

*Sophia Services presents ...*

# A further Search of Knights Templar in Portugal

with **Sarnia Guiton,**  
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and **Peter Moore**

April 13—27, 2019

The Knights Templar are well known for their activities in Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Middle Ages following the First Crusade. Their demise in 1307 is also well known. What is not so well known is the belief that their activities in Portugal, working with Bernard of Clairvaux and Portuguese Templar Kings over several generations, formed a Kingdom of Conscience with laws that are echoed in Rudolf Steiner's Threefold Social Order. Their history is profound in Portugal and we will visit some major sites in the country. Our guides are deeply knowledgeable about the Templars and their history. ([www.templarknights.eu](http://www.templarknights.eu)) Some who came on the original tour wish to return to explore this theme further.

## Itinerary

**Sat Apr 13** Arrival in Lisbon – Transfer to Sintra. Accommodation: Hotel Quinta das Murtas B & B (2 nights)

**Sun Apr 14** Tour of Lisbon – Belém: Jerónimos Monastery, where many ancient Portuguese explorers sought shelter and the final resting place of Vasco da Gama. Belém Tower; built in the 16th century as a fort to protect the coast from foreign attack. Monument to the Discoveries, built in the 20th Century to honour the Portuguese explorers whose expertise came from the successors to the Knights Templar, the Order of Christ. City of Lisbon: Lisbon Story Centre. São Jorge Castle, a Moorish castle on a commanding hilltop overlooking the historic centre of the city and the Tagus River. The taking of Lisbon from the Moors led by the Knights Templar began the eventual reconquest of Islamic Portugal and Spain by the Christians. Evening walk in downtown Lisbon and dinner in a traditional setting with Fado. Return to Sintra.

**Mon Apr 15** Tour of Sintra, visit to the historic centre. Guided tour of Quinta Regaleira with initiation well linked to Knights Templar. Convent of Capuchos: built to have minimal impact on the natural surroundings. The monastery buildings are blended with the ancient forest and massive granite boulders. Departure to Porto and check in. Evening stroll in historical Porto, the city from which the eventual reconquest of Christian Portugal began during the second crusade led by the Knights Templar. Accommodation: Design Palacio Flats B & B (1 night)

**Tue Apr 16** Depart Porto for Guimarães, known as the birthplace of the nation, Guimarães is a fascinating place with its proud castle and well-preserved medieval quarter. The impressive square keep of Guimarães castle dominates the skyline for miles around. This shield-shaped castle was built in the 10th century to protect the town against invaders and was expanded in the 12th century as an arsenal and palace. Legend has it that Portugal's first king was born here. Visitors can also walk along the castle walls and visit the tiny Romanesque chapel of São Miguel. Visit Braga: The Sanctuary of Bom Jesus stands atop a lush hill. Its main attraction is the impressive baroque staircase, known as Escadório do Bom Jesus. Departure to Arcos de Valdevez – check in. Accommodation: Hotel Luna, Arcos de Valdevez B & B (2 nights)

**Wed Apr 17** Visit Gerez Mountain Range region: Small community towns with people living by ancient rules with waterfalls and granite grain stores. Opportunity for walking in the beautiful countryside.

**see over**





**Thu Apr 18** Depart to Montalegre region: Visit the Monastery of Santa Maria das Júnias, the most isolated of all the Cistercian churches in Portugal, set in a valley surrounded by mountain peaks, close to the border with Galicia. To reach the church, visitors must walk 200 metres down into the valley, but the site's uniquely magical atmosphere is a fine reward for all the effort. Visit Panoias, Vila Real, a Neolithic religious site of ancient graves with Latin and Greek inscriptions referring to earlier ritual practices. Visit Lindosa Castle, a strategic fortress from the time of the Knights Templar alongside ancient granary stores on legs and a dam and waterfalls. Accommodation: Hotel Quinta da Paço, Villa Real B & B (2 nights)

**Fri Apr 19 (Good Friday)** Visit Marialva: A walk in the city and a visit to the castle with its imposing walls and solid keep. Rising from the rocks, Marialva stands out in the Beira landscape like a memory from medieval times. It was given to the Knights Templar order by the King of Portugal to assist in the fight against the Moors. Visit Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo: A walk in the historical village, the location of important medieval monuments, and a visit to the castle.

**Sat Apr 20** Depart for Monsanto: an ancient stone village with many of its houses built between huge granite boulders – the site of ruins of a Knights Templar Castle with ancient sarcophagi. Continue on to Tomar – visit Sardeal, a town where the churches are decorated with carpets of flowers for Easter. Accommodation: Hotel dos Templários, Tomar B & B (6 nights)

**Sun Apr 21 (Easter Sunday)** Visit Óbidos Walk around the city and the castle. Óbidos is a medieval city and one of the most picturesque in Portugal. It has a church with a Templar tomb and Templar crosses. Visit the salt pans in Rio Maior, used by both the Romans and the Moors and later part owned by the Knights Templar; a source of pure organic salt.

**Mon Apr 22 (Easter Monday)** Visit Quinta da Cardiga, a farm granted to the Templars in 1169 by King Afonso Henriques. Site of a Knights Templar tower which formed a part of the defence line of the River Tagus. Visit the Templar Castle of Almourol by boat. Situated on a small island in the middle of the Tagus River, Almourol Castle is one of the most significant Knight Templar monuments in Portugal. Visit the Knights Templar Castle and Convent of Christ in Tomar, headquarters for the religious and military orders of the Knights Templar and Order of Christ.

**Tue Apr 23** Visit Batalha Monastery, built by King João I, to commemorate the 14th century battle where the Portuguese defeated the Spanish. Visit Alcobaça Abbey founded by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the man responsible for giving the Templars their Cistercian links. Visit Nazaré for lunch in the old fishing port, well-known for its fresh fish and sea food. It is the site of Knights Templar legends and was one of the first pilgrimage destinations in Portugal.

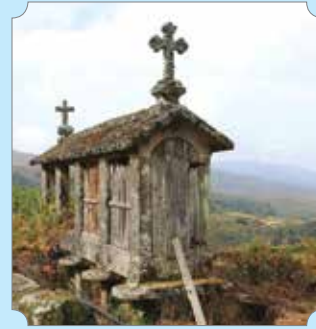
**Wed Apr 24** Visit Dornes, a small lake side village with a Knights Templar watch-tower. Voted one of the seven most beautiful villages in Portugal. Visit the Shrine of Fátima, a major Roman Catholic pilgrimage destination, where there was said to be an apparition of the Virgin Mary to three shepherd children. The site is visited by millions of pilgrims from across the world.

**Thu Apr 25** Walking tour of historic Tomar, including Santa Maria do Olival Church, where the Knights Templar Masters were buried, and the 15th Century Synagogue. Free time in the afternoon.

**Fri Apr 26** Free time to visit the weekly Farmer's market in Tomar. In the afternoon an optional second visit to the Convent of Christ. In the evening transfer to Lisbon. Accommodation: Hotel Radisson Blu, Lisbon B & B (1 night)

**Sat Apr 27** Transfer to Lisbon airport or other destinations in Lisbon.

For further information please visit [www.sophiaservices.ca](http://www.sophiaservices.ca) or contact Sarnia Guiton 604-740-0676 [sarnia@sophiaservices.ca](mailto:sarnia@sophiaservices.ca)



**Land only:** US\$ 2610. This may be subject to fluctuation of currencies and unexpected fuel surcharges. Single supplement \$560. Booking deadline February 1, 2019. Non-refundable deposit of \$525 will hold your place in the group. Full payment due: March 1, 2019.

**Price includes:** Transfers between airport and hotel in Sintra; early arrivals – two hotel pick up sites in Lisbon; all accommodation and breakfasts; all transport; admissions as included in the itinerary; English-speaking guides throughout.

**Price does not include:** International flight; travel insurance (medical is mandatory); lunches and dinners; tips, since they are not assumed in Portugal, although always welcome; the occasional optional events and admissions as opportunity arises.