



Sao Jorge

The Brown Island

Area: 246 sq. km
Length: 55 km (34 miles)
Width: 8 km (5 miles)
Population: 10,300 inhabitants
Capital: Velas

Sao Jorge is a long (55km) and narrow (8km wide) island with a total area of 246 sq.km, which was formed by a series of successive volcanic eruptions. The craggy coastline plunges almost vertically (400m in parts) into the ocean with unique, frequent, small fertile flat areas (fajas) at the base of the cliffs. The central platform runs at an average height of 700m, rising to 1053m at the highest point.



Velas

80% of the island is high pasture which supports 20,000 dairy cattle producing high quality milk from which comes the famous Sao Jorge cheese, still manufactured using traditional techniques and the original recipe.

This is an island for walking, for exploring the little settlements on the fajas along the coast by car, for admiring the stunning scenery and visiting the two small port towns of Velas and Calheta.

16km across the water is Pico (accessible in one hour by boat) where a 2,351m volcano dominates the skyline and seems but a stone's throw away.



Highlights

Cheese

Try the delicious Sao Jorge cheese – you won't be disappointed.

Pico da Esperanca

From here, the highest peak on the island, you can admire the central islands of Terceira, Graciosa, Faial and Pico. Other fine views can be enjoyed from the Miradouro points overlooking the Faja do Ouvidor and the Faja dos Cubres, and from the summit of Pico da Velha.

Topo

The parish of Topo is located at the far South Eastern end of the island. The small fishing port and lighthouse face an islet where colonies of sea birds nest.

Handicrafts

In Ribeira do Nabo you will find a small co-operative making and selling lace work and weaved products.

Fact

The lagoon of Faja do Santo Cristo is the only place in the Azores where clams can be fished.

Festival

- Espírito Santo (7 weeks after Easter)
- Cultural week in Velas (1st week of July)
- Music festival in Calheta (last week of July)

Note: Dates are subject to change.

Activities (page 42)

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



What to see and do on Sao Jorge

The steep black cliffs of Sao Jorge fall dramatically into the ocean, and its rolling hills are carpeted with dense clusters of ferns and luxuriant grasslands. Inland lie spectacular valleys and peaks created by ancient volcanic eruptions. To make the most of your stay on the island we have included a variety of excursions, shown below, that can be pre-booked by Sunvil or arranged locally by our agent.

Non Guided Walks

The islands of the Azores, with their mild climate (day time temperature ranging from 14-22 degrees), are the most wonderful islands for walking. All walks are bookable and payable locally.

Serra do Topo walk (4hr 30mins / 10km) is from the mountain range of Serra do Topo to Faja dos Cubres, on the north coast of Sao Jorge. The walk will take you along a magnificent path descending to

Faja do Santo Cristo, one of the most isolated spots in the Azores, with a handful of resident families and a few summer houses for those visiting in the summer months. Spend time exploring the protected nature reserve of Faja do Santo Cristo, with its underground cave and lake, before continuing towards Faja dos Cubres. The island of Graciosa can be seen from here. **Grade 2.**

Loural is a 4hr 30mins (10km) walk. Starting at Loural you will walk along the steep slopes of Sao Jorge's southern coastline through farming pastures before descending to Faja de Sao Joao and its village. Along this walk you will be able to enjoy a magnificent view across the ocean to Pico Island, with its towering volcano. **Grade 2.**

Pico das Caldeiras is a 5hr 30mins (16km) walk. Passing along the central part of the island from Pico das Caldeiras to Faja do Ouvidor via Pico da Esperanca which, at 1,053 metres, is the highest point on the island. As you descend towards the Faja do Ouvidor, stop at the viewpoint and admire the magnificent view along the coastline and over the agricultural pasture. **Grade 2.**

Grading of Walks

- 1 for Easy
- 2 for Medium



Island Tours

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

Half day

Depart from Velas towards Beira where you will visit a traditional cheese factory. Continue to Calheta and Manadas, stopping at several breathtaking viewpoints en route. In Manadas you will visit the beautiful baroque parish church dedicated to Santa Barbara. Continue to Urzelina before returning to Velas.

From Velas

Price is £118 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.







Velas

Hotel Sao Jorge Garden, Velas

Airport: 8km Sao Jorge ■ Harbour: 1km Velas

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

Opened in 1986 and remodeled in 1999, this modern hotel is well located on the oceanfront of Velas. Wonderful views of Mount Pico across the water can be enjoyed from all the hotel bedrooms, as well as from the panoramic breakfast room. Although the hotel has no restaurant, the town centre, which has a good choice of restaurants, is easily reached within a 5-minute walk.



Accommodation

58 air-conditioned standard rooms ■ All rooms have a bathroom (bath & shower), TV, telephone, and balcony with ocean view ■ Most rooms have a minibar ■ All rooms will accommodate an extra bed for an adult/child.

Amenities/Leisure

Continental buffet breakfast ■ Bar ■ Safe deposit box at reception ■ Comfortable sitting room ■ Outdoor swimming pool (8 x 15m) and sun terrace open May-Oct – pool towels provided ■ Children's pool ■ Lift ■ Lawned gardens with Palm trees ■ Free parking ■ 1km to the natural swimming pool in Velas.



Casa do Antonio, Velas

Airport: 8km Sao Jorge ■ Harbour: 200m Velas

- 3-star equivalent pension ■ Bed & Breakfast ■ Air-conditioning

Casa do Antonio, located by the port, is 100 metres from the centre of the charming coastal town of Velas. The hotel, offering eight spacious guest rooms, has been completely renovated and finely decorated by the owner Antonio Pedroso. Antonio, a local artist (some of his work is on display at the hotel), and collector/restorer of antiques, is always at hand to help clients make the most of their visit to the island. We consider this to be the best accommodation on the island and would thoroughly recommend it.

Accommodation

8 air-conditioned twin bedrooms including standard rooms, a triple room (ground floor) and a tower room (double bed), all with bathroom (shower), hairdryer, cable TV, telephone, internet connect, safe deposit box and ocean view ■ The tower room is a spacious double room (king size bed), bathroom (bath & shower), hairdryer, cable TV, telephone, internet connect, safe deposit box and private terrace with ocean and Mount Pico view.

Amenities/Leisure

Continental breakfast with local cheeses and homemade traditional biscuits and cakes ■ Self-service tea/coffee facilities ■ 150 metres from a natural swimming pool.

Closed: 15Nov11-15Feb12.





Urzelina



Velas



Local biscuits

Cantinho das Buganvilias, Queimada

Airport: 1.5km Velas

- 3-star equivalent ■ Self catering ■ Swimming pool ■ Air-conditioning
- Car hire recommended

The Cantinho das Buganvilias affords wonderful views along the coastline towards the capital, Velas and across the ocean to the neighbouring islands of Pico and Faial. The swimming pool, terrace and many of the self-catering apartments enjoy this stunning panorama.

This owner-managed property, opened in 2010, consists of nineteen spacious apartments each decorated in a simple, Scandinavian design. Light wood furnishings and bright fabrics are used throughout. Large floor to ceiling windows allow nature and natural light to flood through the interiors. The property is in an ideal setting to enjoy the magnificent sunsets over Sao Jorge and is perfect for guests looking for the independence and flexibility associated with self-catering.

Accommodation

All apartments have air-conditioning ■ Daily cleaning and linen change every two days.



Three Studio apartments (sleep 2+2)

Each unit consists of bathroom (shower and hairdryer), an open-plan room with double bed, designated living area with two single sofa beds, satellite TV, safe deposit box and kitchenette (2 electric hobs, microwave, fridge, toaster and coffee maker) and a small terrace ■ The studio apartments are in single story detached buildings and have views over the grounds towards the two-bedroom units ■ The furthest apartment is located 50m from the reception, breakfast room, bar and lobby.



Sixteen two-bedroom apartments (sleep 4+2)

Each unit consists of bathroom (bath, shower and hairdryer), one twin bedroom and one double bedroom, living room with two single sofa beds, satellite TV, safe deposit box and kitchenette (2 electric hobs, microwave, fridge, toaster and coffee maker) and a terrace ■ The two bedroom apartments are located in two-storey buildings (apartments on the ground and top floor) ■ Apartments on the ground floor have a garden view, some also with partial sea view ■ Apartments located on the top floor are called 'Superior apartments' and have a larger balcony with ocean view and a hydro-massage bath ■ Limited chairs on the terrace and in the dining room. When the apartment is at full occupancy clients are required to use the chairs from the terrace in the dining area and vice versa.



Amenities/Leisure

Breakfast room with panoramic terrace overlooking the ocean towards Pico (buffet breakfast available at a supplement – payable in advance or locally) ■ Bar ■ Lobby with complimentary internet connection ■ Small swimming pool (5m x 15m) with direct sea views towards Velas ■ An indoor swimming pool and gym is planned for 2012 ■ This property is not suitable for clients with walking difficulties ■ 1km from a mini-market and 5km from a supermarket (Velas) ■ 1.5km from the airport – three flights a day ■ 500m from a bus stop which runs once a day into Velas ■ Located 5km from Velas – a taxi to Velas costs c. 8 Euros each way ■ Free parking.

