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## *Essential Information*

# ***Whale & Dolphin Watching***

### *Sao Miguel Island, Azores*

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#### **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. This is a very beautiful time to visit the Azores and the sightings of dolphins and whales continue to be exceptional so be prepared for anything!

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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.

Please read this carefully and ensure you have sent us your completed booking forms and medical forms.

**Please also ensure that when you arrive in the Azores, you hand your Accommodation Voucher to the hotel reception and your Activity Voucher to the boat base reception.**

#### **If you need to contact us before departing for the**

**Azores** Please contact the Dolphin and Whale Connection office in the UK Tel: + 44 (0) 1273 882778 email: [info@dolphinandwhaleconnection.com](mailto:info@dolphinandwhaleconnection.com)

#### **If you need to contact us once you have departed for the Azores regarding any alterations to your travel**

**plans** Please contact our local representatives in Ponta Delgada: Futurismo tel: +351 296 628 522 or +351 296 010 083 or TM +351 967 805 101

**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.**



## What you will need to bring

- Light waterproof/windproof jackets are useful for the occasional shower on the boats or land. The boat company will supply rainproof jackets in the event of heavy rain.
- Sun hats that stay on, sunglasses and sun protection are essential.
- If you are prone to seasickness please bring some medication.
- Valid passport, standard health and valuables insurance, drivers license (If you want to hire a car)
- Waterproof bag/rucksack for the boat to protect your camera equipment from the occasional sea spray. Shoes that grip.

## Getting There

*Please give yourselves plenty of time to check in for your flight to the Azores (especially if you are flying from Stansted - it gets VERY busy 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 in the event that the airline delays your baggage (more likely if you are transferring planes).

**Transferring flights at Lisbon** Some flights are direct to Ponta Delgada (PDL) and others involve a plane change in Lisbon. Please note that Lisbon Airport has 2 terminals, so check which one your PDL 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 make sure the taxi takes you to the correct terminal for departures to Ponta Delgada, Sao Miguel in the Azores.

**Your transfer from your airport in the Azores** You will be met at Ponta Delgada Airport, Sao Miguel Island, Azores by our representative from **Futurismo** holding a sign with our logo on it and/or their company's logo (see below)



We have your flight information and have arranged your transfer according to the information provided to us. If you miss your connection in Lisbon, please inform our local representatives Futurismo tel +351 296 628 522 or +351 296 010 083 or or TM +351 967 805 101 (24hrs). If your flight arrival in the Azores is delayed, our local transfer representatives will know about it and will still meet you.

**On arrival at your hotel** Please present your Accommodation Voucher to the hotel receptionist on arrival. This details what has been pre-paid for your accommodation. You will be able to pay the hotel directly for additional items such as use of the mini bar or room service when you check out.

You can purchase drinks and light snacks in the hotel bar on arrival. If you have time, you can visit the boat base and main office for an orientation and to check your boat schedule.

## Other activities & tours

For those wanting more activities, the boat base can arrange inland tours of the island. This is an excellent chance to appreciate the island's rugged beauty and magical charm.

There is also access to swim in the sea, nearby walks, bird watching, snorkelling in the lagoon and rocky coves (the beaches are mostly volcanic rock). Wonderful hiking, jeep tours, bike tours and nature walks.

Children will enjoy the outdoor swimming pool located by the boat base and the local botanical gardens will be very exciting to explore!

Ponte Delgada's shopping centre, Parque Atlântico, is within walking distance of our hotels; ask staff at your hotel reception for directions. The program can be as relaxed or active as you choose.

**Meals** Your breakfast will be delicious buffet with plenty of fresh fruit, breads, cheeses, meats and cereals. There is also cooked breakfast option on the buffet. You can purchase drinks and bar food in the hotel bar which also offers room service until midnight (for those of you arriving late in the evening). 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 the hotel has a very good restaurant offering an extensive range of meals.

**WIFI and mobile reception** The hotel has wireless broadband for laptops. There is good mobile phone coverage at the hotel and all over the town.

**Room facilities** Rooms come equipped with a safety deposit box. Bring a small kettle with a European adapter if you want to make hot drinks in your room as there are no tea/coffee making facilities.

## Your hotel address and location

Please refer to your Accommodation Voucher sent with this Welcome Letter for your hotel details and hotel contact information. Locate your hotel on the map below to view the distance from the hotel to the boat base (all hotels are within walking distance of the boat base and the marina). The Sao Miguel Park Hotel for example, is a 15 minute walk from the boat base.

## Our Boat Base Location in Ponta Delgada

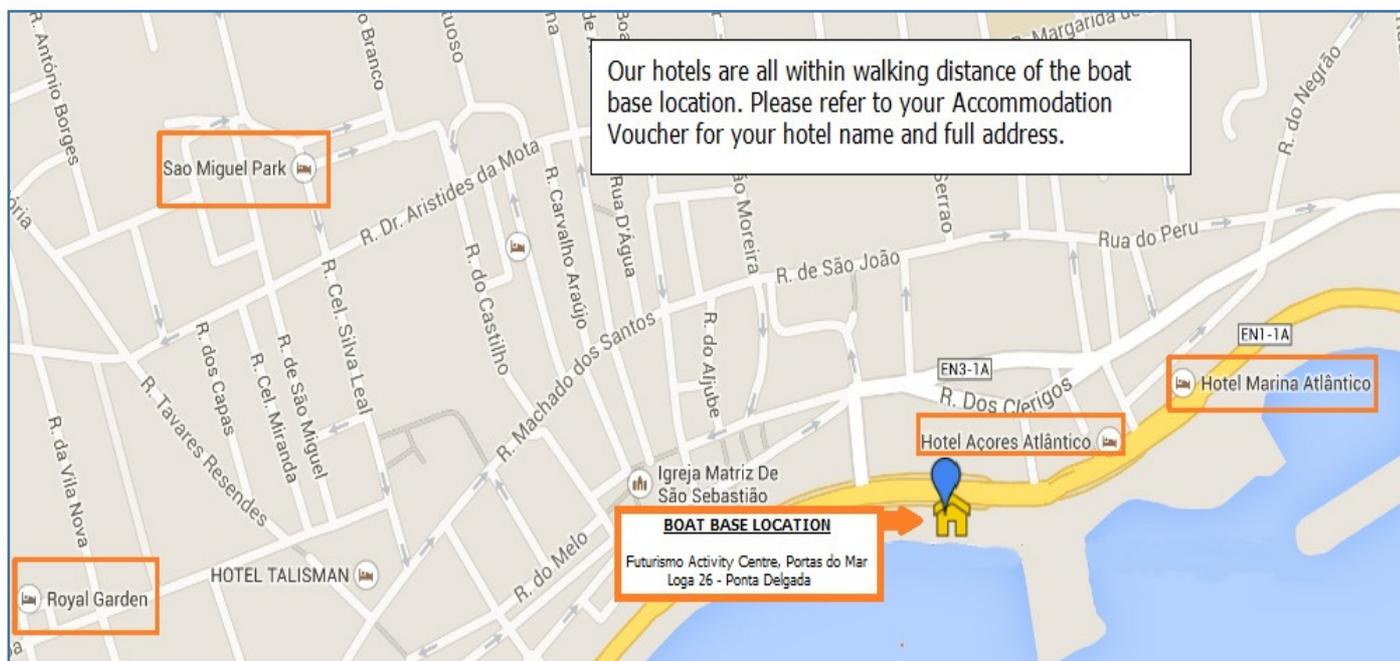
### FUTURISMO ACTIVITY CENTRE (see map below)

Portas do Mar . Loja 26

Marina Pêro de Teive . Loja A . Ponta Delgada

Tel +351 296 628 522 or +351 296 010 083

TM +351 967 805 101



## 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. 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. If a guest chooses not to take a pre booked boat trip, they will forfeit this trip. Please note, it is NOT the responsibility of The Dolphin and Whale Connection to provide alternative trips in this instance. If a trip is cancelled, we also offer an alternative program of activities.

## Your Boat Trip Schedule

Present your Activity Voucher to the reception staff at our boat base (see map above). When you make your first visit to the boat base to check your schedule, please check boat times and the best time to collect your pre-boarding ticket (we suggest you find out about the quieter times to collect your pre-boarding ticket as the booking desk can get very busy).

Your boat trips will either be in the mornings or afternoons lasting about 3 hours. There are 3 or 5 scheduled trips with additional trips depending upon your preference at booking. Please note your boat schedule can change if we have to cancel due to bad weather. In this instance, you will be offered revised times and land activities as an alternative to going out to sea.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If we are not able to reschedule a cancelled trip, please ask the boat base to exchange this for a half day tour on land or an alternative day at sea. Partial refunds for trips are possible but it is better value for you to exchange for an alternative tour while you are there.



There will be a briefing about the marine life of the Azores and the boat trips. This is also a chance for you to ask any questions. There are regular audio/visual presentations offered by the marine biologist either in the lecture room or on the boat. This will give you very thorough information to prepare you before you go out on the ocean. All through the trip our resident Marine Biologist will be giving you information about species and behaviour. They are really happy to answer any questions you may have and to spend time talking to you in greater detail. Please ask lots of questions!

## Your transfer back to the airport from your hotel

Please confirm the pick up time & hotel (detailed on your Activity Voucher) for your transfer to the airport with Futurismo (the boat company who also organise your airport transfers for you). You can do this anytime during the week of your holiday at the boat base. Your pick up time from the hotel is always 2 hrs prior to your flight departure time (check your latest flight information from your travel documents and ensure that Futurismo have the correct pick up time for you).

**PLEASE NOTE:** If we are not able to reschedule a cancelled trip, please ask the boat base to exchange this for a half day tour on land or an alternative day at sea. Partial refunds for trips are possible but it is better value for you to exchange for an alternative tour while you are there.

**Average rainfall & temperature in the Azores**

	Rainfall (mm)	Min°C	Max°C
Jan	112	12	16
Feb	98	11	16
Mar	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

## Ponta Delgada – mini restaurant guide

*We have compiled the following list of our favourite restaurants in Ponta Delgada which we hope will be useful to you. Your hotel reception will be happy to make reservations. Many of these restaurants get fully booked so we recommend booking a table.*

**Conmaya** 5 mins from the Sao Miguel Park Hotel, great local cuisine with an international style.

**Collegio 27** International Cuisine and Jazz club Tel: (00 351) 910 441 214. One of our favourites, everything cooked with an exquisite attention to flavours and presentation, great atmosphere.

**Anfiteatro** Tel: 296 206 154/5 Close to the whale watch base and yacht club. **Downstairs** at the very end of the Pavilhao do Mar – views of the harbour and boats, relaxed atmosphere. Great salads, wraps and “deli” food with sushi sometimes on the menu. **Upstairs** - big open plan restaurant serving international cuisine with an emphasis on experimental dishes good selection of wines and a taster menu with wine to go with each course.

**Tasca Rua do Aljube** Tel: 296 288 880 Busy, local fare and tapas, great atmosphere “Art, Food, Friends”

**Cais** Tel: 20 962 822 004 or 296 384 811 Local fish restaurant with great sea views and 15 min drive from the centre. The restaurant will do a free pick up from the hotel and then drop you back (it is important to reconfirm this pick-up during the busy season). Popular with the locals, it has a lively atmosphere, authentic Azorean sea food and is reasonably priced.

**Rotas** - Rua Pedro Homen (49) VEGETARIAN Tel: 296 628 560 Excellent vegetarian restaurant with an alternative “arty” feel, fantastic unusual dishes and mouth watering desserts.

**Mimo.it** Tel: 296 282 290 Excellent Italian cuisine

**Arriba** Mexican, Reasonably priced, near the centre (ask at reception for details)

**Sao Miguel Park Hotel** If you are staying at the Sao Miguel Park Hotel, a buffet is served from 7 - 9:30pm every evening which costs 15 euros per person or 22 euros per person with unlimited wine & beer!

**Reserva Tapas Bar** Tel: 351 910 543 159 highly rated on Trip Advisor.

We wish you a wonderful adventure and a very memorable and fulfilling experience with the whales & dolphins. 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 & The Team at The Dolphin and Whale Connection**