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São Miguel - The Green Island - Activities 2023

Sunvil can pre-book a variety of activities on São Miguel.
Please note that any pre-booked activity with Sunvil must be requested 14 days or more before departure.



Bike Tour and Botanical Garden Visit (Furnas)

Hop on a mountain bike and pedal along volcanic trails through beautiful landscapes of dense vegetation, lakes and even the ocean. After lunch, enjoy a walk through Furnas botanical gardens.

09:00 - Meet at Picos de Aventura's base in Ponta Delgada. Transfer to Furnas for the beginning of the tour. Collect your mountain bike and cycle along trails through beautiful landscapes of dense and exuberant vegetation with views of the lake en route.

12:00 - Cozido lunch in a local restaurant included. Opportunity to taste the traditional dish of the Azores, consisting of a variety of meats and vegetables, slowly cooked by underground vapours at Furnas hot springs.

13:30 - Visit Terra Nostra Park. This is one of the most beautiful botanical gardens of the 18th century, where you can find species of flora from different regions of the world. After a brief guided tour of the botanical gardens, there is an opportunity to bathe in thermal waters in the outdoor pool.

15:30 - Return to Ponta Delgada via the North coast (arrival around 16:30).

Price is £76 per adult and £38 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Departs: Daily at 09:00
- Duration: 7½ hours
- Bike trails are selected depending on each person's fitness level and technique
- Minimum number 4 people - subject to change or cancellation
- Safety equipment provided: Bike helmet and repair kit
- Equipment required: Comfortable warm clothing including extra t-shirt and/or sweater, trainers, swim suit, towel, light rain jacket, backpack, hat, sun lotion, water, snack and a camera
- Recommended Equipment: MTB Gloves, hydration bag, clip shoes and pedals
- Suitable for children aged 6 years or older

Canoeing and Bike Tour (Furnas)

Take a canoe out on Furnas Lake and revel in the sheer magnitude of being in a sleeping volcano surrounded by green lush slopes and hot springs. After lunch, hop on a mountain bike and pedal along volcanic trails through beautiful landscapes of dense vegetation, lakes and even the ocean.

09:00 - Meet at Picos de Aventura's base in Ponta Delgada. Transfer to Furnas Lake for 10:00am start on a canoe.

12:00 - Lunch in a local restaurant included

13:30 - Mountain biking in Furnas. Collect your mountain bike and cycle along trails through beautiful landscapes of dense and exuberant vegetation with views of the lake en route.

15:45 – Return to Ponta Delgada (arrival around 16:30).

Price is £67 per adult and £34 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Departs: Daily at 09:00
- Duration: 7½ hours
- Canoes are large enough for two adults and a child under 10yrs
- Suitable for children aged 6 years or older
- Bike trails are selected depending on each person's fitness level and technique
- Minimum number 4 people - subject to change or cancellation
- Safety equipment provided: Bike helmet and repair kit and paddle vest (canoeing)
- Equipment required: Comfortable warm clothing including extra t-shirt and/or sweater, trainers or casual footwear that can get wet, swim suit, towel, light rain jacket, backpack, hat, sun lotion, strengthening food/water and a camera
- Recommended Equipment: MTB Gloves, hydration bag, clip shoes and pedals, lycra shirt, neoprene shoes, waterproof bag (for smart phone and camera)



Birdwatching

This tour will appeal to beginners and long-time bird enthusiasts alike. Escorted by an ornithologist, you will observe birds and learn about their behaviour and diet all within a magnificent landscape.

The Azores islands are an excellent destination for birdwatching. Here, you can find two of Europe's rarest birds: The Azores Bullfinch, *Pyrrhula murina*, endemic to a small area of São Miguel and the Mosteiro's storm-petrel, *Oceanodroma monteiroi*, breeding on the two islets south of Graciosa Island.

Other species seen here are the Atlantic Canary, *Serinus canaria*, an exclusive species from Macaronesia, as well as several subspecies such as the Common Chaffinch, *Fringilla coelebs moreletti*, the São Miguel Goldcrest, *Regulus regulus azoricus*, the Azores Woodpigeon, *Columba palumbus azorica*, and the Buzzard, *Buteo buteo rothschildi*.

Currently, the Azores holds the largest colony of Cory's Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea borealis*, and one of the largest colonies of Roseate tern, *Sterna dougallii*, worldwide. Altogether, the archipelago has over 30 bird species which nest, and also, due to the islands central position in the Atlantic Ocean you may also observe migratory birds coming from America and Eurasia.

The number of species seen in the islands is close to 400, including a few which are extremely rare and even some which have been newly sighted in the Western Palearctic.

Price is £108 per person based on a minimum of 2 people (shared tour).

Private tours possible at a supplement on request.

Note: If clients want to see the Priôlo (Azores Bullfinch) please request this at the time of booking.

Notes

- Pick-up from hotels in Ponta Delgada at 08:30 (return 17:00)
- Pick-up from hotels outside Ponta Delgada at a supplement on request
- Departs: Daily (avoid weekends as too many people around the lake)
- Minimum 2 and maximum 8 people – subject to change or cancellation
- Suitable for all – recommended for children aged 8yrs and over
- Included: 9-seater minibus, English speaking guide, picnic and lunch
- Best time to observe resident and migrating birds is between Sept-May



Canoeing

Take a canoe out on Furnas Lake and revel in the sheer magnitude of being in a sleeping volcano surrounded by green lush slopes and hot springs. It is also possible to visit the thermal hot springs where the local stew 'Cozido' is cooked underground in large pots.

10:00 or 14:00 – Meet at the parking area (west), next to the Church of N. Sra. das Vitorias at Furnas Lake.

Transfers not included.

Note: Transfer to and from Furnas can be arranged at a supplement on request

Price is £29 per adult and £15 per child (6-11yrs) without transfers

Notes

- Departs: Daily at 10:00 or 14:00
- Duration: 2 hours
- Meeting point: Furnas next to the Church Nossa Senhora das Vitórias
- Canoes are large enough for two adults and a child 6-10yrs
- Suitable for children aged 6 years or older
- Minimum number 4 people and maximum 18 - subject to change or cancellation
- Safety equipment provided: Paddle vest
- Equipment required: Comfortable warm clothing including extra t-shirt and/or sweater, trainers or casual footwear that can get wet, swim suit (Furnas thermal pool – optional), towel, light rain jacket, backpack, hat, sun lotion, strengthening food/water and a camera
- Recommended Equipment: Lycra shirt, neoprene gloves and shoes and a waterproof bag (for smartphone and camera)

Canoeing and Botanical Garden Visit (Furnas)

Take a canoe out on Furnas Lake and revel in the sheer magnitude of being in a sleeping volcano surrounded by green lush slopes and hot springs. After lunch, enjoy a walk through Furnas botanical gardens.

09:00 - Meet at Picos de Aventura's base in Ponta Delgada. Transfer to Furnas Lake for 10:00 start, on a canoe.

12:00 - Cozido lunch in a local restaurant included. Opportunity to taste the traditional dish of the Azores, consisting of a variety of meats and vegetables, slowly cooked by underground vapours at Furnas hot springs.

13:30 - Visit Terra Nostra Park. This is one of the most beautiful botanical gardens of the 18th century, where you can find species of flora from different regions of the world. After a brief guided tour of the botanical gardens, there is an opportunity to bathe in thermal waters in the outdoor pool.

15:30 - Return to Ponta Delgada via the North coast (arrival around 16:30).

Price is £76 per adult and £38 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Departs: Daily at 09:00
- Duration: 7½ hours
- Canoe are large enough for two adults and a child under 10yrs
- Suitable for children aged 6 years or older
- Minimum number 4 people otherwise subject to change or cancellation
- Safety equipment provided: Paddle vest (canoeing)
- Equipment required: Swim suit, waterproof footwear, towel, sun lotion, hat, sunglasses, windbreaker jacket, change of clothes to wear after the activity, backpack, water and snack.
- Recommended Equipment: Lycra shirt, neoprene gloves and shoes and a waterproof bag (for smart phone and camera)



Private City Tour of Ponta Delgada - Half Day

This tour goes through the main streets of Ponta Delgada, visiting the main sites of the city with its 450 year plus history. You will get to know the secrets, the stories and the history of a city located by the sea, passing by the main monuments with a mixture of various architectural styles, as well as the typical features of the so-called "Micaelense" architecture. The tour also includes a visit to Ponta Delgada's market, a colourful and vibrant place where you can buy local products from juicy pineapples and a variety of flavourful cheeses to the freshly caught fish and traditional liquors. During the tour, there will also be time to enjoy a coffee, or a local drink (not included and payable locally - prices are very reasonable here!).

Price is £81 per person based on 2 people. Prices on request for different numbers of people.

Notes

- Departs: Daily at 09:00 or 14:00 from Picos de Aventura's base at Ponta Delgada Marina
- Duration: 3 hours
- Recommend comfortable footwear and clothing, light jacket, water bottle, sun lotion and hat.



Canyoning

Canyoning is an exciting combination of walking, scrambling, climbing, jumping, abseiling and swimming in some of the most spectacular scenery of cliffs on the island of São Miguel. It has become a very popular extreme sport with fans all over the world and provides a unique experience in the middle of nature and at the same time offers moments of pure adrenaline. No previous experience required.

Price is £86 per adult (Half Day) or £117 (Full Day)

Notes

- Departs: Daily
- Pick-up from all properties in Ponta Delgada at 08:15 (09:00 start). Pick-up outside Ponta Delgada at a supplement on request.
- Half Day: 4 hours (including 2 hours in the canyon and 1 hour for transportation) – Level of difficult (easy)
- Full Day: 6 hours (including 4 hours in the canyon and 1 hour for transportation) - Level of difficult (medium)
- Location: Achada - Nordeste (northeast for HD excursion) or Ribeira Grande (north for FD excursion)
- Suitable for children aged 8 years and upwards. Swimming ability recommended but not required.
- Minimum 2 people - subject to change or cancellation
- Equipment included: Neoprene wetsuit and socks, canyoning shoes, helmet and harness
- Equipment required: Towel, swim suit, shoes that can get wet – preferably mountain boots or running shoes, hair-bands, warm clothing and a bottle of water

IMPORTANT: The tour will depend on water levels and weather conditions. Participants height: minimum 1,20m / maximum 2m. Weight: minimum 20kg / maximum 120kg.



Coasteering

Coasteering is a combination of swimming, climbing and jumping in some of the most spectacular scenery of cliffs and waterfalls on the island of São Miguel. The volcanic island coastline hides areas that few ever get to see. This adventure involves scrambling and traversing the tide line, snorkelling and swimming, climbing or cliff jumping into salty water.

Price is £86 per person (Half Day)

Notes

- Departs: Daily
- Pick-up from all properties in Ponta Delgada at 09:00. Pick-up outside Ponta Delgada at a supplement on request.
- Duration: 5 hours (c.2 hours on the coastline and up to 2 hours for transportation)
- Suitable for children aged 6 years and upwards. Swimming ability required.
- Level of difficulty: Easy
- Location: Central south coast
- Safety Equipment: lycra shirt, neoprene wetsuit and socks, coasteering shoes, helmet, personal flotation devices (PFD) and group safety equipment
- Equipment required: Towel, swim suit, hair-bands and a bottle of water



4x4 Tours

Enjoy an unforgettable drive along the island's best trails. Driving through trees and pastures often overlooking the Atlantic Ocean you will discover places and landscapes of rare beauty not often encountered by the average tourist. During the trip there will be several stops with time to enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Nordeste (Monday - Full Day)

Take a tour to Nordeste on the eastern coast of Sao Miguel, known as the greenest part of the island.

- Ponta do Cintrão ■ Santa Iria viewpoint ■ Ribeira dos Caldeirões ■ Serra da Tronqueira ■ Salto do Cavalo ■ Ponta Delgada

Price is £82 per person

Lagoa do Fogo (Tuesday - Half Day)

Visit the central area of the island and the vast volcanic complex of Lagoa do Fogo.

- Baleeiros viewpoint ■ Caldeira Vehla ■ Lagoa do Fogo ■ Lagoa village ■ Ponta Delgada

Price is £41 per person

Sete Cidades (Wednesday - Half Day)

Visit some of the highlights on São Miguel's west coast.

- Carvão viewpoint ■ Lakes of Empadadas ■ Nove Janelas ■ Sete Cidades Lake ■ Vista do Rei viewpoint ■ Ponta Delgada

Price is £41 per person

Sete Cidades (Wednesday - Full Day)

Visit the unique sights on São Miguel's west coast.

- Carvão viewpoint ■ Lakes of Empadadas ■ Nove Janelas ■ Cumeeira Norte ■ Sete Cidades Lake ■ Vista do Rei viewpoint ■ Cumeeira Sul ■ Mosteiros ■ Ferraria ■ Ponta Delgada

Price is £77 per person

Furnas (Friday - Full Day)

See the mystic Furnas valley and surrounding area with its amazing volcanic formations.

- Caloura ■ Vila Franca do Campo ■ Castelo Branco ■ Furnas Lake ■ Pico do Ferro ■ Ribeira Grande ■ Ponta Delgada

Price is £82 per person

Notes

- Pick up from all hotels (included) in Ponta Delgada at 09:15

- Pick-up from hotels outside of Ponta Delgada at a supplement on request
- No child reductions
- Minimum 2 people
- Escorted by an English speaking driver/guide
- Full day tours (7 hours) including lunch
- Half day tours (3½ hours)
- Itineraries are subject to change



Azorean Tapas and Wine - Evening Walking Tour

Discover the Azores through delicious drinks, great bites and stories. In this 3-hour walking tour participants will experience some of Ponta Delgada's best bars and eateries, sampling unique Azorean beverages, whilst learning all about the local traditions and drinking culture. Through sips and tales, this tour will present the historical Pico wines, locally produced beer, liqueurs and many delicious foods. It's a great experience for both serious drink enthusiasts as well as beginners wishing to expand their knowledge. Although the emphasis is on the wine and drinks, there will be plenty of flavourful tapas to eat during the tour.

Price is £97 per adult and £70 per child/teen (6-17 years)

Notes

- Evening Walking Tour (3hrs) - The tour starts at 5pm, from Ponta Delgada City Gates.
- Inclusions: 5 Azorean drinks and tapas
- Extra-small groups (12 people max)
- Language: English
- Includes cafés, bars and fine-dining spots
- Non-alcoholic options available
- Vegetarian options available
- Minimum 2 participants and maximum 12

Highlights: - A tasting of local wines and foods, to be found nowhere else - Visit some of the best spots in Ponta Delgada - The fascinating stories of Azorean wines - from the USA to Russian Tzars - Insightful information about all drinks (production, types)

Good to know: This tour is not a pub crawl: wines and foods will be served generously but with moderation.

Ponta Delgada Food Tour - Half Day

Take a bite of the Azores and immerse yourself in the surprising flavours and tales that emanate from the city. The archipelago has been welcoming settlers and travellers for more than five centuries. They brought ingredients and culinary traditions from all over the world, thus creating a unique gastronomy. Imagine rich Mediterranean cuisine mixed with African and American fruits, and seasoned with Asian spices.

The Food Tour explores downtown Ponta Delgada, visiting the highlights of the city, exploring the history and food culture and listening to fascinating stories along the way. Participants will enjoy a progressive menu, including fruit, bread, cheese, fish and meat, and finishing with a homemade dessert. The tour includes eight traditional and modern foods, and two drinks.

Price is £92 per adult and £70 per child (6-11yrs)

Highlights

- A tasting of local specialties, to be found nowhere else in the world
- Gain knowledge and background of Azorean food
- Learn the secrets of traditional Azorean cuisine

- Visit the local market, meet traders and sample their quality produce

Notes

- Departures: Mon, Wed, Fri and Sat – all year
- Duration: Half day Walking Tour of 3.5 hours
- Meeting point: Ponta Delgada's City Gates at 10:00
- Tastings: 8 foods and 2 drinks (water, soda or beer) - vegetarian options available
- Includes highlights, shops, the city market and restaurants
- Minimum 2 people and maximum 12 (per group)



Golf

Tee-off on one of two golf courses on São Miguel: Furnas, 4km from the Terra Nostra Garden Hotel, Furnas Lake Apartments and Quinta da Mó; or Batalha, a 20-minute drive (12km) from Ponta Delgada.

Price is £46 per person for one round of green fees (9 holes) all year and £79 per person (18 holes)

Furnas golf course is located in the mountains (500m above sea level) with beautiful lakes, fairways surrounded by large trees and undulating greenways ■ 46 hectare golf course ■ Course length is 6232m maximum ■ 18 holes ■ Par 70 ■ Required handicap: 28 Men / 36 Women ■ Clubhouse with bar, restaurant, small pro-shop, TV room and complimentary WiFi ■ Two putting greens, a practice tee and chipping and pitching area.

Batalha golf course is a beautifully landscaped course with challenging fairways and greens overlooking the ocean ■ 100 hectare golf course ■ Course length is 6574m maximum ■ 27 holes ■ Par 72 ■ Required handicap: 28 Men / 36 Women ■ Clubhouse with bar, restaurant (golfers only), pro-shop, TV room and complimentary WiFi ■ Driving range, two putting greens and chipping and pitching green.

Notes

- Obligatory to wear soft spike shoes on both courses. Shirts must have a collar and sleeves. Jeans and tracksuits cannot be worn.
- Clubs and carts can be hired locally



Guided Island Tours

Sunvil is able to pre-book the following guided minibus tours on São Miguel.

Furnas (Monday - Full Day)

Lagoa ■ Caloura viewpoint ■ Vila Franca ■ Furnas ■ Santa Iria viewpoint

Morning departure along the south road towards Lagoa and Caloura viewpoint. Stop at Vila Franca (first capital of the island) for a short coffee break. Arrive at the valley of Furnas and visit the lake, hot springs and the natural ovens where meals are cooked by underground vapours. After lunch (included), walk through the Terra Nostra Botanical Garden – opportunity to swim in a natural hot water pool, and visit the mineral water springs. Drive to the north coast and visit a tea plantation – one of the few in Europe, and then continue on to Santa Iria viewpoint. Return to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £99 per person

Sete Cidades & Lagoa do Fogo (Wednesday - Full Day)

Fajã de Baixo pineapple plantations ■ Vista do Rei viewpoint ■ Sete Cidades Lake ■ Carvão viewpoint ■ Ribeira Grande ■ Caldeira Velha ■ Lagoa do Fogo viewpoint

Depart for Fajã de Baixo to visit the pineapple plantations, and continue on to the Vista do Rei viewpoint. Descend to the valley floor of Sete Cidades, passing by the green and blue lakes. Visit the Carvão Lake and then stop for lunch (included) at a local restaurant. In the afternoon, proceed to Ribeira Grande with a brief stop in the town. Then continue in the direction of Caldeira Velha with its magnificent view of Lagoa do Fogo (Fire Lake), at an altitude of 900m. Return to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £99 per person

Nordeste (Friday - Full Day)

Santa Iria viewpoint ■ Ribeira dos Caldeirões ■ Nordeste ■ Forest Park of Cinzeiro - Interpretation Centre of the Azorean Bullfinch ■ Ponta da Madrugada viewpoint ■ Povoação ■ Furnas

Morning departure towards the eastern part of the island with a stop at the Santa Iria viewpoint and its scenic north coast panorama. Continue along the north coast, stopping at the Ribeira dos Caldeirões with one of the few remaining water mills on the island and its magnificent waterfall. Next is Nordeste and a brief visit to this quaint village. Continue on to the Forest Park of Cinzeiro and visit the Environmental Interpretation Centre of the Azorean Bullfinch (Priolo) – the only endemic bird of the Azores. Stop for a pleasant picnic (included) in the forest park. Return by the east coast with stops at Ponta da Madrugada viewpoint and the town of Povoação. A short stop at the crater lake of Furnas is included for the magnificent view and also to stretch your legs before returning to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £86 per person

Notes

- Pick-up from hotels in Ponta Delgada at around 09:00 and return to Ponta Delgada at 17:00
- Duration: 8 hours
- Transfers from hotels outside of Ponta Delgada at a supplement on request
- Lunch/picnic and entrance fees to museums and parks included
- Minimum 6 people
- Itineraries are subject to change



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. Our suggested walks incorporate some of the best scenic walks on the island.

Guided Walk - Sete Cidades - Half Day

The adventure begins in Ponta Delgada before heading off towards Pico do Carvão. This trail (5km) starts at the entrance of Mata do Canário, joins two sections of pre-existing trails and allows you to discover the various lakes in the western part of the island of São Miguel. In the first part of the walking tour it is possible to find ground vegetation, mainly grasses, and it is also possible to see the "Muro das Nove Janelas", an ancient aqueduct that carried water to Ponta Delgada. After an ascent through an area where the terrain is more irregular, you will see a large part of the west side of the island, as well as the collapsed crater of Sete Cidades. From this location, on a clear day, you can see a large part of the island of São Miguel. On the return to Ponta Delgada, it is possible to stop at the Viewpoint of Vista do Rei, where you will find a magnificent landscape of the Lagoa Azul and Verde.

Price is £34 per adult and £17 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Depart: Wednesday
- Difficulty: Easy
- Distance: 5km
- Departure: 09.00 or 13:00 from Picos de Aventura's Base - Ponta Delgada's Marina
- Duration: 3.5 hours
- Recommended: Footwear suitable for walking (Hiking boots/shoes), comfortable clothing, light jacket, extra t-shirt or sweatshirt, snack, water, backpack, sun lotion and hat.

Guided Walk - Lagoa do Fogo - Full Day

Today's tour begins with a drive along the south coast of the island, with views over the ocean and the hills of Lagoa do Fogo mountain. This 11km trail starts on a dirt path through woods of Japanese Cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*), Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Australian cheesewood (*Pittosporum undulatum*), wild kahili ginger (*Hedychium gardnerianum*), New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*, a New Zealand plant) and many endemic plants. The trail continues along a levada (about 2km) until you reach a wider area, with wide slopes on both sides going to the rim of Lagoa do Fogo. During the ascent there are several places from where you can enjoy a magnificent view of Vila Franca do Campo and its Islet and the hills on the south side of the island. The stop for lunch (included) will be along the shores of the lake.

The return to our starting point is made by a path that traverses an area covered by endemic vegetation which then flows into an area of pastures as we descend and approach the end of the hike. On the way back to Ponta Delgada you will visit the bathing area of Caloura harbour, with a comfort stop and possibility of swimming in the natural pool. Then back to Ponta Delgada driving along the south coast back where the activity ends.

Price is £53 per adult and £27 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Depart: Tuesday or Saturday at 09:00
- Difficulty: Medium
- Distance: 11km
- Departure: 09.00 from Picos de Aventura's Base - Ponta Delgada's Marina
- Duration: 7 hours
- Recommended: Footwear suitable for walking (Hiking boots/shoes), comfortable clothing, light jacket, extra t-shirt or sweatshirt, snack, water, swimsuit, towel, backpack, sun lotion and hat.

Guided Walk - Pico da Vara - Full Day

This 7km trail begins and ends in the parish of Algarvia, in the municipality of Nordeste, at an altitude of 700 metres. After ascending about 1km through a forest of *Cryptomeria* (*Cryptomeria japonica*), the landscape changes to endemic plant species and ground vegetation, composed mainly of grasses from which the town derives its name 'Graminhais'. From here, you can see Povoação, the place where settlers first arrived on the island in the 15th century. The trail rises until it reaches the highest point on the island of São Miguel, Pico da Vara, at 1105m above sea level, where you have an amazing view over almost the whole island and a 360 degree view on top of the mountain. The return is done by taking the same route back downhill which can be a little slippery in winter. On the return to Ponta Delgada, passing by the northern coast of the island, there will be time to stop at the oldest tea factory of São Miguel, Gorreana tea factory, for some tea tasting and passing by the city of Ribeira Grande, the only city on the north side of the island, before crossing back to the south coast, through the narrower part of the island (8km). After a brief drive along the south coast, the activity ends in Ponta Delgada.

Price is £53 per adult and £27 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Depart: Daily
- Difficulty: Hard
- Distance: 7km

- Departure: 09.00 from Picos de Aventura's Base - Ponta Delgada's Marina
- Duration: 7 hours
- Recommended: Footwear suitable for walking (Hiking boots/shoes), comfortable clothing, light jacket, extra t-shirt or sweatshirt, snack, water, backpack, sun lotion and hat.

Guided Walk - Sanguinho - Full Day

The activity starts with a drive along the south coast of the island with amazing views over the hills, green pastures and the Islet of Vila Franca do Campo, a volcanic formation that is considered a natural reserve by the Government of the Azores. Then enter the collapsed volcano of Furnas, one of the places where you can see volcanic phenomena, such as the hot springs and the calderas. After passing by Furnas, you will exit the volcanic crater and arrive in Povoação, the first settlement on São Miguel. The trail begins in the parish of Faial da Terra, lasts approximately 3 hours 30 minutes and extends for 4.5km. Initially, the trail climbs through a steep path with a breathtaking view over the parish and the ocean until it reaches Sanguinho, a place that owes its name to the abundant endemic plant (*Frangula azorica*). Then the trail continues through a forest of Japanese Cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and some other species such as the Ginger Lilys (*Hedychium gardnerianum*) and the Australian Cheesewood (*Pittosporum undulatum*) before it reaches the waterfall of Salto do Prego, in one of the most beautiful places on the island. This is the perfect stopover for a picnic lunch and for bathing in the crystal clear waters of the waterfall.

The return route is along the path parallel to a stream that flows from the waterfall to the parish of Faial da Terra, through lush vegetation. The return to Ponta Delgada includes a comfort stop in the village of Povoação to taste the local pastry "Fofas da Povoação". On the way back to Ponta Delgada, you will cross to the north coast of the island where it will be possible to see some unique tea fields, the hills and the landscape of the north coast, passing by Ribeira Grande, the second largest city on the island and then crossing back to the south coast through the narrower part of the island, at 8km width. After a brief drive along the south coast, the activity ends with the arrival in Ponta Delgada.

Price is £53 per adult and £27 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Depart: Friday or Sunday at 09:00
- Difficulty: Medium
- Distance: 4.5km
- Departure: 09.00 from Picos de Aventura's Base - Ponta Delgada's Marina
- Duration: 7 hours (return 16:00)
- Recommended: Footwear suitable for walking (Hiking boots/shoes), comfortable clothing, light jacket, extra t-shirt or sweatshirt, snack, water, swimsuit, towel, backpack, sun lotion and hat.

Guided Walk - Ribeira Funda and Praia da Viola - Full Day

The day starts with a drive from Ponta Delgada, crossing the island from south to north by the narrowest part. After passing by the only city on the north coast, Ribeira Grande, a great coastline awaits you with it's amazing views. On the way, it is also possible to see the vast fields with tea plants, one of very few found in Europe. This 5.5km trail begins in the centre of a small place on the north side of the island called Ribeira Funda and takes around 3 hours to complete. The walking starts in an open area, turning into a path with dense vegetation, mostly composed of Australian Cheesewood (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Ginger Lilys (*Hedychium gardnerianum*).

The trail then leads us to some old water mills that were once used to transform wheat and corn into flour and used in the confection of bread (the primary food for families all over the island) and passing by various streams until you reach a viewpoint, from where you can see your next stop - Praia da Viola beach. Praia da Viola is a small, quiet beach with rough sand, flanked by a cliff with several water springs. If the ocean is calm, it is possible to go for a quick swim. In the middle of this hidden beach, there is a trail that takes you to the end of the tour, in the small parish of Maia. Some parts are very narrow and very steep and might also be slippery. On the return to Ponta Delgada, passing by the northern coast of the island, there is still time to stop at the oldest tea factory on São Miguel, the Gorreana tea factory, for some tea tasting and a stop in Caldeira Velha, located in the hills of the mountain of Lagoa do Fogo where it's possible to have bathe in the relaxing hot waters. Back on the road, pass by Ribeira Grande before crossing back to the south coast and after a brief drive arriving in Ponta Delgada to end the activity.

Price is £62 per adult and £31 per child (6-11yrs)

Notes

- Difficulty: Medium
- Depart: Daily
- Distance: 5.5km
- Departure: 09.00 from Picos de Aventura's Base - Ponta Delgada's Marina
- Duration: 7 hours (return 14:00)
- Recommended: Footwear suitable for walking (Hiking boots/shoes), comfortable clothing, light jacket, extra t-shirt or sweatshirt, snack, water, swimsuit, towel, backpack, sun lotion and hat.



Private Taxi Tours

Sunvil is able to pre-book the following private taxi tours on São Miguel with an English speaking driver.

Lagoa do Fogo (Half Day)

Depart to Ribeira Grande with a brief stop. Then continue by the mountain road towards Lagoa do Fogo, at an altitude of 900m, where you will have a magnificent view of the island. Continue southwards to the village of Lagoa, and visit a traditional ceramic factory (closed on weekends). Return to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £102 per taxi

Sete Cidades (Half Day)

Depart to Sete Cidades Lake by the mountain road. After visiting the lakes, you will stop at the 'Vista do Rei' belvedere from where there is a panoramic view over the lakes and the surrounding area. Return to Ponta Delgada, stopping en route at a pineapple plantation.

Price is £102 per taxi

Sete Cidades & Lagoa do Fogo (Full Day)

Depart for Fajã de Baixo to visit the pineapple plantations and then proceed to Sete Cidades Lake by the mountain road. Stop at the 'Vista do Rei' belvedere from where there is a panoramic view over the lakes and the surrounding area before descending down to the valley floor of the crater lakes to take a leisurely walk along the shores of the green and blue lakes. Then take the north coastal road to Ribeira Grande (brief stop). Continue in the direction of Lagoa do Fogo (Fire Lake), at an altitude of 900m, with a stop at Caldeira Velha. Return to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £197 per taxi

Furnas (Full Day)

Depart for the village of Furnas by the south road, passing the village of Lagoa and the Caloura viewpoint before stopping at the town of Vila Franca do Campo en route. In Furnas you will have time to visit the beautiful 30-acre botanical gardens and hot springs before continuing north, visiting a tea plantation and the Santa Iria viewpoint en route. Return to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £190 per taxi

Nordeste (Full Day)

Head north, passing by typical villages along the coast and stopping at viewpoints for stunning panoramas of the north-east area of the island, until you arrive at the village of Nordeste. Return via Água Retorta, Povoação (the pioneer village of the island), through the valley of Furnas and along the south coast to Ponta Delgada.

Price is £203 per taxi

Notes

- Pick-up from hotels in Ponta Delgada at 09:00
- Transfers from hotels outside of Ponta Delgada are at a supplement on request
- Prices are based on a maximum of 3 people per taxi
- Full day (7 hours) or Half day (3 hours 30 minutes)
- Not included: Lunch and entrance fees to museums and parks
- A qualified English speaking guide can be provided at a supplement on request
- Itineraries are subject to change



Azorean Rural Experience (Ginetes) - Half Day

This half-day experience centres on a traditional family-run farm in the village of Ginetes and provides an insight to the history, culture and lifestyles of rural farming communities on the island of São Miguel.

Take a scenic ride (by minibus) through Ginetes to the viewpoint of Escalvado, from where there is a splendid panorama over the western coast and the parish of Mosteiros. Take a nice walk to 'Fonte do Sapateiro' (1km – easy walk). You will visit the ethnographic centre of Quinta das Raiadas, the farm and orchards, where there is even a possibility of milking a cow. At the House of Bread, there will be an explanation, and participation, on how to make bread, local handicrafts and how to prepare some traditional food. You will also taste a variety of local produce including cheeses, jams, liquors and traditional biscuits.

Price is £54 per adult and £27 per child (6-11yrs) #

No transfers included but can be arranged with a supplement on request.

Notes

- Half Day: 3 hours 15 minutes (09:30 to 12:45) – lunch not included but can be added at a supplement on request
- Meet at Quinta das Raiadas parking, beside the church in Ginetes at 09:30 (free parking at Quinta das Raiadas)
- If transfers are included from Ponta Delgada, pick-up from your hotel at 08:30. Pick-up time from hotels outside Ponta Delgada on request.
- Children aged 2-5yrs go free when accompanied by two adults
- Minimum 2 and maximum 12 people

Azorean Rural Experience (Ginetes) - Full Day

This full-day experience centres on a traditional family-run farm in the village of Ginetes and provides an insight to the history, culture and lifestyles of rural farming communities on the island of São Miguel.

Take a scenic ride (by minibus) through Ginetes to the viewpoint of Escalvado, from where there is a splendid panorama over the western coast and the parish of Mosteiros; You will then take a boat trip, departing from Mosteiros, passing by several islets and by the coast of Ferraria. At the House of Bread, there will be an explanation, and participation, on how to make bread, local handicrafts and how to prepare some traditional food. Lunch includes local soup, main dish, drinks (wine, water, juices) and dessert. In the afternoon, visit the Sabrina island viewpoint, the lighthouse of Ferraria and the ethnographic centre of Quinta das Raiadas. Take a short tour around the farm and orchards, where there is even a possibility of milking a cow and taste a variety of local produce including cheeses, jams, liquors and traditional biscuits.

Price is £90 per adult and £45 per child (6-11yrs) #

No transfers included but can be arranged with a supplement on request.

Notes

- Full Day: 7 hours (09:30 to 16:30) - a 3-course lunch is included with soft drinks
- Meet at Quinta das Raiadas parking, beside the church in Ginetes at 09:30 (free parking at Quinta das Raiadas)
- If transfers are included from Ponta Delgada, pick-up from your hotel at 08:30. Pick-up time from hotels outside Ponta Delgada with a supplement on request.
- Children aged 2-5yrs go free when accompanied by two adults
- Boat trip subject to weather conditions
- Minimum 2 and maximum 12 people



Scuba Diving

Enjoy an unforgettable adventure filled with caves, volcanic drop-offs, underwater arches and an abundance of both Atlantic and Tropical fish life – parrot fish, groupers, sting and eagle rays, moray and conger eels, barracudas, amberjacks, turtles and dolphins. A fully equipped PADI dive centre - **Best Spot Azores Dive Center**, is based at the Marina Pero de Teive in Ponta Delgada.

Price for 2 dives from £97 per person (own equipment)

Price for 4 dives from £183 per person (own equipment)

Other prices on request.

Notes

- Departure from Ponta Delgada at 09:00
- Daily activity (Jan-Oct)
- Equipment can be hired locally if required c.35,00 Euros per person per dive (price subject to change)
- Suitable for all - from complete beginner to the most experienced, with boat dives.
- 2 dives includes 1 excursion - two dives whilst out on the boat. Dive 1 is followed by a break to test equipment etc before taking dive 2.
- Maximum dives permitted per day is two.
- 4 dives is the same process as 2 dives but it takes place over two days.
- Dives include include a 12 litre steel tank (200 BAR), weight belt, dive master guidance and boat transportation to and from the dive sites within a 6-mile radius
- Minimum age of 16yrs applies to all PADI programmes except for the Junior Open Water course which is 10yrs
- Medical certificates confirming fitness to dive is required for certain dives
- There are also PADI dive shops in Ponta Delgada

IMPORTANT

- At the time of booking we need the following information: Participants certification level, number of dives and date of the last dive. Depending on the last dive date, a refresher may be required.
- Waiting the correct amount of time before flying will reduce the nitrogen in your blood. As a general rule it is recommended to wait **24 hours** before flying after doing any type of diving.

The activities provided by the dive centre:

- Offshore diving
- Scuba Diving
- SSI & PADI Diving Courses
- Try Scuba

Best Spot Azores is the only 100% Aware & Blue Oceans Dive Center in the Azores, as a PADI and SSI DIVE SCHOOL.

They have 3 boats:

- Flying Fish: 12m Heavy Duty RIB with 2x 325HP engines, toilet and shower on board. Able to get 20 divers on board plus 4 dive guides.
- Zifio: 8.5m Heavy Duty RIB with 1x 350HP for 12 divers on board and 2 dive guides
- Lelo: 7.5m Heavy Duty RIB with 1x 300HP for 10 divers on board and 2 dive guides



Snorkelling

It is possible to dive in São Miguel all year around. The average sea temperatures vary between 16°C and 22°C and peaks at a maximum of 24-25°C. Water visibility differs depending on the season. Between June and October the visibility often exceeds 30 metres. In contrast, spring divers will find the large amounts of nutrients in the water have turned it slightly green. Visibility at this time of year drops to an average of 10-15 metres.

The most common species seen in the waters off Sao Miguel are: Dusky groupers, Grey triggerfish, Colourful nudibranchs, Octopuses, Moray eels, Mediterranean rainbow wrasse, Ornate wrasse, Azores chromis, Mediterranean parrotfish, Red scorpion, fish barred hogfish, Yellowmouth barracudas, Almaco jacks, white trevallies, Devil rays, Turtles, Ocean sunfish, Salema porgy, Ballan wrasses, Blacktail combers, White seabreams, Blue jack mackerels and Amberjacks.

Price is £46 per person

Notes

- Departures at 14:00 or 16:00
- No transfers included - transfers can be arranged at a supplement on request.
- Departs: Daily
- Duration: 2-2.5 hours (1 hour in the water)
- No age restrictions - you just need to be able to swim. There will be a guide in the water with you.



Stand Up Paddle Boarding

Stand Up Paddle Boarding (SUP) is becoming increasingly popular and it is relatively easy to master. Once you get the hang of it you can also practise some yoga poses. The equipment includes a board, a paddle and a life jacket.

Sete Cidades is an ideal location to rent a SUP as it is calm and is set in a beautiful environment. Essentially you are in a sleeping volcano surrounded by green lush slopes and hot springs. There are little to no waves, making it much easier than paddle boarding on the sea.

Price is £11 per person

Notes

- Meet at the activity centre at 10:00 or 14:00 on the edge of Sete Cidades Lake – no transfers included. Should you wish to pre-book transfers to and from Sete Cidades, this can be arranged at a supplement on request.
- Departs: Daily
- Duration: 1 hour
- The paddle board takes one person only
- Minimum age for a child is 8 years old
- Safety equipment provided: Life jacket (compulsory)
- Dressing room facilities with showers available
- Equipment required: Comfortable clothing, swimsuit, towel, light rain jacket, backpack, hat, sun lotion and water



Swimming with Dolphins

Swim with dolphins in the blue Atlantic waters around São Miguel Island. The four species of dolphin that are regularly sighted here are Common, Bottlenose, Risso and Atlantic Spotted.

Price is £96 per person - 01Jun-15Oct

Picos de Aventura from Ponta Delgada

Price is £113 per adult and £96 per child (6-13yrs) – 01May-30Sep

Terra Azul from Vila Franca do Campo - recommended if staying in Caloura, Vila Franca do Campo or Furnas

Notes

- Excursion provider: Picos de Aventura (Ponta Delgada base) or Terra Azul (Vila Franca do Campo base)
- Meeting point for Picos de Aventura is the whaling base in Ponta Delgada departing at 08:30 (daily) or 13:00 (daily)
- Meeting point for Terra Azul is the whaling base in Vila Franca do Campo departing at 08:30 (daily) or 12:30 (daily)
- Duration: 2-3 hour trip (in the water for c.10-minutes) with a short briefing by the skipper (c.15-minutes)
- Two people allowed in the water at a time (only free diving permitted)
- Contact with the dolphins is not permitted
- Minimum 2 crew members on board at all times. The final decision to dive rests with the skipper on the day
- Maximum of 6 people per boat (including crew members) from Ponta Delgada, and 10 people per boat (including crew members) from Vila Franca do Campo
- Minimum child age is 6 years (accompanied by a parent or guardian)
- Location is c.10 miles from shore
- Wetsuits and snorkelling life vest (without fins or tube) are provided
- Guests can hire the whole boat for a private excursion at a supplement on request
- Pre-booking in July and August is recommended

Important: For experienced, confident swimmers only



Whale and Dolphin Watching Trip

A mere glimpse of a dorsal fin can have you beaming for hours. So why not hop on a Zodiac or Catamaran in search of cetacean activity – 24 of the planet's 80 species of whales and dolphins have been sighted off the coast of the Azores.

Important: Children aged 3yrs or under, pregnant women or any person suffering from back problems are not allowed on the Zodiac boats.

By Zodiac (rib boat)

Price is £57 per adult and £29 per child (6-11yrs) – all year

From Ponta Delgada with Picos de Aventura

Price is £61 per adult and £46 per child/teen (6-13yrs) – all year

From Vila Franca do Campo with Terra Azul – recommended if staying in Caloura, Vila Franca do Campo or Furnas

Notes for Zodiacs (rib boats)

- Excursion provider: Picos de Aventura (Ponta Delgada base) or Terra Azul (Vila Franca do Campo base) (whaling base no.26)
- Picos de Aventura: Meeting point is Portas do Mar Marina (whaling base) in Ponta Delgada departing daily at 08:30 or 13:00
- Terra Azul: Meeting point is the whaling base in Vila Franca do Campo departing daily at 08:30 or 12:30
- Duration: 2-3 hour excursion with a pre tour briefing (c.10 minutes) by a marine biologist
- Zodiac boats (small, rigid hull inflatable carrying up to 24 people) are used
- Minimum child age is 6 years (accompanied by a parent)
- We cannot guarantee that you will see a cetacean but it is unlikely that you should be so unlucky
- Pre-booking in July and August is recommended
- Recommend that you take a raincoat, cap or hair-band, sun cream, trousers (rather than a skirt), flat shoes and a bottle of water
- Note (Picos de Aventura only): Should you be unlucky enough not to see any whales and/or dolphins on your excursion, then you can book another day with the local supplier (free of charge and dependent on availability) or claim back a full refund which Sunvil will provide on your return to the UK

By Catamaran

Price is £57 per adult and £29 per child (6-12yrs)

Free for children aged 5 years or under – all year

From Ponta Delgada

Notes for Catamarans

- Excursion provider: Picos de Aventura (Ponta Delgada base)
- Meeting point is Portas do Mar Marina (whaling base) in Ponta Delgada departing daily at 08:30 or 13:00
- Duration: 2-3 hour excursion with a pre tour briefing (c.10 minutes) by a marine biologist
- Catamaran's have a toilet onboard
- Children aged 5 years or under go free of charge
- We cannot guarantee that you will see a cetacean but it is unlikely that you should be so unlucky
- Pre-booking in July and August is recommended
- Recommend that you take a raincoat, sun cream, flat shoes and a bottle of water