

LUSTING AFTER LISBON

OK! EXPLORES PORTUGAL'S CAPITAL CITY

Below: Lisbon sits at the mouth of the Tagus River. **Right:** City fan Victoria Beckham



WHAT CAN I DO?

Taxis are cheap, but one of the most scenic ways to explore the city is by taking one of the old trams up the cobbled streets to charming Alfama, the city's historic quarter. OK!'s favourite way to get around, however, was on a guided tuk-tuk tour that took in Jerónimos Monastery, São Jorge Castle and the Church Of Santa Engrácia before heading to the river passing by the Museum Of Art, Architecture And Technology. We finished at Belém Tower, the city's iconic medieval structure, and rewarded ourselves with one of the city's pastel de natas (custard tarts) at the Pastéis de Belém bakery. OK! also signed up for a three-hour walking tour, where we were introduced to Lisbon's Ginja sour cherry liqueur and a Moroccan palace hidden inside a building near the Praça Luís de Camões square. Also seek out the Santa Justa Lift, which connects the lower streets of the Baixa district to chic Carmo Square. The design is inspired by the Eiffel Tower and, with a 45m elevation, it's a romantic way to hit the heights.



WHERE CAN I EAT?

The Cervejaria Liberdade restaurant, at the Tivoli Avenida Liberdade hotel, offers an innovative Japanese and Peruvian menu. Menu highlights included the shellfish platter and the strawberry soup dessert that's prepared at your table. Afterwards, head to the Tivoli's Sky Bar for a rooftop cocktail and hang out with the city's fashionistas.

Kitted out like an old chemist, the

decor of concept restaurant Pharmacia is as unique as the dishes. OK! loved the roasted goats' cheese salad with mango sorbet and pica-pau sirloin strips and pickles.

For panoramic city views, dine at the eclectic Insólito restaurant in Bairro Alto. Part of the experience is accessing the roof garden in a

Head to the Sky Bar at the Tivoli Avenida Liberdade for drinks



century-old lift that fits just three people.

Chef José Avillez has several restaurants in the city, with OK! visiting his more informal Cantinho do Avillez. We loved the Farinheira sausage and flaked cod with 'exploding' olives!

Known as the city of seven hills, you're never far from a breathtaking view during a trip to Lisbon – but there are most definitely more than seven reasons to visit.

The capital of Portugal, historic Lisbon sits on the mouth of the Tagus River and is one of Europe's oldest cities, with a wealth of Moorish and medieval landmarks. It's certainly not all about sightseeing, though. One of the best aspects of this city is you never know what you're going to stumble upon next – one minute you feel as if you've landed on the set of *Game Of Thrones* as you wander around the Gothic Belém district, and the next you're starring in *Pretty Woman* shopping for designer labels on Avenida da Liberdade.

OK!'s Lisa Marks set out to discover the best of this lively city, which is less than a three-hour flight from the UK...

WHERE CAN I STAY?

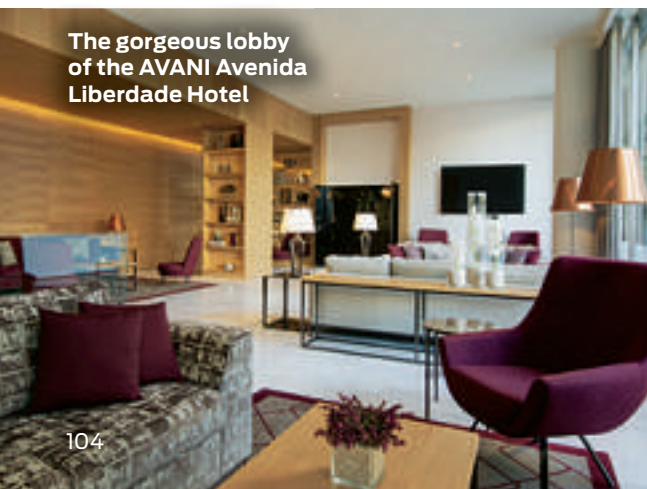
OK! checked into the stylish AVANI Avenida Liberdade Hotel, located within walking distance of the bustling Bairro Alto and Chiado districts. Having recently undergone a refurbishment, the hotel is now as fashionable as the nearby designer

shops. Relaxation is king, with a gorgeous lobby featuring fabulous floral displays, retro furniture and an espresso machine for that pre-sightseeing caffeine fix. The 119 rooms have been decorated in subtle plum and cream tones, featuring huge marshmallow-soft beds. But the jewel in the hotel's crown is the Olivier restaurant, with its delicious Mediterranean menu which features strong Portuguese flavours (the black truffle linguine, mini chicken pies and beef carpaccio were all incredible).

WHICH STARS WILL I SEE?

Footballer Cristiano Ronaldo started his career playing for Sporting Lisbon and owns a penthouse near the Avenida da Liberdade, while Manchester United boss José Mourinho is a regular visitor and has a home in Setúbal, where he grew up. Madonna has reportedly moved to the city so that her son David Banda can follow his dream of a footballing career. It's thought he's joined Benfica's youth academy, with the star reportedly buying a £7 million 19th century rural idyll just outside the capital. Meanwhile, Victoria Beckham has dined at the city's Bica do Sapato restaurant, while husband David visited the city recently for a H&M photoshoot.

The gorgeous lobby of the AVANI Avenida Liberdade Hotel



Take a tram to Alfama, the city's historic quarter





WHERE CAN I SHOP?

If you're splashing the cash, you can't go far wrong with the tree-lined Avenida da Liberdade. Among Prada and Gucci, you'll also find High Street names such as Mango and Zara. This main thoroughfare has been styled on the Champs-Élysées and is dotted with cafés, fountains and statues. Or head to the Príncipe Real neighbourhood and the Ribeiro de Cunha Palace, which houses the Embaixada Shopping Gallery. Here you'll find a gin bar, local designers and lovely ceramics, all with a Portuguese twist.



For more unusual purchases, the hip LX Factory

is a must. This industrial estate is now a thriving artistic community, bursting with fashion, street art, galleries, restaurants and eclectic shops.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Room rates at the AVANI Avenida Liberdade Lisbon Hotel (www.minorhotels.com/en/avani/lisbon) start from £116 for a double room, based on a B&B basis.

Monarch (www.monarch.co.uk) operates year-round flights to Lisbon from Birmingham, London Gatwick and Manchester airports with fares, including tax, from £42 one way. **OK!**

FOR MORE ON LISBON, SEE WWW.VISITLISBOA.COM.

FOR MORE ON THE TUK TUK TOURS, SEE WWW.ECOTUKTOURS.COM AND FOR THE GUIDED WALKING TOURS, VISIT LISBOAAUTENTICA.COM/EN.

REPORT BY LISA MARKS EDITED BY ANNABEL MACKIE, OK! TRAVEL EDITOR 5 OF THE BEST AND TRAVELLER'S TALES BY NANCY BROWN PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALAMY, GETTY IMAGES

5 OF THE BEST TRAVEL ESSENTIALS



1 JAM AUDIO ULTRA EARBUDS, £99, uk.jamaudio.com. Say goodbye to tangled earphones with these wireless beauties – great for the plane!

2 HAVAIANAS ORIGINE SLIM, £32, www.havaianas-store.com/en. The flip flop brand branches out into espadrilles, in a variety of colours and with a removable strap.

3 TAIKKA ANANAS+ CLUTCH, £95, www.taikka.com. We love this totally tropical vegan-friendly bag, made from the waste of pineapple leaves.

4 YOU ME THE DREAM DRIFTER ROUND PATTERNED TOWEL, £50, www.notonthehighstreet.com. Because rectangular beach towels are so last year!

5 SOMFY ONE, £229, www.somfy.co.uk. Enjoy peace of mind as you jet off with this smart alarm system. Easy to install, you can monitor your home via your phone from anywhere in the world.

TRAVELLER'S TALES

LORRAINE KELLY

THE TV HOST ON HER EPIC ADVENTURE AND CHRISTMAS ABROAD

What's your most precious family holiday memory?

My brother lives in the Far East and we've had some great family times there. He's got a place in Bali and we've had lots of lovely family Christmases there. He insists on doing turkey, which is very difficult to get hold of out there!

What are your top packing tips?

I was off on an expedition to Antarctica recently and you've got to take a lot of stuff, but I discovered these things that are like a vacuum – you put all your stuff in and you suck out the air and you can get five times the amount of stuff in your case.

How do you spend your time on holiday?

I'll sunbathe for half a day and then I'll get antsy, so I like to visit

places where there's lots going on – that's why I loved Antarctica so much, because we followed Sir Ernest Shackleton's journey and it was a real adventure. I even went swimming in the sea. I had a bikini on and ran into the ocean and then ran back out again – it was freezing! I like to experience the culture of a place. The more you travel, the more you realise that we're all just the same. The food and the language might be different, but we've got more in common than what divides us.

Where are you off to next?

I'm going to Singapore for two weeks – my daughter Rosie lives there now. Singapore is like Asia for beginners. If you want to go somewhere really safe and experience it, it's just lovely.



LORRAINE'S LATEST COLLECTION FOR JD WILLIAMS IS AVAILABLE NOW AT WWW.JDWILLIAMS.CO.UK