



5 Days

The Azores

Whales, Dolphins and Volcanoes

The Azores are a hidden gem in the mid-Atlantic; an archipelago of volcanic islands they are the perfect destination for biology students boasting a startling array of fabulous wildlife and fauna. This 5 day biology itinerary has been designed to showcase the best elements that the island of São Miguel has to offer. Hiking tours in stunning volcanic scenery, cooking local delicacies in steaming craters, kayaking in a crater lake and the chance to see the great whales that live off the shores of these incredible islands. This is a brilliant adventure close to home, that promises to both educate, inspire and exhilarate.



Recommended tour itinerary

Day
1

Arrive in The Azores

Upon our arrival on the beautiful island of São Miguel we will be met by our local Trip Leader at the airport and transferred to our accommodation at Pousada da Juventude de Ponta Delgada. After some time to freshen up and relax, the rest of the day will be free to spend at our leisure.

Day
2

Whale & Dolphin watching & Visit to Vila Franca Islet

There are approximately 25 cetacean species that can be found in the Azores. Today, with any luck, we will be able to observe some of them. Although nature offers no guarantees, whales and dolphins are regularly seen during our full day tours, along with turtles, seabirds and other marine life. Before the boat trip local biologists will give us a briefing on which cetacean species can be observed, safety measures aboard, how we respect the animals as well as some historical facts. During the tour each passenger is required to wear a life vest.

For trips running in the summer season, we will stop in the Vila Franca do Campo to have lunch in a local restaurant. We will then board a converted traditional fishing boat and head to Vila Franca do Campo islet, a volcanic crater off the coast that encloses a natural lagoon. The islet is a natural reserve, so here we will be able to view the diversity of fish species that have been preserved due to this protection (masks and snorkels are provided).

For trips outside of the summer season, an alternative activity will be arranged either to the Oficina Museu and Pineapple Plantations or other activities arranged upon arrival.

Day
3

Hiking in Sete Cidades

The starting point of this walk is the amazing Vista do Rei belvedere, where we learn about the geological formation of the caldera of Sete Cidades and enjoy the beautiful view of the twin lakes; one blue, the other green with soaring cliff walls brimming with vegetation and flowers. Next we start walking the dirt path along the rim of the crater. The views are wide and open. To the right we will see the caldera and the twin lakes; to the left we have the sea and several coastal villages. The trail ends in the centre of the village where we will enjoy our picnic lunch. This will give you the perfect opportunity to observe how vegetation thrives in a volcanic environment.





Day
3

Mountain Bike Tour, Sea Kayak in Sete Cidades & Ferraria

Today we will have a chance to explore of the west side of São Miguel, starting with the Sete Cidades lake, one of the most famous and legendary lakes of the island. Here we will have the opportunity to circle the bottom of the crater on our bikes and kayak in the beautiful lake, definitely the best way to enjoy Sete Cidades, allowing us to really connect with the amazing scenery.

Afterwards we will drive along the south coast and pass by Ferraria where we find a wonderful hot water bathing area that was created by the formation of a small crater and volcanic fissure from which the surrounding ocean water is heated. A perfect way to end our adventurous day and sooth any aching muscles!

Day
4

Thematic Tour of Furnas

Today will be all about the magical of Furnas – a town awash with thermal baths. It is hard to visit Furnas without becoming immersed in its volcanic history. We will start by visiting the Caldeiras da Lagoa das Furnas (Furnas Lake Calderas), where we will cook the famous “Cozido das Furnas” a special meal cooked in the steaming craters of the Caldeiras das Furnas.

We will then continue with a gentle walk taking us around the lakeside, during which we will have the opportunity to appreciate a variety of endemic flora species. A picnic lunch will be served on our visit to the Terra Nostra botanical garden, which is famous for its extraordinary collection of native plants, as well as others from all over the world that have adapted to the local garden conditions.

At the end of the visit we will be invited to bathe in an iron-rich hot water swimming pool that has a temperature of 35-40°C, an exquisite experience! On the way back to Ponta Delgada we will stop at several beautiful viewpoints on the North Coast. Later we will enjoy a Cozido meal at a local restaurant.

Day
5

Return to UK

Today, depending on your flight time you may have a chance for a final walk in the countryside before we will transfer to the airport for our return journey back to the UK.

Further information

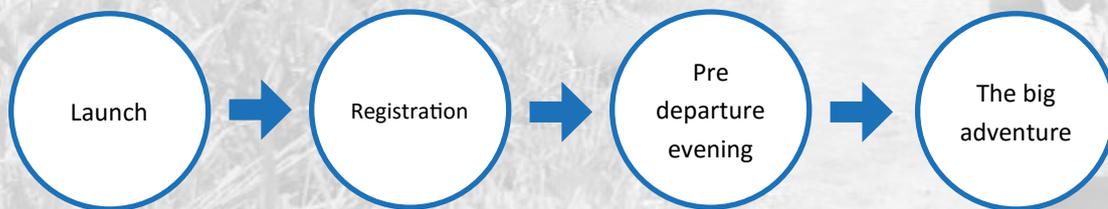
Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch evening
- Pre-departure preparation evening
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your educational journey timeline



Physical journey rating:



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey.



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your educational travel itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange a trip launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with a comprehensive information evening and an opportunity for questions.



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