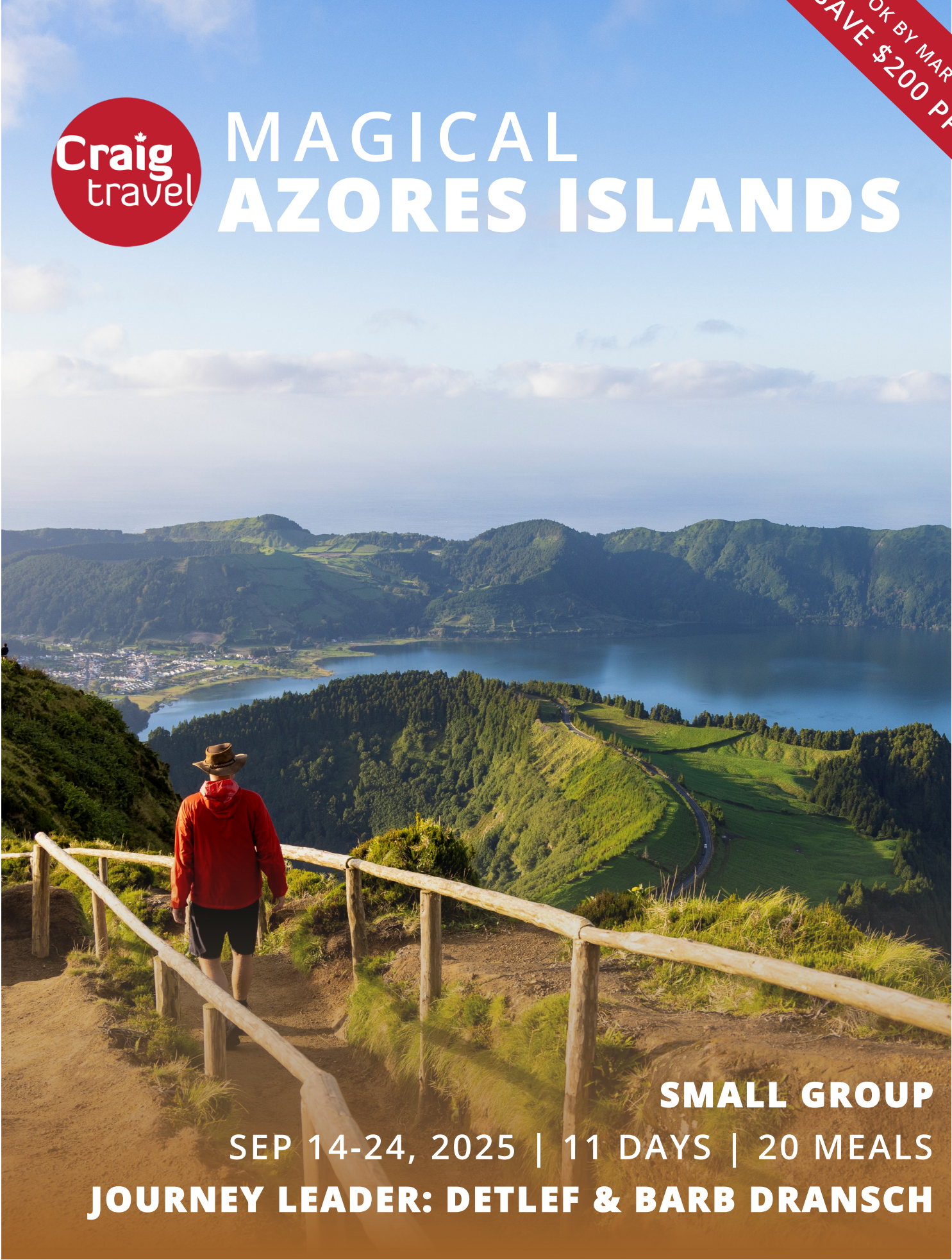


BOOK BY MAR 18
SAVE \$200 PP



MAGICAL AZORES ISLANDS



SMALL GROUP

SEP 14-24, 2025 | 11 DAYS | 20 MEALS

JOURNEY LEADER: DETLEF & BARB DRANSCH

The Twin Lakes of Sete Cidades

Sprinkled across the Mid-Atlantic, the nine islands of the Azores stand as a testament to a rich past, where quaint villages and lush farms blend seamlessly with modern life. Discovered in the 15th century, these islands quickly became vital stopovers for treasure-laden ships sailing from the Americas.

Today, as an autonomous region of Portugal, the Azores epitomize natural splendour. Volcanic peaks, charming homesteads, and fishing hamlets dot the landscape, offering an escape into unspoiled nature. Our journey through São Miguel, Terceira, Faial, and Pico reveals the unique spirit of each island. We will wander through colourful harbourside plazas, cross rolling pastures, and peer from belvederes into luminous crater lakes. Over the course of ten days, you'll see why these islands draw travellers seeking something different.



SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

LIMITED TO ONLY 25 MEMBERS

Highlights

- Two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The historic centre of Angra do Heroísmo and the vineyards of Pico Island
- Ponta Delgada, the capital of the Azores
- Swim in the geothermal pools of São Miguel
- Visit a wine museum and learn about the traditions of Azorean winemaking
- Europe's only tea plantation
- The geothermal fumaroles of Furnas Valley
- Pineapple plantation tour in Ponta Delgada
- Magnificent views of the twin lakes of Sete Cidades
- Visit the Capelinhos Volcano Interpretative Centre to learn about the 1957-1958 eruption that added 2.4 square kilometres to Faial Island

Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare from Canada to the Azores Islands on SATA Airlines
- Comfortable first class centrally located hotels as indicated or similar
- 20 meals (B - 9 breakfasts, L - 7 lunches, D - 4 dinners)
- Comprehensive tours of each island visited including all entrance fees as indicated
- Welcome and farewell dinners
- All gratuities, surcharges, taxes and fees for included services
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare
- Services of our Canadian journey leaders plus professional drivers and guides in destination

Journey Leaders

Detlef and Barb Dransch are thrilled to be the journey leaders for this upcoming trip to the Azores. They enjoy visiting new places, experiencing local culture, and meeting new people. Together their travels have included South America, Costa Rica, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. Detlef has organized private motorcycle tours in the Alps, Norway, and North America. He is retired from a high-tech career in Ottawa and Barb from a career in finance in the non-profit sector. Both enjoy hiking and are active volunteers in their church community. Detlef also enjoys photography, playing squash, and alpine skiing. Barb has an open and curious mind and has recently delved into the issues of climate change and affordable housing. They look forward to their next adventure, sharing their experiences with fellow travellers, and creating new memories.



SEP 14, Sunday

Travellers from across Canada gather in Toronto for their flights to Terceira Island.

DEPART CANADA

SEP 15, Monday

TERCEIRA ISLAND
Terceira, whose name means "Third" in Portuguese, was the third island discovered and remains the third largest. Upon arrival, we'll meet our local guide and proceed to Angra do Heroísmo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This historic city, with its harbour sheltered by volcanic cliffs, served as a key hub for transatlantic trade from the 16th to 18th centuries. Our touring includes the Palace of the Captains General, the Public Gardens, and the Convent of São Gonçalo, the oldest in the city, renowned for its collection of 18th-century Portuguese tiles. We will also visit the Cathedral of Angra do Heroísmo, which features an Indo-Portuguese lectern, intricate silverwork, and a 16th-century wooden painting. The day concludes with a welcome dinner at the hotel. **Terceira Mar Hotel** (3 nights) D

SEP 16, Tuesday

TERCEIRA ISLAND
Drive up to Monte Brasil and stop at Pico das Cruzinhas Belvedere for great views over Angra do Heroísmo. In the centre of the island, visit Algar do Carvão, a 100-metre-deep volcanic cave with unique rock formations and an

underground lake. Along the east coast, you'll pass through villages with colourful houses and green fields bordered by lava stone walls. Stop in São Sebastião to see the historic parish church's frescoes and an Império nearby - these small, bright chapels have hosted Holy Ghost festivals since medieval times. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before heading to Praia da Vitória for a short stroll. Then drive through Serra do Cume, taking in panoramic views of Lajes and the ocean, before arriving in the wine region of Biscoitos to visit a wine museum. BLD

SEP 17, Wednesday

TERCEIRA

Today, you'll have the opportunity to choose between two optional exciting activities: heading out to sea in search of whales passing through the archipelago, or taking an easy 6-km coastal hike. Alternatively, you can simply unwind at the hotel and make use of the amenities. Please inform our sales specialists of your preferred activity when making your final payment. B

SEP 18, Thursday **TERCEIRA / FAIAL ISLAND / PICO**

A short early morning flight takes us to Faial Island, where we'll stop at Espalmaca Belvedere for views of Horta's harbour. Next, we'll visit the Caldeira, a volcanic crater at the island's highest point, surrounded by dramatic scenery. At Capelinhos, we'll explore the landscape shaped by the 1957–1958 volcanic eruption and visit the underground Capelinhos Volcano Interpretation Centre to learn about the eruption, global volcanic activity, and the history of Azorean lighthouses. After lunch at Varadouro, a coastal retreat known for its natural volcanic swimming pools, we'll head to the harbour to catch a ferry to Pico Island, where we'll settle in for the next few nights.

Hotel Caravelas (3 nights)

BL

SEP 19, Friday

PICO ISLAND

Our day begins with a leisurely stroll through the village of Madalena. Just outside town, we'll visit the unique vineyards of Criação Velha, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Following some free time for lunch, we'll follow the southern coast to the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus in São Mateus. From there, we'll head to Lajes do Pico, the island's oldest village, where the whaling museum offers a glimpse into Pico's deep connection with whaling. On the way back to the hotel, we'll stop at Lagoa do Capitão, a great spot for photos. BL

SEP 20, Saturday

PICO

Today we travel along the island's north coast, passing by and visiting various communities along the way. After lunch in Prainha, we'll stop at Mistério da Prainha, a local nature reserve formed during the Azores' longest recorded volcanic eruption (1562–1564). Our route back to the hotel takes us through the beautiful central plateau. BL

SEP 21, Sunday

PICO / SÃO MIGUEL ISLAND

A morning flight brings us to São Miguel, the largest and most geographically diverse of the islands. We start our exploration on the western side, with Sete Cidades, which is renowned for its scenic mountains and lakes. Along the way, take in coastal views, lush pastures, and charming cattle farms. Stop to visit a pineapple plantation and learn about its cultivation. The day concludes in the spa town of Furnas. **Terra Nostra Garden Hotel** (3 nights) BLD



São Miguel's thermal pools offer pure relaxation



Mount Pico, the highest peak in the Azores



Rolling tea plantations of the Azores



The quaint town of Horta, Faial Island

SEP 22, Monday **THE EAST END**
 Moving east across São Miguel, we visit Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park, known for its waterfall, 16th-century waterfalls, and hiking trails. From there, we continue to the seaside village of Nordeste and follow the eastern coastline, stopping at various viewpoints to take in the incredible scenery. After lunch in Povoação, we return to Furnas, where you can choose between an optional lakeside hike (9.5 km / 3 hrs) to the Hermitage of Nossa Senhora das Vitórias or relax in our hotel's thermal swimming pool. **BL**

SEP 23, Tuesday **LAGOA DO FOGO / FURNAS**
 Venturing high into São Miguel's mountains, we will overlook the stunning Lagoa do Fogo (Fire Lake) — a sapphire volcanic lake whose name hints at its fiery origins. This serene crater lake encapsulates the island's mystical landscapes. As we cross one of the island's highest points, we will be treated to vistas of both the southern and northern coasts. In Ribeira Grande, the 17th and 18th-century Baroque architecture will transport us back in time, before we return to the dramatic present-day coastline, sculpted by volcanic rock. Our visit to Gorreana, home to Europe's only commercially grown tea, reveals meticulously cultivated terraces. Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner and folkloric show at Vale das Furnas Restaurant. **BLD**

SEP 24, Wednesday **PONTA DELGADA / CANADA**
 Ponta Delgada is the largest city and the capital of the Azores. While the city continues to expand, its historic centre remains well-preserved, with whitewashed buildings accented by black basalt trim. Our walking tour begins at the City Gates, a symbol of Ponta Delgada. From there, we continue to City Hall to see the ornate statue of St. Michael the Archangel, the city's patron saint. We'll also visit the Matriz Church and the Museum of Sacred Art, housed in the former Jesuit College. The tour concludes at the Convento da Esperança and the Sanctuary of Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres, one of the most significant religious sites in the Azores. After some free time for lunch, we'll transfer to the airport for our direct flight to Toronto, with connections across Canada. **B**



The twin lakes of Sete Cidades

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CT Rating 3/5 - Moderately Challenging: This tour is designed as a leisurely, in-depth experience with two or three nights at most hotels. The journey includes extensive touring through the hilly islands. There will be opportunities for longer walks but these are optional for those interested. A number of walks are included which will involve hills, cobblestones and some steps. The islands themselves are quite hilly and this may affect those with limited mobility. All members need to be physically fit and able to meet our basic criteria to fully enjoy this journey.

Book by March 18, 2025
and save \$200 per person

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only* (Join / Leave at hotel)	\$5,245
Toronto	\$6,445
Ottawa / Montreal	\$6,645
Halifax / Winnipeg.....	\$6,835
St. John's / Regina / Saskatoon / Victoria	\$6,945
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver	\$6,885
Single Supplement	\$1,775

*Land Only price does not include the cost of any internal flights in the Azores (these will be quoted, subject to confirmation). Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective November 2024. Prices are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted with a minimum of 20 travellers.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment is due on July 2, 2025
First deposit is \$700 per person at booking
Second deposit is \$1,800 per person due April 9, 2025

To reserve your spot on this tour, you can either book online through our website or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:



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