

WILDERNESS TRAVEL SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTS

# Total Solar Eclipse 2026

WITH POST-ECLIPSE TOURS IN SPAIN, PORTUGAL & FRANCE

## Hiking the Isle of Madeira

HISTORIC LEVADA TRAILS, SUBTROPICAL FORESTS & LEGENDARY WINE  
AUGUST 9-20, 2026



Wilderness Travel



## 2026 Spain Eclipse Program

Join us in northern Spain in 2026 to experience a total solar eclipse as it sweeps across the Iberian Peninsula. Our exclusive viewing location atop a hilltop winery aligns with the eclipse’s centerline. Chosen in collaboration with esteemed eclipse meteorologist Jay Anderson, it promises the finest weather and sweeping views across the flat Meseta Norte—we should be in for a visual treat. Because the total eclipse will occur low on the horizon just one hour shy of sunset, we can look forward to a number of effects being different from when totality is high overhead. Intensified atmospheric scattering should greatly enhance the colors of the surrounding horizon, and the setting sun will appear magnified by the “moon illusion.” Throughout the program, we’ll enjoy insightful talks on eclipses and cosmic wonders curated by our distinguished lecturer Dr. Alex Filippenko, Professor of Astronomy at UC Berkeley.



### OUR EXPERT ASTRONOMER ALEX FILIPPENKO, PHD

A name familiar to many, Dr. Filippenko is a celebrated professor at UC Berkeley, revered for his expertise in the fields of exploding stars, active galaxies, and universal expansion. His accolades are numerous, and notably, he’s been voted “Best Professor” at UC Berkeley a record nine times!

# Eclipse Program Locations



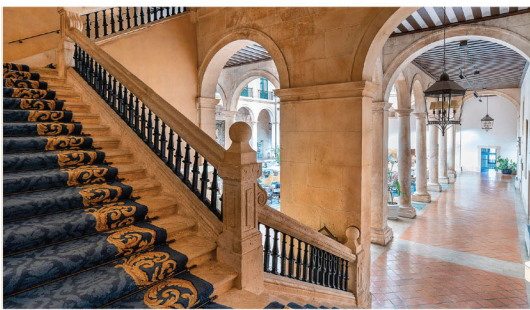
## BILBAO

We begin the Eclipse Program in Bilbao exploring this Basque capital where timeless traditions fuse with the avant-garde. Bilbao's dedication to innovative architecture and cuisine is felt throughout the city, from the iconic Guggenheim Museum—a shining example of 20th-century architecture housing one of the most important private collections of modern and contemporary art—to its historic Old Town filled with eateries serving pintxos and Txakoli wine.



## BURGOS

On our way to Burgos, the capital city of the unified kingdom of Castile and León for five centuries, we'll tour the prehistoric site of Atapuerca, where the oldest known evidence of humans in western Europe was unearthed. In Burgos, we'll visit the famed cathedral, one of the masterpieces of Spanish Gothic architecture and the only cathedral in Spain to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



## LERMA

Our lodging during this astronomical event is the iconic Parador de Lerma, once the Ducal Palace and the seat of the Spanish Empire from 1599-1618 under the clandestine rule of the Duke of Lerma, a favorite of King Phillip III. Dating back to pre-Roman times, Lerma experienced significant growth and wealth in the 17th century under the Duke's patronage, including the construction of buildings in the Herrerian style that today are among the best-preserved historical-artistic complexes in Spain.

## Eclipse Program Schedule

### DAY 1, AUGUST 9: BILBAO

- Arrive in Bilbao and Transfer to the Hotel Carlton
- Welcome Reception and Dinner

### DAY 2, AUGUST 10: BILBAO

- Morning Lecture on Eclipses
- Walking Tour of Bilbao, and Cruise Down the Nervión River
- Haute Cuisine Pintxos Lunch Designed by Chef Zuriñe García
- Tour of the Guggenheim
- Afternoon Lecture on the History and Culture of the Basque People

- Late Afternoon Astronomy Presentation

### DAY 4, AUGUST 12: LERMA

- Morning Astronomy Presentation
- Free Time to Explore Lerma
- Transfer to Viewing Site
- Pre-Eclipse Presentation, Winery Tours and Tasting
- Eclipse!
- Celebratory Farewell Dinner at the Winery

### DAY 3, AUGUST 11: BURGOS / LERMA

- Transfer to Lerma, via Burgos
- Tour of Atapuerca Archaeological Site
- Walking Tour of Burgos' Historical Center and Gothic Cathedral

### DAY 5, AUGUST 13

- Depart Lerma on Your Post-Eclipse Tour



# Overview



## TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 12 days  
**Arrive:** Bilbao, Spain  
**Depart:** Funchal, Portugal  
**Lodging:** 11 nights hotels  
**Meals:** All meals included except 1 lunch and 3 dinners  
**Activity:** Cultural, Hiking

**Trip Level:** 1 2 ③ 4 5 6

5 hiking days on moderate to strenuous trails, some steep

## QUESTIONS?

Our Area Specialists are your single point of contact and would be happy to answer any questions about your trip!

800.368.2794 | 510.558.2488

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Witness the dramatic phenomena of a total solar eclipse with renowned astrophysicist Alex Filippenko, PhD (veteran of 14 eclipse events with WT!)
- Enjoy the fabulous Parador de Lerma and our private eclipse-viewing site at a hilltop winery
- Hike Madeira's unique levada trails through subtropical forests
- Follow a spectacular ridge trail to Madeira's highest point at 6,100 feet
- Savor fresh seafood, explore red-roofed villages, hear evocative fado music
- Go dolphin and whale watching by private boat
- Explore impossibly picturesque Funchal, with its colorful homes
- Enjoy delightful hotels, including elegant Reid's Palace, the Grand Dame of Funchal

# Introduction



After the thrill of witnessing the total solar eclipse in Lerma, Spain, we'll celebrate the beauty of Madeira, set in the cobalt blue waters of the Atlantic and warmed by the Gulf Stream. This lush island is blanketed in laurel forests and capped by sharp volcanic peaks that cut through the aquamarine shoreline. Our hiking journey explores the island's many personalities as we walk ancient "levada" irrigation canals through green valleys and UNESCO-protected laurisilva forests, hike to crater lakes, take cobbled paths to red-roofed villages, and cross high trails above the sparkling Atlantic. Along the way, we'll visit a producer of Madeira's famous fortified wines, taste catch-of-the-day fish, and go dolphin and whale watching by private boat.

## TRIP DATES

August 9-20, 2026

# Itinerary



## **Overnight: Hotel Carlton**

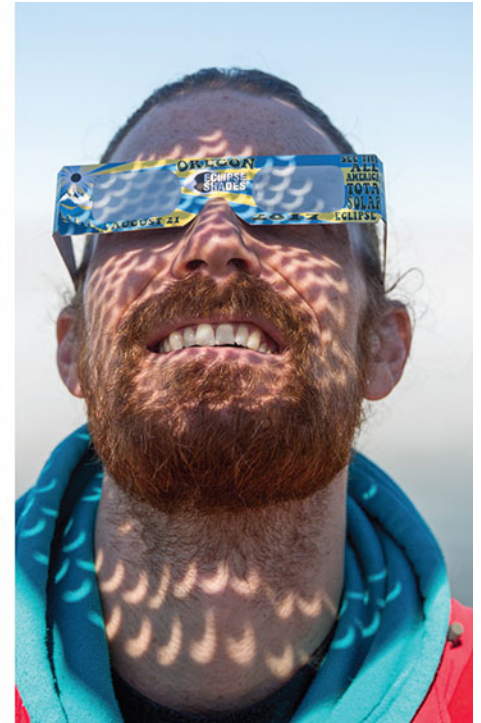
The Hotel Carlton, built in 1919, is an impressive Beaux Arts monument in the grand style of its era. It is centrally located in the Old Town on Plaza de Federico Moyúa and just a short walk to the Guggenheim Museum. The hotel was the seat of the Basque government during the Spanish Civil War.

**Meals: B, L, D**

## **DAYS 1-2 TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PROGRAM, BILBAO, SPAIN**

Our eclipse program begins in Bilbao, with a tour of the acclaimed Guggenheim Museum, a masterpiece by Canadian architect Frank Gehry that put Bilbao on the map for art lovers, a cruise along the Nervión River, which flows through the city to the Cantabrian Sea, and a walking tour of the pedestrianized Old Quarter. We'll savor a pintxos lunch designed by chef Zuriñe García, the first Basque woman to get a Michelin star, and enjoy dinner in the old Alhóndiga, or wine warehouse, of Bilbao. Our Guest Astronomer, Dr. Alex Filippenko, will begin his series of lectures on eclipses and other astronomical phenomena, and we'll discover the ancient and mysterious culture of the Basque people with a local historian, Professor Alberto Santana. Our Bilbao accommodation on Days 1-2 is the luxurious Hotel Carlton, a Bilbao landmark. Meals begin with Dinner on Day 1.

# Itinerary



## **Overnight: Parador de Lerma**

Built in the 17th century atop a medieval castle, this former Ducal Palace was built by the Duke of Lerma as a place of lodging, rest, and general enjoyment for his close friend, King Felipe III. The palace has a central courtyard surrounded by stately columned galleries, and features interiors from the era of the Hapsburgs, with beautifully designed lighting and décor.

**Meals: B, L, D**

## **DAYS 3-4 TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PROGRAM, BILBAO TO LERMA, SPAIN**

Departing Bilbao, we visit the prehistoric Atapuerca archaeological site, whose caves hold a rich fossil record of Europe's early humans. Heading to the charming town of Burgos, located on the Camino Frances, we'll tour its imposing Gothic cathedral before continuing to the medieval town of Lerma, where you will have time to explore before we gather for another astronomy lecture. On eclipse day, we'll craft our viewers and enjoy a bit more of Lerma before heading to our private eclipse-viewing site at an expansive winery on a hill-virtually on the centerline. Winery tours and tastings will be available this afternoon as we prepare for the eclipse and enjoy the winery's grounds and views. On Days 3-4, we stay at the fabulous Parador de Lerma, a Ducal Palace originally built for King Felipe III.

# Itinerary



## DAY 5 FUNCHAL, MADEIRA

Morning group transfer from Lerma to Madrid (MAD) for your flight to Funchal (FNC) (see flight suggestions on the Arrival & Departure page). After checking in to our group hotel on the foothills of Funchal, you will have the afternoon free to explore the hotel gardens, renowned for colorful camellias, proteas, and perfumed jasmine hedges, or take a short stroll on the hotel grounds to a wonderful viewpoint of the whole city of Funchal spread below us. Lunch and dinner are on your own, as people will be arriving at different times into the evening.

### Overnight: Casa Velha do Palheiro

This tranquil country house hotel, a restored 18th-century hunting lodge, is set in the Palheiro Nature Estate in the foothills of Funchal. More than 12 miles of hiking trails surround the lodge (great for birdwatching), and there are two swimming pools. All guest rooms convey a sense of the history, beauty, and elegance of the estate, and our rooms in the Garden Wing feature pleasant views across the gardens. The lodge features an award-winning restaurant and is a member of the prestigious Relais & Chateaux association.

### Meals: B



# Itinerary



**Overnight:** Casa Velha do Palheiro

**Meals:** B, L, D

**Hiking Details:** 3.5 hours, 4.5 miles, 1,350 feet ascent/descent, moderate

## DAY 6 HIKE AT PONTA DE SÃO LOURENÇO / FUNCHAL / FADO

We start the day with a Trip Briefing, then a hike on the dry eastern tip of Madeira at Ponto de São Lourenço, where the variegated rocks speak of this volcanic past. Our return is by Zodiac along the coast, an excursion offering superb views of the rocky peninsula we will have just hiked. We'll take a walking tour through Funchal, which first flourished in the 15th century as sugar (or "white gold") enriched the island. Sugar merchants settled around the Sé Cathedral, beautiful in its simplicity and topped off with tiny colored "azulejos" tiles. Close by, fruit and vegetable stands jostle for space alongside flower stalls in the colorful Mercado dos Lavradores ("Farmers' Market"). Wearing the traditional red-and-blue striped skirt with an embroidered waistcoat and pointy hat, the local flower sellers always steal the show. After absorbing the sights, sounds, and aromas of the market, we'll finish the day in Funchal's Old Town at a local restaurant where Portugal's traditional Fado music is played. Fado's evocative songs tell stories of love and loss. Even without understanding a word of Portuguese, the deep emotions are powerfully conveyed in haunting melodies. At the restaurant, all the family members take part in the musical performance—even the cook may come out of the kitchen to take his turn!

# Itinerary



**Overnight:** Casa Velha do Palheiro

**Meals:** B, L, D

**Hiking Details:** 4-5 hours, 7 miles, 900 feet descent, moderate

## DAY 7 HIKE THE LEVADA DO FURADO / SANTANA HOUSES / RUM FACTORY

Madeira's famous levadas are hand-built irrigation channels that brought water to the island's fields. There are more than 200 levadas in Madeira, many built over 200 years ago. Our hike on the Levada do Furado in Ribeiro Frio ("Cold River") begins at 2,800 feet and brings us through an indigenous laurel forest. This ancient woodland once covered the whole of the island, but great swaths were burned down to clear land for planting sugar cane when the Portuguese first arrived. Hiking along the edge of the levada, we'll recognize the astonishing amount of labor required to construct this unique network of water channels that wind for more than 1,400 miles across the island. As we walk, we'll keep an eye out for one of the island's endemic birds, the tiny Madeira firecrest, with its distinctive orange mohawk. After our hike, we stop by Santana, a town known for its traditional triangular houses. The steeply-pitched thatched roofs that descend nearly to the ground are ideal for the location, staying warm in winter and cool in summer, and give the town a whimsical fairytale feel. From Santana, we'll head along the coast to Porto da Cruz to witness 100-year-old steam-driven machinery noisily crush the sugar cane to extract its juices, then distilled into rum-which we'll just have to taste! Before dinner at our hotel, the sommelier will introduce us to some of the island's finest Madeiran wines. We'll learn of the accidents of history that led to the creation of the unique qualities of this rich, flavorsome wine.

# Itinerary



## **Overnight: Aqua Natura Madeira Hotel**

The Aqua Natura is set between the imposing cliffs of Madeira's rugged north coast and the blue Atlantic and all guest rooms have dazzling views and small balconies. There is also a rooftop bar and restaurant and a sauna and Jacuzzi. Just below the hotel are fabulous natural swimming pools built right into the coastal lava rocks.

## **Meals: B, L, D**

**Hiking Details:** 3-4 hours, 7 miles, minimal ascent/descent, easy

## **DAY 8 TOBOGGANS / CÂMARA DE LOBOS / HIKE THE LEVADA DA CALHETA**

In the morning we make our way to Nossa Senhora do Monte, a picturesque white church built in the late 1700s and still one of the most venerated sites on the island. On the Feast of the Assumption, penitents climb on their knees all 74 steps to pray in this church. Just below is the start of the famous toboggan run that allows us a quirky departure, in giant wicker baskets. These toboggans are steered by two guides elegantly dressed in white, wearing straw hats and traditional soft leather boots. During the short slide we won't be traveling at great speed, though Ernest Hemingway famously described it as one of the most exhilarating rides of his life. Despite his large touch of irony, this unique experience is an island "must" and it's guaranteed to generate big smiles all the way down the hill.

Afterwards we drive along Madeira's southern coastline, stopping at Camara do Lobos, a picturesque fishing village where Winston Churchill came often to relax and paint. The fishermen here head out to sea at night to line-catch black scabbard fish, or espada, a mainstay of the local cuisine. These fish are caught only off Madeira and Japan and live at a depth of up to 5,500 feet. Their sharply pointed snout lined with protruding fang-like teeth and enormous round eyes give this fish a fearsome appearance, but their taste is surprisingly delicate. Our hike is along the Levada Nova da Calheta, starting at Prazeres and heading west to Maloeira. This hike is best described as agricultural, as the waterway wends its way slowly through farmland where many of the regional vegetables are grown, including potatoes, sweet potatoes, green beans, cabbage, and corn. At 1,600 feet, fruit flourish as well—apple, lemon, fig, and papaya trees add color to the terraced fields. Sections of eucalyptus and pine trees provide shade, blue flowering agapanthus abound along the levada's edge, and in the distance shimmer the waves of the Atlantic. We end at a marvelous bakery serving excellent cakes, coffee, and beer, but you may prefer to head straight for an ice cream at the end of the trail!

A scenic hours' drive takes in the western edge of the island on our way to the picturesque village of Porto Moniz at the northwestern tip of Madeira. Our hotel is close to natural volcanic rock swimming pools filled by Atlantic breakers (the original infinity pool!). The rock formations along the coast here are stunning. After savoring some of the fresh locally caught seafood, and perhaps relaxing in the hotel's Jacuzzi or sauna, we'll be lulled to sleep by the sound of the sea.

# Itinerary



**Overnight:** Aqua Natura Madeira Hotel

**Meals:** B, L

**Hiking Details:** 3-3.5 hours, 5 miles, 1,000 feet ascent, moderate

## DAY 9 HIKE THE PAUL DA SERRA PLATEAU / WINERY VISIT

Setting out, we'll stop a few miles along the coast to view a dramatic basalt sea stack, a peculiar rock formation 120 feet high and standing a few feet from the shore. Near its top there is a large hole, or "janela" (window), after which the nearby village, Ribeira da Janela, is named. Our hike on the Paul da Serra plateau starts out from the Lagoa do Fanal; this crater lake rarely has much, if any, water in it, but is nonetheless a favorite haunt of the rusty brown cattle that roam free on this high plateau. Our earthen trail climbs up through the laurisilva forest, classified in 1999 as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site. These sturdy trees with their twisted branches draped in mosses and lichen give the route an otherworldly feeling, especially when mists shroud the area. Wood and shrubs were harvested from here in the near past and taken down to the north coast via a network of cables, to be used in farming and for heating; this practice is no longer permitted. After our morning hike we'll head to a winery at São Vicente, on the north coast. The vineyards are terraced up the steep hillsides and, in some places, are protected from the salty winds by high hedges constructed from tree heathers. Various grape varieties are grown, producing white, rosé, and red wines, with Verdelho, the most important, producing high-quality white wines. We'll savor the wines over lunch at the Quinta do Barbusano, then enjoy a tour of the vineyards to hear about the challenging conditions these hardy grapes face. Our dramatic drive back to Porto Moniz via the north coast brings us through small coastal villages set on the narrow strip of land between sea and cliff, often referred to as the "Big Sur" of Madeira. We return to the Aqua Natura for overnight. Dinner is on your own this evening.

# Itinerary



## Overnight: Reid's Palace Hotel

Century-old Reid's Palace, now a Belmond property, is set on clifftops and surrounded by acres of subtropical garden. Just a short walk from Funchal's shops and restaurants, Reid's is the Grand Dame of the city, with an "old school" décor that includes dozens of fresh flower displays. The terrace bar is a great place for vistas over the gardens, the city, and the blue expanse of the sea.

## Meals: B, L

**Hiking Details:** 7-8 hours, 9 miles, 3,500 feet ascent/2,000 feet descent, strenuous

## DAY 10 CAMINHO REAL DA ENCUMEADA / CABO GIRÃO / FUNCHAL

This morning we depart quite early but it's worth the effort as we discover one of the island's most scenic hikes: the "Royal Path," paved and used as one of the main routes across the island by the landed gentry before the roads were built. Hiking from a high saddle at Encumeada (3,290'), we descend through eucalyptus forests to a tiny mountain settlement by a river, where in the past, islanders came to plant their crops and graze their animals. Today the small, terraced fields lie abandoned but white calla lilies still flower and chestnut trees flourish. From here we climb through woodland and on up below the rugged, dark cliffs of Pico Grande. The views down to the valleys as we progress are simply stunning. Until very recently, goats roamed wild over the mountains, eating the fragile vegetation thus threatening the delicate natural balance; their removal is enabling plants to re-establish and regenerate. Reaching a grassy saddle at 2,700 feet, we'll enjoy a picnic looking over the secluded Valley of the Nuns, where the village lies snuggled below us in a small bowl surrounded by rugged high peaks. From here the trail becomes wider, crossing the central massif and following the curves of the high ridge to Boca da Corrida, with great views all the way to the end of our hike. En route to Funchal, we'll have a quick stop at the sea cliffs of Cabo Girão, among the highest in the world. At a lookout point, a glass skywalk will give us breathtaking views of the land and sea far below. The elegant Reid's Palace Hotel, built in the late 19th century to accommodate passengers traveling on ocean liners, is our setting for our final two nights. Dinner is on your own; you can wander into downtown Funchal to soak up the atmosphere and grab a bite to eat.

# Itinerary



**Overnight:** Reid's Palace Hotel

**Meals:** B, L, D

**Hiking Details:** 1.5 hours, 2 miles, 1,475 feet descent

## DAY 11 HIKE FROM EIRA DO SERRADO TO CURRAL DAS FREIRAS / DOLPHIN AND WHALE WATCHING

We begin today's hike at Eira do Serrado, a beautiful vista point about a half-hour drive from Funchal. Here a steep, winding cobbled path leads down to the village of Curral das Freiras ("Nuns Valley") with great views all along the way as we descend. Our trail descends through a large stand of horse chestnut trees that produce one of the crops for which Curral das Freiras is best known. At lunch we'll enjoy a sampling of this simple nut in a variety of ways: roasted in a soup, in a hearty stew with beans, or for dessert as a delicious cake washed down with chestnut liqueur. Later in the day, a private boat will take us out for an afternoon of whale and dolphin watching. The waters around the island are visited by more than 20 species of dolphins and whales throughout the year. Tonight, we gather for our festive Farewell Dinner at the historic 17th century Fortress of São Tiago overlooking the waterfront.

**Meals:** B

## DAY 12 DEPART

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flights.

# Pricing

## TRIP COST

\$9,595 (10-14 members)

\$9,995 (4-9 members)

Single supplement: \$1,780

## PAYMENT TERMS

At time of reservation \$1,000 per person

Due 180 days prior to departure: 25% of land cost

Due 90 days prior to departure: Balance

*Please note that this differs from our standard policy.*

## CANCELLATION & TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum cancellation fee: \$500 per person

365-181 days prior to departure: \$1,000 per person

180-91 days prior to departure: 25% of land costs

90 days or less prior to departure: 100% of land costs

*We reserve the right to treat the reservation as canceled if payments are not received when due.*

## 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](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance)

## TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Presentations by Guest Speakers
- Expert Trip Leaders and local guides
- All accommodations based on double occupancy
- Meals as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- All ground transportation and baggage handling from meeting until departure
- All activities as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Entrance fees to museums and archaeological sites
- A glass of wine or beer with lunch & dinner

## TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Travel to and from the arrival and departure location as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Additional hotel nights outside the trip's scheduled dates
- Optional gratuities to Trip Leaders or staff
- Optional travel insurance
- Other expenses of a personal nature (some alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.)
- Gratuities during the Eclipse Program portion of your journey

# Arrival & Departure

## ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

**Suggested Airport:** Bilbao Airport (BIO)

**Suggested Arrival Date & Time:** Day 1, August 9, 2026, by 5:00 pm

**Note:** Depending on your routing, it may be necessary to depart from the US one or more days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary.

**Meeting Place:** We will gather for a Welcome Reception in the Crystal Hall of the Hotel Carlton before dinner. Timing to be advised prior to departure.

## Flight to Madeira

**Suggested Departure Airport:** Madrid (MAD)

**Suggested Arrival Airport:** Madeira Airport (FNC)

**Date & Time:** Day 5, August 13, 2026, any time

**Note:** We will organize a Group Transfer from Lerma to Madrid with the intention to arrive at the Madrid-Barajas Airport by 9:00 am. There will be many flights to choose from throughout the day to Madeira, but if you get one around noon, you would normally arrive in Funchal by about 6:30 pm. Upon arrival at the Madeira Airport, taxis are readily available outside the terminal and the transfer cost to the hotel is approximately €30.

**Meeting Place:** You will meet your Trip Leader in the lobby of the first hotel the morning of August 14th. Timing to be advised prior to departure.

## DEPARTURE

**Suggested Airport:** Madeira Airport (FNC)

**Date & Time:** Day 12, August 20, 2026, any time

Your Trip Leader can help you arrange your airport transfer for any flights on Day 12.

## INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

If you would like assistance booking your flights, 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](http://www.exitotravel.com).

Please remember that 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 (as specific as arrival and departure details could change) and we have sent final arrival and departure instructions.

Once your tickets have been purchased, please forward us 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 Bilbao (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 [wildernesstravel.com/leaders](https://wildernesstravel.com/leaders).



## SKYE MCDONALD

Skye McDonald lives in Scotland's Highland capital, Inverness. She has worked as a Trip Leader in 35 countries since the millennium and lived in Germany, France, and Tanzania. "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 speaks German, French, beginners Portuguese, and unusually, a smattering of Swahili from earlier years as a volunteer agricultural officer in Tanzania. Life continues to be an adventure for Skye, who has recently taken up bee-keeping, wild-water swimming, and scuba diving.



## NUNO PORTELA

Originally from Funchal, the largest city in Madeira, Nuno has a deep knowledge of the island's natural wonders and culture, and finds something new to enjoy on every adventure he leads. He studied in mainland Portugal and has been a mountain guide for more than 18 years. His experience in nature, paired with his passion for Madeira's people and traditions, makes him the perfect guide on our journey to this unique island.

# What to Expect

## WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated **Level 3+, Moderate to Strenuous**, according to our trip grading system. We have five hiking days, varying from 2-8 hours of hiking a day. The 8-hour hike on Day 10 is strenuous; the trail is quite narrow and steep in places, with precipitous drop-offs and a degree of exposure. Please note that our daily hiking activities are weather-dependent. Based on their many years of experience here, our Trip Leaders always have wonderful alternate plans.

## TERRAIN

Two of our hikes are along levadas, where the paths are well maintained and there is minimal altitude gain or loss. Others are on well-defined but rocky trails and involve a few thousand feet of ascent and descent.

## WEATHER

Madeira is a subtropical island. The south coast is the warmest and driest area and the mountains, rising to over 6,000 feet, are the coolest and wettest. We can expect pleasant temperatures of 58 to 66°F at the coast, but cooler temperatures up in the mountains. April is the start of the dry season, but rain is always a possibility; the monthly average is two inches.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

All our hotels are chosen for their local history and central location. Because some of them are in historic buildings, the rooms may not conform to uniform standards, but we hope you will enjoy them for their charm and local color. Single rooms can be requested, but are not always available, due to the limited space in some of our hotels. If you require a single room, please make the request as early as possible. European single rooms are often smaller than US singles.

## TRANSPORTATION

We travel the island by mini-bus, and the roads are very twisty in some places. The longest single drive is about one hour and 15 minutes.

# Additional Information

## 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 or email us at [info@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:info@wildernesstravel.com).

## REFERENCES

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

## ABOUT NEW TRIPS

This is a new adventure and one that we are particularly excited about offering. However, as with all new departures, flexibility and a spirit of adventure are always appreciated! Activities are described in the itinerary but they can vary, sometimes considerably, depending on weather conditions, the group, and other factors.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At [www.wildernesstravel.com](http://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.



## 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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# Wilderness Travel

1102 Ninth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710-1211  
800-368-2794 • 510-558-2488 • fax: 510-558-2489  
info@wildernesstravel.com • www.wildernesstravel.com