

# Portugal (South West Europe)



## Touring Tips

This information should be read in conjunction with our [general advice for motoring in Europe](#).

**Drinking and driving:** If the level of alcohol in the bloodstream is 0.05 per cent to 0.08 per cent, fine and withdrawal of the driving licence for a minimum of one month to a maximum of one year; more than 0.08 per cent, fine and withdrawal of driving licence for a minimum of two months up to a maximum of two years. The police are also empowered to carry out testing on drivers for narcotics.

**Driving licence:** Minimum age at which a UK licence holder may drive a temporarily imported car and/or motorcycle (over 50cc) 17; however visitors under the age of 18 years may encounter problems even though they hold a valid UK licence.

All valid UK driving licences should be accepted in Portugal. This includes the older all-green style UK licences (in Northern Ireland older paper style with photographic counterpart) although the EC appreciates that these may be more difficult to understand and that drivers may wish to voluntarily update them before travelling abroad if time permits. Alternatively, older licences may be accompanied by an [International Driving Permit \(IDP\)](#).

**Fines:** On-the-spot and must be paid in Euros. Most traffic police vehicles are equipped with portable ATM machines for immediate payment of the fines. An official receipt showing the maximum amount of the fine should be obtained.

Note: foreign motorists refusing to pay an on-the-spot fine will be asked for a deposit to cover the maximum fine for the offence committed. If a motorist refuses to do this, the police can take the driving licence, registration document or failing that they can confiscate the vehicle.

Wheel-clamping and towing are in operation for illegally parked vehicles.

**Fuel:** Unleaded petrol (95 and 98 octane), diesel and LPG available. No leaded petrol (lead replacement petrol available as 98 octane).

Petrol in a can permitted.

Credit cards accepted at most filling stations; check with your card issuer for use in Portugal before travel. Note: A tax of €0.50 is added to credit card transactions.

**Lights:** Dipped headlights compulsory in poor daytime visibility and in tunnels.

**Motorcycles:** Use of dipped headlights during the day compulsory. The wearing of crash helmets is compulsory. Child under seven not permitted as passenger.

**Motor insurance:** Third-party compulsory.

**Passengers/children in cars:** Children under 12 and less than 1.50m in height cannot travel as front seat passengers. They must travel in the rear in a special restraint system adapted to their size, unless the vehicle has only two seats, or is not fitted with seat belts.

Children under 3 can be seated in the front passenger seat if using a suitable child restraint however, the airbag must be switched off if using a rear-facing child restraint system.

**Seat belts:** Compulsory for front/rear seat occupants to wear seat belts, if fitted.

**Speed limits:** Standard legal limits, which may be varied by signs, for private vehicles without trailers: In built-up areas 31 mph (50 km/h), outside built-up areas 55 mph (90 km/h) or 62 mph (100 km/h) and on motorways 74 mph (120 km/h).

The minimum speed on motorways 31 mph (50 km/h). Motorists who have held a driving licence for less than one year must not exceed 55 mph (90 km/h) or any lower speed limit.

### **Compulsory equipment in Portugal:**

- **Photographic proof of identity** - It is a legal requirement in Portugal that everyone carries photographic proof of identity at all times
- **Reflective jacket** – compulsory for residents, recommended for visitors\*
- **Temporary Electronic Toll Device (DEM)** – Since the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010 you are required to have a temporary automatic toll device for using certain motorways. We have been advised that these are the A4, A17, A25, A28, A29, A41 and A42 – This may be extended. The device must be pre-loaded with a minimum of €10. The device can be obtained from some motorway service stations, CTT which is the post company in Portugal and Via Verde shops, with a €27 deposit. When leaving Portugal the device must be returned to one of the selected outlets. The deposit paid for the device and any unused monies should be credited to you.

### **Other rules/requirements in Portugal:**

Carrying a warning triangle recommended as the use of hazard warning lights or a warning triangle is compulsory in an accident/breakdown situation.

It is prohibited to carry and/or use a radar detector.

Spiked tyres and winter tyres are prohibited.

Snow chains may be used, where the weather conditions require.

It is illegal to carry bicycles on the back of a passenger car.

\* The wearing of reflectorised jacket/waistcoat is recommended if the driver and/or passenger(s) exits a vehicle which is immobilised on the carriageway of all motorways and main or busy roads. We recommend the jacket be carried in the passenger compartment of the vehicle (not the boot). This is a compulsory requirement for residents.

In built up areas the use of the horn is prohibited during the hours of darkness except in the case of immediate danger.

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