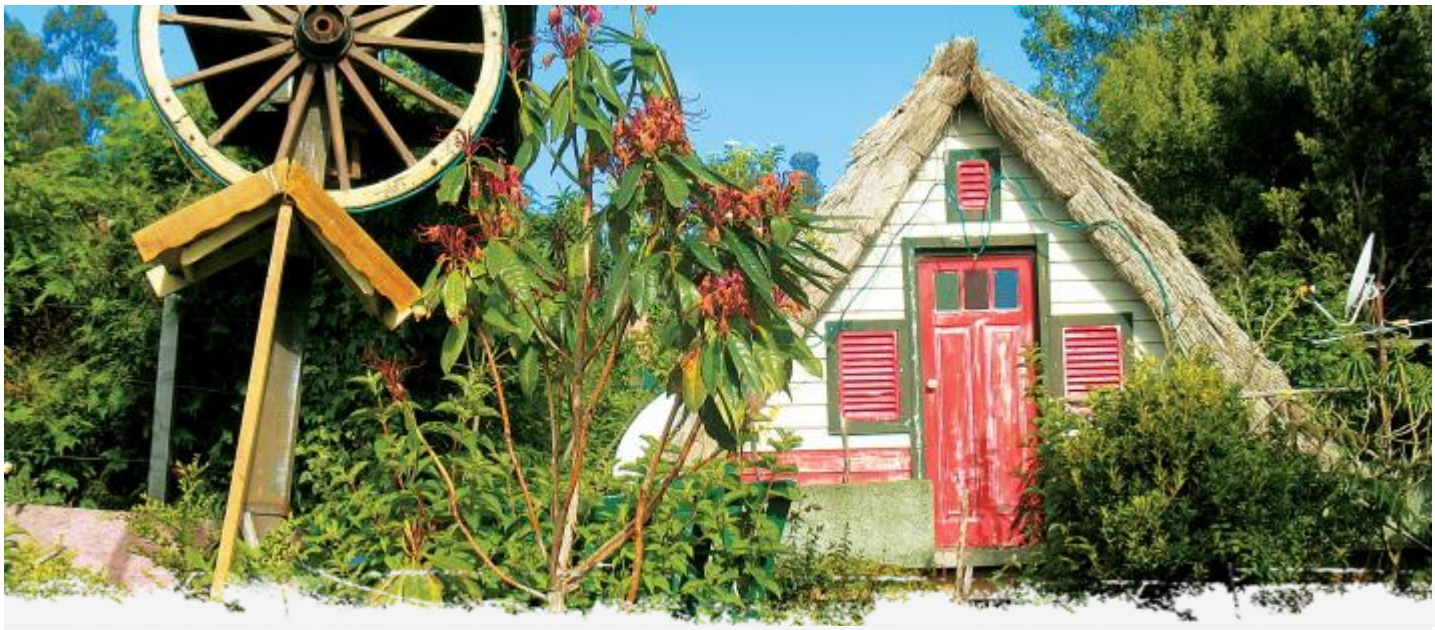
EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Levada Trails of Madeira (TM 2015)

WALK & TREK

TOURDURAT
8
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Standard
Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Moderate
tour Code: TM

Tour Highlights - Levada Trails of Madeira

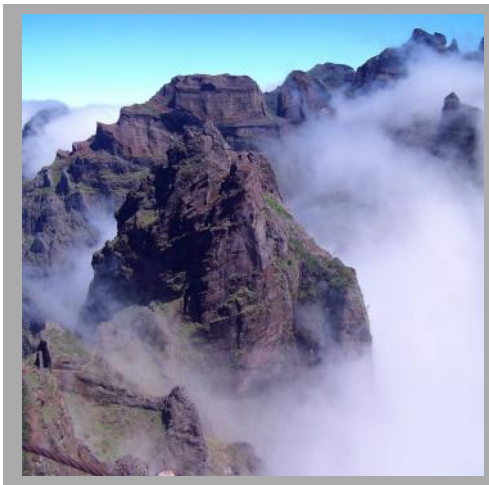
- ✓ Funchal - Laid-back city with beautiful gardens, parks, historic buildings and a colourful market
- ✓ Sao Lourenco Peninsula - Cliff top walk with stunning coastal views
- ✓ Levada Paths - Variety of picturesque walks alongside the island's unique irrigation channels
- ✓ Pico de Ruivo - Walk to Madeira's highest point (1862m) and enjoy stunning views

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Funchal
End Point:	Tour ends: Funchal
Transport:	Minibus
Countries:	Portugal, Madeira

Levada Trails Of Madeira

Following Madeira's unique network of narrow irrigation channels, known as 'levadas', this tour incorporates some of the best walking trails on this beautiful volcanic island. Hike to Madeira's highest peak (1862m), and spend time absorbing the delights of the laid-back capital, Funchal.



Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Trek Grade: Moderate

For those who are fit and active, these moderate walks are normally on good paths and tracks at low altitude. Days may include some fairly demanding ascents and descents, so previous experience is preferable but not essential.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and

organization throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour in Funchal

Arrive Funchal and check-in to hotel. Funchal takes its name from 'funcho', meaning fennel. According to legend, when Zarco landed here in 1419, he named this spot after the abundance of the herb he found here. Visiting sailors used to call the capital of Madeira 'Little Lisbon' because the grandeur of its cathedral and its harbourside buildings reminded them of Lisbon.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Scenic coastal walk on Sao Lourenco Peninsula

A short drive via a scenic viewpoint brings us to Sao Lourenco, the north eastern peninsula of Madeira. Here we walk along the cliff tops, on an undulating trail with great views on both sides (approx. 3 hours walk). The rock face displays age old volcanic action, eroded by the fury of the Atlantic Ocean. This area is dry and desert-like and offers a contrast to the rest of the island, which is lush and verdant. We continue with a drive to Santana, through a peaceful agricultural area, where the rich soil helps to yield up to three crops yearly. An idea of how rural Madeira once looked can be gained from the area's many examples of traditional thatched 'A' frame houses known as 'palheiros'. The thatched roofs keep the buildings cool in summer and warm in winter. Due to a high fire risk, meals were often prepared outside. Once lived in, some of these buildings are now used as cowsheds – the terrain in this area is too dangerous for cows to roam freely. You will often see farmers carrying huge piles of hay to feed their cattle.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Walk through UNESCO forest to Ilha village

This morning we drive up to Queimadas where our walk to the village of Ilha starts in the the lush UNESCO protected laurel forest following a levada along to the waterfall of Caldeira Verde. We go down a forest path to Ilha finishing with expansive views of the North Coast (approx 5 hours walk). From here our vehicle takes us right along the north coast to Porto Moniz. The 16km stretch of road from Sao Vicente to Porto Moniz took 16 years to complete and was built entirely by hand! Porto Moniz has unusual rock pools, created by volcanic activity. In summer the sun warms the trapped sea water making them excellent places to swim or simply bask after a day's walking. When the weather is rougher, the waves crash dramatically over the seawall and it is hard to believe that the rock pools really exist!

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Follow levada paths to Florencas; drive to Paul do Mar

Today we head inland up to the 'Desert Plain' where we follow a levada path overlooking the fertile south coast. A unique feature of Madeira is its network of 'Levadas' - irrigation channels. Fed by natural streams and reservoirs, the network covers over 2000km. Along our route we see caves used by shepherds and may even have goats and cows along with us, as on this terrain they are allowed to roam freely. Our path takes us to Rabacal and then through a long tunnel to join another levada leading down to Florencas (approx. 5 hours walk). The levada paths are often bright with flowers throughout the year thanks to Madeira's pleasant maritime climate. Hydrangeas and oleanders give the paths a blaze of colour: wild agapanthus and bird of paradise flowers can often be seen. This afternoon we drive to Paul do Mar, a small coastal town in the west of the island, that is our base for the next two nights.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 From Ponta do Pargo, mountain walk with views of Curral das Freiras

We drive up into the mountains and intend to walk east from Encumeada, this time following one of the many old trails that linked villages across the island, used before the modern road system was built. The walk takes us through chestnut forest and past old terraces of farms, then up and across the face of Pico Grande from where there are dramatic views of Curral das Freiras (Nuns Refuge). Nuns from the Santa Clara convent fled to this area when pirates attacked Funchal in 1566. Please note the paths are narrow in short sections. We may have to replace or alter this walk with another due to local conditions which vary from week to week. (Approx 6 hours walk).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Walk to Pico de Ruivo, Madeira's highest point

Today's walk starts at Pico das Pedras (900m). Climbing steadily we zigzag through high woodland to Achada do Texeira (1542m) - an alternate starting point for those who prefer a shorter walk. From here we follow the trail to the summit of Pico de Ruivo (1862m), Madeira's highest point, from where on a clear day we are rewarded with stunning views down over the island. This route includes walking a small part of the famous Balcony Walk - the full route is currently not possible due to a landslide. After our walk, we return to the island's capital. The old part of town has many restaurants where you can try Espada, a long flat fish unique to the waters around Madeira (and some islands in Japan). This fish has very large eyes and can live at depths below 800m. The Madeirans serve it with banana, which is a delicious combination! Perhaps the best way to spend the evening is on the harbour front, sampling a glass of the famous Madeira wine, enjoyed by many throughout the ages, including Sir Winston Churchill. (Total walking approx. 11kms)

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Free day in Funchal; optional dolphin and whale watching

Today there is a choice of activities from Funchal. You could take a half day cruise and try your luck searching for whales and dolphins. You may simply wish to take some time to stroll through Funchal, perhaps visiting the colourful market to see the displays of flowers and exotic fruit or nosing into the delightfully old-fashioned shops, maybe finishing the afternoon with tea at the venerable and atmospheric Reids Palace Hotel for a touch of turn of the century opulence. You may also wish to take the cable car up to the tropical gardens at Monte.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Tour ends in Funchal

Tour ends after breakfast.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Portugal

Lunch £: 13.00

Dinner £: 15.00

Madeira

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Portugal

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00 - 3.00 depending on your location, well touristed areas are usually slightly more expensive.

Water £: 1.40

Madeira

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Funchal - Wine lodge guided tour and tasting €5.5; Botanical gardens €5.5; Tropical gardens €10; Whale Watch on a Catamaran €45 (summer months only 2.5 hours); Reids Palace Hotel; Afternoon tea €33.5; Cable car €10; Catamaran trip €30 half day; Full day Boat trip to Islas Desertas inc. lunch €80
Porto Santo - Ferry €57.4 (apr - Sep) €46.95 (Jan - Mar) return ticket

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approximately €20 for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Portugal

ATM Availability: Cash-point machines are available in all major towns. Bankcards with the Cirrus logo are accepted.

Credit Card Acceptance: Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers cheques can be exchanged in all major towns but are not recommended due to the high rate of commission.

Local Currency: Euro.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

Where to Exchange: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Madeira

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour,

and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Portugal: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

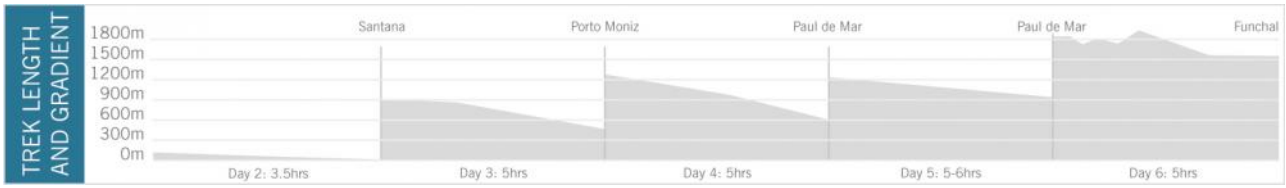
Vaccinations & Protection

Portugal

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Madeira

Preparing for your Tour



Trekking Details

We walk for 5 days with an average of 4-5 hours a day. One day is left free. Parts of the balcony walk are not suitable for vertigo sufferers. This tour has been graded as moderate.

Walking Boots

Well broken in walking or trail boots are essential.

Climate

Portugal

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a trip to Portugal - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The northern high plains has both extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. The islands have very different weather patterns due to their positioning and can have sudden rain falls throughout the year so waterproofs are recommended even in the summer.

Madeira

Clothing

July and August are the warmest months, though the islands are freshened by cooling sea breezes. Waterproofs are essential at any time of the year, especially in March/April, as are gloves, a warm jacket/ jumper/fleece and hat for higher summits and evenings in addition, a daysac cover. A swimsuit is also recommended.

Equipment

We recommend a waterbottle, sunhat, sunscreen, sunglasses, towel for swimming, blister kits, strong torch (for tunnels) and trekking pole(s) for steep descents. A decent daysac is recommended.
On this trip we will have several picnic lunches so any equipment to assist in your preparations would be recommended. i.e Lunchbox and cutlery.

Footwear

Comfortable trainers or sandals for relaxing. Plastic sandals are useful if swimming off lava rocks.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Portugal

Population: 10,647,763

Size of Country: 92,090 sq km

Major Language: Portuguese

Religion: Roman Catholic

Madeira

Electric Supply & Plugs

Portugal

2 Pin Round

Madeira

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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