



Azores of Portugal Hiking No Trip Report
June 18 – 29, 2020

Another trip bit the dust.

It was just not to be. We waited until the very last minute hoping Portugal who seemed to have the virus under control would open up. But even the air travel got closed down.

I have a credit and a date for next year, same itinerary, same group.

Itinerary

Thu Jun 18

5:15pm Depart home
 8:30pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#64

Fri Jun 19

8:20am Arrive Lisbon for plane change

 11:40am Depart Lisbon LIS via TAP Portugal #TP1867
 1:05pm Arrive San Miguel International Airport at Ponta Delgada, PT PDL

20 km airport to hotel – how to transport?

Hotel Pestana Bahia Praia – add one night to tour front – asked Harvey on 9/26/19
 Praia de Água d'Alto, Apartado 8, 9680-365, Vila Franca do Campo
 Tele: +351296539130 Reservations: +351 218 442 001
 Upgraded room through RunQuest and paid Harvey via check.

From <https://www.pestana.com/en/hotel/pestana-bahia-praia> - *Holidays on Sao Miguel Island - Pestana Bahia Praia is a 4-star hotel located on the Azores Archipelago, on São Miguel Island, with direct access to the Baia de Água d'Alto Beach and with fantastic views of the Atlantic Ocean. São Miguel Island is the largest of the archipelago and has strong links with the sea and nature. Throughout your entire stay, you will be able to enjoy an external fresh-water swimming pool, two restaurants and a bar. In your free time, play a game of tennis on one of the two courts, play in the game room or stroll through the expansive garden which features a chapel from the 17th century. The rooms are spacious, were recently remodelled, feature modern furniture and each is equipped with a flatscreen TV and Wi-Fi. Reasons to Choose: An incomparable charm; A refurbishment project that has been carried out perfectly; The location is right in the centre of the island; Literally “on top” of the best beach on the island.*

10 minutes from hotel to nearest city: Vila Franca do Campo.
 15 minutes from the center of Ponta Delgada and 20 minutes from Ponta Delgada Airport

From www.RunQuestTravel.com - The Azores are one of the most magical places on the planet. Exotic, tropical, friendly locals, frequently referred to as Europe's best kept secret, the Azores are a Portuguese archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Azores are a nature lover's paradise. They offer an array of opportunities for hiking and running with spectacular trails. We will be traveling with experienced local Azores guides in 4x4 Land Rovers

to access the best places on the island. We will be enjoying several geothermal hot springs, famous to the islands, also on your journey.

You will have 4-star accommodations along with some of your best meals of the entire year. Food and wine are incredible in the Azores, all included in your excursion.

While the Azores are off the beaten track, they are easily accessible from North America. The best priced flights are often from Toronto and you can easily fly from your home city to Toronto. Flights from Toronto or New York are only 5 hours to the Azores.

Join Carlos Sa and Harvey Lewis along with our local lead guide Bruno Fernandes on the trip of a lifetime! We're super excited and can't wait to host you.

Itinerary:

SAT, JUN 20 – Day 1 of hike

Welcome to Azores! Welcome to Sao Miguel Island, known as the Green Island for its lush beauty. Sao Miguel is the largest of the islands of the Azores, about 287 square miles and 900 miles off the coast of mainland Portugal.

Guests will arrive in the morning and will be transferred from S. Miguel's International Airport to Pestana Bahia Praia - Nature & Beach Resort. Guests will have time to get acquainted with the beautiful garden featuring a 17th century chapel, enjoy the pool, spa or Baia de Agua d'Alto Beach. Its a charming hotel with a beautiful landscape.

At 3pm we will have a meet and greet with the guides and guests before setting out for an afternoon adventure to hike/run with a trail with dramatic views.

We are excited to host you at the 4 star Pestana Bahia Praia throughout the week. Each day we will have excursions with our local guides in the 4x4 Land Rovers to explore across the island. You'll find the hotel a great launching point for daily adventures across the island as well as the perfect place to relax.

(All activities listed on the itinerary are included in your trip). You can also book added excursions such as diving, surfing, paddle boarding or kayaking.

SUN, JUN 21 – Day 2 of hike

Guests will enjoy breakfast in the hotel at their leisure.

We will set off at 9am for Lagoa das Sete Cidades. Guests will have several hiking or running options on the trail. We have an excellent guide to guest ratio of typically 1 to 4 or better. As our guest we cater to you. Whatever distance or pace you wish to hike or run we will accommodate. Feel relaxed and just let one of the guides know your preference in the morning. Each evening we will outline the plan for the day ahead and ensure our greatest effort to meet your preferences.

The Miradouro da Boca do Inferno hike or run offers amazing vistas. The famous Vista do Rei viewpoint will be a trip highlight. The epic view gives you the opportunity to view the mountain and sea and two other lagoons amongst a volcanic crater. A professional photographer will be hired for the day who will take photos of group which are included in your trip.

The hike or run ends near to the idyllic village Sete Cidades where we will enjoy an midday meal at a local favorite with fresh foods with wine or sangria.

Sao Miguel's is renowned for its hot springs and lakes! They are perfect for rejuvenating the mind, body and soul. In the afternoon we will enjoy Ponta da Ferraria, a small geothermal natural spring where the ocean water is warmed, one of the only ocean natural hot springs in the world.

At 7pm the group will enjoy dinner back at the hotel together.

MON, JUN 22 – Day 3 of hike

Guests will enjoy breakfast at their leisure.

Depart at 9am for Lagoa das Furnas trail. The hike or run will take you to a very unique area where locals actually use high temperatures from the geothermal activity to cook traditional dishes. We will enjoy a traditional lunch at noon prepared with food from one of these special cookers. One of the most popular local dishes, Cozido is a meat stew (you may opt for vegetarian) made in a large pot cooked underground by volcanic steam. At this hotspot you can watch as pots are being cooked in their cooking holes.

For the afternoon we will embark on a whale watching tour. The Azores are one of the best places in the world for whale watching. You are also likely to see dolphins and will get another perspective of the island from the sea.

TUE, JUN 23 – Day 4 of hike

Guests enjoy breakfast at their leisure.

8am - Enjoy outdoor yoga with local yoga instructor at our hotel

9:30am - depart for Lagoa do Fogo, another great trail for hiking and running. The journey will take us to a scenic lake.

Midday - lunch at local restaurant in the town of Vila Franca do Campo.

Afternoon - Enjoy a short boat ride to the enchanting island off of the coast of the village. It has a water filled cauldron, a beach with amazing swimming or snorkeling.

7pm - Dinner at local restaurant near hotel.

WED, JUN 24 – Day 5 of hike

Guests enjoy breakfast at their leisure.

9am - depart for Quatro Caminhos do Faial da Terra trail. The Trail traces the southeast coastline and offers dramatic views of the ocean.

1pm - lunch in the small town of Furnas

3pm - Explore the Caldeiras das Furnas outside of the town of Furnas. The hot springs and steam are really active and some have said it has similarities to Yellowstone.

4pm - Immerse yourself in the Poca Dona Beija hot springs. These are 5 open air natural pools at different temperatures situated in a lush garden.

8pm - Dinner & drinks at charming restaurant near hotel.

THU, JUN 25 – Day 6 of hike

6am - We want to remind everyone that everything is optional with our trips. If you prefer to relax back at the hotel for the morning or afternoon you are absolutely welcome. This morning we plan an optional early morning run or hike from Ponta da Madrugada and Ponta do Sossego Lookouts to view the sunrise.

Guests enjoy breakfast at their leisure.

10am - Depart for tour of organic pineapple plantation and/or Gorreana Tea Plantation.

12:30pm - lunch in countryside

2pm - Hike at Salto Do Prego Waterfall.

Afternoon - Relax and leisure at hotel.

7pm - Tour of Ponta Delgado, the largest city in the Azores with about 60,000 residents. Dinner & drinks at outstanding local restaurant celebrating a week of memories.

FRI, JUN 26 – Day 7 of hike

Enjoy breakfast at your leisure.

9am - 10km run from hotel.

Transfers. Guests depart hotel for airport.

3:35pm Depart Ponta Delgada PDL via Tap #TP1866

6:50pm Arrive Porto OPO

Taxi? Shuttle?

Hotel Sheraton Porto Hotel & Spa – 3 nights and form needed
Rua Tenente Valadim 146 Porto 4100-476 Tele: +351 22 040 4000
Conf#99907512 – yes coffee maker in room

Sat Jun 27

Open

Sun Jun 28

Open

Mon Jun 29

12:15pm Depart Porto OPO via Lufthansa #LH1177

3:55pm Arrive Frankfurt FRA for plane change

5:30pm Depart Frankfurt FRA via UA#75

8:25pm Arrive Newark EWR

Uber home

Notes:

Only home from Oslo on Wed Jun 10.

Open until July with possible Jul 10 to Colorado for Jul 12-17 PPH hike

Paid Harvey \$500 deposit on 9/22/19 via check

Paid Harvey \$685 for 610 Euros room upgrade on 9/22/19 via check

RunQuestTravel has Portugal trip June 12-19 then Azores June 20-26. They arrive in Azores on Friday 6/19.

Participants:

Harvey Lewis

Carlos Sa

2 local guides

4 single women new to group

Diana

Denny and MaryAnn – son is Keith – met 6 years ago on Portugal hike

Links:

Run Quest Travel - Azores in June with itinerary

<http://www.runquesttravel.com/upcoming-events/azores-portugal-2020-5/overview-12/>

Azores article from Discoverer

<https://www.thediscoverer.com/blog/what-are-the-azores-and-why-is-everyone-visiting/>

Azores with pics from NYT.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/travel/52-places-azores.amp.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>

Contact Form Received - Run Quest Travel 9/11/19

Thank you for embarking on your adventure to Portugal with RunQuestTravel. We are excited to be taking you to some of the greatest places on Earth. Our mission is to make this the trip of a lifetime. Please complete the customer agreement, liability waiver and see the supply list. You will also want to purchase health insurance for travel abroad if you are not covered by your provider. You will receive a hard printed itinerary prior to departure and welcome letter after payment to Paypal. Sincerely, Harvey Lewis, RunQuestTravel.com - 513-484-4435

15 Page booklet with map of area, what to do, and pictures:

https://pesweb.azureedge.net/spdoc/hoteldocuments/inout-bahiapraia_pt.pdf

In the Azores, You Can Cook Your Dinner Inside a Volcano -

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/food-drink/cozido-das-furnas-azores>