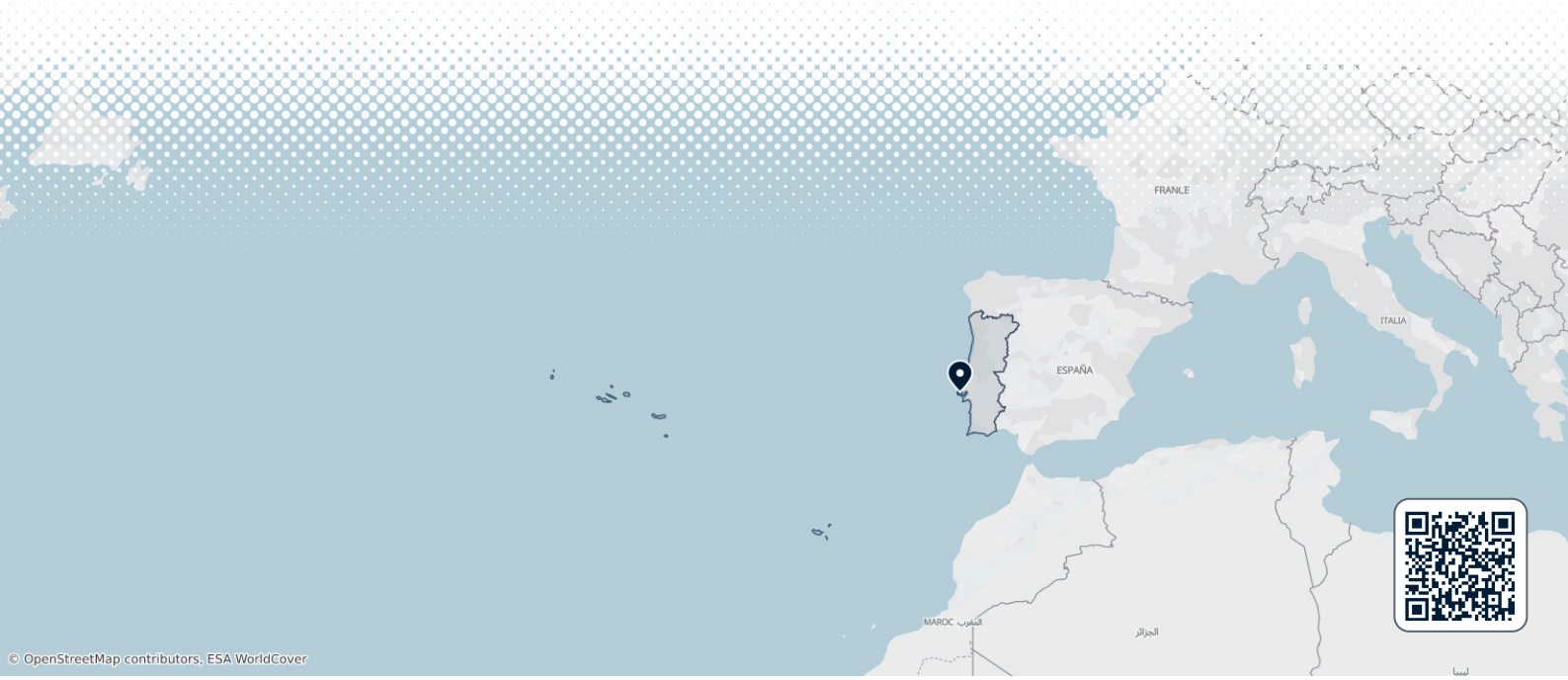


Sintra

Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Sintra is a small town in forested hills, about 40 minutes by train from Lisbon. Kings and rich families built palaces and gardens here from the Middle Ages to the 1800s. Together they form a UNESCO World Heritage cultural landscape.

The hills are cooler and greener than Lisbon, and mist often covers the peaks. The Atlantic coast and Cabo da Roca are a short ride west. Sintra suits first-time visitors to Portugal who want palaces, gardens and viewpoints. Plan at least one full day. Two days is more relaxed, because the main sights are far apart and uphill.

When to visit

Spring and early autumn are the best times. Paths are green, days are mild and crowds are smaller than in summer. July and August are the busiest months, so go early. Winter is wet, and mist can hide the views. Bring a light jacket in any season, because the hills are cooler than Lisbon.

In summer, concerts and ballet take place in palace gardens such as Seteais and Monserrate. Check the programme before you book.

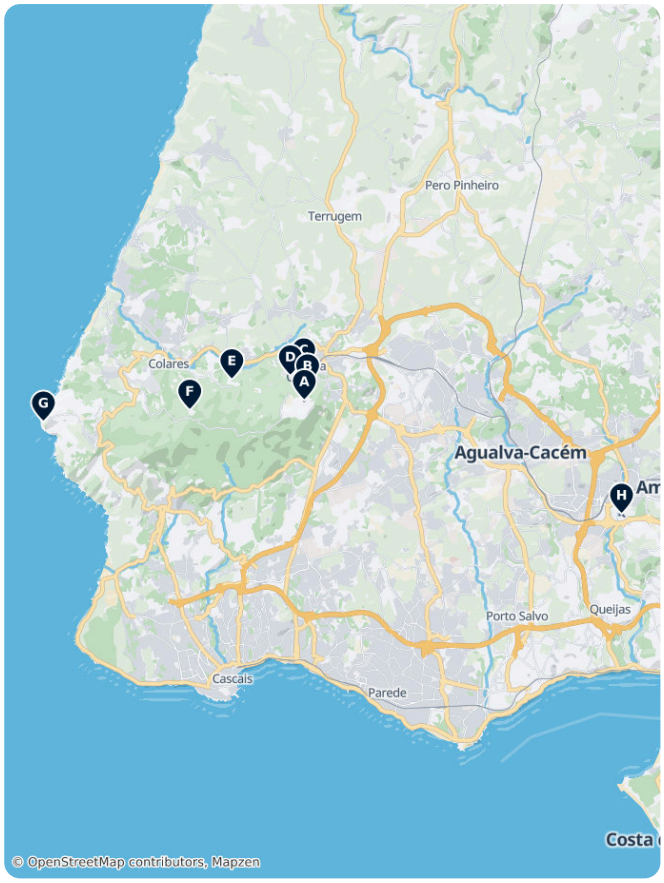
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 16° Feels like 9°	10° / 6°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Good Good for hiking	14° / 17° Feels like 9°	10° / 7°	Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	15° / 19° Feels like 10°	11° / 8°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	16° / 20° Feels like 12°	12° / 9°	Dry air
May	Great Great for hiking	18° / 22° Feels like 14°	14° / 11°	21 sunny days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 23° Feels like 17°	16° / 14°	20 sunny days · UV 8 (Very high)
July	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 24°	17° / 16°	24 sunny days · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 24°	17° / 16°	24 sunny days · UV 8 (Very high)
September	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 24°	17° / 15°	20 sunny days
October	Great Great for hiking	19° / 23°	15° / 13°	
November	Good Good for hiking	16° / 19° Feels like 12°	13° / 9°	12 rainy days · Dry air
December	Good Good for hiking	14° / 17° Feels like 10°	11° / 7°	12 rainy days · Dry air

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

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

Top sights

- A Pena National Palace is the symbol of Sintra. *Ferdinand II* built this colourful Romantic palace from 1842 to 1854 on the ruins of a monastery. Allow time for the terraces and the surrounding park.
- B Castle of the Moors is a Moorish fortress from the 8th and 9th centuries. You can walk along the walls for views over the hills and the coast.
- C Sintra National Palace stands in the old town centre. It was a royal home from the 15th century. Look for the two huge conical chimneys and the painted ceilings and tiles inside.
- D Quinta da Regaleira is a Romantic estate built in the early 1900s. Its gardens have grottoes and tunnels. The initiation well is a spiral staircase that goes down about 27 m.
- E Monserrate Palace is a 19th-century palace with a Moorish-style interior. It is surrounded by a large botanical garden with plants from around the world. It is quieter than Pena.
- F Convento dos Capuchos is a small Franciscan convent from 1560 in the woods. The monks' cells are tiny and lined with cork.
- G Cabo da Roca is the westernmost point of mainland Europe. High cliffs drop to the Atlantic. Sunset is a popular time to visit.
- H Queluz National Palace is a Rococo palace with formal gardens. It is in Queluz, on the Sintra train line, and is easy to add on the way back to Lisbon.



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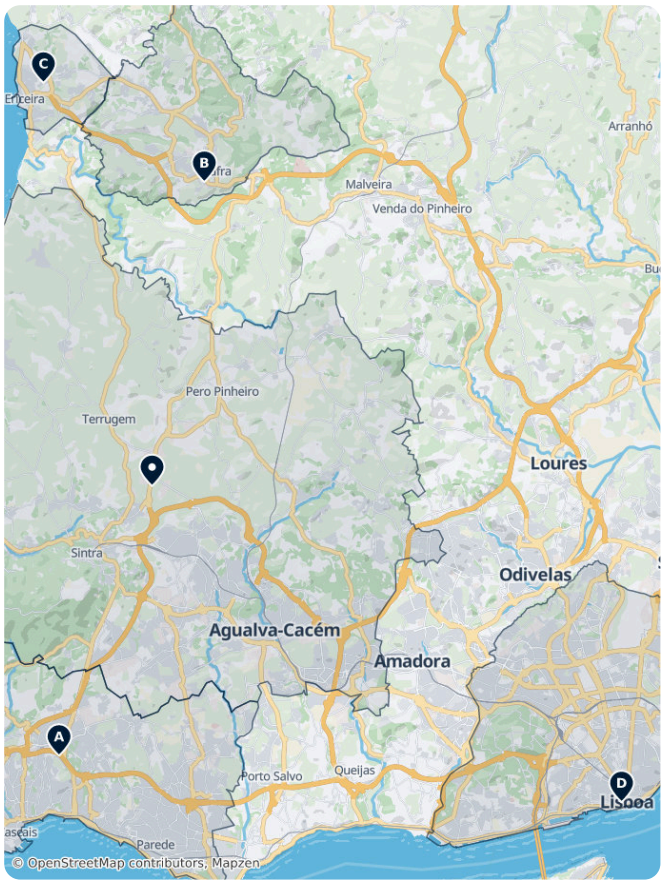
What to experience

- Watch the sunset from Cabo da Roca or the cliffs nearby, then eat on the coast.
- Walk the forest paths between the old town, the Moorish Castle and Pena Park, instead of taking the bus.
- Spend an afternoon at Praia da Adraga, a wide sandy beach below cliffs on the Atlantic coast.
- Ride the Sintra Tram down to Maçãs Beach.
- Tour a Colares winery. The vines grow in sand and are among the few in Europe not grafted onto American roots.

Day trips

Sintra is itself a day trip from Lisbon. These places are good additions if you stay longer.

- A Cascais: about 30 minutes by car, or by bus 403 via Cabo da Roca. A seaside town with beaches and a marina.
- B Mafra: about 30 minutes by car. The huge Baroque palace and convent, a World Heritage site, was built from 1717 for *King John V*.
- C Ericeira: about 30 to 40 minutes by car. A fishing town and a World Surfing Reserve since 2011.
- D Lisbon: about 40 minutes by train from Rossio station. Most visitors use it as their base.



Where to explore

Most visitors combine Sintra with these nearby destinations.

- For the capital: Lisbon
- For beaches and the coast: Cascais
- For a palace and surf town north of Sintra: Mafra and Ericeira

Getting there

- **By air**: Lisbon Airport (LIS) is the gateway. Take the red metro line to Oriente station, then a train to Sintra.
- **By train**: Trains run from Lisbon Rossio station every 20 to 30 minutes. The trip takes about 40 minutes. Sintra station is a short bus ride or walk from the old town. Book and check times on the CP Comboios de Portugal site.
- **By bus**: Bus 403 connects Cascais, Cabo da Roca and Sintra. It is useful if you stay on the coast.

Getting around

- **Scotturb buses**: Bus 434 is a one-way loop from Sintra station through the old town to the Moorish Castle and Pena Palace. Bus 435 goes to Regaleira, Seteais and Monserrate. Buses are often full in summer. Check fares and tickets on the Parques de Sintra site, which also sells monument tickets.
- **Sintra Tram**: A heritage tram runs from Vila Alda to Maçãs Beach, about 45 minutes. Tickets are sold on board. Check the timetable first.
- **Tuk-tuks and taxis**: These are useful for steep roads when buses are full.
- **On foot**: The old town is walkable, but the roads to the palaces are steep. Wear good shoes. Cycling is hard in the hills.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The old town is compact. The palaces are on steep, wooded hills a few kilometres away.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Steep, narrow roads and heavy bus traffic make cycling hard.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: No, for Sintra itself. Parking is very limited and traffic in the old town is restricted. A car helps only for the coast, Mafra and Ericeira.
- **Parking**: Park at Sintra station or in the lots on the edge of town and take a bus. Roads to Pena are often closed to private cars in peak season.
- **Restrictions**: Narrow, steep roads and fog make driving slow.

Food & drink

Sintra is known for two pastries. *Travesseiros* are puff-pastry pillows filled with egg cream and almonds. *Queijadas* are small cheese tarts. The old Piriquita pastry shop in the old town has sold them since 1862.

For meals, try the lanes around the old town and the village of São Pedro de Sintra. On the coast, look for seafood restaurants. Colares red wine from the Ramisco grape is a local specialty.

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

Sintra is safe for visitors. The main risk is pickpockets in crowds at the old town, on bus 434 and at palace queues. Keep bags closed and phones out of back pockets.

Paths are steep and can be slippery when wet. Wear shoes with grip. Fog and wind can make Cabo da Roca cold, so bring a layer. Take care near cliff edges.

History

The Moors built a fortress on the ridge. Today you can walk its walls at Castle of the Moors. Portugal's first king, *Afonso Henriques*, took Sintra in 1147.

Later kings used Sintra as a cool summer home. Sintra National Palace was the court's residence for centuries. In the 1800s *Ferdinand II* rebuilt the ruined monastery at Pena as a Romantic palace, and wealthy families added villas and gardens such as Monserrate Palace. The poet *Lord Byron* praised Sintra as a glorious Eden after visiting in 1809.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



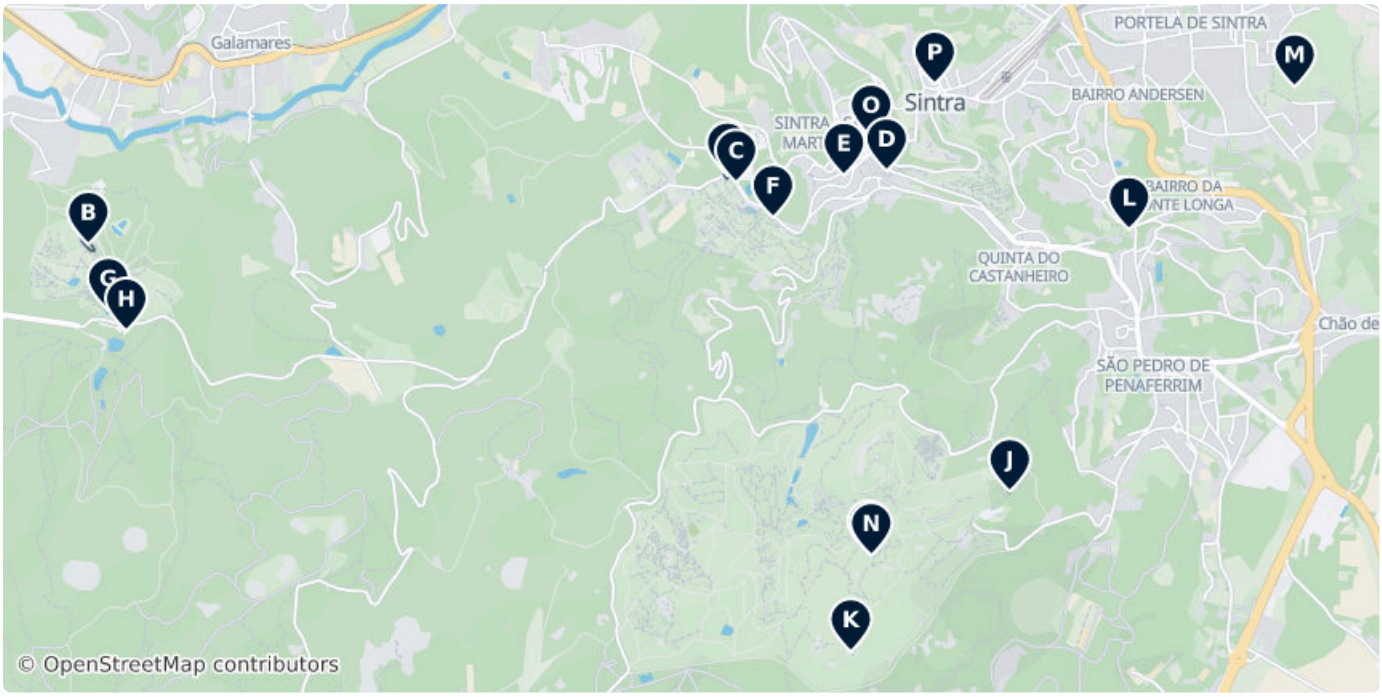
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Portuguese

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Sintra's Fairytale Essentials

Sintra features a concentrated collection of 19th-century Romantic architecture and mystical landscapes. This list highlights the UNESCO-listed Monserrate Palace with its Moorish Revival influence and the enigmatic Quinta da Regaleira estate, known for its initiation wells and secret tunnels. Beyond the major palaces, the selection includes natural landmarks like the Cascata dos Pisões waterfall, the high-altitude Cruz Alta peak, and historic urban features such as the Manueline-style Sintra Town Hall and the Chafariz do Paço Real fountain.





A Main House

Quinta da Regaleira is a quinta located near the historic centre of Sintra, Portugal.

Rua Barbosa du Bocage 5 27101567 (38.79633, -9.39608)

Mo–Su 09:30–17:00

+351 21 910 6650



B Monserrate Palace

Historic palace featuring eclectic Romantic and Moorish Revival architecture set within lush exotic gardens. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Estrada de Monserrate, 2710-405 Sintra, Portugal (38.79425, -9.42066)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00

+351219237300

C Palácio da Regaleira

Neo-Manueline palace designed by Luigi Manini, serving as the centerpiece of the Quinta da Regaleira estate.

Rua Barbosa du Bocage, 2710-567 Sintra, Portugal (38.79610, -9.39574)

D Toy Museum of Sintra

An amazing museum that the kids as well as adult visitors will immediately fall in love with and will want to return to once the tour is...

Rua do Visconde de Monserrate 26, 2710 Sintra, Portugal (38.79645, -9.38996)

museu-do-brinquedo.pt, +351 219 242 171

E Hora do Conto

Small theatre and cultural space located in the historic center.

Rua Gil Vicente 5, Sintra, PT (38.79632, -9.39160)

horadoconto.com

F Cascata dos Pisões

Small waterfall located along the road connecting the town center to Quinta da Regaleira.

(38.79505, -9.39433)

G Cascata

Ornamental waterfall located within the exotic gardens of the Monserrate Palace park.

(38.79227, -9.41989)

H Cascata

Ornamental waterfall located within the exotic gardens of the Monserrate Palace park.

(38.79166, -9.41920)

I Queen's Throne

Stone bench carved into the rock within Pena Park, used by Queen Maria II to view the palace.

(38.78499, -9.39065)

J Santa Eufémia da Serra

High-altitude viewpoint and chapel site offering panoramic views of the Sintra hills and coastline.

2710, Portugal (38.78684, -9.38522)



K Cruz Alta

The highest point of the Sintra Mountains at 528 meters, marked by a stone cross in Pena Park.

2710, Portugal (38.78205, -9.39133)

valentim.org/cume/37358

L Jardim da Vigia

Public terrace providing views over the valley toward the Moorish Castle.

(38.79469, -9.38063)

M Pedra

Scenic viewpoint overlooking the surrounding hills.

(38.79897, -9.37426)

N Trono da Rainha

Stone bench carved into the rock within Pena Park, used by Queen Maria II to view the palace.

(38.78493, -9.39055)



O Chafariz do Paço Real

Historic fountain situated in the main square across from the National Palace of Sintra.

2 Calçada do Pelourinho, Sintra 2710608, Portugal (38.79746, -9.39055)



P Sintra Town Hall

Early 20th-century municipal building featuring a Manueline-revival facade and azulejo-tiled clock tower.

6 Travessa do Município, Sintra 2710592, Portugal (38.79905, -9.38811)

DATA SOURCES

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