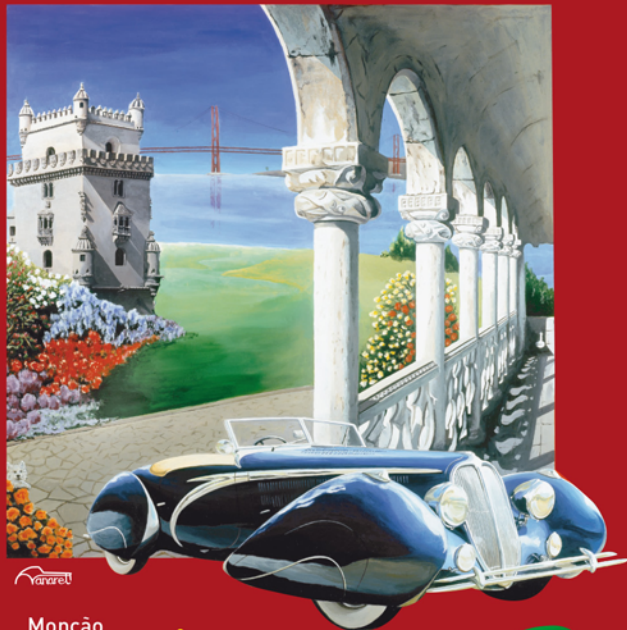


# L'Impérial

Portugal 2011



## TOUR EXCLUSIVES

- A scenic helicopter ride over the Douro Valley and River, right from the hotel's terrace.
- A priest's blessing for the cars and crew before the tour departed.
- An authentic journey through an unspoiled region just a few hours by plane from most major European cities.



## Portugal 2011

An autumn driving adventure



After Prague-Venice (2009), "L'Impérial - Rallye d'Exception" returned to Europe with an exciting journey through Northern Portugal and the Douro Valley where participants revelled in an authentic experience and great company under Portugal's radiant skies.

### Roads made for driving

The tour's 1,228-kilometre loop took participants along winding roads through some of Portugal's most beautiful nature reserves – with plenty of scenic overlooks and spectacular views to boot! Driving enthusiasts enjoyed a unique opportunity to have the region's roads virtually to themselves, free from the constraints of speed limits. There is simply no better time of year to discover the Douro Valley – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – than in the autumn, bathed in golden sunshine and stunning colours.

### Hospitality and the very best in luxury accommodation

The 2011 adventure kicked off not on the road but in the air, with a helicopter ride over the Douro Valley and the river's glittering waters. The air tour lifted off from the terrace of the Yeatman Hotel following a sumptuous buffet. The tour began the next day from Monte de Santa Tecla, where a priest gave a traditional blessing for the cars and crew. At each stop along the route participants were welcomed with the friendly hospitality characteristic of the Portuguese people. After reaching Monção in the northern tip of the country, the tour turned eastwards to wind through a series of charming, authentic villages along the Spanish border: Montalegre, Gerês, and Bragança – home to some of Portugal's most beautiful castles. The tour then headed south for a stop at Marialva, an entire medieval village converted into a luxury hotel, before moving on through Miranda do Douro and Régua, also known as the Garden of Portugal. The 2011 "L'Impérial - Rallye d'Exception" also included a special treat: two cruises along the Douro River to visit the region's famous UNESCO-listed vineyards. Participants enjoyed a delightful barbecue at the appropriately-named Quinta dos Sonhos (Villa of Dreams) on the Douro river in Romaneira – a bucolic scene right out of an Impressionist painting! The tour drew to a close with a festive private dinner including, of course, plenty of fine Porto wine at the Rozês wine cellars.

The 2011 tour took participants on an exciting discovery of one of Europe's most beautiful regions, combining an unforgettable driving experience with spectacular scenery (from land, river, and air!), great company, and the prestigious dining and accommodations that are the hallmark of "L'Impérial - Rallye d'Exception".

*"One of Europe's most beautiful circuits,  
set in the heart of stunning vineyards"*

