

Porto, Portugal

Port information

Currency	The currency in Porto is Euro. Foreign exchange is available from reception onboard on deck 4.	Language	The language spoken in Porto is Portuguese.
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Getting around

Distance to town centre	It's 12 kilometres from the port to the city centre, so there'll be a chargeable timed town transfer available onboard from Destination Services. It tends to be busy with quite a few ships in, so it can be busy at the drop off point as all ships buses use the same drop off point. The buses will be signed Marella Spirit and please expect queues. It takes approximately 25 minutes to drive from the port to the town depending on traffic.	Main Highlights	<p>From Praca da Ribeira rises a tangle of medieval alleys and stairways that eventually reach the hulking, hilltop fortress of the cathedral. Founded in the 12th century, it was largely rebuilt a century later and then extensively altered during the 18th century. However, you can still make out the church Romanesque contours. Inside, a rose window with a 14th century Gothic cloister remain from its early days.</p> <p>Sitting on Praca Infante Dom Henrique, Igreja de Sao Francisco looks from the outside to be an austere Gothic Church, but inside it hides one of Portugal's most dazzling displays of baroque finery.</p> <p>Ponte de Dom Luis I was completed in 1886 by a student of Gustave Eiffel. The bridge's top deck is now reserved for pedestrians, as well as one of the city's metro lines; the lower deck bears regular traffic, with narrow pedestrian walkways lining the road. The views of the river and Old Town are simply stunning, as are the daredevils who leap from the top. Its construction was significant, as the area's foot traffic once travelled across a bridge made from old port boats lashed together. To make matters worse, the river was wild back then, with no upstream dams. When Napoleon invaded in 1809, scores were crushed and drowned in the rushing river as a panicked stampede proved too much for the makeshift bridge.</p> <p>Visit a port wine producer. There are several to choose from on the southern bank of the Douro River. Over fifty wine companies can be found in the Vila Nova de Gaia area. The real upsurge in demand for port wine came when the Brits banned French wine at the end of the 17th century</p> <p>Igreja do Carmo dates to the late 18th century, this captivating azulejo-covered church is one of Porto's best examples of rococo architecture. The tiled panel on the facade pays tribute to Nossa Senhora (Our Lady). Don't miss a photo opportunity next to the statue of D. Pedro IV on a horse, a symbol of his courage and affection for the people of Porto.</p>
Hop-On-Hop-Off	Go sightseeing in Porto at your own pace on a hop-on hop-off bus tour to see the city's historic attractions and castles, beaches and port. Don't miss a thing with two included routes – one that covers Porto and another that goes to the neighbouring coastal towns of Matosinhos and Vila Nova de Gaia. Admire all the sights from an open-top double-decker bus, and then hop on and off whenever you like to explore more on your own. (You'll need to get the chargeable town shuttle to the town centre to get to the nearest stop).		
Taxis	Taxis are available from outside the Cruise port. Be aware that most taxis are metered but, if not, make sure that you agree a rate with the taxi driver before making your journey. Remember the cost per journey is approximately a euro per minute here.		
Main Highlights	Perfect for a languid stroll, the Riberia district – Porto's riverfront nucleus – is a remarkable window into the city's history. Along the riverside promenade, barcos radelos (the traditional boat used to ferry wine down the Douro) bob beneath the shadow of the photogenic Ponte de Dom Luis I. The splendid neoclassical monument of Palácio da Bolsa (built from 1842 to 1910) honours Porto's past and present money merchants. Just past the entrance is the glass-domed Pátio das Nações (Hall of Nations), where the exchange once operated. But this pales in comparison with rooms deeper inside; to visit these, join one of the half-hour guided tours, which set off every 30 minutes. The highlight is a stupendous ballroom called the Salão Árabe (Arabian Hall), with stucco walls that have been teased into complex Moorish designs, then gilded with some 18kg of gold.		

Essential information

Tourist information	There are four tourist information centres located in and around the city centre. The main office is at Av dos Aliados .	Shopping	Rua de Santa Catarina is the number one shopping street, featuring a big mall and many smaller shops selling everything from clothes to consumer electronics.
Internet access	Many cafes and restaurants in Porto offer WiFi access.	PLEASE NOTE:	Downtown Porto offers some of the best shopping in the city, in the Santa Catarina area, where many of the city's leading retailers can be found clustered together in a series of attractive boutiques.
Nearest beaches	If you walk through the port the nearest beach is about 15 minutes walk away	As with all cities always please keep a close eye on valuables	Boavista is the place to head for upmarket brands and labels, particularly around Avenida da Boavista and the Avis area. Here you will enjoy people-watching as much as bargain hunting, so leave yourself plenty of time to relax at a pavement café, admire your purchases and watch the world go by.

Your Destination Services team would like to wish you a lovely day in Porto.

There can be last minute changes. Please check Cruise News for the latest information before you go ashore.