



## **The Arts Society Kensington & Chelsea**

a four night trip to

### **LISBON**

Monday 17 to Friday 21 October 2022



*Torre de Belem*

*Lisbon has a special charm, a hilly coastal town with pastel coloured buildings and a mildly Moorish feel, and is rich in culture and gastronomically interesting. It is one of the world's oldest cities, and the oldest city in Western Europe, influential from Roman times onwards as an important maritime and commercial centre. It is best known as the starting point for Vasco da Gama's voyages of discovery in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Trade brought wealth and patronage which is well testified in the splendid architectural ensembles of the city; palaces, municipal squares, cathedrals castles and rich museum collections. The tour includes all the best there is to see.*

## Itinerary

**Day One** - Depart from Heathrow airport on BA518 at 13.35 arriving Lisbon at 16.20 where we meet our guide who will accompany us to our centrally located hotel, the **Hotel Avenida Palace**. Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Day Two** - Morning orientation drive before arriving at **Belem**. On arrival at Belem we start with coffee, water and/or soft drinks accompanied by the famous *Pasteis de Belem* (aka Pasteis de Nata), traditional custard filled small cakes sprinkled with cinnamon. The best in the country. Later a short walk takes us to the **Jeronimos Monastery**, a magnificent 16th century monastery and a UNESCO World Heritage site, commissioned by King Manuel I and one of the most important examples of Manueline architecture in Lisbon. Back on the coach for a short drive to the nearby 16th century **Torre de Belem**, of similar architectural style as the monastery and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The tower was part of the defensive system of medieval Lisbon. Back on the coach for another short drive to the **Monument to the Discoveries**, from where Vasco da Gama embarked on his voyage to India in 1497 and where Christopher Columbus anchored briefly on his way back from the Americas. Back on the coach for a slightly longer drive to lunch at *5 Oceanos* fish restaurant gloriously located by the banks of the River Tagus with splendid views over the 25 April Bridge and Cristo Rey. After lunch, we drive to the excellent **Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga** where we spend the rest of the afternoon. Founded in 1833, the museum houses a vast collection of paintings, sculptures, metal works, furniture and other decorative art forms from the middle ages to the early 19th century. Of interest are the Flemish-influenced Portuguese paintings such as the *Apparition of Christ to the Virgin* by Jorge Afonso. Evening free or join an ad hoc dinner.

**Day Three** - Depart by coach from the hotel for a day in the splendid UNESCO World Heritage site of **Sintra**, the former summer retreat of the Portuguese Royal Family. On the highest of Sintra's hills stands the spectacular **Palacio de Pena**, an eclectic medley of architectural styles. The building's long history starts in the medieval ages when the King Joao II built a sanctuary on the site. Damaged by lightning and later destroyed by the Great Lisbon Earthquake in 1755, it lay in ruins until the middle of the 19th century when King Ferdinand II rebuilt it as its summer residence. We will also visit the **Palacio Nacional de Sintra**, located in the heart of town, featuring a pair of strange conical chimneys rising high above this Royal Palace. The history of the palace goes back to the 8th century Moorish domination of the region as the seat of the ruler of the day. In the 12th century King Afonso Henriques conquered the village and took the palace for his own use. Lunch will be provided in a restaurant opposite the palace. In the afternoon,

we return to Lisbon and visit **Queluz Palace**, originally a hunting lodge it was transformed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century into a delightful Rococo Summer Palace which was extended and partially redecorated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Evening free or join an ad hoc dinner.

**Day Four** - Morning drive to the **Alfama district** the oldest part of the city. In 1150, King Afonso Henriques recaptured Lisbon from the Moors and built a cathedral on the site of an old mosque for the first bishop of Lisbon, the English crusader Gilbert of Hastings. The **Se' Cathedral** was heavily damaged by the 1755 Lisbon earthquake but rebuilt and renovated over the centuries. Today it features a blend of architectural styles with nine Gothic chapels and a treasury containing a vast collection of religious artefacts, robes and illustrated manuscripts. Next a visit to the **Decorative Arts Museum** where there are more than 1,300 exhibits, a range of items dating back to as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century: from Chinese porcelain to Portuguese furniture, Flemish tapestries, and European silverware. Our next visit is to the splendid 17<sup>th</sup> century church and monastery of **Sao Vicente da Fora** located outside (fora) the old city walls, one of the most important monastery and mannerist buildings in the country. The church and monastery feature impressive artistic works of the period such as Joaquim Machado de Castro's 18<sup>th</sup> century baroque canopy over the altar flanked by life-size wooden statues and the sacristy of the monastery exuberantly decorated with polychrome marble and painting. The cloister is also notable for the 18<sup>th</sup> century tiles that recount fables of *La Fontaine*, among other themes. The morning programme ends in **Baxia**, the lowest part of the city where we will leave the coach and explore the area independently. Here are some of the most beautiful squares of the city such as Rossio, Praca dos Restauradores and Praca da Figueira, elegant neo-classical buildings and a vast number of cafes and restaurants. In the afternoon, there will be visits to the **Museu Nacional do Azulejo**, a stunning collection of tiles and later the **Basilica da Estrela**, a vast, domed cathedral built at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and set on a hill above the city it is one of Lisbon's famous landmarks. Dinner in a local restaurant.

**Day Five** - we check out of the hotel and then visit the **Ajuda National Palace**, a typical 19<sup>th</sup> century Royal residence with sumptuous decorative arts. Finally we visit the **Calouste Gulbenkian Museu** before reaching the airport by 14.30 for the BA519 flight to Heathrow, departing 16.40 and arriving at 19.15.

**Tour Leaders** – Margarida Ferreira, a local professional guide who has guided many of St James's Art Tours, will act as your guide, and Gillian Craig will be there as tour manager.

**Please note:**

- *As this tour has been planned many months in advance, the final itinerary is provisional and is subject to change if local conditions dictate.*
- *As with all such tours there will be quite a bit of walking around sites and museum and in particular around the old town on day four.*
- *Covid regulations, if still in place at the time of the trip, will be adhered to.*

**Price:** £1645 per person sharing

*Single Supplement: £295 – provides a double room for sole use*

*Deposit required at time of booking: £350*

*Please note: Travel insurance is obligatory - please give details on the Booking Form*

**Tour includes:**

- Flights with British Airways
- 4 nights' accommodation in 5-star hotel – comfortable and very well appointed
- 4 lunches and 2 dinners with wine, water, coffee.
- Transport: private coach throughout the tour
- All entrances and tips, except discretionary tips
- Audio system
- Dorling Kindersley Guide Book
- Services of Margarida Ferreira as guide

***The tour is operated by Millennium Tours Ltd, and bookings must be made direct with Millennium Tours Ltd, fully bonded with the Civil Aviation Authority (ATOL10040).***

***All payments must be made directly to Millennium Tours Ltd.***

***The Booking Form and the Terms & Conditions should be read prior to booking.***

**Flights:** with British Airways from Heathrow Airport

**Out:** Monday 17 October- departing 13.35, arriving: 16.20

**Return:** Friday 21 October - departing 16.40, arriving: 19.15

**Hotel:** 4 nights at 5-star Hotel Avenida Palace, The Hotel Avenida Palace, located in the center of Lisbon close to Bairro Alto and the Chiado, is a 5 star Hotel which combines luxury and charm and is regarded as part of the city's historic heritage. Boasting an exceptional location between Lisbon's Pombaline Downtown and the Avenida da Liberdade, elegant neoclassical architecture, sophisticated and luxurious decoration and more than a century of history, although completely renovated, the hotel occupies the boundary where tradition and innovation meet.

**END.**