



The Azores – Lava Lands and Searching for Dolphins



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: The Azores

BROCHURE CODE: 4034
DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Get a fabulous introduction to the Azores on this family holiday, based on Sao Miguel Island. You will get to kayak on Sete Cidades Lake and mountain bike through its lovely surroundings. There will be whale watching on the Atlantic Ocean and snorkelling with friendly dolphins! Taste a traditional 'cozido' stew on a thematic tour around the volcanic area of Lake Furnas and the Terra Nostra Botanical Garden. Relax in a hot spring, visit the longest lava tunnel on the island and go canyoning in a natural park.

Our Opinion

“ You and the kids will quickly see why the Azores are so famous for their natural beauty. There’s no watching from a distant cruise ship here – you’ll be up close to some of the most beautiful environments on the planet. Whether you’re kayaking on Sete Cidades or wandering through Terra Nostra Botanical Garden, you will always be surrounded by incredible outdoor scenes. Best of all, there will be opportunities to spot whales and dolphins! ”

Jono Archer



What's included?

- **Transfers:** all transfers included
- **Accommodation:** 7 nights in Hotel São Miguel Park with the option to upgrade to Marina Atlântico
- **Meals:** 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 2 dinners
- **The following activities are included in the holiday:** Sete Cidades Adventure Tour, whale watching, Vila Franca do Campo visit*, thematic tour to Furnas, minibus tour to Fogo and canyoning (**the order of activities is subject to change**)
- Fully qualified guides and instructors during activities

* If you are travelling outside 15th June to 15th September you will visit the Oficina Museu instead

Trip Overview

Lose yourself in nature, activities, and culture in the Azores with this brilliant seven-night active family summer getaway, based in the city of Ponta Delgada on Sao Miguel Island.

You will begin with an adventure tour to the Sete Cidades Lake, kayaking on its crater lake and mountain biking in the nearby area. There will be an amazing whale-watching tour over the Atlantic waters, as well as lagoon-snorkelling* at the Vila Franca Islet. Continuing with wildlife activities, an undisputed highlight of this holiday has to be swimming with dolphins in their ocean habitat – an unforgettable experience in every sense of the term!

There will be a chance for you to get acquainted with the island's volcanic side at Terra Nostra Botanical Garden, where you will bathe in a hot spring. At Furnas, you can taste a traditional cozido stew, cooked using natural steam from the ground. This mix of regional vegetables and juicy meats is only one Azorean delicacy you will be able to sample.

The outdoor reserves and territories of the island will be yours to explore during this trip. Try your hand at canyoning in Ribeira dos Caldeiraes Natural Park, walk over the black sands of Santa Barbara Beach, and take a dip at the Caldeira Velha waterfall. There is also the opportunity to look around the mysterious Gruta do Carvao, the longest of the lava

tunnels on Sao Miguel.

Your hotel for the duration of this exciting family activity holiday will be Sao Miguel Park: superb four-star accommodation close to the centre of Ponta Delgada, with indoor and outdoor pools, and splendid spa facilities. You can also upgrade to the Marina Atlantico hotel, which sits right on the waterfront and offers brilliant views over the marina.

*Snorkelling equipment is not provided, so we recommend bringing your own



Image credits: Futurismo Azores Adventure, Azoresphotos. visit Azores (Pedro Madruga)

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

Welcome to the Azores! You and the family will be picked up and transferred in no time to your hotel. Check in and settle in for the night.

Included Meals: None

DAY
2

SETE CIDADES ADVENTURE TOUR AND WELCOME DINNER

Eat a substantial breakfast before an exciting, full-day outing: the Sete Cidades Adventure Tour! This takes you to the Western side of São Miguel Island to the famed Lagoa das Sete Cidades or Lake of the Seven Cities, and along the way, you will stop at some viewpoints. The deep crater lake is divided by a bridge, virtually forming two lakes that showcase different colours and are known as the Blue and Green Lakes – a wonderful environment where everyone will spend the day mountain biking and kayaking. There will be a picnic lunch break along the way.

In the evening, you will be treated to a lovely welcome dinner with a spread of Azorean specialties. Our friendly guide will be on hand to answer any questions about the rest of your holiday.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3WHALE-WATCHING AND VILA FRANCA DO CAMPO OR OFICINA MUSEU
AND PINEAPPLE FARM VISIT

After breakfast, you can look forward to a fabulous whale-watching tour to fill up the morning. There aren't many places which are as highly regarded for this pastime as the Azores – the islands have even had visits from National Geographic and the BBC!

Expert biologists will give you full briefings on safety measures and responsible whale watching before you are taken out over the water by Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) (restrictions may apply for pregnant women and people with lower back problems). Depending on luck and the time of year,

there are over 25 different whale and Dolphin species that you might spot, as well as other marine creatures. Life vests and waterproofs are provided.

If you are travelling between 15th June to 15th September, you will be transported in a converted fishing boat to the beautiful islet of Vila Franca: a green ring around a crater lagoon. You and the kids can go swimming in this marvellous natural reserve. Snorkelling equipment is not provided, so we recommend bringing your own. Species to look for include rainbow wrasses and Guinea-fowl puffers.

If you are travelling outside 15th June to 15th September, or if weather conditions are not favourable, you will be driven to Capelas for a visit to Oficina Museu – here you can lose yourselves in the history of the Azores, learning how the culture of the island and local lifestyles changed in the middle of the twentieth century. Take the chance to observe artisans making typical Azorean handicrafts. The day will finish with a trip to a pineapple farm on São Miguel. Did you know that it takes two years for an Azorean pineapple to reach the dinner table?

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
4

THEMATIC TOUR TO FURNAS

Today is a volcanic culture day! Once you have had breakfast, your first stop will be at one of the oldest remaining tea plantation and factory in Europe, the Gorreana Tea Estates. In addition to looking around, you will also get to sample their produce. It is a must for tea-loving families.

From there, it is onto Caldeiras das Furnas with its fumaroles and mineral water springs; they say the water has a different flavour in each one! On the way, you will stop at a viewpoint.

For lunch, you will all be served cozido, a traditional Portuguese stew with a succulent selection of meats slow-cooked with locally-produced vegetables. Keeping with the geothermal theme of the day, it will be cooked using only steam from the surrounding earth.

Once you have all feasted, everyone will be taken to the famous Terra Nostra Botanical Garden, which showcases a rich variety of native and foreign plants; it is a very pretty place to stroll around. Finishing off this visit is the opportunity to get into a naturally heated pool, with water rich in iron. At a temperature of between 35°C to 40°C, it makes for a super-relaxing experience.

Returning to Ponta Delgada, you will make a couple of stop-offs to take in awesome coastal views; cameras at the ready!

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
5

LIVING THE FARM AND FREE AFTERNOON

This morning following breakfast, you'll head to 'Quinta do Agricultor' for a true Azorean experience on the farm. Locals, Eugenio & Gorete, will greet you on arrival for fun filled 'day in the life of' adventure. This husband and wife team are hugely passionate and will share their wealth of

knowledge and enthusiasm for their traditional way of life. During your visit, as well as learning about Azorean culture, you will have the opportunity to meet an array of farm animals and even try milking a cow! The ethos of Quinta do Agricultor is that guests will arrive as visitors and leave as friends.

The afternoon will be left free for you and your family to spend as you wish. You can stay back at the harbour and grab lunch at a local restaurant before being transferred back to São Miguel Park, or take a transfer back straight away. If the morning's swimming hasn't been enough, why not have a session in one of the hotel pools? You might also like to leave the hotel behind and explore the streets of Ponta Delgada.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY
6

GRUTA DO CARVAO, MINIBUS TOUR TO FOGO AND SANTA BARBARA BEACH

This day's activities transport you to different parts of São Miguel Island. Tuck into breakfast before being taken to Gruta do Carvao. At almost two kilometres long, this is the longest tunnel of lava on the island – perfect for budding adventurers! After exploring the lava tunnel, you will visit Santa Barbara Beach. Here you can relax on its black sands and take a swim in the ocean.

After lunch, the afternoon brings many more natural sights with a journey to Lagoa do Fogo, the 'Lagoon of Fire'. You will all be blown away by the splendour of this natural reserve area. A drive to Caldeira Velha waterfall follows, with the chance to bathe in its warm, iron-rich waters. There will also be a look around Caldeiras and its billowing fumaroles.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
7

CANYONING AND FAREWELL DINNER

Following breakfast, you will start your last full day in The Azores with a session of canyoning in the Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park. After a walk up the trail, you'll reach the starting point before sliding and abseiling in a region full of forests.

A delicious farewell dinner at a local restaurant marks your last night in the Azores.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
8

DEPARTURE

Eat your last breakfast at the hotel before being transferred to the airport for your flight home.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Included Accommodation

Other options are available - see below for details.

Hotel São Miguel Park (Nights: 1-7)



Not far from the centre of Ponta Delgada, this four-star hotel is close to the city's pretty Botanical Gardens and only ten minutes from the airport. Its fully-furnished rooms are perfect for families, with warm colours and splendid vistas of the surroundings. Parents will love the excellent on-site health club, and everyone will enjoy the exquisite Azorean buffets on offer at the hotel restaurant.

Hotel facilities

- Enjoy a mix of swimming locations with the hotel's indoor and outdoor pools
- Lounge about in the Jacuzzi, replenish your energy in the spa or book a calming massage
- Gym-lovers won't have to worry about missing workouts while away thanks to the Fitness Centre
- Why not sample tasty Azorean specialities in the restaurant, or try a colourful cocktail from the bar?

Room options

TRIPLE ROOM

Each triple room contains a twin or double bed with an extra bed. The bathroom comes with a shower, toilet, and hairdryer. Keep cool with air-conditioning and chilled drinks from the minibar. Other facilities include internet access, a cable television, a telephone, and a safe-box.

TWIN/DOUBLE ROOM

These rooms contain a twin or double bed, as well as a bathroom with a shower, toilet, and hairdryer. There is a telephone, cable television, and internet access. The rooms are air-conditioned and come with a minibar and safe box.

Other accommodation options

Contact us for a personalised quote.

Marina Atlântico



The 4-star Marina Atlântico sits right on the waterfront for exceptional views over the marina and out to sea.

With easy access to the airport and within walking distance of shopping, restaurants and bars, this hotel is the perfect combination of convenience and style. The spacious en-suite rooms are great for families and some come with spectacular sea views. Make sure you keep an eye on the water for the marine wildlife that could be playing in it!

Sample the local food, stroll along the streets and admire the architecture. The painted basaltic rock can, at first, feel imposing but it gives the town an almost colonial feel. Even the pavements are painted! The central location makes it easy to explore São Miguel but there's also plenty to enjoy within the family-friendly hotel. Relax in the Escuna restaurant or Palhobote bar area and make use of the onsite pool and gym facilities.

Hotel facilities

- Enjoy the indoor pool as well as the fitness and spa area
- Dine in the excellent on-site restaurant
- Explore the nearby marina and outdoor pool by crossing the impressive white steel suspension bridge

Room options

DOUBLE ROOM/TWIN ROOM

These rooms come with either a double or twin bed and many are sea-facing and you can enjoy the views from the balcony. All rooms come equipped with a private bathroom, air conditioning, telephone, cable TV, WiFi, radio, minibar, safe box and hairdryer.

TRIPLE ROOM

There are also triple rooms available. This will either be a double bed with an extra single bed or three single beds, depending on availability. The triple rooms all have views over the town.

Please contact our Travel Experts for a quotation.

Image credits: Hotel Marina Atlantico

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 4 to maximum 21 people approximately

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 numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our booking conditions.

Minimum and maximum age

The minimum age for this holiday can be found in the 'Key Facts' section of the holiday overview.

Younger family members may be able to participate but may not be able to take part in all activities. Please contact one of our Travel Experts if you have any questions.

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.activitiesabroad.com/booking-conditions>

Please note: our payment and cancellation terms will be unique to each booking - they will be confirmed with you at the time of quotation. The terms listed above are noted as a guide only