



A Volcanic Island Short Break



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group

VISITING: The Azores

BROCHURE CODE: 5552

DURATION: 4 nights

In Brief

UNESCO may have discovered The Azores but this stunning archipelago still feels untouched. This four-night break includes the highlights of the largest island, Sao Miguel. Combine peaceful island life with adventurous exploring as you enjoy activities such as whale watching, cycling and kayaking amongst the volcanic landscape.

Our Opinion

“ The Azorean landscapes are like nothing I’ve ever experienced in my extensive European travels. They’ve got volcanoes growing out of their volcanoes, they cook their food in the warm volcanic soils, they’ve got the world’s happiest cows and, they’ve got some spectacular whale and dolphin watching. ”



What's included?

- **Transfers:** all transfers included
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights' in Hotel São Miguel Park with the option to upgrade to the Marina Atlantico or the Grand Hotel. All the hotels are located in the coastal town of Ponta Delgada
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 2 lunches
- **The following activities are included in the holiday:** whale and dolphin watching, tour to Furnas, Sete Cidades adventure tour with optional cycling (easy or difficult levels) and kayaking **(the order of activities is subject to change)**
- Fully qualified guides and instructors during activities
- Equipment, training, and supervision for all activities with expert local guides

Trip Overview

Rich green plant life covers the ground, steam rises into the air and rugged volcanic landscapes tower above. You'd be forgiven for thinking you've just travelled to Hawaii or indeed Jurassic Park but the Azorean Islands are in fact, a European hidden treasure.

Perhaps it's their location in the mid-Atlantic that keeps the Azores off the tourist map. However, with easier-than-ever travel routes, it is completely bewildering to us that tourists aren't flocking here.

With its picturesque landscape and seascapes, an abundance of wildlife and a wealth of activities on offer, the Azores leave everyone who visits in awe. During your holiday, you'll have several opportunities to discover its natural wonders.

You'll see wildlife all around you but it's the ones below the surface that truly inspire. Head out onto the Atlantic for a whale and dolphin watching tour.

In almost every direction, you'll see evidence of the volcanic activity in the Azores. During a trip to Furnas, you'll learn all about the volcanic action that shaped the islands.

Exploring the surroundings even further at Sete Cidades, you'll also have the option to cycle around

and kayak across impressive crater lakes.

During your time here, you'll experience how the Azores offer a perfect combination of slow island life with plenty to see and do. Just make sure you don't brag too much when you're home – we'd love to keep these islands to ourselves for as long as possible!

Image Credits: Futurismo Azores Adventure

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

Upon arrival at João Paulo II Airport, the driver of your transfer vehicle will be waiting to take you to your hotel which is approximately 10 minutes away.

You'll then check into your accommodation at either the Hotel São Miguel Park or you may have upgraded to the Marina Atlantico or the Grand Hotel.

Included Meals: None

DAY
2

WHALE AND DOLPHIN WATCHING

Today, after breakfast you will have the opportunity to see the fascinating marine life of the Azores as you set sail on a catamaran.

During the whale and dolphin watching tour, you'll have the opportunity to look out for some of the 25 cetacean species found in the Azores. Though there are no guarantees, whales and dolphins are regularly seen during these half-day tours. As well as this, you may see turtles, seabirds and other marine life.

Before you set off, a marine biologist will provide a briefing. You'll learn about the different cetacean species, safety measures aboard, how to respect the animals as well as some historical facts.

Once you're back on land, your afternoon is free to spend as you wish.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY
3

VOLCANIC TOUR TO FURNAS

Today is all about exploring the volcanic landscapes of the Azores.

Your first location of the day will be a real highlight for tea-lovers. You will visit Gorreana Tea Estates, one of Europe's oldest remaining tea plantations. In addition to seeing the growing areas, you will, of course, get to sample some of the tea produced here. If you are a fan of Green Tea then you are in for a real treat, the local varieties are fabulous.

You will then go to the Caldeiras das Furnas to see the volcanic activity at work. Here, you'll see fumaroles and mineral springs. Make sure you try the water from each spring as you might notice the variety in tastes because of the different minerals present.

At lunch, you have the chance to try the local dish of Cozido das Furnas. This is the classic Portuguese 'cozido' which is a stew of slow-cooked meats and vegetables but with an Azorean twist. Here, the locals really make use of the geothermal activity and cook this delicious meal using the natural steam from the ground!

Following lunch, you will have the chance to look around the exceptional Terra Nostra Botanical Gardens. Filled with a variety of plant life, this is a captivating visit which includes the fantastic opportunity to unwind in the iron-rich waters of a geothermal pool. The waters have a soothing temperature of around 35°C to 40°C and the minerals present will leave you feeling deeply relaxed. (Please take old swimming costumes as the mineral water will stain them a light brown colour).

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
4

JEEP TOUR, CYCLING AND KAYAKING AT SETE CIDADES

After fuelling up on breakfast, you'll have an adventurous day exploring the west side of São Miguel.

On the way, you will stop at various viewpoints to enjoy this beautiful landscape. One of the stops will be at the Vista do Rei, probably the most famous viewpoint of Sao Miguel Island. From here you can enjoy the views of the 'Lagoa das Sete Cidades' or 'Lagoon of Seven Cities' that consists of a twin lake formed in the crater of a dormant volcano. The greenish-blues of the water sit between plush green landscapes.

After arriving at the lake, you can explore the surroundings on a 10km cycle ride. The trail is largely flat, with only 10 minutes of uphill peddling which means you can enjoy your surroundings. There is an option to do a tougher route if you're feeling up to the challenge.

There's also the chance to get even closer to the placid lake by kayaking across it.

A picnic lunch is included today.

Back at the hotel, you'll have a free evening to spend your last night as you please. You could head

out and sample more of the local cuisine. We'd strongly recommend trying Azorean tapas... black pudding with pineapple might surprise a few people!

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
5

DEPARTURE

Following breakfast, it's time for your exploration trip to come to an end. If you have an early flight, we'll box up breakfast for you before your transfer to the airport.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Included Accommodation

Other options are available - see below for details.

Hotel São Miguel Park (Nights: 1-4)



This centrally located four-star hotel is a short distance from Ponta Delgada's beautiful Botanical Gardens and just ten minutes from the airport. Its open and spacious rooms offer fine views and a summery feel. Tuck into delectable buffets of Azorean cuisine at the on-site restaurant and take an invigorating break at the hotel's health club.

Hotel facilities

- Switch your swimming between the hotel's indoor and outdoor pools
- Book a therapeutic massage treatment, relax in the Jacuzzi, or freshen up in the spa.
- Maintain your gains in the well-equipped Fitness Centre.
- Sample cocktails from the hotel bar and fill up on Azorean cooking at the restaurant.

Room Type

Twin/Double Room: These have a twin or double bed. The bathroom has a shower, toilet, and hairdryer. The room also comes with cable television, internet access, and a telephone, as well as air-conditioning, a safe, and a minibar.

Image credits: Futurismo Azores Adventures, Sao Miguel Park Hotel

Other accommodation options

Contact us for a personalised quote.

Grand Hotel Azores



A stylish hotel situated near the historic centre of Ponta Delgada and features stunning sea views across the harbour.

Hotel facilities

- Enjoy magnificent sea views and delicious food from the Balcony restaurant
- Sit back, relax and sip a specially crafted cocktails at the Vapore Bar & Lounge
- Workout in the onsite gym or take a swim in the indoor heated pool
- Enjoy free WiFi throughout the hotel

Room type

DOUBLE OR TWIN ROOMS (SOME WITH SEA VIEWS)

All rooms come with a double or twin bed and have air conditioning, a telephone, TV, Wi-Fi, a minibar (extra charge), a safe, a hairdryer, bathrobe and toiletries

Please contact our Travel Experts for a quotation.

Marina Atlântico



With nautical themes and incredible views overlooking the ocean, the 4-star Marina Atlântico is a great place to enjoy the island's sea and landscapes. Your central location puts you right in the midst of Azorean culture. Sample the local food, stroll along the streets or visit one of the many museums which are all within walking distance.

Hotel facilities

- Relax in Escuna restaurant or Palhabote bar area
- Make use of the onsite pool and gym facilities
- Enjoy free use of the hotel's bicycles to explore the volcanic landscape further

Room type

- **Double or twin rooms (some with sea views):** All rooms come with a double or twin bed and have air conditioning, a telephone, cable TV, Wi-Fi, radio, minibar (extra charge), safe, hairdryer, gym and spa area

Please contact our Travel Experts for a quotation.

Image Credit: Hotel Marina Atlântico

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Approximately 2 - 21 people

Please note: if you choose to travel by catamaran during the whale watching, the maximum group size is 76 people.

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Artisan holiday is typically 8 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions>

Minimum travellers 10, Maximum travellers 20