



KDavisTravels

Sao Miguel, Azores **September 1- 8, 2021**

This trip begins and ends in Ponta Delgada, Portugal. Azores Airlines flies direct from Boston to Ponta Delgada (PDL). In order to arrive on September 1, you must depart U.S. on August 31. For those arriving on the Azores Airlines early morning flight from Boston, I will arrange transfers to Casa das Palmeiras in downtown Ponta Delgada for an early check-in. After the minimum of 10 reservations is reached, we will advise you to make your air travel reservations.

Trip Start: September 1, 2021 – Casa das Palmeiras, Ponta Delgada, Portugal
Trip Finish: September 8, 2021 – Casa das Palmeiras, Ponta Delgada, Portugal
Trip Length: 8 days, 7 nights
Trip Cost: \$3,000 per person sharing a room
 \$3,400 for a single room

(Trip cost includes everything except airfare, meals as indicated on your own, beverages, and tips.)

Day by Day Overview

Wednesday, September 1 – I will arrange transfers to our hotel for those arriving on the morning Azores Airlines flight from Boston. Check into our rooms at Casa das Palmeiras and have a rest. **1:30:** Depart on foot from the hotel for Ponta Delgada city tour. The distinctive architecture of whitewash and black basalt lend Ponta Delgada a monochrome complexion, but this is a town full of colorful character. We will visit the local market, the City Gates (Portas da Cidade), and Sao Sebastiao church. Our walk takes us to *São Francisco* square where Esperança Convent is located. The convent chapel is associated with the cult of the Christ of Miracles, the patron of the biggest religious festivities in the archipelago. The town tour concludes with a visit to Carlos Machado Museum. Walk back to the hotel.

- Lunch at hotel
- Dinner together at local restaurant—7:00PM

Lodging: Casa das Palmeiras - <http://www.casapalmeiras.com/>

Thursday, September 2 – Viola Beach walk with visit to tea plantation

This trail on the North coast of the island connects the villages of *Lomba da Maia and Maia*. Our hike takes us to one of the most beautiful natural beaches of the archipelago. We will see remains of water mills that were once used for grinding wheat and corn into flour. Bread was a staple of the diet of the

many families of this village and of the island. We visit the Tobacco Museum housed in a former tobacco factory in Maia. This tobacco factory was once the largest employer in the area.

Tea growing was introduced in the Azores in the beginning of the 19th century. The climate in São Miguel proved to be well suited for the tea crops. We drive to one of the local tea plantations for a short walk and visit to the factory, followed by a tea service at the owner's house. Our day concludes with a stop in Ribeira Grande to visit the Museum of the Azorean Emigration. You'll find some surprises here! Return to the hotel in Ponta Delgada.

Distance today: 4 miles; elevation gain: 200 feet. Additional time in transport.

- Picnic lunch
- Dinner together

Friday, September 3 – Furnas Lake, “Cozido das Caldeiras” and Terra Nostra Garden

This trail begins and ends in the village of Furnas. The trail passes along the lakeside where the Hermitage of Nossa Senhora das Vitórias is located then circles the lake on an easy path. When we get to Caldeiras da Lagoa, we will see various restaurants taking advantage of the high temperatures in the ground to cook traditional dishes. Lunch will be the local specialty, “Cozido das Caldeiras”, a stew with assorted meats and vegetables cooked for about 7 hours with geothermal heat!

Our day continues with a visit to Terra Nostra Garden which features a wide variety of trees and plants from all over the world and a thermal swimming pool with ferrous water. Return to our hotel.

Distance today: 6 miles; minimal elevation gain. Additional bus transport time.

- Lunch together (see above)
- Dinner on your own

Saturday, September 4 – Morning Whale Watching; Free afternoon

We depart on foot from the hotel to walk to the harbor. Lying in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, the Azores islands are a permanent home or point of passage for more than a third of the world's whale and dolphin species. Sperm whales, common dolphins, bottlenose dolphins and Risso's dolphins are present all year round. Other species visit or pass by during specific seasons. The whale watching activity, is done by a professional team of lookouts, skippers and biologists. Before we depart there is a briefing including information about the species we may see and the Azorean Whale Watching code of ethics.

- Lunch together at a local restaurant
- Dinner together - at a restaurant that features Portuguese folk music called Fado

Sunday, September 5 – Sanguinho walk and Nordeste

This walk takes place at the north-east part of the island, in *Faial da Terra*. The trail begins next to the stream *Ribeira do Faial da Terra*, crosses several small orchards on the banks of the creek and passes by a beautiful waterfall. We reach the now restored village of *Sanguinho*. This village was abandoned in the 60s and 70s due to emigration to the Americas. Nowadays the village is restored with buildings and farm holdings typical of the period prior to its being deserted. The tour will continue with a stops at the village of Nordeste and Ribeira dos Caldeiros Park.

Distance today: 4 miles, medium difficulty; 2.5-3.5 hours of transport time.

- Picnic lunch.
- Dinner together

Monday, September 6 - *Mata do Canário* walk and *Sete Cidades*

Our hike begins in the area surrounding *Canário* Woods and nearby *Muro das Nove Janelas* (nine windows wall). This wall was once a stone aqueduct used for the water supply of public fountains in the city of Ponta Delgada. Along the path we have wide panoramic views of the north and south coasts of São Miguel and in the background, the *Serra de Água de Pau*. Our path follows the ridgeline of the *Lagoa Azul* (lagoon) with sights to *Sete Cidades* crater and *Santiago* lakes. The trail ends at *Sete Cidades* village.

Leaving *Sete Cidades* we have a scenic drive along the northwest part of the island passing by several small villages to reach *Capelas*. Here we visit *Oficina Museu*, a museum of a private collection of what would have been typical stores and shops of an old Azorean street with all its trades.

Distance today: 8 miles; elevation gain: about 500 feet

- Lunch at a local restaurant.
- Dinner on your own.

Tuesday, September 7 – *Lagoa do Fogo* walk and pineapple plantation

(08h15: Departure from the hotel by 4x4)

Our hike today is a roundtrip along the banks of *Lagoa do Fogo*. This lake is one of the largest of the inland lakes of the Azores. The lake (or caldera) was formed by the collapse of the top of a volcano some 5,000 year ago. We have a “steepish” climb to the rim of the caldera, continue our walk along the rim and then return the way we came. The hike takes us by farm lands, pastures, fields and woods. Along the way we see several endemic flora such as Azorean Blueberry, Azorean Heather, Azores laurel, St John’s wort and Mediterranean spurge. Birds of the area are kites, Azorean buzzard, grey wagtail and Azores wood pigeon. On the way back we have a magnificent view over the South Coast of the island to the islet of *Vila Franca*.

We drive back to Ponta Delgada by bus to visit a local pineapple plantation. While the temperatures in Azores do not allow the pineapples to develop naturally, the locals found a very innovative way to produce pineapple: in greenhouse--- extremely tasty and faster than the usual way. Return to the hotel.

Distance today: 8 Miles, medium difficulty with some steep ascents at the start then a long downhill...poles are definitely needed. Transfer from Ponta Delgada to the trail (one way) will be in 4x4 vehicles to transport as far as possible along the initial steep track of the trail.

- Picnic lunch
- Farewell dinner together.

Wednesday, September 8 - Breakfast and departure to Ponta Delgada airport around 3PM. The current Azores Airline departure to Boston is late afternoon. This day will be free time to do last shopping, organizing and packing. Transport provided for the Azores flight to Boston.

Please Note: The above schedule is subject to change due to weather or other circumstances beyond our control.

Flight and Airport Info

Getting to Ponta Delgada, Sao Miguel—Fly direct from Boston to Ponta Delgada (PDL) on Azores Airlines. As of January 2021 flights leave Boston at 21:15 and arrive Ponta Delgada at 6:10AM. You will need to arrive in Boston with ample time to collect, re-check your baggage and go back through security. Return flights on September 8 currently leave at 17:10 and arrive Boston at 19:00.

Weather: Mild weather - sun and possible showers with average day time temperatures of 70F and night 60-65F.

Helpful Websites:

Ponta Delgada Hotel: <http://www.casapalmeiras.com/>
Azores: <https://www.visitazores.com/en>
Azores Airlines: <https://www.azoresairlines.pt/en>
Azores Weather: <https://www.visitazores.com/en/weather>

Books:

The Islands of Magic: legend, folk, fairy tales from Azores- Elsie S. Eells—2011
Azores: Nine Islands, One History - Susana Costa—2008

Articles:

Coffee, Tea, and Tradition - <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/28/travel/azores-coffee-tea-wine.html>

Where to Shop (and eat) in Sao Miguel Portugal -

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/t-magazine/travel/sao-miguel-portugal-guide.html>