



**Portugal- Island hopping in the Azores (2025)**

**14 Days/ 13 Nights**

**Group Guided**



Discover the best of five Azores unspoilt islands; Sao Miguel, Terceira, Sao Jorge, Flores and Faial. This gentle walking holiday explores the beautiful and varied landscapes; crater lakes, extinct volcanoes, vineyards, thermal springs and craggy coastlines.

- **Sete Cidades** - Crater walk with stunning views of the twin blue and green lakes
- **Whale watching** - Opportunity to take a boat trip alongside whales and dolphins
- **Faja dos Cubres** - Follow a hydrangea lined path down to this unique lagoon

**OK Cycle & Adventure Tours Inc.** - 666 Kirkwood Ave - Suite B102 – Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1Z 5X9

[www.okcycletours.com](http://www.okcycletours.com) Toll Free 1-888-621-6818 Local 613-702-5350

TICO Ontario Registration No: 50022848



## **Day by Day**

### **DAY 1 - Join trip in Ponta Delgada on the island of Sao Miguel**

Arrive in Ponta Delgada, Located on the harbour of Sao Miguel, the Azores largest island, Ponta Delgada is a charming historic city with narrow cobbled streets and some interesting buildings worth a visit, such as the Municipal city hall with its reflecting pool in the city centre of Baixa.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 7pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Ponta Delgada at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive at João Paulo II Airport in Ponta Delgada (PDL) which is around 10 minutes' drive from the hotel. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to take a stroll along the harbour front promenade past the 16<sup>th</sup> century fort to the marina or visit the Convent and Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Esperança with its unique quadrangular tower.



### **Day 2 - Walk around Sete Cidades, see the colourful crater lakes**

Basing ourselves at Ponta Delgada, the island's capital, we spend our first 3 days exploring Sao Miguel - the largest of the islands we visit. We use a mixture of local and private buses to transfer us to and from our walks.

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For our first day walking we drive to the west side of the island for a beautiful walk within and around the iconic Sete Cidades volcanic crater. The 500-metre/1640 feet deep, three-mile long volcanic crater contains two lakes, Lagoa Verde and Lagoa Azul, one blue and one green.

The trail starts at Vista do Rei viewpoint, heading along the crater ridge until the parking lot of Várzea. Throughout the walk, there are views of the Sete Cidades lakes to the right and views over the coastline of Sao Miguel Island and the sea to the left.

**Today's leisurely 5 kilometre/3.1 miles walk is expected to take around two hours with 270 metres/890 feet of ascent and descent. The last section of the trail before the village is quite inclined and can be slippery. MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST**

#### **Day 3 - Enjoy lakeside walk, lunch among volcanic scenery and visit thermal pools**

We make a stop at Gorreana, Europe's oldest and only remaining tea factory and continue to Lagoa das Furnas where we take a walk around the shores of the lake, stopping to see the natural ovens (cavities in the rock). In the huge hollow of Furnas Valley, diverse volcanic activity has also created thermal springs and boiling mud pools. For lunch today we'll enjoy a traditional Cozido cooked in the volcanic fumeroles.

We also have time to visit the botanical gardens of Terra Nostra, planted over 200 years ago which has an outdoor thermal pool in which you may like to take a dip. Back on the bus we continue to a viewpoint to Lagoa de Fogo, the island's highest crater lake, where we will stop to take photos before continuing back to Ponta Delgada.

**Today's leisurely 4 kilometre/2.5 miles walk is expected to take around one-and-a-half hours with 50 metres/ 170 feet of ascent and descent. MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH**

#### **DAY 4 - Free day; optional boat trip to look for whales**

Today is left free to explore more of the island on and off shore. You may wish to do one of the many walks around the island, options include the Salto do Cabrito trail (seven-and-a-half kilometres) to the waterfall or a linear route that connects the village of Sao Vicente Ferreira and Calhetas on the north coast (six-and-a-half kilometres). Another option is to take a whale searching trip. MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

#### **DAY 5 -Fly to Sao Jorge Island**

Today we take a short flight to the island of Sao Jorge. This curiously elongated island is some 56 kilometre/34.8 miles long, but only 8 kilometre/5 miles wide, having been created by a series of linear volcanic eruptions. The island remained almost isolated for many centuries, due to the lack of shelter offered to ships. After transferring to our hotel, we are free to wander the streets of the small maritime community of Velas, where we are based. Alternatively, we can take an optional walk to the old whale



watching tower, Miradouro do Morro das Velas, which is positioned on a volcanic crater from where we can enjoy views down on to Velas town (2 hours). MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

#### **Day 6 - Walk through Caldeira de Cima gorge down to Faja dos Cubres**

We spend two full days walking on Sao Jorge, a place of precipitous cliffs, narrow valleys and tiny coves. On our first day, we'll head from Velas to the north side of the island. A stunning walk starting from the 700 metre/2300 feet high ridge of Sao Jorge leads us through the beautiful gorge of the Caldeira de Cima and down to the coast. From here we follow the rocky coastline passing the Caldeira de Santo Cristo Lake walking to Faja dos Cubres. Fajas are the small plains at the foot of the steep coastal cliffs which are dotted with traditional hamlets and fertile orchards.

**Today's moderate 10 kilometre/6.2 miles walk is expected to take around four hours with (295 metres/970 feet) of ascent and (960 metres/3150 feet) of descent. MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST**

#### **Day 7 - Free day with a choice of optional walks including the descent from the central spine to Faja Ouvidor**

Our second day is left free for optional walks, and your tour leader will advise on the various possibilities. Views of the surrounding islands are excellent from Pico da Esperanca ridge walk (1,053 metre/3455 feet) in the centre of the island, while a walk along the fajas on the south coast of the island offers a contrast in scenery from the north.

**Today's moderate optional is around 20 kilometre/12.4 miles ridge walk is expected to take around five hours with 420 metres/1380 feet of ascent and 1,230 metres/4036 feet of descent. PROVIDED: BREAKFAST**

#### **Day 8 - Ferry to Pico Island and wine tasting in the afternoon**

This, morning, we take a boat to Pico and transfer to our accommodation at Madalena. The island covers some (42 kilometre/26 miles) by (16 kilometre/10 miles) and is dominated by its volcano, Pico Alto, reaching up to 2350 metre/7710 feet.

For those interested in the history of the island, there are many small fishing ports, several with reminders of the old whaling industry once so vital to the island.

In the afternoon, we visit the Pico Wine Cooperative that many of the vineyards are part of to learn about the wine making process and enjoy a tasting.

The rest of the day is free to explore this small fishing port, or perhaps visit the Grota do Torres Lava Tunnel. MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST





**Day 9 - Optional whale watching and walk through UNESCO World Heritage landscape**

This morning, there is an opportunity to visit the other main town Lajes do Pico, and have the opportunity to take a whale-watching trip from Lajes to spot sperm whales as well as several species of dolphins.

We then transfer to Porto do Calhau in the village of Candelaria from where we walk a linear route through the UNESCO World Heritage landscape to arrive back in Madalena town. The trail take us along the coast passing by tide wells before heading into vineyards to be surrounded by a network of volcanic stone walls (currais) that protect the various grape vines, with views to Mount Pico in one direction and the island of Faial out in the distance in the other.

Weather dependant and for those wanting more of a challenge, an alternative today is to make the ascent of Pico, a very strenuous six-seven hour climb (with 1020 metre/3350 feet ascent and descent). Those interested in walking can ask your Tour Leader to arrange it for you, from where there are fine views across the straits to Faial, while behind the peak of the volcano rises into the clouds. There are dozens of small volcanic cones on the slopes of Pico Alto and some caves created by past lava and magnificent vistas of neighbouring islands.

**Today's leisurely 8 kilometre/5 miles walk is expected to take around 3 hours along a flat route.**

MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST



#### **Day 10 - Misterios do Sul coastal walk**

Today we walk along the south coast of the island. The walking trail of Misterios do Sul do Pico starts in the Forest Reserve and passes by the lava landmarks of Misterio de Sao Joao and the Misterio da Silveira from the historical volcanic eruptions of 1718 and 1720, respectively. The word misterios, which translates as mysteries, is due to the lack of knowledge and fear that these natural phenomena caused to the Azorean population.

Along the route will see the red Ponta Rasa windmill, built in 1949 and pass the villages of Silveira and Sao Joao, home to the Cheese Museum where you can purchase some local delicacies from the shop, including the emblematic Sao Joao cheese, which dates back to 1948 and is the brand image of Pico Island.

**Today's leisurely 8.5 kilometre/5.2 miles linear walk is expected to take around 3 hours with 80 meters/262 feet of ascent and descent.** Meals provided: Breakfast

#### **Day 11 - Take the ferry to Faial Island; explore Horta**

This morning, we cross by ferry to the charming island of Faial, where the harbour is often full of yachts, half way through their transatlantic crossing. The remainder of the day is free to stroll the streets and harbour of Horta. There is a circular walk from the hotel on the Monte da Guia headland which provides views over town, the tour leader will provide directions.

Our accommodation for the last three nights at the Azoris Faial Garden Hotel is a relaxing way to end this walking holiday. Set within an extensive landscaped garden with coastal views and an inviting outdoor swimming pool.

**Today's leisurely optional 4.5 kilometre/2.7 miles walk is expected to take around two hours with 160 meters/525 feet of ascent and descent.** Meals provided: Breakfast

#### **Day 12 - Excursion of the island, walk around the Caldeira and visit the Capelinhos volcano centre**

Today we explore the Ilha Azul, taking a tour of the island by private bus. We head to the stunning Caldeira often shrouded in cloud, where we view the lush green-carpeted crater and walking along its edge. The views over the island are particularly impressive in summer, when the wild blue hydrangeas that form many of the hedges are in flower. We then continue to the western end of the island to visit the Capelinhos volcano, now extinct, where we can walk around or visit the Capelinhos Volcano Interpretation Centre. Later we return to Horta, an attractive little town with some good restaurants.

**Today's leisurely 7 kilometre/4.4 miles Calderia trail is expected to take around two-and-a-half hours with 280 metres/920 feet of ascent and descent.** Meals provided: Breakfast



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### **Day 13 - Circular walk down to Faja da Praia do Norte**

Heading to the north of the island, today's trail begins and ends at Praia do Norte Parish, descending to Faja da Praia do Norte, a faja (headland) formed by lava from the eruption of the Cabeco do Fogo volcano.

Heading towards the sea we follow the road passing by several fountains until starting the descent along the dirt road path through cultivated fields and along the cliff path through laurel forest woodland to reach Praia do Norte beach, a prime surfing spot. Continuing along the coast passing by an area for the protection of endemic plants there is a picnic spot for lunch. Walk through the centre of Praia do Norte, passing by the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Penha de Franca, built in 1787. From the town the trail follows the road until ascending the cliff path to reach again the road and back to the waiting bus.

**Today's moderate 5 kilometre/3.1 miles walk is expected to take around two with 265 metres/870 feet of ascent and descent.** Meals provided: Breakfast

### **DAY 14 - Trip ends in Horta, Faial Island**

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Horta.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Horta at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Horta Airport (HOR) which is around 15 minutes' drive from the hotel.

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## Route



Easy to moderate walking

All hikes may be subject to change due to weather.

Getting there: Direct flights are available from major North American Hubs.

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**Dates and Prices – all prices are per person, in Canadian dollars and subject to confirmation on booking.**

Date	Double Occupancy	Optional Single Room Supplement
April 12	\$4910	\$1470
May 3	\$4910	\$1470
May 17	\$4910	\$1470
May 31	\$5150	\$1550
July 5	\$4410	\$1470
July 19	\$4410	\$1470
Aug 2	\$4410	\$1470
Aug 16	\$4150	\$1790
Sept 6	\$4910	\$1650
Oct 18	\$4410	\$1470

#### **Included**

- 13 Breakfasts 1 lunch
- 110 nights comfortable Hotel, 2 nights premium hotels
- Experienced guide
- Group size 10-16

#### **Not Included**

- Optional tips
- Meals not mentioned above
- Drinks and personal expenses
- Travel insurance is required

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### **Optional activities**

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for locally and do not form part of your holiday contract.

Pico Island - Half day whale watching €65pp (pre-booking recommended)

Sao Jorge - Ridge Walk Pico de Esperanza €20/25pp shared taxi

Pico - Gruta das Torres lava cave €10 entrance fee (pre-booking required)

Pico Hike - if you would like to hike Pico, please ask your Tour Leader a few days in advance to book it for you as it needs to be pre-paid and pre-booked. Rates are from €60pp including hiking permit, equipment, mountain guide and transport

Faial - Capelinhos Volcano Interpretation Centre €10 entrance fee

All taxi costs are based on a minimum of 4 people sharing. Taxis need to be paid in cash. All other excursions can be paid by cash or card

***This is a partner tour.***