

Hiking in the Azores

ADVENTURES IN A BREATHTAKING ARCHIPELAGO



TRIP DATES

2024

April 29-May 8, 2024
May 12-21, 2024
August 23-September 1, 2024
September 16-25, 2024 *

2025

April 28-May 7, 2025
May 11-20, 2025
August 22-31, 2025
September 16-25, 2025 *

*Please note: date change since catalog publication



Wilderness Travel

ITINERARY	3
TRIP COST, PAYMENT & INSURANCE	9
ACCOMMODATIONS	10
ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE	12
TRIP LEADERS	13
TRIP DETAILS	14
TOUCAN CLUB	15



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ADVENTURES IN A BREATHTAKING ARCHIPELAGO

Welcome to an island-world of traditional villages, lake-filled calderas, and ancient vineyards—the Azores! On this volcanic archipelago just a five-hour flight from Boston, we explore four enchanting islands: São Miguel, Faial, São Jorge, and spectacular Pico, each with its own personality and terrain. We'll hike along crater rims, cross rugged moorlands above a deep blue sea, and follow ancient canadas (pathways) that link farms and villages. Complementing our hikes, we'll head out for whale watching, dine on catch-of-the-day fish at cozy local spots, and relish the unhurried pace of Azorean life. Our accommodations include a refurbished 16th century fort and an Art Deco hotel with thermally heated bathing pools.



Wilderness Travel

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Itinerary

DAY 1

SÃO MIGUEL ISLAND / PONTA DELGADA

We meet at 6:00 pm in Ponta Delgada, the Azorean capital. After a trip briefing, we gather for a Welcome Dinner and toast the start of our Azorean adventure with wine from the island of Pico. Saúde! Overnight in the city's Old Town...D

You can arrive in the afternoon of Day 1 or anytime prior to Day 1. If you wish to arrive a day early, we are happy to book a hotel room for you in Ponta Delgada (an "on your own" expense).

An important note: While we work hard to make this itinerary as accurate as possible, the planned daily activities are subject to change as necessary, depending on weather conditions and ferry schedules at the time. Our guides are very knowledgeable and will always provide you with a worthwhile alternative. We will do our very best to follow this itinerary, but please bring your spirit of adventure and flexibility, and be aware that some changes may be necessary. In the event we need to make changes, the goal is to do most, if not all, activities during our time on each island.

DAYS 2-3

SETE CIDADES HIKE / FAIAL ISLAND: SHEARWATER COLONY, LEVADA HIKE & PONTA DOS CAPELINHOS

We set out for an easy hike on the rim of the twin lakes of Sete Cidades, one very blue (Lagoa Azul) and the other distinctly green (Lagoa Verde). They nestle in the crater of a dormant volcano and are separated by a narrow channel. Views on our hike stretch the length of São Miguel, the largest island in the archipelago, and the vegetation along the trail gives us an introduction to endemic species such as *Juniperus brevifolia*, whose timber was used as roofing beams, and Azorean holly, once used as winter cattle feed. An afternoon flight brings us to Faial, known as "the blue island" for its long rows of hydrangea hedges and famed as a stopping-off point for yachts on trans-Atlantic crossings. In the island's main town, Horta, the marina is lively with activity. All Azorean Islands have volcanic origins, and in 1957, Faial erupted over the course of 18 months, adding almost a square mile to the western edge of the island. While we're here, we'll immerse ourselves in its volcanic story. We settle into our comfortable Pousada Forte Hotel, built as a fort in the 16th century to protect the island against pirate attacks and now a lovely hotel. After dinner at the hotel, we head to Castelo Branco, a rocky peninsula where Cory's shearwaters colonize the cliffs. Nests are in burrows, rock crevices, or sometimes on the ground under thick scrub. Sitting quietly, we'll observe this lively scene and the air will reverberate with the gurgling and squeaking noises of thousands of shearwaters returning to land after a day foraging at sea.



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length:	10 days
Arrive:	São Miguel Island, Azores
Depart:	São Miguel Island, Azores
Lodging:	9 nights hotels
Meals:	All meals included except 1 dinner (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity:	Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level:	1 2 ③ 4 5 6 8 hiking days on moderate trails (some steep sections), 3-5 hours a day, van support

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike and explore four lush volcanic islands, each with a unique culture and landscape
- Taste Pico Island's white wines from age-old vineyards
- Search for whales and dolphins in one of the world's largest whale sanctuaries
- Stay in a converted 16th century fort and the Art Deco grandeur of Terra Nostra Garden Hotel

Itinerary (cont'd)



On Faial island, we become volcanologists! Together with a local guide, we head to the youngest and westernmost point of Faial, where the massive volcanic eruption occurred in 1957. Before visiting the newest part of the island, our hike is along a levada that contours the lush hillsides above the Geosite. The levada, or water channel, took four years to complete and was inaugurated in 1964. Lying 2,200 feet above sea level, this engineering feat supplies water collected from the towering slopes above it and carries it to produce hydroelectricity. The track alongside affords us fabulous coastal views, varied volcanic features, endemic vegetation, and the possibility to watch some of the island's birds, including the tiny

goldcrest, which flits restlessly between branches, with often just the flash of its spiky, golden crownfeathers to be seen. After a picnic lunch we'll head to the Ponta dos Capelinhos, the volcanic formation formed in 1957, with its rocky barren features and redundant white lighthouse. The lower part of the lighthouse remains buried by the eruptions. We'll visit the interpretive center, built underground. Here two stories are told. The first is the birth of Ponta dos Capelinhos, described using holographs and film, and second is the long geological history of the whole Azorean archipelago. Afterwards, we'll take the spiral staircase (66 feet) to the top of the lighthouse for a bird's-eye view of a wild landscape that's just over 50 years old—the views are magnificent. Our chosen restaurant specializes in locally caught fish, some familiar (tuna, cod, and snapper), some less known (such as grey triggerfish, blackspot seabream, or Guelly jack). Overnight at the Pousada Forte Hotel...BLD each day

Hiking Details:

Sete Cidades: 5.5 miles, 2.5-3 hours, 400 feet ascent/descent

Levada: Hiking Details: 4.7 miles, 3 hours, 450 feet ascent/descent



DAYS 4-5

PICO ISLAND: CAMINHO DOS BURROS, OPTIONAL CLIMB OF PICO, WHALE WATCHING & WINERY

A morning ferry crossing of about 30 minutes brings us to the island of Pico, crowned by a dormant 7,713-foot volcano, Portugal's highest. Over a third of this island, including the mountain, is a nature reserve. We have a choice of activities, either moderate or strenuous, accompanied by expert local guides (as with all the hikes, both activities are weather dependent). Our "moderate" day starts with a short drive to the rolling moorland of the central highland plateau for a hike on the Caminho dos Burros ("Path of the Donkeys"). This old trail connects the north and south coast of the island. The local people used this path for centuries to transport items to other villages, trading goods in exchange for full milk churns to bring back home after the twice-daily milking of the cows in the high pastures. As we hike through rough grasses, colorful sphagnum moss, and the endemic *Euphorbia stygiana*, we'll have fabulous views towards Pico Mountain and across the sea to the sharply defined ridgeline of São Jorge Island. We'll pass a small green volcanic cone, Cabeços do Mistério ("Mystery Head"), formed between 1562 and 1564 during the longest volcanic

eruption since the Azores were settled. Descending gently through scrub and woodland, we reach a wider track that takes us down to the Forest Nature Reserve of Misterio da Prinha, an ideal spot for our picnic. After lunch, we'll head to the Gruta das Torres ("Grotto of Towers"), near Madalena. Formed over 1,500 years ago, it is the biggest lava tube in all of Portugal. We'll don hard hats and carry lamps for an hour's guided tour exploring these intriguing lava tunnels. These show great geological diversity, with different types of stalactites and stalagmites, side benches, lava balls, ridged walls, and ropey lavas. Our "strenuous" day is a climb of Pico Mountain, a very steep climb to the summit at 7,713 feet and not to be taken lightly (we will not be able to do it if the weather conditions are poor). This perfect stratovolcano last erupted in the 16th and 18th centuries. The rocky trail starts at Cabeço das Cabras at about 4,000 feet above sea level and continues over small, loose stones to the summit. It is not technically difficult, but walking poles are essential. If you are strong enough for this demanding day, the views from the highest point in the mid-Atlantic will be well worth the physical effort.

Another day we will head to the town of Lajes do Pico, Pico's oldest settlement (its chapel dates back to 1460, the time of the Portuguese discovery of the islands). Once a whale-hunting hub, it is now a major whale-watching destination, with a remarkable 26 species of cetaceans documented in the deep waters offshore. Together with a marine biologist, we venture out by RIB boat to catch a glimpse of some of these magnificent mammals. Sperm whales as well as humpback, minke, pilot, fin, and blue whales are seen at different points in the year. Bottlenose, spotted, striped, common, and Risso's dolphins are also found here. Following lunch at a local restaurant, we'll visit the whaling museum, housed in old boathouses that line the seafront. After the museum, we make our way to the island's main wine-growing area. The Azores Islands have produced wine for hundreds of years, and in the 17th and 18th centuries, thousands of liters were exported throughout the world. The fact that vines grow in this temperate climate warmed by the Gulf Stream is not remarkable, but what is unique is that the grapes are grown on a surface of volcanic rocks and the vines lay unsupported on the ground, protected by a labyrinth of five-foot-high rock walls (known as currais) that provide a wind break and create heat pockets to help ripen the grapes. We'll be met at Czar, a local winery, where the owner will bring us into his traditional wine barrel storage shed to share the history and techniques of his unique wines. On Day 4, we enjoy a delightful dinner in one of the best restaurants on Pico Island, with superb views toward Faial Island. Dinner is on your own on Day 5, and the Trip Leader will be happy to make recommendations. Overnights at the modern Hotel Caravelas, where guest rooms have balconies facing Faial Island...BLD on Day 4, BL on Day 5

Hiking Details:

Moderate Hike, 6.5 miles, 3.5 hours, 100 feet ascent, 2,300 feet descent

Strenuous Hike, 5.6 miles, 8-9 hours, 3,700 feet ascent/descent

Whale Watching: approximately 3 hours





DAYS 6-7

SÃO JORGE ISLAND: CHEESE TASTING, FAJÃ DOS CUBRES, COFFEE TASTING & HIKE

An early ferry ride brings us to Velas, the picturesque principal town on São Jorge Island. The town is a delight to wander around in, with its narrow, cobbled streets, colorful town houses, newly renovated town square, and 17th century church. São Jorge is reputed to produce the best cheese of all the islands—in fact, there are more dairy cattle on this island than people! We check into our simple accommodation, Hotel S. Jorge Garden, situated above the Atlantic and facing Pico Island, with fantastic views of Pico Mountain. The hotel has a pool, but if the sea is calm, it is pleasant to bathe in the natural swimming pools carved into the dark lava rocks just a couple of minutes' walk from the hotel. We'll visit the island's only remaining family cheese producers who milk just 40 cows and we'll hear about their production, sample some of their much-prized "Canada" cheese. We'll have lunch and head to the northern coast for our hike. A central ridge runs the length of São Jorge, with steep hillsides descending to flat coastal "fajãs," or fertile plains along the coast created by lava flows and rock falls. Small settlements were established on the fajãs because microclimates created such excellent growing conditions. Our out-and-back hike is one of the best in the Azores. A dirt track brings us from Fajã dos Cubres ("Fajã of the Goldenrods"), a yellow flower that flourishes here, alongside the rugged ocean coastline, through the partly abandoned villages of Fajã dos Tijolos ("Fajã of the Tiles") and Fajã do Belo ("Fajã of Beauty") and into the pretty village of Fajã da Caldeira de Santo Cristo and its quaint white church. People from around the island make regular pilgrimages to the 19th century church, especially on the first Sunday in September, when long processions of devotees arrive to pray and give thanks. Astonishingly, this remote location is also known as the best place to surf in São Jorge and the only place where clams can be dug out of the nearby lagoons.



Another day on São Jorge Island begins with a stop at Café Nunes, where we'll meet our local guide and her family. Her mother and aunt have a small workshop where they weave traditional woollen bedspreads on wooden looms, and her father operates the largest commercial coffee plantation in Europe, producing Arabica beans for local consumption. We'll enjoy the earthy flavor of an espresso here before heading out on the trail. Our hike starts in Vimes, on the south coast following old, cobbled trails. Turning into the Fajã dos Bodes ("Fajã of the Goats"), we head steeply up, mainly under a canopy of dense trees, and savor vistas over to the island of Pico and its iconic mountain as well as the rugged coastline of São Jorge. Higher up, we'll see endemic species including Azorean heather and blueberry plants before popping out into the village of Lourais, where cattle graze. A steep descent (hiking poles are recommended) brings us down to Fajã de São João on the coast. This town has narrow, cobbled

streets and a small fishing harbor. The only café, opposite the village church, is our final destination. Cold beers are on order after our demanding yet satisfying hike! Dinner on Day 6 is in a typical local restaurant. On Day 7, we'll enjoy dinner at a wonderful small restaurant with picture windows offering views over to Pico and Faial. All dishes are home-cooked using only local meat and fish, accompanied by organic vegetables and herbs grown in the owners' garden. Overnights at Hotel São Jorge Garden...BLD each day
Hiking Details: 6.2 miles, 4.4-5 hours, ascent 1,400 feet, descent 1,400 feet

DAYS 8-9

SÃO MIGUEL ISLAND: FURNAS, THERMAL BATHS & COZIDO

We start the day with a walk along the western peninsula of the island to the old lighthouse at Rosais. After lunch in a local restaurant we fly back to Sao Miguel, where we are met and whisked off to the picturesque town of Furnas and our hotel, the Terra Nostra Garden Hotel, an Art Deco hotel dating to the 1930s and surrounded by a large 19th century garden with canals and lakes. If we arrive in the late afternoon, we'll take a stroll around the gardens, then enjoy the thermally heated pools, with their rich iron-red waters, a good way to soothe tired muscles.

On our final full day, our explorations are based around the 19th century spa village of Furnas, nestled inside a huge caldera with many active fumaroles. Taking a short drive to a higher, water-filled caldera, we'll hike along the lake's pretty shoreline. Our hike's end coincides with a chance to see local restaurant owners coming to retrieve their cook pots buried in hot soil in the geothermally active area at the northern end of Furnas Lake. The famous cozido nas caldeiras, a traditional dish, is cooked in pots set in the geothermally heated soil. The large pots are carefully extracted by two men using long metal poles, then driven down the hill to be served up in Furnas as lunch and dinner. Today we'll have a light lunch, saving the hearty cozido dinner for tonight. There is a choice in the afternoon, either to hike or to relax in the thermal pools and spa of the charming Terra Nostra Garden Hotel. If hiking, the guide will decide the most appropriate hike for those walking, as again, there is a choice: either a linear hike along the north coast with a possible swim in the sea, or a circular hike higher up among trees and along a river with waterfalls. Both are of similar length and time. In the early evening we'll gather and raise a glass to toast our hikes and the four islands of the amazing Azorean archipelago. Our Farewell Dinner at the Terra Nostra Garden Hotel is a treat—the traditional cozido meal, with mouth-watering flavors of tender meat (beef, pork, and chicken) and assorted rice and vegetables, and we pair it superbly with the deep red wines from Pico Island. Overnights at the Terra Nostra Garden Hotel...BLD each day
Hiking Details:

Lagao das Furnas: 2.5 miles, 1.5 hours, level ground.

Afternoon: 3 miles, 2 hours, 630 feet, 740 feet descent



Itinerary (cont'd)



DAY 10

TEA PLANTATION / PONTA DELGADA / DEPARTURE

This morning we make a call at one of only two tea plantations in Europe. Chá Porto Formoso is set on the north coast of São Miguel, where climate and soil conditions have allowed tea to thrive far from its native terrain in Asia. Tea production on São Miguel started at the end of the 19th century with seeds and techniques brought from China. Sitting out on the wooden veranda overlooking the neatly clipped tea bushes that sweep down toward the sea, we'll savor a cup! The teas produced here have an especially aromatic flavor and make a lasting memento of the islands to take home with you. We'll transfer to the city of Ponta Delgada, São Miguel's capital, for an early lunch and arrive at San Miguel Airport by 1:00 pm, in time for your international flight...B



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$7395 (8-12 members)

\$7795 (4-7 members)

Single supplement: \$865

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Europe by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Euro. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled .94 Euros. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Euros, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Euro were to rise in value, the land price would rise less than might be expected, and if the Euro were to fall, the drop in trip cost would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of Wilderness Travel Trip Leader
- Accommodations as noted
- All meals included except 1 dinner as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Ground and internal air transportation as noted
- Sightseeing as noted
- Airport transfers as noted

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessitated by airline schedule changes or other factors; pre-trip expenses of medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Accommodations



HOTELS IN PONTA DELGADA

Ponta Delgada, Portugal, Day 1 (1 night)

In Ponta Delgada, we stay at one of the following properties:

HOTEL TALISMAN

With a great location in the center of town, near Ponta Delgada's cafes and historic churches, the Talisman is a historic 17th century building converted into a charming hotel. Guest rooms differ in size and shape, but most have views of the port. The hotel is decorated in an Art Deco style with lovely seating areas on the first floor. The rooftop pool is a nice spot for a refreshing dip before dinner.



GRAND HOTEL AÇORES ATLÂNTICO

Set in a wonderful location facing Ponta Delgada's Marina, this European-style hotel features a friendly staff and modern, spacious guest rooms. Its historical maritime pieces and nautical theme can almost make you feel like you're a passenger at sea. You can enjoy the breakfast buffet and seasonal dinner menu in the restaurant, or relax at the bistro for lighter meals and cocktails. There is also an indoor heated swimming pool and a gym, and the historic city center is just a ten-minute walk away.



POUSADA FORTE HOTEL

Horta, Portugal

Days 2 to 3 (2 nights)

The Pousada Forte is a restored fortress set along a promenade on Horta's port. It offers comfortable rooms overlooking the harbor and a great swimming pool. The views of Pico Island are breathtaking.



HOTEL CARAVELAS

Madalena, Portugal

Days 4 to 6 (3 nights)

The Caravelas offers clean, comfortable rooms with views of Faial Island and the harbor and a central location for the ferry. The hotel offers an excellent buffet breakfast.



HOTEL S. JORGE GARDEN

Velas, Portugal

Day 7 (1 night)

The simple but comfortable Hotel S. Jorge Garden has guest rooms with panoramic views of Pico Island, a friendly bar, and a lovely saltwater swimming pool. In the evenings, guests can hear the sounds of the local Cory's shearwaters coming back to their colony to roost for the night.



TERRA NOSTRA GARDEN HOTEL

Furnas, Portugal

Days 8 to 9 (2 nights)

The historic Terra Nostra Garden Hotel, surrounded by calderas and thermal springs, is the perfect spot to enjoy São Miguel's natural geothermal wonders. You can step right out of your room and straight into the garden to relax in bubbling hot springs. The hotel is sleek and modern, surrounded by vast gardens that date back to 1775.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Hiking in the Azores* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Ponta Delgada, São Miguel Island, Azores

Suggested Airport: Ponta Delgada Airport (PDL)

Suggested Date & Time: The morning of Day 1 or anytime prior to Day 1

Meeting Place: You will meet your Trip Leader in the Lobby of the first hotel at 6:00 pm on Day 1.

Upon arrival at the Ponta Delgada Airport, taxis are readily available outside the terminal and the transfer cost into town is approximately €10. There is also a bus that costs around €2.

DEPARTURE

Ponta Delgada, São Miguel Island, Azores

Date & Time: Day 10, anytime after 3:00 pm

Suggested Airport: Ponta Delgada Airport (PDL)

Please do not book a departing flight leaving before 3:00 pm, as we begin our day on the other side of the island and have some scheduled activities and lunch before dropping the group at the airport at around 1:00 pm.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from the Azores. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or more days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS

If you are arriving one or more days early, we can book extra nights for you at the group hotel in Ponta Delgada (an 'on your own' expense).

Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders: www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/portugal-azores-islands-hiking-tour/



SKYE MCDONALD

Skye McDonald was born and raised in Scotland in a small village called Scone, the ancient crowning place of the kings and queens of Scotland, and is now based in the Highland capital of Inverness. She has worked as a Trip Leader in 27 countries since the millennium and lived in France. As a walking guide she has explored many areas, including the Pindos in northern Greece, the wadis of Jordan, the volcanoes of Cape Verde, the sentiers of the Dordogne and Pyrenees, the Sahara in Mauritania and Mali, the mountains of Cyprus and Lebanon, and most recently the levadas of Madeira and the slate villages and cultural sites of Portugal. “Bringing understanding between peoples of very different cultures and backgrounds is one of the joys of being a Trip Leader, and of course, the chance to make friends around the world.” Closer to home, she delights in sharing the glories of her native Scotland, and says that a good day scaling some of the beautiful Scottish mountains is hard to beat. Skye also loves revealing the glories and stories of the Principality of Wales and walking the famous Coast to Coast trail across northern England. “I adore all the trips I lead for WT. When asked which is my favourite, my response is, all of them!” Skye speaks German, French, and unusually, a smattering of Swahili from earlier years as a volunteer agricultural officer in Tanzania.



DAVID MONTEIRO

David Monteiro was born in Mindelo, Cape Verde, an archipelago on the west coast of Africa, and moved to Portugal with his family when he was a child. After working as a CPA for more than 20 years, he felt the need for a change and began to lead hiking, mountain biking, and rock climbing trips, all sports he had enjoyed since his childhood. When not guiding, David indulges in his passion for photography, literature, and history.

Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated a Level 3 (Moderate) according to our trip grading system. You will need to be comfortable hiking up to 7 miles a day and being on your feet for 5 hours a day. With the exception of one day, there are no alternative hiking options, so you will need to be able to keep up with the moderate but steady hiking pace of the group. Rain is a very real possibility all year round - it is not uncommon for rain in the morning and sunshine in the afternoon. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing.

Average Hiking Day

- 6 miles
- 3-4 hours
- 800 feet gain and 1,200 feet loss

Challenge Day

- Day 6 - 5.5 miles, 4 hours, 2,300 feet gain, and 400 feet loss; includes 1.5 hours by ferry and 2 hours of driving

TERRAIN

We'll hike along crater rims in a volcanic landscape, traverse rugged moorlands above a deep blue sea, and follow ancient canadas (pathways) that crisscross the islands linking farms and villages. Occasionally there are steeper paths and steps on the coastal walks, and the ground can be uneven with some sharp rocks. If there has been rain, it can be muddy and slippery. Hiking poles will be beneficial on many days. Many of the trails are on rocky and uneven ground, so it is important that your footwear is comfortable and has a good hiking sole. On non-hiking days, we'll still be on foot for many hours as we explore the towns and sites.

WEATHER

The Azores have a subtropical maritime climate with mild temperatures throughout the year. In the summer, temperatures average between the mid-60s°F to the low 80s°F during the day and the 50s°F and 60s°F at night. It can be humid, and although it is usually sunny in the

summer, clouds and rain are a possibility any time of the year. A light waterproof shell of a rain jacket and pants in your day pack are highly recommended for the short rainstorms that may pass us while hiking.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at europa@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ponta Delgada	63/54	63/52	63/54	63/54	68/55	72/59	75/63	79/64	77/64	72/61	68/57	64/55
Rainfall - Inches												
Ponta Delgada	4.7	3.9	4.1	2.6	2.4	1.6	1.0	1.2	3.1	4.1	4.7	3.9

Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan.

Here's how it works:

YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST
PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner
Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row
Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row
Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*
Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner
50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row
Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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