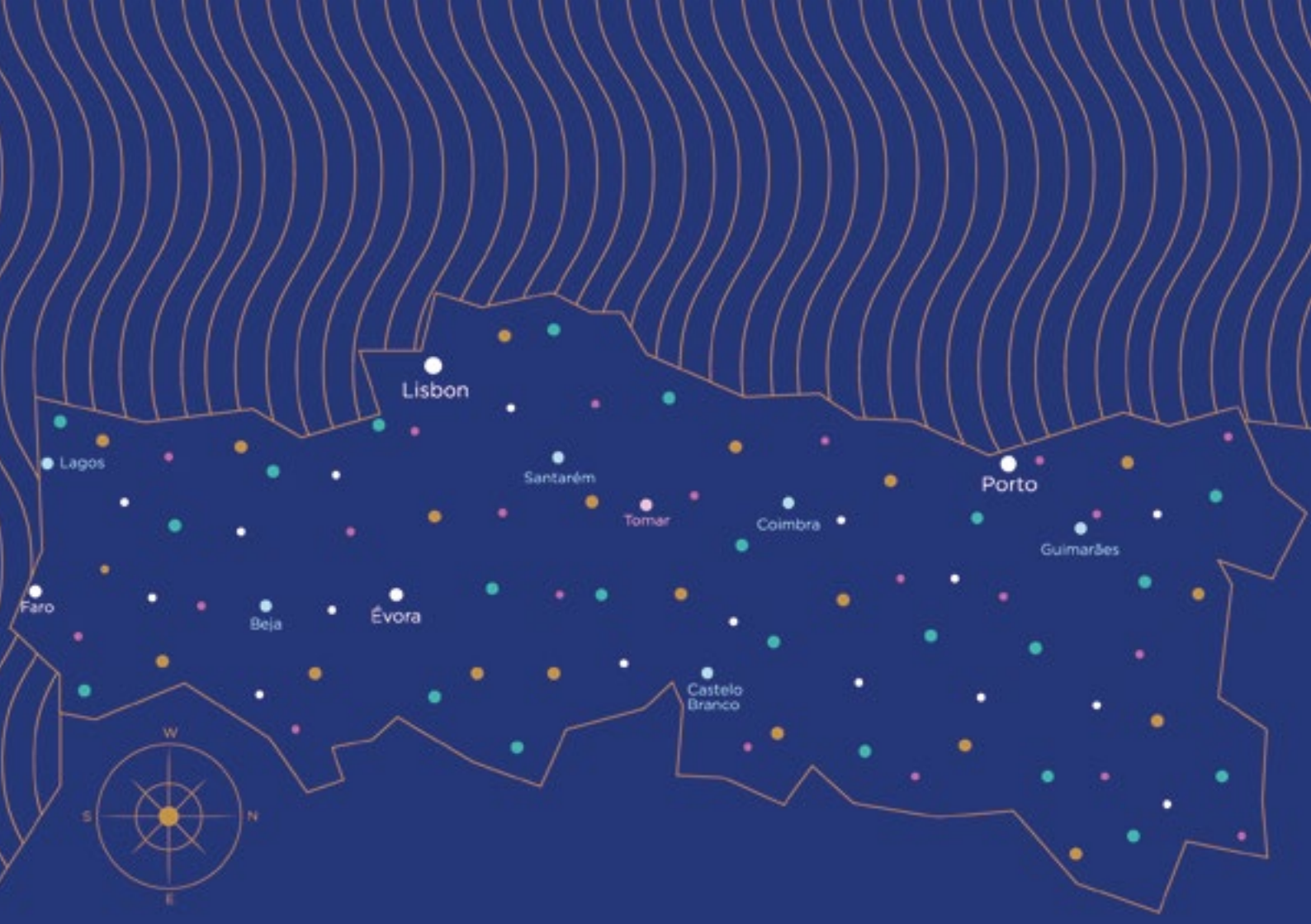


TO DIE FOR

# PORTUGAL

Not your average travel guide







Dear traveller,

Portugal is a beautiful and charming country with a unique quality of life. And it's really not only about those 3,023 hours of sunlight a year. Portugal is one of the oldest countries in Europe, full of fantastic legends and blessed with a compelling history; the Portuguese have a strongly rooted sense of togetherness, and cherish humanistic values. Their cuisine is delicious, traditional and healthy, made with local produce. It's a nation where slow living has never gone out of fashion, where wild nature is still abundant and where beautiful old towns and villages are hidden around every corner.

Meanwhile, its major cities are developing quickly into creative hubs where an urban crowd of expats and locals joins forces to develop and implement exciting new ideas; this age-old country thus proves to be an excellent breeding ground for ideas for the future. And last but not least, most Portuguese people are just plain friendly and tend to easily embark on conversations with strangers; they seem to be very much at ease with themselves and aren't arrogant or snobbish. My kind of people!

To me, this is a country so unique and extraordinary it's simply to die for. Hence you'll see me 'dying' in every picture, in awe of so much beauty, only to happily resurrect each time, and go on to discover even more amazing places in this Wonderland.

‘To Die For: Portugal’ came about while meandering through the country with visiting friends. Often we accidentally discovered hidden gems, were dragged to absolutely fabulous places by locals, or found ourselves suddenly in the middle of breath-taking landscapes. As a newcomer to Portugal and eager to ‘integrate’, I frequently went drifting through the country with the intention of becoming immersed in Portugueseness, to come closer to the soul of this country, and to enjoy the way people are. ‘To Die For: Portugal’ is the result of all this, and aims at inviting curious, likeminded visitors to discover this fabulous remote place near the ocean the way I did: in a slow travel mood and as an engaged wanderer.

I share my favourite places in Portugal through the pictures taken by my partner-in-crime Yves Callewaert, a fellow Belgian who has his photo- and film studio in Lisbon. Enjoy the pictures, buy the book, enjoy the travelling exhibition, and if you decide to visit Portugal: book me as your exclusive travel companion who connects you with the quality of life this country still has in abundance. Feel welcome to explore what’s beyond tourism!

#### About the author

*Veerle Devos (aka Vos) is a historian and an international journalist born and raised in Belgium, who has stayed in great places all over the globe while travelling for work and pleasure. Now she calls Portugal home. She’s been exploring her new Wonderland for many years and keeps on discovering new delights she likes to share. Hence her travel companion services through [www.lisboneye.eu](http://www.lisboneye.eu) and hence her project To Die For: Portugal.*

All pictures © Studio Yves Callewaert



# World record waves

## Nazaré

This small seaside fishing town on the Silver Coast gained world fame when in 2011 American big wave surfer Garrett McNamara caught a wave of 24 metres, thus beating the world record of the biggest wave ever surfed. In 2017 his record was beaten by Brazilian Rodrigo Koxa surfing a wave of 24.4 metres. For those who don't surf, Nazaré is just a beautiful romantic town to visit. And of course there is the legend of the deer, depicted in Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Nazaré. The story goes that on a misty morning in the 12th century a knight on horseback was saved by the Virgin Mary from falling of the cliff when chasing a deer. To thank her, the Ermida da Memória chapel was built.




Joaquim Teixeira has been creating miniature fishing boats for decades, a craft he learned from his father. Largo Padre Silvestre 10. A great authentic souvenir from Nazaré!



Absolutely charming are the ladies dressed in colourful aprons, selling nuts, tremoços and dried fruits next to Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Nazaré. They're wearing several layers of skirts to keep warm, a tradition going back to the times women waited on the coastline for the return of their fishermen husbands and sons. Sometimes in vain.



 Family restaurant Maria do Mar in Rua Guilhim 13 serves delicious fish and seafood straight from the ocean, fado on Friday, maritime decoration, and good vibes.



# Panorâmico do Monsanto

Lisbon



There's an abundance of miradouros (viewing points) in the centre of Lisbon, which invite citizens and visitors alike to marvel at the beauty of the city, each one more outstanding or romantic than the other. My absolute favourite miradouro is not in the city center though: it's located in the middle of the Monsanto park, the so called 'green lung' of Lisbon. Here, there is one absolutely mesmerizing weird concrete building that beats all the miradouros hands down: the Panorâmico do Monsanto. An exclusive high-society restaurant and night club that opened in the late 1960s, which ingloriously perished due to bankruptcy. It was left abandoned and in ruins for nearly two decades, and its future seemed doomed. Panorâmico do Monsanto was adopted by generations of urban artists who transformed the incredible building with its 360° view on Lisbon into their unrestricted playground. And it's from this community the rescue of the building came: urban artist Vhils and his friends gave new life to it when they decided to organize their outstanding yearly 'Urban festival of Art and Music 'Imminente' here. They thus drew attention to this forgotten beauty, and convinced the city government to renovate the building. Now everyone is welcome here to come and enjoy the view and the urban art pieces. And by the way, the park itself is also worth a visit.



REAL

EDS

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CHASER!

REAL




# Sheepdog with his flock

Britelo

Meeting animals while on the road is always a sweet experience in Portugal, especially in the north where they roam more or less freely through the stunning landscapes. We took our picture near Britelo while a shepherd with his sheep and dog passed by. You can almost see what this cute and caring shepherd dog thinks of the situation, having to decide whether he will resuscitate me or decide that it's not so bad after all and that I'll survive by myself. This photo was taken in the high north of Portugal, near Viana do Castelo, which is close to the Spanish border. In terms of language, mentality, culture and gastronomy, people from this region feel very close to their neighbors in Galicia, Spain. So much so that voices have been raised to unite the two parts officially into one European region. Of course the central Spanish government abhors the idea: they already have enough trouble with existing regions striving for more self-determination. In any case, if you cross the border here from Portugal to Spain and vice versa you won't notice any major differences, which is the case elsewhere between these two countries.



 If you're feeling fit and have some time, walk from nearby Viana do Castelo the 'Caminho Português', the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Spanish Galicia. If you start in Viana do Castelo you'll meet people who've started in Lisbon (610km) or Porto (227 km), whereas you only have to walk about 160 km until you reach your destination. Pilgrims travelling north on this road cross five main rivers - Ave, Cávado, Neiva, Lima and Minho - before they arrive in Santiago de Compostela. About 30,000 pilgrims per year walk this path. Arriving in Santiago de Compostela is a religious highlight for those who believe in it, and a feast for the eyes and for the stomach for the rest of us. After losing a few kilos walking, here they will soon be put back on again.



A woman in a blue dress is lying on her back on a grassy hillside, with her arms and legs spread wide. She is positioned next to a small stream that flows through a rocky, moss-covered landscape. The background features large, jagged rock formations under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is serene and natural.

A marvellous little travel book to guide you  
through Europe's most surprising destination.

