

Santa Maria - The Island of the Sun - Activities 2025

Sunvil can pre-book a variety of activities on Santa Maria– see full details below.

These activities can also be booked locally through our local agent.

Please note that any pre-booked activity with Sunvil must be requested 14 days or more before departure.



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.

Entre Serra e Mar (Half Day)

This 9.5km (2.5 hours) circular walk starts and ends at the parish church of Santa Bárbara and passes typical houses and through rural landscapes. As you travel around the island you will notice the distinctive house chimneys, unique to Santa Maria and the varying number of colours used – the colours relate to the parish in which they are located. Following well used tracks, this walk offers excellent views of the bay of São Lourenço. **Grade 2 (Medium)**

Pico Alto - Anjos (Half Day)

This 14km (4 hours) linear walk starts on the Pico Alto forest road (587m), the highest point on Santa Maria, with views over the whole island – São Miguel Island can also be seen on a clear day. You will pass through the Barreiro da Faneca, a unique ecosystem made up of reddish clay soil known as the 'Red Desert of the Azores', and a forest of Japanese red cedar trees. Throughout the walk travellers are treated to views of Anjos, Ponta da Baleia, the Baía da Cré and the Lagoinhas Islet. **Grade 2 (Medium)**

Santo Espírito - Maia (Half Day)

This 6.8km (3 hours) linear walk begins in the parish of Santo Espírito passing through Maia and ending at the whaling factory in Ponta do Castelo. The route runs through the village and passes by the splendid waterfall of the Aveiro in Ribeira Grande, the Gonçalo Velho Lighthouse and through terraced vineyards. **Grade 2 (Medium)**

North Shore (Half Day)

This 6.7km (3 hours) linear walk starts in Feteiras de Baixo and ends at Baía dos Anjos. The trail goes through Baía do Raposo, Ribeira do Engenho, Barreiro da Faneca (a unique ecosystem in the Azores, made up of reddish clay lands, also known as the “Red Desert of the Azores”) and Baía da Cré, places with great geological interest and classified as Geosites. **Grade 2 (Medium)**

South Shore (Half Day)

This 8.5km (3 hours) linear trail begins at the Dalberto Pombo Environmental Interpretation Center, where this naturalist's vast fossil and taxidermy animal collection is displayed. Continue towards Forte de São Brás, Ribeira de São Francisco, Pedreira do Campo (Geosite classified a natural monument), Gruta do Figueiral (Fossil Cave), Touril and Prainha. After a relaxing swim you will proceed to the Fort of Prainha and choose between climbing toward the viewpoint of Macela or follow the slope to the Praia Formosa area where you can relax on the white sandy beach. **Grade 2 (Medium)**

Price per walk is £43 per adult and £22 per child (8-11yrs)

Notes

- Daily pick-up from all hotels at 09:00 or 14:00 - supplier Smatur
- Guided walks with English speaking guide
- Minimum 2 people
- Minimum age is 8 years
- Recommended: Comfortable clothing, walking boots, swim suit, towel, rain jacket, sun lotion, binoculars, camera and water



Santa Maria Van Tour (Full Day)

Visit beautiful geological points of interest, wonderful bays, traditional and quiet parishes and historical and cultural heritage. Some of the highlights include the small seaside resort of Anjos and its small chapel where Christopher Columbus attended a mass on his return from America; the pretty village of Santa Bárbara where it is possible to admire the simple and beautiful architecture of the traditional houses of Santa Maria; a viewpoint overlooking the famous and unique landscape of São Lourenço Bay - a volcanic semi-crater covered in terraced vineyards and divided by basalt stonewalls; the village of Santo Espírito, surrounded by green pastures and hills with a 17th century baroque church; a visit to Maia, on the south coast, to see the beautiful waterfalls before heading to the beautiful bay and white sand beach of Praia Formosa - where the island's oldest music festival 'Maré de Agosto' takes place. There will be a stop for lunch (included) in a local restaurant.

Price is £98 per adult and £60 per child (3-11yrs) and £11 per infant (0-2yrs)

Notes

- Pick up from hotel at Vila do Porto at 09:00 - supplier Smatur
- Full Day: 8 hours
- Includes lunch and English speaking guide



Scuba Diving

Santa Maria is a place of unique beauty for divers. The abundance and richness of underwater fauna provides unforgettable moments. The Pedrinha, the islet of Lagoinhas, the islet of São Lourenço, the islets of Formigas and the Dollabarat reef offer 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 is based in Vila do Porto.

Price for 1 Dive is 67 per person and £125 per person for 2 Dives

Notes

- Meeting point at Mantamaria Office at Vila do Porto harbour at 08:30 - please arrive 30-minutes before departure
- Daily Jan-31Oct
- Minimum 6 people required between Oct-May
- Suitable for all - from complete beginner to the most experienced, with boat trips
- Dives include a 12 litre steel tank (200-230 BAR), weight belt, dive master guidance and boat transportation to and from the dive sites
- Wetsuits not included but can be rented locally for approx. 8 Euros
- All divers have to carry valid diving and medical certificates confirming fitness to dive
- It is a mandatory condition to have dived less than 6 months prior, otherwise clients will have to take a REFRESH DIVE with additional cost.

Snorkelling

One of the most sought after experiences by travellers who visit the Azores is the chance to snorkel in the crystal clear waters of Santa Maria. It is also possible to swim with manta rays, harmless to humans, the manta rays gracefully dart and swoop around you – an incredible sight.

Price is £51 per person (Snorkeling around the island - minimum 6 people)

Price is £92 per person (Snorkelling at Formigas Islet or with Whale Sharks - minimum of 10 people)

Notes

- Meeting point at Mantamaria Office at Vila do Porto harbour at 08:30 - please arrive 30-minutes before departure
- Daily Jan-Oct
- Minimum 6 for Snorkeling around the island and 10 people for Snorkelling at Formigas Islet or with White Sharks
- Mask and snorkel included
- Wetsuits not included but can be rented locally for approx. 8 Euros
- Suitable for adults only
- It is mandatory to have dived less than 6 months ago, otherwise clients will have to take a refresh dive at an additional cost.