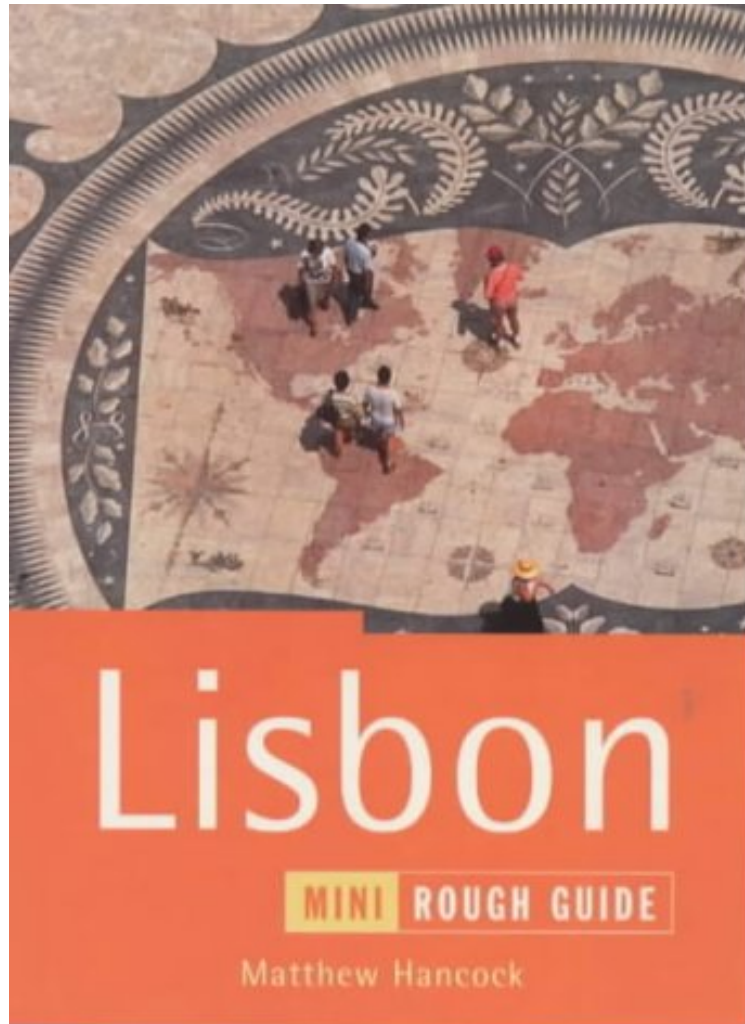


(Download) The Rough Guide to Lisbon

## The Rough Guide to Lisbon

*Matthew Hancock*

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**Matthew Hancock : The Rough Guide to Lisbon** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rough Guide to Lisbon:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A good guidebook for a short tripBy Meriah L. CrawfordI used this book for a recent 3-day trip to Lisbon. The maps in the back are really helpful, but the info in here wasn't as good as other books in this series. It made it difficult to really get a coherent sense of the area before arriving. Still, it makes a good reference for a short trip and the small size makes it great for carrying around.

This guide to Lisbon has accommodation and restarurant listings for every budget, and tips on bargain markets and eateries. It describes the traditional life of the city's historic neighbourhoods and reviews bars and nightlife hotspots, as

well as nearby beaches and resorts.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Introduction After many years as a sleepy backwater, Lisbon (Lisboa), Europe's most westerly capital, has become in recent years one of the continent's most happening cities, with hundreds of lively bars, a vibrant nightlife and a growing number of designer shops. Lisbon is also immediately likeable, gentler than any capital should be; a big city that remains human in pace and scale. The unusual and startling cityscape is a big draw in itself. At its heart is the eighteenth-century grid of the lower town, the Baixa, enclosed by a switchback of hills above the broad Tejo (in English, Tagus) estuary, and linked to surrounding districts by a network of cobbled streets and a system of trams and funiculars that crank their way up outrageous gradients. Down at the river, your gaze is lured across to a vast, Rio-like statue of Christ, arms outstretched, whose embrace encompasses one of the grandest of all suspension bridges, the Ponte 25 de Abril, and a fleet of cross-river ferries. It's hard not to see the city as an urban funfair, a sense heightened by the castle poised above the Alfama district's medieval, whitewashed streets; by the fantasy Manueline architecture of Belm; and by the mosaics of the central Rossio square and the city's Art Nouveau shops and cafs. Lisbon was once one of Europe's wealthiest cities, but many of its grandest buildings were destroyed in the Great Earthquake of 1755. The Romanesque S (cathedral), the Moorish walls of the Castelo de So Jorge and the extraordinary Mosteiro dos Jer--nimos at Belm, are fine historic survivors of the earthquake, as is Lisbon's most atmospheric and traditional district, Alfama, a warren of narrow steps and alleys. Many of the city's more modern sites also demand attention: the Fundao Calouste Gulbenkian, a museum and cultural complex with superb collections of ancient and modern art; the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, effectively Portugal's national art gallery; and the futuristic Oceanarium at the Parque das Naes, the largest of its kind in Europe. Beyond these, it's the central streets, avenues and squares, with their attendant comings and goings, that keep the interest high, along with a buoyant nightlife which ranges from the traditional fado clubs of the Bairro Alto and Alfama down to the glitzy clubs of Lisbon's redeveloped docklands. There's a superb array of Brazilian and African clubs and bands too, brought to the city by immigrants from Portugal's former colonies, and a panoply of international restaurants and bars. All of which makes for a city that demands at least a few days out of anyone's itinerary. It is also the perfect base for day-trips and excursions into the surrounding area. The sea is close by, with the beach suburbs of Estoril and Cascais just half an hour's journey away by train; and slightly further, across the Tejo, are the miles of dunes along the Costa da Caparica. Northwest of the city, again easily reached by train, lie the lush wooded heights and royal palaces of Sintra, Byron's "glorious Eden". And if you're interested in Portuguese architecture, there are the rococo delights of the Palcio de Queluz and its gardens en route to Sintra, or the extraordinary monastery of Mafra to the north. When to visit Lisbon is comfortably warm from April to October: with its cooling Atlantic breezes it is less hot than Mediterranean cities on the same latitude, especially after sundown, though in terms of hours of sunshine it is one of Europe's brightest capitals. Most Lisbon residents take their holidays in July and August, which means that some shops, bars and restaurants close for the period, while the local beaches are heaving. September and October are good times to go, as is June, when the city enjoys its main saints' festivals. Lisbon's westerly position means that it gets its fair share of rainfall, most of which falls in the winter months, when the whole city seems to become saturated. However, when the sun does appear, it can be gloriously warm even in mid-winter. It is also worth noting that weather can be extremely localized - it can be pouring in Sintra but clear in Lisbon, or cloudy in Lisbon and sunny south of the Tejo.