

Estate Guide

A day on the estate: where to go and what to do

As I strongly believe in the importance of local tips when away from home, here's a list I've put together for you of what to do and see on the estate and around it, as well as where to eat. As you'll probably be able to guess from the recommendations I just love restaurants!

The restaurant Pont' a Pé in Aljezur is marvellous and well worth a visit! Typical Portuguese food, very well done and the owner is the best host ever. Ask him for tips on wine and he'll help you out! Tel +351 282 998 104.

Aljezur is about 15 km South from us and there is, besides the beautiful old part of the town, a couple of churches, a fort which was the last one in Portugal to be re-conquered from the arabs and a few small museums worth visiting. The house museum of painter José Cercas and the sacred art museum next to the church of Misericórdia are two examples.

Lovers of vegetarian and vegan food; don't miss Moagem in the historic part of Aljezur. Offering healthy food and cultural space, it's well worth a visit by everyone.

Azenha do Mar, some 5 km North from Odeceixe, has a rustic but great Marisqueira (sea food restaurant, the only restaurant in the fishing village) Order Santola or Sapateira (huge crabs, way better than lobsters), ameijoas (clams in garlic, wine and cilantro sauce) and percebes (barnacles, ask how to eat them if you've never tried!), it's all to die for! Accompanied by bread, the portuguese way. You have to go on odd hours (basically before 19.30 for dinner and before 12.30 for lunch) as this restaurant gets very full and waiting for a table for an hour is never nice... Tel +351 282 947 297

Best fish around according to me is robalo and dourada, two species fished by line just by the shore.

Restaurante Chaparro in the center of Odeceixe has good grilled food and some typical portuguese dishes. Then there is Restaurante Gabão a bit higher up in Odeceixe, below the church. In both you can choose if you want to sit outside or inside.

The Odeceixe church is simple but very special to us, as we got married there and baptized our children at the same time in July 2013. The only marriage that year!

At the top of Odeceixe, on the street going up from the wind mill, is the small restaurant Assador Altinho, where the food is top! THE best steak you can get on this coast! The owners are the same as for the hotel Casas do Moinho close by, the restaurant is run by chef Hugo Nascimento.

During the summer the wind mill is open for visits, for whoever is interested in knowing how this cute little land mark looks on the inside!

Supermarkets: you have a small fish and vegetable/fruit market in the center of Odeceixe, open Monday to Saturday until one o'clock. If you want a real supermarket I recommend Intermarché in Aljezur, 15 km to the South. Aljezur has, besides the supermarket, a more picturesque fish/fruit/vegetable market than Odeceixe.

The Odeceixe beach is incredible, with the river reaching the ocean. High rocks and cliffs dive into the ocean on both sides of the beach, and thanks to this incredible scenario Praia de Odeceixe won the award for being the most beautiful cliff beach in Portugal. You'll have to go there at least once! You have a couple of surf schools which use this beach quite often, and if you don't need the instructor you can rent a surf board, SUP or canoe on the beach.

Beach bars are open only in the high season months. You have a café/bar called Agapito and, a bit further down, you have another one, Esplanada do Mar, facing the beach. Both serve things like fresh juices, sandwiches and burgers. Agapito has a really good selection of wine, served by the glass or bottle, and selections of ham, presunto (Portugal's prosciutto) and cheese. The other bar has a simple but divine fish soup.

And then there's another place which I love! It's called Bar da Praia and is small and really cool! Located just above the part of the beach turned towards the river, they have a beautiful view over the beach and tapas are great. Owned by two Spanish guys who came to our area because they like it so much :)

On your way to the beach, when passing just below Odeceixe, is a big café with an outside patio with orange trees where I like to go for breakfasts or afternoon snacks. The café is called Quintal dos Sabores and the entrance is just in the beginning of the parking zone. You can also buy entire cakes or pieces of them to bring back to your house.

Closer to the beach, overlooking the river flowing in the valley, is ODX, a space where you can enjoy live music, art, theatre and connect with the local community. They also organize fun events for kids, and of course you can eat something and have drinks there as well! Check out their programming online, www.odx.pt, to know what's going on there at the moment!

Another beach which I strongly recommend is Arrifana, close to Aljezur. You'll have to park at the top and walk down but it's worth it. It's possible to drive down to drop someone off if needed but the car has to go back up. Arrifana has a surf school and the waves are great for beginners!

If you like remote and calm beaches where it's likely you'll find no one or just one or two fishermen, then I recommend my favourite beach Carreagem... It's gorgeous...! Just outside Rogil, a bit South of Odeceixe. Small, hard to reach but extremely poetic! Lousy for surfing though because you have beautiful cliffs and rocks all over, including under water. Not much sand either. But beautiful! You have to go during low tide when the rocks show and the beach gets bigger, in high tide the beach loses its charm. Before going to this beach, stop by the bakery/café Padaria do Rogil to bring something with you to the beach! Everything in this bakery is great, they sell to for example El Corte Inglés and other gourmet stores all over the country. Slow service, be patient ;)

Two other beaches are Amoreira, outside Aljezur, and Carvalhal some 10 km North of Odeceixe. Carvalhal's beautiful, easy access and perfect since it's protected from wind. There's Thai massage on the beach and there are two beach bars in the summer.

Just before reaching Carvalhal, arriving from South, you can make a quick stop to have a look at the animals there. It's not a zoo or anything but the owner of the farm has a thing for exotic animals so there are zebras, buffalos and gazelles for example, walking around in the fields!

A day-trip to the beaches Carrapateira and Amado is strongly recommended, they're amazing. Good for surfing too. When driving south you'll pass a small village called Bordeira and straight after, before reaching the village Carrapateira, you turn right towards the beach. If you continue on that road it'll eventually take you to Amado beach. They're both incredible but according to me what's even more special is the road in between them on top of the cliffs...! The view from there is priceless!

If you like exploring go upriver towards Monchique. The road's beautiful! (turn left towards Zambujeira de Baixo when by the bridge outside of Odeceixe, instead of turning right towards Odeceixe) and after some 6 km, turn left (turning right, uphill, is another way to get to Aljezur some 15 km South) and keep on going. You'll pass Reguengo (yoga retreat, among other things) Zambujeira de Baixo and some other villages before reaching Monchique. Monchique's a small town known for their thermal water and handicrafts. Knitted sweaters, big and small carpets, pottery, blankets, sheepskin slippers... They have a bit of everything! Nice restaurants too! When you're in Monchique you have to make the few extra km to Caldas de Monchique, it's an amazingly beautiful little town just by the springs. The houses and the surroundings look like they come from a romantic movie. I repeat, do not miss this!!

Staying at the estate you have over 60 hectares to explore! You have a salt water swimming pool with two big sun decks just above the houses. Our land stretches out on both sides of the river, which means that it's in Algarve and in Alentejo!

At your disposal to use on the estate we have a Stand Up Paddle, a canoe and mountain bikes. Feel free to use them whenever you want!

We also have electric bicycles which we rent out for 25€ per day and bike.

On Wednesdays and on Saturdays at around 10am (please confirm the exact hour with the staff) yoga classes are given by the swimming pool or in the Moroccan tent by the river. We don't charge our guests anything, just show up a bit before if you want to join.

We work with several masseuses and can help you book a session where the masseuse comes to your house. There is traditional massage, thai massage, shiatsu and reiki available upon request.

There are many fruit trees on the estate and you can pick whatever's ripe during your stay. We have peach, orange, nespera (loquats in English, it's the one growing in the middle of the parking of the main house, as well as just outside Casa da Abobada, outside Casa da Pereira and a little all over the estate. Small, orange fruits with big brown seeds inside. You'll have to peel the fruit before eating), plum, lemon and wild blackberries. We've planted more fruits trees close to Casa Poente and Casa da Gaiola, they're not giving a lot of fruit yet as they're still small but we have apple, tangerine, lemon, peach and orange!

Each fruit tree has its timing and the best time to pick the fruit varies. For example peach gets ripe in the peak of the summer and all citrus fruit are ripe around Christmas.

We have several kitchen gardens on the estate, we rotate and plant on around two of them per year. Tomato, egg plant, pepper, cucumber, edible flowers, beetroot, radish, water melon, pumpkin and cabbage are some of the things which grow really well in our soil. Please feel free to pick whatever is ripe during your stay!

A couple of years ago we built a treehouse in the middle of the woods, kids usually love exploring there!

On the estate we also have several animals, at the moment one dog, sheep and goats. And a cat which walks around as she pleases and lived on the estate when we bought it in 2010. The sheep and the goats are usually in their 1 hectare compound which stretches from up the hill on the right from the pool. In the summer they usually feed in the fields in the middle of the valley. Viking, our dog, walks free. He's big but a real sweetheart! He was born on the estate, in 2012. Sometimes we have chicken, ducks and peacocks as well, and we're preparing to have horses. The cows you can see with the shepherd in the fields sometimes aren't ours, they belong to our neighbour and have our permission to graze on our pastures.

On the day you arrive there will be things left in the house for your breakfast the coming days. Yoghurts, juice, milk, cheese, marmalade and butter. The espresso machine in your house works with nespresso type capsules. Each day a traditional sourdough bread will be left by your door as well. I hope you'll enjoy it!

Ok, I think this'll keep you busy for a few days :) Anything specific you'd like to know please just ask and we'll do our best to help you out.

Kind regards,
Catarina



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