



Portugal Preparation Guide - 2022

Before you read this I would like to say the following is a recommendation only. Some of it is a bit tongue in cheek. There is no right or wrong on what you bring. I am happy to apply the motto, "come as you are, bring what you have". I will do my very best to get you through in the most enjoyable way possible.

However some sensible preparation will help....

1.0 Documents and Money

Currency Euro - readily available for cash points and many more places will accept UK debit/ credit cards. You do not need to carry all your money in cash but you should consider carrying sufficient emergency funds just in case.

1.1 Personal documents

Ferry tickets
Passport
Travel Insurance
Driving licence
Emergency cash
NHS Covid Passport

1.2 Vehicle Documents

MOT, proof of insurance (you may need to inform your insurance company that you are travelling abroad) , registration document, European road side recovery
Photocopies of the above

1.3 COVID 19 Requirements

Please ensure you meet the entry requirements as set out on the UK Government website

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/spain/entry-requirements>
<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/portugal/entry-requirements>
<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france/entry-requirements>

The following is my understanding of the rules at the time of writing, but it is your responsibility to meet the entry requirements on the day.

Entry to Spain and Portugal requires all persons to be full vaccinated and able to prove their vaccination status with the NHS vaccination certificate

Spain requires a Health Control form to be completed 48hrs before travel and a QR Code received

<https://www.spth.gob.es/>

Crossing the Portugal Land Border details are here

<https://imigrante.sef.pt/en/covid-19/faqs/#1621260456638-8876f963-fd47>

I recommend you put some specific time aside before you travel to ensure all the paperwork is in order.

Further to this I would recommend you get some PCR/Rapid antigen tests for use before travel and if required to use them in Spain and Portugal. Don't forget a good supply of masks.

It may be worth considering limiting social contact for a week before travel and implementing a PCR testing routine.

2.0 Safety and security

Worth consideration carrying a false grab bag in the cab. Keep valuables either on your person or safely put away. A false bag with an old wallet and phone, camera etc is a great way of fobbing off any unwanted attention. Probably not a problem in the more remote areas, but we will stand out from the crowd in service stations etc. Also consider:

First aid kit

Additional medicines if required.

Emergency contact numbers

3.0 Clothing and Personal effects

Mountains tend to cause extremes of climate so you should be prepared for cold wet weather as much as hot and dry. Consider :

Waterproofs, Boots , Warm clothing, Hats, Sun screen ,Sun glasses

4.0 Accommodation, Camping, Hotels and Eating

It helps to be able to setup and pack up camp efficiently. We will be moving on most days and you don't want to be unloading half the truck every night or having a fight with your tent every morning. Less is sometimes more!

While it is very useful to carry some supplies of food, you do not need a full 2 weeks of supplies from home. Plenty of supermarkets, bakeries, restaurants and campsite shops to supplement your rations from. Assuming 10 nights in total you are never going to need more than 10 nights of food, 3-6 would be more realistic. Very likely to be stopping to stock up on fresh produce, bread and beer/wine every day or so anyway.

However there may be a 1 or 2 nights when there is either no where to shop or it's just not convenient, if for example we arrive late.

Please note that now we are no longer in EU the import of fresh fruit/dairy produce/meat products etc may no longer be allowed.

If you're like me and you like your coffee then consider bringing a flask for hot water or a Jet Boil. I have a Stanley flask that is virtually indestructible and will keep water hot for 24 hrs. There is no problem stopping to make a brew, but sometimes it's not always convenient to have to wait for a kettle to boil!

It is unlikely we will have many wild camps as it is not allowed in most areas because of the fire risk. Campsites are planned most evenings.

We usually stay in a hotel for one night in Porto and have a night out. This is usually booked on route. If the weather becomes too poor for camping then we will look for alternative accommodation, usually low cost hotels in discussion with the group.

5.0 Vehicle Preparation

Nothing specific is required except however Portugal does offer some excellent chances for some challenging offroading. We expect a minimum of good strong recovery points front and rear and at least all terrain tyres. Winches, locking diffs, rock sliders, underbody protection can all be put to the test in Portugal. If you do wish to invest in overland preparation then I believe it's worth spending the money on things in or under the vehicle rather than bolted on top of it, so improved off road performance rather than bolt on accessories like roof-racks, roof tents, jerry can holders etc, They all look great but they add weight and don't improve the performance of the vehicle. Quality shocks absorbers and good tyres will improve ride and handling on the trail. If you have a roof tent and a roof rack that's fine, just suggesting you don't need to run out and buy one!

Ensure the vehicle has had a good service and fix any known faults. If parts are changed, its worth considering bringing the old one as a spare.

Try to familiarise yourself with you vehicle. If you have never put a spanner on it that's fine, but you need to know how to change a wheel and how to give it a daily check for fluid levels and/or leaks. Vehicles should be checked every evening for signs of problems.

If you do make modifications make sure these are not last minute and they have time to become tried and tested before the trip.

You need to think what is likely to stop you rather than what would simply be an inconvenience. A failed wheel bearing is a show stopper. A failed shock absorber is an irritant. A failed alternator belt may mean the water pump won't work, so no cooling, but a failed starter motor just means it will be annoying to have to bump or tow start it ever morning (assuming its a manual not an auto).

4.1 High priority items

- Brakes
- Steering
- Auxiliary belt (driving water pump and alternator)
- Wheel bearing

4.2 Minimum spares kit

- Spare brake pads (2 weeks of trail and mountain roads can eat a set of pads)
- Service kit (filters etc)
- Auxiliary belt
- Fluids, Engine oil, brake fluid etc specific to your vehicle

4.3 Simple repair kit

- Araldite
- Fuel tank repair
- Rad weld
- Gaffer tape
- Steel wire
- Selection of nuts, bolts, jubilee clips etc

Gasket sealant
Ratchet load straps
Fuel pipe

4.4 Other Spares

By all means bring other spares like UJs, shocks, springs, alternators, starter motors, water pumps, fuses, bulbs etc etc assuming you have the space and load capacity

4.5 Tools

Even a small tool kit is useful, more if you know how to use them...

6.0 Recovery Equipment Minimum

5m tow rope
2 shackles
Shovel

6.2 Guide vehicle equipment- this is what I will be carrying

Waffle boards
High lift jack
Jump leads
Air compressor
Tyre repair kit
Extra shackles
Winch pulley blocks
Tree straps x2
Axle straps
Log saw
Bottle jack
Pick axe
Large First aid kit
Fire extinguisher

6.3 Other kit

I don't want to carry everything nor do we need 5 of anything so please let me know if you have any of the following. I may ask for help carrying certain items to spread the load, or I may suggest you leave something home.

Trolley Jack
Extra waffle boards
Tirfor Hand winch
Ground anchor
Rigid tow bar
Air compressor
High lift Jack
Pick axe
Log saw

Note: just because items are listed here does mean we will need them, nor will we be intentionally driving into situations that will require them, however shit happens, things go wrong and weather changes, so I would like to be as reasonably well prepared as possible.

7.0 Fuel, water and spare tyres

This is very dependent on your vehicle, space and number of passengers.

7.1 Fuel

Fuel is plentiful but it's handy to have a reserve. Recommend 5 - 20L especially if you have a smaller tank (like with a Land Rover 90). Fuel is a bit cheaper in Spain but similar in Portugal and they sell premium diesel as the norm

7.2 Water

Drinking water is plentiful. No need for any purification or treatment . I expect you will want to carry some for camping, but also useful to have some in reserve for the vehicle
Recommend 10 - 20 L

7.3 Spare tyres

2 spare tyres and wheels, (unless you can confirm by prior arrangement that there is another vehicle on the trip with a compatible spare).

7.4 Spare ignition Keys

Worth considering bringing a spare set to exchange with a fellow traveller just in case.

8.0 Additional requirements for driving abroad

Legal requirements vary from country to country but the follow should keep any dodgy foreign policemen at bay if you do get pulled over!

2 warning triangles

High vis jacket for each occupant

Bulb kit

Fire extinguisher

UK sticker (note legislation has changed and you must have a UK sticker or symbol on the rear of the vehicle, the GB sticker is no longer valid)

Headlight converters for night driving

9.0 Communications

Professional quality walkie-talkies provided

Check you phone package for use abroad. I believe some phone operators have introduced roaming charges. EE and virgin have not. Don't forget charger leads.

Second battery and inverter can be useful to keep things charged overnight.

Further reading: Vehicle Dependent Expedition Guide by Tom Sheppard