



Georgia Festival Chorus

Performance Tour
of Portugal

Traveler Version

May 4 - 14, 2023



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PORTUGAL

A tour to Portugal is a journey through history that will afford a wonderful opportunity for exploration and discovery. With its fascinating variety of landscapes, from the blue sea and sandy beaches to mountaintops covered with snow, Portugal is unique. It is a country of immaculate white houses, colorful costumes, inviting people, wonderful food, rich culture, and musical traditions perpetuating over eight hundred years!

This performance tour will allow you to explore the many wonders of Porto, known for its narrow, cobbled streets, where you will cruise the Douro River and shop in bustling open-air markets full of local specialties. Here and throughout your travels, you will perform and exchange with local choirs experiencing an interesting array of venues. Next, you will stay in Leira, a medieval city rich in history and packed with visible remnants of a long ago time. Finally, your journey takes you to the stunning capital city of Lisbon where you will experience and learn about the tradition of Fado, a type of Portuguese singing, renowned for its expressive and profoundly melancholic character.

Enjoy a concert tour of Portugal and let yourself be immersed in all that the country has to offer as you share your music with local people and enjoy the incredible sights in this beautiful country.



PROPOSED TOUR ITINERARY

updated on 4-21-2022



DAY 1 | Thursday, May 4

FLY TO PORTUGAL

The **Georgia Festival Chorus Performance Tour of Portugal** starts with an overnight flight from **Atlanta** to **Porto, Portugal**.

Meals, snacks, and refreshments will be served on board. Be sure to read through the great tips and travel information in your **Music Contact International tour handbook!**



DAY 2 | Friday, May 5

ARRIVE in PORTO | SIGHTSEEING | WELCOME DINNER

Welcome to **Portugal!** Arrive in **Porto** at a glorious, springlike, time of year. Your **Music Contact International tour manager** will be waiting to greet you in the arrivals hall of **Porto Airport**. Together, board your private motor coach and enjoy your first impressions of greater Porto as you enter the exciting capital of Portugal!

Porto, famous for its stately bridges and port wine, is one of Europe's oldest cities; its historical core was proclaimed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996. Porto is a port city and trading hub, welcoming and active and described by a popular Portuguese saying: "While Porto works, Coimbra studies and Lisbon has fun."

The **Georgia Festival Chorus Performance Tour of Portugal** begins with a **guided panoramic tour of Porto**. See the old neighborhoods still intact, a maze of winding streets, superb churches and the placard of multicolor houses set into the seaside. Drive down Avenida dos Aliados, generally regarded as the heart of Porto and the city's most grandiose avenue, flanked by ornate buildings in a range of architectural styles, from neoclassical to French Beaux-arts. This avenue was built to impress!

The tour will end at your conveniently located Porto hotel. Check in and freshen up from the overnight flight. Those interested are welcome to join your tour manager for an **orientation walk** of the hotel neighborhood.

This evening, kick-off your tour at a **welcome dinner of tasty Portuguese cuisine and entertainment** at a local restaurant!



DAY 3 | Saturday, May 6

SIGHTSEEING in PORTO | CONCERT*

Breakfast is served daily in the hotel dining room.

This morning set out to see some of the sites around Porto. Stop at the **São Bento Train Station** known for its magnificent Azulejos panels depicting scenes from the traditional life of the north. Admire the **Stock Exchange Palace** and its famous Arab salon, one of Porto's most impressive buildings built in the mid-19th century in the neo-classical style. Walk through the picturesque **Praça da Ribeira**, one of Porto's most beautiful neighborhoods. As one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites, the area is filled with winding medieval streets and small cobblestone alleyways. Ribeira is extremely scenic as it sits on the riverfront of the Rio Douro and comes complete with numerous cafes, restaurants, and bars.

Later in the morning, take a brief **scenic cruise on the Douro River** passing underneath Porto's amazingly beautiful six bridges and admiring the terraced hillsides that line the river.

In the afternoon return to your hotel and prepare for tonight's concert. *An afternoon rehearsal can be arranged upon request.*

Tonight, the **Georgia Festival Chorus is invited to perform a concert with a local choir** who will host your concert at a local venue. Enjoy meeting a local choir and performing for an appreciative audience.



DAY 4 | Sunday, May 7

SING FOR MASS* | PORTO

This morning, the **Georgia Festival Chorus is invited to attend and sing for mass at a local Porto church.** Enjoy fellowship with the friendly parishioners - a unique chance to get to know locals and to share in their spiritual practice while contributing your music to their community.

Following service, the day is yours to discover Porto on your own. Your tour manager will be glad to make suggestions and help you discover the city! Dinner is on your own this evening as well.



DAY 5 | Monday, May 8

PORTO to LEIRA | AVEIRO | LEIRA

Check out of your hotel and prepare to transfer from **Porto to Leira**. A stop will be made in the famous coastal city of **Aveiro**, known as the "Venice of Portugal." Aveiro is full of picturesque canals that crisscross the city, and "Moliceiros", colorful boats with raised bows, can be found transporting people and goods from place to place. Take a memorable **boat tour on a "Moliceiro"**. Informal singing aboard is encouraged!

Upon returning to the shore, enjoy some free time in Aveiro to walk along the docks and investigate lunch on your own.

Reconvene after lunch to learn how to prepare the local specialty known as "**Ovos Moles**", a pastry made of egg yolks, flour, and sugar, with a sampling of course!

Visit the **Salinas de Aveiro** or sea salt pans. At one time, the area had many salt pans, but today there are just a few. Salt pans are very important environmental sites. Many types of waterfowl live in the marshes and surrounding areas. It is said that salt from Ria de Aveiro is "white gold" because of its high quality and taste due to artisan crafting and the weather conditions in the north of the country with less sun and more clouds.

Return to your motorcoach and depart for your hotel in **Leira**, a small medieval city rich in history and packed with visible remnants of a long ago time, some say one of Portugal's secret treasures. Upon arrival, check in and join your tour manager for an **orientation walk** of the hotel neighborhood.

Tonight, a group **dinner** will be arranged at a local restaurant.



DAY 6 | Tuesday, May 9

NAZARE | ALCOBACA | FATIMA | CONCERT*

This morning takes you on a tour of the nearby area. The first stop is the town of **Nazaré**, a colorful fishing village and home to some of the world's biggest waves. Enjoy time strolling through the winding streets, catch the amazing view over the ocean and marvel at some of the biggest surf in the world and pristine golden sand.

Depart for **Alcobaca** where you will find one of the most beautiful Cistercian abbeys of Portugal and one of the richest and most powerful in the country. You will discover the church of the monastery and the moving love story of Pedro and Ines.

In the afternoon, visit **Fatima**, where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to three young shepherds in 1917. Since then, the site has become an immense sanctuary with two basilicas and a scenic square where thousands of devotees congregate to commemorate the event. **In Fatima*, the Georgia Festival Chorus will have the opportunity to sing sacred selections as part of the daily celebrations that honor the Virgin Mary's appearance here.**

Return to your hotel in Leiria late in the afternoon and enjoy dinner on your own arrangements.



DAY 7 | Wednesday, May 10

LEIRA to LISBON | OBIIDOS | FADO DINNER

This morning check out of your Leiria hotel and board your motor coach bound for **Lisbon**, Portugal's capital city famous for its sunny weather, colorful buildings, Fado music and friendly locals.

Along the way stop in **Obidos**, a great example of a truly traditional Portuguese village, with medieval architecture, narrow, cobblestone streets, a town wall, and quaint whitewashed houses. There will be opportunities for informal singing, small group exploration, lunch and shopping in the quaint town center. While you are there why not walk on top of the old city walls or see the Church of Santa Maria or Obidos Castle. Before you leave have a group tasting of "Ginja de Óbidos", a locally made cherry liqueur served in chocolate cups, and cheers to your travels!

In the afternoon, transfer to **Lisbon**. Upon arrival check in to your hotel and prepare for tonight's **dinner and entertainment**.

Tonight, head to a typical **"fado" house**, where your group will sample traditional Portuguese cuisine with interludes of authentic fado music performed by a fadista accompanied by the Portuguese guitarra, a pear-shaped guitar unique to Portugal. This music is thought to be representative of the Portuguese soul, and the feeling of "Saudade" or nostalgia, characteristic of the Portuguese temperament.



DAY 8 | Thursday, May 11

SIGHTSEEING IN ALFAMA

Today's journey begins with a self-guided walk through the **neighborhood of Alfama**, the oldest district in the capital. Admire the winding streets and flowered balconies. Perhaps climb to the **Belvedere of Santa Luzia** where you will find one of the most beautiful panoramic views overlooking the city and the gorgeous seascape below! Walk past the **Sao Jorge Castle**, the hilltop fortress that dates back to the medieval period of Portuguese history. Continue downhill to **Rossio Square**, and admire the ornate cobblestones and its resident fountains and monuments also visit the impressive **Praça do Comercio** plaza, a highlight of the city outfitted with shops and cafes for you to enjoy lunch on your own.

In the afternoon, return to the hotel and enjoy an afternoon and evening to discover Lisbon on your own.



DAY 9 | Friday, May 12

CABO DA ROCA | SINTRA | CASCAIS | FRIENDSHIP CONCERT*

Enjoy **breakfast** at your hotel before heading off for a full-day excursion to some of Portugal's most beautiful spots!

Board your motorcoach and set out for a visit to **Cabo da Roca**, the westernmost point of the European continent. Perched around 500 feet above the sea, the Cabo de Roca site provides spectacular views over the Serra de Sintra mountain range and the coast. Admire the windswept cliffs and capture some breathtaking photos.

Next stop is **Sintra**, the picturesque town known for its extravagant palaces and stunning scenery situated within the hills of the Serra de Sintra. Hidden within these pine covered hills are extravagant palaces, opulent mansions, eccentric labyrinthine gardens, and the ruins of a medieval castle. For six centuries, Sintra was the favorite residence of Portugal's rulers and as a result, many charming "quintas" or elegant palaces can be found there. Tour the colorful **Sintra City Palace** followed by time for lunch and browsing in the quaint artisan shops and galleries. It is recommended to taste Sintra's delicious "queijada" or tart, the specialty of the city.

As we return to Lisbon, pass through the charming beach town of **Cascais** and explore the attractions, picturesque coastline and ornate historic mansions and villas before returning to Lisbon.

Tonight, the **Georgia Festival Chorus will perform a friendship concert** with a local choir. Sing for each other and a friendly local audience at this special musical encounter.



DAY 10 | Saturday, May 13

LISBON

Today enjoy free time to explore **Lisbon** on your own. This will be a great opportunity to see some more sites, shop for souvenirs and take some final photographs.

Perhaps Belém neighborhood, a historic trading center on the banks of the Tagus River. See the Church of the Hieronymite Monastery, a world-renowned repository of Manueline Art (Portuguese late Gothic), and the Tower of Belém, a 16th-century monument that served both as a fortress and as a ceremonial gateway to Lisbon. Sample the "pastel of Belém" a typical pastry found in this part of the city.

Another option is to visit the National Tile Museum piques your interest, an art museum dedicated to the "azulejo", traditional tilework of the former Portuguese Empire. You could participate in a workshop to learn how the traditional tiles were produced under the Portuguese tradition and try your hand at making a decorative tile of your own.

Your Music Contact International tour manager will be happy to offer suggestions and may even join you!

Reconvene in the evening. A **Portuguese-style farewell dinner** brings your tour to a festive close. There will be ample opportunity to recount the many highlights of your tour!



DAY 11 | Sunday, May 14

DEPART PORTUGAL & RETURN TO THE USA

Georgia Festival Chorus's performance tour of Portugal ends with a flight from **Lisbon back to Atlanta**. Heartfelt goodbyes are exchanged at the airport and your group is sent off with a fond "Thank you for connecting our world through your music. Until we meet again.....!"

**All performance opportunities and venues proposed in this itinerary are pending final confirmation and availability at time of booking. Your group's final program will be determined by confirmed times and locations for concerts, workshops, entrances and other activities. Although your ensemble's exact itinerary will vary to accommodate performance schedules, the same type of singing experiences, activities, and caliber of venue will be included in your final concert tour program.*



Your Tour INCLUDES:

FLIGHTS - professionally managed with group airfare

- Flights for your group depart from Atlanta to Porto, Portugal and return from Lisbon, Portugal to Atlanta.

Our flight team handles custom flight requests and upgrades.

Currently, for this routing, our contracts include one complimentary checked bag per traveler. Please note airline baggage inclusions are subject to change until flights are ticketed.

ACCOMMODATIONS - thoughtfully selected to match group needs

9 nights in 4-star hotels, including portorage (1 full size bag per person) as follows:

- 3 nights at a conveniently located hotel in Porto - Vila Gale Hotel or similar
- 2 nights at a conveniently located hotel in Leiria - Hotel TRYP or similar
- 4 nights at a conveniently located hotel in Lisbon - Lumen Hotel or similar

MEALS - varied, flavorful, and highlighting local cuisine

Breakfast daily at your hotel

4 multi-course Portuguese dinners:

- 1 welcome dinner at a local restaurant in Porto
- 1 dinner at a local restaurant Leira
- 1 dinner with a Fado show in Lisbon
- 1 farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Lisbon

Additional meals can be arranged upon request.

PERFORMANCES, WORKSHOPS, and EXCHANGES *that are customized, unique, and inspiring*

Music is the heart of this tour and the suggestions made here reflect the type of performances, venues, musical exchanges, and experiences we will arrange for your ensemble. Impromptu singing on tour is encouraged!

4 performance & singing opportunities*:

- Friendship concert in Porto
- Sing for Mass in Porto
- Concert in Fatima
- Friendship concert in Lisbon

**These arrangements are pending confirmation. Confirming concerts is a process, which requires registration of your ensemble for this tour along with your current biography, sound samples, photos, and repertoire. In some cases, additional separate applications must also be submitted. Organizers, venues, and hosts need to then approve each proposed concert. Music Contact International manages this process and is excited to share updates as performances confirm.*

ACTIVITIES + TOURS + ENTRANCES - *handpicked for your travelers*

Experience fabulous sightseeing with our entertaining and informative guides:

- Guided panoramic tour of Porto
- Mini-cruise on the Douro
- Workshop and tasting of "Ovos Moles"
- Moliceiro boat ride
- Entrance to Salt Pans
- Tasting of "Ginjinha"
- Entrance to Sintra City Palace

TOUR MANAGER *to handle on-the-road logistics*

A full-time tour manager to accompany your group every step of the way from arrival through departure. Our beloved tour managers assist with:

- Greeting and gathering the group upon arrival
- Expediting hotel check-ins and check-outs
- Liaising with reception desks, coach drivers, and guides
- Facilitating concerts and rehearsals
- Directing on-site entrances and activities, handling tickets and vouchers

- Keeping each day well-paced
- Sharing cultural content and interpreting local customs
- Sending everyone home with fond memories & hopes to travel together again soon!

TRANSPORTATION *in a private, modern, climate-controlled motor coach with a professional driver*

For all services specified in your itinerary.

GRATUITIES tips for your tour managers, local guides, & motor coach drivers are included in the tour package

INSURANCE *that covers our commitment to you*

Music Contact International, Inc. holds \$5,000,000.00 of Travel Agent and Tour Operator Professional Liability Insurance.

TOUR ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS *to help plan, promote, and prepare for your tour*

- A custom Traveler's Resource Site (TRS): We build this site specifically for your tour as a resource for travelers to engage in from the start. The TRS is where travelers view the itinerary and watch it develop. There are maps, pictures, packing lists, recommendations for destination-based books and movies, collections of FAQs, and helpful travel links. We'll build your site when your group is registered for this tour!
- A customized Tour Handbook with hourly itinerary, packing tips and lists, practical "Things to Know", destination background, and other fun content. This printed booklet is provided for each traveler about a month before departure.
- A luggage tag, passport/document holder, and outlet adapter for each traveler is also included.

MUSIC CONTACT INTERNATIONAL SERVICES *go beyond logistics*

- A unique opportunity to make lifelong friends through music and pilgrimage! When we bring groups together, friendships develop that frequently extend to years of heartfelt reunions on tours we plan around the world.
- You are in good hands! We've got 30+ years' experience arranging custom cultural and special interest tours, performance tours and festivals for choirs, bands, and orchestras.
- Our MCI team is the best in the business! We are musicians, teachers, event planners, parents, performers, volunteers, travelers, linguists, athletes, and more, from many countries, sharing our expertise at producing great tour experiences.
- We are right there with you! Often, a person who works on your tour, escorts it. This means your tour manager's expectations for a great program and activities are as high as yours!
- Details are our specialty! Group leaders appreciate our well-organized, user-friendly systems and tools for handling group logistics, payments, and diverse traveler needs.
- You'll love our flexibility! Do some of your travelers need individual flights? Adjoining rooms? Gluten-free meals? We are always glad to help.
- No matter where you live, consider us local! We will travel to meet your group, present the tour, and help you promote and plan for it. We also Zoom, Skype, and video chat.

CONVENIENT ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM *tour accounting has never been easier!*

MCI has a secure, password-protected, online payment site where tour members register and pay for their tour in increments. Reminders and statements are sent electronically.

Your designated leader is emailed a weekly report on group finances and has access to a portal to view payments at any time. We have a system for handling scholarships and monies from fundraisers as well. If for any reason you prefer to collect payments from your travelers and send us a group payment, that's fine too!



TOUR PACKAGE PRICES *you can rely on*

LAND ONLY PACKAGE PRICES

- \$ 2,772.00 - Based on a minimum of 80 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*
- \$ 2,961.00 - Based on a minimum of 70 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*
- \$ 3,802.00 - Based on a minimum of 60 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*

Plus **\$1,545.00** estimated airfare, tax and fuel* for **2023** travel.

Group fares will be available in **July 2022**.

**Flight Taxes and Fuel Surcharges are subject to change until tickets are issued.*

LAND & ESTIMATED AIR PACKAGE PRICES

- \$ 4,317.00 - Based on a minimum of 80 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*
- \$ 4,506.00 - Based on a minimum of 70 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*
- \$ 4,547.00 - Based on a minimum of 60 paying travelers *per person in double occupancy*

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS:

- \$558.00 supplement per person for single occupancy

Your tour includes everything above. Here's what's not included:

Passport, official ID, visa or other required travel documents | Immunizations | Fees for extra, oversize or overweight baggage Luggage handling at airports | Musical instruments including rental of piano and keyboard | Transportation of oversized instruments | Rehearsal/meeting room | Meals, entrance fees, and coach transfers not mentioned above | Drinks with meals unless specified | Gratuities for hotel staff | Travel insurance

Please let us know if you would like any of these items added to your tour.

TRAVEL PROTECTION is recommended!

Music Contact International recommends purchasing a travel protection plan through Travel Insured: [Link to Travel Insured here](#). This link is also available on your Traveler's Resource site. Please review coverage options very carefully and contact Travel Insured Inc. directly with any insurance related questions.



MUSIC CONTACT INTERNATIONAL

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photo location - our home in Burlington, Vermont