

# Walking in the Azores

Trip Code: SGSM

Version:



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



LEISURELY



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Walk to Sete Cidades Caldeira with its mystic blue and green crater lakes
- Enjoy the chance to get up close to nature on a whale watching boat tour
- Delight in the freedom to get off the beaten track
- Stay in 2-star and 3-star family-run hotels in Ponta Delgada, capital of the Azores, and the volcanic hot springs area of Furnas

- Option to upgrade to 4-star hotels for the entire trip, including 3 nights at the renowned Terra Nostra Garden Hotel in Furnas

## AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking and sightseeing
- Daily departures available
- Join at / End in Ponta Delgada

## ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

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

# Introduction

The Azores - nine little islands amidst the wild Atlantic that are full of mystery, staggering volcanic scenery, and a history of great explorers. This one-week self-guided walk and drive holiday gives you the opportunity to delve into the amazing world of Sao Miguel, known as the Green Island thanks to its dense and incredible vegetation - a reputation it certainly lives up to!

Your walks will take you to the stunning Sete Cidades Caldeira with its blue and green lakes, to the Fogo Lake nature reserve that teems with birds and other wildlife, to the summit of Pico da Vara to stand on top of this amazing island, to the lush Furnas Valley, past waterfalls, and to the forgotten village of Sanguinho. You will also have the opportunity to visit the oldest and only remaining tea plantation in Europe as well as embark on a whale watching tour so you can experience all sorts of facets of life on this enchanting island. Spending 4 nights in Ponta Delgada and 3 nights in Furnas on a B&B basis gives you the freedom to really get the most from your holiday and to soak up local life.

## Is this holiday for you?

We have specially designed this holiday with flexibility in mind, to give you the opportunity to make the most of your holiday and everything this gem of the Atlantic has to offer. By designing this as a hike and drive itinerary, hiring a car means that you can have even more freedom - pre-booking your hire car well in advance is highly recommended. Your walks will take you to the natural masterpieces of Sete Cidades Caldeira, Fogo Lake, and through lush valleys punctuated with waterfalls. You will walk for an average of 3-4 hours per day on marked paths, which allows plenty of time to make stop-offs at viewpoints both along your walks and during your drives, as well as to enjoy your accommodation's facilities.

# Itinerary

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## Holiday Information

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### What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Whale watching boat trip (3 hours, weather dependant)
- GPX tracks supplied

## What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to/from Ponta Delgada Airport
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist taxes may apply and are usually around 2 Euros per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Hire car and fuel for the hire car
- Any car parking charges
- Any additional transport
- Personal equipment
- 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.

## Car Hire

This holiday has been designed to give you the ultimate flexibility and independence with arranging your own hire car.

There are numerous car hire agencies on Sao Miguel, with offices at Ponta Delgada Airport. Arranging your car independently, you can choose the type of vehicle you prefer, the number of drivers required, and the level of excess protection desired. Car hire brokers such as [Zest Car Rental](#) are a good resource for comparing rental deals. We highly recommend that you pre-book your hire car so that it is ready to collect on arrival, and to do this as early as possible if you are visiting the island between May and August to help ensure you get your first choice of vehicle.

Our sales team would also be happy to provide you with a quote for car hire through our preferred partner, Zest Car Rental. If you choose to arrange your hire car through KE, you would benefit from financial protection of your full holiday package.

Rental conditions will vary according to the provider; these will be presented with your quote. General terms and conditions for hire can be found here: <https://www.zestcarrental.com/terms/>

As a minimum service level, car rental arranged through KE would come with:

- Excess protection
  
- Top-up insurance
  
- Unlimited mileage
  
- Breakdown assistance

Upgrades such as additional days' hire, automatic transmission, or electric or hybrid vehicles can also be requested (subject to availability).

You can also find answers to frequently asked questions and further information about car hire [here](#)

## Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking or cycling holiday for your family, a centre-based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a day's walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool, or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our Sales Team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts and ends at Ponta Delgada Airport. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis, allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method that best suits you. The nearest airport for this trip is Ponta Delgada Airport, well-served with departures from UK regional airports. There are numerous car rental agencies available at Ponta Delgada Airport - pre-booking your hire car is highly recommended.

## Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your holiday.

## 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

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Food in the Azores features Portuguese and Mediterranean flavours, yet is more rustic and hearty than its mainland counterparts. Azorean cuisine includes dishes such as kale soup with chunks of potato and sausage, and pot-roast style dishes baked with tomatoes, onion and garlic. An interesting dish for which Furnas is famous is Cozido - a one-pan stew cooked by being buried in a small pit and covered by hot volcanic soils. This is fascinating to see as well as an adventure to taste with the smoky volcanic flavours imparting themselves to the food. Blood sausage served with the local pineapple for which the Azores was once the world's leading exporter is also popular. Seafood is a large part of the diet as well, as expected in such a location, with grilled limpets (Lapas) served in their shells in a butter, garlic and chilli sauce, huge juicy clams (Amêijoas) served with an onion, tomato and white wine sauce, octopus (Polvo), delicious seafood stews and beautiful freshly-caught local fishes on many menus. For a snack you might want to do like the locals and choose Bolo Lêvedo - a bit like a Portuguese version of an English muffin. Slightly sweet, they are a staple at breakfast time and also make a great morning or afternoon snack - and make perfect sandwiches for a picnic. For a sweet treat you can't miss Queijadas, small sweet cheese-based pastries made with eggs, milk and powdered sugar. Although found throughout Portugal's territories, the ones made on Sao Miguel at Vila Franca do Campo are perhaps the most famous of all. Very sweet desserts tend to be found on the menu too, several of which feature the locally grown pineapple. A speciality is dough balls rolled in sugar that have a similarity to doughnuts (yum!). The Azores also make some excellent wines and even produce gin; if you prefer a soft drink you might like to try Kima, a sparkling drink made from real fruit using the local passion fruit.

## Accommodation

We have hand-picked two excellent family-run hotels for this trip, both chosen for their fantastic locations and warm hospitality. You will spend 4 nights in the 2-star Hotel Alcides in the heart of Ponta Delgada's historic centre, whose well-reputed restaurant is popular with locals and visitors alike. You will also spend 3 nights at the 3-star Vista do Vale on the eastern side of the island in Furnas, situated close to the famous botanical gardens and hot springs of Parque Terra Nostra. The hotel also has a swimming pool and a lovely terrace - perfect for unwinding after a day exploring. Both accommodations are on a bed and breakfast basis, allowing you the flexibility to enjoy the many fantastic restaurants on the island.

It is also possible to arrange additional nights' accommodation if you would like to enjoy this magnificent island a little longer - just ask our Sales Team for details.

During high season you may be booked into an alternative accommodation of a similar standard in the area.

### WHY NOT TREAT YOURSELF TO A HOTEL UPGRADE?

On this trip we are pleased to offer you the opportunity to upgrade your accommodation to 4-star hotels - perfect if you are looking to treat yourself for a special occasion, or simply prefer to travel with a little more luxury. In Ponta Delgada you will stay in the Hotel Talisman, overlooking a beautiful garden within the historic centre. The Hotel Talisman is full of art-deco charm and boasts a rooftop pool and a cosy lounge area, perfect for relaxing with a good book. You will also spend 3 nights in the 4-star Terra Nostra Garden Hotel, located within Parque Terra Nostra. This luxurious hotel is surrounded by the tranquillity of nature, and its exceptional location within the park allows you exclusive access to the thermal springs once the crowds have left for the day.

Please contact our Sales Team to find out more.

## Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday.

For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Please also consider the luggage capacity of the type of vehicle you choose to hire.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

**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.

## Health & Vaccinations

### Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.**

Please check the [FCDO](#) and [Travel Health Pro](#). For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

### Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

## Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace, however getting some additional exercise before going on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. After all, the fitter you are the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking 3 to 4 hours for consecutive days.

## Climate

The Azores are situated in the middle of the Atlantic, so the weather is changeable! However, as the islands benefit from the warmth of the Gulf Stream, temperatures remain mild and moderate throughout the year. During the summer months the temperatures tend to range from 15-30 degrees Centigrade, with the majority of days being sunny, and it can also be quite humid at this time. In the late spring and early autumn, the temperatures are slightly cooler and there is a higher chance of rain. Temperatures rarely ever fall beneath 10 degrees Centigrade, and rainy days can occur across all seasons. It is not uncommon to experience a mixture of weather in the same day at any time of year, rather like in many places in the UK, so it is always best to be prepared with warm and waterproof layers and appropriate footwear.

## 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](http://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](http://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

- Azores Bradt Travel Guide - David Sayers
- Field Guide to the Birds of the Atlantic Islands - Tony Clarke

## 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

## Self Guided 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
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Camera (and batteries / memory card)
- Reusable sealable picnic boxes for picnics

- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Walking poles
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Personal wash kit
- Your self-guided route notes
- Rucksack (approx. 20L)

## Land Only Information

Please note that our 'from' price listed is based on 4 persons on twin or double occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers including solo travellers - contact our Sales Team for a quote.

This holiday requires a hire car to be arranged independently. There are several car rental agencies available on Sao Miguel, with desks at Ponta Del Garda Airport. Our Sales Team can also provide a quotation for car hire if required.

When considering your travel dates, you might like to investigate any seasonal opening times of attractions and points of interest.

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 - please ask our Sales Team to find out more about this.

Our Sales Team will be happy to provide you with a quote for scheduled flights, or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

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

## Why Choose KE

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## Why KE?

We have designed this trip to showcase the very best of Sao Miguel whilst giving you the ultimate flexibility with a choice of walks on most days, recommended excursions, and even an option to upgrade your accommodation. In addition, we have included a whale watching tour in the cost of your trip to give you the chance to admire these majestic mammals, and perhaps some of their smaller friends, close-up.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 04/07/2026 and the trip is subject to change