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John King; Julia Wilkinson

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John King; Julia Wilkinson : Lonely Planet Portugal (Travel Atlas) by John King (1997-07-02) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lonely Planet Portugal (Travel Atlas) by John King (1997-07-02):

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Overweight, stale, out of dateBy Hairy LarryI have used the Lonely Planet guides in Asia, the Middle East, and in Europe. Lately, they seem to have lost their way. Originally, the LP guides were for people who had travelled at least a little bit before and needed some pointers to an area. The guides usually had some sort of walking tours in the cities they indicated. Their guides have become filled with useless colour photos of generic scenes, The quirky, fresh information has disappeared -- In the summer of 2004, I used the LP guides for both Portugal and Spain. I was traveling for about three months. I had been in both places before and had used a LP guide. The most recent guides are stale and minimally updated. They are also occasionally misleading; especially concerning food. Sadly, the LP guide to Portugal is not worth the weight that goes along with carrying it.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good, solid guide with occasional florid prose and out of date informationBy Scott C. LocklinI don't expect much from Lonely Planet. Usually, they seem to be written by some sandal wearing reprobate who thinks finding vegetarian food is important. They often skip over interesting historical fact, landmarks, culture and items of artistic merit -to say nothing of local custom and folkways, in order to have enough space to tell you about where the local discos are, and where you can buy more lonely planet books (think about why this is dumb for a minute). Personally, I only buy them because they have good maps in them, and halfway decent (if bizarre) hotel and restaurant recommendations. I also buy them because nobody else really makes serious travel books (I have high hopes for the "Avant Guide" franchise). I'd probably be better off collecting antique

Baedekers. This guide to Portugal was, on the other hand, quite good; well above their average offering. It's out of date in some significant ways. For example, one of the central train stations in Lisbon, Rossio, has been out of service for years; it's somewhat excusable that this is out of date information in the book, but the same thing is on their website, so I have to imagine the next edition will have the same problems. Also, when I went, there were all manner of bizarre ceremonies involving students in robes being tormented by other people; nary a mention in the book. None the less, there were many sights I had never heard of which were mentioned in the book. Many were described as "like out of star wars" by the voluble Miz Hole (or Beach), which pretty much meant: you should really see this. It wasn't a bad description, as Lucas obviously modeled some of his alien looking stuff after Manueline gothic style -just a bit matey for my tastes. There were also a number of excellent "small detail" recommendations for restaurants; a really cool fried chicken restaurant in Porto, run by a midget and a guy who looks like an undertaker -a remarkable hotel in Tomar run by the world's happiest man, Esteve. These sorts of little details made me forgive all the flaws I mentioned above. The details also made me love Portugal. Portugal isn't as dense in history and monuments as Italy, nor is the food as good as in France, but they have a very deep and wonderful culture there. This is quite a good book for getting a flavor for it, and seeing the sights which need seeing. 23 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Good recs for hotels/restaurants, domestic travel info poor

By Mike R. This book was right for hotel recommendations, both in Lisbon and the smaller cities (I can only speak to Porto, Guimaraes, Coimbra, Sintra, and Pombal.) The chapter on Porto was particularly sharp, offering details and information that I would have almost certainly missed. Be aware, however, that both cinemas (Portuguese and Hollywood) in central Porto are closed, along with a several restaurants. Bus information to Boavista is inaccurate, as is nearly all information regarding domestic travel in Portugal, particularly by train. Most of it is dated, as a new station in Lisbon has apparently rerouted some lines, but some info is totally wrong. For example, the guide contends that most IC trains to and from Lisbon stop BOTH at Coimbra A and B, when in fact, Coimbra B services the Lisbon line, and A handles local traffic. The reverse is true of Gare Oriente and Santa Apolonia in Lisboa, where it is possible to get off at either station. This is important information, especially if you speak barely functional Portuguese and have a hard time understanding anything more than simple directions about departure times and locations or yes/no responses (quando e? sim/nao/amanha, etc...) Furthermore, there are many more trains running on the Lisbon/Porto/Braga line than are mentioned in the book, and contrary to its assertions to the contrary, train travel (with the exception of the local, which painfully slow) is efficient and reasonably priced (the Lisbon-Porto Alfa train, the equivalent of an Amtrak metroliner between New York and Washington, costs about 15 dollars and takes all of 3 hours.) All in all, a good book, but it needs to be updated, particularly with the coming changes and chaos during Euro2004.