

DESTINATIONS

SPAIN & PORTUGAL | DOURO CRUISES



DOURO CRUISES

Whether it's wining and dining or soaking in historic sights, a relaxing Douro cruise offers plenty of Portuguese wonders, finds **Alice Barnes-Brown**



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DOURO VALLEY AND SALAMANCA

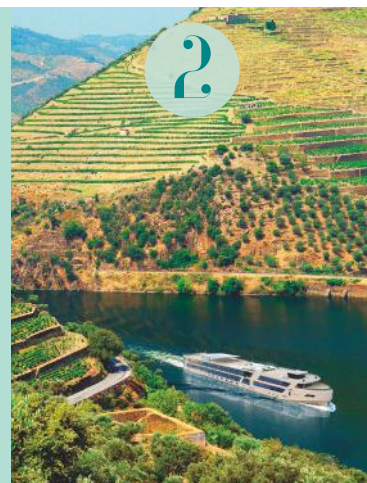
Riviera Travel's new ship, *Porto Mirante*, takes to the Douro this summer. Clients will be able to play 'spot the quinta' – the wine estates that line the banks – from the top-deck Sky Bar, while sipping port as they drift along. The itinerary stops at several vineyards and villages, including medieval walled town Castelo Rodrigo (pictured). In 2025, another new ship, *Rivera Rose*, will take over the itinerary.

Book it: The seven-night cruise starts at £2,399 per person, based on two sharing a lower-deck cabin. The price includes flights departing August 1, transfers, excursions and a Superior drinks package. rivieratravel.co.uk

DOURO DISCOVERY

Travelmarvel's itinerary visits some Douro stalwarts, including the living museum that is Mateus Palace – home of the ruby-coloured rosé wine – the terraced countryside around Pinhão and the bridged city of Porto. But it's the 'insider experiences' that really reach into the heart of Portugal, including dinner at a *quinta*, a port tasting with views over the Douro Valley, and a flamenco performance across the border in Salamanca.

Book it: The eight-day cruise starts at £1,895 per person for a November 7 departure, including flights from the UK, services of a Travelmarvel cruise director, flamenco show and lunch, and a dinner in Pinhão. aptouring.co.uk



DOURO RIVER VALLEY

Private port tastings with winemakers who know their craft intimately is just one thing that makes this Uniworld sailing special. Passengers will also visit the Unesco-listed Old Town in Guimarães, which dates back to medieval times, and Salamanca's tiled roofs and twiddly turrets.

Book it: The eight-day cruise starts at £3,499 per person, based on two sharing a Classic Madeira Deck room, departing July 7. The price includes flights, transfers, all-inclusive dining, premium spirits and wines, plus activities. uniworld.com

UNFORGETTABLE DOURO

Passengers on this romantic Scenic sailing visit some of Portugal's loveliest hidden gems, including the sleepy village of Provesende, where they can wander through charming cobbled alleys and admire sweeping views of the plateau below. In Porto, they will enjoy a private classical concert in the São Francisco church (pictured), before returning to their suite, where a butler will be on hand to look after them.

Book it: The 10-night cruise starts at £3,933 per person, including flights, premium drinks, Wi-Fi, tips and private transfers, departing August 4. scenic.co.uk



DOURO CULINARY HIGHLIGHTS

This A-Rosa sailing runs just once a year, in October, offering immersion into the world of Douro wines. Two local vintners and a sommelier will be on board to discuss the region's winemaking history. Curious taste buds will also be sated, with two pairing menus and a workshop on the creamy *pastel de nata* (Portuguese custard tart), before passengers dine at a traditional *quinta* on the final night.

Book it: The seven-night cruise leads in at £2,850 per person, departing October 23. The price includes flights, transfers, Wi-Fi, meals and alcoholic drinks, and experiences as detailed in the itinerary. arosa-cruises.com

