



Essential Information

The following information is not intended to put you off, but is an honest guide to the way of life in Portugal. As at home, things occasionally go wrong, and whilst we have only chosen those properties which we feel will provide the perfect holiday accommodation, we cannot guarantee that things won't happen that are beyond our control.

Weather

Weather in the Algarve is generally good throughout the summer, with a low average rainfall. Buildings are designed and furnished to be comfortable in hot temperatures, and may not be as well suited to wet or cold periods as houses in northern Europe. Humidity can be a particular problem in countries where temperatures are usually high. In very wet periods, properties may give the appearance of being damp. However, as soon as the weather reverts to normal, and houses can be aired properly, any sign of dampness will quickly disappear.

Building Work & Disturbance

As with any country, building work in Portugal is sporadic and can start at any time. Even properties in developments that are well established, can be affected if a neighbour suddenly decides to renovate or improve. Likewise local councils may start road works with little or no notice. We do not control such work and we do not always receive advance notice of when it will begin. However, if we are made aware of any such disturbance that is likely to seriously impair the enjoyment of your stay, we will contact you as soon as we are aware of it. If this happens, you will be entitled to exercise the options outlined in section 5 of our Terms and Conditions although compensation will not be payable unless the work is being carried out by, or on behalf of, one of our own property owners to the property you are staying at. If building work starts during your holiday, which deems to seriously impair your enjoyment of the property, we will do our best to try to move you or try to find solutions to improve your enjoyment.

Security

Be as security conscious whilst on holiday as you would be at home. Do not leave valuables on view in cars, and always be sure to secure the properties doors, shutters and windows when going out, or if you are by the pool. We recommend you do not take items of great or sentimental value on holiday with you.

Mosquitoes & Other Pests

As with all hot countries, insects can be a problem. It is advisable to use plug-in mosquito repellents in bedrooms, and a lotion to protect exposed skin when eating out. Uncovered food will invariably attract unwanted pests so store all food in the fridge or in airtight containers. Anti pest powders may solve the problem if it occurs, but prevention is the best cure. Likewise accessible food is a great temptation for mice and other rodents so please remember to store provisions carefully.

Cats, Dogs & Other Animals

Stray cats and dogs can occasionally be a problem in some areas. Should either beg for food at your property, however sweet they look, please do not feed them. They may not be strays – just opportunists looking for an extra meal! The next clients may not be as tolerant. Many local families keep dogs or other live stock, which live outdoors and may sometimes

be heard making a noise. Properties in rural areas may be located close to farms and smallholdings so wild animals and farmyard noises are likely.

Water, Electricity & Solar Power

With little or no rain, shortages do occur which may result in a low water pressure or supplies being cut off for short periods. Please bear with it, the locals are suffering in the same way. The water is safe to drink, but may taste different and we therefore recommend you stick to bottled water for drinking and washing salads etc. Portuguese plumbing is not as efficient as we are used to and cannot cope with the disposal of nappies etc. If a blockage occurs, the floor of the property may need to be dug up which will undoubtedly cause disturbance to your holiday. Electricity cuts, especially during and after storms, are not uncommon. Some properties rely on solar power to heat water and if there is insufficient sunlight, shortages of hot water may occur although there is normally a back-up system which should prevent this from happening. Insufficient sunlight may also affect the water temperature of solar heated pools.

Beaches, Swimming Pools & Safety

Where we advertise the distance to the nearest beach, please bear in mind that access may be difficult for those with limited mobility. No swimming pool is safe for unsupervised children and many properties have bedrooms with direct access to the pool. Pool dimensions, where provided, are only approximate. Swimming pools are generally 1m – 2m deep so are without a very shallow end so we would strongly recommend that upon arrival at your property, you check the position of the shallow and deep ends. Please refrain from diving into the pool at any time. Towels for use by the pool are only provided if stated in the property description and must not be taken to the beach.

Toys, Games & Sports

Where advertised tennis courts, table tennis, snooker and pool tables are there to provide enjoyment but please don't expect them to be of championship standard! We recommend that you take bats, racquets and balls with you as these may not be provided. Occasionally owners and departing guests will leave toys and games for the following clients to enjoy but please exercise caution if you decide to use them as we cannot be held responsible for any accidents that may occur as a result. Please also be aware that properties near golf courses are at risk of stray golf balls entering the garden!

Damage

We accept that accidents do happen, and if you break something, please either replace it or report it to the house manager who will endeavour to replace it for you. All breakages should be paid for before vacating the property. Your travel insurance should cover you for accidental damage or breakages whilst on holiday but keep all receipts as they will be required for any claims on your return. If you are unable to obtain an official receipt, a letter from the house manager should suffice. Unreported damage or breakages will result in a deduction from your security deposit so it is advisable to report anything, however minor, before you depart.

Extras

Pool heating, central heating (including electricity for mobile heaters and fuel for open fires or log burning stoves) and air conditioning are NOT included in the rental price unless otherwise stated and must be booked and paid for in advance. It should be noted that pools can take anywhere between a few days and a week to heat up. If the property is vacant, or the clients occupying the house immediately prior to your arrival did not require the pool to be heated, then in order to ensure that the pool is warm enough for your arrival, it will be necessary to preheat the pool in advance. Therefore, a pre-heating charge will be made in addition to the cost of maintaining the heat for the duration of your holiday. In general pool heating will heat water between 3 and 8 degrees Centigrade above the average air temperature and the weather also has a dramatic effect on the pool temperature. Heavy rainfall or exceptionally cold nights can seriously reduce the effect of the heating. Pool heating supplements are non-refundable, irrespective of what temperature the pool reaches, as the majority of the cost is incurred in the first few days. Any cancellations will not be possible after the heating is initially switched on. It is not recommended to heat the pool during the hot summer months when heated pools can sometimes turn green with a reaction to the chemicals. This can be rectified and your house manager should be notified immediately, but we cannot accept responsibility if you opt for pool heating in July and August. Please note that unheated pools will feel cool in early and late season.

Equipment

All accommodation is equipped with a fridge or fridge/freezer, cooker, kettle, iron and ironing board and sufficient utensils, cutlery and crockery appropriate to the maximum occupancy of the property. Barbecues may be gas or charcoal, fixed or portable. Extras such as washing machines, dishwashers, microwaves, TVs, VCRs, CDs, DVDs, where they are installed, are noted in each individual property description. Please bring your own tapes, CDs and DVDs and a small supply of washing and/or dishwasher tablets, where appropriate, as these are not generally provided.

Satellite, Cable TV & Internet Access

Please note that where a property description contains satellite and/or cable television, where advertised, it does NOT give access to the subscription channels (e.g. Sky which includes movies, sport and entertainment). News Channels are usually available but may be the only channels available in English. Some owners have provided 'free to air' channels which will give access to a limited number of English terrestrial channels, however since Sky is moving its footprint, these channels may not be available and owners are trying to offer alternatives, subject to availability. We therefore cannot guarantee, or be held responsible, for any specific channels that may or may not be provided. If there is internet access at your chosen property, there may be an access charge in common with many wireless 'open zones'. We cannot be held responsible if the service develops a fault or is unavailable for any reason.

Maids, Gardeners & Pool Maintenance

The frequency of maid service is stated in each property description. The maid's duties include general cleaning (but not washing up or personal laundry), sweeping the floors and cleaning the bathrooms. They will ensure clean bed linen and towels are provided. Please note that maids do not work on Sundays or public holidays and that the frequency of service includes the change over day. Therefore, if maid service is twice per week, the first clean will be on the day of arrival and you will only see her once more during that week. Maids do not dispose of household rubbish, which should be bagged up and taken to one of the many local public bins. Where it is indicated in a property description that a washing machine is not available, for maid's use only or that laundry is by arrangement, it should be possible for you to make a private arrangement with the maid to do personal laundry. Swimming pools need regular maintenance in order for them to remain in sparkling condition and the gardens need regular work. The staff will endeavour to be as unobtrusive as possible. Sometimes essential maintenance or repairs need to be carried out at the property but any arrangements to complete work will be made with you in advance by your house manager. Should you notice anything that needs maintenance during your stay it is essential that you advise your house manager. We will do our best to ensure that anything that needs repair or replacement will be done with the minimum amount of disturbance to you and your party.

Arrival & Departure

We will endeavour to have the house fully cleaned and ready for your arrival by specified time, which is 15:00h unless stated or agreed otherwise, on the day of your arrival and would ask you to vacate by 10:00 on the day of departure. It would be appreciated if you would strictly adhere to these rules, as cleaning the whole house thoroughly and to your satisfaction is a lot of work for the maid. If, when you arrive, work is still continuing, please allow the maid to finish. If you arrive on an early flight, it is sometimes possible for you to leave your luggage at the property from 12 noon onwards and use the pool and terrace, if you are permitted access to your property early.

Properties

Each property we feature is individually owned, and furnished to the owner's personal taste. Where we state that a bed is a double, it could mean that there are two single mattresses on a double base made up as a double bed. Cloakrooms consist of a WC and hand basin. Bathrooms have a full size bath, and shower rooms have walk-in showers. The distances quoted on the website are approximate and intended as a guide only.

Cots, High Chairs & Extra Beds

These are not in each property as a matter of course but can be ordered in advance. The cots will either be foldable travel types or standard wooden frames, but not necessarily to British safety standards. In either case, cot linen is not supplied. Extra beds may be camp beds or divans and may be supplied at additional cost, subject to the property owner's agreement.

Breakage Deposits

We understand that accidents happen but should you or a member of your party cause damage to a property or its contents, property owners have the reassurance that we hold a breakage deposit. This paid with your final payment or full payment if less than 10 weeks until arrival. Normally, unless stated otherwise on the property description the amounts are as follows based on the size of the property: 2 bedrooms - £150-200; 3 or 4 bedrooms - £250-£500 and 5 bedrooms. £500-£750, 6 or more bedrooms - £750-£1,500. Some villas will request the breakages deposit in euros on arrival, this is generally at the villas where we do a meet & greet system with the keys, return of the monies either way is set out below.

Generally, breakage deposits are refunded in full within 14 days after your return as most clients treat the properties with a great deal of care and respect. The maid will have checked the property prior to your arrival to ensure everything is in good order. Should you notice anything amiss, please report it immediately to the house manager. It is imperative to ensure that you have adequate travel insurance as charges incurred for damage can usually be claimed back from your travel insurance provider.