



# Azores

## An Environmental Science Expedition

8 Days

The Azores are a hidden gem in the mid-Atlantic; an archipelago of volcanic islands they are the perfect destination for Environmental Science students boasting a startling array of geo thermal features and fabulous wildlife. This 8 day Environmental Science itinerary has been designed to showcase the best elements the island of São Miguel has to offer. A visit to a geo thermal power plant, hiking tours in stunning volcanic scenery, cooking local delicacies in steaming craters and kayaking in a crater lake.



[Learn more about our Carbon Labels](#)

# Your Recommended Educational Journey

- Day 1** **Fly to The Azores, arrive & get comfy** D  
On arrival, we will transfer to our accommodation at the Pousada da Juventude de Ponta Delgada. The rest of the day will be spent settling in.
- Day 2** **Adventure tour in Sete Cidades & five senses—back to the roots** BLD  
Let's explore the west side of São Miguel. Sete Cidades lake is one of the most famous and legendary lakes of the island. We will venture down to the bottom of the crater where we will get the chance to ride a bike and paddle a kayak - definitely the best ways to enjoy the Sete Cidades environment, feeling the amazing energy and beauty of the place. Our lunch will be enjoyed on the edge of the lake and in the afternoon we will be taken on a trip back in time, taking part in activities typical of the Azorean lifestyle 50 years ago. We will bake fresh bread and biscuits, milk a cow, plough the earth and participate in traditional activities and games. This is a fun-filled day that is perfect for anybody wanting to feel down to earth while connecting with nature and time-old local traditions
- Day 3** **Whale & dolphin watching & lecture with marine biologists** BLD  
Today we will have the opportunity to spot and observe some of the 25 cetacean species that can be found in the Azores. Although nature offers no guarantees, whales and dolphins are regularly seen during these half day tours, along with turtles, seabirds and other marine life. Prior to the boat trip, local biologists will brief us on which cetacean species can be observed, safety measures aboard, how we respect the animals and rules of observation at sea as well as some historical facts. After the boat trip and a scenic picnic lunch, we will spend the afternoon with some of the island's biologists. They will help us understand about the island's biodiversity, the conservation of species, as well as past and current scientific research
- Day 4** **Hiking in Salto do Cabrito (Distance-7KM: Difficulty-Easy)** BLD  
Today we start our tour by visiting the Geothermal Power Plant in Ribeira Grande. We will learn all the sustainable processes of generating electricity that represents 40% of energy of the island. On our way to the Salto do Cabrito waterfall we will find the ruins of one of the oldest hydroelectric central stations built on the island of São Miguel. This station was opened in 1902 and produced its last electricity in 1972. We will follow the path of the ancient water tubes and learn about their history. The hillsides along the stream are densely forested. It is possible to find diverse range of vegetation such as: the Japanese cedar, acacias, eucalyptus, incense, kahili ginger, and violet yellow berry shrub. At the end of the trail we will come to the 38 metre drop that forms the beautiful waterfall named "Salto do Prego" where we will have picnic lunch. Shortly after lunch we will visit Caldeira Velha, a natural park with a visitors centre on the area and with geological information about the islands. Here we can take the opportunity to experience the warm iron-rich waterfall and pool for the first time before heading up to the amazing natural reserve of Lagoa do Fogo, to finish day 4 off in style! Some of the best views on the Island can be found here. Time for the compulsory photo of everyone in their STC t-shirts enjoying nature at its best





## Day 5

### Azores Bullfinch Conservation Centre

BLD

The Azores bullfinch is one of Europe's most endangered birds. It is only found in the east of the island of São Miguel, in just a few square kilometres of wood in Serra da Tronqueira. The finch was a locally abundant pest of fruit orchards in the nineteenth century but became rare after 1920. Changes to the native vegetation of the Azores have destroyed the species' natural habitat and led to a decline in numbers to just 120 pairs. The population today is around 1000 individuals. The recovery is largely due to a conservation project which works to re-establish the native vegetation by habitat management including the creation of fruit tree orchards, clearance of alien invasive plant species and planting native species in the core area and buffer zones. We will spend today at the project helping with planting and clearing invasive plants. On our way back we will visit a Wind Farm to learn about wind as a sustainable source of energy. We will also stop at the Gorreana Tea Factory and plantation, where we will visit the working tea factory and have a lovely break to taste the tea.

## Day 6

### Pineapple plantations with R&R

BLD

On our visit to the pineapple plantations, we will learn about the different stages of plant growth and have the opportunity to plant some pineapples ourselves. Each pineapple we plant will be labelled so that later on photos can be taken and sent to us to follow up on the plant growth. Did you know that this exotic fruit takes almost two years until it is ready to be served on your table? The afternoon is free for some well needed R&R before our last full, action-packed day in The Azores.

## Day 7

### Hiking in Faial da Terra (6KM Difficulty: Medium), Terra Nostra Botanical Garden & Cozido cooking

BLD

Our first stop of the day will be at Furnas where we will have a special leader joining us – the “Cozido” Chef. He will walk us through the village where we will buy all the items we need to cook dinner – ‘anyone speak Portuguese?’ We will then head to the lake where we will have a cooking lesson with all the purchased ingredients which we will use to prepare our dinner. We will prepare the special “cozido meal” which will cook underground for 6 hours using only the steam of the Earth. While dinner is in the oven we will have a picnic lunch followed by our hiking trail in Faial da Terra. After the walk, we will return to Furnas to visit the most impressive botanical garden of the Azores and bathe in its iron-rich thermal water swimming pool. At 6.00pm we will collect our dinner in the natural holes where it has been slowly cooking

## Day 8

### Last goodbye & departure

B

This morning we say our final goodbyes and transfer to the airport for our flight back to “sunny?” England





## Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

## What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



## A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. While we are far from perfect, we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Trees for Life



## Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 2



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

## Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 2



Expect to find local life broadly familiar to that in the UK, however aspects of the trip are likely to be in remoter areas where differences are more profound. Whilst English may not be the native language, you can expect it to be widely spoken. There may be some cultural differences and although western pallets should be well catered for there will be the opportunity to try new dishes.



## Travel Safety & Other Pre-Travel Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to this educational journey. Topics covered will include:

### Responsible Tourism workshop

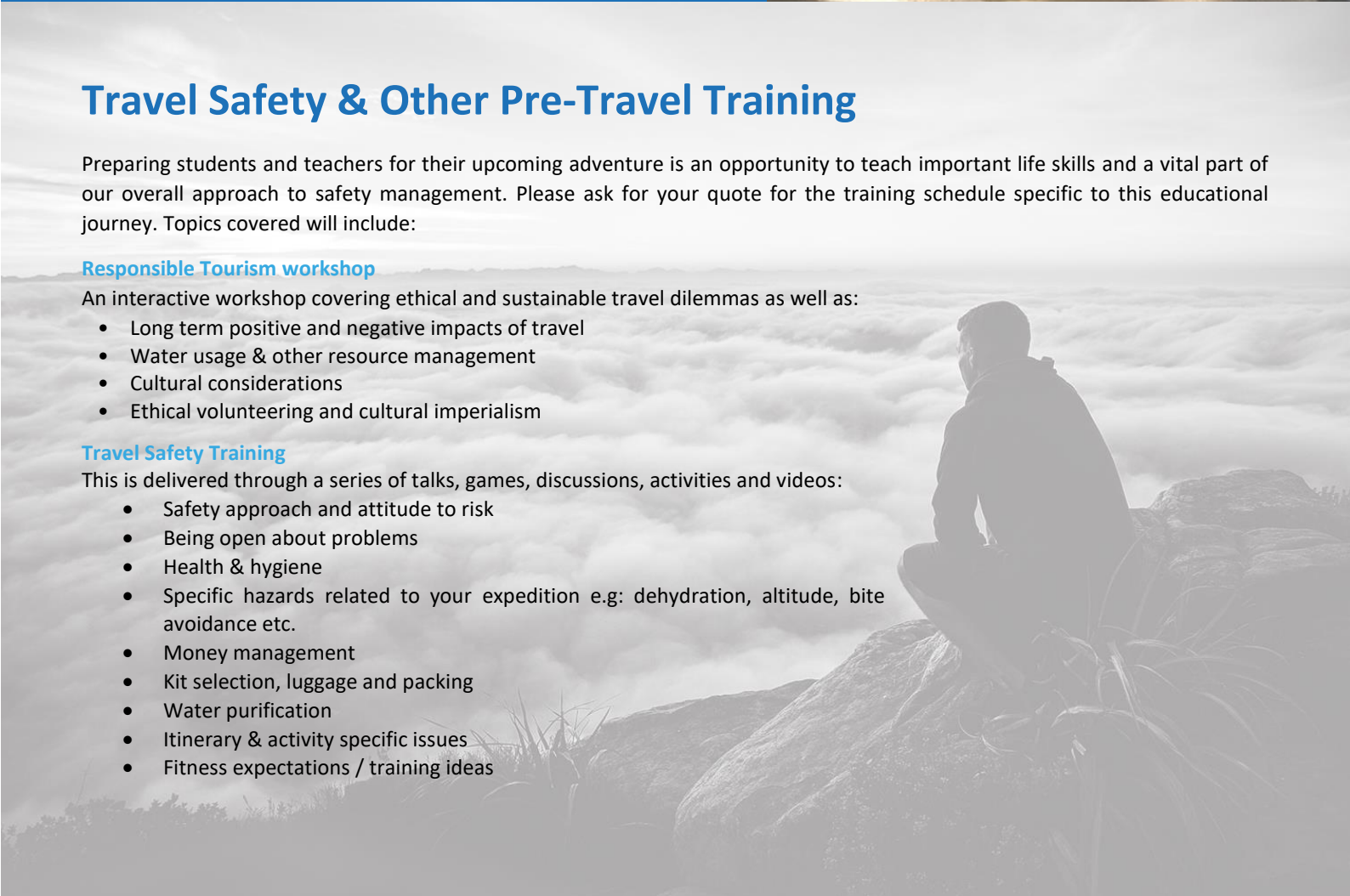
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

### Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





# A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey

## 1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your adventure itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your trip approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

## 3 Arrange a trip launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with comprehensive information covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.



*"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."*

**Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick**

## Contact Us:

STC Expeditions, 6b King Street, Exeter, EX1 1BH

t: 01392 660056 | e: schools@thestc.co.uk | w: www.thestc.co.uk

