

PASSAGE ALONG THE DOURO

Discover the beauty of the Douro
Valley aboard the **MS Gil Eanes**

29th May to 5th June 2018 &
26th September to 3rd October 2018

SPECIAL
OFFER -
SAVE UP TO
£400
PER PERSON



NOBLE CALEDONIA



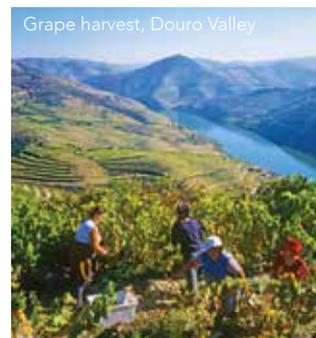
The Douro is not the longest, grandest or most historic of Europe's rivers, but it certainly is one of the most untouched and beautiful. From its meagre beginnings in the hills north of Madrid it makes its way through Northern Portugal in a meandering flourish to the ocean and the endlessly fascinating city of Oporto. Our cruise aboard the delightful MS Gil Eanes offers the opportunity to sail this delightful river and experience some of the local flavour. Where vessels once laden with barrels of port drifted to Oporto, we will cruise along this lovely river, relaxing on board whilst admiring the beautiful passing scenery and stopping each day for fascinating excursions.

Our navigation of the Douro will take us from Oporto, on a wonderfully scenic path, past sleepy villages and a tranquil countryside of almond and citrus trees to just before the Spanish border. From here we will visit Spain's ancient seat of learning, Salamanca with its grand buildings in rich copper hues and the country's most magnificent square, Plaza Mayor. Along the way we will visit the world renowned port wine region, restored palaces, places of pilgrimage and cultural centres. Small towns and settlements perched on the sloping hillsides of the region have retained an aura of Medieval simplicity, its many tiny communities, largely agricultural, clustering round historic churches, monasteries and castles.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Oporto, Portugal. Fly by scheduled flight. Upon arrival transfer to the MS Gil Eanes and embark. This evening meet your fellow travellers at the Welcome Dinner.

Day 2 Oporto to Entre-Os-Rios. This morning there will be a guided tour of Oporto, Portugal's second largest city and a World Heritage Site. This attractive city was originally a Celtic-Iberian settlement and became a prosperous Roman village thanks to its natural harbour. During our tour we will drive through its narrow streets to find 16th century arcaded buildings, Baroque churches and chapels, as well as the city's iconic 19th century iron



Grape harvest, Douro Valley



bridge, built by the school of Gustav Eiffel. We continue along the coastal road of the Atlantic to the mouth of the Douro River to view this wealthy neighbourhood with its fashionable villas and manor houses. Our final visit will be to the city's cathedral, located on the top of the Penaventosa Hill. Inside are beautiful examples of golden carved altarpieces and paintings from the Nasoni period, whilst outside we will enjoy the amazing view over the river. The tour will conclude with a visit to a port wine lodge where we will see the old casks full of port and enjoy a sample of this delicious world famous wine. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a relaxing afternoon of cruising.

Day 3 Regua. Depart for Regua in the heart of the port producing region, from where we visit the unique 18th century Mateus Manor House and its gardens. This fine



Lamego



Mateus Palace and Gardens, Regua



Port grapes



Figueira Castelo Rodrigo



Vineyards in Douro Valley

looking palace and gardens is still owned by the Count of Vila Real and is one of the best examples of Baroque architecture in Portugal. On our guided tour of the Palace we will see the "rare books" library, as well as vestments and religious icons, and also view the remarkable chestnut wood crafting on the ceilings, as well as some beautiful paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries. Stroll around the romantic gardens which feature a unique 100 foot long cedar tunnel and formal garden. Finally, before returning to the vessel, there will be time to visit the villa's pretty chapel and winery.

Day 4 Figueira Castelo Rodrigo.

Enjoy a leisurely morning on board as we cruise to Barca d'Alva and after lunch depart for an excursion to the picturesque Medieval town of Figueira Castelo Rodrigo, known as the white village because of its surrounding almond trees. Located at about 2200 feet above sea level, and one of Portugal's 12 historical parishes, its streets are typically narrow and steep with 16th century facades and Manuelino style windows. The Romans were the first to build a fortress here, then in 1209 Alfonso IX built the fortress wall. During the centuries Jews, Christians and Arabs lived

peacefully here, and evidence of this can be seen on Sinagoga (Synagogue Street). However, the once large Jewish community fled during the Inquisition.

Day 5 Salamanca, Spain. Today we will enjoy a full day tour to Salamanca, a Spanish city rich in culture and tradition. Salamanca has been famous as a seat of learning since the early 13th century and has an impressive history, with many fine monuments and architecture. The city attracts around 40,000 international students each year, giving it a cosmopolitan and modern feel. Our guided tour will include the University, House of Shells and the classic Plaza Mayor, formally a bullfighting site. We will also visit the Gothic "New Cathedral" which was actually constructed in the 16th century, replacing the original 12th century Salamanca Cathedral. After lunch in a local restaurant, enjoy some free time to explore independently before returning to the vessel for dinner.

Day 6 Quinta do Seixo, Portugal.

Enjoy a leisurely morning on board as we cruise to Tavora. After lunch we will depart for our visit to Quinta do Seixo, an ancient property with 99 hectares of vineyards and a

modern winery. Here we will learn about the production methods and sample some of the local wines. This evening we will be entertained by a Portuguese folklore show on board.

Day 7 Lamego. This morning we will enjoy a half day excursion to the historical and charming town of Lamego. This city houses one of the most important places of pilgrimage in Portugal - the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Remedies. Built in the second half of the 18th century over

the remains of a 14th century chapel, it is an excellent example of Portuguese Baroque style. It is wonderfully decorated with enormous panels of blue and white tiles, with an impressive staircase of nearly 700 steps. During lunch on board we sail back to Oporto crossing the Crestuma-Lever dam. Join your fellow travellers tonight for the Farewell Dinner.

Day 8 Oporto to London.

Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for the return scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE UP TO £400 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Cat	Cabin Description	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
E	Main /Middle Deck Double/Twin Cabin	£2395	£2195
D	Middle Deck Double/Twin cabin	£2695	£2395
C	Upper Deck Double/Twin Cabin	£2795	£2495
B	Middle Deck Suite	£2995	£2595
A	Upper Deck Suite	£3995	£3595
E	Main /Middle Deck Cabin for sole use	£2895	£2695
D	Middle Deck Cabin for sole use	£3195	£2895

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel, seven nights aboard the MS Gil Eanes on full board basis, all-inclusive drinks from 10am to 11pm (please note that premium brands & sparkling wines are not included), shore excursions, Cruise Director, Tour Manager, Guest Speaker, transfers, gratuities, port taxes, airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.



Salamanca Cathedral



Lamego



Lamego

PRE-CRUISE PORTUGAL EXTENSION - 24th to 29th May & 21st to 26th September 2018



Lisbon

If you would like to spend some time in Portugal before embarking the MS Gil Eanes we are offering a five night extension offering the chance to tour Lisbon, Sintra, Coimbra, Tomar, Guimaraes, and Braga.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Lisbon, Portugal. Fly by scheduled flight. Upon arrival transfer to our hotel in Lisbon for a two night stay. Meet later tonight for our Welcome Dinner.

Day 2 Lisbon & Sintra. Set on seven hills on the banks of the River Tagus, Lisbon has been the capital of Portugal since the 13th century. It is a city famous for its majestic architecture, old wooden trams, Moorish features and more than twenty centuries of history. Following disastrous earthquakes in the 18th century, Lisbon was rebuilt by the Marquês de Pombal who created

an elegant city with wide boulevards and a great riverfront and square, Praça do Comércio. Today there are distinct modern and ancient sections, combining great shopping areas with culture and sightseeing in the Old Town, built on the city's terraced hillsides. During our panoramic tour we will see the Monument to the Discoveries and Belém Tower, and visit the famous Jerónimos Monastery. This afternoon we will drive to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sintra where we will visit Sintra National Palace, famous for its magnificent painted ceilings. The palace is the only survivor of the country's Royal Halls, dating from the Middle Ages. Later enjoy some free time to explore the town which still retains much of its medieval layout before driving back to Lisbon.

Day 3 Lisbon to Coimbra. Check out this morning and drive to the city of Tomar where we will visit the Convento de Cristo. Founded in 1160 by Gualdim Pais, and headquarters of the legendary Knights Templar, this extraordinary monument is a rambling concoction of Gothic, Manueline and Renaissance architecture. After lunch we will continue our journey to Coimbra and check in to our hotel for a two night stay.

Day 4 Coimbra. Spend the day in charming Coimbra, the Medieval capital of Portugal for over 100 years and the site of the country's greatest university for the past five centuries. Visit the stunning 16th to 18th century buildings,

including the Paco das Escolas (Royal Palace). We will enjoy lunch at the university followed by a free afternoon for individual exploration.

Day 5 Guimaraes. After breakfast in the hotel we will drive to Guimaraes, the birthplace of Afonso Henriques, the first independent King of Portugal. Guimaraes has beautifully preserved its illustrious past; its Medieval centre is a warren of lanes and picturesque plazas framed by 14th century edifices and on an adjacent hill stands the 1,000 year old castle and the palace built by the first duke of Braganca in the 15th century. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before checking in to our hotel for our overnight stay.

Day 6 Guimaraes to Oporto. Spend the morning in Braga, an elegant town laced with ancient narrow lanes, plazas and Baroque churches. After lunch we will transfer to the MS Gil Eanes moored in Oporto.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£795** Single: **£995**

Price includes: Five nights hotel accommodation as described on a bed and breakfast basis, dinner on Day 1, lunches on Days 3, 4, 5, 6, tours as described, Tour Manager, gratuities, transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance, lunch on Day 2, dinners on Days 2, 3, 4, 5.



MS GIL EANES

For our cruises along the Douro we have chartered the elegant MS Gil Eanes. Launched in 2015, the ship is well-designed with a modern feel and offers a tranquil atmosphere on which to relax and enjoy the picturesque panoramas of the region. Cabins are located over three decks, and have a bright airy feel. Public areas include the restaurant, the lounge bar with floor to ceiling windows, and the Sun Deck with comfortable loungers, and some tables and chairs under a shaded area. There is ample opportunity to watch the world gently pass by as you relax on board your comfortable floating hotel.



Your Cabin/Suite

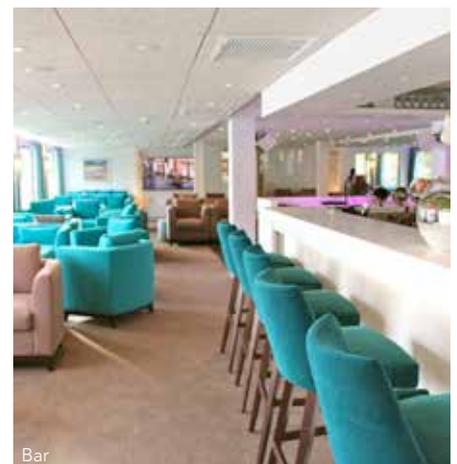
The MS Gil Eanes features 62 spacious outside cabins and 4 suites, all of which are stylishly decorated and feature individually controlled air-conditioning, private bathroom with shower, flat-screen TV, hair dryer, safe and wardrobe. The cabins and suites have twin beds which can be positioned separately or together as a double bed. Most cabins are 13.3 square metres, though some on the Middle Deck and Main Deck are slightly smaller at 12 square metres. The Suites

on the Middle Deck measure 15.5 square metres, whilst those on the Upper Deck measure 19 square metres. Cabins on the Main Deck feature two windows, and those on the Middle and Upper Decks boast French balconies and sliding floor to ceiling windows.

Your Space

The vessel offers plenty of space to relax unwind and watch the world go by. The spacious Sun Deck is equipped with comfortable loungers and for those who prefer the shade, an awning, under which are tables and chairs. The Lounge Bar is situated on the Middle Deck. Stylishly decorated with clusters of armchairs and sofas set around tables, this roomy area boasts panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows and is the perfect place to spend time at leisure and make new friends whilst enjoying complimentary drinks from the bar from 10am until 11pm. The entrance to the ship is also on the Middle Deck, and you can find the reception desk here, manned from morning through evening

and offering assistance when required. On the same deck is a small shop selling a selection of souvenirs. Wi-Fi is available in the reception area and lounge bar.



Bar

