

Vigo to Leixões

73 nautical miles south along the Galician and Portuguese coast, from the Real Club Náutico de Vigo to Marina Porto Atlântico, in a single day on Thursday 23 July 2026.

DISTANCE	73.0 nm, 10 legs
TIME	12 h 25 min at 5.5 to 6 kn
DEPART	07:30 CEST from Vigo, 12 minutes after sunrise (07:18)
ARRIVE	About 18:55 WEST at Leixões, before sunset (21:01 WEST)
DAYLIGHT MARGIN	About 2.1 hours of daylight left on arrival
TIDES	Neaps (coefficient 37 to 38), so streams are at their weakest
WIND	Summer Nortada from the north: a downwind passage
BOAT	35 to 38 ft sailing yacht, 1.9 m draught, 6 kn under sail, 5.5 kn under engine
CREW	Skipper and 3 crew, watches of 3 hours



Track, waypoints 1 to 9 and ports of refuge (squares).

Go or no-go

Decide at 06:30 CEST on the day, after the morning forecasts. Go only if all of these hold:

- ☐ Wind forecast for the coast between Vigo and Porto is from north to west at force 5 or less, and not rising above 6 before 20:00 WEST.
- ☐ Significant wave height at Leixões is 2.5 m or less, and swell is not from the south-west.
- ☐ Visibility is forecast at 2 nm or more. With fog forecast, go only with working radar and AIS and a crew briefed for fog routine.

- ☐ The Portuguese Navy's bar status page shows Viana do Castelo and Póvoa de Varzim open, so both ports of refuge are usable.
- ☐ No navigation warning for the route (Portuguese Hydrographic Institute local warnings, Spanish coastal warnings).
- ☐ Crew, boat and safety gear checked against the list at the end of this plan.

If the forecast fails on the day, the fallback is a 7 nm hop to Baiona and a fresh start the next morning.

Route and waypoints

Waypoints are planning positions chosen in open water, with distances and courses calculated from them. Plot every one on the current chart before use. Courses are true; magnetic variation in this area is small (about 1°W, check the chart's compass rose). Times assume 5.5 kn in the ría and 6 kn on the open coast.

#	WAYPOINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	COURSE	LEG NM	TOTAL NM	ETA	NOTES
0	Real Club Náutico de Vigo	42°14.6'N	008°43.3'W				07:30 CEST	Depart. Position approx on chart.
1	Ría de Vigo, off Cabo Estai	42°11.8'N	008°50.0'W	241°T	5.7	5.7	08:32 CEST	Main channel. Watch for traffic.
2	Canal del Sur	42°10.5'N	008°54.0'W	246°T	3.2	8.9	09:08 CEST	South of the Islas Cíes, south end of the Cíes.
3	West of Islas Estelas	42°07.8'N	008°56.5'W	214°T	3.3	12.2	09:40 CEST	Clear of Las Serralleiras. Check clearance on the chart.
4	Off Cabo Silleiro	42°06.0'N	008°57.5'W	202°T	1.9	14.2	10:00 CEST	3 nm west of the light. Can build off the cape.
5	Off the Río Miño	41°52.0'N	008°57.0'W	178°T	14.0	28.2	11:20 WEST	Border. Clocks go back to the river.
6	Off Montedor	41°45.0'N	008°57.0'W	180°T	7.0	35.2	12:30 WEST	Viana do Castelo is 5 nm off. Port of refuge in Portugal.
7	Off Esposende	41°32.0'N	008°53.0'W	167°T	13.3	48.5	14:43 WEST	Stay outside the port. Bar is not usable.
8	Off Póvoa de Varzim	41°22.5'N	008°49.5'W	165°T	9.9	58.4	16:22 WEST	Second port of refuge. Rely on it before relying on it.
9	Leixões approach	41°10.0'N	008°43.5'W	160°T	13.3	71.7	18:35 WEST	Keep 0.5 nm from the coast. On VHF 12. Enter on the channel.

#	WAYPOINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	COURSE	LEG NM	TOTAL NM	ETA	NOTES
10	Marina Porto Atlântico	41°11.0'N	008°42.3'W	042°T	1.3	73.0	18:55 WEST	VHF 9. Inside the harbor

Tides and time

VIGO · CEST (UTC+2)

LW	05:39	1.41 m
HW	12:04	2.69 m
LW	18:19	1.47 m
HW	00:36 (24th)	2.61 m

LEIXÕES · WEST (UTC+1)

LW	04:45	1.4 m
HW	11:09	2.5 m
LW	17:20	1.4 m
HW	23:40	2.5 m

Thursday 23 July 2026 is a neap tide, the smallest range of the month (coefficients 37 to 38, against 95 at springs on 15 July), so tidal streams are at their weakest. Range is about 1.2 m at both ports.

The clock trap. Spain keeps CEST (UTC+2) and Portugal keeps WEST (UTC+1). Leixões high water at 11:09 Portuguese time is the same moment as 12:09 in Vigo. Keep the log in UTC, and change the ship's clock at waypoint 5 off the Río Miño.

Depth on arrival. Arriving around 18:55 WEST, the tide at Leixões is just after low water (17:20, 1.4 m). The shallowest berths in the yacht basin have about 2.0 m, so depth there is about 2.0 + 1.4 = 3.4 m against a 1.9 m draught: about 1.5 m under the keel. The entrance basin has 4 m. Observed levels at Leixões run about 10 cm above prediction.

Daylight. Sunrise in Vigo 07:18 CEST. Sunset in Leixões 21:01 WEST.

Weather

- **Nortada.** In summer the Azores high and the heat low over Iberia set up a steady north to north-north-west wind along this coast, usually strongest in the afternoon. Southbound, it is behind you. Rig a preventer, plan gybes, and expect the sea to build off Cabo Silleiro.

- **Fog.** Cold upwelled water makes morning fog and haze common in summer. The Portuguese met office issues coastal visibility warnings for Minho to Cabo Carvoeiro.
- **Swell.** Atlantic swell from the north-west runs under the local wind sea. It decides whether the Portuguese bars are open.
- **Current.** The Portugal Current sets south along the coast, slightly in your favour. Plan for no help and treat any as margin.

FORECASTS TO CHECK

- AEMET coastal forecast, zone 7 "Aguas costeras de Pontevedra", and high-seas zones Finisterre and Porto.
- IPMA (Portugal) zone 17 "Porto" and the 20 nm inshore bulletin.
- NAVTEX Coruña: 518 kHz station D at 0000, 0400, 0800, 1200, 1600 and 2000 UTC. Check the station letter on the receiver.
- NAVTEX Portugal (Cencomar): 518 kHz station R at 0200, 0600, 1000, 1400, 1800 and 2200 UTC.

Hazards

- **Leaving the Ría de Vigo.** Commercial traffic, ferries to the Cíes and mussel rafts (bateas) line the ría. Keep to the main channel and keep a lookout.
- **Canal del Sur.** Rocks lie off the south end of the Islas Cíes and off Monteferro.
[CHECK ON THE CHART](#) and pass mid-channel.
- **Las Serralleiras and Islas Estelas.** Islets and rocks off Baiona (Las Serralleiras light Fl G 4s). Waypoint 3 keeps you west of them. [CHECK CLEARANCE ON THE CHART](#)
- **Cabo Silleiro.** Wind and sea build off the cape in a Nortada. Keep 3 nm off.
- **Fishing gear.** Pot buoys and nets are common off northern Portugal, often poorly marked. Keep 3 nm or more offshore in daylight, and keep a bow lookout.
- **River and harbour bars.** The Río Miño (A Guarda and Caminha) and Esposende are not for a 1.9 m yacht. Esposende's bar was restricted to 3 hours either side of high water at last report.
- **Leixões.** A commercial port with an oil terminal. No navigation within 0.5 nm of the oil monobuoy. When a tanker is approaching, stay out of the outer channel until the pilot and VTS agree. Inbound craft keep to the east side of the channel. Keep 100 m from cruise ships and manoeuvring ships, and 50 m from ships at anchor. No anchoring in the box from 41°09.6'N to 41°13.6'N, 008°43.4'W to 008°46.6'W.
- **Beaches.** In the bathing season, no navigation within 300 m of a beach.

Ports of refuge

PORT	FROM THE ROUTE	USE IT WHEN	NOTES
Baiona	4 nm from waypoint 3	Anything goes wrong in the first 2 hours	Monte Real Club de Yates, 24 h, depths 4 to 40 m, tel +34 986 385 000. The easiest entry on the route.
Viana do Castelo	5 nm from waypoint 6	Wind or sea rising mid-passage	Bar open to all navigation at last report. Capitania +351 258 070 553. Check bar status before committing.
Póvoa de Varzim	3 nm from waypoint 8	Late afternoon, crew tired, or daylight short	Bar open at last report. Check the Navy's bar status page on the day.
Leixões	Destination	Always available	Open day and night unless the Captain of the Port restricts entry. The safest harbour on this coast.

Pilotage

LEAVING VIGO

1. Call the marina on VHF 9 before slipping. Engine on, fenders and lines stowed once clear.
2. Head west-south-west down the ría in the main channel. Port traffic has priority.
3. Pass between Cabo Estai and the Cíes into the Canal del Sur, mid-channel.
4. Off the Estelas, turn south-west, then south at waypoint 4 off Cabo Silleiro (FI(2+1)15s).
5. Sails up once clear of the ría: a poled-out headsail or downwind rig, with a preventer.

ENTERING LEIXÕES

1. From waypoint 8, keep outside the no-anchoring box and at least 0.5 nm from the oil buoy.
2. Call Leixões on VHF 12 at waypoint 9 and listen for traffic. Polícia Marítima watches 12 and 16.
3. Watch for the entry signals: if the bar is "condicionada" or "fechada", do not enter.
4. Enter on the east side of the channel. Head-to-wind, sails down, inside the breakwater.
5. Call Marina Porto Atlântico on VHF 9 for a berth. The marina entrance has a green light, FI G 4s.

LIGHTS ON THE WAY

Cíes, Monte del Faro	FI(2)8s, 185 m
Cíes, Punta Canabal	FI(3)20s, 63 m
Las Serralleiras	FI G 4s
Cabo Silleiro	FI(2+1)15s, 85 m, 17 M
Ínsua (Río Miño)	FI WRG 4s

Montedor	FI(2) about 9.5 s, 103 m, 22 M: check the period on the chart
Viana do Castelo breakwater	FI R 3s
Leça (Boa Nova)	FI(3)14s, 57 m
Leixões south breakwater	FI G 4s, 17 m

Communications

Real Club Náutico de Vigo	VHF 9 · marina 24 h +34 638 037 201 · office +34 986 447 441
Port of Vigo control centre	+34 900 100 802 (24 h) · port VHF channel: CHECK THE PILOT BOOK
Monte Real Club de Yates, Baiona	+34 986 385 000
Leixões harbour (Polícia Marítima)	VHF 12 and 16, call sign POLIMARLEIXOES
Leixões VTS	+351 229 992 800
Capitania de Leixões	+351 220 165 050 · duty +351 916 353 249
Marina Porto Atlântico	VHF 9 · +351 229 964 895 · 09:00 to 12:30 and 14:00 to 18:30
Emergency, both countries	VHF 16, DSC 70 · 112
Portugal maritime emergencies	+351 214 401 919 · Leixões lifeboat +351 918 102 179
Spain, Salvamento Marítimo	CHECK THE NUMBER IN THE PILOT BOOK

Contingencies

- **Wind rises above force 6 or swell above 2.5 m.** Before waypoint 5, turn back to Baiona. After it, go to Viana do Castelo if its bar is open, otherwise continue to Leixões, which stays open.
- **Fog.** Fog routine: navigation lights, sound signal (1 long, 2 short under sail), radar and AIS watch, lifejackets on, liferaft ready. Move out to 4 nm to stay clear of pot buoys and the coast, and slow down.
- **Engine failure.** Sail on: the wind is fair. Do not try a Portuguese river bar under sail. Arrange a tow into Leixões through the marina or Polícia Marítima.
- **Running late.** If waypoint 8 is passed after 19:00 WEST, decide between Póvoa de Varzim and a night entry to Leixões, which is lit and open.
- **Person overboard.** Shout, point, throw the danger buoy, press MOB on the plotter, DSC distress alert, Mayday on 16. In a following sea, crash-stop or quick-stop under sail, or recover under engine.
- **Crew fatigue or seasickness.** 3-hour watches, food every 3 hours, and Baiona or Viana as the early exit.

Before leaving

- ☐ Forecasts read and logged at 06:00 to 06:30 CEST
 - ☐ Bar status checked for Viana and Póvoa
 - ☐ Navigation warnings checked
 - ☐ Waypoints entered and checked against the chart
 - ☐ Ship's log started in UTC
 - ☐ Crew briefing: route, watches, safety gear, MOB, fog
-
- ☐ Fuel for 12 hours under engine, plus a reserve
 - ☐ Water, food and hot drinks for 14 hours
 - ☐ Lifejackets with crotch straps, jackstays rigged, harnesses
 - ☐ Liferaft, grab bag, flares in date, handheld VHF
 - ☐ Radar, AIS and nav lights tested
 - ☐ Passports and boat papers aboard for Portugal

Sources

- Tides, Vigo: Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina tide service, 23 July 2026 (times inferred as UTC; check against the printed table).
- Tides, Leixões: APDL official 2026 tide table, leixoes.apdl.pt.
- Leixões rules: Capitania do Porto de Leixões, Edital 594/2018.
- Bar status: Marinha, Estado das Barras, marinha.pt.
- Marinas: rcnauticovigo.com, mrcyb.es, marinaportootlantico.net.
- Lights: The Lighthouse Directory (Rowlett), ibiblio.org/lighthouse.
- Forecast zones and NAVTEX: AEMET maritime guide, IPMA maritime bulletins, dxinfocentre.com.
- Pilot: RCC Pilotage Foundation, Atlantic Spain and Portugal, 9th edition (2025).
- Sunrise and sunset: calculated (NOAA method).

A planning exercise to RYA Yachtmaster standard. Not for navigation: use current official charts, the pilot book and the forecasts on the day.