

# Lisbon

by Jools Stone

**O**ne of the Eurozone's more affordable coastal cities, Lisbon packs a considerable punch, thanks to a unique culinary scene, riotous nightlife and no shortage of historical and cultural attractions.

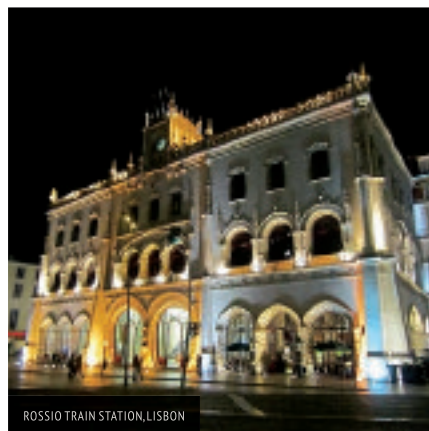
## Why sell it

The Portuguese capital is ideal for a weekend getaway or even as one half of a twin-centre break combined with Porto.

Many visitors will also want to take in the historical hilltop town of Sintra, which can easily be done in an afternoon, being just a 40-minute train ride from the central Rossio Station.

Sintra's main attractions are the Pena Palace and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Quinta de Regelaria. The Quinta is a palace with beautiful, sprawling grounds, complete with intricate towers, grottos and waterfalls to explore.

Pena Palace is one of Europe's most striking and colourful castles, an eclectic mishmash of architectural styles built in the 1840s by King Ferdinand as a tribute to the Portuguese Empire.



ROSSIO TRAIN STATION, LISBON



Perched 500 metres above sea level, the palace can be reached via a hair-raising tuk-tuk ride from the town.

## Who to sell to

Gastronomes will feel comfortable here, thanks to the abundance of fresh fish, seafood and other culinary delights.

One of Lisbon's newest foodie attractions, the Time Out Market is also among the best. This huge covered food hall in the revitalised riverside area of Cais do Sodre is fringed with over 30 food stands and leading restaurants on a self-service basis - so you can sample a starter, main and dessert from three different outlets in one sitting. You may have to fight for a seat at one of the communal benches here, but it is well worth doing so.

One of the city's essential sweetmeats is *natas* cakes, delicious caramelised custard tarts familiar to anyone who frequents Nandos. You'll find these in *pastelarias* all over the city, but

the best place to sample them is the Pasteis de Belem, a bakery that's been residing over the secret recipe since 1837. Customers routinely queue around the block for the puff pastries.

History buffs will appreciate the medieval architectural treasure that is the Tower of Belem. Nearby is the more modern but equally colossal Discoveries Monument, on the banks of the Tagus River. It memorialises centuries of Portuguese exploration and seafaring.

Late-night party-goers and revellers will welcome Lisbon's lively nightlife, which doesn't really get going until around midnight. Trek uphill to the Bairro Alto, where among undulating alleyways are several tiny bars.

Those of a more cultural bent will be attracted to the Bairro to experience the music of fado, a type of folky Portuguese blues dripping with melancholy. The Portuguese have their own word which sums up the spirit of fado - 'saudade' which roughly translates as a feeling of sad, wistful nostalgia for the ways of yesterday.

## Lisbon Essentials

**TIME:** +1 GMT.  
**FLIGHT TIME:** 2 hours 40 minutes  
**VISAS:** None  
**CURRENCY:** Euro  
**LANGUAGE:** Portuguese  
**BOOK IT:** Broadway Travel offer a six-night, twin-city break, pairing Lisbon with Porto, including

train transfers, from £379pp.  
**broadwaytravel.com**  
**08717161006**  
**GETTING THERE**  
Portugal's national airline, TAP, and budget carriers Monarch, Easyjet and Ryanair serve the city from many UK airports.

**CONTACT**  
**visitlisboa.com**  
**OTHER TOUR OPERATORS**  
**rivieraatravel.co.uk**  
**cosmos.co.uk**  
**travelsphere.co.uk**  
**intrepidtravel.co.uk**  
**titantravel.co.uk**

## Top sellers

Lisbon is a hilly city, but the variety of urban transport doubles as one of its key attractions. The extravagantly ornate Art Deco Santa Justa Elevador in Chiado is no ordinary lift, and there are funiculars and numerous trams, many packed with tourists like the proverbial sardines.

The most iconic is the vintage, yellow No. 28, which rattles its way up through streets so narrow you can almost reach out and touch the walls. ■■■