace of the city of Faro, and the Lethes Theatre, an ancient Jesuit convent transformed into a beautiful Neoclassical theatre in the 19th century. I would also recommend you make time for one of the shows staged by the Algarve Theatre Company or to hear a concert by the Algarve Orchestra, one of the best, if not the best, in the country. And since culture is about more than just monuments and theatres, I recommend you taste the newly emerging wines of the Algarve. I particularly like the bouquet of wines from the Tavira and Lagoa area.

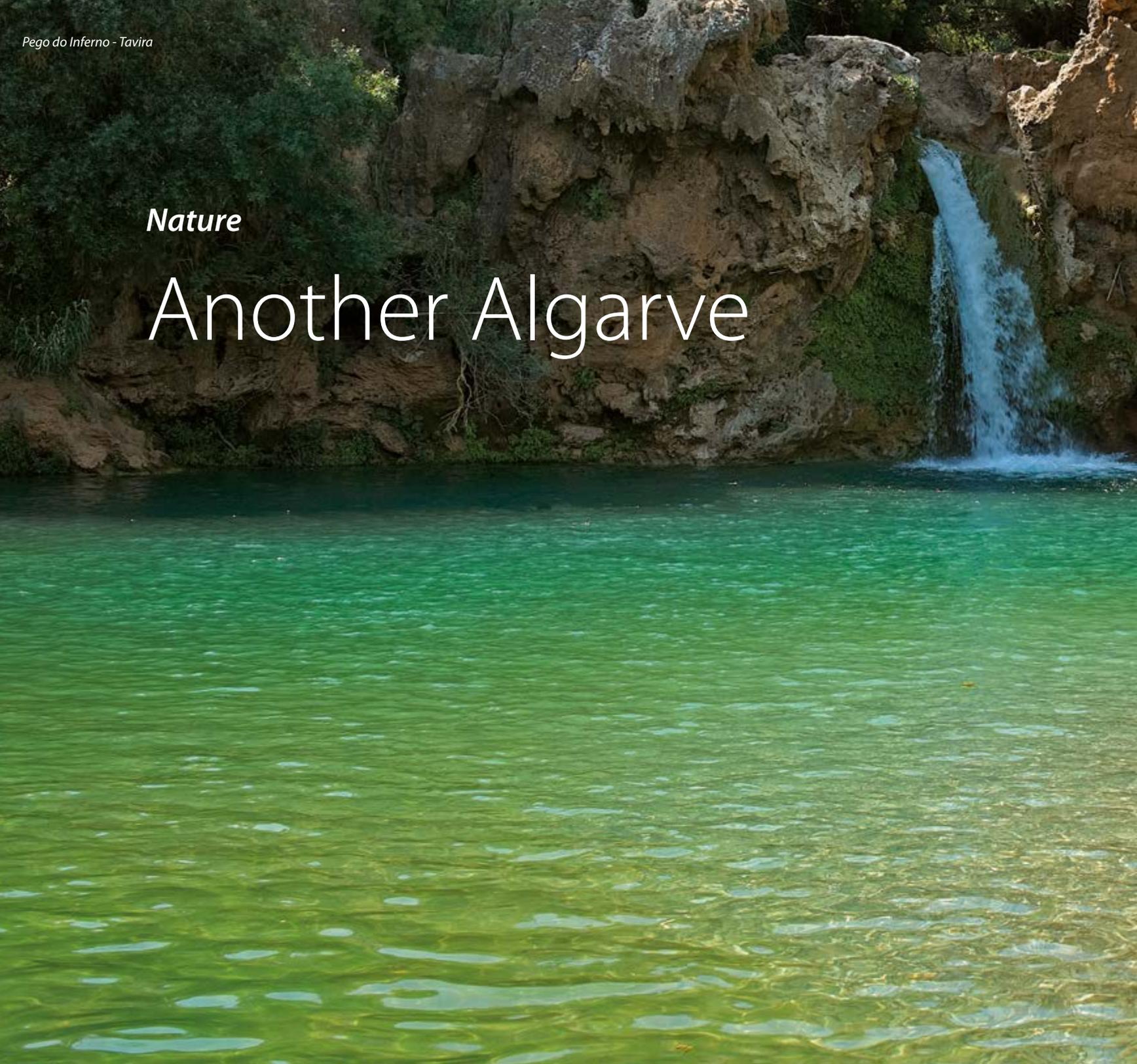
Luís Vicente
Actor



- Faro, Largo da Sé
- Lethes Theatre
- Algarve Orchestra
- Algarve Wine

Nature

Another Algarve









Nature

It's difficult to travel from one end of the Algarve to the other without setting foot on a beach. But it's worth trying because you'll discover the enchanting beauty of this land, with the Atlantic Ocean always glistening in the background, always there, a stone's throw away.

Give the beach a rest, pack your rucksack and cross the Algarve along the Via Algarviana, a 300 km footpath that begins in Alcoutim and ends at Cabo de São Vicente in Vila do Bispo, crossing several towns that still live according to the traditions of the rural world.

The Algarvian microclimate provides the perfect conditions for environmental tourism, with idyllic landscapes like the Parque Natural do Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina, Ponta de Sagres, where the eastern and southern coasts meet, creating a unique marine ecosystem, the Parque Natural da Ria Formosa, with its 60 km of islands and channels forming a birdwatcher's paradise, the Reserva Natural do Sapal de Castro Marim, where you'll find one of the largest flamingo habitats in Europe and many other places where nature remains untouched.

Treat yourself to the luxury of a break from civilisation.



I have been living in the mountains of the Algarve, the Malhão, for many years. From up here you get a 360° view of the Algarve and enjoy the most stunning sunrises and sunsets! As a painter, I am inspired by the undulating colours of the mountains and I love how the mountains transform into magical islands when encircled by clouds in the winter. It's Wagnerian! Everything is in its pure state here: nature, the food and the people. Any route you take holds a delight in store, whether you head for Sítio das Éguas to taste its mouth-watering cheeses or queijinhos, Fontes Ferrenhas to buy delicious bread or to the sea to enjoy the mouth-watering seafood. Along the way you'll find unique plants, Moorish footpaths, villages from times gone by and countless reasons to delay your journey home with names like Xarém or Medronho.

Peixoto.

António Peixoto
Biological Farmer



Costa Vicentina

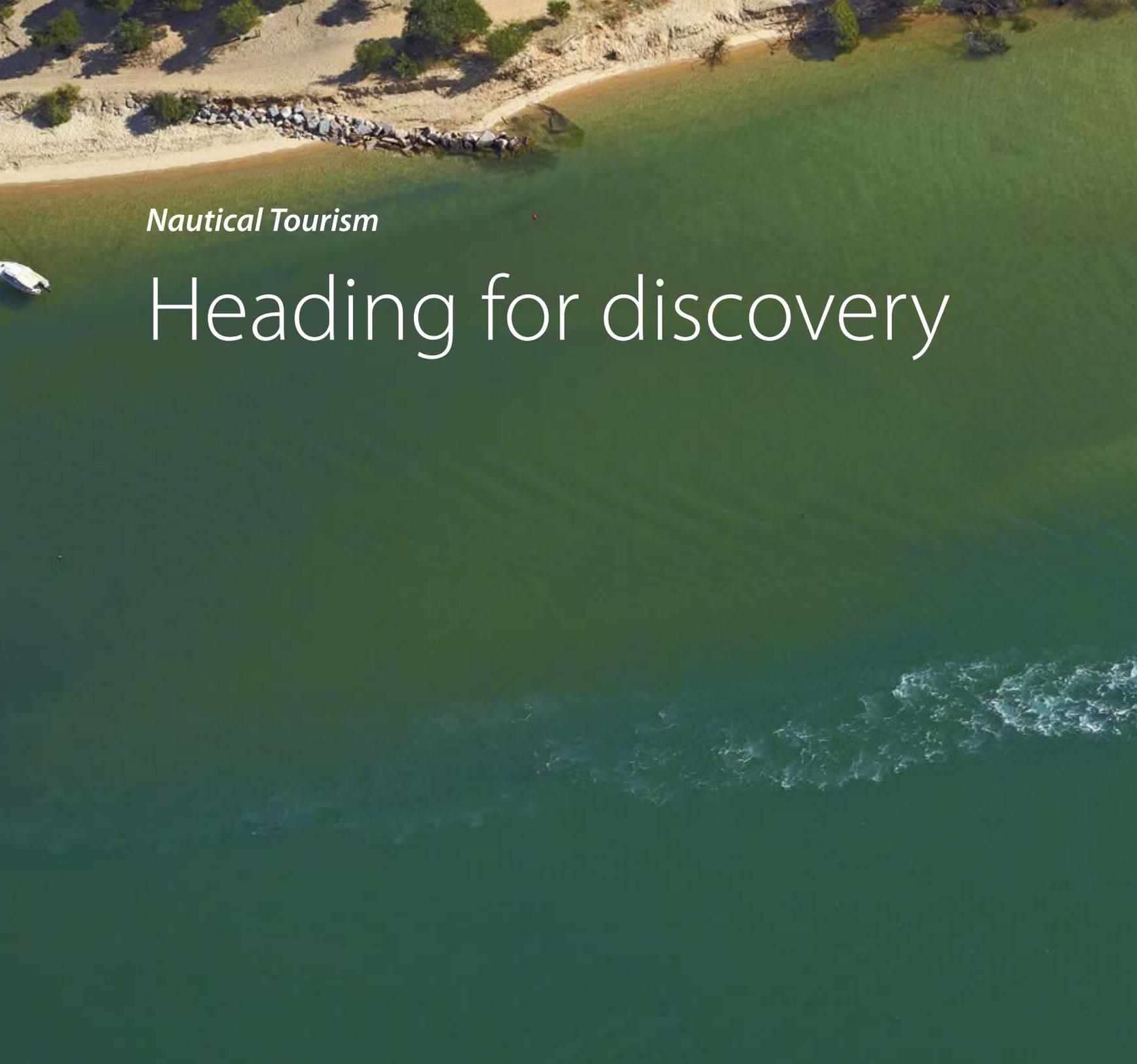


Wild Berrie





Quinta do Lago Bridge

An aerial photograph of a large body of water, likely a lake or reservoir, with a rocky shoreline in the upper left. The water is a deep green color, and there are some white waves in the lower right. A small white boat is visible on the left side of the water. The shoreline is composed of rocks and some sparse vegetation.

Nautical Tourism

Heading for discovery







Nautical Tourism

It comes as no surprise that a region that lies on the edge of the sea provides exceptional conditions for sailors from all over the world.

When you moor your boat in one of the excellent marinas or pleasure-boating harbours along the coast, you'll see that the sea is just one more pretext for having fun in your free time, even if your swimming costume stays dry. You'll understand what we mean when you discover Vilamoura, Portimão, Faro, Olhão or Vila Real de Santo António.

In the sea around the Algarve, the variety and level of a wide range of international competitions continue to attract sailing enthusiasts. Before you take to the sea, have a look at the sporting calendar.

Set your compass and sail to the Algarve.



Sailing along the Algarvian coast always reveals a new secret, hidden among the caves of Benagil, the cliffs of Albufeira or the virtually private beaches of Lagos and Ria Formosa, where I tend to drop anchor and spend the night on board, close to Farol Island. The excellent climate and tranquil waters mean that I can enjoy beautiful sailing trips at any time of year. I always tell people that I'm a lucky man to have been born in the Algarve.

Ricardo Barradas

Ricardo Barradas
Skipper

Lagoa, Benagil Beach

Lagos, Dona Ana Beach

Albufeira, Falésia Beach

Faro, Barrinha



Albufeira Marina



Portimão Marina



Olhão Marina



Sport

One sport on departure,
all of them on arrival









Sport

There is more to sport in the Algarve than just golf. It's true that the region provides the best possible conditions for golfers to play their game, but that's also true of many other sports.

This is confirmed by the great football teams who regularly come to stay and the drivers who race on the Algarve racetrack at over 300 km per hour. It's also confirmed by all the surfers, with schools for beginners and spots for the more experienced, skydivers, who drop from our skies all year round, and kite-surfers, who take advantage of the gusty nortada wind blowing through the Serra de Monchique or the breeze along the Alvor estuary. The water provides excellent conditions for a variety of sports and every dive reveals a wealth of species, making a Jacques Cousteau of every beginner.

If you prefer, you can stay on the surface, sunbathe or enjoy the tennis or athletics in sports complexes along the seashore, or walk or cycle through the Algarvian mountains.

One thing is certain: the Algarve will never run out of secrets, neither on the green nor in the blueness of the sea.





Algarve Stadium



Cycling Track - Tavira



Motocross Track - Cortelha

Hi, my name is Martin Edwards and I'm from the Algarve. Before I settled in the Algarve, I lived in various countries, including Australia, where I was born. You must be wondering what I'm doing here and I don't have a short answer to that. Whenever I can, I go down to the Vilamoura marina, set sail in my Bénéteau, a 15-metre sailing boat, and go fishing for blue swordfish, the ultimate sport fisherman's catch. The truth is that I came here because of several secrets: the best climate in the world, crystal-clear waters, the variety of sea life, unspoilt beaches with rocks, caves or white sand, and all of this without any sharks to trouble fishermen, surfers or bathers. Yes, I know, now they're no longer secrets.

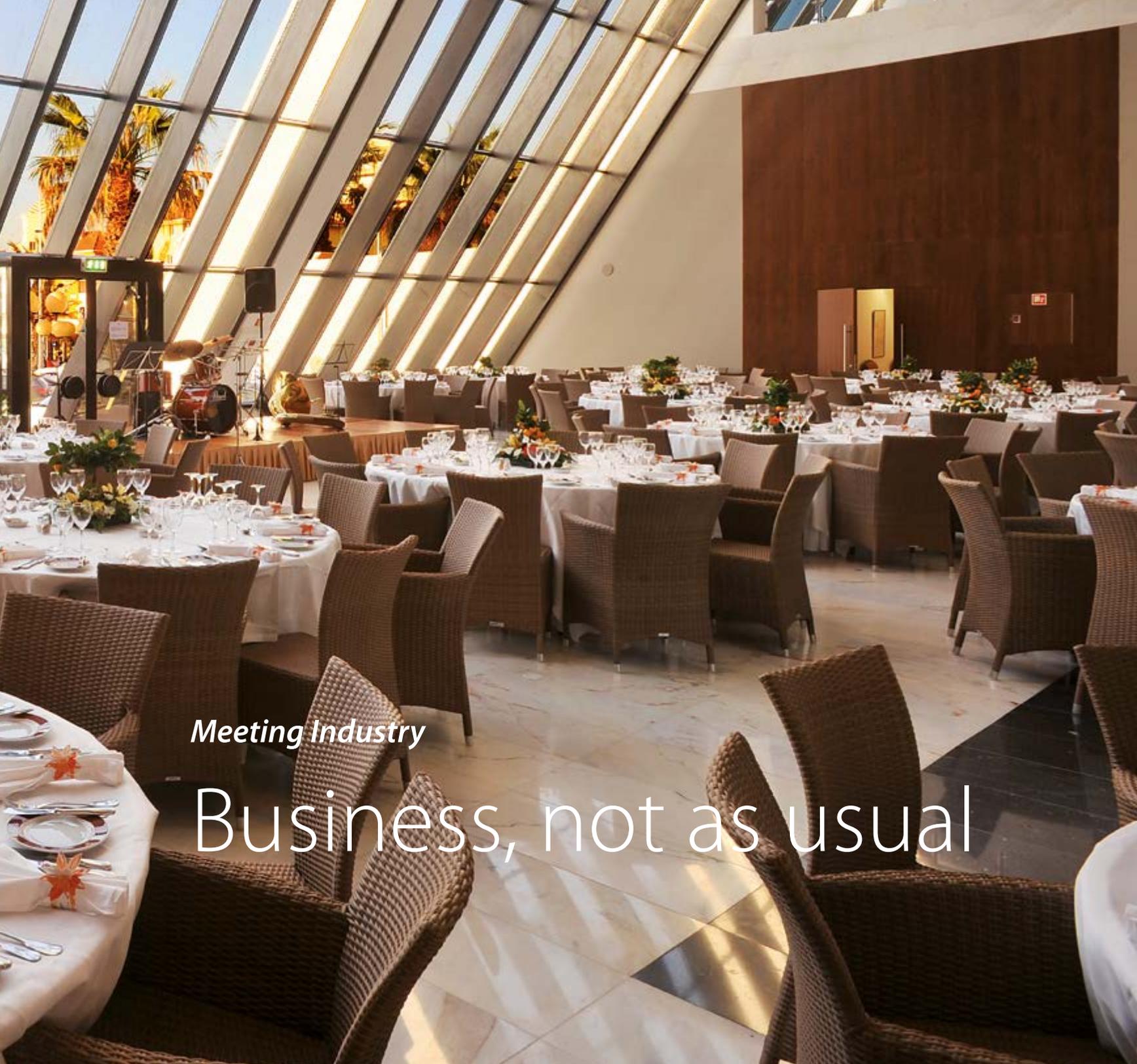
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Edwards".

Martin Edwards
Big Game Fisherman

- Vilamoura Marina
- Lagoa, Carvalho Beach
- Fishing







Meeting Industry

Business, not as usual





Meeting Industry

Opinions differ.

Some people say the Algarve has become one of the most successful business destinations in Europe because of its year-round pleasant climate, the variety of its Mediterranean food, its historical and cultural heritage and, naturally its landscape, which combines heavenly beaches with the well-kept secrets of the mountain range.

Others argue that it attracts companies from every corner of the world because of the growing number of luxury hotels, providing the perfect conditions to host large conferences, small meetings and incentive travel, whether in a conference hall, a historic building or during a golf match, but both of them are certain about one thing: Faro International Airport receives professionals from Europe's major capital cities every day and many of them answer "no" to the question: is this your first time in the Algarve?



Contrary to what many people believe, the Algarve is more than just a perfect holiday destination. I am a hotelier in this region and I can tell you that it's also an excellent place to work. I realised this about fifteen years ago, when I started to think that the sun, the year-round mildness of the climate and the dynamism and beauty of this land could also serve to welcome people travelling on business. I therefore decided to refurbish my hotel so that I could organise meetings, conferences and other kinds of business events in addition to accommodating people and I have never looked back.

António Cardoso

António Cardoso
Hotel entrepreneur

- Vila do Bispo, Barriga Beach
- Meeting Room
- Safari Jeep

Canoeing - Ria Formosa



Algarve International Karting Circuit





Algarve Map

Legend

-  Beach
-  Golf Course
-  Marina
-  Airfield
-  Rail Road
-  Secondary Road
-  Main Road
-  Highway
-  Natural Reserves
- 
- 



Useful Contacts

Algarve Promotion Bureau

Av. 5 de Outubro, Nº 18 - 8000-076 Faro
Tel.: 289 800 403 - Fax: 289 800 466
E-mail: ata@atalgarve.pt
www.algarvepromotion.pt

Algarve Tourism Board

Av. 5 de Outubro, Nº 18 - 8000-076 Faro
Tel.: 289 800 400 - Fax: 289 800 489
E-mail: turismodoalgarve@turismodoalgarve.pt
www.turismodoalgarve.pt

Consulates

Germany

Urb. Infante D. Henrique
Lote 11 r/c Dto.
8000-490 Faro
T. 289 803 181
Fax: 289 801 346
info@honorarkonsul-faro.de

Angola

Praceta projetada à rua de Moçambique
(paralela à Av. Caloust Gulbekian) Lote Q-1º Esq
8005-203 Faro
T. 289 897 100
Fax: 289 897 108
geral@consuladogeralangola-faro.pt

Austria

Beco de Gil Vicente, 4 - r/c
8200-009 Albufeira
T. 289 512 878
consul.austria.algarve@hotmail.com

Belgium

Av. 5 de Outubro, n.º 28, 1.º Esq.
8000-076 Faro
T. 289 812 589
Fax: 289 812 591
consuladobelgicafaro@gmail.com

Brazil

Largo Dom Marcelino Franco n.º 2
8000-169 Faro
T. 289 096 193 / 918 803 922
consular.faro@itamaraty.gov.br

Cape verde

Rua Porta da Serra, 37, 1.º Esq.
8500-603 Portimão
T. 282 417 720
Fax: 282 417 720

Canada

Rua Frei Lourenço Sta. Maria, 1, 1.º Frente
8001-901 Faro
T. 289 803 757
Fax: 289 880 888
canada.faro@sapo.pt

Denmark

Rua Conselheiro Bivar, 10, 1.º Dto.
8000-255 Faro
T. 289 805 561
Fax: 289 803 333
geral@ssgcllegal.com

Spain

Av. Ministro Duarte Pacheco
8900-330 Vila Real de Sto. António
T. 281 544 888
Fax: 281 511 826
con.vilareal@mae.es

Estonia

Praça Dr. António Padinha, 12
8800 Tavira
T. 932 825 254
Fax: 281 325 870
gmd@martinsdias.com

Finland

Edf. La Finca, Cascalheira
8125-018 Quarteira
T. 289 399 873/4
Fax: 289 399 872
giselia.farias@netc.pt

France

Rua Almirante Cândido dos Reis, 226
8800 Tavira
T. 281 380 660
Fax: 281 380 668
taviclinica@hotmail.com

Great Britain

Edf. A, Fábrica
Av. Guanaré
8501-915 Portimão
T. 282 490 750
Fax: 282 414 054
portugal.consulate@fco.gov.uk

Italy

Edifício Visualforma, 1.º Andar – Loja 4
Sítio da Mã Vontade
8000 Faro
T. 289 812 186
vitor.neto.tfn@mail.telepac.pt

Morocco

Vila Lageado, 19
Apartado 993
8200-913 Albufeira
T. 289 587 960
Fax: 289 586 084
alegria@mail.telepac.pt

Mexico

Rua José de Matos, 5 r/c
8000-503 Faro
T. 289 827 074
Fax: 289 827 075
consulmexico@mail.telepac.pt

Norway

Rua Eng. Francisco Bivar
Praia da Rocha
8500-809 Portimão
T. 282 099 162 / 912 307 564
Fax: 282 240 901
consuladono.ruega@airpass.pt

Czech Republic

Av. 5 de Outubro, 55, 1.º Esq.
8000-076 Faro
T. 289 804 478
Fax: 289 093 161
paulo.neves@hppsau.de.pt

Republic of Poland

Quinta da Bolota, Lote 4 A
Vale de Santa Maria
8200-314 Albufeira
T. 968 059 595
Fax: 289 580 539
consul.polonia@mail.telepac.pt

Romania

Volta dos Plátanos, 10
8125-563 Vilamoura
T. 289 301 702
consul@consulat.algarve.com

Russia

Apartado 2107
Quinta do Lago
T. 917 810 031
Fax: 289 845 966
n.gama@nggdel.com

Sweden

Apartado 3712
8135-908 Almancil
T. 916 890 887
sateen.theo@iol.pt

Sweden

Rua 1.º de Maio, 9
8800-360 Tavira
T. 281 325 612/636
Fax: 281 325 612
consuladodasuecia@taviralawyers.com

Tourist Information Offices

Faro Internacional Airport

8001 – 701 Faro
Tel.: 289 818 582
turismo.aeroporto@turismodoalgarve.pt

Albufeira

Rua 5 de Outubro
8200 – 109 Albufeira
Tel.: 289 585 279
turismo.albufeira@turismodoalgarve.pt

Alcoutim

Rua 1.º de Maio
8970 – 059 Alcoutim
Tel.: 281 546 179
turismo.alcoutim@turismodoalgarve.pt

Aljezur

Rua 25 de Abril, n.º 62
8670 – 054 Aljezur
Tel.: 282 998 229
turismo.aljezur@turismodoalgarve.pt

Alvor

Rua Dr. Afonso Costa, n.º 51
8500 – 016 Alvor
Tel.: 282 457 540
turismo.alvor@turismodoalgarve.pt

Armação de Pêra

Avenida Marginal
8365 Armação de Pêra
Tel.: 282 312 145
turismo.armacaodepera@turismoalgarve.pt

Carvoeiro

Praia do Carvoeiro
8400 – 517 Lagoa
Tel.: 282 357 728
turismo.carvoeiro@turismoalgarve.pt

Castro Marim

Mercado Local (Local Market)
Rua de São Sebastião
8950-121 Castro Marim
Tel.: 281 531 232
turismo.castromarim@turismoalgarve.pt

Faro

Rua da Misericórdia, n.º 8 – 11
8000–269 Faro
Tel.: 289 803 604
turismo.faro@turismoalgarve.pt

Lagos

Praça Gil Eanes (Antigos Paços do Concelho)
8600 Lagos
Tel.: 282 763 031
turismo.lagos@turismoalgarve.pt

Loulé

Avenida 25 de Abril, n.º 9
8100 – 506 Loulé
Tel.: 289 463 900
turismo.loule@turismoalgarve.pt

Monchique

Largo S. Sebastião
8550 Monchique
Tel.: 282 911 189
turismo.monchique@turismoalgarve.pt

Monte Gordo

Avenida Marginal
8900 Monte Gordo
Tel.: 281 544 495
turismo.montegordo@turismoalgarve.pt

Olhão

Largo Sebastião Martins Mestre, n.º 8 A
8700 – 349 Olhão
Tel.: 289 713 936
turismo.olhao@turismoalgarve.pt

Guadiana International Bridge

A22 – Monte Francisco
8950 - 206 Castro Marim
Tel.: 281 531 800
turismo.guadiana@turismoalgarve.pt

Praia da Rocha

Avenida Tomás Cabreira
8500 – 802 Praia da Rocha
Tel.: 282 419 132
turismo.praiaदारocha@turismoalgarve.pt

Quarteira

Praça do Mar
8125 Quarteira
Tel.: 289 389 209
turismo.quarteira@turismoalgarve.pt

Sagres

Rua Comandante Matoso
8650 – 357 Sagres
Tel.: 282 624 873
turismo.sagres@turismoalgarve.pt

São Brás de Alportel

Largo de São Sebastião, n.º 23
8150 – 107 São Brás de Alportel
Tel.: 289 843 165
turismo.saobras@turismoalgarve.pt

Silves

E. N. 124 (Parque das Merendas)
8300 Silves
Tel.: 282 098 927
turismo.silves@turismoalgarve.pt

Tavira

Praça da República, n.º 5
8800 Tavira
Tel.: 281 322 511
turismo.tavira@turismoalgarve.pt

Municipal Tourist Offices

Albufeira

Estrada de Santa Eulália
8200 Albufeira
Tel.: 289 515 973
posto.turismo@cm-albufeira.pt

Estrada Nacional 395 (entrada da cidade)

8200 Albufeira
Tel.: 289 599 502
posto.turismo2@cm-albufeira.pt

Alte

Pólo Museológico Cândido Guerreiro e Condes
de Alte
8100 Alte
Tel.: 289 478 060

Portimão

(Ed. do TEMPO – Teatro Municipal)
Largo 1.º Dezembro
8500-538 Portimão
Tel.: 282 402 487
info@visitportimao.com

Querença

Largo da Igreja
8100 – 495 Querença
Tel.: 289 422 495

Salir

Centro Interpretativo de Arqueologia
8100 – 202 Salir
Tel.: 289 489 137

Silves

Centro de Interpretação do Património Islâmico
Praça do Município
8300-117 Silves
Tel.: 282 440 800
turismo@cm-silves.pt

Useful telephone

National code: 00351

Tourist Telephone Line Support - 808 78 12 12
SOS line - 112

Transports

Faro Internacional Airport - 289 800 800;
<http://www.ana.pt/>

CP - Comboios de Portugal - 808 208 208;
<http://www.cp.pt/>
EVA Transportes - 289 589 055;
<http://www.eva-bus.com>

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- Communications and Image Algarve Tourism Board

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- Bottom Line Activism
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Av. 5 de Outubro, Nº18, 8000-076, Faro - Portugal

