Lisbon Joins Europe's Capitals of Cool

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Portugal's capital may be packed with history, but it is also full of options for the travel trendsetter. With its vibrant nightlife, hip art spaces, quirky shopping and contemporary dining scene, Lisbon is a rising star among Europe's coolest cities.

Below are 10 travel ideas that affect the new face of Lisbon:

1. Savour gourmet canapés by the Portuguese Heston Blumenthal: A star chef in his home country, Michelin-starred José Avillez is Portugal's answer to Heston Blumenthal and Ferran Adrià. Mini Bar (www.minibar.pt) is his latest opening, a casual bar with a retro décor, serving experimental yet affordable canapés and gourmet small plates for less than €5 per dish.

2. Hang out at Lisbon's coolest market: The Mercado de Campo de Ourique (www.mercadodecampodeourique.pt) has been the heart of the neighbourhood for more than 80 years – but after its recent renovation, you will find the traditional vegetable stalls next to gourmet food stands, fresh juice counters and bars serving all types of Portuguese wine.

3. Party at the 'Pink Street': Until its recent makeover, riverside Cais do Sodré was one of the city's seediest neighbourhoods – but today Rua Nova do Carvalho is Lisbon's liveliest street for nightlife, packed with live music venues, burlesque clubs and tapas bars. Closed to the traffic, the street is painted with a cheerful bright pink colour, giving it its nickname 'Pink Street'.

4. Buy the perfect souvenir, quirky and 100% Portuguese: Located at the much-loved Terreiro do Paço, the Lisbon Shop (https://pt-br.facebook.com/LisbonShop) is the ideal place to buy that special gift and take with you a little part of Lisbon – from colourful tiles to urban design, quirky books to handmade jewellery, contemporary crafts to recycled materials.

5. See the likes of Picasso, Dalí, Bacon and Warhol for free: There is no entrance fee to visit Museu Colecção Berardo (http://en.museuberardo.pt/). Its wide collection focuses on the major European and American art movements of the 20th and early 21st century, covering from surrealism, pop art and hyper-realism to minimalist and conceptual arts.

6. Take in the latest street art exhibition: Lisbon is one of the few capitals in the world to have a government division that encourages, promotes and funds street art. There is an 'official' exhibition wall by Galeria de Arte Urbana (www.facebook.com/galeriadearteurbana) in Bairro Alto, but you can see street art even on waste collection trucks and bottle banks!

7. Be wowed by one of the best fashion and design collections in Europe: The stark exhibition rooms of MUDE (www.mude.pt), formerly a bank, make its exhibits really pop. Featuring iconic works from the design and fashion's world greatest from 1937 to present, this is where Phillipe Starck and Charles Eames come together with Jean Paul Gaultier and Vivienne Westwood.

8. Dine alfresco at Lisbon's latest hotspot: U Chiado Trendy Bar & Restaurant (http://uchiado.pt) offers all things to all people and at all hours, both indoors and outdoors, from snacks to sushi, weekend brunches to exotic cocktails. Industrial chic is the theme here – and if you prefer a late dinner alfresco, the cosy terrace comes with warm blankets available.

9. Pay a late night visit to the impressive Museu do Oriente: The riverfront Museu do Oriente (www.museudooriente.pt) is so superbly converted that few would guess that until a few years ago it was a salt cod warehouse! Open until late every Friday, it brings to the forefront the history of Portugal in the Far East during the Age of Discovery.

10. Head to bohemian Bairro Alto for all things vintage and alternative: Once one of the city's least desirable areas, today the backstreets of Bairro Alto are crammed with alternative shops, hip hairdressers and fashionable bars. Vintage rules in this sassy bohemian enclave, where you can pick up outrageous hand-me-down attires and heaps of odd accessories.

Direct flights to Lisbon operate from London, Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Bristol with TAP Portugal, British Airways, easyJet and Ryanair.

For more information visiting Lisbon please go to www.visitlisboa.com.

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About Lisbon

Portugal's national capital, Lisbon, boasts one of the longest histories, warmest climates and bustling nightlife of any major European city alongside its dramatic location sprawled along seven hills overlooking the river Tagus and the country's west coast. Famed for its year-round sunshine and beauty, Lisbon's grand architecture dazzles and its old-world charm mingles with chic streets, galleries, lively nightlife and a centre which gives way to sandy beaches just minutes away. It is also one of the most affordable capitals in Europe, perfect for a captivating city break or short haul escape.

www.visitlisboa.com

About Turismo de Lisboa

Turismo de Lisboa is a non-profit organisation established through an alliance of public and private bodies operating in the tourist sector. It now has 713 associated members. Since its inception in 1998, the main objective of this association is to improve and increase the promotion of Lisbon as a tourist destination and therefore enhance the quality and competitiveness of the city.

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