



# ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

## Portugal Birds & Wine in Winter *2<sup>nd</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (11 days)*



Griffon Vulture by Yeray Seminario

*Southern Portugal offers a fantastic diversity of habitats, and consequently an equally diverse array of birds, in a relatively small area, allowing us to visit several species rich areas without needing to travel long distances.*

*The Mediterranean climate of Southern Portugal is very agreeable to birds during the winter. Early February weather is pleasant, with the first signs of Spring coming and the first migrants just arriving from Africa. Coastal wetlands and interior grasslands host thousands of waterfowl, shorebirds, cranes, bustards, raptors and passerines. We anticipate encounters with a great diversity and number of birds. Some examples include: Graylag Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Common and Red-crested pochards, Ferruginous and Tufted ducks, Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Spoonbill, White and Black storks, Squacco Heron, Eurasian Griffon and Cinereous vultures, Golden, Spanish Imperial, Bonelli's, Short-toed Snake, and Booted eagles, Red and Black-winged kites, Common Crane, Great and Little bustards, Eurasian*

*Stone-curlew, Black-winged Stilt, Pied Avocet, European Golden-Plover, Northern Lapwing, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed godwits, Common Greenshank, Common and Spotted redshanks, Audouin's, Slender-billed and Mediterranean gulls, Little Tern, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Eurasian Hoopoe, Common Kingfisher, Iberian Yellow, Pied and White wagtails, Water and Meadow pipits, Bluethroat, Blue Rock-Thrush, Sardinian and Dartford warblers, Iberian Gray Shrike, Iberian Magpie, Long-tailed and Eurasian Penduline Tits, Spanish and Rock Sparrows, Eurasian Serin and Rock, Reed and Cirl Buntings.*

*Around Lisbon we'll visit the famous Tagus Estuary Nature Reserves, the most important wetland in Portugal. A short drive of less than 90 minutes and we start to explore the Castro Verde rolling plains and the Guadiana Valley Natural Park, with the steppe like habitat, the hills, escarpments, and Cork and Holm oak and Stone Pine woodland of the Alentejo region; here, we shall find vultures, eagles and bustards; another short drive of less than one hour and we shall visit the Algarve, the southern tip region of Portugal, with its salt pans, lagoons, and beaches, with several protected wetlands, in order to find some of the more localized species of Europe.*

*All this birding activity is combined with visits to some of the most important wine producers in the main wine regions of Southern Portugal, giving an opportunity throughout the whole of our route to better understand the country's rich wine heritage. At various times we'll be joined by qualified wine makers who will help us learn to discern the subtle differences between the various regions, terroirs, wines and grapes. Besides the great wines, we'll have numerous opportunities to sample Portugal's many culinary delights.*

*Also, we shall have plenty of opportunities to enjoy the rich cultural heritage of Portugal, including some historical monuments and archaeological sites.*

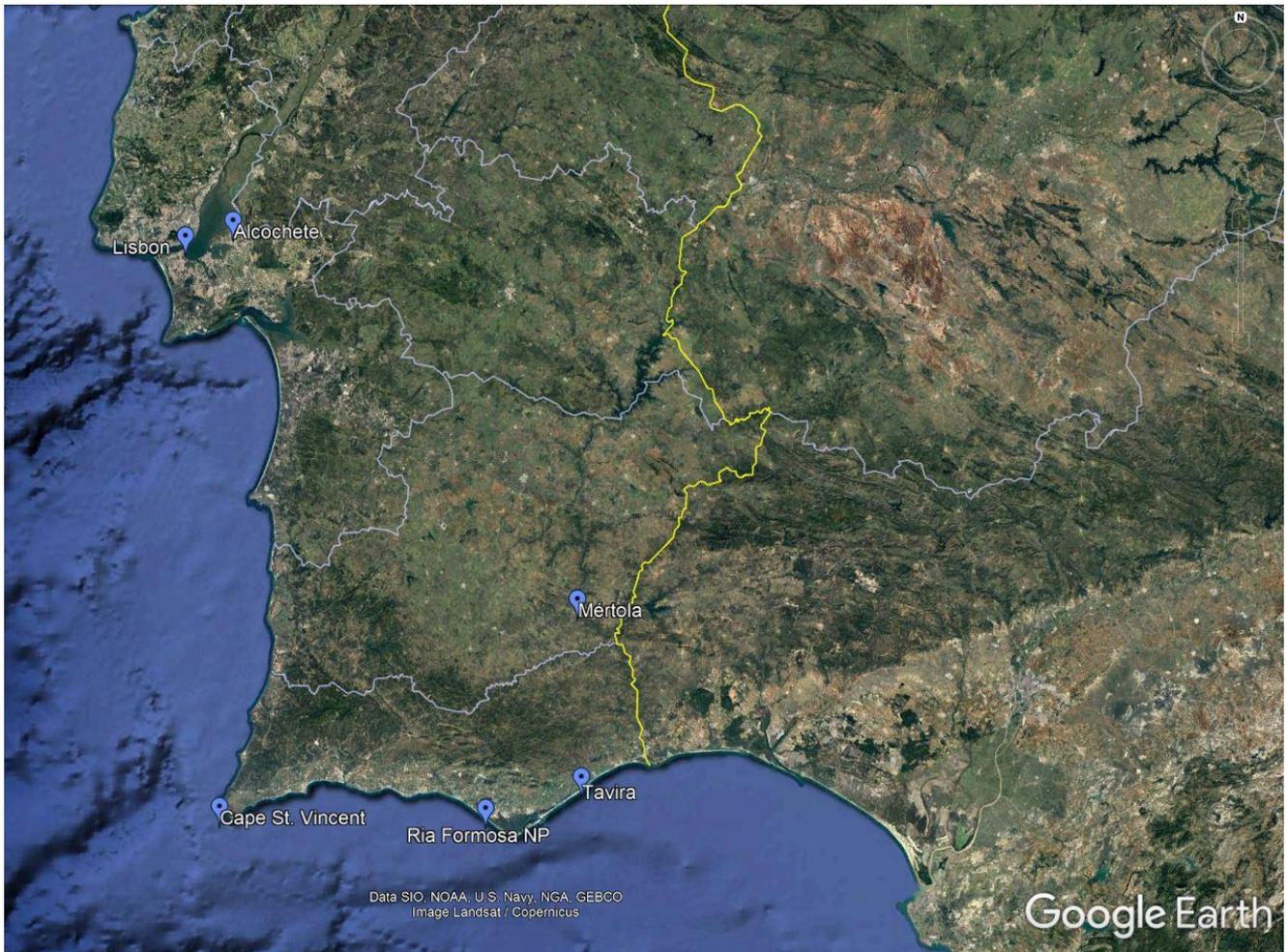
### **THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...**

#### **THE ITINERARY**

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Arrival in Lisbon, transfer to Alcochete; Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve</b>
<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Tagus Estuary N. R., Alcochete area</b>
<b>Day 3</b>	<b>Tagus Estuary N. R., Ponta da Erva and Pancas areas</b>
<b>Day 4</b>	<b>Travel to Mértola; Castro Verde plains</b>
<b>Day 5</b>	<b>Guadiana Valley Natural Park</b>
<b>Day 6</b>	<b>Guadiana Valley N. P.; Mértola archaeological sites</b>
<b>Day 7</b>	<b>Castro Verde plains; Travel to Tavira</b>
<b>Day 8</b>	<b>Ria Formosa Natural Park</b>
<b>Day 9</b>	<b>Cape St. Vincent and Sagres; Salgados lagoon</b>
<b>Day 10</b>	<b>Castro Marim Nature Reserve; Travel to Lisbon</b>
<b>Day 11</b>	<b>Final departure</b>



**TOUR MAP**



## THE TOUR IN DETAIL...



Bluethroat by Clayton Burne

**Day 1: Arrival in Lisbon, transfer to Alcochete.** After arriving in the historic city of Lisbon, we will travel to Alcochete, spending the day birding several areas and a variety of habitats within the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of Hortas and the salt pans of Samouco.

The Tagus Estuary and Sado Estuary Nature Reserves are remarkable, protected wetland areas with extensive bird lists that include Greater Flamingo, White Stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Greylag Geese, Squacco Heron, Black-winged Kite, Hen Harrier, Merlin, Western Swamphen, Little Bustard, Little Owl, Bluethroat,

Iberian Grey Shrike, Spotless Starling, Crested Tit, Rock Sparrow, European Serin, Cirl Bunting and an excellent selection of ducks, waders, gulls and terns.

**Day 2: Tagus Estuary, Alcochete area.** We have the entire day to bird the Tagus estuary, including the salt pans of Atalaya, Ribeira das Enguias and the Barroca d'Alva rice fields and pastures.

**Day 3: Tagus Estuary, Ponta da Erva & Pancas.** We shall visit other sites and habitats of the Tagus Estuary, including the open fields, rice fields, reed beds, lagoons, inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of the Ponta da Erva area and the cork oak woodlands of Pancas.

Later this afternoon, we will enjoy our first wine tasting at Companhia das Lezírias.

**Day 4: Alcochete to Mértola.** After breakfast we will leave Alcochete and the greater Lisbon area behind, travelling to Mértola, in the south Alentejo region. En route we shall start our initial explorations of the great Castro Verde rolling plains, home of Great Bustard, Common Crane, Red Kite, Lesser Kestrel, Eurasian Stone-curlew, Northern Lapwing, Golden Plover, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Great Spotted Cuckoo and Calandra Lark.



Little Bustard by Ignacio Yufera

**Day 5: Guadiana Valley Natural Park.** Today we will visit the bluffs





Eurasian Stone-curlew by David Hoddinott

and hills of the Guadiana Valley Natural Park, including the Mértola, Canais, Mina de São Domingos and Alcaria Ruiva areas. Species of note that we may find today include Griffon and Cinereous Vultures, Spanish Imperial, Golden, Bonelli's and Short-toed Snake Eagles, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Eurasian Eagle-Owl, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Dartford Warbler, Iberian Magpie, Blue Rock Thrush, Long-tailed Tit, Spanish Sparrow, Hawfinch and Rock Bunting.

This afternoon we will enjoy wine tasting at Bombeira do Guadiana.

**Day 6: Mértola archaeological site and Guadiana Valley N. P.** After breakfast,

we'll head to the archaeological remains of Mértola. Here we shall be guided by an historian, who will explain these fascinating archaeological remains (mainly Roman and Moorish) which make this town one of the most important archaeological sites in Portugal. In the early afternoon we shall visit other sites of this protected area, including the Pulo do Lobo gorge, Álvares and São João dos Caldeireiros.

In the late afternoon, we will enjoy wine tasting at Balanches.

**Day 7: Mértola to Tavira; Castro Verde plains en route.** We depart Mértola after breakfast and travel west to the Castro Verde plains, birding en route to Tavira, trying to see steppe birds we haven't seen before.

**Day 8: Ria Formosa Natural Park.** Some of the places you will visit in the Algarve, namely the Ria Formosa Natural Park and the Castro Marim Nature Reserve. This area of dunes, open water, inter-tidal



Audouin's Gulls by Adam Riley



mudflats, salt marshes, salt pans, reed beds, lagoons and pine woods are unique in Portugal as sites for rare and highly localised species such as Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls and Lesser Short-toed Lark. These are also excellent spots for getting close views of scarce species like Little Bittern. Little Owl, Eurasian Hoopoe and Common Kingfisher are particularly abundant here. The cliffs and shore at Cape St. Vincent should provide an excellent opportunity for guests to see a wide range of sea bird species, plus some localized species such as Red-billed Chough.



Little Owl by Markus Lilje

In the afternoon, we will enjoy wine tasting at Quinta dos Vales.

**Day 9: Cape St. Vincent and Sagres; Salgados lagoon.** Today we plan to visit the Sagres and Cape St. Vincent regions. We'll spend more time birding the cliffs and sea shore, giving us great opportunities to add a good number of sea and shorebirds.

**Day 10: Tavira to Lisbon.** Before we depart to Lisbon, we shall visit the complex of canals, saline flats and salt pans of the Castro Marim Nature Reserve. As we make our way back to Lisbon, we shall partake in more wine tasting at José Maria da Fonseca. This evening, we shall enjoy a final celebratory dinner in Lisbon.

**Day 11: Final departures.** All good things must come to an end. After breakfast we shall head to Humberto Delgado Airport where the tour will conclude.

### **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**

**Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES below.**

#### **This includes:**

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 11;
- All lodgings;
- Wine at dinner;
- Cellar and wine tasting sessions;
- Ground and boat transportation;
- Reserve and historical site entrance fees;
- Bottled water;
- Extra activities as mentioned in the itinerary; and
- All local guiding services



**The tour fee does not include:**

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any drinks (except as stated above);
- Tips for local guides and services; and
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.
- b) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.
- c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.
- d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

**Tiping:** As noted above, gratuities are NOT included on this tour.

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:**

This tour **does not** include ANY airfares. The tour will begin in the morning of day 1 with a group transfer from Humberto Delgado Airport, Lisbon to Alcochete. Please ensure that you arrive the previous day. The tour will conclude at Humberto Delgado Airport, Lisbon after breakfast on day 11.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

**FLIGHTS:**

Humberto Delgado Airport (IATA: LIS) is the main port of entry and exit for international flights on this tour. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

