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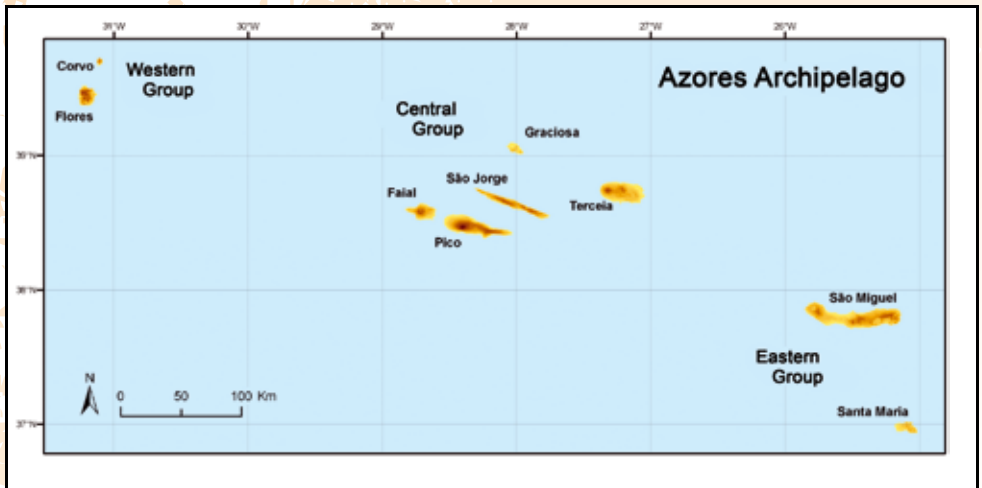
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**ART** ASSOCIAÇÃO  
AZORES REGIONAL  
DE TURISMO

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Publisher: ART - Regional Tourism Association  
Graphic Design: Ver Açor, Lda.  
4th Edition February 2013

# DISCOVERING THE AZORES



The Azores have a strong geographical identity expressed by both the landscape and the natural and cultural heritage. In remote regions such as the Azores, recognised for its natural and cultural identity, expansion of alternative tourism is recognised as a contribution to sustainable development. The rugged diverse natural landscapes and cultures, the wealth of the natural landscape, the omnipresence of the ocean, the exoticism and tranquillity make this destination uniquely attractive to visitors. The variety available gives tourists the opportunity for a relaxing holiday and an active holiday filled with nature and adventure.

The Archipelago of the Azores is made up of nine islands grouped into three groups (central, western and eastern). It is a scattered insular territory with its own identity where each group and even each island complements the others. In order to discover the Azores, one cannot visit just one island, for there are many identities and great diversity in the tourism offer.

In this scattered territory, the connections

between the islands are decisive for both locals and visitors. All islands have regular connections by air, and some by boat. Visitors can also rely on maritime tourism companies to travel between islands within the same group. For land travel, the options are public transportation, taxi services, cars for hire or transport provided by tourism companies, travel agencies and tourism enterprises.

To reach the Azores the options are more limited, the great adventurer will arrive by sailboat, others opt for a short visit through the territory on a cruise ship, but the most popular option is to arrive by airplane at one of the several airports with international connections.

However you choose to travel to the Azores, you will see a unique view of green islands emerging from the immense blue of the Atlantic Ocean. The uniqueness and beauty of this territory captivates tourists. Expectations are usually exceeded, and the majority of visitors quickly discover that there is more to see and do than they had expected.

This guide focuses on presenting, methodi-

cally and simply, the available nature and adventure tourism activities in the Azorean islands while highlighting information relevant to planning a trip. By promoting a sustainable tourism model, we hope to raise environmental awareness and increase the demand for an active holiday that values contact with nature and the local culture. With this in mind, activities with significant environmental impact were intentionally excluded, namely motorised sports on land and some water sports.

This guide is for tourists and locals who wish to participate in these activities either on their own or by using the services of tourism or maritime tourism companies. The guide is divided into three sections:

- In the first section, the possible nature and adventure activities in the Azores are outlined, grouped by sea and land activities.

- In the second section, each island is described individually. In addition to information about which activities can be enjoyed and where, the guide includes information about the available tourism services and a summary of the cultural heritage, including the main festivities.

- The last section is a list of the tourism service agencies and maritime tourism service

agencies with details of the services that they provide, including a list of useful contacts and internet sites with relevant information.

Since the market for tourism services is in constant evolution, it is natural that some changes in the contact information are inevitable and that new service providers and new services will become available.

Nature and adventure activities have associated hazards. Therefore, participants



should adopt good practices and use appropriate equipment that is adapted to their experience and skills and the local conditions. Participants should also obtain information about the local conditions, including weather and sea forecasts, whenever relevant. Although the authors and ART (Regional Tourism Association) have tried to provide information that is as accurate and updated as possible, they do not accept responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience resulting from the use of this guide.

# CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Azores have been focusing on a tourism model that builds on the strengths of the territory to offer a genuine and quality product that has as its foundation a sustained internal development. This sustainability is dependent on appropriate land management, but it is equally dependant on the actions of the tour operators, residents and tourists.

Visitors can help minimize the negative impact and contribute in a positive way, by adopting practices such as the following:

- Respect local culture and traditions.
- Give preference to local products and services.
- Learn about the local environment, flora and fauna.
- If doing activities individually, get information about restrictions and limitations, and obtain the necessary permissions.
- Follow environmental restrictions and limitations.
- Do not contribute to the spread of infesting species.
- Give preference to activities with lower environmental impact and do not take part in activities resulting in significant impact to sensitive areas.
- Do not wander off the trails, close all gates and do not cross cultivated fields.
- Keep your distance from wildlife; use a zoom lens when taking pictures.
- Do not light fires and don't dispose of lit cigarette ends.
- Avoid contaminating lakes and streams; avoid discharges of water with shampoo or other detergents.
- Respect other visitors by controlling your noise level and not leaving waste behind.
- Do not throw waste into the sea.
- When diving, maintain good buoyancy control, be aware of yourself and equipment, especially the fins, and do not bring souvenirs from the sea.
- Prefer and recommend companies that promote codes of good practice and environmental education.
- Report environmental violations made by tourism companies.
- Collect only essential information on paper. Prefer digital information, thus avoiding the proliferation of leaflets.
- Give preference to longer stays at each location and travel between the islands by boat, which has a lower environmental impact than air travel.
- "From Nature take nothing but pictures, and leave nothing but footprints".



# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

The Azores have exceptional conditions for nature and adventure activities. There are many opportunities for practising different activities, in a diverse landscape. The mild weather allows visiting the islands year-round and, if the conditions become less favourable, there are a number of options to explore local culture and heritage, and to taste the excellent gastronomy.

Although many activities can be carried out on all the islands, each island has its particular niches. Flores is excellent for hiking, boating, diving and canyoning; Corvo is known for diving and bird watching; Faial has sailing and whale and dolphin watching; Graciosa is good for scuba diving; Pico has mountain climbing and whale and dolphin watching; São Jorge has spectacular hiking trails, surfing and canyoning; and Terceira offers interesting boat tours, geotourism and golf. In the Western Group, in São Miguel, geotourism, whale watching and hiking are particularly important and in Santa Maria, the best activities are boat trips and diving.

The requirements for participating in each activity are distinct, though most activities are accessible to anyone who wishes to begin or to simply have a new and unforgettable experience. For those who are more experienced, there are also numerous opportunities. Visitors wishing to carry out activities individually should confirm that they have adequate credentials and competence, the appropriate equipment, as well as the necessary information about the local conditions, in order to avoid undesired incidents. Hiring service providers, either guides or local specialists, is recommended to visitors. This both improves the safety of the activities and gives the visitor an opportunity to discover the secrets of the islands and to learn about the local environment and culture. All islands have nature and adventure tourism service providers, though the available activities differ, as shown in the following table. A list of tourism agencies and companies is included in the last section of this guide.

## ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES BY ISLAND

Activity	FAIAL	GRACIOSA	PICO	S. JORGE	TERCEIRA	FLORES	CORVO	S. MIGUEL	S. MARIA
Whale and Dolphin Watching	**	*	**	-	*	-	-	**	-
Swimming with Dolphins	**	-	**	-	*	-	-	*	-
Boat Tours	**	**	**	*	**	**	*	**	**
Sailing	*	-	*	-	*	-	-	*	-
Diving	**	**	**	*	**	*	*	**	**
Recreational Fishing	**	**	**	*	**	*	*	**	*
Sea Kayaking	*	*	-	-	*	*	-	*	*
Surfing, SUP and bodyboarding	*	-	-	*	*	-	-	*	-
Hiking and Walking	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	**	*
Mountain climbing	-	-	**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Geotourism	**	*	**	-	**	*	*	**	*
Birdwatching	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	-
Cycling and mountain biking	*	*	*	-	*	-	-	*	-
Horseback riding	*	-	*	-	*	-	-	*	*
Canyoning	-	-	-	*	-	*	-	*	*
Climbing and Abseiling	-	-	*	-	*	-	-	*	*
Golf	-	-	-	-	*	-	-	**	-

Legend: Potentially available: -


Available Services:


Some \*

Varied \*\* \*

# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

The available activities in the Azores are briefly characterized in this guide, grouped by land or sea activities. Aerial activities are not included because demand and offer are low, however paragliding is becoming more available and there are some specialized sites and guides available.

 **SEA ACTIVITIES:** Whale and dolphin watching, swimming with dolphins, boat tours, sailing, scuba diving, sea fishing, sea kayaking, surfing, SUP, bodyboarding and windsurfing.

 **LAND ACTIVITIES:** Hiking and walking, mountain climbing, geotourism, birdwatching, cycling, mountain biking, horseback riding, canyoning, climbing, golf, caving, orienteering and roping.

## WHALE AND DOLPHIN WATCHING

Whale and dolphin watching is a leisure and environmental education activity, regulated by law in the Azores. In the archipelago's marine zone, one third of the 81 cetacean species in the world can occur.

After two centuries of whaling, which ended in the 1980's, once again these mammals contribute significantly to the local economy but now as a sustainable activity. Whale and dolphin watching has become the most developed and prominent nature tourism activity in the Azores.

Pico and Faial islands are the major centres for whale and dolphin watching. Both islands have several fully licensed companies and comply with the established code of good practices. However, this service is also available on the other islands, namely on Terceira and São Miguel.

A briefing precedes the departure to sea, where the activity is explained to the visitors and the characteristics of the species that may eventually be spotted are given. High success is achieved in spotting the mammals because of the specialised whale spotters on land who provide key information to guide the boats from strategic locations where whale-spotting stations remain from the whaling period.

On these boat trips, visitors experience unforgettable moments watching the impressive whales and the singular shows given by dolphins but also contribute both to the local economy and to the preservation of these species that are one of the current symbols of marine life conservation.

As a complement to whale and dolphin watching, visitors can also discover the extensive heritage associated with the extinct whaling industry, by visiting the whale spotting sites, the museums, the old factories and the rendering stations.



## SWIMMING WITH DOLPHINS

Currently, there are several companies offering swimming with dolphins programs, which are an opportunity for visitors to have an unforgettable experience. However, this activity must be carried out in a controlled way, respecting established rules, to minimise potential negative impacts that might occur, especially with the resident dolphin species and when calves are present in the group.

This activity takes place on the surface of the deep blue Atlantic Ocean, near the islands, and usually the boat is positioned in the expected path of the dolphins, allowing time for swimmers to enter the water and wait for the approach of the dolphins that eventually may interact with whoever is in the water. If you wish to participate in this activity, look for a company that shows they are adopting good practices to reduce the potential negative impact to the dolphins, namely by using small boats, taking small groups, and not swimming with dolphins simultaneously with other activities.



## BOAT TOURS

Given the proximity and diversity of the islands, the Archipelago of the Azores, and in particular the Central Group, is excellent for boat tours. On these tours, the visitor has the opportunity to discover hidden coastal spots and singularities on different islands and enjoy the panoramic views of the islands from the vast surrounding ocean. Boating services are available on virtually all the islands for tours in motorised boats, either around an island or between islands. Tourists can sign up for outings organized by the companies or form a group to organize a more personalized visit that may include birdwatching or a boat ride at sunset.



## SAILING

Owing to their privileged location, in the mid-North Atlantic, the Azores are an important port for sailboats that cross the Atlantic Ocean. As a result, a quiet island like Faial became quite cosmopolitan. Presently there are marinas in seven of the islands of the archipelago, and although the availability is still reduced, it is possible to hire boat tours or a boat for several days, with or without a skipper.

The availability of marinas and the proximity of the five islands of the Central Group give this area excellent conditions for sailing, allowing you an unforgettable experience sailing in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.





# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

## DIVING

Due to a privileged location and its volcanic genesis, the Azores have a lot of opportunities for scuba diving. Scuba diving sites are located mostly on the coastline, with caves, cavities and either rocky or sandy bottoms. Many coastal reefs also provide good scuba diving opportunities just a few metres below the surface, as well as some offshore sites, at guyots, abrupt elevations of the ocean floor in very deep areas. There are also a considerable number of submerged shipwrecks and one archaeological site accessible to divers.

The large majority of the dive sites in the Azores are in the coastal zones, but some of the more emblematic sites are offshore ocean platforms of volcanic origin that emerge from the deep bottom almost to the surface.

The spectacular fauna, the beauty of the ocean bottom, the crystal visibility and the mild water temperature are why many consider that the Azores have some of the best scuba diving in the North Atlantic. In addition to the large numbers of fish and the diversity of species, observation of some larger specimens is a rewarding experience for divers. The Azores are an exceptional destination for experienced divers as well as for beginners and those who wish to participate in a course for international certification.

The best time of year for diving in the Azores is from May to October. The ocean's temperature varies from 17°C to 24°C; the higher temperatures occur in the months of August and September. It should be noted that often visibility is very good up to 30 metres, naturally depending on seasonal changes and surface weather.

Diving centres can be found on almost all the islands, where trips, equipment hire and assistance in planning the scuba diving trips are available. At the diving centres, available programs range from discover scuba diving programs, for a first-time scuba diving experience in a highly supervised and relaxed environment, to tailored scuba diving trips to various spots, for dives in different environments and levels of difficulty. Some diving centres also offer specialised courses. Currently there are three hyperbaric chambers in the archipelago, one in each group, on the islands of São Miguel, Faial and Flores.

Although diving is one of the tourism services that is most developed in the Azores, the source of the development is still very vast, namely with regards to scientific and technical diving or diving in places further from the coast, especially the Princess Alice Bank and the Dom João de Castro Bank.

Given the delicate balance of fragile marine ecosystems, divers should adopt rules for mini-

mal negative impact to the environment, minimising disturbance or damage to the marine flora, fauna and geological formations. These include a good diving technique, the correct use of the equipment and accessories and the minimization of disturbance or damage to the marine flora, fauna and geological formations.

For more information, refer to publications and look for information on the internet, like the site [www.horta.uac.pt/scubaazores](http://www.horta.uac.pt/scubaazores), or ask for information at the diving centres.





## RECREATIONAL FISHING

Fishing tourism is the non profit capture of marine species, and includes recreational fishing, sport fishing and spearfishing. Recreational fishing is available on all the islands of the Central Group with support service agencies on all the islands, which are required to be licensed in the area of maritime tourism services. This activity is regulated by the DLR n.º 9/2007/A (19th April), and by the Normative Dispatch 62-2007, 21st December.

The ocean in the Azores has a large diversity of marine floors that are habitat to more than 500 species of fish. The richness of fauna, the vast exclusive zone and the fact that the oceans in the Azores have not been overfished results in great opportunities for recreational fishing in the Azores. Within a short time, tourists will even be able to experience life aboard a commercial fishing vessel, as this is a new product being offered by some commercial fishing companies.



### Recreational fishing

Recreational fishing can be done in the Azores from land or from a vessel. There are several different forms of recreational fishing available in the Azores. By using the services of specialized companies, that know the best places and the most favourable conditions, you can expect to experience an unforgettable day. Participants can choose from trolling, ledgering, jigging or fishing with poppers, each representing a different skill and for the capture of different species.

### Sport fishing

Also called big game fishing, this type of fishing requires the use of specific vessels. In the Azores there are companies specializing in this form of fishing, especially on Faial and Terceira Islands.

The Azores are famous in the big game fishing international community for being one of the regions where you can catch the largest blue marlins; however, there are other appreciated species such as tuna and shark. Given the immense depths of the Atlantic Ocean, even short trips near the coast are successful.

### Spearfishing

Spearfishing, here referring to underwater fishing, involves the manual capture of marine species for recreation by floating or snorkelling. The use of artificial breathing equipment is forbidden. Other restrictions that apply include the requirement to use a signal buoy, the prohibition of fishing less than 300m from a port and less than 100m from bathing areas and the prohibition of night fishing. Capture is limited to a maximum of two crustaceans and 10 fish or octopuses per person. It is forbidden to capture dusky grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*) and limpets (all species of *Patella genus*).

Owing to the good visibility, the mild water temperature and the diversity of fish near the coast, the Azores are one of the preferred destinations for spearfishing enthusiasts.

# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

## SEA KAYAKING

Sea kayaking provides a more adventurous and active way to discover the coastline of the islands. Some companies have kayaks for rent, allowing visitors to explore the coastline independently. This activity is conditioned by sea conditions. Safety rules include always being in a group, not wandering far from the coast, and taking provisions, water, life vest and a means of communication.

For more experienced kayakers, alternatives include trips between islands (dependant on obtaining the required licences), or tours lasting several days. However, this activity is still beginning in the Azores, thus kayaks for rent are not abundant and information and organized logistical support is limited.



## SURFING, SUP AND BODYBOARDING



The Azores already have some recognized surfing and bodyboarding spots. Although regular swell can be found, and some sandy beaches exist, most spots are only recommended for experienced surfers and body-boarders since they are located in rocky areas. Therefore, participants should ascertain whether the spots are appropriate for their skills and experience, and look for information about the dangers in each location.

Surfing and bodyboarding spots exist on all the islands; Terceira and São Miguel are the islands with the largest number of spots, followed by the island of Faial. However, the most popular surfing spot is the Fajã de Santo Cristo, on São Jorge Island.

SUP (Stand Up Paddle Surfing) is a recent activity in the region with great potential.

Owing to the mild water temperature (average 21° C) and the regularity of swells, the most favourable months for this activity are September and October.

Although it is new in the archipelago, there is already some offer for SUP (Stand Up Paddle Surfing) for which all the islands have excellent conditions.

## WINDSURFING AND KITESURFING

Although windsurfing is an activity with potential in the Azores, there are still very few followers and the services offered are limited. Existing windsurfing spots are mainly the sheltered beaches and areas of the archipelago. Kitesurfing is a very recent activity in the Azores, with potential for development, particularly for experienced kitesurfers due to the scarcity of beaches with large sandy areas that are recommended for beginners.

The Praia Grande on Terceira (Praia da Vitória) has excellent conditions for both windsurfing and kitesurfing.





## HIKING AND WALKING



Hiking and walking either for leisure, sport or environmental education, is a fast growing activity, recognized for its health and well-being benefits.

The Azores are a natural hiking and walking destination, providing excellent opportunities, due to the amazing scenery, shaped by the volcanic activity, in a landscape dominated by shades of green and the variations in blue of the Atlantic Ocean.

Regional and local agents have been setting up a network of classified trails, duly signed, according to international standards, and publicized, in order to promote their use by independent hikers. Most trails are the result of restoration of old trails that are predominantly in natural or rural areas. In 2012, there were about 73 routes distributed among the islands of the Azores, but the number of available trails tends to grow. You can find more information at the local tourism offices where there are leaflets of the routes available and on the Internet sites [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com) and [www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com).

Although the trails are relatively safe, hikers should be aware of the rapid weather changes, quite common in the Azores, and of the frequent occurrence of rain and fog at higher altitudes. Thus, it is essential to check the weather forecast before departing on a hike. It is recommended that visitors avoid hiking alone, wear appropriate clothing and shoes, take food and water and never forget to tell someone about their hiking or walking plans. Once on the trail, it is important to close the gates that you open, to follow the trail, to not leave waste behind, to avoid taking samples of rocks or plants and to not disturb the cattle.

Some companies provide guide services or transportation to and from the trails. Alternatively, taxis may be hired. Some companies offer guided services to unmarked trails. Many of these trails are difficult to find and follow alone.



## MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

Mountain climbing in the Azores is restricted to the climbing of the Pico volcano, on Pico Island. It is the highest point in Portugal with 2,351 metres.

The mountain can be climbed year-round and by anyone who has the determination and the stamina to climb a very steep trail and overcome a 1,150-meter difference in level. The trail can be climbed independently, but a local guide is recommended to ensure a higher level of safety and to permit the climbers to learn about the evolution of the local geology and ecosystem.



# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

## GEOTOURISM

The Archipelago of the Azores is located in a region where three lithospheric plates meet and is part of an extensive range of underwater mountains (the Mid-Atlantic Ridge), resulting from the forces of internal geodynamics with the extrusion of magma onto the surface through volcanic manifestations. Its relatively recent formation and the progressive volcanic eruptions are reflected in the terrain, characterized by accentuated landforms and well-preserved volcanic structures. As a whole, the Azores are home to a variety of geological manifestations and ecosystems, complex and fragile, with a high level of ecological and touristic interest. In addition to well-preserved volcanoes, many others exist that have collapsed, forming spectacular calderas.

In terms of geological tourism, the islands complement each other; each one has distinct and singular volcanic features and phenomena. Among the most interesting geological monuments are the Capeli-nhos vulcano, on Faial island, where remains of a recent eruption can be visited; the Algar do Carvão and the Furnas do Enxofre (sulphur fumaroles) on Terceira island; the impressive Furna do Enxofre, a large cave on

Graciosa island; the Rocha dos Bordões (Staff Rock) on Flores; on Corvo the Caldeirão (Great Caldera); and, on Pico island, in addition to the Gruta das Torres, an impressive lava tube, there is the majestic Pico volcano that reaches an altitude of 2,351 metres with a small volcanic cone that rises from the moon-like scenery of the central crater that has a diameter of 700 metres.

With regards to natural geothermal occurrences, the Hot Springs at Carapacho, on Graciosa Island and the Hot Springs at Furnas e Ferraria, on São Miguel Island, are worth visiting.

It should be pointed out that the volcanic caves whether volcanic pits or lava caves have potential for caving. The observation of some underwater volcanic phenomena, including submersed lava tubes, some submarine volcanoes and even volcanic activity, is possible through diving. Despite all the variety, the number of specialized guides and programs specifically for geotourism is still limited.

The creation of Geopark Azores ([www.azoresgeopark.com](http://www.azoresgeopark.com)) is very important to the promotion of geotourism, to sustainable management and to the awareness of the value of the abundant and diversified geosites.



## BIRDWATCHING

Birdwatching in the Archipelago of the Azores, although not very marketed, is promising because of the possibility of seeing a great variety of species in natural and beautiful scenery. In addition to some of the endemic species, it is possible to watch many resident and migratory species. Among the more emblematic birds that are easily found are the Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo rothschildi*), the Cory's Shearwaters (*Catonectris diomedea borealis*), the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), and the Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*). On all the islands, good birding sites are identified. More information is available on the Internet at <http://at www.birdingazores.com>.

Birdwatching is a year-round activity; however, birdwatchers visit the archipelago mostly in the period from August through December.





## CYCLING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING

At first sight, the accentuated landforms of the islands may be seen as an obstacle to this activity. However, the landforms are a welcomed challenge for the more motivated and physically prepared. There are numerous alternatives for less challenging rides, such as the plateaus or the coastal areas. Another option is to use the transportation services available from some companies, which take participants to higher locations so that the ride becomes an enjoyable downhill tour through fields and woods, discovering the scenery that extends into the ocean.

Cycling is one of the most interesting ways to discover the territory. Cycling the "Landscape of the Pico Island Vineyard Culture", UNESCO'S World Heritage Site, is a must.

For more demanding routes, such as downhill, there are numerous possibilities, but since there are still few enthusiasts, information about routes is limited.



## HORSEBACK RIDING

All the islands of the Azores have a strong tradition associated with horses, which have been utilized for transportation and bullfights, for many decades, especially on Terceira Island. Presently, there are several equestrian centres dedicated essentially to breeding horses and providing riding lessons. Some also provide services of guided tours to their premises and tours in carts or on horseback.

Horseback riding is another interesting way to discover the islands, viewing the scenery, galloping or gently walking. Some companies offer programs both for experienced and inexperienced riders. Inexperienced riders will need a preliminary experience with the horse and the tours are always with a guide.



# NATURE AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE AZORES

## CANYONING

Canyoning is a recreational sport in which participants travel down a canyon using techniques such as abseiling (rappelling), jumping, scrambling down and tobogganing to overcome the obstacles. This water and mountain activity allows the discovery of appealing locations and includes a very attractive recreational component.

In the Azores, São Jorge and Flores islands have excellent conditions for canyoning with several equipped routes of different levels of difficulty. There are also good routes on São Miguel and Santa Maria. The large vertical drops and waterfalls to the ocean, characteristic of some Azorean routes, are one of the main attractions of this new canyoning destination.

Owing to the abundance of water and a mild climate it is possible to go canyoning almost year-round, however the best period is from April to October, although it is always dependent on the weather conditions and the discharge of the river channels.

This activity can be done by experienced visitors in individual groups or in organised tours by local companies. Independent groups need to obtain information about the routes, engaging only in those suitable for their level of experience and expertise. They are expected to use the appropriate equipment, always inform someone about their plans, and to check the meteorological and ocean conditions, whenever leaving by ocean is required.

This is a recent activity in the Azores so that the information and services available are still scarce, but this is expected to change quite rapidly. The publication of a guide with canyoning routes is anticipated in 2013 and information can be obtained from local specialized companies and on the internet at [www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com).



## CLIMBING, ABSEILING AND ROPING ACTIVITIES

Climbing potential is limited on most islands. It is restricted to rock climbing in small basalt cliffs, mostly located by the coastline.

On Terceira Island, there are over one hundred equipped climbing routes, relatively small, in three different areas and on the islands of São Jorge, Pico and São Miguel there are already some well-equipped climbing schools.

There are also tourist entertainment programs that include this activity and several brochures with details about the equipped routes are available from ART (Regional Tourism Association) offices or from the association "Os Montanheiros".

There are companies that provide services for those would like to do abseiling, which can be done in waterfalls on São Jorge Island.

They are also several adventure parks in the archipelago where it is possible to take part in several activities, including slide, rappel and zipline.



## GOLF

The Azores have some potential for golf, because of the security and tranquillity of the destination, and because of the local environmental conditions, where water is widely available, therefore golf courses can be easily integrated into the surrounding landscape, made up of woody areas and green pastures.

The availability of this activity is, however, very restricted, as there are only three golf courses, one on Terceira and two on São Miguel. However, a golf course is in construction on Faial and another is planned for Pico.

In the last few years, the Regional Department of Tourism in collaboration with Tourism in Rural Areas Association has been promoting an alternative to traditional golf referred to as field or rustic golf. This sport, which is much more sustainable than traditional golf, takes place in pastures or other grasslands, and may contribute to diversify tourism activities in the Azores.

Some companies working in rural tourism have started to offer this service and provide equipment, expert monitoring and even sites prepared for the sport.

For more information about the availability of this service see the table of services and companies at the end of this guide, ZoomAzores ([www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com)) or contact the local tourist offices and the tourist information kiosks of the Regional Tourism Association.



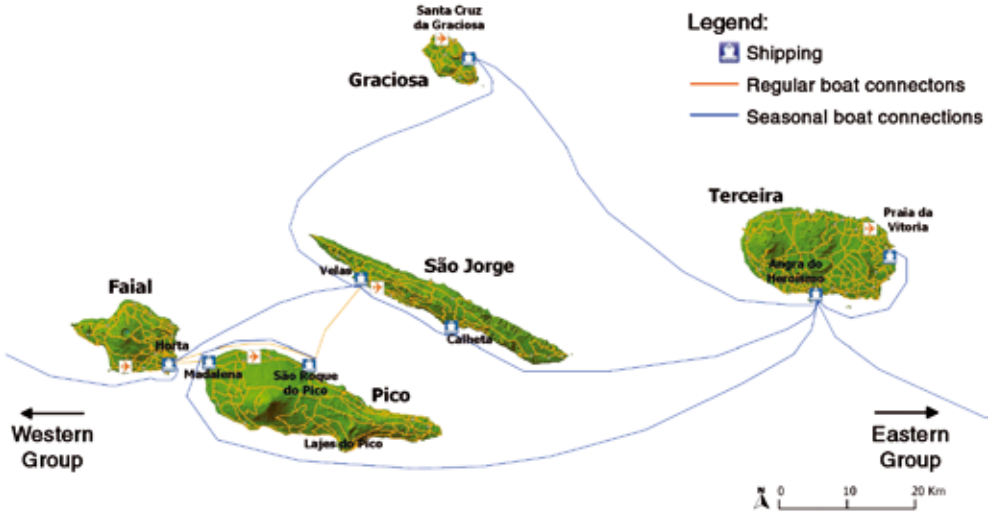


# CENTRAL GROUP

# GETTING THERE

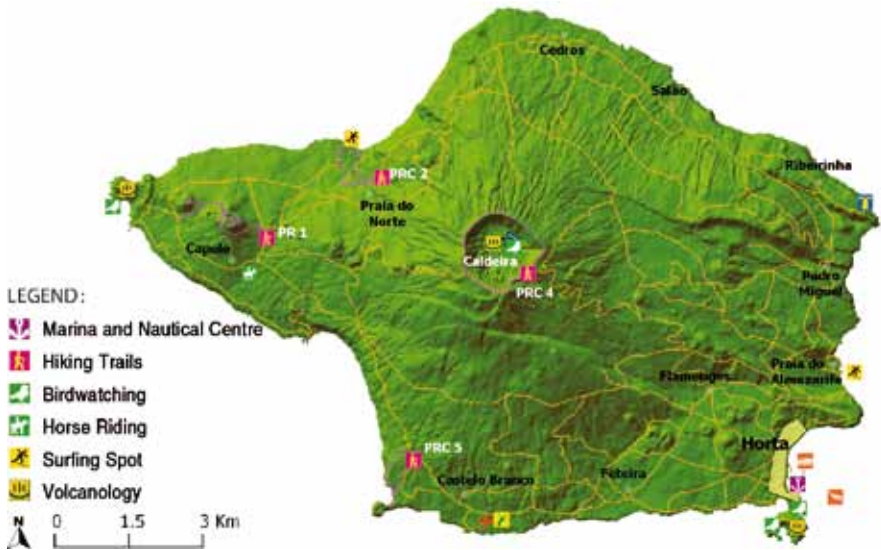
## Direct airline connections

	FAIAL	PICO	S. JORGE	GRACIOSA	TERCEIRA
FAIAL	-				✈
PICO		-			✈
S. JORGE			-		✈
GRACIOSA				-	✈
TERCEIRA	✈	✈	✈	✈	-
S. MIGUEL	✈	✈	✈	✈	✈
S. MARIA					
FLORES	✈				✈
CORVO	✈				✈
MADEIRA					
PORTUGAL	✈	✈			✈
EUROPE					✈
U.S.A.					✈



**Maritime connections:** Maritime connections between the islands of the Central Group are provided by the companies Transmaçor and Atlântico Line. However, interested parties may also utilize the services of maritime tourism companies that often provide inter-island trips.

- **Transmaçor:** Guarantees connections between the islands of the triangle (Faial, Pico, São Jorge) year round, and during the high season (May to October) connections between these three islands are increased and connections with the remaining islands of the Central Group are added.
- **Atlânticoline:** During the high season, it provides connections between all the islands of the Central Group and with the other islands of the archipelago for passengers as well as vehicles.



Although it measures only 173 km<sup>2</sup>, Faial is one of the most visited and cosmopolitan islands of the Azores and its port is famous among sailors who cross the North Atlantic. The island is dominated by the central volcano that has an altitude of 1,031 metres at the Cabeço Gordo. It is topped by the fascinating caldera with almost two kilometres in diameter. To the west, the Capelinhos volcano is evidence of the most recent large eruption in the Azores, which occurred from 1957 to 1958, and can be visited.

The large majority of the approximately 15,000 residents of the island inhabit the east coast, mainly in the city of Horta, where the majority of the available lodging and tourism companies and offices are also located. Faial is also known for the Peter Café Sport that, since 1918, has been gaining world renown, first among international yachters, and later among the tourists that increasingly visit the island.

Faial is where the best sandy beaches of the Central Group can be found, namely the beaches of Almozarife, Porto Pim and Praia do Norte. Faial is also privileged with the magnificent view of Pico Island.

**Main activities:** Whale and dolphin watching, scuba diving, sea fishing, boat tours and hiking and walking.

**Main attractions:** City of Horta, Capelinhos Volcano and Interpretive Centre, the Caldeira, museums, Peter Café Sport, the view to Pico, beaches and natural pools.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** In the city of Horta, there are several examples of historical sites that are worth a visit. The defence fortifications of the Fort of Santa Cruz and the Fort of São Sebastião stand out. At Espalamaca, there are two renovated windmills. Concerning museums, the Centro do Mar (Whaling Factory), the Scrimshaw Museum (on the upper floor of Peter Café Sport), the Museum of Horta, the Interpretive Centre at the Capelinhos Volcano and the Casa (House) Manuel de Arriaga should not be missed.

The main festivities are the Semana do Mar (Ocean Week) on Faial (first week of August); the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (from May through September); the Festa de São João (Saint John's Feast) on Faial (June 24th); and the Festa da Nossa Senhora da Angústia at Angústias (Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows) on the 6th Sunday after Easter.

**How to get there:** Horta international airport is an important entry point, but many visitors use the sea connections to travel between the main islands of the Central Group and even from other islands of the Azores. The most frequent sea connection is between the city of Horta and the town of Madalena, on Pico Island; it takes about 30 minutes. The marina at Horta is especially famous among the sailors that cross the North Atlantic.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Faial is the main centre for sea activities in the Central Group. Several companies promoting nature and adventure activities can be found near the port and marina, the most popular are whale and dolphin watching, scuba diving, boat tours, and recreational and big game fishing.

Equipment for sea kayaking and windsurfing is available for hire. For surfing, the most popular spots are the beaches at Praia do Norte, Praia da Fajã, on the north coast, and Praia de Almoxarife.

**Whale and dolphin watching:** For decades, Faial and Pico islands were the main whaling centres of the Azores. Whale and dolphin watching for tourism began early on Faial; the two islands have the largest number of companies providing this service.

**Scuba diving:** The main dive sites on the coast of Faial are concentrated near the city of Horta, especially on the south and east coasts, but the local companies also organize diving in the channel between Faial and Pico and on the west coast of Pico. Horta is the departure point for diving at one of the best diving sites in the Azores, the Princess Alice Bank. However, organising a trip to this site is not straightforward since the trip is only possible with good sea conditions and with a minimum number of experienced divers.

**Sailing:** A sailing experience is a possibility even for those who don't have a boat. It is possible to hire a boat for a few hours or a few days, with or without a skipper, to visit the islands of the Central Group.



 **LAND ACTIVITIES**

Faial has a fairly good selection of land activities. The main activities are hiking and walking, geotourism and bird watching. Other activities include cycling, mountain biking and horseback riding.

**Hiking and walking:** On Faial, there are four marked trails, three of which are circular. The PRC4 encircles the enormous Caldeira created by the collapse of the main cone of a large volcano. This area is frequently covered with clouds, therefore it is advisable to check the weather and choose a clear day to climb to the Caldeira. The trail begins at the end of the road that climbs the eastern side of the volcano. The best program includes transportation by car to the crater, the walk on the trail that encircles the crater and the return to Horta by bicycle.

**MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF FAIAL** (source:www.trails-azores.com)

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Capelo – Capelinhos	Medium	7 km	2h30m
PRC2	Rocha da Fajã	Medium	5.5 km	2h30m
PRC4	Caldeira (caldera)	Medium	8 km	2h30m
PRC5	To the Hillock of Castelo Branco	Easy	4 km	1h30m

**Geotourism:** The island of Faial is rich in terms of preserved volcanic sites accessible to visitors. In addition to the magnificent volcano of the Caldeira, with a caldera measuring about 2 km in diameter at the top, there is an alignment of relatively recent volcanic cones to the west that culminate at the Capelinhos Volcano. The latter is a result of the eruption of a submarine volcano, which occurred from September 1957 to October 1958. Next to the old lighthouse, there is a modern interpretive centre dedicated to volcanology, with several exhibitions and multimedia resources to recount the geological history of the islands and, in particular, of the eruption at Capelinhos. The hillock of Castelo Branco and the Monte da Guia, on the southeastern part of the island, also evidences of volcanism on Faial Island, are worth a visit. The Monte da Guia, a protected natural area, incorporates a submarine cone, the Caldeira do Inferno (Hell's Caldera), and is connected to the city of Horta by an isthmus.

**Birdwatching:** The main birdwatching sites on Faial Island are in Horta, including Monte da Guia, the beach of Porto Pim and the commercial port. Although the humid zone of the Caldeira could be a site, access to the zone is not allowed since it is an integral nature reserve. The Capelinhos volcano area is another good site for birdwatching.



The smallest and most isolated island of the Central Group is Graciosa Island; it measures only 62 km<sup>2</sup>, and has less than five thousand inhabitants. Classified as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (2007), this island is less humid than the others because it is less mountainous.

The relatively mild slopes facilitated the construction of a road network that allows easy circulation on the island. The predominantly rural scenery is characterized by a disperse settlement with villages of whitewashed houses, many windmills, grazing fields and, to the north, vineyard enclosures. The east side is dominated by a volcanic landform, with an altitude of 405 metres, and a large caldera in whose centre is located the impressive Furna do Enxofre.

**Main activities:** Scuba diving, geotourism and thermal springs.

**Main attractions:** The historic centre of the town of Santa Cruz of Graciosa, the Furna do Enxofre, several lava caves, a ragged coastline and the Ilhéu da Baleia.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** The historic buildings and structures include the historic centre of the town of Santa Cruz da Graciosa, the urban centre of Praia, the water architecture, resulting from the need to capture and store water for the drier seasons, and the well-conserved examples of the traditional architecture. Of interest are also the windmills and the vineyard enclosures on the coastal edge; the Barro Vermelho (Red Clay) is of special interest.

The main festivities are the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (from May through September), Carnival and the Festa do Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres (Feast of Our Lord of Miracles) in the second week of August.

**Hot Springs Tourism:** The hot springs at Carapacho are open from May 1st to September 30th. They are located by the coast and have water temperatures that range from 35°C to 40°C.

**How to get there:** Graciosa has regular direct air connections with Terceira and São Miguel and sporadic sea connections with Terceira and São Jorge. During the high season, the sea connections include the remaining islands of the Central Group. This service is also often provided by maritime tourism companies.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Graciosa is a recognised destination for scuba diving and underwater photography, due to the crystal waters, the diversity of the marine life and the good quality scuba diving service that is provided. Although there are few companies, they offer a variety of services that, in addition to scuba diving, include boat tours, whale and dolphin watching, fishing and sea kayak tours. On this island, there are four spots of reference for surfing: Lagoa, Cachorro, Ribeira da Areia and Calhau Miúdo.

**Diving:** On Graciosa, there are more than 30 different dive sites with good diving opportunities, in different environments and levels of difficulty. The main dive sites are easily and quickly accessible, most are located near the coast and permit the observation of a large diversity of marine life including some larger species. There are also sites for shipwreck diving, such as the Terceirence and the Corvo. Visiting underwater lava caves is also possible.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

Graciosa's main land activities are hiking and walking, geotourism and birdwatching. Other activities include cycling and mountain biking.

**Hiking and walking:** On the island, there are three main routes, all of them relatively short and easy; one of them, the trail around the Caldeira is circular.

### **MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF GRACIOSA** (source: [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com))

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
<b>PR1</b>	Serra Branca - Praia	Easy	7 km	2h30m
<b>PRC2</b>	Around the Caldera – Furna do Enxofre	Easy	9 km	3h
<b>PR3</b>	Baia (Bay) da Folga	Easy	2.1 km	1h

**Geotourism:** The main geological attractions on Graciosa are the Caldeira, the Furna do Enxofre and some interesting lava caves. The island's coastline is very ragged and, to the east of the Ponta da Barca lighthouse, an islet can be found whose shape resembles the profile of a whale, thus it is called Ilhéu da Baleia (Whale Islet).

The Caldeira volcano has an elliptical caldera, with a diameter of about 1.6 km at its widest point. At the bottom of the caldera is the most important volcanic cavity of the island, the Furna do Enxofre (G1), which can be visited. This cave, one of the most imposing cavities of the archipelago, has a distinctive landscape and is considered unique in the international volcanospeleologic scene. It has a height of 80 metres and a maximum length of 194 metres. Inside, under an almost perfectly arched roof, there is a cold-water lake and exemplary sections of lava stalactites can be observed next to a fumarole with mud and other gaseous emissions. Access is through a 37-metre high tower. There is a small tourist reception and access to the cavern requires the payment of a small fee.

Although there are several lava caves, the most accessible to the visitor are the Furna da Maria Encantada (G2), the Furna do Abel (G3) and the Furna d'Água (G4).

**Birdwatching:** Graciosa Island is particularly interesting for observing marine birds, namely at the Ilhéu da Praia (Praia Islet) and at the coastal zone near the Ilhéu de Baixo. Other locations with potential are the ports of Santa Cruz and of Praia and the coastal area between Luz and Ponta da Barca. In addition to seeing the more common species, the spotting of rarer species has been reported. One of these is the Monteiro's Storm Petrel (*Oceanodroma monteiroi*) that is endemic to the Ilhéu da Praia (Praia Islet).



Santa Cruz da Graciosa Town Centre





Pico is the largest island of the Central Group with an area of 445 km<sup>2</sup>, and is easily recognised by its impressive mountain volcano with an altitude of 2,351 metres in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. This island was the main whaling centre during the peak period of sperm whale hunting, but it was able to overcome a time of economic decline, resulting from the end of whaling, with the development of the tourism activity of whale and dolphin watching.

The landscape of the western part of the island is characterized by a coastal plain formed by flowing lava. On this plain, human perseverance and effort tamed the rocky soil, creating small fields of soil, enclosed by rocky walls, on which grapevines are grown. In this area marked by lava rock enclosures for growing grapevines, on the edge of the ocean, was developed the culture of the verdejo wine, refined over the centuries with the help of the Franciscan, Carmelite and Jesuit friars. The UNESCO classification as a World Heritage site, recognising the uniqueness of the landscape, gave this area the deserved stature and provided the opportunity to draw attention to the need to preserve this landscape, strictly associated with a form of agriculture, which can only be sustained with the help and effort of the local population and tourism.

**Main activities:** Whale and dolphin watching, mountain climbing (climb of Pico Mountain), geotourism, scuba diving, hiking and walking.

**Main attractions:** Pico Mountain, the cultural landscape of the Pico Vineyards and the whaling heritage.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** Pico has an important heritage associated with two economic activities on the island: the vineyard culture and whaling. Historic sites associated with whaling include some of the whale spotting shelters, the Whaling museums in Lajes and the museum of Indústria da Baleia (Whaling Industry) in São Roque.

Heritage sites associated with the vineyard culture, include the landscape classified as World Heritage, the Museu do Vinho (Wine Museum) at Madalena and the diverse properties and sites associated with wine production consisting of, among other things, windmills, coastal freshwater wells, traditional houses, manor houses, wine cellars and cask rolls, which are rough ramps cut out on the rocks to facilitate the transport of the wine barrels to the sea.

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The main festivities of Pico Island are the Semana dos Baleeiros (Whaler Week), at Lajes during the last week of August; the Festa da Vindima (Grape Harvest Feast) during the 2nd week of September; the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (from May to September); the Feast of Our Lady of Madalena, at Madalena (July 20th to 23rd); the Festas do Cais de Agosto (August Port Festival), at São Roque (last weekend of July) and the Festa do Bom Jesus Milagroso (Feast of Miraculous Good Jesus), at São Mateus (August 6th).

**How to get there:** Pico has good airline connections with the main islands of the Azores and some connections with the Portuguese continent. Owing to its central location, this island also has excellent regular boat connections with Faial and São Jorge, and, less frequently, with Terceira.

For sailors, there are three good ports on the island (Madalena, São Roque and Lajes), but only one marina located at Lajes do Pico.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

The town of Lajes is the main centre for sea activities on the island, but there are also good services at the town of Madalena and some at the town of São Roque. Whale and dolphin watching, swimming with dolphins, boat tours, scuba diving, fishing and sailing all have organized services on the island. As for surfing, there are two spots of reference: Cachorro and Barca.

**Whale and dolphin watching:** For decades, Faial and Pico Islands were the main whaling centres of the Azores. Pico Island was pioneer in whale and dolphin watching for tourism. Pico and Faial have the largest number of companies offering this activity.

**Sailing:** A sailing experience is a possibility even for those who don't have a boat. At São Roque, it is possible to hire a boat for a few hours or a few days, with or without a skipper, to visit the islands of the Central Group.

**Scuba diving:** The main dive sites on Pico are on the western coast in the channel between Faial and Pico, and on the south coast of Pico. Given the genesis of the island, there are also good opportunities to see submersed geological features. Pico, like Faial, is an important departure point for diving at one of the most emblematic diving sites in the Azores, the Princess Alice Bank. Of note, if only recently, is that some companies offer snorkelling with sharks.





## LAND ACTIVITIES

Pico has excellent conditions for land activities. It is the only island with mountain climbing, and it has excellent alternatives for hiking and walking, geotourism and birdwatching. In recent years, several natural walls have been equipped for climbing thus providing excellent conditions for this activity. Other available activities include mountain biking, cycling and horseback riding. On the extreme eastern end of the island, at Piedade, there is an equestrian centre that offers guided horseback tours.

**Mountain climbing:** Pico Mountain, with an altitude of 2,351 metres, can be climbed year round and by anyone who has the determination and stamina to climb a very steep trail and overcome a 1,150-metre difference in level. The trail can be climbed independently, but use of a local guide is recommended to ensure a higher level of safety and to benefit from the knowledge of local guides about local geology and ecosystems. Some companies provide this service and, at the tourist offices, you may request a list of guides.

The trail begins next to the Casa da Montanha, located on the western side of the mountain at an altitude of 1,220 metres. To reach the Casa da Montanha, follow the road that heads to Cabeço das Cabras. Registration at the Casa da Montanha is required before beginning the climb. Although, on a clear day, the trail is relatively easy to follow with the few signposts, in foggy weather or at night, it is easy to lose the trail. Clouds can set in quite fast, and it is common for the mountain to become completely surrounded by the clouds. Better visibility is more likely in the morning and in the evening. In winter, snow is possible on the upper slopes of the mountain and the snow may remain for a few days. Although for many the climb seems to be the big challenge, it is important to understand that generally the main difficulties occur during the descent.

The climb to the border of the main crater (2,250 m) takes about 2h30m and it is necessary to go around, to the right, to enter the crater. From there, another 125 metres have to be climbed on a steep trail, to reach the summit of the small volcanic cone that tops the crater, the Piquinho. The number of visitors who may climb this cone is limited to a pre-established number per day. The more adventurous may spend the night in the crater (a tent or a bivouac sack and permission is required), and appreciate the sunset during the climb and the sunrise on the summit. Although for many the climb seems to be the big challenge, it is important to understand that generally the main difficulties occur during the descent.

**Hiking and walking:** On Pico, there are ten marked trails that are physically much less demanding than the climb of Pico Mountain. PR1 and PR5 allow you to visit a portion of the protected landscape of the Pico Vineyard.

## MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF PICO (source: www.trails-azores.com)

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Caminhos de Santa Luzia	Medium	10.5 km	3h
PR2	Caminho dos Burros: Vertente Norte	Medium	8.4 km	3h30m
PR3	Ponta da Ilha (Island Tip)	Difficult	10 km	3h
PR5	Vinhas da Criação Velha	Easy	8 km	2h
PR7	Caminho das Voltas	Easy	6.3 km	2h
PRC8	Ladeira dos Moinhos (Mill Slope)	Easy	3.4 km	1h15m
PRC9	Prainha do Norte	Easy	8 km	2h50m
PR10	Santana - Lajido	Easy	8.7 km	2h50m
PRC11	Calheta do Nesquim	Medium	12 km	4h
PR13	Lagoa do Capitão (Captain's Lake)	Medium	9.2 km	3h

**Geotourism:** In addition to the impressive Pico volcano, the island of Pico is prolific in volcanic manifestations, evidenced by the landforms, which are easily accessible to visitors. Cloaks of lava from recent eruptions, locally known as "mistérios" (mysteries), can be found at various locations on the island, for instance, the Mistério da Prainha. More liquid lava flows formed the "lajidos", coastal lava plains on Pico, of which the Lajidos de Santa Luzia are an example. Several cones and craters are clear in the landscape, particularly along road number 3, which crosses the plateau in the direction of Piedade. On the central plateau, there are several lakes; the most interesting are Capitão, Caiado and Paul.

The islets of Madalena, Ilhéu em Pé and Ilhéu Deitado, remnants of the eruptions of a submarine volcano, are clearly seen when travelling by boat from Horta to Madalena.

On the island, there are numerous volcanic cavities. The Gruta das Torres is the largest lava tube known in the Azores measuring about 5,150 metres in length, and it has high ecological and geological interest. Located at Criação Velha, in Madalena, this cave is equipped with an interpretive and a tourist centre, and a portion of the cave can be visited with helmets with mounted lights. Although only a part of the cave is open to the public, the guided tour covers 450 metres and lasts about 45 minutes.

**Birdwatching:** On Pico Island, several locations are known to be good birding sites. The most interesting are the mountain's lakes (Capitão, Seca and Caiado, among others) and the port areas (Ponta do Arieiro, at Madalena, São Roque, Ponta do Pargo, at Lajes, São Mateus, São João and Calheta de Nesquim).



# SÃO JORGE



São Jorge is a long and narrow island (56 km long and 8 km wide), made up of a chain of volcanic reliefs that reach their highest point at Pico da Esperança with an altitude of 1,053 metres. Although most of the land is above 500 metres, the population is concentrated in the lower zones, essentially on the south coast from Velas to Calheta, the main towns.

The coast is generally very steep, and large collapses created numerous "fajãs" which are small areas of flat fertile land at the bottom of a seaside cliff composed of volcanic and/or geomorphological debris. The fajãs are one of the main attractions of the island for their beauty and singularity. São Jorge is also known for the quality of its cheese.

**Main activities:** Hiking, canyoning, surfing, scuba diving, spearfishing and geotourism.

**Main attractions:** The fajãs (a small area of flat fertile land at the bottom of a seaside cliff composed of volcanic and/or geomorphological debris), gastronomy, tethered street bullfights, waterfalls, views of Pico and boat tours.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** São Jorge has a valuable natural heritage in its landscape. The historic buildings are mainly located on the coast from Velas to Ribeira Seca and include good examples of civil, agricultural, religious and military heritage buildings and sites. In the fajãs, there are small clusters of traditional stone houses, often abandoned. The windmills and watermills are also worth visiting.

Cheese production is an important industry, and visitors can visit one of the factories where the famous São Jorge cheese is made and cured since the 16th century.

The main festivities, in addition to the tethered street bullfights and the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (from May to September), are the Cultural Week at Velas (1st week of July); the Festival de Julho (July Festival) at Calheta (2nd fortnight in July); the Romaria à Nossa Senhora do Carmo (Peregrination to Our Lady of Mount Carmel), at the Fajã dos Vimes (July 16th) and the Romaria de Santo Cristo (Peregrination to Holy Christ), at Fajã de Santo Cristo (1st Sunday of September).

**How to get there:** São Jorge has airline connections to the main islands of the Azores, frequent boat connections with Pico and Faial, less frequent boat connections with Terceira and sporadic boat connections with Graciosa. The main port of entry is Velas. However, boats from Terceira stop at Calheta. The port at Velas has a small marina to accommodate recreational vessels.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

This quiet island with a long coastline is a privileged destination for some sea activities, in particular, boat tours, spearfishing, scuba diving and surfing. The north coast of the island has a beautiful natural and unspoiled landscape, thus a boat tour from the small port at the Fajã do Ouvidor, which was recently improved, is highly recommended. As on the other islands, there are good opportunities for sea kayaking.

**Scuba diving:** São Jorge has excellent diving sites, some impressive underwater caves and arches, and abundant marine life. Most sites are located on the south coast; however, the most famous are on both ends of the island, at Baixa dos Rosais and at Ilhéu do Topo.

**Surfing:** The Island is also famous in the surfing community especially due to the reputation of spots like the Fajã dos Cubres and the Fajã de Santo Cristo.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

São Jorge has exceptional conditions for hiking and walking and canyoning. São Jorge also has great potential for cycling, mountain biking and horseback riding. However, there are still no companies providing these services. There is some potential for caving and rock climbing, there are two equipped sectors, one at Urzelina and the other at Fajã do Ouvidor.



**Hiking and walking:** The establishment of small communities at the fajãs, many of which are in almost inaccessible places, required a vast network of paths, along valleys and steep slopes. At present, many fajãs are already accessible by road, but others, mostly abandoned, are only reachable on foot. The recovery and signalling of some of these trails, allows visitors to reach some of these spots independently.

Among the existing trails, PR1 is a popular one since it goes down the mountain to Fajã de Santo Cristo, which is a fajã accessible only on foot or with a 4-wheel motorcycle, and a symbol of the island because of its amazing landscape and ecosystem. It is possible to spend the night in the small settlement, either camping or in local lodging. There is also a coffee shop that serves meals and has local specialities, particularly, clams from the small lagoon in the fajã. It is also one of the best spots for surfing, spear fishing and canyoning.

## MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF SÃO JORGE (source: [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com))

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Serra do Topo - Caldeira Santo Cristo - Fajã dos Cubres	Medium	10 km	2h30m
PR2	Serra do Topo - Fajã dos Vimes	Medium	5 km	2h30m
PR3	Fajã dos Vimes - Lourais - Fajã de s. João	Medium	10 km	3h30m
PR4	Pico do Pedro - Pico da Esperança - Fajã do Ouvidor	Medium	17 km	4h
PRC5	Fajã de Além	Medium	6 km	3h
PRC6	Norte Pequeno Trail	Medium	11 km	3h
PR9	Fajã dos Vimes - Fragueira - Portal	Medium	3.1 km	1h30m

In addition to these trails, there are many others going to abandoned fajãs, especially on the north coast, but they are difficult to find and follow, so the use of a guide is recommended. For those looking for a different and unforgettable program there is the descent to the Fajã Redonda and Fajã do Sanguinhal and eventually returning by boat with a swim from the rocky beach. For this outing to be successful, good sea conditions are required as well as hiring of a local guide for the hike and a pick up boat for the return trip. It is necessary to swim to the boat from beach. On the boat trip along the north coast, you can enjoy the imposing scenery of steep cliffs broken by impressive waterfalls.

**Geotourism:** On São Jorge Island, there are many opportunities to see geologic features of volcanic origin. In the town of Velas, the Morro Grande results from the activity of a submarine volcano, and in the town you can easily see a natural arch. In the centre of the island, surrounded by a dazzling landscape, the alignment of volcanic cones is the evidence of a fissural volcano. At Urzelina, don't miss the visit to the church tower that withstood the eruption that destroyed the settlement in 1808.

Some of the fajãs are formed by lava flows such as the Fajã das Velas, the Fajã da Calheta, the Fajã do Ouvidor, the Fajã das Pontas and the Fajã da Ribeira da Areia. Others are formed from the accumulation of sediments from the collapse of steep slopes. Examples of the latter are the Fajã de Santo Cristo, the Fajã de João Dias, the Fajã dos Cubres and the Fajã dos Vimes.

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**Birdwatching:** São Jorge Island has several good birdwatching sites. The significant zones with indigenous flora, the lakes, the extensive coast and the high concentration of migratory birds allow for the spotting of several species from the most common to some of the rarer species. The fajãs also have good birdwatching conditions, especially the Fajã dos Cubres and the Fajã dos Tijolos. The two extremities of the island Topo (with a view of the Topo Islet) and Ponta dos Rosais are also privileged locations for birdwatching.

**Canyoning:** Canyoning in São Jorge is characterized by the omnipresence of the ocean and by the huge vertical cliffs making it an ideal territory for experienced canyoneers and fans of nature adventure sports. For anyone wishing to try out this activity there are simpler itineraries that can be undertaken with the help of qualified guides from tourism companies. Ribeira da Caldeira has two adequate routes for beginners.

Some routes end on the coast and hiring a boat service is necessary since no other way out is available (C13, C14 e C15). On other routes, the boat is the best form of returning, although there are alternatives to return by land (C4, C5, C18).

At the beginning of 2012 there were 26 marked canyoning routes on São Jorge. They are all equipped by the Associação de Desportos de Aventura Desnível. Experienced canyoneers can discover these routes without guides, based on information available on the internet at [www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com) and [www.desnivel.pt](http://www.desnivel.pt). Those who wish to do canyoning without a guide should consider the level of difficulty, the distance, the vertical descents, group competencies and available equipment before beginning the course, in order to avoid accidents. If you need to hire a service to take you to the site and pick you up at the end (by car or boat), arrangements have to be made beforehand. For beginners and less experienced canyoneers, or those who do not have equipment or companions, the use of specialised services of a company are recommended.

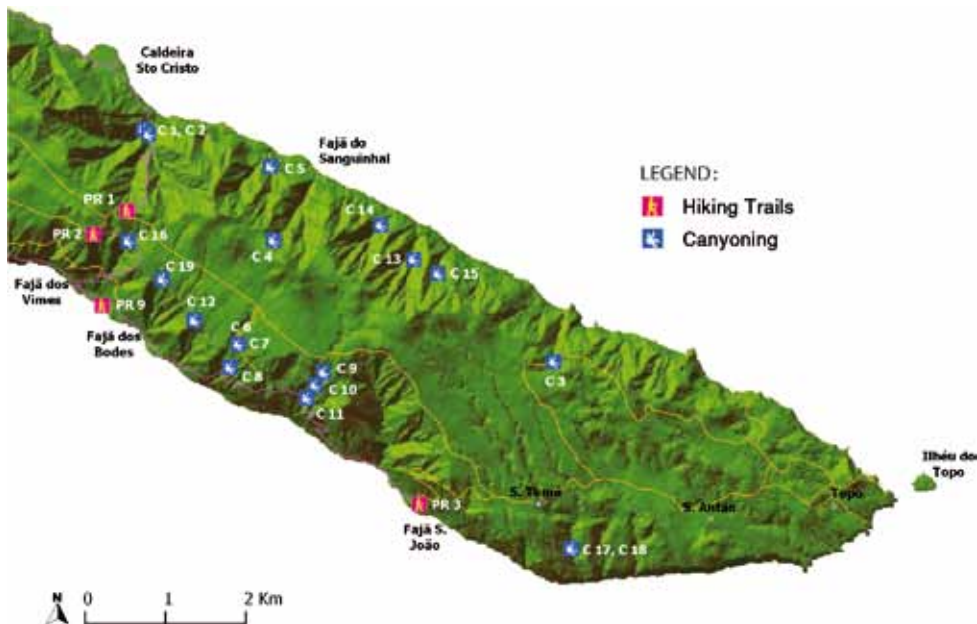




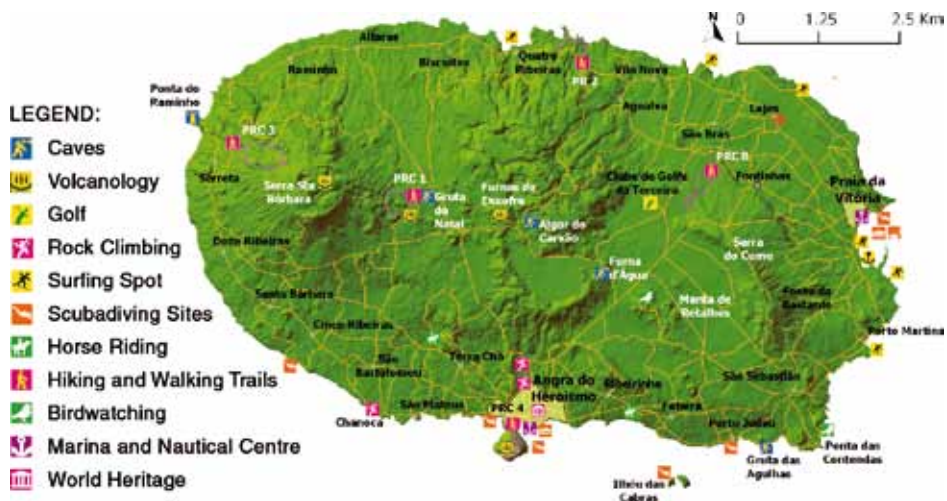
## MAIN EQUIPPED CANYONING ROUTES ON SÃO JORGE

ID	NAME	INTEREST	LEVEL	TIME (h)	TOTAL DESCENT (m)	MAXIMUM RAPPEL HEIGHT (m)	ROPE (m)	# OF ABSEILS
C1	Caldeira Right	***	V3	1.5	170	15	15	6
C2	Caldeira Left	***	V3	1.5	150	15	15	5
C3	Upper Funda	**	V3	2	350	35	35	14
C4	Sanguinhal	****	V5	6	750	75	75	15
C5	Fajã Redonda	***	V4	2	160	35	35	6
C6	Upper Cedro	**	V2	1	50	7	10	2
C7	Middle Cedro	**	V4	1.5	250	33	35	7
C8	Lower Cedro	****	V5	3.5	270	55	55	9
C9	Upper Salto	***	V2	2	110	20	20	8
C10	Middle Salto	**	V2	1	70	28	30	4
C11	Lower Salto	****	V4	4	480	40	40	19
C12	Lower Cavaletes	***	V4	6	550	60	60	18
C13	Castelhano	****	V5	3	300	57	45	12
C14	Entre Ribeiras	****	V5	2.5	240	51	40	5
C15	Fachos	****	V3	3.5	360	41	45	17
C16	Vimes	**	V3	3.5	400	33	35	9
C17	Upper São Tomé	**	V3	2	250	15	15	4
C18	Lower São Tomé	****	V4	1.5	135	43	45	4
C19	Caímbro / Bodes	***	V4	4.5	585	34	35	20

Note: The level of interest ranges from slightly interesting (\*) to exceptional (\*\*\*\*). The level of difficulty ranges from V1 (very easy) to V6 (extremely difficult).



# TERCEIRA



Terceira Island is the third largest and the second most populous island of the Azores, with an area of 400 km<sup>2</sup>; it is one of the main entry points for the Azores. This island has excellent conditions for cultural, nature and business tourism.

Terceira is an island where cultural activities are abundant including the festivities, the Chapels (Impérios), the tethered street bullfights, the gastronomy and the architectural heritage, particularly the city of Angra do Heroísmo, which is classified as World Heritage by UNESCO.

The large bay by the city of Praia da Vitória has an excellent sandy beach, and provides excellent conditions for various nautical sports.

Terceira has excellent restaurants, a distinct number of hotels and rural lodgings, a magnificent 18-hole golf course, and abundant tourism services and activities.

**Main activities:** Geotourism, golf, boat tours, sea fishing, scuba diving, whale and dolphin watching, and hiking and walking.

**Main attractions:** Cultural heritage, festivities, historical centre of the city of Angra do Heroísmo, tethered street bullfights, Algar do Carvão, sandy beaches, countless natural pools and the scenery from Serra do Cume.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** Terceira has a significant cultural heritage, including the noteworthy city of Angra do Heroísmo, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Angra do Heroísmo has several monuments worth a visit such as the Sé Catedral, the Castle of São João Baptista, the Fortress of São Sebastião and the São Francisco Convent, where the Museum of Angra is located. The Wine museum at Biscoitos and Carnival museum at Lajes are small museums worth a visit.

The small chapels (Impérios), emblematic constructions of the Azorean popular architecture associated with the cult of the Divine Holy Spirit, and have a wider expression on Terceira Island where more than fifty can be found around the island.

The rural landscape is characterized by pasture fields enclosed by stone walls, especially the “patchwork quilt” that can be viewed from the viewpoint on the Serra do Cume. With regards to local

architecture, in which the Azores are abundant, the "Architecture of Ramo Grande" is of reference and can be found in the parishes of Lajes, Vila Nova and Fontinhas on Terceira Island.

The main festivities on Terceira Island are the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (from May to September); the tethered street bullfights (from May to October); the Danças de Carnaval (Carnival Dances) in February; the Sanjoaninas (Saint John's Feasts) in Angra (end of June); the Festas da Praia da Vitória (Praia da Vitória Feasts) during the 1st week of August; the Festa do Vinho e da Vinha (Wine and Vineyard Festival), at Biscoitos (1st weekend of September); the Angra Rock music festival (beginning of September); the Angra Jazz music festival (beginning of October) and the Outouno Vivo "Autumn Alive Festival in Praia da Vitória (beginning of November).

**How to get there:** The Lajes airport on Terceira is one of the main entry points to the archipelago. There are also weekly boat connections to the main islands of the Central Group and connections with the islands of the other groups. Both the ports, Praia da Vitória and Angra do Heroísmo, have boat connections to the other islands but mostly during the high season. For those who arrive by sailboat or other recreational vessels, Terceira has two excellent marinas, one in Angra do Heroísmo and the other in Praia da Vitória.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

The marinas and recreational ports of Angra do Heroísmo and Praia da Vitória assemble most of the abundant and diversified tourism services. The activity with the largest offer is boat tours. Whale and dolphin watching, and recreational and big game fishing are among the main activities, which have significantly grown recently. The extensive and protected sandy beach at the city of Praia da Vitória is an excellent location for sea sports, in particular kayaking, windsurfing, kitesurfing and recreational sailing. On the coastline, there are several surfing spots, namely, Terreiro, Contendas, Porto Martins, Santa Catarina, Quatro Ribeiras, Riviera and Baixa da Vila Nova.

**Boat Tours:** Those interested in boat tours may join a pre-defined program or choose a more personalized service. The main itineraries visit Monte Brasil and the Ilhéu das Cabras, but some go all the way to the Ponta das Contendas, which is an interesting location for observing marine bird species.

**Scuba diving:** Terceira has several diving centres that organize outings, especially on the south coast of the island, in locations that are abundant in species, in caves and at the Aquatic Archaeological Park located in Angra's bay. At the park, at depths ranging from 15 to 30 metres, visitors can see several anchors from the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and the wreck of the Lidador that was shipwrecked in 1878 ([pg.azores.gov.pt/drac/cca/pasa](http://pg.azores.gov.pt/drac/cca/pasa)). From Terceira, it is possible to organise diving trips to one of the most impressive sites of the Azores, the Dom João de Castro Bank, 35 nautical miles from the island. Diving at this location is possible only if the ocean is quite calm and with a minimum group of experienced divers. This bank emerges from the depths almost to the surface. Intense hydrothermal activity can be observed at a depth of between 13 and 20 metres.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

**Hiking and walking:** In addition to the five hiking trails that are available to enjoy of some of the best and most protected landscapes of the island, visitors should also discover the enchantment of the city of Angra do Heroísmo on foot, following the "Angra-on-foot" itinerary and by climbing Monte Brasil on the

PRC4 trail. The “Angra-on-foot” route can also be done with a guide for a more complete narrative of the history and culture of Angra. On Terceira there is an important network of paths, for which a guide or information from tourism companies is required.

### MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF TERCEIRA (source: [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com))

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PRC1	Mistérios Negros (Black Mysteries)	Difficult	5 km	2h30m
PR2	Bays of Aqualva	Easy	4 km	2h
PRC3	Serreta	Medium	7 km	2h30m
PRC4	Monte Brazil	Easy	7.5 km	2h30m
PRC8	Relheiras (Oxen Cart Tracks) of São Brás	Easy	5 km	2h

**Geotourism:** Terceira is one of the islands in the Central Group with the most diverse volcanic phenomena and landscapes easily reached by visitors, including:

- Algar do Carvão, one of the most beautiful geological formations of the Azores, which is the volcanic conduit of a cone, with a number of cavities and a volcanic chimney accessible through the interpretative centre on site.

- Furnas do Enxofre are volcanic fumaroles in permanent activity.

- Natal and Agulhas Caves. They are two lava tube caves. The Natal cave is located in the western centre of the island and has a visitor centre, and the Agulhas cave is located on the coast and has no electricity or support infrastructure.

- Monte Brasil is a submarine volcano in front of the city of Angra that may be visited on foot or by car. The trails provide great views and access to a whale spotting shelter.

- Serra de Santa Bárbara (1,021 m in altitude) is the highest point of the island and possesses a very sensitive ecosystem. On clear days, the scenery is breathtaking.

In addition to the interpretive centres, the Volcano-speleology Museum is recommended. It is located at the headquarters of the “Os Montanheiros” association in Angra do Heroísmo.

**Birdwatching:** Terceira is an island with good birdwatching opportunities. Noteworthy are the Cabo da Praia, the Ponta das Contendas and the Ilhéu da Mina, Praia da Vitória (marsh, beach and port) and the port at Angra do Heroísmo. There are other good locations both on the coast and in the centre of the island.

**Climbing:** On this island, there are several climbing locations and more than a hundred equipped routes on basaltic rock and with practically all levels of difficulty. Chanoca, a coastal cliff to the west of São Mateus, is the location with the largest number of routes, about 80 climbs up to 25 metres and maximum climbing grade of 7c. A climbing guide can be obtained at ART (Regional Tourism Association) or at the “Os Montanheiros” association. If you wish to discover this activity or simply spend an afternoon doing something different, there are several tourism companies that provide services.

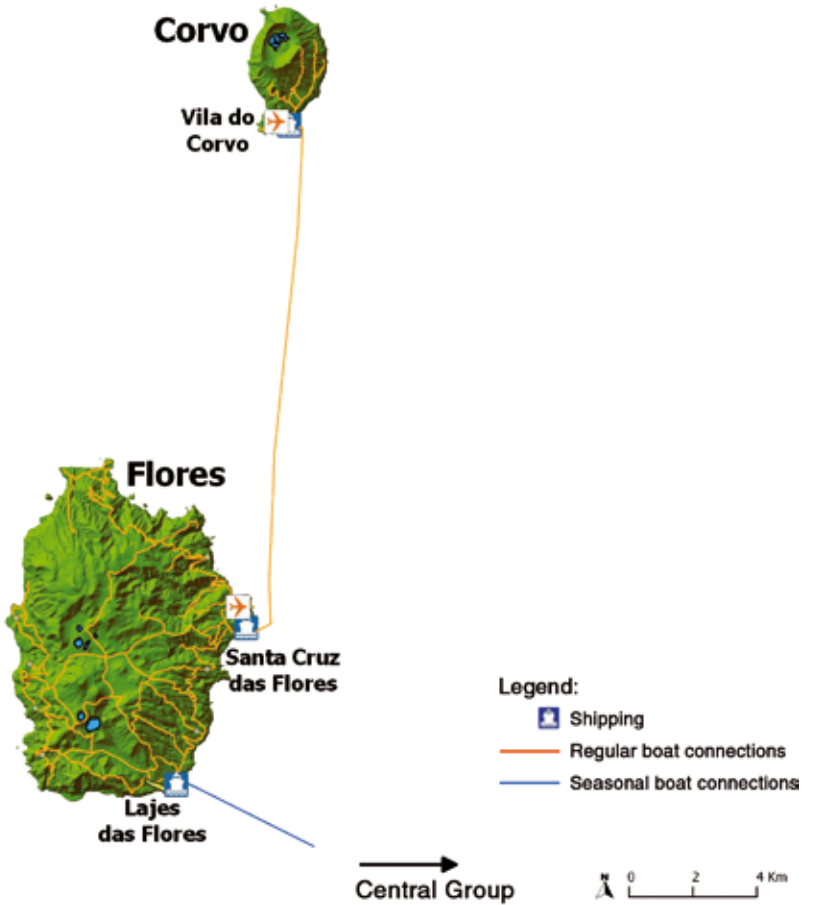
**Golf:** Terceira has an excellent 18-hole golf course located in the interior of the island in a natural landscape setting. The Terceira Island Golf Club offers several services including driving range, storage, putting green and two tennis courts.

# WESTERN GROUP

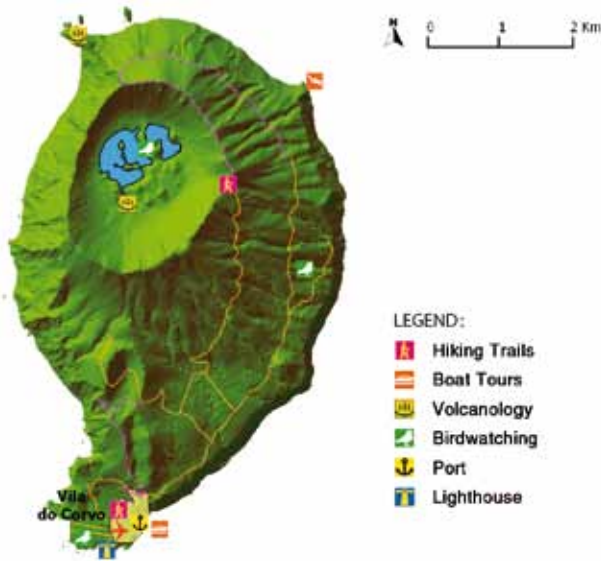
# GETTING THERE

## Direct airline connections

	FLORES	CORVO
FAIAL	✈	✈
TERCEIRA	✈	✈
S. MIGUEL	✈	✈
FLORES		✈
CORVO	✈	



**Maritime connections:** The company Atlânticoline provides transport between the Western Group and the other groups, however, it only operates during the high season (May to October). The same company operates the route between Flores and Corvo, year-round as sea conditions permit. There are also several tourism companies that provide inter-island transport between the islands.



Corvo Island, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve since 2007, is the smallest and most remote island of the Azores. It measures about 17 km<sup>2</sup> and has less than 500 inhabitants. It reaches its highest elevation at 718 metres at Morro dos Homens. This is a very rugged island, except in its southern zone, where there is the only settlement on the island, Vila do Corvo.

The main tourist attractions of the island are the Caldeirão, an impressive caldera of an old volcano located on top of Monte Gordo that created the island, and the cultural landscape with a strong identity, resulting from the concentration of the population in Vila do Corvo and the eastern and southern slopes.

**Main activities:** Geotourism, diving and birdwatching.

**Main attractions:** Caldeirão, cultural heritage, community life and the possibility of observation of rare migratory birds.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** The main tourist attraction of the island is the Caldeirão (Great Caldera), a caldera located on the top of the island, with 2.3 km in diameter and 320 metres in depth, with a lake that has 12 cones inside it. However, the craggy coastline of the island and the peaks, hillocks and rocky formations of basaltic origin, of which the Ponta do Marco is an example, are also noteworthy.

The countryside is very characteristic of the island, resulting from the action of man for farming, with a predominance of grassland divided by hedges or basalt walls.

The cultural heritage of the island is certainly one of the unique aspects of this island. Being a small isolated area, the communal way of life arouses the curiosity of visitors. The wooden locks that are characteristic of the island of Corvo and the linguistic expressions used by the inhabitants are two examples of its cultural wealth.

With regards to festivals there are the Feast of the Holy Spirit, which on this island has peculiar features (on the second weekend of July); and the Feast of Our Lady of Miracles (mid-August), which includes the Festival of the Mills.

**How to get there:** Corvo has an aerodrome that guarantees two weekly connections with the island of Flores year-round, as long as the weather permits. There are also regular connections with the islands of São Miguel, Faial and Terceira. With regards to boat transportation, an almost daily connection with the island of Flores is guaranteed throughout the high season (every day except on Wednesdays), which decreases to two weekly connections during the low season (Tuesday and Saturday).

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Corvo Island has become known for responsible tourism. The creation of a voluntary reserve for the protection of marine fauna with collaboration between tourism entrepreneurs and fishermen is an excellent example of a reconciliation of interests between different economic interests, which is mutually beneficial. This reserve has made security in the tourism activities on the island, as well as, the preservation of marine biodiversity possible. The main tourism recreational activity on the island it is diving.

**Scuba diving:** Corvo Island has several dive sites with excellent visibility and many marine fauna. The Caneiro dos Meros is one of the best-known spots by virtue of being the source of the voluntary reserve established in 1999. On this site, you can observe a community of large groupers. A local company specializing in scuba diving provides excellent services to both those wishing to try out diving and to those wishing to explore the different dive spots.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

The main activities of Corvo are geotourism and birdwatching, although there are also interesting hiking and walking trails and historical and cultural tours.

**Geotourism:** Geotourism's main attraction is a visit to the Caldeirão.

**Birdwatching:** Corvo Island has good conditions for birdwatching because it is a stopping area for many migratory birds. The Caldeirão (Great Caldera) is the best place for birdwatching. Other sites include the east coast, the small woodlands and rural areas at low altitude, west of Vila do Corvo. Birdwatching is especially important on the island attracting a significant number of tourists when the largest numbers of birds are migrating, particularly in October.

**Hiking and walking:** There are two classified hiking and walking trails on the island of Corvo, but PR2 is not sufficiently marked and is often affected by fog, therefore it is not recommended without a guide. Although it is not approved or marked, the most interesting and frequented route is the descent and walk around the lake in the caldera of the Caldeirão.



### MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF CORVO (source: www.trails-azores.com)

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Cara do Índio (Indian Face)	Easy	3.5 km	1h
PR2	Caldeirão (Great Caldera) -- Cancela do Pico	Difficult	5.3 km	4h



# FLORES



The island of Flores, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (2009), measuring 143 Km<sup>2</sup> is the fourth smallest island of the Archipelago, but with only four thousand inhabitants, it is the second least populous, just after Corvo. The Monchique Islet along its northwest coast is the westernmost point of Europe.

This island of rugged terrain and environmental wealth stands out for its many points of scenic and environmental interest, including several calderas, lakes and rocky cliffs where towering waterfalls rush. The jagged coastline, the vegetation cover, with vast areas with indigenous species and some Cryptomeria groves and its peculiar geological formations make many consider it the most beautiful island in the archipelago.

**Main activities:** Boat tours, walking and hiking, canyoning, diving, big game fishing and birdwatching.

**Main attractions:** Natural landscape, waterfalls, lakes, fajãs, coastline, boat tours, Rocha dos Bordões (Staff Rock).

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** The natural heritage of the island of Flores is extremely rich and of great relevance in the Azores archipelago. The Rocha dos Bordões (Staff Rock), the seven lakes located on the plateau of the central area of the island, the waterfalls in the area of the Fajã Grande and the precipitous and jagged coastline with many coves and caves stand out among the natural attractions of the island.

Regarding cultural heritage and historic buildings, this island has several churches and chapels dating from the eighteenth century, such as the churches of Our Lady of the Rosary, in the municipality of Lajes, or Saint Bonaventure in Santa Cruz. The many mills and water mills are also noteworthy. They were brought by the first settlers to harness the force of the water, such as the mill of the Rei (King), on the small river Funda, and the two water mills on the riverside of the Moinhos river.

The sausage (linguiça) with yams, watercress soup, as well as fish, seafood and cheese are some of the local flavours to discover.

The festivities include the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (late May), the Emigrant Festival (mid July) and the Sanjoaninas (Saint John's Festival) during the fourth week of June, among many others, that are mainly religious in nature.

**How to get there:** The island of Flores has regular air connections with the main islands of the Azores, but due to the limitations of its airport, these can be interrupted occasionally due to weather. During the high season, it is possible to reach the island by boat, but the connections are infrequent. The main port of entry is at Lajes where there is also a small marina. The sea connection with Corvo is from Santa Cruz of Flores.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Because of the beauty of its coastline, full of coves, caves, crevices, caverns and steep slopes coloured by waterfalls, the island of Flores is another splendid destination for sea activities such as boat tours, diving, fishing and sea kayaking.

**Boat tours:** The east coast of the island is beautiful for boat tours, but a tour around the entire island is also recommended. The boat ride to the island of Corvo is also something not to be missed and can be complemented with a visit to the northeastern coast of Flores Island.

**Scuba diving:** The island of Flores is known for its crystal blue waters, a variety of dive sites, abundant underwater fauna and a high probability of observing large deep-sea species. Indeed, these characteristics give this region very favourable conditions for scuba diving.

**Big game fishing:** Although the availability of services by specialized companies in this activity is not abundant, big game fishing has potential on the island of Flores in virtue of the amount and variety of marine fauna available.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

The recommended land activities on the island are hiking and walking, geotourism, canyoning and birdwatching.



**Hiking and walking:** The hiking and walking trails are one of the tourism products of excellence on the island, because of the variety and beauty of the available marked trails, and the existence of many others, which may easily be explored, using the services of a guide, or based on information available about the traditional paths.

The four marked trails allow you to discover some of the most interesting sights on the island. Of these, the PR1, between the Fajã Grande and the Albernaz Lighthouse with a trail along the escarpment of the northwest coast, stands out among the others.

## MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF FLORES (source: [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com))

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Ponta Delgada - Fajã Grande	Medium	12 km	3h
PR2	Lajedo - Fajã Grande	Medium	10 km	2h30m
PR3	Viewpoint of the lakes - Poça do Bacalhau	Medium	7 km	3h
PR4	Fajã de Lopo Vaz	Medium	4 km	2h

**Canyoning:** Because of its natural characteristics with rugged terrain and abundant rainfall, the island of Flores has many streams and waterfalls with potential for the practice of canyoning.

At the beginning of 2012, there were about 39 canyoning routes equipped by the Association for Adventure Sports Desnível, with different levels of difficulty. Among these, there are courses that are appropriate for beginners, very fun and easily accessible. There are also average difficulty courses, with appealing vertical drops for anyone who practices canyoning regularly and other much more difficult, which are only suitable for those with extensive experience.

This guide only includes the most interesting courses, and their main characteristics. These can be done with guides from local companies specialized in canyoning, or by those with experience, since they are equipped and there is information available on the websites [www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com) and [www.desnivel.pt](http://www.desnivel.pt). The publication of a guide at the end of 2013 is expected. Practitioners should, however, ascertain the level of difficulty, duration and total descent, access and return conditions to avoid undesirable incidents.

If transport is needed to access or return from the stream, it is necessary to plan all the logistics with local agents in advance. The required transport may be by land or sea because some of the routes exit by sea, as is the case of courses C17, C21, C22 and C24. For those with less experience, or for those who do not have equipment and companions, we recommend the services of a specialized firm.

## MAIN EQUIPPED CANYONING ROUTES ON FLORES

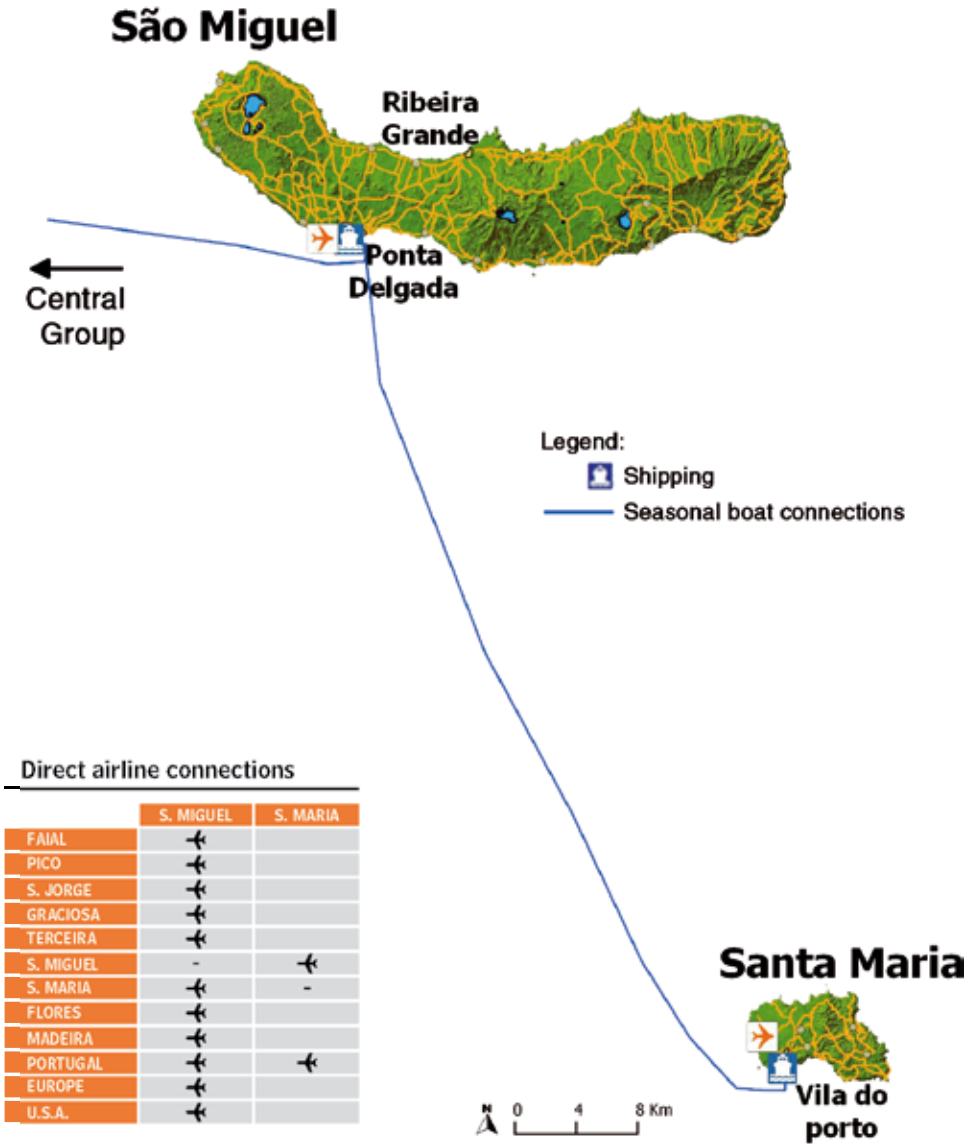
ID	NAME	INTEREST	LEVEL	TIME (h)	TOTAL DESCENT (m)	MAXIMUM RAPPTEL HEIGHT (m)	ROPE (m)	# OF ABSEILS
C1	Lower Barrosas	****	v3	4	175	30	30	8
C16	Algares	****	v5	5	330	85	30	9
C17	Lower Alquevins	****	v5	4	235	80	40	14
C18	Lower Badanela	***	v4	4	135	20	20	6
C20	Meio	***	v4	4	324	70	40	9
C21	Monte Gordo	***	v6	3	308	95	70	5
C22	Mosteiro	****	v5	5	245	75	35	10
C23	Mouco	***	v6	4	320	100	40	15
C24	Privada	***	v6	4	255	75	55	13
C25	Rocha Alta	***	v6	5	300	173	52	9
C26	Silva	***	v3	4	335	40	40	11
C27	Upper José Fraga	***	v4	6	350	60	60	16
C28	Cabo	****	v4	4	325	50	50	7
C29	Lower Cão	****	v6	5	440	225	55	13
C30	Lower Casas	****	v6	5	340	115	60	13
C31	Upper Casas	***	v6	5	150	30	30	5
C32	Esguihão	***	v3	3	215	30	30	11
C33	Fazenda	***	v2	1,5	65	22	22	3
C34	Ferreiro	***	v6	4	240	120	60	7
C35	Grande	***	v6	4	270	105	80	5
C36	Lower Ilhéus	****	v3	2	105	20	20	6
C37	Middle Ilhéus	***	v4	2	125	40	40	7
C38	Lower José Fraga	***	v4	2	250	45	45	9

Note: The level of interest ranges from slightly interesting (\*) to exceptional (\*\*\*\*\*).  
The level of difficulty ranges from V1 (very easy) to V6 (extremely difficult).

**Geotourism:** The range of ecosystems and geological events on the island of Flores results in geotourism having great opportunities on the island. Some of the spots of geotourism interest are the Rocha dos Bordões (Staff Rock), the seven lakes in the centre of the island and the fajãs.

**Birdwatching:** The island of Flores has excellent conditions for birdwatching; it is well known for its potential for the observation of species on the intercontinental route. It is one of the islands with the best natural conditions for birdwatching; there are about 33 observation spots. The Caldeira (caldera) Branca and the Quebrada Nova are two of the best observation spots.

# EASTERN GROUP



**Maritime connections:** Connections between the islands of the Eastern Group and the remaining islands are provided by the company Atlânticoline during the high season (May to October). Those who wish can also use one of the several tourism companies that provide inter-island transport between the islands.

# SANTA MARIA

## LEGEND:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Hiking Trails      |  Surfing Spot |
|  Canyoning          |  Caves        |
|  Birdwatching       |  Volcanology  |
|  Horse Riding       |  Port         |
|  Boat Tours         |  Lighthouse   |
|  Scuba diving Sites |               |



The island of Santa Maria is known as the warmest and driest of the entire archipelago; it is the southernmost island. It measures 97 Km<sup>2</sup> and has little more than five thousand inhabitants. Its climate, coastline, beaches and geology are its main attractions.

**Main activities:** Boat rides, diving and Geotourism.

**Main attractions:** Beaches, coastline, geology, settlement and historical and cultural heritage.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** With regards to natural attractions on the island of Santa Maria, the following deserve special attention: the jagged coastline, with several deep bays and white sand beaches, and the several geological phenomena, such as the Barreiro da Faneca, known as "red desert" and the columnar prismatic disjunction in the river Maloás. This is the only island of the archipelago that has sedimentary soils, and where fossils of many marine species can be seen. Having been the first island in the Azores to be populated, the Vila do Porto is the oldest Azorean town. Santa Maria has an interesting historical and cultural heritage, which features the typical houses with an architectural style that is different from most of the other islands, and the churches and chapels of different architectural styles.

The religious and cultural festivals that occur on Santa Maria are the Feast of the Holy Spirit (common to all the islands), between May and September, the Feasts of the Patron Saints, during the Summer months, among which is the Feast of Our Lady of the Assumption (on the 15th August), and the Grape Harvest Feast in São Lourenço on the last weekend of August or first weekend of September.

One of the major attractions of the island, which brings a large number of visitors is the Festival Maré de Agosto (August Tide Festival), held annually in the fourth week of August that runs for three to four days. This is the oldest musical festival in the Azores, and in 2012 is its twenty-eighth anniversary.

**How to get there:** The island of Santa Maria has regular air connections with the island of São Miguel and less frequent air connections with Lisbon. During the medium and high seasons, one can also reach the island via maritime connections with the island of São Miguel.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Although there are other activities on the island of Santa Maria, the main maritime tourism activities are boat tours and diving.

**Boat tours:** Like the coastline of Flores Island and the northern coast of São Jorge Island, the coastline of the island of Santa Maria has great beauty and splendour. It is full of numerous coves, islands, beaches and majestic cliffs. Boat tours leaving from the marina in Vila do Porto, available through maritime tourism companies, are the best option to enjoy the coastal landscape and complement the visit of the island with a view from the sea.

**Scuba diving:** The transparency and temperature of the waters around this island result in exceptional diving conditions. Note that this is the nearest island to the Formigas Islets and the submarine mountain Dollabarat, which are two of the best diving spots in the archipelago.

**Sea Kayaking:** Although the shape and beauty of the coastline make this an attractive activity, tourism services offering sea kayaking on Santa Maria are limited.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

Among the best land activities on Santa Maria are geotourism, hiking and walking, canyoning and horseback riding tours.

**Geotourism:** The geology and morphology of the island are wonderful for geotourism. Among the many interesting sites on the island, the priorities, according to the project Geopark Azores, are the Barreiro areas of Faneca, Pedreira do Campo (Quarry Field), Poço da Pedreira, Ponta do Castelo (Castle Point) and the River Maloás.





**Hiking and walking:** There are three marked hiking and walking trails on the island of Santa Maria. The trails are suitable for a wide range of hikers, but many trails are only for the more adventurous or those who use the services of expert guides.

## MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF SANTA MARIA (source: www.trails-azores.com)

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR1	Costa Norte (North Coast) Trail	Medium	6.7 km	3h
PR2	Pico Alto - Anjos	Medium	14 km	4h
PRC3	Entre a serra e o mar (Between the mount and the sea)	Medium	9.5 km	2h30m
Pr4	Santo Espírito - Maia	Medium	6.8 km	3h
PR5	Costa Sul (South Coast) Trail	Medium	6.8 km	3h

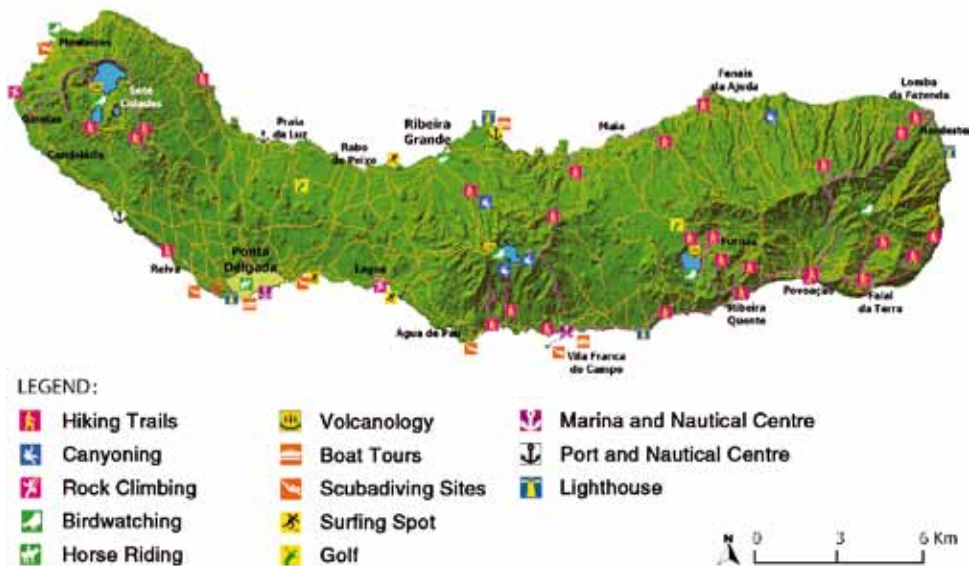
**Canyoning:** There are five equipped canyoning routes with different difficulty levels on the island of Santa Maria, but they are usually short and with great vertical drops. Unlike the other Azores islands that offer canyoning, the best time of year is late winter and spring, because the streams in summer have diminished flows.

## MAIN EQUIPPED CANYONING ROUTES ON SANTA MARIA

ID	NAME	INTEREST	LEVEL	TIME (h)	TOTAL DESCENT (m)	MAXIMUM RAPPEL HEIGHT (m)	ROPE (m)	# OF ABSEILS
C1	Amaro	****	v5	1.5	150	36	36	4
C2	Engenho	***	v5	1.5	135	75	75	4
C8	Funda	****	v2	2	200	20	20	4
C3	Grande - Aveiro	*****	v6	2	160	55	55	4
C7	Maloás - Malbusca	***	v4	2	140	80	45	2

**Horseback riding:** The Island has a tradition of horses; there are several riding stables that provide services and riding lessons.

# SÃO MIGUEL



The island of São Miguel is the largest and most populous island of the Azores. It measures about 745 Km<sup>2</sup> and has around of 50% of the population of the archipelago. The large size and natural resources of the island along with the large number of air connections have led to this island being the entry point for most visitors to the Azores.

The island of São Miguel has a rather consolidated and diversified offer in terms of tourist and maritime tourism products. Because of its natural and cultural features, the island is able to offer a broad spectrum of activities. There are also many tourist entertainment and maritime tourism agencies that offer diverse quality services.

**Main activities:** Geotourism, whale watching and hiking.

**Main attractions:** Lagoas (Lakes) das Sete Cidades and the Lagoa (Lake) do Fogo, geothermal phenomena of the Furnas and the Ferraria.

**Heritage and cultural highlights:** The natural and cultural landscape is one of the main attractions of this island, especially the many craters and lakes like the Sete Cidades, Fogo and Furnas. The geothermal phenomena, the numerous volcanic cones and the viewpoints, which offer sweeping landscapes on a terrain that alternates between green fields and blue ocean, also deserve attention. There is also important cultural and building heritage in the historic centre of Ponta Delgada.

The gastronomic offer is very diverse, with a special mention of the typical cozido of Furnas, cooked in holes made in the warm earth of the hot crater lake shore of the Furnas. The tea plantations in Porto Formoso and Gorreana are the only two in Europe with industrial production. The production of fruit on the island is also diverse and includes orange, pineapple and exotic fruits like passion fruit and guava.

The religious festivals that occur on São Miguel island are the Festas do Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres (Feasts of Our Lord of Miracles), in the last week of May; the Feasts of the Holy Spirit (May to September) and the Festas de São João da Vila (Feast of Saint John) in Vila Franca do Campo in mid-

June, among many others. The island also plays host to numerous thematic and music festivals, such as the Feast of Singing to the Stars (early February).

São Miguel has also been asserting itself in the cruises, golf and business tourism and events markets. Among the events that have been held on the island the Azores Islands Billabong Pro world tour, which is included in the international surf circuit, is of note.

**How to get there:** The Island has an airport with frequent regional, national and international air connections. As far as sea transport, during the high season there are frequent connections with Santa Maria and sporadic connections with the remaining groups.

## SEA ACTIVITIES

Due to its size and other characteristics, São Miguel has practically all the activities available in the archipelago. The following are noteworthy:

**Whale and dolphin watching:** This is one of the activities with highest demand on the island of São Miguel where there are several maritime tourism companies offering this service.

**Scuba diving:** Because of the large demand, São Miguel has a diversified offer and has several specialized companies. Like most maritime tourism services, they are concentrated at the port of Ponta Delgada.

## LAND ACTIVITIES

Among the large variety of land activities available, the following are noteworthy:

**Hiking and walking:** There are 32 marked trails on the island of São Miguel, with different levels of difficulty, distance and time, suitable for a wide range of audiences. However, due to the large number and diversity of available trails, it is recommended that one select carefully which trails are most attractive to you and appropriate for your expectations. Additionally, there are a large number of other paths of great beauty that can be explored using tourism companies, who provide transport and specialized guides.

**Geotourism:** The geology and morphology of the island offer a varied range of activities. Several sites of interest include the landscape and surroundings of the main lakes and craters (Sete Cidades, Fogo and Furnas), the Gruta do Carvão and the various geothermal phenomena especially in Furnas.

**Birdwatching:** Although there are a large variety of birds, particularly migratory, that delight birdwatchers, São Miguel is especially known for one of the most endangered and rarest birds in Europe. The Azores Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula murina*) is a passerine endemic to São Miguel whose habitat is in the eastern mountainous area of the island in the municipalities of Nordeste and Povoação (<http://centropriolo.spea.pt>).

**Canyoning:** There are about of 11 equipped canyoning routes with different levels of difficulty that can be done with the help of an agency specialized in canyoning or alone by those with vast experience canyoning.



## MARKED WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS ON THE ISLAND OF SÃO MIGUEL (source: www.trails-azores.com)

ID	TRAIL	DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	TIME
PR3	Vista do Rei - Sete Cidades	Easy	7 km	2h
PR4	Mata do Canário - Sete Cidades	Easy	11 km	3h
PR7	Algarvia - Pico da Vara	Difficult	3.5 km	5h
PR8	Lomba da Fazenda - Pico da Vara	Difficult	8 km	5h
PR12	Agrião Trail	Medium	8.4 km	3h
PR18	Vigia da Baleia (Whale Lookout Station) Trail	Medium	8 km	3h
PR22	Pico do Ferro - Caldeiras da Lagoa das Furnas	Medium	2 km	0h45m
PR23	Povoação - Pico da Vara	Difficult	15.2 km	5h
PRC2	Praia - Lagoa do Fogo	Medium	12 km	4h
PRC5	Serra Devassa	Easy	4.2 km	2h
PRC6	Furnas	Easy	9.2 km	2h50m
PRC17	Nascentes da Rocha de Santo António	Medium	4 km	1h30m
PRC19	Ribeira Chã	Medium	8.4 km	3h
PRC20	Rocha da Relva	Easy	4.5 km	2h30m
PR10	Praia da Amora - Lobeira	Medium	5.7 km	2h30m
PR11	Ribeira do Faial da Terra Trail	Medium	3.1 km	2h
PR13	Lombo Gordo Trail	Easy	4 km	2h
PR15	Pico da Areia Trail	Easy	6 km	2h
PR16	Redondo Trail	Medium	3.2 km	1h30m
PRC9	Faial da Terra - Salto do Prego	Medium	5 km	2h
PRC31	Lomba da Fazenda Pedestrian Trail	Easy	7 km	2h
PR27	Praia da Viola	Easy	5 km	2h
PR32	Monte Escuro - Vila Franca do Campo	Medium	13 km	4h
PRL1	Vila Franca do Campo - Ponta Garça	Easy	13 km	4h
PRC26	Chá (Tea) Trail – Porto Formoso	Medium	5 km	2h
PR29	Salto do Cabrito	Easy	3.5 km	1h
PR14	Pico da Água Retorta Trail	Easy	6.7 km	2h
PR25	Fonte do Sapateiro	Medium	3.8 km	1h30m
PRC34	Feno Trail	Easy	4 km	2h
PRC28	Chá (Tea) Gorreana	Easy	6 km	2h
PRC33	Atalho dos Vermelhos	Easy	5.1 km	2h
PRC35	Windmills at (Moinhos da) Ribeira Funda	Medium	3 km	1h30m

## MAIN EQUIPPED CANYONING ROUTES ON SÃO MIGUEL

ID	NAME	INTEREST	LEVEL	TIME (h)	TOTAL DESCENT (m)	MAXIMUM RAPPEL HEIGHT (m)	ROPE (m)	#OF ABSEILS
C1	Lower Caldeirões	***	v2	4	130	10	10	7
C2	Middle Caldeirões	***	v3	1	55	6	6	2
C3	Upper Caldeirões	***	v3	5	320	20	20	10
C6	Grande Inferior - Salto do Cabrito	***	v2	3	115	15	15	5
C7	Grande Superior - Lombadas	***	v4	5	250	45	45	5
C10	Upper Praia - Pico da Vela	****	v4	7	460	40	40	7
C11	Upper Três Voltas	***	v4	4	410	70	35	6

# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE CENTRAL GROUP\*

ISLAND	COMPANY	SERVICES																					
		Whale watching	Swimming with dolphins	Boat tours	Sailing	Diving	Sea fishing	Spearfishing	Sea kayaking	Surfing and bodyboard	Other nautical activities	Hiking and walking	Mountain climbing	Geotourism	Birdwatching	Cycling and mountain biking	Horse and donkey riding	Canyoning	Climbing and abseiling	Golf and rustic golf	Other activities		
Faial	Anticilone - Catamaran Sailing Charter			x	x									x									
	Azores4fun			x	x																		
	Base Peter Zee - Peter Café Sport	x	x	x	x				x		x					x							
	Cachalote à Vista				x		x								x								
	Casa d'Ávilas																				x	x	
	Central Sub			x		x	x																
	Dive Azores	x	x			x																	
	Faial Terra Mar - Charters de Pesca Turística						x																
	FundOceano				x	x																	
	Graturmar	x	x	x		x		x		x	x												
	Habitat Boat						x																
	Hortacetáceos	x	x																				
	Nautipico				x		x	x															
	Norberto Diver	x	x	x		x	x	x															
	O Viandante						x																
	OceanEye				x																		
	Pegada Activa																					x	
Quiosques de Turismo																							
Sailazores Yacht Charter						x																	
Turismar				x	x		x																
Yachtaçor - Aluguer de Embarcações					x																		
Graciosa	Divingraciosa - Nautigraciosa	x		x	x	x	x		x		x	x				x							
	Gracipescas	x		x		x	x																
	Quiosques de Turismo																						
	Viver Atlântida			x		x	x	x														x	
Pico	Aquaçores	x	x																				
	Aventura Abegoaria							x															
	Azores Oceanic			x		x	x	x														x	x
	Caminhando																						
	Casa d'Ávilas																						x
	CowFish Dive Center				x	x	x																x
	CW Azores	x	x	x		x																	
	Espaço Talassa	x	x	x																			
	Futurismo Azores Adventure	x	x																				
	Nautipico				x		x	x															
	Pico Sport	x	x			x																	
	Picotur																						
	Quiosques de Turismo																						
	Sportfish				x		x	x															
Turispico																							
Yachtaçor - Aluguer de Embarcações						x																	
S. Jorge	Aguabrava			x																			
	Aventour			x		x			x		x	x											x
	Discover Experience Azores																						
	Quinta do Canavial - Ecovelas																						
Terceira	Sailazores Yacht Charter					x																	x
	Urzelinatur					x																	
	Aguiatur	x	x	x																			x
	Anfibius - Centro de Mergulho																						
	AMPA																						
	Anticilone - Catamaran Sailing Charter				x	x																	
	Clube de Golfe da Ilha Terceira																						
	ComunicAir																						
	Divingraciosa - Nautigraciosa																						
	Diveropus																						
	FeelAzoresSUP																						
	Lima Praia	x		x																			
	Mar Vela e Sol				x	x																	
	Marsol	x	x	x																			
	Ocean Emotion	x	x	x																			
	Octopus - Diving Center																						
	Pé de Lava																						
Praiaçores																							
Quinta do Galo																							
Quiosques de Turismo																							
Temáticaventura																							

\* Since the market for tourism services is in constant evolution, it is natural that some changes in the contact information are inevitable and that new service providers and new services will become available.

# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE CENTRAL GROUP

ISLAND	COMPANY	LOCATION	PHONE 1	PHONE 2	URL
Faial	Anticilone - Catamaran Sailing Charter	Horta?	292700905	934108720	www.anticilone-sails.com
	Azores4Fun	Horta	962669528		www.azores4fun.com
	Base Peter Zee - Peter Café Sport	Horta	292292327	962524125	www.whalewatchingazores.com
	Cachalote à Vista	Horta	292293934	964419360	cachaloteavista.com.sapo.pt
	Casa d'Ávilas	Castelo Branco	292673035	962423694	www.casadavilas.com
	Central Sub	Horta	292293304	966507226	www.centrlsub.com
	Dive Azores	Horta	912585803	967882214	www.diveazores.net
	Faial Terra Mar - Charters de Pesca Turística	Horta	969736181	964066351	www.faialterramar.net
	FundoOceano	Horta	292949505	292949563	www.fundooceano.com
	Graturmar	Horta	967003757		www.graturmar.com
	Habitat Boat	Horta	964583031		www.habitatboat.com
	Hortacetáceos	Horta	292391940	965251322	www.hortacetaceos.com
	Nautipico	São Roque	914768277	918620735	www.atlantic-sportfisheries.com
	Norberto Diver	Horta	292293891	962824028	www.norbertodiver.com
	O Viantante	Horta	963300618	292208722	http://azores-fishing.com
	Oceaneye	Horta	966140608	918395415	www.oceaneye.pt
	Pegada Activa	Horta	916004554	916007434	www.pegadaactiva.com
	Quiosques de Turismo	Horta	292292167		www.acores-quiiosques-turismo-artazores.blogspot.com
	Sailazores Yacht Charter	Velas e São Roque do Pico	911065555	916231111	www.sailazores.pt
Turismar	Horta	919977637		www.turismarazores.com	
Yachtaçor - Aluguer de Embarcações	São Roque	912240999	913023300	www.yachtaçor.com	
Graciosa	Divingraciosa - Nautigraciosa	Sta Cruz da Graciosa	917062029	966060969	www.divingraciosa.com
	Gracipescas	Praia	295712001	916053023	www.gracipescas.com
	Quiosques de Turismo	Sta Cruz da Graciosa	295712888		www.acores-quiiosques-turismo-artazores.blogspot.com
	Viver Atlântida	Sta Cruz da Graciosa	918561231	911507940	www.wix.com/viveratlantida/pt
Pico	Aquaçores	Lajes do Pico	292672411	917569453	www.aquaçores.com.pt
	Aventura Abegoaria	São Roque	292642884	917815902	www.aventura.a-abegoaria.com
	Azores Oceanic	Madalena	292623389	917659073	www.azoresoceanic.com
	Caminhando	Criação Velha	962408417		
	Casa d'Ávilas	Castelo Branco	292673035	962423694	www.casadavilas.com
	Cowfish Dive Center	São Roque	919020508		
	CW Azores	Madalena	292622622	911133658	www.cwazores.com
	Espaço Talassa	Lajes do Pico	292672617	292672000	www.espacotalassa.com
	Futurismo Azores Adventure	Lajes do Pico	296628522	962374315	www.futurismo.pt
	Nautipico	São Roque	914768277	918620735	www.atlantic-sportfisheries.com
	Pico Sport	Madalena	292622980	292623761	www.whales-dolphins.net
	Picotur	Madalena	292622499		www.picotur.com
	Quiosques de Turismo	Lajes do Pico e Madalena	292672486	292623245	www.acores-quiiosques-turismo-artazores.blogspot.com
	Sportfish	São Roque	916721934	925116578	www.sportfish.pt
Turispico	Piedade	912622198	915980412	www.turispico.com	
Yachtaçor - Aluguer de Embarcações	São Roque	912240999	913023300	www.yachtaçor.com	
S. Jorge	Aguabrava	Guarda	914825419		
	Aventour	Calheta	295416424	912042470	www.aventour-net.com
	Discover Experience Azores	?	967552354	926360041	
	Quinta do Canavial - Ecovelas		295412981	918904568	www.aquintadocanavial.com
	Sailazores Yacht Charter	Velas e São Roque do Pico	911065555	916231111	www.sailazores.pt
Urzelinatur	Urzelina	912068410	965440100	www.urzelinatur.com	
Terceira	Agulatur	Angra do Heroísmo	913841289	917553111	www.agulaturazores.com
	Anfibius - Centro de Mergulho	Angra do Heroísmo	295402600	912595541	www.anfibius.com
	AMPA	Angra do Heroísmo	295643270	961474571	
	Anticilone - Catamaran Sailing Charter	Horta?	292700905	934108720	www.anticilone-sails.com
	Clube de Golfe da Ilha Terceira	Aqualva	295902444	295902299	www.terceiragolf.com
	ComunicAir	Praia da Vitória	910503800	919052869	www.comunicair.pt
	Divingraciosa - Nautigraciosa	Sta Cruz da Graciosa	917062029	966060969	www.divingraciosa.com
	Diveropus	Angra do Heroísmo	295213163	968782543	www.diveropus.com
	FeelAzoresSUP	Angra do Heroísmo	963265561		www.feelazoresup.blogspot.pt
	Lima Praia	Praia da Vitória	295542482	966370498	
	Mar Vela e Sol	Praia da Vitória	295642330	962926494	
	Marsol	Angra do Heroísmo	961117210	969212218	www.marsolter.com
	Ocean Emotion	Angra do Heroísmo	962973736	917072154	www.ocean-emotion.com
	Octopus - Diving Center	Praia da Vitória	965431985	912513906	www.octopusportugal.com
	Pé de Lava	Angra do Heroísmo	968782517		www.greenemotions.org
	Praiaçores	Praia da Vitória	214428162	963381183	praiaçores.googlepages.com
	Quinta do Galo	Terra Chã	295333315	912575245	www.quintadogalo.pt
	Quiosques de Turismo	Angra do Heroísmo e Praia da Vitória	295218542	295543251	www.acores-quiiosques-turismo-artazores.blogspot.com
	Temáticaventura	Angra do Heroísmo	962334489	913545402	www.tematicaventura.blogspot.com

# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE WESTERN GROUP \*

ISLAND	COMPANY	SERVICES																				
		Whale watching	Swimming with dolphins	Boat tours	Sailing	Diving	Sea fishing	Spearfishing	Sea kayaking	Surfing and bodyboard	Other nautical activities	Hiking and walking	Mountain climbing	Geotourism	Birdwatching	Cycling and mountain biking	Horse and donkey riding	Canyoning	Climbing and abseiling	Golf and rustic golf	Other activities	
Corvo	AzoresFerias			x																		
	Extremocidente			x																		
	Florescetáceos			x																		
	MareOcidental			x																		x
	WestCanyon																					x
Flores	AzoresFerias			x		x	x															
	Extremocidente			x																		
	Florescetáceos			x																		
	MareOcidental			x		x			x		x											x
	WestCanyon																					x
	ZagaiaFlores			x			x															x

\* Since the market for tourism services is in constant evolution, it is natural that some changes in the contact information are inevitable and that new service providers and new services will become available.

# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE WESTERN GROUP

ISLAND	COMPANY	LOCATION	PHONE 1	PHONE 2	URL
Corvo	AzoresFerias	Lajes das Flores	964794943	963696990	www.azoresferias.com
	Extremocidente	Sta Cruz das Flores	292590100	918390189	www.hotelocidental.com
	Florescetáceos	Sta Cruz das Flores	917918964	964220645	www.viagemailhadocorvo.blogspot.com
	MareOcidental	Sta Cruz das Flores	916253556	916744057	www.mareocidental.pt
	WestCanyon	Sta Cruz das Flores	968266206	917098728	www.westcanyon.net
Flores	AzoresFerias	Lajes das Flores	964794943	963696990	www.azoresferias.com
	Extremocidente	Sta Cruz das Flores	292590100	918390189	www.hotelocidental.com
	Florescetáceos	Sta Cruz das Flores	917918964	964220645	www.viagemailhadocorvo.blogspot.com
	MareOcidental	Sta Cruz das Flores	916253556	916744057	www.mareocidental.pt
	WestCanyon	Sta Cruz das Flores	968266206	917098728	www.westcanyon.net
	ZagaiaFlores	Sta Cruz das Flores	292592521	914900304	www.zagaiaflores.com



# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE EASTERN GROUP \*

ISLAND	COMPANY	SERVICES																			
		Whale watching	Swimming with dolphins	Boat tours	Sailing	Diving	Sea fishing	Spearfishing	Sea kayaking	Surfing and bodyboard	Other nautical activities	Hiking and walking	Mountain climbing	Geotourism	Birdwatching	Cycling and mountain biking	Horse and donkey riding	Canyoning	Climbing and abseiling	Golf and rustic golf	Other activities
Santa Maria	BlueAzores				x					x											
	Garajau		x			x															
	Henrique Manuel do Monte F. M. Botelho		x			x	x			x											
	Nortaçor - Manta Maria		x			x	x														
	Paralelo 37		x			x	x			x											
São Miguel	Wahoo Diving		x			x															
	100% Aventura								x						x	x			x		x
	296 Iates			x																	
	A descoberta dos Açores			x							x										
	Açordiving	x		x	x	x															
	AçorVela			x																	
	Amazing Tours										x										x
	ANC Moto-Rent										x					x					x
	António Manuel Matos Lopes						x														
	Atlanta Tours	x		x							x										
	Atlantic Bowling																				x
	Atlantimagia																				x
	Azorean Travel Experts											x				x					x
	Azoreantours											x									x
	Azores Dream Tours																				x
	Azores Ocean Land	x	x	x																	
	Azores Sub			x		x			x		x										
	Belazorica											x									x
	Bigblue Azores			x								x									x
	Bluetalassa			x																	
	Campos de Golfe das Furnas e da Batalha																				x
	Carlos Manuel Parece Mendes Araújo			x							x										
	Centro e Escola de Mergulho do Caloura Hotel Resort			x			x														
	Colíseu Micaelense																				
	Cresaçor											x				x					x
	Ecocritério																				x
	Ecoislands Azores						x								x						x
Espírito Azul			x		x	x				x											

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ISLAND	COMPANY	SERVICES																			
		Whale watching	Swimming with dolphins	Boat tours	Sailing	Diving	Sea fishing	Spearfishing	Sea kayaking	Surfing and bodyboard	Other nautical activities	Hiking and walking	Mountain climbing	Geotourism	Birdwatching	Cycling and mountain biking	Horse and donkey riding	Canyoning	Climbing and abseiling	Golf and rustic golf	Other activities
São Miguel	Fernando Cabido													X							X
	Festitour													X							X
	Físico Mais			X																	
	Freitas & Macedo			X																	X
	Futurismo	X	X	X					X	X	X		X	X	X	X					X
	Geo Fun								X		X					X					X
	GerbyBirding											X			X						
	Green Island Tours																				X
	Greenzone											X									X
	Ilha Formosa			X							X										
	J. F. Costa	X		X																	
	João Maria da Silva Oliveira						X														
	João Natalino da Ponte Carreiro			X		X	X				X										
	João Pedro Melo						X														X
	José Silvino Pinheiro de Almeida Oliveira		X		X	X					X										X
	Marina do Livramento Sousa P. Aguiar						X														X
	Maviripa			X		X	X				X										
	Moniz & Rego, Lda																				X
	Nature Wellness																				X
	Oceantur			X		X	X					X									X
	Paulo Jorge Melo de Sousa			X			X				X										
	Pedro André da Silva Vieira			X			X														
	Pesca Desportiva e Turística do Alto			X			X														
	Picos de Aventura	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X
	Rui Filipe Medeiros																				
	Scubafish					X															
	Sea Bottom			X							X										X
	Sweet-Sea	X		X			X														
	Teatro Micaelense																				X
	Terrazul	X	X	X							X										
	Trilhógia											X				X					X
	Trilhos da Natureza			X		X			X		X	X				X					X
Viajata																				X	
Village Yachts			X	X																	

# TOURISM SERVICES AND MARITIME TOURISM COMPANIES OF THE EASTERN GROUP

ISLAND	COMPANY	LOCATION	PHONE 1	PHONE 2	URL
Santa Maria	BlueAzores	Vila do Porto	296886060	916039582	www.blueazores.com
	Garajau	Vila do Porto	296884044		www.garajau.com
	Henrique Manuel do Monte F. M. Botelho	Vila do Porto	919289945		
	Nortaçor - Manta Maria	Vila do Porto	916339710	296882907	www.mantamaria.com
	Paralelo 37	Vila do Porto	296883455	914201281	www.paralelo37.pt
	Wahoo Diving	Vila do Porto	296884005		www.wahoo-diving.de
São Miguel	100% Aventura	Ponta Delgada	912608414	917565934	www.100-aventura.pt
	296 Iates	Ponta Delgada	296205070		www.296auto.pt/iates
	À descoberta dos Açores	Ribeira Grande	919934027		www.nauticaservicos.net
	Açordiving	Ponta Delgada	296285900	966182758	www.azoresdiving.com
	AçorVela	Ginetes	296295483		
	Amazing Tours	Lagoa	962526603	296965807	www.amazingtours.se
	ANC Moto-Rent	Ponta Delgada	296630300	967309909	
	António Manuel Matos Lopes	Ponta Delgada	296381447		
	Atlanta Tours	Ponta Delgada	962504440		http://atlantatours.info/home_pt.html
	Atlantic Bowling	Ponta Delgada	296282368		
	Atlantimagia	Lagoa	915230180		
	Azorean Travel Experts	Ponta Delgada	296654622		www.azoren-tourismus.de
	Azoreantours	Ribeira Grande	966780299		www.azoreantours.com
	Azores Dream Tours	Lagoa	919607160		www.azoresonline.com
	Azores Ocean Land	Ponta Delgada	912806860	919176275	www.azoresoceanland.com
	Azores Sub	Vila Franca do Campo	296539141	918755853	www.azoresub.com
	Belazorica	Ponta Delgada	296306600		www.azores-tours.com/pt
	Bigblue Azores	Ponta Delgada	966078829		www.bigblue-adventures.com
	Bluetalassa	Ponta Delgada	919137151	917765828	
	Campos de Golfe das Furnas e da Batalha	Fenais da Luz	296498559	296498560	www.azoresgolfislands.com
	Carlos Manuel Parece Mendes Araújo	Vila Franca do Campo	296582446	917237127	www.azoresailing.com
	Centro e Escola de Mergulho do Caloura Hotel Resort	Água de Pau	296960900		www.calourahotel.com
	Coliseu Micaelense	Ponta Delgada	296209500		www.coliseumicaelense.pt
	Cresaçor	Ponta Delgada	296281554		www.cresacor.org
	Ecocritério	Ponta Delgada	296650200		www.ecocriterio.pt
	Ecoislands Azores	Ribeira Grande	963469932		www.ecoazores.com
	Espírito Azul	Vila Franca do Campo	914898253	914898352	www.espiritoazul.com

ISLAND	COMPANY	LOCATION	PHONE 1	PHONE 2	URL
São Miguel	Fernando Cabido	Ponta Delgada	292929207	968517981	
	Festitour	Ponta Delgada	296099245		www.festitour.net
	Físico Mais	Ponta Delgada	918737202		
	Freitas & Macedo	Ponta Delgada			
	Futurismo	Ponta Delgada	296628522	962413409	www.futurismo.pt
	Geo Fun	Ponta Delgada	296385693	919931562	www.geo-fun.com
	GerbyBirding	Ponta Delgada	967958566		www.gerbybirding.com
	Green Island Tours	Ponta Delgada	960291037		www.green-island-tours.pt
	Greenzone	Ponta Delgada	962770410		www.greenzoneazores.com
	Ilha Formosa	Ponta Delgada	296381788		
	J. F. Costa	Vila Franca do Campo	296583643		
	João Maria da Silva Oliveira	Ponta Delgada	912266959		
	João Natalino da Ponte Carreiro	Vila Franca do Campo	966477176		
	João Pedro Melo	Ribeira Grande			
	José Silvino Pinheiro de Almeida Oliveira	Ponta Delgada	962812982		
	Marina do Livramento Sousa P. Aguiar	Ponta Delgada			
	Maviripa	Ponta Delgada	296628320		www.maviripa.pt
	Moniz & Rego, Lda	Lagoa			
	Nature Wellness	Ponta Delgada	296281055	965418600	www.azoreswellness.com
	Oceantur	Ribeira Grande	917415369	915297939	www.oceantur.pt
	Paulo Jorge Melo de Sousa	Vila Franca do Campo	966226379		
	Pedro André da Silva Vieira	Ponta Delgada	296281959		
	Pesca Desportiva e Turística do Alto	Ponta Delgada	296284291	919772814	www.fishingazores.com
	Picos de Aventura	Ponta Delgada	296283288		www.picosdeaventura.com
	Rui Filipe Medeiros	Ribeira Grande	962758186	914616240	
	Scubafish	Ponta Delgada	962861132		www.scubafish.pt
	Sea Bottom	Ponta Delgada	296302030	919991821	www.seabottomazores.com
Sweet-Sea	Vila Franca do Campo	296581240		www.sweet-sea.pt	
Teatro Micaelense	Ponta Delgada	296308340		www.teatromicaelense.pt	
Terrazul	Vila Franca do Campo	296581361	913453030	www.terrazulazores.com	
Trilhógia	Povoação	968559414	968559414	www.trilhógia.com	
Trilhos da Natureza	Ponta Delgada	919020506		www.trilhosdanatureza.com	
Viajata	Ponta Delgada				
Village Yachts	Vila Franca do Campo	296283283	912579920	www.village-yachts.pt	

# USEFUL CONTACTS

## **TOURIST INFORMATION**

Regional Tourism Association (ART) | 295 216 480 | [info@artazores.com](mailto:info@artazores.com) | [info.qit@artazores.com](mailto:info.qit@artazores.com)  
[www.artazores.com](http://www.artazores.com)

## **TRANSPORTS**

### **Inter-island boat**

Atlântico Line | 296 282 092/3 | [www.atlanticoline.pt](http://www.atlanticoline.pt)

Transmaçor - Transportes Marítimos Açorianos | 292 200 381 | [www.transmacor.pt](http://www.transmacor.pt)

## **AIRLINES**

SATA | 707 227 282 | [www.sata.pt](http://www.sata.pt)

TAP | 707 205 700 | [www.flytap.com](http://www.flytap.com)

## **WEBSITES**

### **Tourist information**

Regional Tourism Association (ART) [www.artazores.com](http://www.artazores.com)

ART – Azores Congresses [www.azorescongresses.com](http://www.azorescongresses.com)

ATA- Tourism Association of the Azores [www.visitazores.org](http://www.visitazores.org)

Regional Department of the Environment [redenatura2000.azores.gov.pt/](http://redenatura2000.azores.gov.pt)

Regional Government of the Azores [www.azores.gov.pt](http://www.azores.gov.pt)

Casas Açorianas [www.casasacorianas.com](http://www.casasacorianas.com)

SIARAM [siaram.azores.gov.pt](http://siaram.azores.gov.pt)

Database of the Biodiversity of the Azores [www.azoresbioportal.angra.uac.pt](http://www.azoresbioportal.angra.uac.pt)

Naturdata – Biodiversity in Portugal <http://naturdata.com/>

Inventory of Azorean Heritage sites [www.inventario.iacultura.pt](http://www.inventario.iacultura.pt)

Projecto CLIMMAT (Weather and Climatology of the Azores) [www.climaat.angra.uac.pt](http://www.climaat.angra.uac.pt)

Portuguese Geographical Institute (topographical maps) [www.igeo.pt](http://www.igeo.pt)

### **Activities and tourism in nature**

## **CANYONING**

ZoomAzores [www.zoomazores.com](http://www.zoomazores.com)

Associação Desnível [www.desnivel.pt](http://www.desnivel.pt)

## **CLIMBING**

Associação de Guias de Montanha dos Açores [associacaodeguiasdemontanha.blogspot.com](http://associacaodeguiasdemontanha.blogspot.com)

Os Montanheiros [www.montanheiros.com](http://www.montanheiros.com)

## **GEOTOURISM AND CAVING**

Gespea [www.speleoazores.com](http://www.speleoazores.com)

Os Montanheiros [www.montanheiros.com](http://www.montanheiros.com)

OVGA – Volcano and Geothermal Observatory of the Azores [www.ovga-azores.eu](http://www.ovga-azores.eu)

Project Geopark Azores [www.azoresgeopark.com](http://www.azoresgeopark.com)

## **DIVING**

Turismo dos Açores <http://www.visitazores.com/pt-pt/experience-the-azores/scuba>

Scubaazores [www.horta.uac.pt/scubaazores](http://www.horta.uac.pt/scubaazores)

Bienal Turismo Subaquático – Açores [bienal-turismosubaquatico.org](http://bienal-turismosubaquatico.org)

## **WHALE WATCHING**

Ordem Cetacea [www.horta.uac.pt/species/cetacea](http://www.horta.uac.pt/species/cetacea)

Whale & Dolphin Conservation Society [www.wdcs.org](http://www.wdcs.org)

European Cetacean Society [www.europeancetaceansociety.eu](http://www.europeancetaceansociety.eu)

WhaleNet [whale.wheelock.edu](http://whale.wheelock.edu)

## **BIRDWATCHING**

Birding Azores <http://birdingazores.com/>

Azores Birds & Birdwatching <http://avesdosazores.wordpress.com/>

Centro Ambiental do Priolo <http://centropriolo.spea.pt/pt/>

## **HIKING AND WALKING**

Trilhos dos Açores [www.trails-azores.com](http://www.trails-azores.com)

Pedestrianismo e Percursos Pedestres em Portugal [pedestrianismo.blogspot.com](http://pedestrianismo.blogspot.com)

## **SURFING**

ZoomAzores <http://www.zoomazores.com/map/>

Wannasurf (Surf no Mundo) [www.wannasurf.com/spot/Europe/Azores](http://www.wannasurf.com/spot/Europe/Azores)

