

***the AZORES* diving holiday specialist**

dive the dive, dive the difference

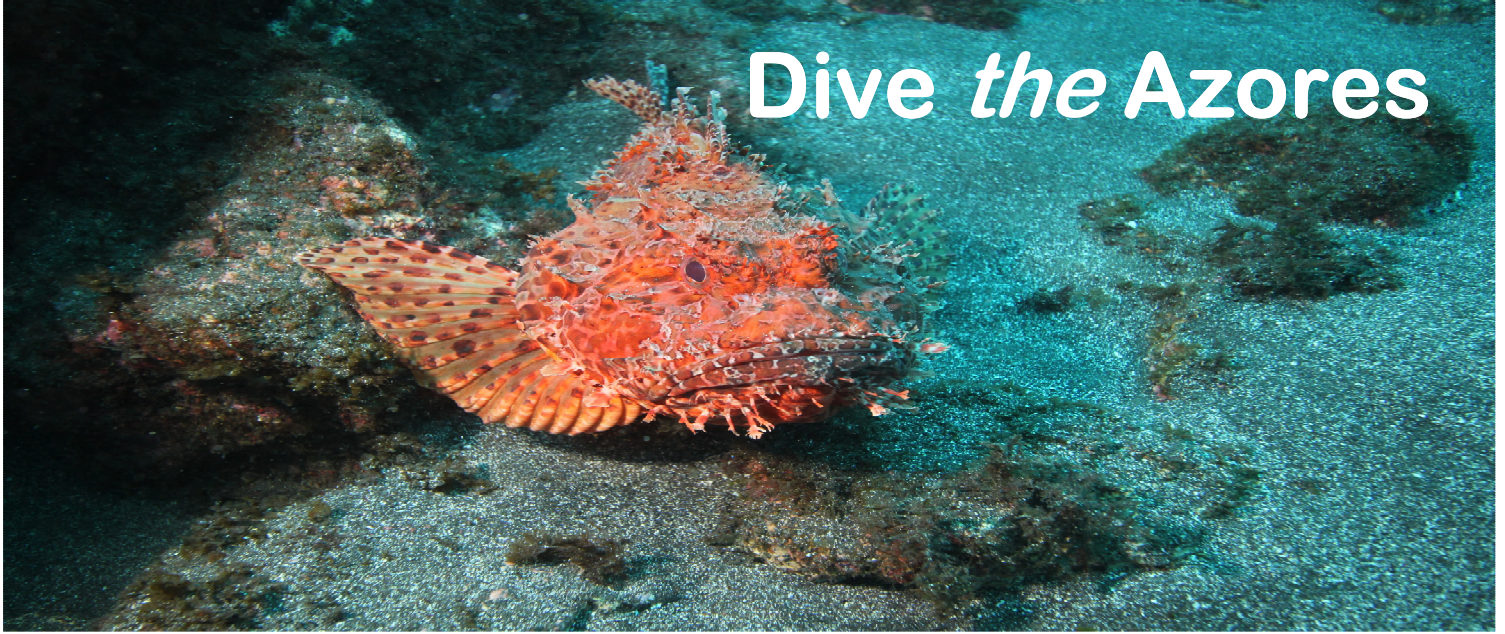
accommodation • scuba • whale watching • swim with dolphins • trekking

welcome to
Dive the Azores

With over 30 years of diving experience, the team at Dive the Azores have a great passion for diving and exclusive diving locations. Whether you are looking to learn the sport of scuba diving, already an experienced qualified diver looking for that special destination or are just looking for that family holiday without that tourist empire. Dive the Azores can offer you everything from learning to dive packages to complete dive packages for the experienced diver including diving with manta rays, sharks and the Azores pelagic marine life. For those in the group who are not divers but wish to experience the thrills of the Azores then why not try snorkelling, whale watching, swimming with the dolphins or maybe even trek mount Pico.

**An amazing island where you can
touch the Ocean and the sky!**
'discover the Azores'

Dive *the* Azores



Background

This digital brochure has been designed to give you a taste to the extensive activities Dive the Azores has scheduled for 2011/12. Unlike other brochures we have included prices which is the reason behind our digital brochure to ensure the information within it is up to date and accurate. Whilst Dive the Azores is not a provider of air travel we shall certainly assist you with this advising you of flight times and costs and how to book, this further reducing the cost of your holiday by reducing agents administration fees.

Why choose Dive the Azores

We have over 30 years of scuba experience, so we too are passionate for the sport, we specialise solely in offering fantastic diving holidays to Pico, Azores and for this reason have a vast knowledge of the Island. We work with selected partners on Pico to bring you the ultimate diving experience ensuring you have the adventure of a lifetime. Hopefully this digital brochure will inspire you to travel to the Azores and join us in Pico for an awesome underwater experience.

Dive the Azores partners

Our diving partner on Pico is Twin Peaks Diving Centre a BSAC Premier Centre ran by UK instructors that are truly passionate in scuba diving. Their knowledge of sites around Pico and the offshore banks of the Azores is second to none. Whale watching is undertaken by various partners on Pico depending on your location on the Island. Oceanic Azores is Dive the Azores preferred partner in trekking which includes the ascent of Mt. Pico,

Responsible Travel

Dive the Azores feels strongly that we have a duty to maintain and minimise any negative impacts of tourism on local communities where possible. All of our Azores partners work to and above, local guidelines and regulations. We support local charities and assist on environmental issues throughout Pico. We accept we all have a role to play in ensuring the natural beauty and marine life of the Azores is maintained in balance with tourism.

Contents

Welcome	2
Destination	4
Offers	4
Learn to dive	5
Dive Packages	6
Princess Alice	7
Blue Shark dive	8
Whale Watching	9
Dolphin Swimming	10
Your Quotation	11
Mount Pico	13
Climbing Pico	14
Lava tour	14
Vineyards of Pico	14
Accommodation	15
Apartments	16
Houses	16
Hotels	17
Caravelas	17
Airro do Fonte	18
How to get here	19
Fly TAP	19
Transfers	20



Your *destination*

“A diving destination, waiting to be discovered”

Pico, Azores

The islands

The Azores, an outline of garden-like islands on the horizons of the Atlantic ocean. Peace and quiet, flowers in the fields, in the villages, in the houses. The blue and green of dreamy lagoons. A pace of life in which there is time to stop and appreciate living. Art treasures that recall pages of a centuries-long history. Nature in its original splendour. A meeting with the past involved in everyday life. An invitation to discover and experience a different world, repeated on each of the nine islands of the Azores.

Origins

The origin of the name Azores was derived from the archaic Portuguese word "azures" the plural of the word blue. Some say that it was named after the goshawk bird (Açor in Portuguese). However, since such bird never existed in the Azores, most historians have concluded that this is the least probable explanation.

Location

The Azores Islands are located in the Atlantic Ocean, about two hours flying time and 930 miles (1500 Km) from Lisbon, and about five hours flying time and 2422 miles (3900 Km) from the eastern coast of North America. The Azores have a total area of 910 square miles (2355 Km²). Their individual areas vary between S. Miguel's 290 square miles (747 Km²) and Corvo's 7 square miles (17 Km²). Its nine island archipelago extends over the parallel that runs through Lisbon (39°43'/39°55' north latitude), giving it a moderate climate with mild annual temperature oscillation.

The Azores sit atop of the Atlantic ridge and are of volcanic origin. Santa Maria is the only island that has signs of reef sediment. The volcanic origin of all Azores islands is revealed by their volcanic cones and craters. Pico, a volcano that stands 7725 feet (2,351 meters) high on the island of the same name, has the highest altitude in the Azores.

Discovery

The Azores were discovered in 1427 by Goncalo Velho (a contested fact by historians), a captain sailing under the command of Henry the Navigator. The colonization of the Islands started in 1439 with people from Portugal, North Africa, Flanders and Spain. There were no humans living in the Azores at time of discovery.

The Archipelago

The archipelago of the Azores is an Autonomous Region of the Portuguese Republic since 1976 extending for 373 miles (600 km) from Santa Maria in the western group to Corvo on the eastern group. It forms an exclusive economic zone of 425 square miles (1.1 million km²). Portuguese is the official language, although there are some dialects of Flemish and African origins. The current president of the Azores is Cesar Carlos. The Presidency for the autonomous government sits in Ponta Delgada (S. Miguel), with the Supreme Court in Angra do Heroismo (Terceira) and the Legislative Assembly in Horta (Faial). Ponta Delgada is the largest city with about 55,000 inhabitants.

Pico island, named for its imposing mountain, is one of the most beautiful and underrated island of the Azores. Only second to S. Miguel in size the 'Mountain Island' stands majestically in the middle of the Azorean central group, at about 4.5 nautical miles from Faial Island and 11 miles from S. Jorge Island. It is approximately 167 square miles (433 km²).

Pico island history was built on the destiny of its whale hunting and winery traditions. The famous Pico wines and the UNESCO world patrimony designated vineyards, as well as wooden boat building, are contemporary fixtures of Pico. Whale hunting, long gone, gave way to a movement of fair treatment study and observation of whales, dolphins, and other sea mammals. Whale and dolphin watching trips can be organized from Madalena or Lajes. Volcanic eruptions ended 300 years ago and Pico is considered a dormant volcano, adding to the mystique of the island, and serving as a magnet for scientists.

The Pico island landscape is a sublime mixture of lava rock and exotic vegetation in an ever changing scenery that envelopes this scarcely populated island. Pico features some of the best swimming holes in the Azores, and every so often an occasional sand beach appears. Pico is also the ideal island to trek, hike, jog, walk, bird watch, whale and dolphin watch, swim, fish, ride bikes and motto-quad bikes. Speleology is also a favourite pastime of Pico and its visitors.

Pico is an Island where calm and peace can be found around every corner, yet there's always the choice of escaping to the village and experience the bustling culture or the occasional festival. Trips to Faial and S. Jorge are one ferry trip away. While it takes no time to know the smaller Faial Island, it takes a long time to get to know Pico as it is the type of destination where one must get out of the car to explore all that it has to offer.

Discounts *and offers*



Offers and discounts

We apologise in advance for our lack of offers, but we believe the price you pay is the best price we can offer and by reducing this price is an indication it wasn't in the first place. From time to time our partners on Pico will run promotions and offers. If this is the case we pass 100% of the offer onto you. We don't use any promotion to further increase our profit margins.

Group Bookings

As in any walk of life the more you buy the cheaper they become. Whether you are a dive centre, club or just a group of friends our service to you is second to none, we can take away the burden of organising a large group trip by doing the leg work for you, gathering deposits collecting final payments can all be done on-line by individuals within your group taking away the hassle, allowing your booking to be processed smoothly from start to finish. We know that booking is a conflict so we operate a low-deposit scheme which means just £50 secures your booking with us. Our group discounts are generous and shows our appreciation for your booking. For groups of 6 all purchasing dive

packages of 6 dives or more shall receive one standard * dive package free, whilst a group of 8 or more shall receive a free place for the group including accommodation

Learn to Dive offers

Learning to SCUBA will leave you with one regret 'why did I not do this sooner?' Learning to dive is fun and is even better shared within a group of family or friends, we recognise this and have secured a great deal with *Twin Peaks Diving Centre* our BSAC partners on Pico a '*family and friends offer*' 2 diver qualification courses of the same grade booked with us shall receive a 50% discount on the second course, groups of 3 shall receive a course free for four courses and we have some amazing discounts.

BSAC members

Unlike other operators we do not give a discount with one had and take with another. All BSAC members shall receive a further 5% discount regardless of any discount already received. To ensure the integrity of the BSAC members discount all membership numbers are required prior to a quotation being prepared, we hope you understand the reasoning.

Learn to dive with BSAC



Learn to Dive with BSAC

Scuba diving is an adventure open to anyone aged 12 or over - and with our worldwide network of clubs and centres providing accessible, affordable diver training, it's never been easier to learn to dive. So, if you're thinking about learning, go for it - there's no better time to learn to scuba dive with BSAC

If you've always wanted to learn how to dive, this course is for you. This course is for beginners and provides the essential knowledge and skills needed to prepare for open water diving. The BSAC Ocean Diver course prepares for this in the safety of a swimming pool or sheltered water and an introduction to open water in a controlled, safe manner. Experience and confidence will be gained under the guidance of a qualified instructor. Maximum depth - 20m.

What you'll learn

The BSAC Ocean Diver course has three main stages:

1. Lessons and theory assessment on the basic principles of scuba diving
2. Five confined water dives to learn the basics in the water (usually in a swimming pool)
3. Five open water dives to further develop your scuba diving skills

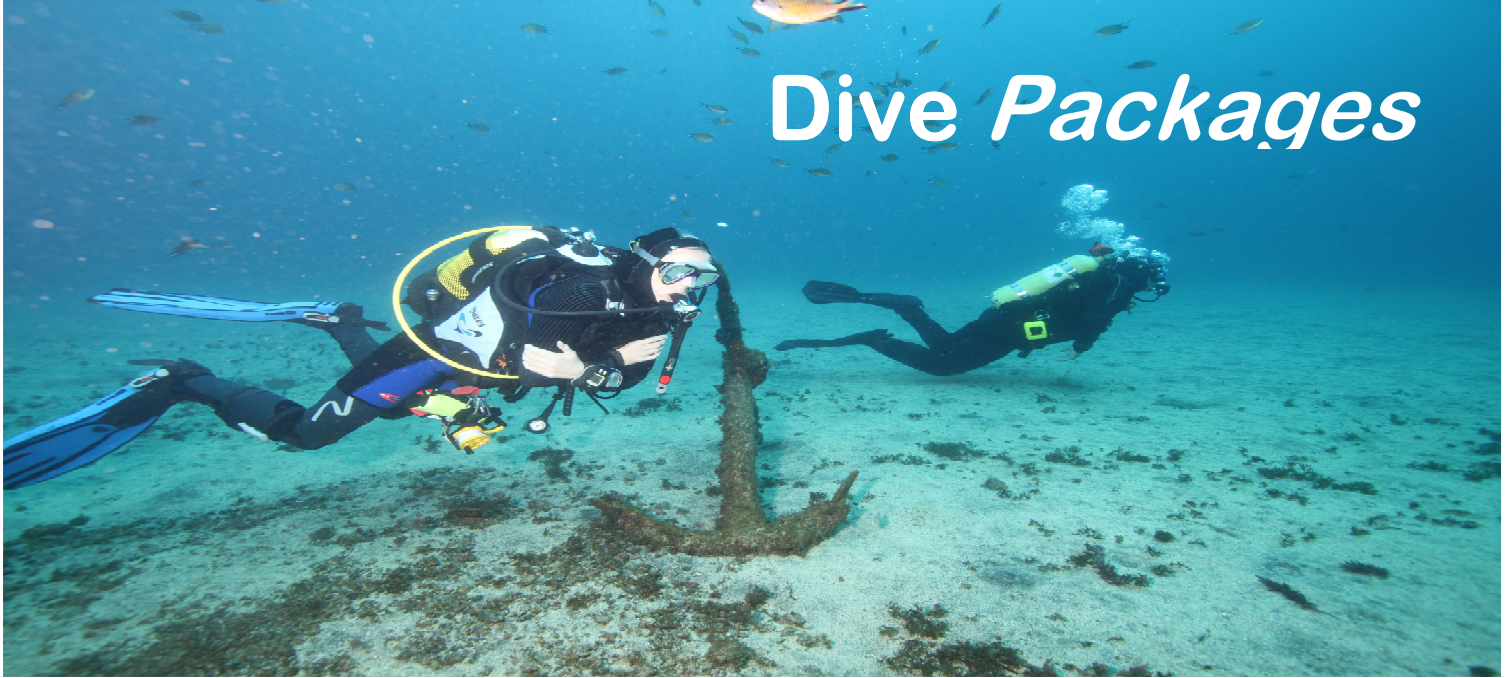
The fun bit

Will be from start to finish! With our BSAC partners Twin Peaks Diving Centre Learning to dive is a life changing experience for many people. Breathing underwater for the first time is something you will never forget and the experience of learning with others is great fun. Your instructor is trained to look after you every step of the way.

Course	No. of divers	Cost
BSAC Ocean diver	1	£340.00
BSAC Ocean diver	2	£510.00
BSAC Ocean diver	3	£680.00
BSAC Sports diver	1	£249.00
BSAC Sports diver	2	£375.00

For more details of BSAC courses and prices have a look at www.twinpeaksdivingcentre.com

Dive Packages



Dive Packages

Whether you are newly qualified to diving or of an advanced level, Pico has the diving to suit your experience. Our diving partners Twin Peaks Diving Centre is affiliated to BSAC and has received Premier Centre status.

We are not into selling you the biggest dive package possible to maximise our profit we offer you achievable packages that allow you to also take in the tranquil Azores and everything else they offer. We would suggest a 6 dive package for a weeks stay with the option to add additional dives locally, so you can choose your own balance between diving and other activities. Additional dives are not at a premium and are equal in price to that of a package. We offer packages to suit all levels from newly qualified to entry level of technical diving. Safety is paramount and all dive packages have the option to up grade to nitrox diving for those qualified, for those who are not qualified it's possible for you to qualify '*FREE*' within your dive package for 32% and 36% EAN with the BSAC Nitrox Diver Course

The diving was just truly amazing. We have even booked for next year.

R. Hague *Manchester*

single dive	£35.00
double dive	£60.00
4 dive package	£120.00
6 dive package	£170.00
8 dive package	£225.00
10 dive package	£280.00
additional dives less than 6 dives	£30.00
additional dives more than 6 dives	£28.00
upgrade to nitrox package	32% £6 per dive
full equipment hire	£9.00 per

Princess Alice Bank



The Princess Alice Bank, or Banco Princesa Alice as it is called in Portuguese, is a submerged seamount that is located 50 nautical miles (92.6 km) to the southwest of Pico Island and 45 nautical miles (83.3 km) to the southwest of Faial Island in the Azores. The bank has a minimum depth of 35 m (114.8 ft), and a depth to the seabed of 2993m located in its western zone. With clear waters that allow the observation of the ocean floor from the surface and an enormous biodiversity, the Bank, in addition to being an excellent fishing spot, is one of the important diving spots of the Atlantic Ocean.

Imagine the experience as we dive with a carousel of sometimes up to 30 mantas (mobula mobular) more commonly known as the devil ray out in what is deemed as mid-Atlantic 'blue water diving' the bank is home to some of the greatest pelagic marine life to read the full article[read more](#)

The Dive

This dive is guaranteed to be a dive that is rated as one of the best in your diving log book. We use a 7.5m 200 hp RIB with central seating, licensed to carry 12 but for your comfort and space we only take 8 divers on the boat. We depart from the marina at 07:30 and arrive on the bank around 09:30, we drop a shot line as we do not use the boats anchor line for safety reasons and comfort. We prepare

for our first dive, some divers wish to descend to touch the bank at 35m this is not compulsory as the mantas will carousel around you at 10m where the majority of the dive is carried out. For safety reasons we ask divers to stay on the shot line but if conditions permit we allow the more experienced diver to leave the shot in pursue of the ultimate picture although you must have and be trained in the use of an SMB, After a light snack and surface interval we prepare for our second dive, another photo opportunity. It's normal to see other pelagic life on the bank such as Tuna and wahoo along with barracuda, dusky grouper and the ever friendly trigger fish.

It has to be my number 1 dive and I've dived a few places

J. Donbavand Derbyshire
Ex North West BSAC Regional Coach

This dive is very weather dependent due to it's location. The dive can be paid locally or at time of booking. If the dive is not executed due to weather constraints 100% of monies shall be refunded in the same method as initial payment. The cost of Princess Alice is £195 for 2 dives, includes refreshments on boat.



Blue shark experience

The blue shark, *Prionace glauca*, is a carcharhinid shark which inhabits deep waters in the world's temperate and tropical oceans. They feed primarily on small fish and squid, although they can take larger prey. Blue sharks often school segregated by sex and size, and this behavior has led to their nickname "wolves of the sea". Blue sharks are light-bodied with long pectoral fins. The top of the body is deep blue, lighter on the sides, and the underside is white. It grows to 3.8 meters long and can weigh up to 204 kilograms . The highest reported weight was 391 kilograms. They are easy to distinguish from other sharks.

Relationship with humans

Blue sharks are the most heavily fished sharks mainly as by-catch It is estimated that 10 to 20 million individuals are killed each year as a result of fishing. Blue sharks are not considered an aggressive species. Most interactions take place in deep water and on small boats as they rarely venture close to shore

Conservation Status



[near threatened](#)

The dive

The Blue shark experience occurs on an offshore bank around 20nm west of Fiall taking us around 60 mins to reach our site. These blue water dives requires excellent buoyancy control as there are no points of reference from the sea floor or a wall. Divers must therefore pay attention to their depth. We use reference lines on the side of the boat which can also be used to join line from. Divers are required to show there ability in buoyancy and trim on regular dives if booking our Blue shark experience. divers should be certified to a minimum level equivalent to a BSAC Sports Diver or PADI Advanced Open Water Diver. Before entering the water all divers are briefed on conduct in the water as well as how to recognise potentially dangerous behaviour from the sharks. In order to avoid a negative impact on the sharks, divers are required to follow dive guides instruction. Touching and feeding the sharks are strictly forbidden. We use chumming techniques that keep the amount of food, blood and oil in the water at a minimum. Should the behaviour of the sharks (or divers) warrant it each dive may be terminated at the dive guides discretion.

The dive can be paid locally or at time of booking. If the dive is not executed due to weather constraints 100% of monies shall be refunded in the same method as initial payment. The cost of the Blue shark experience is £150 for, includes refreshments on boat. Trip is between 3 – 6hrs

Whale watching & Swimming with dolphins



The Azores are widely recognized as one of the top destinations in the world for whale spotting. As well as tourists and scientists, the whales and other sea-life have attracted film crews from the BBC and the National Geographic.

Of the 80 species of whale in the world, 21 can be found in the Azores. The dolphins and whales in the Azores include fin whales, minke whales, beaked whales such as Sowerby's, True's and Cuvier's, sperm whales, short-finned pilot whales, blue whales, sei whales, humpback whales, false killer whales, northern bottlenose whales pygmy, orcas, rough-toothed dolphins, risso's dolphins, common dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, spotted dolphins and striped dolphins. They are attracted to the islands by its quiet, unpolluted waters and an abundance of food. For many years the islanders earned a living from hunting the whales. This practise has now been abolished but many of the traditional skills have survived and ensure that visitors have a good chance of seeing the dolphins and whales of the Azores. For example a 'vigia' or lookout stands on the cliff tops with powerful binoculars and when he spots a shoal of whales he helps guide the boat towards them. There are dolphins and whales in the Azores all year around but the best time for seeing them is from April to October when the sea is calmer.

Whale watching

It's true to say that these excursions to the Atlantic Ocean can be a life changing experience. Our whale watching and dolphin swimming partners on Pico are regarded as best in the business *'the experts'* The skippers are all licensed and qualified boat handlers and are regulated by the Azores in the conduct of whale watching and swimming with the dolphins. They have great skill and sensitivity in there approach to the whale along with the vast knowledge from there marine biologist.

A 3-4hr excursion is just £55 we have a 99% record for whale sightings. A full refund is given for the rare unsuccessful excursions.

Swimming with the Dolphins

Looking into the crystal clear depths of the ocean wearing a mask and snorkel you can have encounters your can have encounters with these curious yet playful mammals. Watching their gracious movements and listening to the dolphin symphony you feel part of their magical world. These trips do involve blue water snorkelling. We can offer 'free' snorkel course to ensure you get the best from these trips.

A 3-4hr excursion is just £65 inc. wetsuit, mask, fins and snorkel. A full refund is offered for the rare unsuccessful trips

Your *accommodation choices*



We have numerous accommodations available and all to suit everyone's budget from a 4 star hotel to studio apartments. Please see below a selection of available accommodation. We offer a free pick-up and drop of service to the dive centre for your diving days or if you prefer, you can locate your diving equipment with you and we collect prior to travelling to dive site this is available with all our accommodation except hotel accommodation all accommodations have drying and washing areas for diving equipment, although we do say the dive centre is the hub of a diving holiday with evening of diving tales over a local brew, in their outside bar-b-que area.

Hotel Caravelas- Madalena

Hotel Caravelas is located on Vila da Madalena, a mere 100 meters from the port and 10 km from the airport. Hotel Caravelas features views of Faial and S. Jorge islands. All rooms have views to the Ocean or Mount Pico. The hotel was recently extended and refurbished and is now a 4 star hotel offering great facilities to make this a perfect base for your stay. Air conditioned throughout with a bar and restaurant. A full breakfast buffet is included in your stay. A private outdoor pool and bathing area is available to the guest enabling you to relax and unwind after a day of SCUBA and exploring. Amenities are all close by in Madalena with bars and restaurants. We collect you from the hotel and return you on your diving days with us. Car hire is also available from the hotel reception

Room Facilities: Satellite TV • direct telephone • Internet service available • Room service • Balcony



Studio/Apartment - Banderias

Purpose built studio apartments this single storey build has just 2 apartments ideal for those searching peace and tranquillity of the Island. Situated in Banderias, just 1.5km from the dive centre is an ideal option for couples who prefer the simpler accommodation. These open plan studio apartments with WC/shower room have double/twin beds, double sofa bed a basic snack preparation area, ideal for preparing breakfast or lunch comprising a microwave oven, kettle and toaster. The apartment has outside maintained gardens with a dining area with gas bar-b-que. These apartments are an ideal choice for those with a full packed itinerary of activities.



Self catering holiday house - Banderias

We also have available fully self catering houses these houses are built as a double storey with each dwelling taking a storey. A fully equipped kitchen ideal for those wishing for a self catering holiday complete with washing machine. These house's have an open plan kitchen dining/living area with 2 double/twin bedrooms and a wc/shower room furnished in traditional solid wood furniture. A newly built property, in the style of the more traditional lava stone builds with an outside lava area ideal for children and off street parking. Situated in the village of Banderias and is approximately 3km from our dive centre. Just a short walk from a local pizzeria which comes fully recommended if time is on your hands as all pizzas and food are freshly prepared including the base.

Jo's bed and Breakfast- Madalena

At just 20-minute's walk from Madalena centre you can find Joe's Place Azores, the right choice to enjoy the scenic island from the comfort of a private residence. It has 5 double rooms: two with private bathroom, the others with a shared one.

Getting *there*



Whilst Dive the Azores is not a provider of Air Travel we can liaise to find you a suitable flight and provide details. Prices for flights are on the day of enquiry and are not guaranteed by us and are subject to change. Please check with us or TAP airlines prior to conformation. Booking and payment of flight can be carried out online at www.flytap.com

The only way to get out to the Azores is by flying although there are 3 main routes to get to Pico. First of all we recommend you fly to Horta you can fly into Pico on a Saturday and Thursday from Lisbon but usually is the expensive option, and take the 20 min ferry crossing to Pico as this is the cheapest route. We find the cheapest route is with the Portuguese airline TAP (Portugal's National carrier)

- ***London Heathrow*** to Lisbon and then onto Horta with TAP, there is sometimes a possible outward bound overnight stay but we can recommend a perfect hotel. [Residencial Lar do Areeiro](#) which is just 5 mins from airport. More information on flights can be found at [TAP Airlines](#)
- ***Manchester Airport*** to Lisbon and then onto Horta with TAP, there is an outward bound and inward bound overnight stay but we can recommend a perfect hotel. [Residencial Lar do Areeiro](#) which is just 5 mins from airport. More information on flights can be found at [TAP Airlines](#)
- ***Via budget airline*** to Lisbon and [TAP Airlines](#) onwards to Horta.

Transfers in Azores

We arrange all your transfers for you whilst in the Azores whether flying into Pico (PIC) or Horta (HOR) we shall meet and greet you at the airport and if flying from Horta transfer you to the ferry port and the driver shall issue you with your ferry tickets, we shall then collect you from Pico ferry port and transfer you to your accommodation. Flying into Pico airport we shall meet and greet at the airport and transfer you to you accommodation, also same transfers for your return flights. We offer a free collection and drop off service to the dive centre on your diving days.