

# Azores Islands Adventure

October 11 – 19, 2023 • 9 Days • \$4950

Island hopping to 4 of the Azores 9 islands offers a surprisingly diverse introduction to this luxuriant Atlantic archipelago sitting amidst the moderating influence of the Gulf Stream astride 3 adjoining tectonic plates.

[Contact Us](#)

[Tour Type: Classic Curated](#)

- [Overview](#)

Far out in the Atlantic Ocean, roughly one-third of the distance between southern Europe and the East Coast of the USA, lies a 9-island archipelago called the Azores Islands. Here, the tips of some of earth's tallest mountains poke above the ocean surface from the bottom of a deep ocean at a juncture of three major tectonic plates.

The depth of the ocean (nearly 4 miles) and the moderating influence of the Gulf Stream attract a wealth of sea life, including many species of cetacea (whales, dolphins, and porpoises). The latitude of the islands combines with the moderating Gulf Stream influence and rich volcanic soil to produce a Garden-of-Eden effect. Luxuriant vegetation is an extraordinary feature of the Azores.

The volcanic nature of the islands also produces a tremendous topographical variety: emerald green valleys dotted with a plethora of prolific dairy cows, black lava beaches bearing the pounding of a starkly contrasting and unusually clear blue surf, mysterious meandering lava caves, and a fascinating variety of lagoons and lakes...all explored on a well developed system of trails and dirt roads.

Six hundred years ago, under the patronage of Prince Henry the Navigator, Portuguese mariners became the first to develop the ability to sail the open ocean, out of sight of land. In their relentless quest to round the cape of Africa in search of trade treasures of the East, they happened upon this blessed archipelago. Hence, though over 800 miles from Portugal, it fell under the jurisdiction of Lisbon and is today a part of the nation of Portugal.

Step into a different dimension and join us on this island-hopping odyssey in search of the heart of the Azores on a brand-new Walking Adventure for 2023!

## Including:

- Airport to hotel group transfers on first day
- Three inter-island flights
- Roundtrip cruise from Faial to Pico Island

- All land travel as outlined by motorcoach
- Accommodations in tourist class or better hotels
- 16 meals: all breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 dinners as denoted (BLD)
- 7 walk routes-all IVV
- Walking fees for those collecting IVV walking credit, if sanctions approved
- WAI guide service throughout(2 guides)
- Cultural & historical expertise of a national guide throughout
- Local guides at Captiaes-Gereais Palace and Algas do Carvao Cave
- All tipping for local guides, coach drivers, and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$750. We also provide a roommate matching service.

#### **Activities/Visits to:**

- Lagoa das Furnas - Sao Miguel
- Parque Terra Nostra bicentennial botanical garden - Sao Miguel
- Angra do Heroismo UNESCO World Heritage Site - Terceira
- Captiaes-Gereais Palace - Terceira
- Amelias pastries with baking demo - Terceira
- Monte Brasil Natural Reserve - Terceira
- Agualva Bay - Terceira
- Algar do Carvao volcanic cave guided walk - Terceira
- Peter's Sports Café - Faial
- Whaling Station in Porto Pim - Faial
- Monte da Guia - Faial
- Pico Island wine cellar & Verdelho wine tasting - Pico
- Pineapple Plantation tour & tasting - Sao Miguel
- Lagoa das Sete Cidades - Sao Miguel
- Azorean fruit liqueur tasting - Sao Miguel
- Cha Gorreana Tea Plantation - Sao Miguel
- More fun and educational stops than we can list!

#### **Optional Excursions:**

- Whale watching cruise (Day 8)

- [360.260.9393](tel:360.260.9393)
- [Email Us](#)



## Adventure Pace

**Tour Pace:** 1 2 3 4 5

**Walk Challenge:** 1 2 3 4 5

[About Adventure Pace](#)

## Adventure Pace

How much Adventure do you want? Here are a few features to help gauge the following factors on each tour.

**Tour Pace:** On a scale of 1 (slowest pace) to 5 (fastest pace), we've rated the following factors: number of 1-night hotels; driving miles per day; fullness of schedule; mid-tour airline flights; high elevation setting; and average amount of walking per day.

**Walk Challenge:** This number represents an average walk difficulty rating for the tour using a scale of 1 (easiest) to 5 (hardest).

[Contact Us](#)

# Important Info



## Group Size

Maximum 24 travelers.



## Hotels

Accommodations in a variety of small hotels



## Meals

16 meals included: all breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 dinners. Meals are denoted in itinerary as (BLD).



## Airfare

International air not Included. Travelers will fly into and out of Nordela Airport (airport code PDL) in Ponta Delgada, on the Azores Island of Sao Miguel.



## Transportation

Included: 3 interisland flights, 1 roundtrip interisland ferry, motorcoach on each island. Smaller buses due to narrow roads.



## Traveler Age

Our travelers usually range from 50–75 years of age. All ages welcome!



## Your Guides



### Scott & Ruth Burk

Sharing the best of Europe, Northern Africa, Israel, and the USA, Scott and Ruth have been leading Walking Adventures for nearly 10 years. The Azores has long been on Scott's bucket list, so he was excited to assist Scott Isom on the inaugural WAI tour in July and now share it with Ruth and another group of inquisitive WAI travelers.

Scott recently retired from a career as an air traffic control manager for the Portland, Oregon airport. Ruth operates her own business as a writer consultant for high tech companies. They love traveling and sharing their experiences with others and have successfully instilled that wanderlust in their two adult children.

## Itinerary

*Click on each day to reveal more details. BLD refers to meals included, Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner.*

### [DAY 1-October 11: Arrive Furnas, Sao Miguel Island \(Azores\) \(D\)](#)

Welcome to the Azores Islands! This surprisingly diverse Portuguese archipelago promises a mesmerizing and magical 9-day adventure that explores four of its most scenic and colorful islands.

We begin and end our exploration on the green island of Sao Miguel, known for its deep woods and green pastures, where productive dairy cows roam freely. We also visit the purple island of Terceira, known for its lilacs and wisteria as well as its UNESCO World Heritage 16<sup>th</sup> century town of Angra do Heroismo. Next is the blue island of Faial, with a strong seagoing and whaling heritage and where colorful hydrangeas line the roads. A day trip to the gray island of Pico reveals the volcanic hues of Portugal's tallest mountain. We return to Sao Miguel, largest of the islands for the last full day of the Adventure.

This rainbow-themed road trip begins with a transfer from Sao Miguel's main airport in Ponta Delgada to the geothermally active region of Furnas, where a welcome dinner kicks off the festivities!

### [DAY 2-October 12: Activities on Sao Miguel Island \(BL\)](#)

*Lagoa das Furnas - 9.5 km, rated 2A*

Today's walk displays the volcanic nature of the Azores, and especially the Furnas Valley, steaming within a sleeping volcanic crater. Our trail takes us past bubbling terrain, vaporous fumaroles, and thermal-warmed running streams. The mystical setting is compelling with verdant vegetation framing the green, crystal-like Lagoa das Furnas, first of numerous enchanting lagoons we'll encounter. The steam percolating from the superheated ground is used by the locals to cook the famous "Cozido das Furnas," a stew made with different vegetables and meats left underground for 6 to 7 hours to boil by the earth's own heat. We'll taste Cozido das Furnas for lunch.

This afternoon, we discover the softer, more delicate side of Furnas as we stroll in the Parque Terra Nostra bicentennical botanical garden, guardian of a highly regarded camellia collection and of an English oak tree planted in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Thomas Hickling, who worked in the American consul in the Azores. We finish our day on the eastern side of the island enjoying charming little towns like Povoacao, as well as the panoramic coastal viewpoints for which this part of the island is known.

### [DAY 3-October 13: San Miguel to Angra do Heroismo, Terceira Island \(BD\)](#)

*Monte Brasil - 7.4 km, rated 2B*

This morning we fly from San Miguel to Terceira. Upon arrival, a walking tour introduces us to Angra do Heroismo. The port of Angra became an obligatory port-of-call for ships, starting in the late 15th century, as they followed newly discovered trade routes to and from Africa and the Indies. It gained UNESCO World Heritage status as an outstanding example of maritime architecture, in particular two sets of 400-year-old fortifications. As we stroll, we take in its colonialist ambiance, imagining the buzzing port life, arriving settlers, and Jesuit monks as we visit the town's vibrant streets, baroque churches, and the Captiaes-Gereais Palace.

Color and faith are both prominent features in Terceira's architecture, which we witness at

the “Imperios,” modest chapel-like buildings, decorated in strong contrasting hues, where the Brothers of the Holy Spirit perform their religious practices. Our education in this town’s history and culture continues at the charming Town Hall while tasting D. Amelias, small pastries made in honor of the queen and bearing her name. Prior to tasting, however, we see how to make these precious treats. Our tours on Portugal’s mainland have instilled in us a great appreciation for a variety of phenomenal, light melt-in-your mouth pastries.

This afternoon, we enter the vibrant and verdant natural reserve of Monte Brasil, remnant of an extinct volcano, to explore one of the oldest fortifications of the island and enjoy remarkable vistas overlooking Angra do Heroismo.

#### [DAY 4-October 14: Activities on Terceira Island \(BL\)](#)

##### *Agualva Bay – 4 km, rated 1C*

During the morning, we enjoy a journey north for a two-hour walk to take in cliff-side views, marvel at rock columns, and enjoy the pebble beach of Agualva Bay. Be on the lookout for numerous bird species, including the Rock Dove, Azores Wood Pigeon, and perhaps even the Common Tern.

In the afternoon, we make our way to the volcanic caves of Algar do Carvao. The cave is a volcanic chimney that resembles a stone-carved theater. It contains a pool of water and two remarkable rocky domes over it, adorned with enormous We explore Algar do Carvao on a guided walk with an expert that knows the secrets hidden in the heart of this island.

#### [DAY 5-October 15: Terceira Island to Horta, Faial Island \(BD\)](#)

##### *Entre Montes (Faial) – 3.5 km rated 2B*

Bidding farewell to Terceira, we fly this morning to our next island, Faial. Upon arrival, we take in sights in Horta. Our first visit is to Peter’s Sports Café, a world famous institution that is more than just a café. With well over 100 years of history under its belt and a bright blue façade and orange sign, Peter’s has been a place for currency exchange, a yachting club, a post office, and even a place of charity on occasion. On its upper floor, we find the most striking scrimshaw collection on the island, bearing witness to Faial’s long whaling history.

Our next stop at the former Whaling Station in Porto Pim reveals more of this island’s relationship with large aquatic mammals. The Whaling Station was the site where poached whales were processed. Whaling was banned in 1984 and many former whalers are now using their whale expertise to help visitors see and appreciate these enormous creatures of the deep.

In the afternoon, our introduction to Faial continues on a short walk to Monte da Guia, one of the most beautiful viewpoints of the island. Due to its strategic location, this peninsula was vital in the development of telecommunications between Europe and the United States.

In 1893, the first underwater telegraphic cable was installed here, proving crucial during the World Wars and operational until 1969. All along our trail, several fortifications have been used for maritime protection dating to the 16th and 17th centuries.

When evening comes, we enjoy a relaxed dinner in the beautiful marina of Horta, where we spend the next two nights.

#### [DAY 6-October 16: Day trip to Pico Island by boat \(BL\)](#)

*Lago do Capitaó (Pico) – 9.5 km, rated 2A*

Our fourth island is a short scenic boat ride from Faial Island. Pico Island is the home of Portugal's tallest mountain, which shares its name with the island. By virtue of the fact that this volcano's base is a few miles below the surface on the ocean floor, it is actually one of earth's tallest mountains, proudly elevated from the black, volcanic terrain.

Pico is also home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Pico Vineyards. The vineyard earned this distinction because of the unique way the vines are protected from harsh Atlantic winds by small lava stone walls. A by-product of this viticultural creating is an appealing landscape of sandy browns, dark grey corrals, and light green foliage.

Our walk takes us among these vast vineyards, enjoying the unique vistas and taking opportunity to visit a wine cellar. Here, we learn about the rural life of the island and the century's old production and storage of wine. Of course, tasting Pico delicacies accompanied by the unique regional Pico's wine (verdelho) is just the right thing to do in this setting.

Following this perfect day on Pico, we board our boat for the short 30-minute ride back to Faial for our second night in Horta.

#### [DAY 7-October 17: Faial Island to Ponta Delgado, San Miguel Island \(BL\)](#)

*Vista do Rei Sete Cidades – 7.5 km, rated 1A*

This morning, we fly back to the island of San Miguel. Our first activity upon arrival is a visit to one of the famous pineapple plantations and packaging centers. The owner greets us and takes us through several stages of pineapple cultivation, where we play our part in the growth process by unearthing and watering them. In the end, we enjoy the fruits of our labor, literally, tasting fresh pineapple and other pineapple delights such as liquors and jams.

Following lunch, we make our way to the most impressive lagoon on the island: Lagoa das Sete Cidades. We start at Vista do Rei viewpoint and from there we walk around the perimeter of this mysterious body of water, part luminous green and part deep blue. Legend says the lagoon formed after a blue-eyed princess and a green-eyed shepherd shared a forbidden love. Their shared tears created a symbol of their love, separated yet never apart.



From this vantage point, we see beyond placid green pastures to Mosteiros in the distance, a proud little fishing village and our final destination. This postcard-perfect hamlet is situated between the green and blue segments of the lagoon, bordered by black sand beaches, and a place of enchanting natural pools.

#### [DAY 8-October 18: Activities on Sao Miguel Island \(BD\)](#)

*Janela do Inferno - 7.6 km, rated 2C*

*Cha Gorreana Tea Plantation - 3.5 km, rated 2B*

We start this morning with a unique trail featuring a series of aging aqueducts blanketed by the subtropical climate in a carpet of green. As we hike through the forest, panoramic vistas over the Atlantic are interrupted by a passage through tunnels and punctuated by the viewing of two lovely waterfalls, one which gave its name to our walk, "Window to Hell" (Janela do Inferno).

After time for lunch, travelers are faced with a difficult choice—an included tea walk activity and an optional whale watching excursion.

The included afternoon activity starts with the calming fragrance of tea leaves that guides us along our walk through Cha Gorreana, the only existing tea plantation in Europe.

Producing black and green tea since 1883, this family-run business uses no chemicals and maintains the century-old artisanal cultivation method. The splendid green plantation runs along a 79-acre field bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, offering spectacular Atlantic views! At walk's end, we can reminisce about our wonderful day as we sip a cup of tea together.

Optional Whale Watching Excursion: The Azores are known worldwide as an oceanic magnet for cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises). Of the 81 total whale and dolphin species existing on the planet, 28 of them show up in the Azores. We sail towards the deep ocean in the company of a marine biologist to look for migratory and resident whales and dolphins, living or passing by our island's coast. The tour is 3 hours long. Since wildlife is wild, not scripted, we cannot guarantee sightings. Estimated price: \$80

Join us this evening for a Farewell Dinner to celebrate our discovery of this exquisite little archipelago in the middle of the Atlantic.

#### [DAY 9-October 19: Departure from Ponta Delgado, Sao Miguel Island \(B\)](#)

No group activities are scheduled for this morning. Following breakfast, travelers are free to batch together in taxis for the 10 minute ride to the airport. With reluctance we leave this storied green archipelago, eager to return and continue the exploration in an Atlantic setting seemingly forgotten by time.

# Before You Book

*Click on each heading for more details. More information will be provided at the time of registration.*

## [How Do I Lock in My Place on This Adventure?](#)

To register, a non-refundable \$300 deposit is required to hold your spot. A final payment is due 90 days before departure and is non-refundable after the due date. You will receive a prompt email from us 2 to 3 weeks in advance.

Soon after registration, an “Adventure Advice” email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

Please follow this link to read our full [General Tour Conditions](#).

## [Unique Aspects of this Tour](#)

Azores Islands Adventure is unique in that we visit 4 islands using inter-island air and ferry. In addition, this is a tour we have planned remotely with a trusted local partner who has provided us with detailed information about walks and activities. The temperate, sub tropical climate of the Azores can produce abundant rain at any time of the year, but we have planned the itinerary for one of the drier periods.

## [What's a Classic Curated Tour](#)

With help from local experts and walking guides, these itineraries are hand-crafted with the help of trusted in-country partners to tailor itineraries to WAI specifications.

When planning Classic Curated Tours, our objective is to capture the essence of a destination—the history, culture, and natural wonders unique to that part of the world. We then build activities and walks that take us inside these characteristics.

Yes, these tours are educational, but they are also interactive and immersive; walking gets us off the bus and penetrates local cultures to not only see but touch, smell, and feel these special spaces.

Along the way, local walking guides amplify the experience by sharing insights into the magic of that particular location.

## [Walk Ratings](#)

We generally walk at a pace of 2 to 3 miles per hour. Walks that are oriented more towards education may take longer due to stops for guide commentary. Nature walks, on the other hand, generally continue at a steadier pace because we’re stopping less to talk. In most

cases, we are not “strolling.” We are walking at a relaxed but steady pace. Your experience will be significantly affected by your level of physical fitness. If not walking regularly at home, we strongly recommend that you make a priority of “training” beforehand to both enjoy the trip and avoid medical issues due to overexertion.

If you have questions about your ability to participate, please contact our office at [fun@walkingadventures.com](mailto:fun@walkingadventures.com).

We have adopted a walk difficulty rating system which contains a numeric indicator for trail incline and an alpha indicator for trail terrain. The explanation for this system is presented on the table below:

#### INCLINE

1. Minimal hills or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: <200 feet.
2. Some moderate hills and stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 200-1000 feet.
3. Some significant hill or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 1000-2000 feet.

#### TERRAIN

- A. Almost entirely on pavement.
- B. A significant part of the route is on well-groomed trails with very few obstacles.
- C. A significant part of the route is on somewhat difficult terrain (rocky / rooted paths or soft sand).

#### [Elevation on Tour](#)

Since we are near seal level for this Adventure, elevation is not an issue.

#### [How is Airfare Arranged?](#)

International air not Included. Travelers will fly into and out of Nordela Airport (airport code PDL) in Ponta Delgada, on the Azores Island of Sao Miguel.

Air travel to the Azores is available via direct flights from limited East Coast USA cities and by flying through Lisbon, Portugal. The Azores air transport situation is unique due to their location in the middle of the Atlantic. The islands are roughly two-thirds of the distance to Europe measured from the East Coast of the USA.

At the date of publication (July 2022), air schedules for July 2023 were not yet available. WAI will monitor availability of flights and routing with our travel agent consultant and, once clarity has emerged, will publish the Adventure Advice email with direction to book your flights. Please do not book your flight until you receive this Adventure Advice email.

If direct flights are available, WAI will offer a pre-night hotel in Ponta Delgado, Sao Miguel. If flights through Lisbon seem to be necessary for a significant number of travelers, we will offer a pre-night in Lisbon. In this case, travelers would rendezvous in Ponta Delgado on

Day 1 and be transported to our first hotel in Furnas on Day 1.

Please do not book your flights until you receive the Adventure Advice email.

### Travel Insurance

WAI believes strongly in the importance of travel insurance for financial and medical protection from any number of unforeseen circumstances that can arise before departure or during your Adventure. This is now especially true in the era of COVID-19, which is typically treated like any other illness for travel insurance purposes. Many travel insurance providers are available for you to consider. Laura Pfahler and Sharon Mitchell of World Travel Inc. are travel agents who provide air travel and insurance services to many WAI travelers.

Laura Pfahler: 503.434.6401 or [llp@wtpdx.com](mailto:llp@wtpdx.com)

Sharon Mitchell: 971.261.2091 or [smitchell@wtpdx.com](mailto:smitchell@wtpdx.com)

Check out [Insurance Tips](#) from World Travel for a short introduction to travel insurance. (NOTE: WAI receives no commission or financial remuneration from World Travel Inc.). As always, do some shopping to ensure you are getting the best value. Using the [SquareMouth.com](https://www.squaremouth.com) website can be a good way to compare pricing.

Other options include:

Allianz

Betins

Travel Guard

Travel Insured International

*NOTE: We suggest purchasing from a reputable, well-established insurance company (avoid buying insurance from an unknown company found only online). Travelers interested in purchasing "cancel for any reason" insurance coverage should be careful to check pricing and terms BEFORE they register for a tour. Recent changes in the international travel landscape has caused changes in the policies of some insurance companies, and made the purchase of this particular type of policy even more time-sensitive.*

### What if WAI Cancels the Tour?

Walking Adventures International reserves the right to cancel this tour departure with fewer than 12 participants, in which case registered participants would receive a 100% refund of payments received.

This refund policy contains one exclusion. Many suppliers require non-refundable deposits as a condition of booking services. Though it is rare, unforeseen circumstances can force us to cancel a tour. In cases where supplier's non-refundable policies are imposed, WAI attempts to retrieve as much of these deposits as possible but cannot guarantee a 100%

refund. In cases where full refunds cannot be obtained for a cancelled tour, we will do our best to transfer unrefunded money as traveler credits to be applied to a future tour to that destination.

### [Wellness Policies for This Tour](#)

Portugal and the Azores have now dropped all COVID-19-related restrictions. As of the date of this writing (August 30, 2022) previous requirements for proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test no longer exist.

WAI has also relaxed our policies and currently require no mitigation procedures ([WAI Wellness on Tour Policy](#)). However, Walking Adventures International policy includes endeavoring to comply with any COVID-19 policies in place in the destinations through which we travel.

Travelers participating in *Azores Island Adventure* must agree to abide by policies in place at the time of travel. We are not currently aware of any COVID-19 policies or restrictions that will impact this tour in the Azores. WAI will update travelers upon learning of any changes.

### [What Happens Next?](#)

Upon registering for this Adventure, you will receive a welcome email and initial invoice notifying you of your tour balance and due date. All payments for the tour or optional services/excursions can now be made online.

Soon after registration, an “Adventure Advice” email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

A final payment is due 90 days before departure (July 13, 2023) and is non-refundable after the due date. You will receive a prompt email from us a week or two in advance. Please see our [General Tour Conditions](#) for the full terms and conditions for participation in this Adventure.

Around 2-3 weeks before departure, you will receive a final email packet with details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule.

Take a few minutes to browse through this Atlantic island itinerary. It's full of great walks and fun cultural activities. This archipelago is an up and coming travel destination. Now is the time to discover the Azores with WAI!