

# **Portugal, Spain & the Douro River Valley**

## **Apr 23 - May 7, 2022**

### **4/23-24**

Left LAX about 6 pm from Tom Bradley International Terminal for 11 hour flight to Madrid, Spain. Clear views flying west seeing ships and Rancho Palos Verdes before heading northeast. Saw the sunset and sunrise. We had little sleep on the airplane but seats reclined flat.

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/tom-maverick/y7bcX6>

Arrived about 2:15 pm after seeing snow on mountains and roundabouts on roads. Transferred to airplane and Porto, Portugal. Uniworld met us and others about 6 pm for bus transfer to the boat SS São Gabriel. Tested negative on Covid test because our initial test was taken over 3 days ago.

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/tom-maverick/408MCH>

### **4/24**

Relaxing day to adjust to 8 hours time difference. Fuel costs about 2 Euros/liter (~ \$7.88/gallon). Porto has many bridges and hills.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzM287>

### **4/25**

Started bus tour of Porto and the area. Iron Bridge designed by Gustave Eiffel. He built Eiffel Tower after the

bridge here. A student of his did another bridge here. Many narrow streets common with graffiti. [Palácio da Bolsa](#)<sup>1</sup> was the commerce center with beautiful artistry, first telegraph, Eiffel room, exquisite flooring, gold ceiling, varnished stucco to look like wood, jigsaw table, Arabian room.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPCEt>

Also saw a non-typical McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Burger King, Starbucks, etc. I missed photo of electric streetcar. Hospital is modern looking, and children play in the park. A Harry Potter bookstore has quite a crowd wanting in. Medieval enclosure in 11th-12th century highlights UNESCO site of Cathedral Hill. Tour guide points out the arrow windows in church and the pillory. Nearby we see fake ravens on the porch railings for deterring doves. The São Bento train station has beautiful blue mosaics showing history.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPEri>

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<sup>1</sup> From Wikipedia:

The interior of the Palace, only finished in 1910, was magnificently decorated by several artists. The central courtyard (Nations' Courtyard - *Pátio das Nações*) is covered by a large metallic, octagonal [dome](#) with glass panels, designed by Tomás Soler and built after 1880. The lower part of the dome is decorated with the painted coats-of-arms of Portugal and the countries with which Portugal had commercial relations in the 19th century. To the back of the courtyard, a sumptuous stairway, built in 1868 by Gonçalves e Sousa, leads to the upper storeys and is adorned with busts by celebrated sculptors [António Soares dos Reis](#) and [António Teixeira Lopes](#). The ceiling frescoes were painted by António Ramalho.

Several rooms of the Palace - Tribunal Room, Assembly Room, Golden Room - display furniture by José Marques da Silva, allegoric paintings by [José Maria Veloso Salgado](#) and [João Marques de Oliveira](#), sculptures by Teixeira Lopes and many other works of art. The highlight of the Palace is, however, the Arab Room, built between 1862 and 1880 by Gonçalves e Sousa. The room is decorated in the exotic [Moorish Revival](#) style, fashionable in the 19th century, and is used as reception hall for personalities and heads of state visiting Porto.

**4/26**

Douro Museum on hill above the docked ship. A few years ago flooding occurred halfway up the hill. At the museum they played videos showing landscaping for growing the vines. Yellow on my map show prime area. Small boats transported barrels to Porto for aging. Years ago the river was less navigable and ropes were used to move the rabello boats. There were no modern tools to build the wall and plant vines. We had lunch in the wine cellar of Quinta da Pacheca.

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/tom-maverick/ik6xA2>

**4/27**

Beautiful day. Olive oil processing with smoke. Train parallels the river. Passed other ships going opposite way. Another lock (there were 5 on this trip). Butlers opened champagne bottles with sabers. Arrived at Castelo Rodrigo, a historic village. Viewed the pillory and cistern (see Mikvé). Free almond tasting with different flavors.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPDCq>

**4/28**

All day bus trip to Salamanca, Spain.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPMX1>

The evening aboard ship included Flamenco show.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPMKt>

**4/29**

Trip to a prestigious Port wine estate, Quinta de Seixo.  
Ship docked at Peso da Régua.  
<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPPir>

#### **4/30**

Went through the deepest lock in Europe (115 feet). Enjoy the video of the exit. Also toured Guimarães City, home to first King of Portugal and birthplace of Henry the Navigator. Docked at V. N. Gaia.  
<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPT13>

#### **5/1**

Departed the ship for a bus trip to Lisbon. Stopped at Óbidos on the way. Arrived at the 5-star Hotel Corinthia. We noticed that neighbors hang their laundry out to dry.  
<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPTJT>

#### **5/2**

Tour of Lisbon and Belém. Biplane commemorates 100 years of Naval Aviation. Nearby Belém Tower (Tower of Saint Vincent) served as point of embarking & debarking Portuguese explorers. Monument to the Discoveries celebrates Age of Exploration in 15th & 16th centuries. Figures are led by Henry the Navigator and include Vasco da Gama and Bartolomew Dias. Viewed the suspension bridge connecting Lisbon to Almada with the Sanctuary of Christ the King monument. Stopped at Jerónimo's Monastery. Central Lisbon was virtually destroyed by

earthquake, tsunami and fire in 1755. It was rebuilt looking like the older city.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPVkb>

### **5/3-7**

Tested positive for COVID which delayed our return home. Stayed in the hotel with room service. Left for Lisbon airport at 1:30am (*5:30pm Tucson time*) for flight that left at 5:20am for Frankfurt, Germany. Arrived on time and bus took us to terminal to await next flight. Bussed back to another airplane which left at 1:30pm and arrived at Denver, Colorado at 4:30pm (*note the 11 hour flight with time change*). Routed over London, Dublin, south coast of Greenland and Canada.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzPWwy>

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Everyone was masked especially on the ship and airplanes.

Smoking is common.

There is no HIPAA Privacy.

Drivers are polite and observant of pedestrians.

Everyone in the country is very happy, even the workers unloading food supplies.

Food aboard airplanes was great. I must get Edinger Wheat Beer.