



# Graciosa

## The White Island

**Area:** 61 sq. km  
**Length:** 12.5 km (8 miles)  
**Width:** 7 km (4 miles)  
**Population:** 5,000 inhabitants  
**Capital:** Santa Cruz

With an area of 61 sq. km, Graciosa lies 1½ hours by ferry north of Sao Jorge and 20 minutes by air northwest of Terceira. It is the second smallest island in the archipelago, only 12.5km long and 7km wide and has a gentle, low-lying landscape that is relatively untouched by time. The 39km coastline of Graciosa offers a sand beach at Praia and natural rock pools at Carapacho, as well as many picturesque bays and offshore islets that provide a sanctuary for an abundance of sea birds, including the grebe and red-billed tern.



On the north east coast is Santa Cruz, the capital of Graciosa; an attractive town with many 18th and 19th century manor houses and a cobbled central square. From the Monte de Nossa Senhora da Ajuda an excellent view of the town and the vineyards which cover the north of the island can be observed.

Another fine view - of the central islands of Faial, Pico, Sao Jorge and Terceira – can be enjoyed from Pico Timeo on a clear day. Classified as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO this peak is the highest on the island measuring 398m.

A must for any visitor to Graciosa is an exploration of the Furna do Enxofre, an impressive lava cave which stretches 194m in length and 40m in height. Accessed by a narrow funnel and 184 steps, this volcanic phenomenon is part of a much larger caldeira whose fertile lands can be explored by a 9km circular trail.

For those wishing to unwind and step back in time, look no further. Graciosa is an island where tranquility reigns and where age-old traditions remain.

## Highlights

### Furna do Enxofre

The best time to visit this volcanic phenomenon is between 11am and 2pm when sunlight penetrates the narrow funnel by which the cave is entered.

### Ilheu da Baleia

This dramatic rocky outcrop, located near Santa Cruz, is shaped like a whale hence the name islet of whales. See photo on page 39.

### Shopping

Graciosa produces its own wine, cheese and traditional cakes – the 'Queijadas da Graciosa' are a sweet, treacle-like pastry made in Praia. Fresh fish and shellfish are also available in abundance.

## Festivals

■ Espírito Santo (7 weeks after Easter)

## Activities (page 38)

- Island tours
- Natural rock swimming pools
- Scuba diving
- Walking (non guided)



Furna do Enxofre



Nossa Senhora da Ajuda Chapel

# What to see and do on Graciosa

The pace of life on Graciosa is extremely relaxed and therefore ideal for those wishing to recharge their batteries and visit an island almost untouched by time. As with all Azorean islands, Graciosa is the perfect choice for walkers and, although we do not offer a set walking holiday, our local agent will be happy to recommend some walking routes. Alternatively, Sunvil can pre-book a taxi tour of the island.

## Island Tour

Sunvil is able to pre-book the following private taxi tour on Graciosa. Tours can also be tailor-made to suit the individual requirements of our clients, please telephone us for a quotation.

### Half day

Depart from Santa Cruz da Graciosa towards the caldeira where you will visit the Furna do Enxofre or sulphur cavern located at the base of the crater. The view from the caldeira, overlooking small meadows and forests, is spectacular. Continue to the fishing village of Praia, Fenais and on to Carapacho to visit the thermal baths. Return to Santa Cruz da Graciosa via the west coast, stopping at Monte da Ajuda to enjoy the view over the capital.

From Santa Cruz da Graciosa

**Price is £99 per taxi**

### Notes

■ Prices are based on a maximum of 3 people per taxi ■ Lunch and entrance fees to museums and parks are not included ■ Itinerary is subject to change.



## Diving

The Azores are increasingly becoming known for their excellent diving possibilities. Graciosa is a perfect base, with its abundance of fish, fascinating wrecks and 20-30m visibility. This activity is bookable locally.

## Swimming

Take a dip in the clear waters of the natural rock pools located in Carapacho, Calheta or Barro Vermelho. If you prefer beaches, then try the one in Praia – Graciosa’s only black sand beach.



## Multi-Centre Holidays

Graciosa warrants a minimum of 2 or 3 nights stay and would suit a 2-centre holiday with Terceira – all flights to Graciosa are via Terceira. Try one of our suggested multi-centre holidays highlighted here.

### Itinerary 1

- Saturday scheduled flights with SATA International from Gatwick to Ponta Delgada, Sao Miguel
- Accommodation:
  - 3nts Hotel Caracol, Terceira (page 35)
  - 2nts Hotel Graciosa Resort, Graciosa (page 39)
  - 2nts Hotel Sao Miguel Park, Sao Miguel (page 15)

**Price from £1,065 per person based on 2-sharing.**

### Itinerary 2

- Scheduled flights with TAP Portugal from London, via Lisbon, to Terceira and returning from Ponta Delgada (Sao Miguel), via Lisbon, to London.
- Accommodation:
  - 3nts Hotel Praia Marina, Terceira (page 35)
  - 3nts Residencial Ilha Graciosa, Graciosa (page 39)
  - 3nts Hotel Sao Jorge Garden, Sao Jorge (page 44)
  - 3nts Hotel Sao Miguel Park, Sao Miguel (page 15)

**Price from £1,382 per person based on 2-sharing.**

Please telephone us for a quotation.



Santa Cruz

## Residencial Ilha Graciosa, Santa Cruz

Airport: 2km Graciosa

■ 2-star equivalent hotel ■ Bed & Breakfast

The hotel has been restructured from a complex of old buildings and carefully adapted to provide comfortable accommodation for guests. The rooms are simply but adequately furnished throughout. The centre of Santa Cruz, which uniquely amongst the Azorean islands has a proper town square, is within a 5-minute walk. Please note that the service at the hotel, as with the pace of life on Graciosa, can be slow and occasionally erratic.

### Accommodation

15 spacious rooms (ground and 1st floor) including standard rooms and a triple room (ground floor) ■ All rooms have a bathroom (bath & shower, one room has hydro-massage shower only), telephone and cable TV ■ Rooms have a view of the street or gardens ■ Most standard rooms will take an extra bed for an adult or child.



### Amenities/Leisure

Small breakfast room (continental buffet) with barrel shaped stools and an original wine press. During the summer months breakfast can be taken outside ■ Bar serving snacks ■ Spacious TV lounge with free internet access ■ Hairdryer and iron on request at reception ■ Free parking ■ Two restaurants near the main square c. 5 minutes walk.



## Hotel Graciosa Resort, Santa Cruz

Airport: 4km Graciosa

■ 4-star hotel ■ Bed & Breakfast ■ Swimming pool ■ Air-conditioning

This modern building is the first 4-star hotel of its kind built on the island. Set within lawned gardens and small vineyards, the hotel is well situated in a quiet coastal area facing the ocean 1km from the centre of Santa Cruz. Fine dining can be enjoyed from the panoramic restaurant followed by a leisurely walk into town or along the waters edge.



### Accommodation

52 air-conditioned rooms including standard rooms, senior suites and detached villas ■ All rooms have a bathroom (bath & shower), hairdryer, telephone, cable TV, minibar, internet connection (c.3 Euros per hour payable locally), balcony and ocean or land view ■ All rooms will accommodate an extra bed for an adult or child ■ The senior suites have a double bedroom with terrace, bathroom (bath & shower) and a separate living room with terrace and ocean view. On the first floor there is a large living room with dining area, kitchenette (electric oven and hobs, microwave and fridge) and balcony with ocean view and a second bathroom (shower) ■ The detached villas (have one

double and one twin bedroom, bathroom (bath & shower), living room with single sofa bed (suitable for an adult or child) and kitchenette (electric oven and hobs, microwave and fridge) and a roof terrace.

### Amenities/Leisure

Buffet breakfast ■ Restaurant serving Portuguese and International cuisine ■ Bar with free WIFI internet connection and lounge ■ Safe deposit box at reception ■ Gym ■ Sauna ■ Lift ■ Outdoor swimming pool (depth 1.40m) ■ 10km from Furna do Enxofre ■ 1km from the centre of Santa Cruz ■ Thermal Spa located 16km from the hotel. Special rates for hotel guests apply at the Thermal Spa. Transfers to/from the hotel can be arranged and paid for locally ■ Free parking.

