

VILLAINS' REUNION PORTUGAL

Follow the trail from the Algarve to the Atlantic coast, the vineyard country and Casino Estoril.



Inspired by *Villains' Reunion* and *Villains' Reunion – Trikkster* by Gary Smiley

A scene-by-scene route, real-world sightseeing, Portuguese food, wine-country detours and a practical itinerary.

How to use this guide

This guide follows the geography named in the two novels, then adds real places and food stops that make a trip worthwhile. It is designed for readers who want to stand in the landscapes, streets and coastal towns that give the books their Portuguese texture.

A note on fiction and fact

Book locations are places the novels explicitly name. **Reader stops** are real attractions or neighbourhoods suggested because they fit the route. Matilde's Dão vineyard, Nuno's Alentejo wine estate, the Interpol/DIV89 facilities and the Casino Estoril underground rooms described in the fiction are not identified as real visitor sites. The real Casino Estoril is open to the public subject to its own access rules.

The route at a glance

LEG	FOLLOW THE BOOKS	WHY STOP
1	Lagos → Sagres / Algarve	Matilde and Rui's opening escape; white stone, old-town lanes and Atlantic cliffs.
2	Lisbon / Oriente / Baixa	The rail journey, Calçada da Glória, viewpoints, fado and the city's contrasting districts.
3	Aveiro → Esgueira → Costa Nova / Barra	Canals, moliceiros, striped palheiros, lagoon and Atlantic beach.
4	Porto → Vila Nova de Gaia	The steep street chase, São Bento and the Port-wine lodges.
5	Dão Lafões → Douro / Peso da Régua	Matilde's vineyard world, Touriga Nacional and a wine-country detour.
6	Évora / Alentejo → Sintra → Estoril	Roman and medieval heritage, palaces, coast and the reunion landmark.

The full route is spread across a large part of Portugal. A seven-day trip is possible only by trimming stops; the recommended version below is 10 days, with optional extensions for wine lovers.

01 / Lagos & the Algarve

In the first novel, Matilde and Rui hurry along **Estrada de São Roque** toward Lagos train station. The opening scene is all bright limestone pavement, summer crowds, bars and the pressure of a train departure. Later, the story returns to Aveiro, but the novel's route map also points to Sagres and the wider Algarve.

Follow the trail

- **Estrada de São Roque and Lagos station:** begin with the named street and the railway setting that launches the escape. Treat this as a literary walk, not a reconstruction of the characters' actions.
- **Lagos old town:** wander the pedestrian lanes, tiled façades and limestone calçada that match the novel's sensory details. The exact bars in the scene are not named, so choose a café or tasca that appeals rather than trying to identify a fictional venue.
- **Atlantic edge:** add Ponta da Piedade for cliffs, sea stacks and coastal views. If extending the route, continue west to **Sagres Point**, which appears in the novel's wider Portugal journey.

What to see

Prioritise the old town, the waterfront and the dramatic cliffs around Ponta da Piedade. For a slower day, take a coastal walk and leave time to sit outside; the books' Algarve is bright, hot and busy, and the real pleasure is to let the pace drop.

Where to eat

- **Restaurante A Forja** — Rua dos Ferreiros 17; traditional Algarve cooking with a strong fresh-fish and seafood focus.
- **Restaurante Reis** — Rua António Barbosa Viana 21; a long-running local-style option, especially for cataplana and seafood.
- **Atasca-te – Tasca Tradicional** — Rua Marreiros Netto 46; Portuguese petiscos for sharing and a wine list.

Order: cataplana, grilled fish, seafood rice, octopus salad or petiscos. Ask what is freshest rather than assuming every dish is available every day.

Practical note: Lagos is best explored on foot once you are in the centre. Summer heat and crowds are part of the book's opening atmosphere; shoulder season can make the same streets more comfortable.

02 / Lisbon: Oriente, Baixa & the heights

Lisbon appears both as a rail stop and as a city of viewpoints and distinct neighbourhoods. In the novel, **Gare do Oriente** is the siblings' overnight stop on the way north. Later, Matilde and Wes take in the view from **São Pedro de Alcântara Park** after climbing **Calçada da Glória**, then visit the **Casa-Museu Amália Rodrigues** on **Rua de São Bento**.

A literary walk

- **Gare do Oriente / Parque das Nações:** look up at Santiago Calatrava's sweeping station canopy. The station's contemporary architecture makes a useful counterpoint to old Lisbon.
- **Calçada da Glória:** a steep, memorable climb or funicular ride. In the novel, the characters walk uphill and take the Glória Funicular back down.
- **São Pedro de Alcântara Garden:** pause for the classic panorama over central Lisbon and the castle hill.
- **Casa-Museu Amália Rodrigues, Rua de São Bento:** the book names this house museum. Check its current visiting schedule and book ahead where required.
- **Baixa:** the sequel places Nuno in Baixa for a conversation over a pastel de nata. Explore Rua Augusta, Rua dos Fanqueiros and the surrounding grid for cafés, shops and grand squares.

Where to eat

- **Taberna da Baixa** — Rua dos Fanqueiros 161–163; tavern-style Portuguese plates and a broad Portuguese wine selection.
- **Em Alta Na Baixa** — Rua de São Nicolau 22; contemporary Portuguese cooking, seafood and cod dishes.
- **O Cocas** — Rua dos Correeiros 177; casual Portuguese petiscos in the Baixa area.

Order: pastel de nata with coffee, grilled sardines in season, bacalhau, bifana or petiscos. For the book's fado atmosphere, look for a reputable fado house in the old districts and confirm performance times before booking.

Story / reality distinction: the Interpol and DIV89 facilities in the novel are fictional. Do not treat the fictional headquarters, shooting range or covert offices as public attractions.

03 / Aveiro, Esigueira, Costa Nova & Barra

Aveiro is one of the clearest place-based settings in the original novel. Matilde takes a job under an assumed name at a small pastelaria off **Rua Marques Gomes**; Wes rides a moliceiro and gets off near **Rotunda das Pontes**, where Canal Central and Canal do Cojo meet by **Jardim do Rossio**. The sequel returns to the coast at Costa Nova do Prado and the Ria de Aveiro.

Follow the trail

- **Rua Marques Gomes:** the novel's small café/pastelaria is not named, so do not assume a current business is the fictional one. Use this as the cue for a coffee-and-pastry stop.
- **Rotunda das Pontes and Jardim do Rossio:** the moliceiro ride in the book arrives here. Walk the canal edge and notice the patterned calçada portuguesa.
- **Esigueira:** a nearby district in the novel's action. It is a real residential area, not a packaged tourist attraction; use it as a short extension if you want to trace the wider story geography.
- **A25 toward Praia da Barra and Costa Nova do Prado:** the sequel's coast approach is explicit. The striped *palheiros*, the meadow between village and lagoon, and the Atlantic-facing lanes are the visual signature.
- **Ponte da Barra / Praia da Barra:** combine the lighthouse and beach with a walk beside the lagoon. Check wind and surf conditions before swimming.

What to taste

Aveiro is the place for ovos moles, the city's traditional egg-yolk sweet, and seafood from the lagoon and Atlantic coast. In Costa Nova, look for grilled sardines or the catch of the day; the sequel specifically evokes the smell of sardines being grilled by the sea.

Where to eat

- **Maré Cheia** — Rua de José Rabumba 8, Aveiro; a seafood-focused marisqueira known for fish, shellfish and seafood rice.
- **A Nossa Casa** — Rua do Gravito 10, Aveiro; traditional seafood and Portuguese dishes.
Book for popular seafood restaurants and check the day's hours. In Costa Nova, the guide recommends choosing a busy, well-reviewed local seafood restaurant on the day rather than inventing a named venue for the book's unnamed grilled-fish scene.

04 / Porto & Vila Nova de Gaia

Porto's named street sequence is unusually specific. During the chase, Matilde and Wes cut onto **Rua de Belomonte**, then **Rua das Flores**, run toward **Rua da Vitória**, reach **Praça da Liberdade** and return to **São Bento station**. The book also takes the story to **Vila Nova de Gaia**, where Port wine is aged in lodges across the river.

Walk the city

- **São Bento station:** make time for the celebrated azulejo panels inside the station hall. It is the anchor for the novel's street sequence.
- **Rua de Belomonte → Rua das Flores → Rua da Vitória → Praça da Liberdade:** walk these streets at a comfortable pace. They are steep in places; allow extra time for hills, cobbles and photo stops.
- **Ribeira and the Douro waterfront:** descend to the river for views of the bridges and the dense historic streetscape.
- **Vila Nova de Gaia:** cross the Dom Luís I Bridge on foot and visit a Port lodge. The novel's wine-production references connect the vineyards upriver with ageing and blending at Gaia.

Where to eat

- **Taberna Santo António** — Rua das Virtudes 32; informal traditional Portuguese cooking.
- **Abadia do Porto** — Rua do Ateneu Comercial do Porto 22; old-school northern Portuguese food and Porto classics.
- **Taberna dos Mercadores** — Rua dos Mercadores 36; a small, popular traditional restaurant in Ribeira; book or arrive early.

Order: francesinha if you want Porto's famously substantial sandwich, tripas à moda do Porto for a traditional regional dish, or bacalhau and grilled fish. For wine, compare a dry Douro wine with a ruby or tawny Port tasting.

Gaia wine lodges and the Douro Valley are different experiences: the lodges are convenient for a city visit, while the vineyard estates require a longer trip upriver.

05 / Dão Lafões: Matilde's vineyard country

In both books, the vineyard is central to Matilde's attempt to build a life beyond the organisation. The estate itself is fictional and unnamed. The sequel places it in **Dão Lafões**, with rows of vines, a gravel driveway, a veranda and Matilde's motorcycle rides out toward the coast. The novel mentions **Touriga Nacional**; the real Dão region is one of Portugal's important homes for this grape.

Make the detour real

- **Use Viseu as a base:** it gives you access to the Dão region's wine route, historic centre and the region's scattered estates.
- **Visit the Dão Wine Route Welcome Centre** at Solar do Vinho do Dão, Rua Dr. Aristides Sousa Mendes, Fontelo, Viseu. The centre can introduce producers and help you orient yourself; it is not itself a winery.
- **Book an estate visit in advance:** the official route includes quintas and cooperatives across the region. Confirm the language, tasting format, transport and whether food is available.
- **Look for Touriga Nacional and Encruzado:** taste the region's structured reds and its notable white grape. Ask how altitude, granite soils and the local climate shape the wines.

A reader's tasting

Plan a guided tasting of three or four wines rather than a rushed succession of stops. Compare a Touriga Nacional-led red with an Encruzado white, then ask the producer about harvest timing, vineyard management and the work required to run a small estate. That practical reality echoes Matilde's increasingly serious relationship with the vineyard.

The novel's estate is not a bookable location

No named address is given for Matilde's vineyard. The best faithful experience is to visit the real Dão wine region and a participating estate, not to claim that a particular winery is the one from the story.

Wine route planning: cvrdao.pt/en/dao-wine-route/ and cvrdao.pt/en/welcome-center-798/. Reserve directly with the winery; opening schedules and tasting availability vary.

06 / The wine-country detour: Douro & Alentejo

The book offers two different wine landscapes. Nuno's unnamed estate is in the **Alentejo**, with a wine cave, barrels and red-wine blending. In the sequel, the group reaches **Peso da Régua** in the Douro and crosses the river by the **Ponte Pedonal Metálica** before heading to a cruise. These are distinct regions; allow time rather than trying to squeeze both into a single day.

Option A — Dão to the Douro (recommended)

- **Day trip or overnight at Peso da Régua:** admire the terraced vineyards from the riverfront and use the town as a base for a winery appointment.
- **Book a vineyard visit:** the official Douro wine-tourism directory lists options such as Quinta de Ventozelo, Quinta do Bomfim, Quinta do Crasto, Quinta da Pacheca and Quinta de la Rosa. These are real producers, not fictional estates from the novels.
- **Take a river cruise if it suits your schedule:** the sequel's cruise scene gives the reader a natural excuse to see the steep vineyard slopes from the water. Confirm departure point and duration in advance.
- **Continue to Vila Nova de Gaia:** understand the full chain from vineyard production in the Douro to ageing and tasting in the lodges across from Porto.

Option B — Évora and the Alentejo

- **Évora historic centre:** the novel explicitly calls out the Roman Temple, Évora Cathedral and Capela dos Ossos (Chapel of Bones). All make worthwhile visits.
- **Elvas:** included in the novel's wider route map; visit for its fortified heritage if you have a car and an extra day.
- **Wine and food:** seek Alentejo reds, olive oil, regional cheeses, açorda and migas. Book a winery visit in advance; Nuno's estate is not named in the book.

Which detour should you choose?

IF YOU WANT...	CHOOSE	BEST FOR
The sequel's Douro cruise scene	Peso da Régua and the Douro	Terraced vineyards, river views, Port and Douro wines
The original's wine-cave atmosphere	Évora and the Alentejo	Roman heritage, plains, hearty regional food and reds
Matilde's Touriga Nacional vineyard life	Dão Lafões	A quieter, more intimate wine-country base

Wine-tourism directories: dourowinetourism.com and the official Dão Wine Route at cvrdao.pt. Use a designated driver or organised tour when tasting.

07 / Sintra, Cascais, Carcavelos & Estoril

The original novel's journeylist includes **Sintra** and **Estoril**. The sequel makes the coast more immediate: Matilde rides the **N6** along the Estoril coast, stops at **Praia de Carcavelos**, and heads toward **Cascais**. The landmark at the centre of the reunion is the real **Casino Estoril**.

Sintra: a day of palaces and gardens

- **Palácio Nacional de Sintra:** the landmark palace in the town centre.
- **Quinta da Regaleira:** a palace and gardens known for symbolic architecture, grottoes and the Initiation Well.
- **Palácio da Pena and the Moorish Castle:** allow time for the hills and pre-book timed entry where required. Current access rules restrict private-car circulation in parts of the historic centre; check official visitor guidance before you go.

Carcavelos and Cascais

- **Praia de Carcavelos:** a broad sandy beach west of Lisbon and the sequel's named beach stop. It is popular for surfing; respect flags and lifeguard advice.
- **N6 / Estoril coast:** the coastal road is a scenic link rather than a sightseeing destination in itself. The train is an easy alternative to driving between Lisbon, Estoril and Cascais.
- **Cascais old town and waterfront:** spend time on foot, with a seafood lunch or sunset walk.

Casino Estoril: the real landmark

The real Casino Estoril stands on Avenida Dr. Stanley Ho. The official site lists gaming, cultural events, shows, exhibitions, bars and restaurants, with access conditions and schedules that can change. Visit for the building and public-facing entertainment, not in search of the fictional subterranean catacombs or throne room described in the novels.

Where to eat: the casino complex itself lists dining options; for a wider choice, stay along the Estoril/Cascais waterfront and choose a seafood restaurant after checking current menus and hours. In this guide, no specific Cascais venue is presented as a book location because the novels do not name one.

08 / Suggested 10-day itinerary

This version follows the story's geography without turning every transfer into a race. A car is useful for the Algarve, wine country and the Alentejo; trains work well between major cities and along the Lisbon–Estoril coast. Consider flying into Lisbon and out of Porto if your tickets allow it.

DAY 1 — Lagos

Arrive, settle into the old town, walk Estrada de São Roque and the station area, then explore the waterfront. Seafood dinner; keep the afternoon light in summer heat.

DAY 2 — Sagres / Algarve

Take a coastal day trip to Ponta da Piedade and, if time allows, Sagres Point. Return to Lagos for the night.

DAY 3 — Lisbon / Oriente

Travel to Lisbon. Visit Gare do Oriente and Parque das Nações, then spend the evening in Baixa. Try a pastel de nata and a Portuguese dinner.

DAY 4 — Lisbon literary walk

Calçada da Glória, São Pedro de Alcântara Garden, Glória Funicular and Casa-Museu Amália Rodrigues. Add Baixa's streets and a fado performance if desired.

DAY 5 — Sintra and Estoril

Start early in Sintra for one palace and one garden rather than overpacking the day. Continue to Estoril for Casino Estoril's public areas, subject to current access conditions.

DAY 6 — Aveiro / Costa Nova

Travel north to Aveiro. Walk the canals, Rotunda das Pontes and Jardim do Rossio; taste ovos moles. Continue to Costa Nova and Praia da Barra if timing allows.

DAY 7 — Porto / Gaia

Walk the named Porto route: São Bento, Rua de Belomonte, Rua das Flores, Rua da Vitória and Praça da Liberdade. Cross to Gaia for a Port lodge tasting.

DAY 8 — Dão Lafões

Travel inland via Viseu. Visit the Dão Wine Route Welcome Centre or a pre-booked estate; focus on Touriga Nacional and Encruzado. Overnight in the region.

DAY 9 — Douro / Peso da Régua

Take the scenic drive or organised excursion to Peso da Régua. Visit a booked quinta, enjoy the river views and take a cruise if schedules align.

DAY 10 — Évora / Alentejo or departure

If returning toward Lisbon, make this a long transfer day with a stop in Évora for the Roman Temple and Chapel of Bones. For a more relaxed trip, add a night in Évora and make this an 11-day itinerary.

The more relaxed version

Make this 12–14 days: add a full night in Évora, a second night in Dão Lafões, and a full day in the Douro. The route spans a large country; fewer hotel changes make the wine stops much more enjoyable.

09 / What to eat and drink along the trail

REGION	LOOK FOR	WHY IT FITS THE JOURNEY
Algarve	Cataplana, grilled fish, seafood rice, octopus salad	Coastal cooking for the opening Lagos chapter
Lisbon	Pastel de nata, bacalhau, bifana, petiscos, fado-house supper	Café culture and the city's old and new districts
Aveiro / coast	Ovos moles, grilled sardines, seafood	Canals, lagoon and Atlantic fishing traditions
Porto / Gaia	Francesinha, tripas à moda do Porto, bacalhau, Port	The novel's steep streets and the wine trade across the river
Dão Lafões	Touriga Nacional reds, Encruzado whites, regional cheeses	Matilde's vineyard life and the region named in the sequel
Douro	Douro DOC red/white, Port, river fish and regional dishes	The sequel's Peso da Régua and cruise sequence
Alentejo	Açorda, migas, olive oil, sheep's cheese, regional reds	Nuno's wine-making world and the Évora detour

A few Portuguese words

Bom dia — goodmorning • **Uma mesa para duas pessoas, por favor** — a table for two, please • **O que recomenda?** — what do you recommend? • **A conta, por favor** — the bill, please • **Sem álcool** — without alcohol.

Reservations and etiquette

Popular restaurants and winery visits should be booked in advance, especially in summer and during harvest season. Many Portuguese restaurants have weekly closing days or split lunch/dinner service. Check official sites or call before travelling. Ask about couvert (bread, olives, cheese) if you want to know what will be charged; it is not necessarily complimentary.

10 / Practical planning notes

Getting around

- **Trains:** practical for Lisbon–Porto and Lisbon–Estoril/Cascais. The book's exact train times are part of the fiction and should not be used for planning; check the current CP timetable.
- **Car:** useful for Sagres, Dão Lafões, Évora/Elvas and the Douro estates. Rural winery visits may be separated by winding roads and require appointments.
- **Walking:** Porto and Lisbon are steep and often cobbled. Wear supportive shoes and allow extra time.
- **Beach safety:** Atlantic water and surf can be powerful. Follow lifeguard flags and local advice.
- **Wine tasting:** designate a driver or use an organised tour. Do not combine tastings with a motorcycle or car journey.

Accuracy and reader transparency

The place names and scene cues above are drawn from the two novels. Restaurant choices, visitor attractions and wine-tourism suggestions are real-world recommendations added to make the guide useful. The books do not name a restaurant for every meal, and the vineyard estates are not given real addresses; this guide does not claim otherwise.

Official resources to check before departure

- **Casino Estoril — access, events and practical information**
<https://casino-estoril.pt/en/casino-estoril>
- **Sintra Parks and Monuments — current tickets, access and road guidance**
<https://www.parquesdesintra.pt/en/plan-your-visit/>
- **Dão Wine Route — regional itineraries and participating producers**
<https://www.cvrdao.pt/en/dao-wine-route/>
- **Dão Wine Route Welcome Centre — address, hours and booking**
<https://www.cvrdao.pt/en/welcome-center-798/>
- **Douro Wine Tourism — wineries and tasting experiences**
<https://dourowinetourism.com/>
- **Visit Portugal — wine routes and regional context**
<https://www.visitportugal.com/en/content/wine-routes>
- **Visit Portugal — Sintra visitor overview**
<https://visitportugal.com/pt-pt/content/descobrir-sintra>

Restaurant names and addresses were checked against current business listings during preparation; menus, hours and ownership can change. Confirm details directly before setting out. This guide is a reader's companion and is not affiliated with or endorsed by the venues mentioned.

READ THE BOOKS. WALK THE ROUTE. MAKE PORTUGAL YOUR OWN.

Villains' Reunion • Portugal

