



Car rental in Faro, Algarve: our tips and advice

By Floriane

If you're here, you're planning a trip to the **Algarve**, and frankly, it's a great idea. This region of southern Portugal clearly appealed to us, as much for the diversity of its landscapes as for the way you discover it. But one question quickly came to mind: **how do you go about renting a car in the Algarve without making a mistake?**

Between **Faro** airport, price differences depending on the season, sometimes unclear insurance and rental conditions in Portugal, it's normal to have a lot of questions:

- **where to rent a car in the Algarve**, and more importantly, where?
- what are the **pitfalls to avoid** when booking?
- is it really necessary to take out **supplementary** or **excess-free insurance**?

In this guide, we share **all our advice** on how to **rent a car in the Algarve with peace of mind**, avoid **unpleasant surprises** and **control your budget**.

Why renting a car for your Algarve road trip is (almost) essential

Let's be clear: yes, it's possible to visit some Algarve towns without a car. But if you **really** want to **explore the region**, renting a car quickly becomes a must.

With a car, you can easily :

- ☐ Reach the **wildest beaches**
- ☐ Explore the **cliffs and rock formations** that are often far from the villages, as in the case of the Bengil cave, located 10 km from [Armação de Pera](#), the nearest village.
- ☐ **Leave early in the morning or return late to avoid the crowds**, especially at popular spots like the magnificent [cliffs of Ponta da Piedade](#).
- ☐ Adapt your itinerary to suit the weather or your personal preferences

On the budget front, we were **pleasantly surprised by [car rental](#) prices** in the Algarve. Rates are often very low, which makes renting really worthwhile and means you **don't** have **to bother with public transport**, while enjoying total freedom to explore the region.

During our stay, this is clearly what enabled us to combine **Alvor, Armação de**

Car rental in Faro, Algarve: our tips and advice

Pêra, [Lagos](#), **Ponta da Piedade** and the **Ria Formosa** without constraint.

□ To sum up: as is often the case, the car offers **total freedom**. Find out more about our itinerary for your Algarve road trip in our dedicated article.

Car rental in Faro, Algarve: our tips and advice

Car rental in Faro, Algarve: our tips and advice

Where to rent a car in the Algarve? Faro airport, the best choice

The ideal starting point is **Faro Airport, the Algarve's main (and largest) airport**. There are numerous **direct flights** (depending on the season) from many cities.

[Faro Airport](#) is the perfect place to start your stay or road trip in the Algarve.

Why rent directly from Faro airport?

- more **choice of vehicles**
- **prices are generally lower** than in the city center, every time we travel we take the time to compare, and **the lowest car rental prices are almost always at the airport**.
- **immediate** recovery **on arrival**
- easy return before the return flight

□ Faro is also very well located:

- ~45 min from Armação de Pêra
- ~1h from Lagos village
- ~15 min from the village of Olhão and the [Ria Formosa nature reserve](#) + [the unspoilt island of Armona](#)

➔ View [Faroairport car rentals](#)

When to book a car in Faro?

□ A **key tip: book as early as possible**, especially if you're traveling between June and September, (advice that also applies to hotels in the Algarve, .

Anticipating allows :

- more choice
- pay less
- avoid summer stock-outs

We've seen **huge price differences** every few weeks.

Which rental company to choose in Faro? Our method (simple and effective)

Rather than recommend a **single rental company**, we'd rather be honest: **there's no such thing as a perfect rental company**. Prices and conditions vary all the time.

□ The best solution is to **compare**.

For our part, we systematically use [DiscoverCars](#), a **car rental comparator** that makes it easy to compare offers from numerous local and international agencies, all in one place.

With just a few clicks, this comparator allows us to :

- compare **local and international agencies** such as Sixt, Hertz, Avis...
- check **insurance, deductibles and conditions**
- avoid unpleasant surprises at the counter thanks to our **many reviews**

□ [Compare car rentals in Faro with DiscoverCars](#)

Budget: how much does a car rental in Faro cost?

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, we were **pleasantly surprised by the prices of car rental in the Algarve**. Here are the average rates:

- ☐ **10 to 30 € / day out of season**
- * **€30-50 / day in summer**

During our stay, we found very reasonable rates by booking **several weeks in advance**. For example, here's a simulation for 6 days in May with **Yes Car Hire**, at less than 10€ / day.

Insurance: not to be overlooked

Even if driving in the Algarve is very pleasant, with roads in excellent condition and little stress at the wheel, leaving well covered allows **you** to travel in complete relaxation, without turning the slightest unforeseen event into a nasty surprise.

Before confirming your booking, please check :

- the **amount of the deductible**
- what's included (tires, windows, rocker panels)
- any exclusions
- Using a comparator allows you to see this information in black and white, without having to scrutinize every agency website.

Using the insurance comparator allows you to see **this information in black and white**, without having to scrutinize every agency website.

□ **Our advice:** take the [DiscoverCars full coverage](#) (about €8 per day). may seem to represent an additional cost at the time of booking (it's sometimes higher than the rental price), but above all it's a way of traveling with peace of mind. A simple impact on the windscreen or a small fender-bender can quickly become costly, and this kind of detail can ruin a trip.

It's often **far less expensive than over-the-counter insurance**, covering up to several thousand euros in costs.

What type of car to rent in the Algarve

Good news, and as you'd expect, **there's no need for a 4x4** in the Algarve. Instead, we recommend a **small city car** or a family **SUV** for easy parking in the Algarve's generally small parking lots.

Small or compact car

Perfect if :

- you travel in spring/summer
- you stay on the main roads
- you want to limit your budget

SUV

Interesting if :

- you are in charge
- you move around a lot
- you're looking for more comfort

* The most important thing is **air conditioning**, which is essential in summer.

Driving in the Algarve: what you need to know

Driving in the Algarve is **easy and pleasant**, but there are a few things to keep in mind:

- [limitations well respected](#)
- many **speed cameras**, especially on fast roads
- limited parking in villages

- caution in narrow historic centers

□ Tip: choose **accommodation with parking** so you don't have to spend hours looking for a space in high season, or pay exorbitant parking prices (especially in summer).

Find our selection of well-located Algarve hotels with parking and swimming pool.

How do tolls work in Portugal?

While some freeways operate as they do in France, with **barriers where you stop to pay**, many Portuguese roads use **electronic toll** systems. Gantries register your passage and automatically calculate the amount due.

Here are 3 options for avoiding tolls in Portugal

- Option 1: **Avoid toll routes (simplest □)**

If you want to save money, you can very easily **avoid toll roads altogether**.

□ Simply set up [Google Maps](#) or [Waze](#) by selecting "avoid toll roads". In the Algarve, this works very well: the secondary roads are in good condition, and **the A22 freeway in the Algarve is currently free**.

- **Option 2 - The box offered by the rental company**

Most rental agencies offer a **small electronic box** already installed in the car.

□ It is generally billed **at between €1 and €2 per day**, and tolls are **calculated and paid automatically** when the vehicle is returned.

This is a good option if you don't want to equip yourself before departure and prefer a turnkey solution.

Option 3 - The Ulys electronic toll tag

If you are going to Portugal for several weeks, we recommend that you purchase a [Ulys](#) electronic toll tag, which also works in Portugal. Then all you have to do is register your rental car's **license plate**, and the tolls will be **debited automatically**, exactly as in France.

And as usual, the badge **costs nothing in the months when you don't use it**.

How can I avoid tolls on Google maps?

Sidebar: mistakes to avoid when renting a car in the Algarve

- **Book at the last minute in summer:** prices rise quickly and the choice of vehicles diminishes sharply.
- **Don't check the deductible:** this is often where unpleasant surprises lurk, with high amounts due to the slightest incident.
- **Say yes too quickly to options at the counter:** rental company's insurance, category upgrade, GPS... these options can quickly make the bill explode.
- **Forgetting to check what's covered:** tires, windows and rocker panels are sometimes excluded from basic insurance.
- **Don't do a detailed inventory:** take photos or videos on departure (and on return if possible), especially for micro-scratches.
- **Choosing a car that's too big:** in some historic centers and tight parking lots, a compact car is much easier to maneuver.
- **Underestimate the parking issue:** in some coastal villages, parking spaces are scarce. It's better to look for parking lots on the outskirts of town, or to opt for a hotel with parking, which is still cost-effective, as parking lots can quickly become expensive.

- **Forget the air-conditioning:** in midsummer, it's a real comfort, even essential in the Algarve.

Our opinion on car rental at Faro airport

Renting a car in Faro is clearly **the best way to discover the Algarve**. It's simple, affordable and perfectly suited to a road trip.

☐ If we had to sum up:

- ☐ essential for exploring the region
- ➔ Faro is the best place to start
- ☐ compare + insurance = zero stress

Checklist to be checked at the counter before collecting your [rental car](#) (you can download the PDF article below and then print our checklist before your stay):

Please check

✓ / Notes

Required documents (license, credit card, confirmation)

Amount of blocked security deposit

Insurances included and excluded (tires, windows, underbody)

Options added but not requested

Policy and fuel level

Vehicle condition (photos / video taken)

Mileage (unlimited or capped)

Assistance number and instructions in the event of a problem

Exact time and place of return

We **really enjoyed** writing this article. If you have any other suggestions, please feel free to leave a comment below. We stayed in the Algarve for 10 days, so be sure to check out our other articles about this incredible region.

Don't hesitate to leave us a **note** or **5 stars** below, to let us know if you're planning this trip, or to ask us any questions you may have. We'll be delighted to answer them.

Before you leave, **find all our articles to help you organize your trip:**

- Where to sleep in the Algarve? our best addresses
- Itinerary of our Algarve road trip ?
- Visit the villages of [Lagos](#), [Armação de Pêra](#), [Alvor](#) and Olaho
- [Visit the must-see Benagil cave](#)
- [How to visit the cliffs of Ponta da Piedade?](#) by boat and on foot
- [What to do in Portugal's Ria Formosa natural park](#) and islands?

Donnez une note à cet article :
0 avis (0/5)

Merci de partager notre article :

Car rental in Faro, Algarve: our tips and advice

- [Share on X \(Opens in new window\) X](#)
- [Share on Facebook \(Opens in new window\) Facebook](#)
- [Share on Pinterest \(Opens in new window\) Pinterest](#)
- [Share on WhatsApp \(Opens in new window\) WhatsApp](#)
- [More](#)