

# Ponta Delgada, Portugal - Canary Island & Atlantic Isle Cruises

The Azores rise from the ocean depths 900 miles off the Portuguese coast. The largest city in the Azores, Ponta Delgada is located on Sao Miguel, the largest island in the group. This Atlantic stepping-stone also claims to produce the world's finest pineapples, you'll just have to decide that for yourself.

## Excursions

Please note: The shore excursions listed are typical for this port. The full programme of shore excursions available for your cruise will be displayed on Cruise Personaliser at least 12 weeks prior to departure.

### • Countryside & Wine Tasting

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Visit one of the oldest villages on Sao Miguel where traditional lifestyles are still retained and enjoy Azorean cheese and wine.

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Under the Miradouro da Vista do Rei, from which point King Charles the first of Portugal contemplated this impressive panorama in 1901, lie two volcanic lakes - the Green and the Blue Lake, separated by a narrow bridge. Together the two lakes cover an area of 482 hectares and they are 18 metres deep at their greatest depth. You will have the opportunity to admire these lakes from above.

On the shores of the Blue Lake is the village of Sete Cidades; enigmatic in its own name (Seven Cities) and surrounded by the dark forest-covered walls of the Caldeira. The impressive Caldeira of Sete Cidades dominates the entire region of Sete Cidades, which with its seven miles diameter, is the most spectacular volcanic scene in the Azores. A brief stop will be made for you to admire the Santiago Lake, inaccessibly situated at the bottom of an extinct crater and unique for its rare beauty.

You will be served a selection of the best Azorean wines and cheeses in a leading hotel in Ponta Delgada. The hotel veranda overlooks the harbour bay and offers pleasant views of the city's port and marina. You will have the chance to shop for local handicrafts at the hotel's gift shop.

Tour code

PDL\_004

#### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: LOW

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REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED

Duration

3¼ HOURS

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### • Fire Lakes & Mountains

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Visit the oldest town in the Azores, Ribeira Grande, before driving up to the summit of Pico da Barrosa for the views of Fire Lake.

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Leaving Ponta Delgada, you will head northwards along pleasant country roads, bordered by flowers. Green meadows stretch away into the distance until you reach Ribeira Grande. This is one of the oldest towns in the Azores and the only one of any size in the north coast. You will have time with your guide to admire the pretty little town square and the church, or do some independent sightseeing. Notice the interesting architecture, typical of the island; buildings constructed in basalt with original windows and decorations.

Pico da Barrosa is in the centre of the island and the Fire Lake occupies the crater of an extinct volcano, from where you will have magnificent views. Surrounded by some of the original vegetation of the island, this is an enormous lake with transparent waters, located in an atmosphere of great calm and beauty.

A short stop will be made at the small Pineapple Plantation to discover the various growth stages of the pineapple, before returning to Ponta Delgada.

### Tour code

PDL\_003

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: MEDIUM

### Duration

3½ HOURS

## • Jeep Tour

The pleasure of being off-road and relaxing near crystal-clear streams will make this excursion one of your most memorable.

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Discover the island of San Miguel in vehicles best suited for the terrain. The journey will take you into the mountains, leaving the town behind and reveal to you lesser-known areas. The ruggedness of the high mountains, covered with trees indigenous to the area, hydrangeas and other varieties of vegetation, contrasts with the softness of the valleys, sparkling clear streams and small villages that you pass.

Vast farmland guarantees richness to the population and travelling through these areas will bring you into contact with the nature and friendliness of the local people.

### Tour code

PDL\_007

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: HIGH

### Duration

3½ HOURS

## • Whale & Dolphin Watch

Witness the beauty of whales and dolphins of the Azores on this Eco Adventure, ideal for those who want to feel close to nature.

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The isolated archipelago of the Azores has a well-deserved reputation as being one of the best whale watching destinations in the world. Your boat adventure will begin a short walk away from your ship, where you will venture out into the open sea to search for these fascinating mammals.

The Azores attracts 24 species of cetaceans with Sperm Whales being the most common. Other whales that visit include the Humpback, Minky, Blue, Sei, Northern Bottlenose Whales and the Sowerby's Beaked Whale. Regular encounters are made with the Pilot Whale, Orca Whale and Pseudorca Whale, as well as the Common, Bottlenose, Risso's and Striped Dolphin.

Prior to setting off, you will be given a short briefing by one of the whale-watching experts. The crew on board are available during your excursion to answer any questions you may have on marine life and the rich history of the Azores.

### Tour code

PDL\_011

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: LOW

### Duration

3½ HOURS

## • Furnas Valley & Hot Springs

Furnas Valley is one of richest hydrological areas in Europe with over 22 thermal springs; a truly breathtaking site.

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Heading out of Ponta Delgada towards the North East, you will see roads lined with Japanese Cedars, Hydrangeas and Ginger Lilies until you reach Ribeira Grande, a unique city with a strong feeling of Portuguese influence.

Heading further north towards a wonderful lookout point, Pico do Ferro Belvedere spectacular views over the Furnas Valley. Descending the Valley, you will have time to explore the Terra Nostra Gardens. Developed over the centuries, the Gardens have an extensive selection of trees from all over the world, as well as a serpentine canal, grottoes, camellias, ferns and cycas.

With over 22 hot springs, Furnas Valley in the area of San Miguel, is where volcanic nature still remains an important part of the island's culture. Locals still make use of the Caldeiras (hot springs) for cooking a kind of stew called 'cozido' using the natural steam venting along the shores of Furnas Lake.

Your return journey will pass by Vila Franca do Campo, the former capital of the island.

### Tour code

PDL\_008

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: MEDIUM

### Duration

5 HOURS

## • City Walk & Botanical Gardens

An opportunity to discover Ponta Delgada on foot, and enjoy the charming Botanical Gardens.

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Setting off from the port, enjoy a brief drive to the centre where, upon arrival, your walking tour will commence. Ponta Delgada is well known for its churches and you will head to one of the most visited, the Church of St Sebastian. The Gothic style church is believed to have been constructed between 1531 and 1547.

Your walk will then continue through the bustling main streets of Ponta Delgada before making a stop at the Convent and Chapel of Our Lady of Hope. The richly decorated 16th century chapel is home to the statue of 'Jesus Christ of the Miracles', a present given to the nuns of the convent by Pope Clement VII in 1530.

After your walking tour, you will rejoin your coach for a short drive to the Jose Canto Botanical Garden. Here, you can learn the history of Jose Canto, a renowned gardener and botanist, and enjoy a stroll through the pleasant gardens. To round off your tour, another short drive will take you to the Antonio Borges Botanical Gardens, established by local politician and merchant trader António Borges Medeiros, an avid 19th century amateur botanist. Take a wander through the gardens, before the return drive to the port.

### Tour code

PDL\_010

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: MEDIUM

### Duration

3½ HOURS

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## • Crater Lakes

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This tour provides a rewarding introduction to the Azores, with its historic maritime capital, green fields and dramatic scenery.

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Driving past lush meadows bordered by hydrangeas to nearly 609 metres above sea level, you will reach the extinct Sete Cidades. A giant crater eight miles in circumference, where they say at the bottom were once 'Seven Cities'. From the edge of the crater, you will see there are now lakes, the two largest of which, will particularly attract your attention. One is bright blue, reflecting the colour of the sky, and the other is bright green reflecting the vegetation of the crater walls.

Your next stop will be at the famous Antonio Borges Botanical Gardens. Planted in the mid-19th century, the Botanical Gardens are a peaceful haven with exotic trees, wooded groves and lush lawns.

Afterwards, continue to the suburb of Abelheira and enjoy a short stop at the small Pineapple Plantation. Discover the various growth stages of the pineapple, which can take up to two years to grow, before returning to Ponta Delgada.

### Tour code

PDL\_009

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: MEDIUM

### Duration

3½ HOURS

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## • Golf at Batalha

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The breathtaking landscape of the Azores is the perfect setting for an unforgettable round of golf.

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Designed by Cameron Powell in 1986, the stunning Batalha golf course consists of 27 holes of golf laid out over 120 hectares and is situated on the north coast of São Miguel, just 15 minutes from the port. This relatively new course, with its magnificent setting, nestled on the skirts of the surrounding hills and with sweeping views of the ocean, has large flowing greens, wide and generous fairways and sinuously contoured bunkers.

You can enjoy the luxuriant surroundings and the fabulous scenery at a more leisurely pace by hiring one of the club's golf buggies. It is difficult to select a best hole as they are all in some ways exceptional, but there is a very special sensation to be felt when standing on the soaring 15th tee.

The Club House, with its perfect blend of classical island architecture and modern facilities, covers over 3,000 square metres and offers a superb range of services. With its elevated views, across the course to the mountains and the blue Atlantic ocean, there can be very few better places, anywhere, to enjoy a drink, snack or meal either before or after a round of golf.

## Tour code

PDL\_012

## Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: HIGH

## Duration

4½ HOURS

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