



### WALKING TRAILS

When walking through dense coastal woods, junipers and patches of Laurel forest, you should not be surprised if you find along the way waterfalls where you can cool yourself or typical houses, some of which have been converted to rural tourism units. On trails along the coast, you can admire the jagged slopes with rock formations that sometimes form natural pools where, at the end of a long walk, a bath to refresh and regain strength feels great.

There are many different types of trails that are well suited to different ages and physical conditions, with varying degrees of difficulty and length.

The Nature that the Azores offer those who visit them showcases unique and varied landscapes, which can be reached through about 60 approved and marked walking trails spread across the different islands, comprising a network of about 500 km of trails. In addition to the landscapes that are a feast for the eyes of any ordinary lover of nature, many trails



feature great biological, geological and even historical and ethnographic interest, which can be interpreted by experts from tourism companies that operate on the islands.

For more information, please visit [trilhos.visitazores.com](http://trilhos.visitazores.com).



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**TURISMO DE PORTUGAL** azores

36° 55' 44" N, 25° 01' 02" W - Azores, PORTUGAL



GEOTOURISM

The Azores showcase a remarkable geodiversity that is closely linked to the volcanic nature of the islands. Volcanoes, calderas, crater lakes, fumaroles, hot springs, volcanic caves and grottos, flat strips of land by the sea, and marine fossil deposits, among many others features, are the essence of the geological heritage of the archipelago whose importance is nationally and internationally recognised.

Several activities let you explore and enjoy the archipelago’s volcanic landscapes and geosites, particularly biking, walking, visits to volcanic caves, canyoning, paragliding, bathing in spas, diving in shallow hydrothermal areas, and climbing Mount Pico.

The countless lookouts scattered throughout the islands and the visitor and interpretation centres that exist in several places help visitors and tourists.

Food cooked in the Furnas volcano, ashlar used in traditional buildings and monuments, and religious traditions deeply rooted in seismic and volcanic events are profoundly linked to the volcanic forces of the archipelago.

Experiencing Geotourism in the Azores provides “eruptions of flavours, aromas and experiences” connected to the volcanic nature, which turns a visit to the archipelago into a unique and unforgettable adventure. The addition of the Azores Geopark to the European and Global Networks of Geoparks in 2013 recognised the quality of the 121 geosites of the Azores, their diversity and the actions aimed at their promotion and enhancement, particularly in the context of Geotourism.

Azores Geopark - 9 Islands, 1 Geopark

For more information, please visit [azoresgeopark.com](http://azoresgeopark.com).



BIRD WATCHING



The Azores are known to be an excellent destination for bird watching. There are birds on all the islands and in all types of habitats and landscapes, but given the multiplicity of species that you will find there, wetlands are best areas and they include lakes, mires and coastal islets that function as a haven where birds rest, breed and nest protected from predators and with easy access to food.

In addition to the **Azores Bullfinch** (*Pyrrhula murina*), one of the rarest birds in Europe that is endemic to a small area of the island of São Miguel, and to the **Monteiro’s Storm Petrel** (*Oceanodroma monteiroi*), an even rarer endemic seabird discovered by Azorean ornithologist Luís Monteiro, other species stand out, including the **Atlantic Canary** (*Serinus canaria*), a unique species of Macaronesia, and several subspecies, such as the **Chaffinch** (*Fringilla coelebs moreletti*), the **São Miguel Goldcrest** (*Regulus regulus azoricus*),

the **Azores Wood Pigeon** (*Columba palumbus azorica*), and the **Common Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo rothschildi*).

The Azores also host the world’s most important populations of the **Cory’s Shearwater** (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) and of the **Roseate Tern** (*Sterna dougallii*).

In its entirety, the archipelago features about 30 breeding species, but given its central position in the Atlantic Ocean, it stands out for the spotting of migratory birds coming from the American and Eurasian continents. The best season for bird watching in the Azores runs from September to November.

Almost 400 bird species have already been spotted in the archipelago, including some extremely rare ones and even some novelties for the Western Palearctic.

The bird populations of the Azores are considered to be so relevant that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) were implemented on all the islands of the archipelago, with the aim of preserving the habitats of the species listed in the Birds Directive.

For more information, please visit [birdingazores.com](http://birdingazores.com).



CLIMBING MOUNT PICO

Mount Pico is the highest point in Portugal reaching an altitude of 2,350 metres, and its presence imposes itself in the Atlantic Ocean: whether admiring it from the neighbouring islands, or feeling it from the island itself, or exploring it with your eyes and imagining reaching its summit – the Piquinho, or even climbing it all the way up to the top. Seeing the sunrise or sunset from the top of the Azores, the vastness of the sea, and the neighbouring islands is an unforgettable experience.

The trail has a total length of about 7,600 metres (3,800 metres from the beginning up to the summit) and a vertical drop of 1,100 metres, starting and ending at the Mountain House, a mandatory stop. Located near the beginning of the trail, right at the end of the road that is accessible by car, this visitors centre offers information on the geology, biology, history, climate and legal framework of the Natural Reserve of Mount Pico.

This centre controls the number of climbs through the requests for climbing submitted by visitors, according to the regulation in force. You can hike the trail independently or use the services of a tourism company, with the latter option being the most recommended.

Currently classified as a Nature Reserve, it is one of the oldest protected areas in Portugal created in 1972 as an Integral Reserve. It is also a Natura 2000 protected area, a Geosite of the Azores Geopark, and one of the 7 Natural Wonders of Portugal.

Although it is not a technical climb, the climb of Mount Pico has a medium / high degree of difficulty.



HORSEBACK RIDING



In the Azores, horseback riding is more than a sport, it is a tradition. It is believed that horses have been present in the archipelago since its settlement, as they are listed in the property inventories from the beginning of the 16th century. Back then, owning a horse was a luxury that only the affluent could enjoy. Rarely used for work, they were a symbol of noble distinction.

With the passage of time, the social constraints faded and, from generation to generation, horses started to be part of the daily lives of Azoreans, both helping in rural tasks and as a companion during relaxing rides through the landscapes of the islands.

Walking or trotting, sitting on a saddle or in a carriage, the discovery of trails and lakes is an unforgettable experience during which time gallops away.

The islands feature many riding centres and tourist entertainment companies that offer horseback rides and riding lessons that are available all year round and are accessible even to those who have never ridden a horse.



GOLF

The Azores have three magnificent golf courses: Batalha, Furnas, and Terceira Island Golf Club. They provide a unique contact with nature, without any buildings along the way but with lush vegetation.

On the island of São Miguel, you will find the Batalha and Furnas Golf Courses.



The Batalha Golf Course is located on the north coast of the island of São Miguel, only 10 minutes from the centre of Ponta Delgada, and stands out for being a championship course that hosts major national and international competitions and where the green of the island meets the blue of the Atlantic. This course was designed by Cameron Powell in 1986 and offers 27 holes spread over 120 ha, with generous greens, wide fairways and sinuously contoured bunkers with black sand.

The Furnas Golf Course is simply spectacular. In 2014, the North American Golf Digest, the most important golf publication in the world, elected Furnas as the second best golf course in Portugal. It is located in the middle of an imposing volcanic landscape with lush subtropical vegetation surrounding it – a truly incredible golf experience.

The Furnas Golf Course is located in one of the most beautiful areas of the island of São Miguel in a plateau at the top of the Furnas Valley (which features the famous thermal springs and the Terra Nostra Garden) and near the beautiful Furnas Lake. It is just 25 minutes away from Ponta Delgada and 15 minutes away from Caloura and Água d’Alto.

On the island of Terceira, you will find the Terceira Island Golf Club, which is one of Portugal’s most popular courses with the highest number of members. One of its main features is the patches of Japanese cedar that line most of the holes. It showcases an overall size of approximately 6,000 metres throughout 18 holes. This par 72 course is surrounded by the typical green of the interior of the island, where you can enjoy a quiet and peaceful environment to the sound of nature.