



MADEIRA

itinerary

Created by local hosts

Madeira is a small island with remarkable variety, from mountain peaks and lush forests to coastal villages and natural pools. This flexible itinerary brings together the island's main highlights first, with extra ideas for longer stays.

Need help planning or booking?



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Inside this guide:



Sunrises, sunsets and viewpoints:

Recommended locations to enjoy Madeira's breathtaking views.



Hikes and Levadas:

Scenic routes through Madeira's mountains, forests and valleys.



Restaurants and local favourites:

Trusted recommendations across the island.



Activities and experiences:

Whale watching, canyoning, jeep tours and other locally selected experiences.

Wishing you a lovely trip





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About this itinerary: This seven-day self-drive itinerary is arranged by priority. Start with Day 1 and continue for as many days as your stay allows. Days 1–3 cover Madeira’s essential highlights, while Days 4–7 add more villages, walks and experiences. **A car is required to follow the complete itinerary.**

Best time to do this itinerary: Madeira can be explored throughout the year. Spring to autumn generally offers longer days for hiking and swimming, while winter is quieter and cooler, with more changeable conditions in the mountains.

Guided Hikes: Every hike featured in this guide — and many others across the island — can be arranged with a local guide, including transportation to the start of the trail and collection from the end. Some routes are one-way, making a guided hike with transport an especially interesting option.

Highlights

Must-See Places

Funchal
Monte Cable Car & Gardens
Pico do Areeiro
Cabo Girão
Porto Moniz Natural Pools
Ponta de São Lourenço

Walks & Nature

PR1 – Vereda do Areeiro
Levada das 25 Fontes
PR13 – Vereda do Fanal
Levada Nova
Laurissilva Forest

Villages & Coast

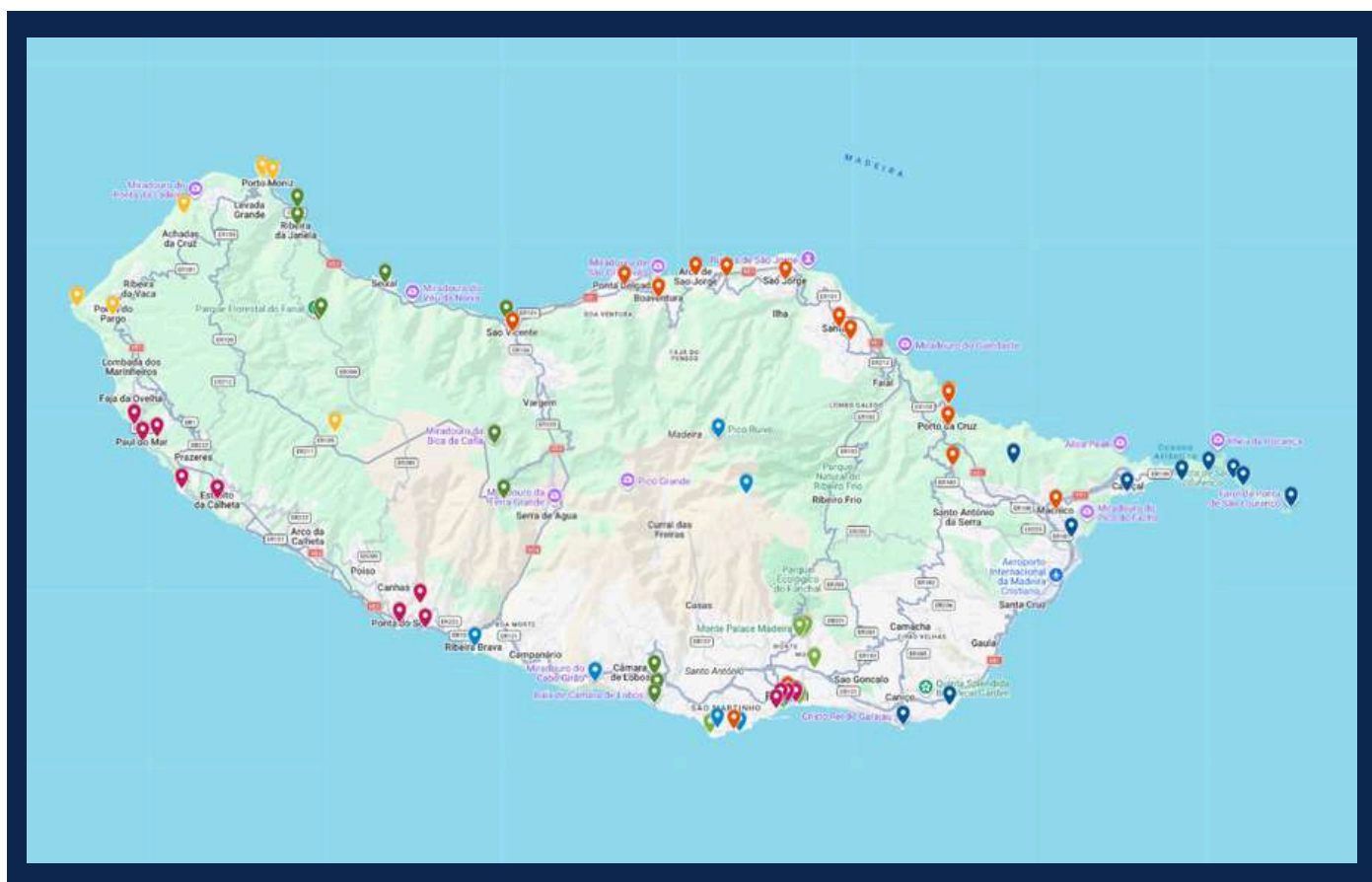
Câmara de Lobos
Ponta do Sol
Jardim do Mar
Paul do Mar
Santana
Porto da Cruz



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We've gathered all the places featured in this guide into one interactive Google Map, organised by day for easier planning. Open it on your phone to find viewpoints, walks, restaurants, activities and other useful stops while exploring Madeira.



[Open Interactive Map](#)

MADEIRA

Day 1

Start your first day in Funchal, Madeira's capital. Take the cable car up to Monte, explore its tropical gardens, experience the traditional wicker toboggan ride, and finish with a sunset boat trip along Madeira's south coast, with the chance to spot dolphins and whales.



Cable Car

Travel from central Funchal to Monte while enjoying open views over the city and bay.



Monte Palace Tropical Garden

Walk through tropical gardens, tiled panels and art displays in the heart of Monte. Many visitors consider it one of Madeira's most memorable gardens.



Optional: Madeira Botanical Garden

If time allows, explore its collection of tropical and subtropical plants while enjoying open views across Funchal. This visit requires a separate cable car journey from Monte.



Toboggin Ride

Descend from Monte in a traditional wicker toboggan, guided by the local carreiros.



Sunset Whale-Watching Trip

Watch the sun set over the south coast, with the chance to spot dolphins and whales along the way.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Pátio das Babosas

A convenient place for lunch in Monte before continuing with the afternoon itinerary.

Dinner: Marisqueira O Barqueiro

Finish the day with a relaxed seafood dinner in Funchal.

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Day 2

Start the day high in Madeira's central mountains with a guided PR1 hike from Pico do Areeiro towards Pico Ruivo. After returning, unwind with an optional Madeira wine tasting, then continue to Cabo Girão before finishing with sunset views from Pico da Torre and an evening in Câmara de Lobos.



Guided PR1 – Vereda do Areeiro

Take on Madeira's iconic high-mountain walk with an experienced guide, from Pico do Areeiro towards Pico Ruivo, with spectacular views across Madeira's central mountain range.



Optional: Madeira Wine Tasting

After returning to Funchal, unwind with an optional tasting and learn about the styles and history of the Madeira Wine.



Cabo Girão Skywalk

Step onto one of Europe's highest sea cliffs for panoramic views over Câmara de Lobos, the south coast and the cultivated area below.



Câmara de Lobos & Sunset at Pico da Torre

Watch the sunset from Pico da Torre, then head down to Câmara de Lobos Bay for an evening walk, local bars and the town's lively atmosphere.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Kampo by Chef Julio Pereira

A creative take on Madeiran ingredients in central Funchal, ideal before your afternoon activities.

Dinner: O Lagar

One of Madeira's best-known places for traditional espetada, accompanied by milho frito and bolo do caco.

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Day 3

Start with the Levada das 25 Fontes hike, then visit Porto Moniz for the natural pools and an optional aquarium dive. Continue to Achadas da Cruz and finish at Ponta do Pargo Lighthouse for sunset.



PR6 – Levada das 25 Fontes

Follow Madeira's best-known levada trail through the Laurissilva forest to the 25 Fontes waterfall.



Porto Moniz Natural Pools

Stop for a swim in the volcanic natural pools, followed by a short walk along the seafront before continuing west.



Optional: Dive at Madeira Aquarium

Join a guided dive in the main aquarium tank among sharks, rays and moray eels. Suitable for beginners and experienced divers.



Achadas da Cruz Cable Car

Ride the cable car down the steep hillside to Fajã da Quebrada Nova, with wide views over the coast and its small cultivated plots.



Sunset at Ponta do Pargo Lighthouse

Finish the day at Madeira's westernmost cape, with open views over the surrounding cliffs and the Atlantic.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Conchinha Bar

A casual stop in Porto Moniz for a traditional prego — Madeiran steak served in bread.

Dinner: O Farolim

Known for its black pork dishes, O Farolim is a good place for a hearty dinner on Madeira's west coast.

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Day 4

Start high on Paul da Serra at Bica da Cana, then choose the full PR13 hike or a shorter Fanal walk. Continue along the north coast through Ribeira da Janela and São Vicente, then return south through Serra de Água for a traditional poncha stop.



Bica da Cana Viewpoint

Cross Paul da Serra's long, open plateau before stopping at Bica da Cana for wide views over the São Vicente valley.



PR 13 – Vereda do Fanal

Follow the 10.8 km trail through the Laurissilva forest to Fanal. A return transfer is needed.



Eira da Achada & Ribeira da Janela

Stop at Eira da Achada for coastal views and its swing, then visit Ribeira da Janela's distinctive rock formations.



Scenic Drive & São Vicente

Follow the north-coast road to São Vicente, passing tunnels and villages, then explore the historic centre along the seafront.



Taberna da Poncha – Serra de Água

On the way back south, stop at this roadside taberna for a poncha and peanuts. It's one of Madeira's most iconic poncha stops.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Quebramar Rotating Restaurant

A memorable lunch in São Vicente, serving traditional Madeiran dishes from a dining room that slowly rotates between mountain and ocean views.

Dinner: Abrigo do Pastor

Finish the day in the mountains with a hearty Madeiran dinner in this rustic former shepherd's refuge.

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Day 5

Start the day on Madeira's eastern peninsula with the PR8 hike and a swim at Cais do Sardinha. After lunch in Caniçal, explore the Funduras trails by buggy before finishing at Cristo Rei for sunset.



PR8 – Vereda da Ponta de São Lourenço

Follow Madeira's eastern peninsula through volcanic landscapes, with open views over both sides of the coast.



Cais do Sardinha

Stop for a refreshing swim at Cais do Sardinha before beginning the return journey.



Optional: Return by Boat

Instead of walking back, take a boat from Cais do Sardinha to Quinta do Lorde, passing coastal cliffs and formations along the way. A longer option also visits the Ponta de São Lourenço Lighthouse.



Funduras Buggy Tour

Drive through the Funduras forest trails to Pico do Furado, with off-road sections and views over the Laurissilva and north coast.



Sunset at Cristo Rei Viewpoint

End the day with open views over the Atlantic and Madeira's southern coastline.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Muralha's Bar

A casual Caniçal favourite for fresh fish, grilled seafood and pregos — ideal after the São Lourenço hike.

Dinner: Laranjinha Bistrô

A local favourite in Caniço for carefully prepared grilled dishes and a more modern take on Madeiran cooking.

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Day 6

Discover Madeira's quieter north and north-east on a private 4x4 tour, travelling through coastal villages, forest roads and mountain valleys. Visit Santana's traditional houses, stop at Porto da Cruz's rum distillery and finish with views from Portela and time in Machico.



North-East Madeira Jeep Tour

Explore Madeira's north and north-east with a local driver-guide, following old roads and forest tracks away from the main routes.



North-Coast Villages

Travel from São Vicente through Ponta Delgada, Boaventura and Arco de São Jorge, with views over the mountains and Atlantic along the way.



São Jorge & Santana

Descend through green valleys towards São Jorge, then continue to Santana to see its traditional thatched houses.



Porto da Cruz Rum Distillery

Visit Engenheiros do Norte to learn how Madeira's agricultural rum is produced, with the opportunity to taste it.



Portela & Machico

Stop at Portela for views over Porto da Cruz and the surrounding mountains, then descend towards Machico.

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Food Recommendations

Lunch: Marcel's Bistro, Santana

A possible lunch option for Madeiran favourites, including espetada, fresh fish and other traditional dishes.

Alternative Stop: A Pipa, Porto da Cruz

A casual local favourite for fresh fish and generous portions. The rice with fresh fish is a popular choice.

Dinner: Papa Manuel do Lido

An easy post-tour dinner near the Lido, known for its pizzas and pasta, with outdoor seating close to the ocean.



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Day 7

Begin with an early walk through central Funchal and the Farmers' Market, then head west for the Levada Nova and Levada do Moinho hike. Continue through Jardim do Mar and Raposeira before ending the day at Paul do Mar for sunset.



Funchal & Mercado dos Lavradores

Start at Mercado dos Lavradores, then walk through the Old Town, past Funchal Cathedral, the Municipal Garden and Santa Catarina Park.



Levada Nova & Levada do Moinho Hike

Follow two traditional levadas above Ponta do Sol, with valley views, tunnels and a waterfall along the route.



Ponta do Sol, Calheta & Jardim do Mar

Stop in Ponta do Sol and Calheta before walking through Jardim do Mar's narrow lanes and along its seafront beneath the cliffs.



Miradouro da Raposeira

Stop for an elevated view over Paul do Mar and Madeira's western coastline.



Sunset at Paul do Mar

Walk along the seafront and finish the day watching the sunset over the Atlantic.



Food Recommendations

Lunch: Fontes do Horácio Restaurant

A good stop for traditional Madeiran cooking and generous portions. Save room for the homemade requeijão tart.

Dinner: Maktub Pub

A lively seafront spot in Paul do Mar for drinks, dinner and sunset views over the Atlantic. Booking ahead is recommended if you plan to eat.

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Wishing you a lovely trip!



Need help with your plans?

Choose the days and experiences that best suit your stay and explore Madeira at your own pace. For local advice or help arranging activities, transport or reservations, Yessica is only a WhatsApp message away.

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