

PORTUGAL JEWISH HERITAGE KOSHER JOURNEY



March 7–14, 2027

Visiting: Lisbon • Sintra • Tomar • Castelo de Vide • Belmonte • Trancoso • Porto

Kosher meals throughout (breakfast, box lunch and dinner)

DAY 1, Sunday March 07: USA / Lisbon

Depart your home city for the overnight flight to Lisbon, Portugal.

Overnight: Flight – International Airfare Not Included.

DAY 2, Monday March 08: Arrive Lisbon – Old City & Jewish Heritage

Welcome to **Lisbon**, Portugal's historic capital and one of Europe's great crossroads of Jewish history. Upon arrival this morning, you will be met by our local tour escort and begin your exploration of this fascinating city.

Lisbon was once home to one of the largest and most important Jewish communities in medieval Portugal. Jewish merchants, scholars, physicians and financiers played an important role in the city's commercial and intellectual life. The community was centered in several Jewish quarters, including the *Judiaria Grande*, until the forced conversion of Portugal's Jews in 1497 brought an end to organized Jewish life.

We will explore the historic **Alfama District**, one of Lisbon's oldest neighborhoods, with its narrow streets, historic buildings and remnants of the city's medieval past. We will visit the

area of the former Jewish quarter, including **Rua da Judiaria**, or "Jews' Street," and learn about the Jewish community that once lived and worked in this part of the city.

We will also visit a historic synagogue and learn about the revival of Jewish life in Portugal in the modern era. Our exploration will include **Rossio Square** and the memorial commemorating the victims of the tragic **1506 Lisbon Massacre**, when hundreds of New Christians and suspected Jews were murdered.

As we explore Lisbon, we begin to uncover the remarkable story of Portuguese Jewry—a story of flourishing communities, persecution, forced conversion, survival and, ultimately, renewal.

In the evening, gather for a **Welcome Kosher Dinner**.

Overnight: Dom Pedro Lisboa Hotel (L,D)

DAY 3, Tuesday March 09: Sintra • Cascais • Estoril

After a kosher breakfast, we depart Lisbon for a full-day excursion along Portugal's spectacular Atlantic coast.

Our first destination is **Sintra**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its magnificent palaces, gardens and dramatic mountain landscape. Once a favorite summer retreat of Portugal's royal family, Sintra today is one of the country's most beautiful and atmospheric destinations. We will stroll through the historic center and enjoy the unique character of this picturesque town.

We continue to **Cascais**, a charming coastal town that developed from a traditional fishing village into one of Portugal's most elegant seaside destinations. We will have time to explore its historic center and enjoy the beautiful Atlantic setting.

Cascais and neighboring **Estoril** also have an important connection to the Jewish refugee story of the Second World War. During the years of Nazi persecution, Portugal became a refuge and transit point for thousands of Jews fleeing Europe. Estoril and the surrounding coastal communities became temporary homes for refugees, including prominent Jewish families and individuals seeking safety before continuing to other countries.

This experience provides an important connection between Portugal's medieval Jewish history and its role as a refuge for Jews fleeing Nazi Europe.

Return to Lisbon in the late afternoon.

Overnight: Dom Pedro Lisboa Hotel (B,L,D)

DAY 4, Wednesday March 10: Lisbon • Tomar • Castelo de Vide • Covilhã • Belmonte

Today we leave Lisbon and travel into the historic interior of Portugal, where some of the country's most remarkable Jewish heritage has survived.

Our first destination is **Tomar**, a city famous for its association with the Knights Templar and home to one of the most important surviving remnants of medieval Jewish Portugal.

Here we will visit the remarkable **15th-century synagogue**, one of the best-preserved medieval synagogues on the Iberian Peninsula. The building now houses the **Abraham Zacuto Portuguese-Jewish Museum**, named for the renowned Jewish astronomer and mathematician whose astronomical tables contributed to Portugal's Age of Discovery.

We continue to **Castelo de Vide**, one of the most beautiful historic towns in Portugal and home to one of the country's best-preserved former Jewish quarters. We will walk through the narrow medieval streets of the *Judiaria*, learning about the Jewish families who lived here and the community that existed before the forced conversion of Portuguese Jewry.

Our journey continues through **Covilhã**, a historic mountain town with important Jewish heritage connections and evidence of a Jewish presence dating back centuries.

We then arrive in **Belmonte**, home to one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of Portuguese Jewry.

Following the forced conversion of Portugal's Jews in 1497, Jewish families in Belmonte continued to preserve elements of Jewish tradition in secret, passing customs and beliefs from generation to generation despite the danger of the Inquisition.

Overnight: Pousada Convento de Belmonte (B,L,D)

DAY 5, Thursday March 11: Belmonte • Trancoso • Porto

This morning we explore **Belmonte**, whose Jewish story is unlike almost anywhere else in Europe.

For centuries, descendants of forcibly converted Portuguese Jews maintained elements of Jewish practice in secret. Their story remained largely unknown to the outside Jewish world until the 20th century, when the community was rediscovered and began reconnecting with Judaism and the wider Jewish people.

We will visit the **Belmonte Jewish Museum**, which presents the history and traditions of this extraordinary community, followed by a visit to the local synagogue. We will learn about the community's survival, rediscovery and continuing Jewish identity.

We then travel to **Trancoso**, an important medieval center that was also home to a significant Jewish community. We will walk through the historic Jewish quarter and visit the **Isaac Cardoso Jewish Culture Interpretation Center**, dedicated to the history and legacy of Trancoso's Jewish community and to Isaac Cardoso, the prominent Jewish physician and philosopher born here who later lived in Amsterdam.

We continue north to **Porto**, Portugal's second city and one of the country's most important historic Jewish centers.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza Porto Hotel (B,L,D)

DAY 6, Friday March 12: Porto – Jewish Heritage & Shabbat

Today we explore the remarkable Jewish heritage of **Porto**, where Jewish life existed for centuries before the establishment of the Portuguese kingdom.

Porto's former Jewish quarters remain visible in the historic center, including streets associated with *Monte dos Judeus*, or "Jews' Hill." Jewish merchants conducted business along the riverfront, while synagogues and Jewish institutions once served a vibrant community.

We will visit the magnificent **Kadoorie-Mekor Haim Synagogue**, one of the largest synagogues on the Iberian Peninsula and an important center of Jewish life in modern Portugal. The synagogue was officially inaugurated in 1938 and is closely associated with **Captain Artur Barros Basto**, who founded the Jewish community of Porto in 1923 and devoted his life to reconnecting descendants of Portuguese Jews who had been forcibly converted centuries earlier.

We will also visit the **Holocaust Museum of Oporto**, which presents the history of the Holocaust and the experience of Jewish refugees who passed through Portugal during the Second World War.

Our exploration continues through Porto's historic center, including the **Ribeira District**, the Douro River waterfront and other important landmarks.

Return to the hotel in preparation for Shabbat.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza Porto Hotel (B,L,D)

DAY 7, Saturday March 13: Shabbat in Porto

Today is dedicated to **Shabbat in Porto**, providing an opportunity to experience Jewish life in this historic city.

Guests may participate in **Shabbat services at the local synagogue** and enjoy a kosher Shabbat lunch. The afternoon will be free for relaxation, personal exploration or simply enjoying the atmosphere of Porto.

Shabbat provides a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the journey through Portugal—from the medieval Jewish communities that once flourished throughout the country, to the families who preserved their traditions in secret, to the renewal of Jewish life in Portugal today.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza Porto Hotel (B,L,D)

DAY 8, Sunday March 14: Porto / USA

Following breakfast transfer to the airport for departure back home (B)