Highlights in Belém

4 stops · 2.2 km

1 Torre de Belém

Welcome to Belém, and to the Torre de Belém. This tower was built in the early 1500s, under King Manuel the First, to guard the entrance to Lisbon's harbour. When it was new it stood out in the river; the shoreline has since moved towards it. Look at the stone ropes, armillary spheres and crosses of the Order of Christ carved into its walls. They are classic Manueline decoration, celebrating Portugal's sea voyages. And see if you can find the small rhinoceros head carved below one of the turrets. Together with the Jerónimos Monastery, the tower is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Next, walk east along the river to the Monument to the Discoveries.

> Tip: The tower reopened in May 2026 after a year of restoration, with timed entry and a daily cap of about 900 visitors. Book a slot online in advance, ideally the first one of the day.

> Practical info: Open 9:30–17:30, last entry 17:00. Tickets online or at the Jerónimos Monastery ticket office. Inside: narrow spiral staircase, not accessible for wheelchairs. Allow 45 minutes inside, or 15 minutes for the outside only.

2 Padrão dos Descobrimentos

Getting there: Follow the riverside promenade east, past the Belém marina.

This is the Padrão dos Descobrimentos, the Monument to the Discoveries. It is shaped like the prow of a ship heading out to sea. Henry the Navigator stands at the front, followed by more than thirty figures from Portugal's Age of Discovery: navigators, kings, missionaries and chroniclers. A first version was built for the Portuguese World Exhibition in 1940; this permanent one was unveiled in 1960, five hundred years after Henry's death. In front of the monument, look down: a huge wind rose and world map are set into the pavement, marking the routes of the Portuguese voyages. If you have time, take the lift to the viewing terrace at the top.

> Tip: The lift to the rooftop terrace gives one of the best views in Belém: the tower, the monastery, the 25 de Abril bridge and the river in one sweep.

> Practical info: Open daily: October–February 10:00–18:00 (last entry 17:30), March–September 10:00–19:00 (last entry 18:30). Viewpoint, exhibition and film: €10 adults, children under 12 free. Allow 30–45 minutes.

3 Museu de Marinha

Getting there: Cross the railway and Avenida da Índia through the pedestrian underpass next to the Padrão, then head left through the gardens to the west end of the monastery.

Welcome to the Museu de Marinha, Portugal's maritime museum, in the west wing of the Jerónimos Monastery. Its collection tells the story of Portugal and the sea, from the age of the caravels to the modern navy. You will find detailed ship models, maps and navigation

instruments. Don't miss the large hall of royal barges, the richly decorated boats that once carried the royal family on the Tagus. The museum also displays the seaplane Santa Cruz, used by Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral in the first aerial crossing of the South Atlantic, in 1922. From here, it is a short walk to the Praça do Império.

> Tip: A good stop if the weather turns: you can easily spend an hour or more inside.
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> Practical info: Open 10:00–17:00 (October–April) and 10:00–18:00 (May–September). Adults €8, reduced prices for children and seniors. Allow 1–1.5 hours.

4 Praça do Império

Getting there: Walk east along the front of the monastery; the garden square opens up on your right.

You have reached the Praça do Império, the last stop of this tour. This large garden square was laid out for the Portuguese World Exhibition of 1940. At its centre is a big fountain, and the hedges and flower beds around it include coats of arms in planted designs. Turn around for the best view of the long facade of the Jerónimos Monastery, a masterpiece of Manueline architecture. When you're ready for a break, the famous Pastéis de Belém bakery is just a few minutes' walk east along the street. Thank you for joining us on this tour of Belém.

> Tip: Lunch break: the famous Pastéis de Belém bakery is a few minutes' walk east along Rua de Belém. Expect a queue at the takeaway counter; the tables inside often move faster.
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> Practical info: Public garden, free and open all day. If you have time and energy left, the Jerónimos Monastery is right next door (separate timed ticket).

Thanks for walking with us. The famous Pastéis de Belém bakery is a few minutes’ walk east along Rua de Belém. You’ve earned one.