

Lisbon's downtown is actually four distinct neighborhoods, and it can get a little confusing to know which one you're in! Here's a quick primer: Baixa is farthest east, buzzing with shops and restaurants. Up the (very) steep hill, Bairro Alto comes alive at night, with light and life spilling from its many bars. A short stroll north, Príncipe Real is where the cool kids hang out, with hip restaurants and concept stores. Nearby, Chiado shows off the city's artsy side, with high-end shops, opera, theatres and cafes. At the waterfront you'll find Cais do Sodre, housing the main train terminal that can take you to Belem or farther out to the beach at Cascais. Together, these districts capture Lisbon's charm and character, from all the angles.







LITTLE EXPLORERS WALKING TOUR

BAIXA + BAIRRO ALTO + CHIADO

Timeout Market: This food hall offers flavors that cater to each taste, with plenty of seating.

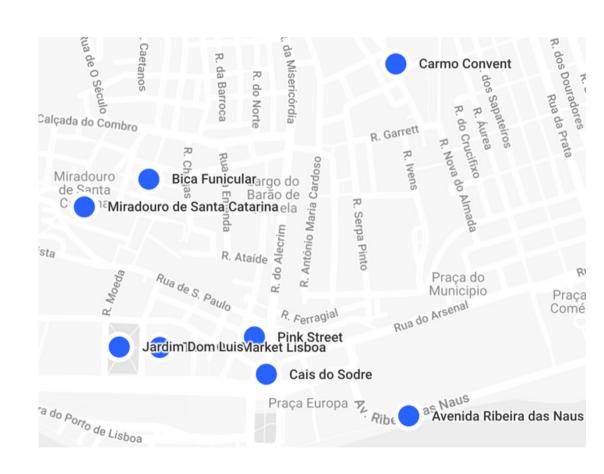
Jardim de Praça Dom Luís: Playground alert! Kids can burn energy while parents enjoy the adjacent cafe.

Ribeira das Naus: Walk along the riverside on this pretty path – or lounge with ice cream.

Pink street: Kids will love this colorful street by day (by night, it's party central).

Bica funicular: Skip a few hills by riding this train car to Miradouro de Santa Catarina.

Carmo Convent: This church is one of the last remnants of the 1755 earthquake, open to the sky. Pop inside if you can for a unique view.



The view from up here BEST MIRADOUROS

Miradouro de Santa Catarina

Miradouro São Pedro de Alcântara

Miradouro de Santa Luzia (Alfama)

Tales in the tiles

3 HISTORIES

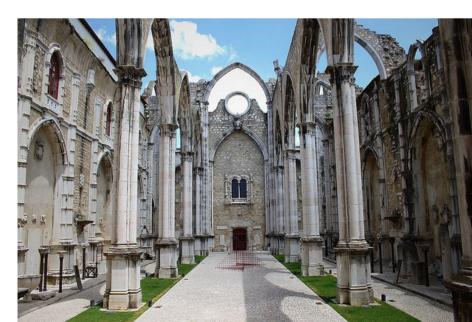
The 1755 Lisbon Earthquake
On November 1, 1755, a devastating earthquake rocked Lisbon, reaching close to a 9.0 on today's Richter scale. The city was then hit by a massive tsunami, and following that, fires. The combined disasters claimed around 50,000 lives. In the aftermath, the Marquis of Pombal spearheaded the city's re-building. In the largely untouched Alfama district you can see what Lisbon was like before the quake, while the Baixa and Chiado districts feature more modern grid-like street patterns.

The Origins of Bairro Alto Originating in 1513, Bairro Alto began as Lisbon's first planned neighborhood, neatly lined by narrow streets. The old medieval wall stood at what's now the site of the twin churches at Praça Luís de Camões. Originally the realm of merchants and high society, it became the heartbeat of Lisbon journalism in the 1800s, with landmark streets named after its flagship newspapers: Rua do Diário de Notícias and Rua de O Século. As night fell, bars opened their doors for journalists wrapping up their stories, setting the scene for the lively (and sometimes unseemly) vibes that Bairro Alto is still known for today.



Carmo Convent

The Carmo Convent in Lisbon is a head-turner. Built in 1389, it was once the city's showpiece church. But in 1755, the earthquake hit during a packed Mass, taking down its roof and leaving it in ruins. Plans to rebuild never came to fruition, and the dramatic Gothic arches and cool design details make it a must-visit. It also houses the Museu Arqueológico do Carmo, where you can check out everything from ancient to medieval treasures.



A FAMA

From the moorish word 'Al-hamma,' meaning springs or baths, this 8th century neighborhood originally made up the entirety of Lisbon. Its winding, labyrinthine streets were home to Moorish populations before Christian rule. It would later house the city's poorer populations. Remarkably, while the 1755 earthquake left much of Lisbon in ruins, the sturdy bedrock under Alfama kept it nearly intact. As you wander its alleys, you're experiencing preserved history. From gorgeous azjuelos to strutting peacocks and views around each corner, Alfama is, without a doubt, full of surprises.



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ALFAMA

Castelo de Sao Jorge: Kids love climbing around this medieval castle. Adults will love the panoramic views. Get here early to avoid the crowds.

Miradoura do Recolhimento: A viewpoint with a bonus – a playground! You get to snap cute pics while your little ones fly down the slide.

Miradouro de Santa Luzia: Another viewpoint? Absolutely! This is my favorite. Could not be more picturesque and memorable with its blue tile walls, live music, and charming pergolas.

Museo do Fado: Older kids might enjoy a Fado performance – a cultural experience unique to Lisbon. Check in advance for showtimes.

Navigating Alfama's steep climb to the castle

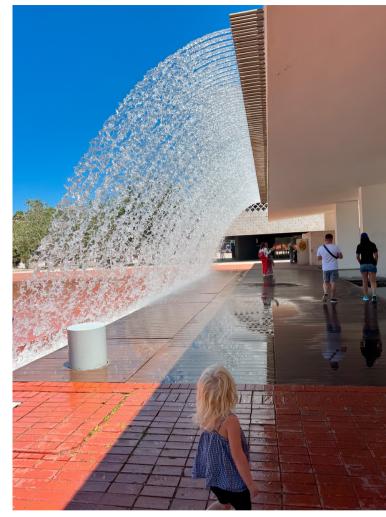
Elevators: Start at Elevador Castelo on Rua dos Fanqueiros. Then take the next elevator at Largo Chão do Loureiro.

Trams + Buses: Opt for Tram #28 or #12. Or, bus route #737 drops you at the castle entrance.



Step into the future at the Parque das Nações, a neighborhood designed and built for the 1998 World Expo. Now, it's a playground for families + and a cultural hub, featuring the Oceanario, Europe's largest aquarium, and the Pavilhão do Conhecimento, Lisbon's science museum. Around these facilities you'll find unique water exhibits your toddler will love and a funicular offering views of the Vasco de Gama bridge (Europe's longest!).

PARQUE DA NACHOES



How to get there:

Catch the 728 bus from central Lisbon. While it's a direct route, it takes about 40 minutes. So, plan your day in advance!



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PARQUE DAS NACOES

Oceanario de Lisboa: This truly exceptional aquarium is a must-see attraction in Lisbon for families (with a cafe serving the Vinho we all need after museum days!).

Pavilhao do Conhecimento: This science museum, just next door to the Oceanario, is a hands-on wonderland for curious kids.

Garcia de Orta: With play areas for kiddos and Isidewalks for riverside strolls, this well-designed green space is named after a famous Portuguese physician and naturalist.

Telecabine Lisboa: Get sweeping views of the river and Vasco de Gama bridge on this out-and-back funicular.



Belem is a hit with families visiting Lisbon. Right on the Tagus river, it's got gorgeous (and very photo-worthy) historic spots like the Jerónimos Monastery and Belém Tower. It's kid-friendly with space to run around, a nice playground close to the main street, and long riverside walkways perfect for scooting. Plus, you've got to try the 'Pastéis de Belém' – these little custard tarts will be a big win with the kids (and you too!).







Catch the Cascais train line to Belem station. You can board at Cais do Sodré station.



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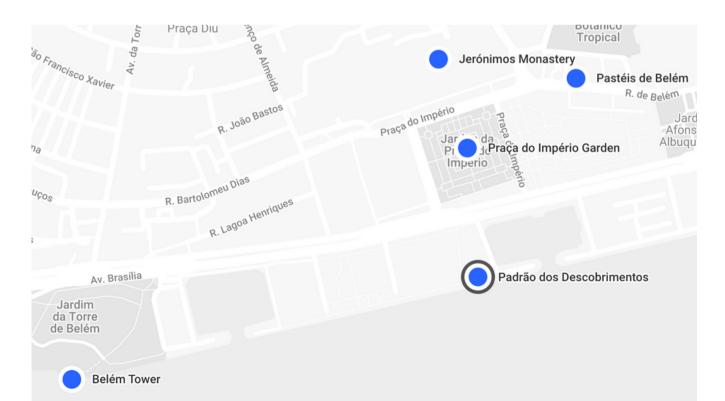
BELEM

Jardim da Praça do Império: Near the Monastery, there's a lovely park with a playground. Stop nearby for lunch on Belem's main drag.

Jerónimos Monastery: Walk past the Monastery for a beautiful glimpse of its historic facade. If you want to go in, buy tickets in advance. Pasteis de Belem: The most famous spot to get the custard tart that's so emblematic of Lisbon.

Belém Tower: A UNESCO World Heritage Site and a mustvisit attraction. While toddlers might not appreciate the historical significance, there's a stretch of sandy beach in front that could provide hours of amusement.

Monument to the Discoveries (Padrão dos Descobrimentos) Built to honor Portugal's Age of Discovery, the size is awe-inspiring. The large plaza is great for kids to run around, with plenty of ice cream and treat carts nearby.



TOP PLAYGROUNDS

Principe Real Playground
Praça Dom Luís I Playground
Parque Infantil do Campo dos Mártires da Pátria
Vasco da Gama Garden Playground
Sud Kids
Praca do Imperio Garden
Praca da Armada Playground
Jardim da Estrela

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