

The itinerary – São Miguel

Saturday – arrival.

- Fly from London to São Miguel Ponta Delgada £180 pp return.
- Pick up hire car £130.70 for 5 days (we booked [Ilha Verde](#) via [HolidayAutos](#)).
- Drive 25 mins to [Hiper Solmar](#) supermarket in [Vila Franca do Campo](#) & stock up on groceries (open daily 8:30am – 9pm).
- Drive the remaining 5 mins to your accommodation, we stayed at [Place of Moments – Verde](#) 4x nights @ £80 p/n.

Sunday – Dive Day 1.

- Spend the morning diving with [Azores Sub](#) (here on map) £66 pp for 2x dives. *There's parking spots next to the marina/5 min drive from accommodation.*
- In the afternoon visit [Caloura manmade pool](#), followed by dinner at [Bar Caloura](#) seafood restaurant (best done on a sunny day).

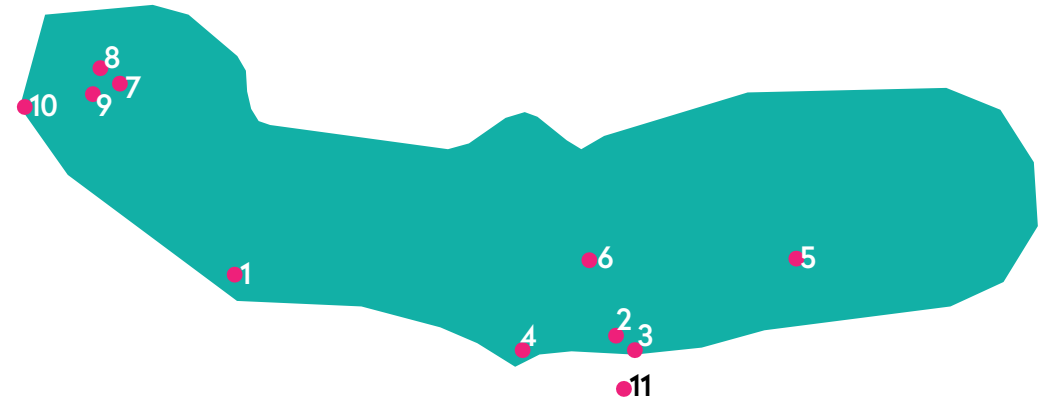
Monday – Dive Day 2.

- Spend another morning diving with [Azores Sub](#).
- In the afternoon drive to [Dona Beija Thermal Springs](#) (here on the map), this can be done rain or shine £4.50 pp, open 7am – 11pm, last entry 10:30pm.

Tuesday – Exploring (schedule in for a sunny day).

- Start your day at [Lagoa do Fogo](#). Park up & take the walk down around the picturesque crater lake (allow 1-2 hours), NB: you're not allowed to swim here.
- Next drive 50 mins to [Miradouro da Boca do Inferno](#) & take the short walk up to a beautiful view point (allow 30 mins return).
- After that drive to [Miradouro da Vista do Rei](#) for beautiful views of Sete Cidades/the twin lakes. Explore the abandoned [Hotel Monte Palace](#), the rooftop has the best view of the lakes (allow 30 mins – 1 hour).
- For the last stop of the day drive 30 mins to [Ponta de Ferraria](#) swimming hole to cool off.

Find more itineraries & videos of our adventures at [generationexplorer.com](#)



Key.

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|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Ponta Delgada/Airport | 8. Sete Cidades |
| 2. Vila Franca do Campo | 9. Miradouro da Vista do Rei & Hotel Monte Palace |
| 3. Azores Sub | 10. Ponta de Ferraria swimming hole |
| 4. Caloura | 11. Ilheu de Vila Franca do Campo |
| 5. Dona Beija Thermal Springs | |
| 6. Lagoa do Fogo | |
| 7. Miradouro da Boca do Inferno | |

Wednesday morning – Last day on São Miguel / flight to Pico.

- Pack up (allowing a separate day-bag) & check out of your accommodation.
- If there's time before your flight departs catch the boat from [Marina de Vila Franca do Campo](#) to [Ilheu de Vila Franca do Campo](#) (offshore islet) to spend the day swimming & relaxing on the island (allow 2-4 hours). [Boats run June to September](#) (£4.40 return pp).
- Time your hire car return for your flight check-in.

Fly São Miguel to Pico Island (£145 return pp).

The itinerary – Pico

Wednesday afternoon - arrival.

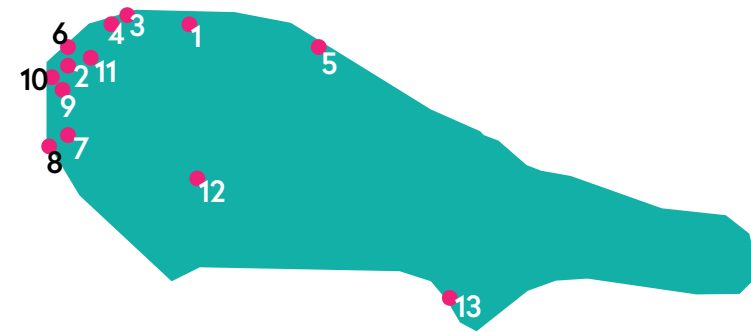
- Touch down on the beautiful Pico Island.
- Pick up hire car [£135 for 3 days \(we booked Rent-a-Car Oasis\)](#).
- Drive to [Hiper Solmar](#) supermarket in Madalena & stock up on groceries (open daily 8:30am – 8pm).
- Next drive to your seaside accommodation, [Casa Cais Mourato](#) [3x nights @ £44 p/n](#).
- Settle in, then pack a picnic to eat at the waters edge (only a 1 min walk from your accommodation). You can also check out the local pub, [Bar Mourato](#).

Thursday - Dive Day 3.

- Head out for 2 dives with [Twin Peaks](#) [£75 pp for 2x dives](#).
Allow at least 18hrs between flying & diving – further deail by PADI [here](#).
- Check out [Cella Bar](#) for dinner ([overview here](#)), & if the weather's nice sit on the balcony to watch the sunset.

Friday morning - [Vinhas da Criação Velha track](#) or [this link](#).

- Drive to Madalena and find a car park close to the bus stop, it's across from the [Ferry terminal](#).
- Catch the south ("Sul") bus (Madalena-Lajes-Ribeirinha) and tell the driver you want to get off at Porto do Calhau. It's just after [Monte](#) & takes 10 mins. [Bus timetable here](#), (NB: Our bus was 45 mins late).
- When you get off find the side road to [Porto do Calhau](#) & walk down the road towards the coast (about 1 km). Here you will find the trail information board & the start of the walk which takes you along the coast & through the [UNESCO Vineyard heritage sight](#). The track ends at Joao Lima Point, approx. 1.5 Kms south of the Madalena Harbour (allow 2–3 hours).



Key.

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|----------------------|--|
| 1. Pico Airport | 8. Porto do Calhau |
| 2. Hiper SOLMAR | 9. UNESCO Windmill |
| 3. Casa Cais Mourato | 10. Pico Wines |
| 4. Bar Mourato | 11. Wine Museum |
| 5. Twin Peaks | 12. Mt. Pico* |
| 6. Cella Bar | 13. Whalers museum* |
| 7. Monte | <i>*worth going to if you have time.</i> |

Friday afternoon - Wine museum & tastings.

- Walk a further 30 mins to [Pico Wines](#) at [Cooperativa Vitivinicola of Ilha do Pico \(CVIP\)](#) for a wine tour & tastings (allow 1 hour) [£6.30 for 5 tastings](#).
NB: We've included all tour options & timings on the last page of this PDF.
- Next either head home or walk the 25 mins to the [wine museum](#) to learn about Pico's wine heritage (allow 30 mins) [£2 entry pp](#).
NB: this was something I didn't overly enjoy, but Jyles did!

Saturday - home time.

- Pack up and check out for your 2 leg flight back to London via São Miguel.

Fly home via São Miguel, then onwards to London.

Trip taken: 16 - 23 September 2017. Prices based on what was paid at time of booking.

Everything you need to know

What to bring

- Suitable exploring clothes
- Warm layers for cool evenings
- Rain coat
(it's more than likely to rain at least once during your time here)
- Bathing suit
(an old one that you don't mind staining at the thermal pools)
- Flip flops
- Walking shoes
- Sun glasses
- Camera
- Toiletries
- Portable speaker
- Portable phone charger
- Card games
(we love Monopoly Deal)
- Car phone holder
(to use as a GPS)
- Any diving gear (if you have it)

The Azores Islands

Location & distances to scale.



Total cost.

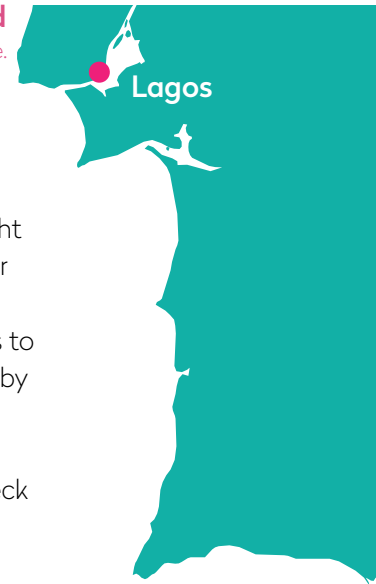
Most activities are free, or cheap (with the exception of scuba diving at standard pricing). All-in we spent £905 pp for the whole week (incl. 6x dives & all activities / excl. petrol & groceries, which were minimal).

When to go.

The summer months from June to September are said to be the best time to visit, but ensure you're prepared for a bit of rain.

Find more itineraries & videos of our adventures at generationexplorer.com

Portugal mainland
Location & distances to scale.



Tips.

General:

- There are limited direct flights to the Azores from London, as most go via Portugal mainland. Check flight times before planning your stay (we flew with Ryan Air direct to São Miguel from London).
- We always recommend picking up groceries for meals to save money (we've added links to local supermarkets by area in this itinerary).
- We 100% recommend hiring a car on both islands, especially if you are limited on time (remember to check parking arrangements with your accommodation).
- Prepare a playlist for your time in the car.
- Azores weather can change in an instant so it's worth being flexible with your plans, i.e. scuba diving or thermal baths can be visited rain or shine, whereas walks to scenic view points, or a boat trip to the islet, is much better in the sunshine.

São Miguel:

- We chose to stay in Vila Franca do Campo as it was central to the island & close to our diving excursions, however it was a very quiet town. If you're interested in somewhere more lively we would suggest staying in the main town Ponta Delgada.
- We made the mistake of visiting Caloura at the weekend when it was packed with children (definitely get here on a week-day instead if you can).
- Expect crowds at Ponta de Ferraria swimming hole. Although it's still a fun place to spend a couple of hours riding the small swell & freshening up.

Pico:

- With more time we would have loved to hike Mt. Pico! This time around we opted for diving instead.

Pico wines

Open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 8pm,
and Saturday from 3pm to 8pm.

Tours & times

From October to April

11:00am to 11:45am – Traditional Visit (Portuguese)

13:15pm to 14:00pm – Traditional Visit (English)

14:15pm to 15:15pm – Frei Gigante Visit (Portuguese)

15:30pm to 16:30pm – Frei Gigante Visit (English)

16:30pm to 17:30pm – Frei Gigante Visit (English)

From May to September

10:45am to 11:30am – Traditional Visit (Portuguese)

11:45pm to 12:45pm – Traditional Visit (English)

13:15pm to 14:15pm – Frei Gigante Visit (Portuguese)

14:45pm to 15:45pm – Frei Gigante Visit (English)

16:15pm to 18:00pm – Wine & Tapas (previous reservation is required – 1 day)

16:30pm to 17:30pm – Frei Gigant Visit (English)

18:00pm to 19:00pm – Frei Gigant Visit (English)

Saturday:

03:30pm (Portuguese guided tour)

05:30pm (English guided tour)



Tours & pricing

Guided tour without wine tasting

2,00€ p.p

Traditional Visit (guided tour with tasting of 3 wines)

3,80€ p.p

Frei Gigante Visit (guided tour with tasting of 5 wines)

7,20€ p.p

Wine & Tapas (guided tour with tasting of 6 wines and tapas)

12,90€ p.p

Sunday tours

For tours on Sunday, a reservation is required (10 people minimum).

– Make a reservation at visits@picowines.com or call (+351) 912.533.243