

Walking Cape Verde - Santo Antao & Sao Vicente

Trip Code: SGCV

Version:



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover some of the best walking trails on Sao Vicente and Santo Antao islands, with an easier walk option available on most days
- Experience the contrasts of Santo Antao: arid mountains, lush valleys and stunning beaches

- Hike the spectacular coastal path along the wild Atlantic from Cruzinha to Ponta do Sol
- Relax in peaceful Tarrafal, soak in the laid back island life and Creole hospitality
- Perfect destination for winter sunshine

AT A GLANCE

- 8 days walking
- Private transfers included
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Daily departures available
- Join at Mindelo

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

The archipelago of Cape Verde, or Cabo Verde, is a stunning collection of islands of varying scenery, situated in the wild Atlantic Ocean 385 miles off the west coast of Africa. On this self-guided walking holiday, you will visit the islands of Sao Vicente and Santo Antao where you will walk on some of the most incredible hiking trails in the mountains and on the coast, discover rural Cape Verdean life and marvel at the spectacular contrasts of the volcanic island landscape.

Beginning your holiday with two nights in the country's colourful cultural centre of Mindelo, you can immerse yourself into the Creole way of life full of art, music and dancing, and enjoy an option of two hikes on this arid island. Journeying by ferry to Santo Antao, you will explore the high mountains, the fertile valleys and the stunning coastal regions of this verdant island with the option of a longer walk or a shorter walk available on most days. Your holiday culminates with two nights in the remote beach village of Tarrafal, free for you to enjoy as you wish; the perfect spot to relax and absorb the chilled out island vibes. Staying in a variety of comfortable hotels and small family-run guesthouses, you will experience a true taste of Creole hospitality and no doubt fall in love with incredible Cape Verde.

Is this holiday for you?

We have specially designed this holiday with the option of a harder or an easier walk available on most days so you can choose the route to suit your preference each day. The trip grade is based on the longer/harder options that are around 5-6 hours of walking, while the shorter/easier hike options are around 3-4 hours of walking.

Your walks are on well-established trails and you will encounter a wide range of underfoot conditions on this very varied holiday. These can be a mix of ancient mule tracks of good condition, cobbled paths, gravelly trails and rough, rocky tracks. Walking poles are highly recommended for this holiday. The nature of the terrain means that many of the trails are rugged and steep, sometimes with dramatic vantage points that call for a good head for heights.

Private transfers are provided to/from your walks as required by the itinerary, making your holiday

experience as seamless as possible. You will have plenty of time to relax in each of the spectacular locations where you will stay. Plus, we have included two nights toward the end of the trip at the remote fishing village of Tarrafal, perfect for a spot of beach R&R after a wonderful week of walking.

Tourism is still in its infancy at many of the places we visit, some accommodations and facilities can be more basic but this adds to the experience of discovering these special, off-the-beaten-track destinations.

For safety considerations on the more remote mountain trails, this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Private transfers as described in the itinerary
- Return ferry journey between Mindelo and Santo Antao
- Tourist tax

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to/from Sao Vicente island
- Visas (if applicable)
- Drinks
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Tips
- Airport security fee (TSA)
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts and ends in Mindelo. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you.

The best airport for this trip is Sao Pedro Cesaria Evora International Airport on Sao Vicente island. You will be met on arrival at the airport and be transferred to your accommodation in Mindelo. At the end of the trip you will be transferred from your accommodation in Mindelo to Sao Pedro Airport in time for the check in of your departure flight.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 6 lunches and 6 dinners are included on this holiday. Drinks (water and other drinks) are not included.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. You should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

In Cape Verde the cuisine is of a West African origin with Portuguese influences. Ingredients used are fresh and tasty, and meals are often based on regional vegetables along with fish or meat. Being surrounded by water, fresh seafood features in many dishes and can include delicious meaty fish such as tuna, jack fish and the lesser known wahoo. Locally grown crops such as sweet potato, yams, cassava and beans make for a hearty meal, generously seasoned with garlic and herbs. The national dish of Cape Verde is known as Cachupa, a slow-cooked stew made with fish or meat, beans, corn and and vegetables, usually served with rice. Soup dishes such as Canjo are also popular, made with chicken, rice, onions and carrots.

Depending on the catch of the day, you might have the opportunity to try the bizarre-looking Percebes (gooseneck barnacles), also known as sea fingers for their appearance; the end is cracked off and the skin peeled to reveal the meat which has a texture akin to squid.

Fresh fruit including papaya, guava, mangoes, banana and coconuts make for a sweet dessert. For those with a sweet tooth, the Cape Verdean bol de cus-cus is a rich, dense cake made with cornmeal, sugar and cinnamon.

Grogue is a strong rum made from distilled sugar cane and is readily available on Santo Antao where the rum is produced. Mixed with condensed milk or molasses, the sweet cocktail of ponche (punch) is created.

Where included, picnic lunches are provided by the accommodation and typically consist of a pasta or rice salad, with tomatoes, corn and sometimes tuna, with local cheese and fruit. It would be a good idea to bring a Tupperware lunch box and picnic cutlery for your packed lunch.

Accommodation

For this holiday we have selected a combination of comfortable hotels and family-run guesthouses in the small villages we stay at, all chosen for their amazing locations, magnificent mountain or sea views and warm welcome.

While in Mindelo, you will stay in a comfortable hotel or guesthouse, well-located for you to easily explore the lively port city.

In Cha de Morte, Ribeira das Patas, you will stay in a welcoming family-run guesthouse with a magnificent backdrop of the surrounding cliffs. In this mountain village, guesthouse facilities are simple, but you will be received like one of the family and enjoy delicious home-cooked meals with produce grown in this very valley.

While at the coast in Paul and Ponta do Sol, your hotels are located close to the seafront, just a stone's throw from the wild Atlantic Ocean.

Toward the end of your holiday, you will stay two nights in Tarrafal on the western side of Santo Antao. A small fishing village untouched by mass tourism, this is a perfect spot to relax and soak up the laid back island life. Here you will stay in a simple guesthouse close to the beach. Please note that it is not possible to make payment by credit card in this remote village, and there are no ATMs or banks here, so you should have a supply of cash for non-included meals and any additional activities or excursions you may choose to undertake independently.

Tourism is still in its infancy at many of the places we visit; accommodation and facilities can be more basic at some locations but this adds to the charm of discovering off-the-beaten-track destinations. Additionally your stay at these locations will directly benefit the local economy.

Additional Information

If you would like to have mobile data connectivity on your holiday, a local SIM card is available on request through KE. The cost is £17 for 7GB data with a local network provider. You just need to make sure that your device is unlocked to accept an additional SIM.

Just order this in advance through our sales team; the cost will be added to your booking to be paid with your final balance. The SIM card will be provided at your welcome meeting on arrival in Mindelo.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, and a daypack for your daily essentials. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates (*see Health & Vaccinations below*), **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the [FCDO](#) for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Visa Cape Verde

UK passport holders do not need a visa for short stays. However there is an 'Airport Security Tax' (TSA) and prior to arrival you must register with the Cape Verde authorities on the EASE website ease.gov.cv where you can pay the 3,400 escudos (approximately £30) TSA.

You must fill in a [traveller entry form](#) at least 5 days before you arrive in the country. This form includes an airport security fee ('TSA'), which you must pay before you arrive.

US passport holders do need a visa for Cape Verde.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you [take precautions to avoid mosquito bites](#).

Zika Virus

Zika virus has been confirmed as active in this country. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The mosquitoes that transmit ZIKV are unlikely to be found above 2,000m altitude. For more information, visit the website of the National Travel Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk>.

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and Support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Currency

The unit of currency in Cape Verde is the Cape Verdean Escudo.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace however, getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking 4 to 5 hours a day for consecutive days on steep and rugged paths.

Climate

Sao Vicente and Santo Antao has a hot desert climate, with the annual temperature on the coast averaging around 24 degrees C. August and September are the hottest months, with daytime highs reaching up to 33 degrees C.

Sao Vicente island experiences little rainfall, with September being the wettest month with an average of 5 days of precipitation. Santo Antao experiences higher levels of precipitation with the rainy season between August and December, accounting for its lush green landscapes. Even so the months of October, November and December only average around 2 days of rain each month.

Higher in the mountains the temperature will feel cooler, dropping as low as 11-15 degrees C.

The best season for hiking is from October to July, avoiding the hottest and wettest month of September.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Cape Verde - Bradt Travel Guide

Folk-lore from the Cape Verde Islands - Elsie Clews Parsons

Fables & Fairy Tales of Cape Verde - R. I. J. Roulhac

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good-grip soles
- Hiking socks
- Long / short hiking trousers
- Functional base layer top and leggings
- T-shirts
- Fleece / extra warm layer
- Windproof jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Hat, gloves, and neck gaiter
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses

- Sunhat
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Filter bottle such as [Water-to-Go](#)
- Mobile phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Camera (and batteries / memory card)
- Reusable sealable picnic boxes and cutlery for lunches
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Walking poles (highly recommended)
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Ear plugs
- Personal wash kit
- Your self-guided route notes
- Rucksack (approx. 20L)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in double or twin occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers - contact our Sales Team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights' accommodation before or after your self-guided trip - ask our Sales Team to find out more about this.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Our Sales Team will also be happy to provide you with a quote for scheduled flights from your nearest regional airport (where possible). Flight prices are subject to change depending on availability and seasonality. Flight prices will only be confirmed to you when all services have been arranged and confirmed for your requested dates.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Utilising our years of experience operating guided walking holidays on Cape Verde, we have designed this unique self-guided itinerary to explore some of the most beautiful hiking trails on Sao Vicente and Santo Antao, linking the two islands with a ferry journey. With the option of longer and shorter walks most days, you set your own pace for your holiday. Stopping over in Lisbon? Make the most of your time with our self-guided Walking Lisbon & Serra de Sintra short break.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 28/12/2025 and the trip is subject to change