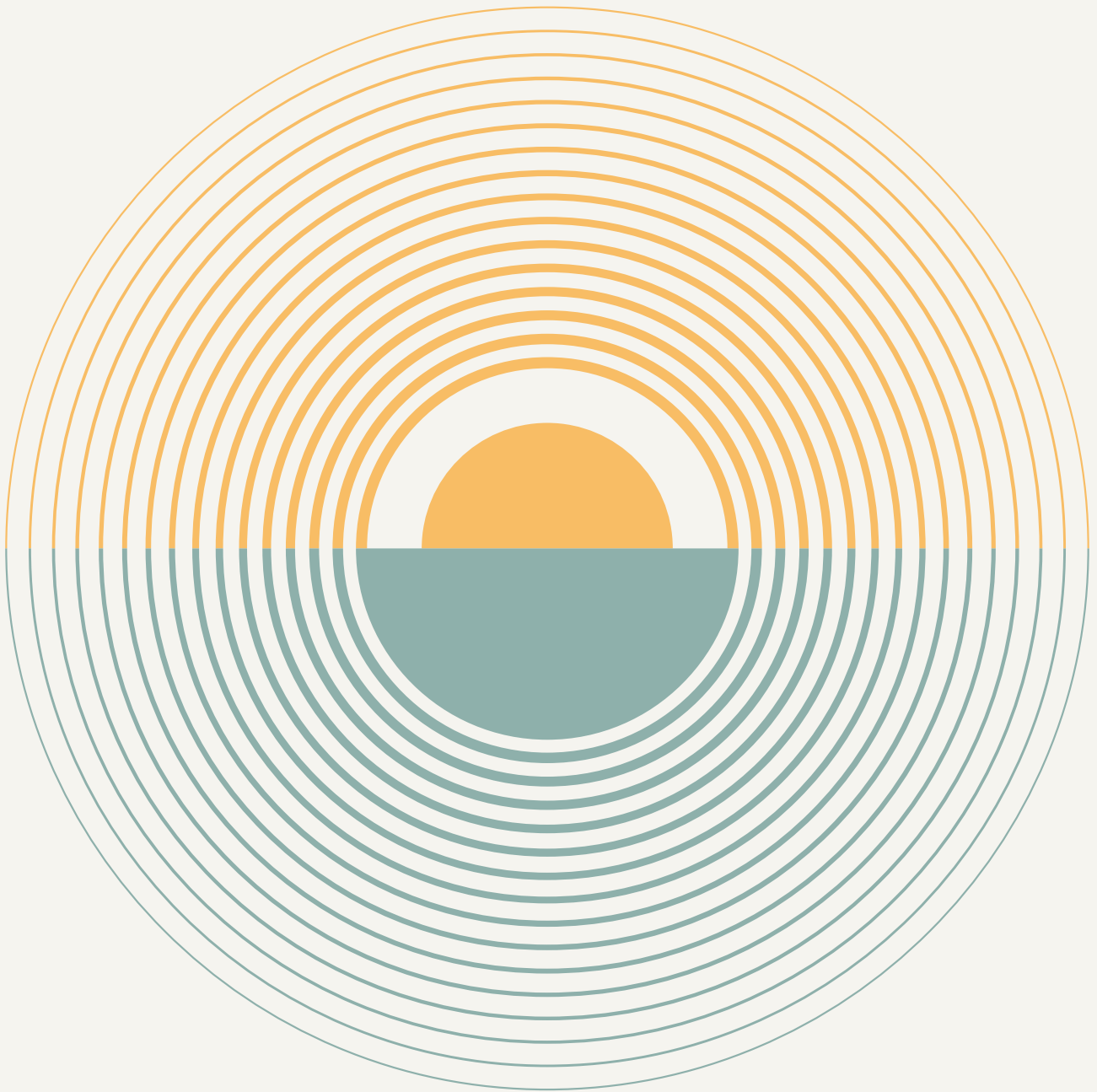




Algarve Insider's Guide

Lost Streets of Lagos

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1. Introduction

This is Soul & Surf's take on a local area guide. A real insider's guide to our Algarve.

We don't want or need to add to the noise and give you another Lonely Planet-style tourist guide. You can look that up anywhere. This guide won't necessarily tell you about the best, flashiest restaurants, or where to go to get the best sunset (although those things are obviously brilliant and you should do those things too).

This is straight from the mouths of the people that actually live here, work here, have spent a lot of time here. It's where the staff run away to when they have a day off, or when we finish up for the season and give ourselves a little treat. Where the locals go to eat the best food. Where we spend our time when we are in these places. Most of this stuff is close to home – the everyday that we take for granted in these special corners of the world.

And it's the little gems we've found and assimilated over the years that are away from the tourists, off the beaten path. These special spots sometimes won't have the best decor, wifi or the best service (or any service at all). You may not be able to find them easily, the people that work there may not speak English to you, you might get lost, you might get something completely different to what you ordered. But you'll

be experiencing something real. And that's why we all travel, right?

So here is our version of the Lonely Planet for you. Anecdotes, tips and a peek into a life less ordinary.

2. Adam



Our General manager here in Portugal, though not around the hotel itself so much these days, your best chance of meeting him is at sunset, as close to the beer tap as possible. Adam has been with us for YEARS, lending his hand to all things surf in Sri Lanka, India and Portugal and with all that time on his hands is shaping surfboards, check it out - @madasurfboards

Walking

Go get lost! Lagos' old town and cobbled streets are a great starting point to explore on foot. Enjoy the Pastelerias, snack bars, and ice cream shops along the way.

Head south from Lagos to discover the beaches of Praia Da Bata, Praia do Pinhão, and Praia Dona Ana. Continue towards Ponta da Piedade, a renowned coastal rock formation with caves and grottos. From there, follow the wooden walkways and promenades westward towards Praia de Porto Mós.



The coastline offers numerous additional options for exploration. The Serra de Monchique mountain (debatable) range and the town of Monchique are also worth visiting (not debatable).

Fonseca's

Fonseca's, a local bar in Odiáxere, is only a short walk from the best bakery in the area. Head over to Fonseca's in the evening after grabbing chicken from the nearby chicken shop. You'll blend in with the locals by standing at the bar and ordering a Cristal and a Medronho. Don't be surprised if the locals ignore you at first — just buy a round of drinks and they'll warm up to you in no time!

Coasteering with Jim!

Experience the Algarve coast from a unique perspective with coasteering! This thrilling activity allows you to explore where the sea meets the land, traversing cliffs, swimming through caves, and cliff jumping for an adrenaline-fueled adventure.



Sítio do Forno

It's a bit of a trek but well worth the drive. This seafood restaurant on the west coast offers incredible ocean views and is located on the cliffs between Bordeira and Amado. Be sure to make a reservation to enjoy the sunset.

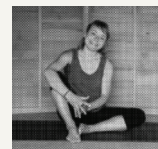


Padaria Odiaxere

It's by the windmill in Odiaxere, down a little side road. I have eaten a lot of pasteís in my time, but this little bakery consistently does the best ones I've sampled in the Algarve. Get them hot and fresh out the kitchen.

This bakery is also good for wildcard pastries.

3. Becca



Becca is a Shiatsu practitioner who came out to Kerala as a volunteer and baked us cakes that still make us drool, just by thinking about them. We really, really liked her, so brought her over to Portugal to be our therapist.

Pizza Party

When I first moved to the Algarve, we were relieved to be welcomed into the calm, safe and easy-going existence of a quiet country life. But after some time (not much time) we were gagging for some FUN...where was the dancing at?!

Not much into dancing on bars to cheesy pop, we eventually decided to venture out to the infamous pizza party in the hills of Monchique. It was probably the highlight of the year. Every Friday night, the pizza party runs like a mini secret festival set into the hill: three stages of reggae, drum and bass, techno - basically everything we'd been missing from dirty city life, all in one place. You can camp on site, the bushes are really comfortable – or stay sober and drive home.....



4. Katie & Zeb



Working for Soul & Surf in many capacities, the dream-team of Keb or Zatie? We'll let you decide. Katie brings the flavours in the kitchen, and Zeb keeps the grass short. What a team.

Spice Cottage

The best Indian around. What's better than a post surf curry?! The owners are lovely and they've just moved to a new location in Salema. Try the aubergine bharta!



Love Burgau

Cosy restaurant with a colourful, quirky outdoor area; tucked away in a teeny street in Burgau. Place to go for a cocktail or some seriously good sourdough pizza. Katie's go to - the "Verdura". Green everything, pesto, asparagus, tenderstem broccoli, cherry toms and cheeseless... don't judge it till you try it!

Praia do Castelejo

A S&S classic for a reason and one of our favourite beaches (we're keeping the others a secret!) Good for a morning surf or a windy walk and watch incredible sunsets over the wild west coast. If it's a Saturday, on your way back, stop by the weekly market in Vila do Bispo (by ZigZag cafe) and enjoy delicious, local and fresh fruit.



Praia da Luz Street Musicians

Head down to the bustling beachfront square of Praia da Luz, relax with a coffee and be entertained. An eclectic mix of music that sometimes goes all day. You'll find everything from full time musicians to first timers giving it a go. This area of the Algarve has a small but impressive live music scene. In summer there's something going on almost every night of the week - you just have to look for it.

5. Joel



Pipped at the post by Corinne Evans and Nick Heath, aka ‘the surfing chef’, in the race to be The Best Surfer From Wolverhampton(™), Joel has shared his surfing knowledge with Soul & Surf guests in Sri Lanka and Kerala. Now the hotel manager, here in Portugal .

Burgau

I could do a guide just on this place alone. It’s one of my favourite spots in the world. Go to the beach, go for a sunset beer at ‘a prateleira’ or commonly known as ‘the shelf bar’ go get a pizza at Corso, go get a coffee (and the world’s greatest banana bread) from Remi at Horizon, go for lunch at the beach bar (pre-pre-pre-booking required) Go say hi to Cristiano at Pingas bar for the best Caiprinhas and Petiscos, and to Marga at Porta 9 for the best ambiance, and portuguese style tapas there is (sometimes she sings and waitresses at the same time, insane.) All in all, I really recommend a visit.



ARVAD Wines

A Vineyard near Silves with amazing wines, food and really, really good sunsets.

Burgau – Luz Walk

It takes about an hour, some stunning coastal path, not such a hard walk, doable in birkenstocks in the summer. You can also hire SUP's on the beach in Burgau to get up close and personal to some of the coves and inlets, don't do this on a windy though! You'll be in Morocco before you know it

Sul Café

Sample some of the best natural wines around, with the stunning view of Burgau beach. Hidden in one of the many corners of Burgau is Sul Café. Opened only in 2024, it's like a little bit of Lisbon in The Algarve. Amazing Portuguese fusion dishes and incredible wines. Not to mention the coffee! Great spot for Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner - And yes, I did go there for 3 meals in a day once, maybe twice.



6. Ed & Sofie



Are Soul & Surf's founders who found themselves in Varkala in 2009 and thought... I wonder if we could open a little surf & yoga stay here? They now divide their time between home-town Brighton and a mix of India, Sri Lanka & Portugal.

Praia do Barranco

Our first visit to the Algarve was in October 2009 in our beige campervan Neil. The bone-shaking dirt track nearly destroyed our van but the secluded, travellers-haven away from the big bad world was worth it. The surrounding bushes got a bit poo-ey with all those folks living in vans but that didn't put us off and now and again the surf was great. It's been sanitised, car-parked and de-wilded now but it still has it's magic.



Praia Amoreira

With so many beaches already talked about, we wanted to mention Amoreira with kids in mind. We have spent a few great, long days on this beach. Take an inflatable for scooting down the river towards the sea, surf boards for the pretty decent wave and all manner of beach paraphernalia including some shade. We found an Octopus under a rock in the river-mouth one summer.

Praia das Furnas

Off the beaten path this beach could be at the end of the world rather than the Algarve. Go early or late season and you'll often have it to yourself, aside from the ubiquitous leathery old nude German man greeting you with a rear-view of his down-dog.



Praia da Ingrina and Sebastião Restaurant

Another family favourite, just round the headland from Zavial is this little inlet beach with a classic local seafood restaurant up top.



7. Michele



Michele, the Italian stallion, born on the mean streets of Como, Italy.... Nurtured into a surfer by Newquay's finest waves. Now, hanging out in the Algarve spreading his surf knowledge and stoke.

Walking

Get lost in Lagos. This town offers beautiful little streets filled with nice bars to have a quick stop and enjoy a snack and/or a drink.

Organise a pasteis de nata bar crawl and let me know what's your favourite. For me the winner is Adoce a Vida, they have the best pasteis de nata in Town!



Praia do Canavial

In my opinion, it's the best beach there is. It is a little bit tricky to find the way down but it's totally worth it! Not many people go there.

It is a (non mandatory) nudist beach. Just so you know...

Restaurante a Forja

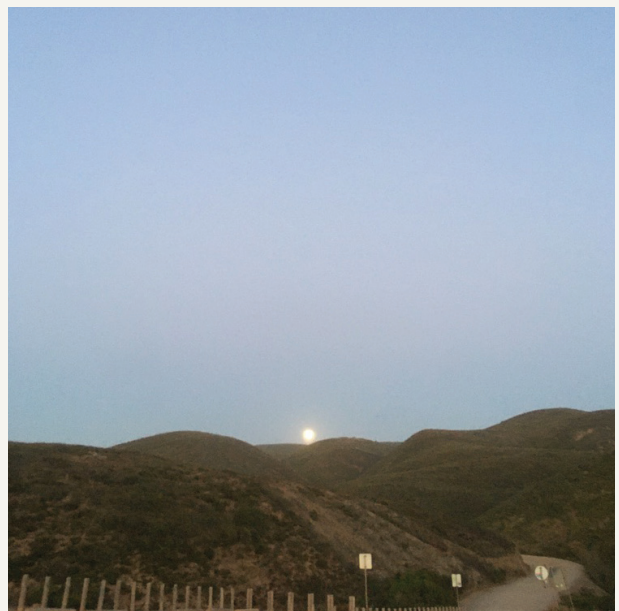
Very fresh meat and fish. Typical Portuguese restaurants. Lulinhas fritas (fried squid) is a must!

Miradouro da Cordoama

Amazing view point situated in between two beautiful beaches on the west coast.

Sagres

Portugal's south-west corner. Beautiful little town, go there and enjoy the afternoon either surfing or relaxing at the beach. Just a heads up.. It can be pretty windy over there.



8. Ben



Our chef extraordinaire, Ben, has a flair for all things food. You'll find him hiding away in our kitchen whipping up something incredible, or out finding waves in any corner of the Algarve.

Beliche

My favorite beach when I'm not surfing myself but just watching. On the way there you'll pass some nice surf shops, restaurants and bars. Tucked away in a bay, Praia do Beliche is a spot that'll blow your mind. The steep cliffs and sheltered cove create a beautiful panorama. I feel like it's a quiet hard spot for surfers who are up for a challenge. The path down is a bit of a trek, but the views of the grottos are totally worth it. I really like to take my food and drinks with me and watch the surfers from the cliffs while sunset.



Empanadas & Co. Lagos

This small snack bar offers an impressive variety of empanadas for both meat lovers and vegetarians. The freshly prepared snacks are perfect for on the go and are easy to take away. In addition to savory options, there are also delicious desserts. An ideal place for a quick and tasty snack. I like to take them with me and drive too...

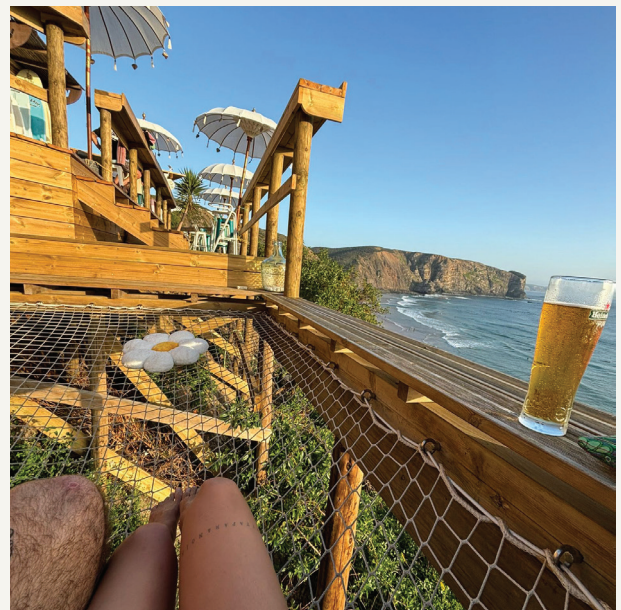
9. Sophia



The scouse surfer (or 'Seerfer'). The keenest surfer we have here at Soul & Surf, if there's the slightest ripple at Meia Praia, she's there. Back for our '25 season whipping up some wonders in the kitchen.

Tio Raul

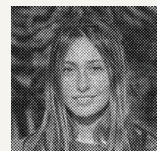
That one in Arrifana where you can have a coffee after surfing and sit and watch everyone fly into each other, even though you have just finished doing that thirty minutes ago you can act like everyone's a kook, you would never surf like that, even though you surf exactly like that.



Favo Bar

Near to a great beach, Zavial, can be scary if it has size, but picks up swell from the west and south. But Favo bar, hosts markets, great foods has DJ nights and Zeb plays there with his band! Merch coming soon... apparently.

10. Anna



A west coast lover with a passion for Pizza and Negroni's. Back in 2025 as our Assistant Manager. When Anna is not at Soul & Surf she is mostly found somewhere out at sea on her longboard.

Walks

From Arrifana to Monte Clérigo. This walk takes you along the stunning coastline, passing by Ponta Atalaia, Praia da Pipa, and Praia da Fateixa. While the trail can be challenging to find at times, the breathtaking views of the west coast make it well worth the effort. Be prepared for some uneven terrain and wear sturdy shoes.



Toxic Magic Shop

A vibrant hub on weekends, hosting live music events and food pop-ups. During the week, it's a laid-back spot to enjoy a delicious brunch or a plate of loaded fries after a surf session, what's better?

Maxi's Warung

If you're craving bold flavors after hitting the waves, Maxi's Warung is the place to be. Their Thai and Indonesian dishes are packed with spice and perfect for satisfying a post-surf appetite.



O Capitão

Situated in Amoreira, O Capitão is a popular hangout for surfers. If you're willing to cross the river, you'll be rewarded with stunning views of the surf break. Grab a beer and soak up the sunset while deciding whether to catch another wave or settle in for dinner.

O Sargo

Situated in Amoreira, O Capitão is a popular hangout for surfers. If you're a Located in Monte Clérigo, O Sargo offers a more refined dining experience. Enjoy local cuisine with a focus on fresh seafood while taking in panoramic ocean views. It's an ideal spot to relax after a long walk. rewarded with stunning views of the surf break. Grab a beer and soak up the sunset while deciding whether to catch another wave or settle in for dinner.



11. Anita



Boss of the boss, Anita is our head of operations and ensures the (occasional) smooth running of Portugal, India and Sri Lanka. A very busy lady, like, imagine dealing with Adam on a daily basis... wow..

Bahia Beach Bar

It is the prime beachfront location on Meia Praia, Lagos. If you would like to go to a beach bar for delicious dishes, good wine or cocktails this is definitely the place for you. You can go for a dip in the sea, which is a 2 minute walk from here. Reservations are recommended during peak times to ensure a spot.



Sunray's Kitchen

This charming café is located in Lagos and has a sheltered outdoor seating area, which is perfect for a hot day. It offers a variety of breakfast and lunch options, with a focus on vegan and vegetarian dishes, fresh juices and excellent coffee.

12. Inês



Our Portuguese Yogi, with a passion for all things nature, Vila Do Bispo and Half a glass of beer. Find her at the bar at 6:20pm with her cup of beer.

Vila do Bispo

For me there's no place on Earth like the little slice of heaven that Vila do Bispo offers, not only the waves and beautiful beaches but also the smell and freshness of the air has its own effect on you. I could tell you a lot of things.. But for now I'll just tell you all about my absolute favourite places.

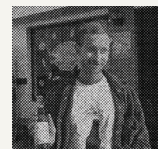
I adore food, actually I love good food and with no doubt little "Pisco", a very cute little restaurant in Vila do Bispo, that serves amazing gourmet-vegan-style-food that I guarantee the creativity of the chefs with simple local products will blow your mind. They also have options for non vegans that can put any mouth watering.. The menu always changes according to seasons and available products, so you probably won't be able to eat the same twice, enjoy it with a glass of their collection of local wines. I'm a proud usual client of this place. Just make sure to book a table before you go, during the summer they are always quite busy.

Also in Vila do Bispo you can stop by for a super nice breakfast or brunch, before or after surfing, you'll find



Izzy's market, all vegan, all organic, all amazing fresh squeezed juices, great coffee and the best brunch around. Trust me, check for the low tide, and walk on the sand from praia do Castelejo to Barriga all the way across and back. Marvel at the black cliffs and rocks, look for sea stars, smell the ocean and hear nothing but the waves, if by the end of this walk you're not reborn something is wrong with you.

13. Andy



A true salty sea dog. You might recognise Andy if you've been to any Soul and Surf before, he's been around, well, a while! Settled now in the Algarve & helping us run Soul & Surf School, Andy is always hungry for a surf, a Why Not and a curry.

Brazilian Grill House – Fogo de Chão – Portimão

The constant queue outside on weekends speaks for itself. Go with an appetite because this place is off the charts! Surround yourself with the finest buffet this side of Lisbon and get ready to say “Mais Uma” when the waiter comes round with grilled delights, quickly followed up by more waiters with more delights. Straight up bangin.



The Lost Waterfall of Monchique

Not sure what to do on a super hot day when the pool or the beach aren't calling? Then head beyond the bottled water factory but just shy of the top of Monchique and embark on a quest for the infamous Lost waterfall. Many have tried and failed in its pursuit but for those of pure intentions its treasures await.....pilgrims may sample the "fonte da vida" during their search, so bring some empty bottles to fill up on the finest spring water you'll find.



7 Hills Indian Restaurant

After a number of Seasons in Varkala I'm a little fussy about Indian food (semi-true), but this little gem in central Lagos does the job nicely. My go to is Frango Manteiga (butter chicken) "picante senhor", naans galore, cold beers; what more do you need? Making myself hungry as we speak!