
GEEO ITINERARY

Hiking the Azores

Day 1: Ponta Delgada Arrive in Ponta Delgada at any time. Meet your group for a welcome meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

Arrive in Ponta Delgada at any time. Due to the potential for flight delays or cancellations, we recommend that you plan to arrive in the Azores or Portugal at least a day in advance. This will also give you time to adjust to the time difference and overcome any jetlag. We can book extra hotel nights for you in Ponta Delgada before the trip. Please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2:00-3:00 p.m. There are no planned activities until an intro meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., usually in the hotel lobby. Check for a sign or ask at the reception desk about the exact time and location of the group meeting. Please make every effort to arrive in time for this meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up tomorrow. After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another.

Day 2: Ponta Delgada (B) Hike from Ribeira Funda to Maia, with a stop for lunch in a quaint village along the way. Then travel to the town of Furnas to visit the hot springs and botanical garden.

Hike from Ribeira Funda to Maia along the dramatic and beautiful north coast of the island of São Miguel. Stop to eat lunch at Praia da Viola, a secluded beach that can only be reached by foot. Along the hike, there are multiple viewpoints overlooking the island's coastline. After arriving in Maia, head into the town of Furnas for a visit to the Terra Nostra Gardens and geothermal hot springs. While there, the group will have a chance to take a dip in the natural hot waters or wander around the 24-acre botanical garden. Afterward, return to Ponta Delgada. Approximate travel time: 2 hrs via private vehicle; 4 hrs hiking

Day 3: Ponta Delgada (B, L) Hike to the shores of Lagoa do Fogo. Then travel to the Sete Cidades Parish and hike the trails for stunning views of the lakes within the caldera.

This morning we will travel to the highest body of water in the Azores, Lagoa do Fogo, a lake that formed at the bottom of the caldera. Hike through a forest of Eucalyptus, Japanese Cedars, and along a levada waterway on your way down to the shores of Lagoa do Fogo. After a light picnic lunch, walk the rolling hills along groomed trails in the Sete Cidades parish. Hike about 3 hours around the caldera for spectacular views of the crater lakes formed within the former volcano. Marvel at the blue-green lake reflecting two different colors due to sunlight and algae growth. Approximate travel time: 2-2.5 hrs by private vehicle; 5.5 hrs hiking

Day 4: Ponta Delgada/Angra do Heroísmo (B) Today we depart São Miguel island on a short flight to Terceira Island. We will hike the Rocha de Chambre trail. In the evening, enjoy a walking tour of Angra do Heroísmo, the capital city, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Board a plane with your group for a quick flight to Terceira Island, considered the capital of Azorean culture. After checking into the hotel your group will hit the Rocha do Chambre trail. This 6-mile circular route takes place in the middle of the island, exploring the rich agriculture of Azorean heather, laurel, and juniper plants. The Rocha do Chambre trail is considered rolling terrain. It has some flat sections through the forest which provide very dramatic scenery and a few steep inclines. It crosses a forest and meanders along a small stream up to the top of the Pico Alto crater at just over 2,300 feet. Enjoy beautiful views of the Azinhal Valley and Biscoitos village with its rocky lava formations that meet the sea. The total elevation of the hike is about 1,180 feet. In the evening, enjoy a 30-45 minute walking tour of the capital city, Angra do Heroísmo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city maintains its stunning

Renaissance architecture, housing fortresses, churches, and manor houses. Walk through this beautiful city and discover the hidden history of the main streets, squares, and monuments. Approximate travel time: 1 hr by plane, 1 hr by private vehicle; 4 hrs hiking

Day 5: Angra do Heroísmo (B, L) Head to the middle of the island with stunning views of the agricultural patchwork fields contrasted by the centuries-old lava flow (often called the Black Lagoon). Hike the Mistérios Negros trail and visit the Algar do Carvão lava caves.

Hike about 7 kilometers (4.35 miles) on the Mistérios Negros trail, which starts near the site of the last volcanic eruption on Terceira in 1761. Learn about this incredible landscape while traversing uneven trails, over hardened lava flows, and volcanic rock. The highlight of the day is a visit to the Algar do Carvão lava caves, which are a naturally formed tunnel of air developed under the warm lava. Approximate travel time: 1 hr by private vehicle; 5-6 hours hiking

Day 6: Angra do Heroísmo (B) Depart Angra do Heroísmo at any time.

There are no planned activities today, so you may depart Angra do Heroísmo at any time. If you wish to extend your stay in Angra do Heroísmo, consider booking post-tour accommodation with us. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is usually mid-morning, but luggage storage services are available at the reception desk. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEE0 programs in the same school year and receive a discount! GEE0 will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year). If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEE0 program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.