

Discover Jewish Heritage of Portugal 2022



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DAY 1, Sunday Oct 23: USA / Lisbon

Depart your home city to Newark (New Jersey) to board the overnight flight to Lisbon, Portugal.

DAY 2, Monday Oct 24: Arrive Lisbon (Presentation & Old City Tour)

Welcome to Lisbon, Portugal's Capital City. Lisbon's history revolves around its strategic geographical position at the mouth of the Tagus, the longest river in the Iberian Peninsula. Its spacious and sheltered natural harbor made the city historically an important seaport for trade between the Mediterranean Sea and northern Europe, serving as a strategic meeting-place for different peoples. Important Jewish communities settled in this region and contributed to the flourishing of its trade and culture.

Meeting services upon arrival and transfer to the Dom Pedro Palace, a five-star luxury



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Lisbon hotel, strategically situated in Amoreiras, the heart of the city. Modern architecture and classic décor contribute to the special beauty of The Dom Pedro Palace, offering uninterrupted views of the city of Lisbon including the Tagus River, the famous bridges, the castle of São Jorge and its skyline. This afternoon an orientation welcome presentation by Dr. Rabbi Peter Tarlow, PhD., a world-renowned speaker and authority on Sephardic and Crypto-Jewish history and works in conjunction with universities around the world to lecture on Sephardic history and culture. He also lectures on the impact of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions on both European and American Jewry.

This afternoon we take a walking tour of the Jewish quarters. We begin at Baixa, traditionally the financial and commercial center of the city, whose parallel streets run into the vast Praca do Comercio the former Terreiro do Pap, where Dom Manuel I (who reigned from 1495 to 1521) built the royal palace. In this square, flanked by the river on one of its sides, is a beautiful statue of Dom Jose I on horseback. This part of the city was partially destroyed by a violent earthquake on 1 November 1755. From its ruins was to rise the area known as the Baixa Pombalina, so called because its reconstruction was carried out under the auspices of, the Prime Minister of Dom Jose I Marques de Pombal. By ordering these new streets of sober monumentality to be laid out at right angles to one another in the form of a grid, he was to change the face of Lisbon.

At the time when the Jews were expelled from Portugal in 1496, there were two important Jewish quarters in this area: the Judiaria Grande, close to the present-day church of Sao Nicolau, in the street of the same name, and the Judiaria Pequena, created during the reign of Dom Dinis (1279-1325), in the place where the Bank of Portugal stands today, in a street parallel to the Praca do Comercio. To the east, in Rua da Alfandega, is the Igreja da Conceicao Velha, a church which some authors consider having been built on an old synagogue and is itself remarkable for its richly carved Manueline doorway. A little further ahead is the dos Bicos, one of the most interesting architectural curiosities remaining from the time of the Discoveries, with its original facade of diamond-shaped stones. There are yet other urban and monumental areas in the city that are linked to the history of the Jews



in Portugal: the Praca Dom Pedro better known as Rossio, where the Court of the Inquisition was held in the Palacio dos Estaus, at the site where the Dona Maria national theatre now stands, built in the 19th century.

Continue our tour in Alfama (Judaiaria). Alfama is one of the oldest districts of Lisbon and is a delightful maze of narrow cobbled streets and ancient houses, which lead up the steep hill from the Tejo Estuary to the castle. This district is home to historic buildings including the Se Cathedral, the Castle, the National Pantheon and Saint Anthony's Church.

This evening a welcome dinner at the hotel.

Overnight and dinner at the Dom Pedro Palace Hotel. (D)

DAY 3, Tuesday Oct 25: Lisbon (City, Sintra, Cabo de Roca, Estoril, Cascais)

Today we tour Lisbon's environs. First stop medieval Sintra, a resort town in the foothills of Portugal's Sintra Mountains, boasting a forested terrain and studded with



pastel-colored villas and palaces and former summer resort of Portugal's monarchy. Here we visit the Moorish- and Manueline-style Sintra National Palace distinguished by dramatic twin chimneys and elaborate timework. The hilltop 19th-century Pena National Palace is known for its design and views. Following lunch, we stop at Cabo da Roca. It is a wild and rugged headland marking mainland Europe's most westerly point. The

windswept cliffs of Cabo de Roca were believed to be the edge of the world up until the up until the late 14th century and the desolate scenery adds to the allure of the location.

Our tour continues as we make our way to Cascais, Lisbon's coastline and popular holiday destination. Historically, Cascais was a fishing village, until King Luís I (1838 - 1889) choose it as his royal summer retreat. Trailing the Portuguese nobility were the high society of Portugal, who in turn constructed lavish villas, ornate mansions and



exquisite gardens. Today, Cascais is an elegant fusion of decorative 19th-century architecture, and during the summer it is a bustling resort, with a buzzing holiday atmosphere. The Jewish Community first appeared and became organized in Cascais when Pedro I declared the town independent in 1364. Many residents were accused of Judaism, heresy and apostasy throughout the years. Cascais played host to important Jewish personalities not only within the backdrop of Inquisition or of groups of Sephardim Jews who had settled in Portugal, but more particularly during the 1930s and 1940s.

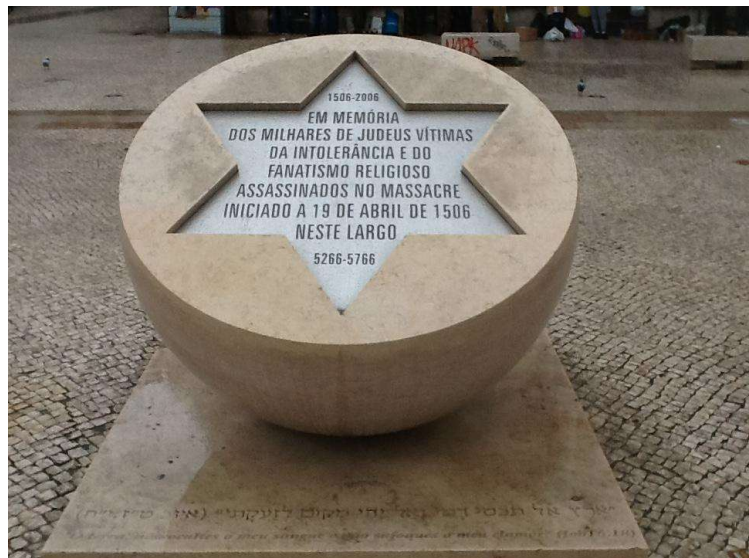
Next, we head to the palm-lined promenades of neighboring Estoril. With one of Europe's great 19th century hotels, famous as the setting for James Bond's "Casino Royale," it is a magnet for World War II history buffs. Portugal was neutral and ideally located for spirited people out of war-torn Europe, and Estoril was a meeting ground and listening post full of international spies, counterspies, couriers, and freedom fighters of the Resistance.

This afternoon we are back in Lisbon to tour more of the historical Jewish sites of Lisbon. Along the way you will discover artifacts, inscriptions, and monuments that no other Jewish tours of Lisbon can access. In May of 2012 a sensational discovery by Archaeologists of Jena University revealed Hebrew inscriptions on stone that point to Jewish people residing in Portugal as early as 390 C.E. However, some Biblical Archaeologists believe that Tartessian texts found in Southern Portugal in 1922

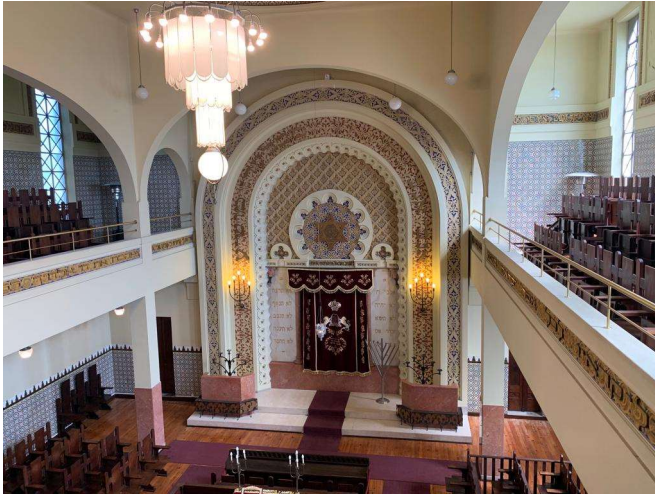
suggests a Jewish presence dating to the time of King Solomon. Walking through the side streets of Lisbon our guide and historian will explain these recent findings and unveil hidden elements in the architecture, explaining the influence of great Jewish sages like The Abravanel- a philosopher and statesman, and Abraham Zucato who altered the course of the Age of Discovery.

The Jews of Portugal throughout history held social and political

ranks with the favor of kings, and conciliatory relations between Muslims and Christians alike. However, these periods were equally marked by inquisitions, forced baptisms and brutal massacres. On this tour we will also discover the amazing story of Crypto-Jews, (Cristão-Novos) a distinctive sub-group of Sephardim in Portugal who survived over 400 years of persecution. At the site of the Inquisitors Palace, we learn



little known facts about the Portuguese Inquisition and the controversy of the Marquis of Pombal whose authority destroyed Jewish heritage but saved lives at the same time.



Next we visit the Lisbon Synagogue, called Shaaré Tikvah (Gates of Hope) is a historical synagogue in Lisbon. This morning we visit the synagogue in the São Mamede quarter of Lisbon. Opened in 1904, the temple is indistinguishable from the street, built at a time when it was forbidden for any faith or religion other than the Catholic Church to be openly

visible. Its construction combines Roman, Byzantine, and Romantic elements and is austere in style, with the temple built facing in the direction of Jerusalem.

Overnight and dinner at the Dom Pedro Palace Hotel. (B,D)

Day 4, Oct 26 Wednesday: Lisbon / Tomar / Castelo de Vide / Belmonte

This morning we depart Lisbon making our way towards Tomar, a small historic village 145 kilometers north of Lisbon, an interesting regional that was a strong hold for the Knights Templar religious order. The remains of their fortress and a monastery are still intact and open as a museum. Buried away in one of the narrow streets of the old Jewish quarter rests the oldest existing synagogue in Portugal dating back to 1438. After the forced conversions that followed in 1496; the synagogue was used as a prison, a church, a hayloft and finally a warehouse. In 1921 the building was declared a national monument and in 1939 the owner, Samuel Schwartz donated it to the state for use as a museum. A mikveh was discovered next door during excavations of the outbuilding in 1985. A prosperous Jewish community developed here back in the 14th and 15th centuries in what is called "the lower town", or town below. We will visit the Abraham Zacuto Museum (Abraham Zacuto was a famous Spanish astronomer, astrologer, mathematician, rabbi, and historian who served as Royal Astronomer in the 15th century to King John II of Portugal). The Museum displays numerous ancient tablets, gravestones, texts, and artifacts showing all aspects of Jewish life in ancient Portugal.



Next, we visit Castelo de Vide is a picturesque village in the district of Portalegre, with an ancient and perennial past, with origins at the top of an elevation of Serra de São Mamede. Castelo de Vide is marked by the Restoration war, according to the walls and ramparts surrounding it; many military personnel from other countries settled here throughout the first decade of the 19th century. The oldest built heritage in the village is essentially of Moorish and Christian origin. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are represented by several examples of civil and religious architecture. Easter festivities are the most characteristic events, by mixing it with Jewish rites. The gardens, huge, cultivated acres, town corners, house style, manors, fountains and the marks of the past are the traits that characterize Castelo de Vide.

On a hill side facing to East and adjoining to the old medieval part was the Jewish quarter from Castelo de Vide. Meander along narrow sidewalks which go from "Porta da Vila", in the Castle, to "Fonte da Vila", in everything equal from those who form the remaining medieval nucleus. The urban area for the Jewry from Castelo de Vide grew, fundamentally, from the streets "Fonte", "Mercado", "Arçário", "Mestre Jorge", "Judaria", "Ruinha da Judaria", the current "Rua dos Serralheiros" and "Rua Nova". The extent of this space can be understood due to of the proximity to the Castilian border.



The Jews who lived within the walls of the little hilltop town of Castelo de Vide were engaged in the traditional activities of commerce, crafts, and sometimes medicine. The Spain edict from 1492, promulgated by the Catholic Kings, Fernando and Isabel, caused a massive displacement of Jewish families seeking to escape Spain and many if not most crossed in Portugal along the border in this region. The Jewish population grew after 1492 with the arrival of Jews from Spain. The former Judaria is fairly easy to identify around the market square (Praço de Comércio). Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries the characteristic little streets led to the small synagogue. A niche, used as a church altar in the seventeenth century, might be a vestige of the aron kodesh. The municipality is currently conducting research into this movingly simple building. Continue to Belmont for overnight.

Overnight and dinner at Pousada Convento das Lagrimas. (B,D)



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Day 5, Oct 27 Thursday: Belmonte / Guarda / Coimbra

This morning we tour Belmonte, situated in the remote and beautiful region of Portugal is rich in the history and traditions. A foundation stone dated 1297 was discovered of a synagogue showing there has been a Jewish community with a long history. It was 'discovered' in 1917 by Samuel Schwartz a Galician mining engineer. Thinking they were the only remaining Jews they only believed Schwarz was a Jew when he recited the Shema Yisrael, and they recognized the name "Adonay".

They had maintained their Jewish identity for over four hundred years by marrying mainly among themselves and adhering to the belief in a single personal Deity who would redeem his people at the end of days. They practiced some Jewish observances, the Sabbath and some holidays. They often lit candles on Friday night where they could not be seen from outside and observed Passover and Yom Kippur a day or two before or after the Jewish calendar date to confuse the Inquisition.

Next, we drive to Guarda where we will visit the ancient Jewish Quarter or "Judaria" dating back to the 12th century. In the 13th century it was moved inside the city walls. It is one of the oldest Jewish Communities in Portugal. It was a very dynamic one, giving to Guarda's population all kind of services, from craftsmen to medical support. The houses in the "Judaria" usually have two floors. The ground one, used for commerce



and the upper floor used for habitation purposes. Also, very interesting are the two doors, a large one for the business and a narrow one for the family.

We make our way to Coimbra. Rising from the Rio Mondego, Coimbra is a city steeped in history. It was Portugal's medieval capital for more than a

century and its home to the country's oldest and most prestigious university. Its historic center dates to Moorish times and offers a unique atmosphere with its dark cobbled lanes and monumental cathedrals. On summer evenings, the city's old stone



walls reverberate with the haunting metallic notes of the guitarra (Portuguese guitar) and the full, deep voices of fado singers. The city is at its best during university term time when the students bring a youthful energy to the streets, thronging bars and partying late into the weekend. Their presence also adds a political edge - witness the graffiti scrawled outside the republic as (communal student dwellings) addressing the political issues of the day. Time permitting, we will visit the university's famous "Biblioteca Joanina" library, dating back to the 18th century, it was designated as one of the most beautiful libraries in the world.

Overnight and dinner at Hotel Quinta das Lagrimas. (B,D)

Day 6, Oct 28 Friday: Coimbra / Aveiro / Oporto – Shabbat eve

We depart to Aveiro, often dubbed as 'The Portuguese Venice', a charming city crossed by a channel, where colored Moliceiros boats navigate and with buildings in pastel shades of Art Nouveau style. The traditional sweet is Ovos Moles which are presented in different shapes, and the Tripas from Aveiro.

The saltworks from Aveiro are among the most well-known saltworks in Portugal, and here we can learn how the salt appears and is extracted. There are those who say that the Salt Worker is lazy because he lives from what nature gives him. But the wisdom of the Salt Worker lies in being capable of relating the salted water, the wind, the sun and the rain, the clayey muds, the seaweed, and the wood of the tools, creating what once was the great engine of the world economy, salt.

We continue to Oporto and the Sheraton Porto Hotel & SPA for a Friday night Shabbat Dinner.

Overnight Sheraton Porto Hotel & SPA. (B,D)



Day 7, Oct 29 Saturday: Porto Shabbat

Today is free to relax and take in the Shabbat in Porto with the Jewish community. The synagogue is beautiful and was renovated recently by the community. The synagogue may be visited by appointment only. There are amazing stories behind this synagogue and the community is now rebuilding its roots. We will visit the Kadoorie Mekor Haim Synagogue, the largest Synagogue in the Iberian Peninsula and one of the largest in Europe. Built with donations from Jews from all over the world, it was inaugurated in 1938, at a time when Synagogues were being burned in Germany.

Overnight Sheraton Porto Hotel & SPA. (B,D)

Day 8, Oct 30 Sunday: Full day Porto

Today we tour Porto, a city that once enjoyed a thriving Jewish community of



merchants. Many Jewish merchants had their offices along the Porto riverfront in the Ribeira area along the Rua da Alfandega. Another Jewish community once flourished at the Rua Monte dos Judeus, where in 1826 an important ancient Hebrew plaque was unearthed. Recently, the main synagogue for the Jewish quarter was discovered during renovations on an ancient building. Behind a

false wall, workers stumbled onto an ark thought to be from the 15th century. We will visit once again visit the Kadoorie Mekor Haim Synagogue and nearby Jewish Museum. This Synagogue is a singular architectural monument, and one of the most extraordinary places of Jewish worship in the world. It is also the headquarters and "heart" of the Jewish Community of Oporto, which was founded in 1923 by Captain Barros Basto, who became known in the Jewish world for trying to rescue the descendants of the Jews who were forced to convert in the 15th century and who continued to practice, in secret, certain precepts of the Jewish religion.

Overnight Sheraton Porto Hotel & SPA. (B,D)



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Day 9, Oct 31 Monday: Full Day Excursion to Douro Valley

The Douro is one of the major rivers of the Iberian Peninsula, flowing from its source near Duruelo de la Sierra in Soria Province across northern-central Spain and Portugal to its outlet at Porto.

The Douro Wine Region is the oldest demarcated wine region in the world, dating from the 18th century. The amazing landscape of the vineyards in the slopes is unique and the reason why the landscape is considered to be UNESCO world heritage.

Our tour begins with a visit to a Port wine producer. There will be a personalized guided tour on the vineyards where the process of making the Port wine will be explained. The wine tasting will be accompanied by a careful selection of Portuguese cheeses.



Lunch will be served in a typical Portuguese restaurant and will be given the choice of meat, fish or vegetarian.

The second winery is a small table wine producer. The visit will be private to the group where the guide will give more importance in explaining the difference between premium wines and the different ways of winemaking. The visit ends with an olive oil tasting. Evening Farewell Dinner and discussion.

Overnight and dinner Sheraton Porto Hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 10, Nov 01 Tuesday: Departure

Transfer to the airport for the flight home. (B)



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