

Aljezur

Faro District · Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Aljezur is a small, quiet town in the west Algarve. It lies inside the Southwest Alentejo and Vicentine Coast Natural Park. The Atlantic coast here is wild. Long sandy beaches sit below tall cliffs, with few buildings and no resort strip.

The town is a few kilometres inland, below a ruined Moorish castle. The best beaches are 5 to 20 km away. Aljezur suits travellers who want surf, big beaches, walks and calm evenings. It is a different trip from the busy south coast of the Algarve.

When to visit

April to October is the best time to visit. May, June and September are warm, sunny and less crowded. July and August are the driest and sunniest months, and the sea wind keeps the coast comfortable. The Atlantic stays cool all year, so many visitors swim only briefly.

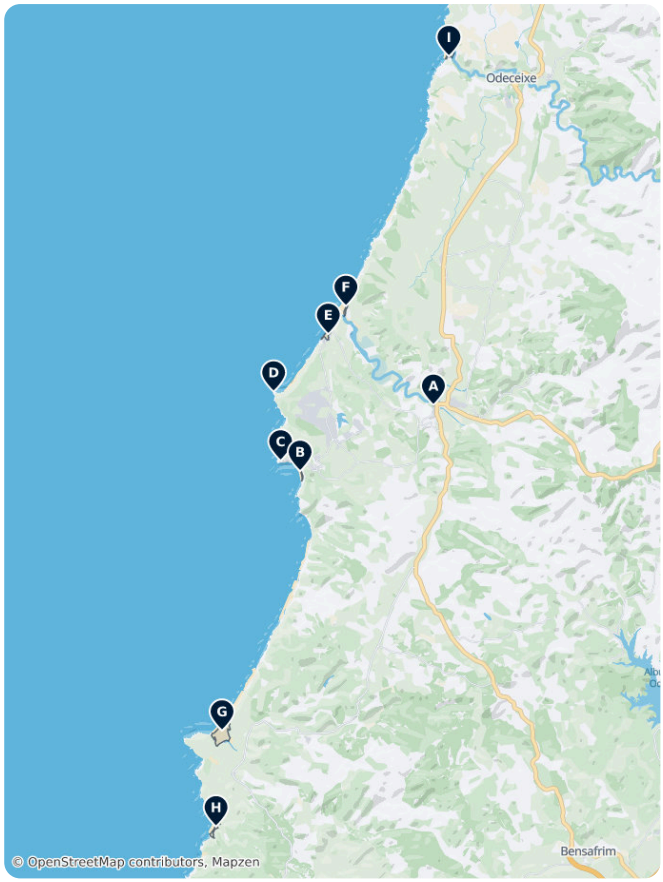
Winter is mild but wetter. The sweet potato festival in Aljezur town is held in late autumn. It is a good reason to visit outside the summer season.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for hiking	16° / 19° Feels like 12°	10° / 5°	Dry air
February	Great Great for hiking	16° / 19° Feels like 13°	10° / 6°	Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	18° / 22° Feels like 15°	12° / 8°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	19° / 24°	13° / 10°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 28°	15° / 12°	☀ 22 sunny days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 30°	17° / 15°	☀ 23 sunny days · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 31°	18° / 16°	☀ 28 sunny days · Humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for sightseeing	27° / 31°	19° / 17°	☀ 28 sunny days · Humid air · UV 8 (Very high)
September	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 29°	18° / 16°	☀ 23 sunny days · Humid air
October	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 27°	16° / 13°	
November	Great Great for hiking	18° / 22°	13° / 9°	Dry air
December	Good Good for hiking	17° / 19° Feels like 14°	11° / 7°	Dry air

Best months: April, May, June, July, August, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Castelo de Aljezur stands above the old town. The castle was built in the Moorish period and the 1755 earthquake destroyed most of it. The walls and two towers give wide views over the town and the valley.
- B Praia da Arrifana is a fine golden beach about 500 m long, about 10 km from town. High cliffs protect it, and it is one of the most popular surf beaches on this coast.
- C Fortaleza de Arrifana is a ruined 17th-century fort on the headland above Arrifana beach. It was built in 1635 to protect the tuna fishing grounds. The 1755 earthquake destroyed it, and the front wall has been rebuilt.
- D Ponta da Atalaia is a headland about 1 km north of Arrifana beach, with sea views. Archaeologists have found remains of a 12th-century Muslim ribat (a fortified religious retreat) here.
- E Praia de Monte Clérigo is a small village beach about 8 km north-west of town. It has rock pools at the south end, a shallow lagoon at low tide, and dunes. Surfing and bodyboarding are popular when conditions allow. There is a strong current just off the beach.
- F Praia da Amoreira is a wide beach with deep dunes, at the mouth of the Aljezur river. A shallow lagoon forms at low tide and is popular with families. Currents near the river mouth can be very strong at high tide.
- G Praia da Bordeira and H Praia do Amado are two large, dune-backed surf beaches near Carrapateira, south of Arrifana.
- I Praia de Odeceixe is at the northern edge of the municipality, at the mouth of the Seixe river. The river marks the border between the Algarve and the Alentejo.

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What to experience

- Take a surf lesson. Praia da Arrifana, Praia da Amoreira and Praia de Monte Clérigo are popular for surfing and bodyboarding, and a surf school works at Monte Clérigo in season.
- Look for crabs and other sea life in the rock pools at the south end of Praia de Monte Clérigo at low tide.
- Watch the sunset over the Atlantic from the headland near Fortaleza de Arrifana. The coast faces west.
- Walk part of the Fishermen's Trail along the cliffs. It is part of the Rota Vicentina, a long coastal trail from São Torpes to Lagos.
- Visit the sweet potato festival in Aljezur town in late autumn. Stands sell sweet potatoes, sweets, crafts and local food.

Day trips

Aljezur is a base for the west coast. Most trips are by car, and public transport is limited.

- A Lagos is the nearest large town. Buses run there. It has an old town, city beaches and many restaurants and shops.
- B Sagres is at the south-west tip of mainland Europe, near Cape St. Vincent. Sagres has a large coastal fortress. Go by car, and go late in the day for the sunset light.
- C Monchique is in the Serra de Monchique hills, east of Aljezur. Fóia and Picota peaks have wide views. The Caldas de Monchique hot sulphur springs are about 6 km south of the town.
- Odeceixe is a village on the Seixe river, north of Aljezur. Its beach is 4 km west of the village, and the village is a good start for walks on the Rota Vicentina.
- Carrapateira is a village south of Arrifana. It is close to the big dune beaches of Bordeira and Amado.



Where to explore

Nearby places in the west and central Algarve:

- West coast and cape: Sagres, Lagos
- Hills and spa: Monchique
- Larger towns on the south coast: Portimão, Silves

Getting there

- By air: Faro airport (FAO) is the main gateway, about 110 km by road. Lisbon airport is the alternative for arrivals from the north. Aljezur has no airport.
- By train: There is no railway in Aljezur. The Algarve line ends at Lagos, so continue from there by bus.
- By bus: Rede Expressos coaches run between Lagos and Aljezur several times a day. From Lisbon, coaches from Sete Rios terminal take about 4 hours. From Faro, change at Lagos; allow 3 hours or more. Check the timetable before travelling, as services vary by day.
- By car: The A22 motorway runs from Faro to Lagos. Then the N120 goes north to Aljezur. See the driving section for tolls.

Getting around

- On foot: Aljezur town is small and can be explored on foot. The beaches and villages are 5 to 20 km away, so they are not walkable from town.
- By car: A car is the easiest way to reach the beaches and villages in the municipality.
- Hiking and cycling: The Rota Vicentina network of hiking and cycling trails runs through the park. Details are on Rota Vicentina.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The town is small and walkable, but the beaches are 8 to 10 km away.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Rota Vicentina has cycling routes, but the coast road is hilly.

Driving

- Is a car worth it?: Yes. Beaches and villages are spread along the coast, and public transport is limited.
- Roads: The N120 links Aljezur with Lagos in the south. The A22 Algarve motorway has been toll-free since 1 January 2025.
- Tolls: The A2 motorway from Lisbon to the Algarve is still tolled.

Food & drink

Aljezur is known for its sweet potato, which has a protected geographical indication. It is used in sweets, bread and savoury dishes. The coast also means fresh fish and seafood.

For a meal by the sea, try the restaurants in Arrifana village, near the harbour, or in Aljezur town.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Caldo Verde
A simple, comforting soup of shredded kale, potato, and slices of chourico sausage.

Francesinha
A hearty Porto specialty: a meat-stuffed sandwich covered in melted cheese and a spiced tomato-beer sauce.

DINNER

Bacalhau
Salt cod, Portugal's national dish, said to be prepared in hundreds of different ways across the country.

Sardinhas Assadas
Charcoal-grilled sardines, especially popular in summer street festivals and along the coast.

Arroz de Marisco
A rich, soupy seafood rice, similar to paella but wetter, packed with shellfish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Pastel de Nata
A small custard tart in flaky pastry, best eaten warm with cinnamon and sugar.

DRINKS

Vinho Verde
A young, light, slightly sparkling white wine from northern Portugal, meant to be drunk within a year of harvest.

Port Wine · Vinho do Porto
A fortified wine from the Douro Valley, aged in cellars around Porto, ranging from sweet ruby to complex aged tawny styles.

Ginjinha · Ginãa
A sweet liqueur made from sour cherries, traditionally served in a small cup, sometimes with a cherry at the bottom.

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Safety & health

Aljezur is a quiet place. Do not leave valuables in a parked car, especially at beach car parks.

The main risk is the sea. Atlantic waves, rip currents and strong undertow are common. Lifeguards patrol some beaches in summer. Swim only where lifeguards are on duty and follow the flags. Be careful at river mouths such as Praia da Amoreira, where currents are strong at high tide. Stay away from cliff edges. Tap water is safe to drink.

History

People have lived here since prehistory. A small town was founded in the 10th century, and the Castelo de Aljezur was part of the Moorish defences of the region. In the 12th century, a Muslim ribat stood on the headland by Ponta da Atalaia. It was used until about 1151.

Christian forces took Aljezur in the 13th century. A legend says a Moorish woman helped them by betraying the defenders. In 1635 the Portuguese built the fort at Fortaleza de Arrifana to protect the tuna fishing grounds.

The 1755 earthquake damaged the whole town and destroyed most of the castle and the fort. A bishop ordered a new church at the edge of the town, called Igreja Nova. A newer part of town grew around it, next to the old quarter below the castle.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



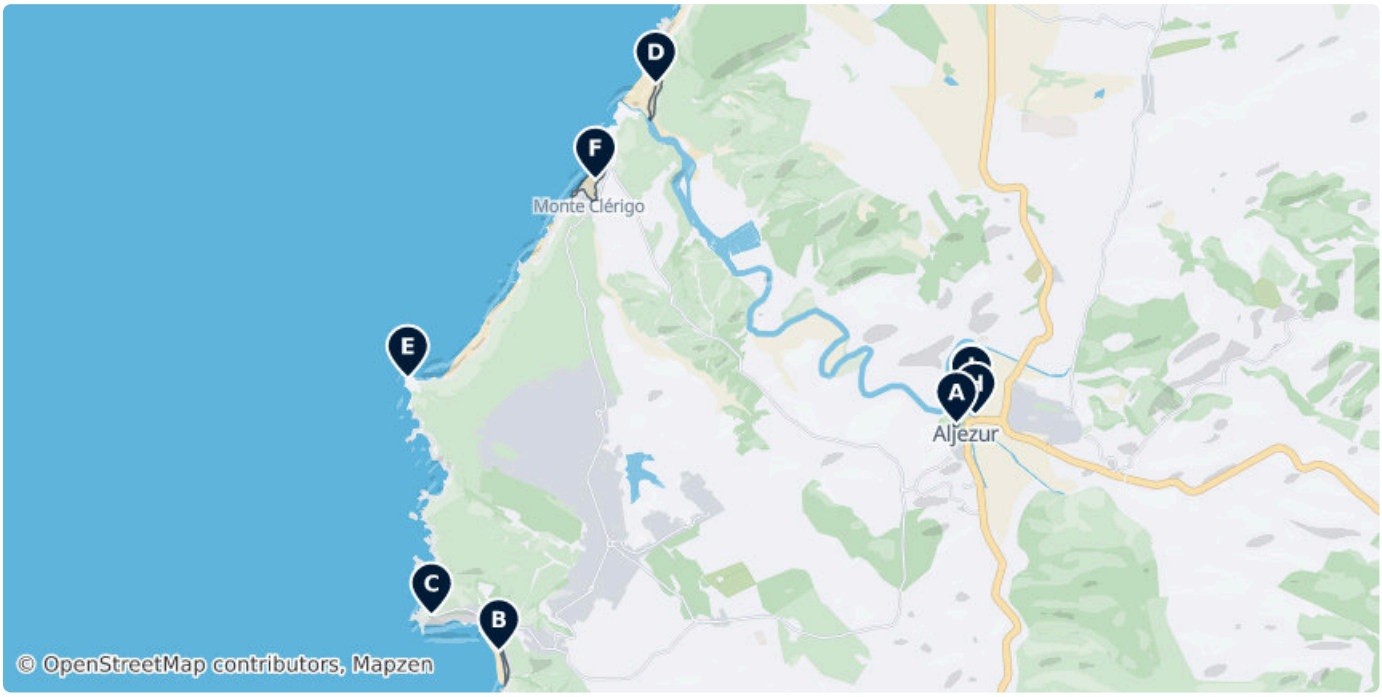
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Portuguese

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Aljezur Essentials

Aljezur combines Moorish history with the rugged Atlantic coast of the Algarve. The town is centered around a 10th-century hilltop castle, overlooking a valley where the Aljezur River winds toward the sea. The surrounding coastline is defined by dramatic schist cliffs and expansive beaches like Arrifana and Amoreira. This selection covers the region's essential landmarks, from the archaeological remains of a 12th-century Moorish monastery at Ponta da Atalaia to the traditional market showcasing local sweet potatoes and fresh Atlantic fish.





A Castle of Aljezur

The Castle of Aljezur is a medieval castle founded in the parish of Aljezur, in the municipality of the same name overlooking the Aljezur...

8670-156 (37.31627, -8.80522)

cm-aljezur.pt, +351 282 991 011;+351 282 990 010



B Arrifana Beach

Praia da Arrifana is a beach within the Municipality of Aljezur, in the Algarve, Portugal.

Portugal (37.29255, -8.86525)



C Ruínas da Fortaleza de Arrifana

The ruins of a 17th-century defensive structure built to protect the coast and tuna fishing grounds. It was largely destroyed by the 1755 earthquake and tsunami, leaving behind stone walls overlooking Arrifana Bay.

(Unnamed Road), 8670, Portugal (37.29632, -8.87408)



D Praia da Amoreira

Situated at the mouth of the Aljezur River, this beach is characterized by its large sand dunes and rock pools. It offers a unique landscape where the freshwater river meets the Atlantic surf.

8670, Portugal (37.35172, -8.84466)



E Ponta da Atalaia

A rugged headland that houses the archaeological remains of the Ribat of Arrifana, a 12th-century fortified Moorish monastery used by warrior monks to monitor the coastline.

8670, Portugal (37.32105, -8.87719)



F Praia de Monte Clérigo

A wide sandy beach featuring a small settlement of traditional houses. At low tide, the receding water reveals extensive rock pools that host various forms of marine life.

EM 1003-1, 8670-119 Aljezur, Portugal (37.34173, -8.85258)



G Aljezur Táctil Museu Municipal

Housed in the former 19th-century Town Hall, this museum displays archaeological finds from the Aljezur region, spanning from the Neolithic period to the 18th century.

2 Rua da Cadeia Velha, Aljezur 8670065, Portugal
(37.31914, -8.80330)

I Pelourinho de Aljezur

A stone pillory located in the historic center, representing the town's administrative autonomy and judicial history.

4 Rua da Cadeia Velha, Aljezur 8670065, Portugal
(37.31900, -8.80325)

H Mercado Municipal de Aljezur

A traditional indoor market where local vendors sell fresh Atlantic fish, regional produce, and Aljezur's PGI-certified sweet potatoes.

Largo do Mercado, Aljezur 8670054, Portugal
(37.31718, -8.80278)

Mo–Sa	08:00–13:00

DATA SOURCES

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