
Essential holiday information

“Whale’come!”

Physical fitness

These holidays are for active people of a reasonable standard of physical fitness. Please inform us of any changes in your health and fitness since completing the medical form. The boat trips themselves are moderately strenuous. Please discuss this with us if you have any concerns. The boats have been described in previous literature.

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Money

The local lingo is Portuguese, although most people we work with speak excellent English. The currency is in Euros. There are cash machines in town. You can pay by credit card for food at the hotel and for souvenirs at the whale watch base or hotel or carry some cash. There is very little to spend money on for the serious shoppers, so be prepared!

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What you will need to bring

- Sea temperatures are 22-24oC. Perfectly warm to swim for short periods. If you do plan to swim in the sea , a wetsuit is highly recommended especially in the spring
 - Light waterproof/windproof jackets. The boat company will supply rainproof jackets for heavy rain but bring waterproof trousers if you want to keep completely dry in the event of some big weather or spray on the boats. Bring clothes that dry quickly as humidity can be high
 - Bring a small torch – there are infrequent power cuts so bringing a small torch will be invaluable to you in such situations.
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Information sheet for guests staying at the
Town Hotel, Whale Watching 2014



Whale’come!

This information sheet is to wish you a wonderful trip to the Azores and to confirm any last minute details. We are sure you are getting very excited by now. The spring and summer are a very beautiful time to go to the Azores and the migrating dolphins and whales have started arriving there, we have been told there are more marine mammals than ever this year!

Contact Details Please contact either Amanda or Gaynor if you need any further information:
Tel: 01273 882778 info@dolphinandwhaleconnection.com

Emergency contact in resort Please contact our local representatives in resort, Espaco Talassa Whalecome in the event of an emergency:
Tel: 00 351 292 672010 Mobile: 919432262

Please call our UK office on + 44 (0) 1273 882778 or our UK mobile + 44 (0)7932 154690 if you experience any problems contacting our local representatives.

- Sun hats that stay on, sunglasses and sun protection are essential.
- If you are prone to seasickness please bring some medication, ginger etc
- Valid passport, standard health and valuables insurance, drivers license (If you want to hire a car)
- Waterproof bag/rucksack for boat and shoes that grip, beach towel and waterproof jacket for an occasional light shower.
- The hotel provides all towels and linen.
- Warm fleece, warm hat layers or sweater for the boat if temperature drops and wind picks up

Other activities

Tours of the island are available. The Boat Company now has a mountain and Island tour guide. This is to give you a chance to appreciate the island's rugged beauty and magical charm. There is access to swim in the sea, nearby walks, bird watching, snorkelling in the lagoon and rocky coves (the beaches are mostly volcanic rock). We also offer talks and presentations on marine wildlife. There is a newly refurbished whaler's museum giving the history of the old whaling culture which stopped 25 years ago.

Tours

For those wanting more activities, ask the base to arrange visits to the underground caves "Gruta da Torres", wonderful hiking, Jeep Tour, nature walks, climb up the volcano. Sea Kayaks are available and mountain bikes.

English speaking taxi drivers can offer additional sightseeing, you can do mountain bike riding, horse and donkey riding. Try CARLOS on 00 351 913811328

The program can be as relaxed or active as you choose...

Getting there

Baggage delays and what to take on board

We suggest you bring essentials in your hand luggage, a change of clothes and a wash bag. The reason is that TAP has been known to not get all bags on the plane!! Delayed luggage can take 24hours to get to the hotel. We wanted to warn you to be on the safe side, although the delayed luggage has improved significantly over previous years and it is unlikely to occur. If any luggage does not arrive you can report this to baggage re-claim by the baggage carousel (our transfer people will wait for you and inform us of any subsequent changes necessary for your onward journey).

Transferring flights at Lisbon

Please note that Lisbon Airport has 2 terminals, so check which one your island flight departs from. If your luggage has been checked through to the Azores you will NOT have to collect it in Lisbon. If you are staying in Lisbon you may want to keep luggage with you and check in again in the morning then make sure the taxi takes you to the correct terminal for departures to your island in the Azores.

Your transfer from your airport in the Azores

You will be met at the either Horta or Pico airports by our representative holding a sign "Espaco Talasa Whale watching " and possibly the individual names of each client. We have your airport info so have arranged your transfer.

There will not be a Whale and Dolphin Connection guide at the airport, but your transfer from the airport to the hotel will be with the local representative. If you miss your connection in Lisbon, please inform the hotel and whale watch base (see emergency contact numbers above) If your flight arrival in the Azores is delayed, our local transfer representatives will know about it and will still meet you and take you to the next available ferry (if required) or directly to your hotel.

Climbing the volcano

(Please note this is optional and arranged as an extra activity and is NOT part of the holiday)

It is an awesome and spectacular experience. Please remember this climb requires good equipment for those who are fit. We have a guide available to accompany the group for a supplementary cost. The climb can be done as a day climb or early morning. We do not recommend anyone to do the climb alone. Please contact us for information on what equipment to bring if you do intend to do this climb. It is possible to do a part day climb without special equipment.

Weather

Weather conditions are described below. The spring /summer season is generally a very good climate. If there is a bad weather pattern or high winds it generally only stays for a day or so as this oceanic climate is very changeable. The skippers and marine experts can advise us of conditions which can change dramatically in a short space of time. We have to be flexible and go with nature on this. After 10 years of experience, we say on average, if unlucky you could lose 1 day out of 6, due to bad weather. If a trip gets cancelled, we will re-schedule trips for you as we have booked more than we need. This will not incur any extra charges to you. We do everything in our power to ensure you get out on the water. It also means that if the weather is good, we will be able to offer extra trips at a minimal cost. If a guest chooses not to take a pre booked boat trip, they will forfeit this trip. It is NOT the responsibility of The Dolphin and Whale Connection to provide alternative trips in this instance. If a trip is cancelled, we offer an alternative program of activities

Transfer

From Horta airport, Faial Island to your hotel on Pico

Transfer to the hotel on the neighbouring island of Pico involves a short taxi ride to the port in Horta, 10 minute journey to the port. Then there is a 25 minute ferry ride to the port of Madalena on the destination island of Pico. The taxi driver will give you your ferry tickets. If you need to wait in Horta, take a walk along the harbour wall to see the paintings of the transatlantic boat crews and see all the boats in the harbour. Also look out for the famous "Peters Bar" It is a real seafaring town, and a stroll to see the yachts is a must. Please be aware of the timing of the ferry as told to you by the transfer person, so you do not miss it!!

Arrival PICO airport

Our taxi driver will meet most of you in the hotel mini bus, with an Espaco Talassa sign and your name. The journey takes about 45minutes to the hotel. In the unlikely event that you are delayed or lost, you can make your own way as all the taxi drivers will know the hotel from the port of Madalena on Pico. It is in Lajes do Pico.

If you are delayed or lost, please inform us via the hotel, as we will be looking for you (see emergency contact numbers above)

The Hotel

The hotel is situated overlooking the harbour and breakfast is taken in the hotel restaurant as a delicious buffet of breads, cereal, fruit, cheeses, cold meats, yoghurt and cakes. Cooked breakfasts are available by request. The hotel provides all bed linen and towels.

On arrival

You can purchase drinks and light snacks in the hotel bar on arrival. There will be no scheduled activities on this day, except for a brief introductory meeting and an orientation, which will be arranged to link in with the afternoon arrivals. On the second day there will be an orientation and briefing about the marine life of the Azores, after breakfast, to prepare for going out on the boats in the afternoon. This is also a chance for you to ask any questions. The boat operator will give you your boat schedule but please note this can change due to weather and the logistics with the boats.

	Rainfall (mm)	Min°C	Max°C
Jan	112	12	16
Feb	98	11	16
March	81	12	17
April	65	13	16
May	56	14	19
June	49	16	21
July	35	18	24
Aug	54	19	25
Sept	90	19	24
Oct	100	17	21
Nov	115	15	19
Dec	120	13	17

Meals

The lunch and evening meal is not included in the price of the holiday. There are cafes and shops to buy lunch in the town, and of course light lunches are served at the hotel. We will recommend all our favourite restaurants so you can sample the local cuisine.

WiFi and mobile reception

The hotel has wireless broadband for laptops and is happy to provide a fax service from the reception. Also there is a small internet cafe to access your own email in the local town if for some reason the hotel system is not working adequately. There is usually good mobile phone coverage at the hotel from your European mobile phones.

Your Boat Trips & talks

Your boat trips will either be in the mornings or afternoons lasting about 3 hours. There are 5 scheduled trips with additional trips if requested and available. Our whale watch company marine biologist will offer a presentation and slide show and will be available to discuss life in the Azorean ocean. Each evening there is a presentation from one of the team on subjects relating to the Ocean, the cetaceans and the Island. There is also a show of the award winning photographers who work as skippers on the boats here in the Azores whose work is very impressive.

We wish you a wonderful adventure and a very memorable and fulfilling experience. Please do not hesitate to call should you have any more queries.

It has been a pleasure helping you make this trip happen and we are looking forward to meeting you in person and sharing the ocean adventure together,

With warm wishes, dolphin delight and wonderful whales

Amanda & Team of The Dolphin and Whale Connection and the ESPACO Team