
Trails in the Azores

ABOUT



Photo: Veraçor

Trails in the Azores

Whether you are a lover of quiet walks or an adrenalin junkie, the Azores have more than 60 hiking trails with all the conditions for walking safely. Venture out and discover unique landscapes between paths totally wrapped in Nature.

The **trails of the Azores** are a **network of footpaths** classified by the Regional Government of the Azores to ensure the safety and tranquillity of the walkers. **Divided into three levels of difficulty - easy, medium and hard** - the network is suitable for **various ages and levels of fitness**. Many of the classified footpaths take advantage of the single tracks that people have used for centuries for day-to-day travel, carrying goods and moving cattle. This ancestral wisdom in creating short cuts across the territory is now exploited by tourists to get to know the different perspectives and details of the Azores islands' scenic treasures, since they link almost every corner of each island, both by the seashore and in the mountains.

The **mild temperature of the Azorean climate enables you to explore the network of trails in any season**. It all depends on the experience you want. Walking during the winter means finding lush greens, waterfalls and faster flowing streams; a walk in the spring and summer brings an invasion of scents and colourful flowers. But the famous Azorean mist can arise at any time. And as fast as it comes, wrapping in mystery the barely glimpsed outlines, it disappears, opening up new horizons.

Due to the particularities of the terrain and weather conditions, some trails may be temporarily unavailable, so **get information before you leave about any warnings or safety recommendations that may be in place**.

On virtually every island, there are **certified tour operators** who **provide programmes** for the Azorean trails, including transport to the starting point, **guide services** and meals, among other extras. Some, for the sections in which they are licensed, even **offer excursions by bike, quad bike, horseback, GPS expeditions** and other alternatives.

Although **hiking** is the most common way, lovers of **cycling** will find in the Azores a wealth of trails and paths suitable for different levels of experience and expectation, from the most radical aspects of **mountain biking** to simply riding along at leisure.

Also for those who enjoy **horse riding**, there are **equestrian centres** on almost all the Azores islands. Whether you want to break into a gallop or just amble along at a walk, discovering the islands' natural landscapes, their amazing recesses, greenery, flowers, brooks and even geological formations on horseback is an unforgettable way to discover the Azores.

Another activity that has become more popular due to the topography of the Azores, is **Geocaching**, with currently **more than 400 caches recorded in the Azores** on the worldwide site of this activity. As participants use coordinates and **GPS devices** to **find hidden "treasures"**, contact with the surrounding terrain takes on a more adventurous quality; in your search, you must design and determine the best route to reach the **cache**.

Whichever way and whichever trail you choose, you will always find true nature in the Azores.

USEFUL INFORMATION

- Consult <http://trilhos.visitazores.com> for a list of classified trails in the Azores.

The site has updated information on the state of the trails and allows you to view and download brochures about the type of heritage, flora and fauna found on each route. A short datasheet indicates the topography, length, level required and estimated duration.

- Depending on the demands of each footpath, you must use proper hiking equipment, as well as bring water and food.

-Observe and follow the safety rules and code of conduct.