



www.visitazores.com

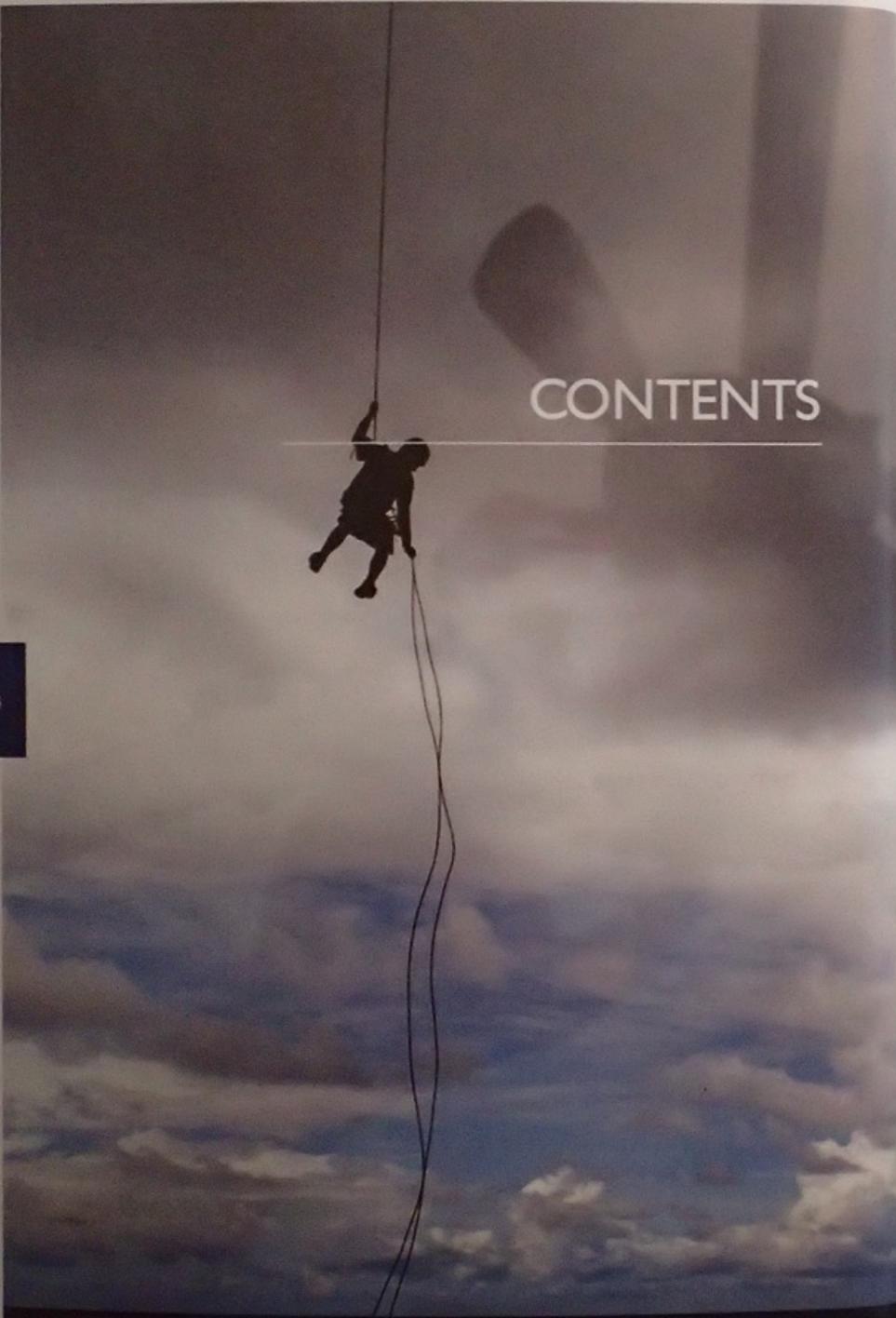
ALONG WATER TRAILS... IN THE AZORES

CANYONING GUIDEBOOK

FRANCISCO SILVA | MARIA DO CÉU ALMEIDA | PAULO PACHECO



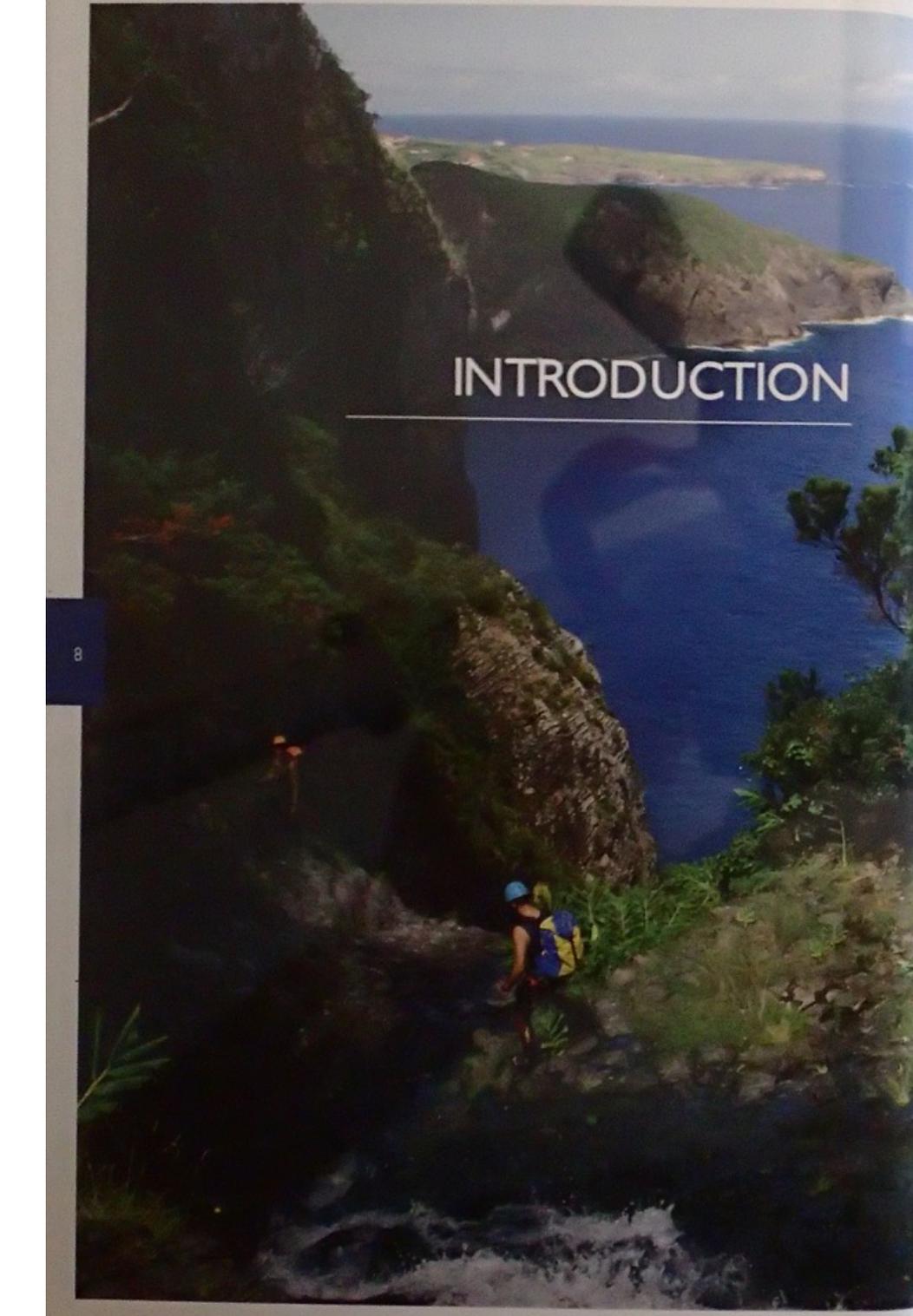
📍 36° 55' 44" N, 25° 01' 02" W - Azores, PORTUGAL



CONTENTS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	8
THE AZORES ARCHIPELAGO	10
Azores – Destination of excellence for nature tourism	11
Geographical overview	12
Territory, location and society	12
Climate	14
Environment and landscape	15
Transport	18
Getting to the Azores	19
Getting around the islands	19
Local transport in each island	19
Accommodation and eating	20
Practical information	20
CANYONING IN THE AZORES	22
Overview	23
Evolution of canyoning in the Azores	26
Environmental quality and responsible canyoning access	28
Cartography, information and orientation	30
When to visit	31
Canyoning gear	32
Installed anchors	32
Gear to bring	34
Descent techniques and risk management	35
Specifics of canyoning in the Azores	35
Canyoning routes classification	38
Canyoning safety and risk management	41
Exits by sea	43
How to use this guidebook	45
CANYONING IN FLORES	48
Summary table of canyoning routes in Flores island	51
General map of Flores with canyoning routes	52
Northeast coast – Sta. Cruz to Ponta Delgada	52
Ilhéus	56
Alquevins	60
Barrosas	63
Esguilhão	65
Fundá da Ponta Ruiva	67
Privada	69
D'Além	71
Pico da Sé	74
Badanela	75
Fazenda	80



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Canyoning is a sport and a recreational activity that involves travelling down water courses, often in narrow and steep canyons, using a variety of techniques including walking, swimming, abseiling, jumping, scrambling or sliding to overcome the obstacles. This recent activity, combining water and mountain ambiances, allows enjoying fascinating sceneries and, despite only being recognised since the 1980's, shows high potential for sporting, recreational and tourism development.

The Azores archipelago is a recent tourism destination, having high potential for canyoning. Today, more than hundred routes are equipped in the Azores, distributed by six of the nine islands of the archipelago: Flores, São Jorge, São Miguel, Santa Maria, Faial and Terceira. Canyoning can be practised in these islands both as a primary or complementary activity; the routes provide valuable experiences, allowing the exploration of these islands in a unique way.

Experienced canyoningers, whose main travel purpose is to discover new canyoning routes, will find the islands of Flores and São Jorge an excellent destination. The impressive nature, the delightful paths and routes provide an opportunity for adventure and enjoyment. These two islands, out of the main tourist circuits, are a great place to discover the rich Azorean natural and cultural heritage. The diversity of routes, the dramatic landscapes with impressive walls and cascades, some to the ocean, are differentiating factors for these islands in the panorama of international canyoning. The atmosphere of adventure and extensive waterfalls on the coast, are striking elements of a great landscape where the mountain merges with the sea.

This guide includes most canyoning routes explored and equipped in the region by mid-2014, from routes with low level of difficulty, as

aquatic hiking, to very difficult multi-pitch large walls. However, even if almost all routes are referred to, only those with higher quality rating are detailed, being the remaining ones presented in a concise form.

Canyoning is an activity of increased risk and canyoningers are exposed to several hazards and risk factors. Therefore, appropriate techniques and equipment should be used, following recognised good practice. Selection of routes must be done according to the skills of group members. Prior to venturing into the canyon information on local weather and sea conditions should be obtained in advance, as applicable. For beginners or less experienced people, guiding services by qualified providers, using sound safety practices, are recommended.

Although great care has been taken to present the most accurate information available to the authors at the time of writing, the authors do not bear any responsibility in connection with any use or result from the use of the information contained in this guidebook.

Canyoning in the Azores is quite recent and the potential for new routes exists. Routes that have been done are as well documented as possible. However, the contribution of all those that visit the routes is essential to keep this information up-to-date and to monitor the local conditions that are continuously changing in these extremely dynamic places. The authors will try to maintain the information up-to-date and available to all, through the website desnivel.pt/canyoning/. Therefore, we appreciate that all those who identify incomplete, incorrect or outdated information, send us their contribution via email to Francisco Silva: desnivel.fs@gmail.com.



THE AZORES ARCHIPELAGO

10

THE AZORES ARCHIPELAGO

AZORES – DESTINATION OF EXCELLENCE FOR NATURE TOURISM

The Azores Archipelago is a recent tourism destination with a strong and positive image associated with nature, authenticity, sustainability, exoticism, tranquillity and remoteness. These conditions, especially the climate, size and remoteness of the islands explain the limited tourism demand. Therefore, the region does not have potential as mass tourism destination; instead it has conditions to remain as an alternative destination.

The perception and recognition of potential for tourism development of the territory has been a key factor encouraging local stakeholders to invest in the sector, resulting in the increase of services, from accommodation to tourism activities of different sorts, both for visitors willing to try new and unforgettable experiences and for experts in nature or adventure sports.

The nine islands of the Azores geographical distribution in the Northern Atlantic is a major factor of attractiveness and interest for tourism. Although common features exist, each island has its own natural and cultural attributes, allowing for a continuum in the discovery, leisure and recreation opportunities. From São Miguel, with its famous lakes and volcanic

phenomena, concentrating most tourism demand and services supply of the archipelago, to the smaller and more isolated islands, there is a wide potential for tourism. In Pico, the second largest island, the imposing volcano rising to 2351 m above sea level is an undeniable attraction. In Faial, the small town of Horta is an icon for international yachting. The islands of Flores and São Jorge, sparsely populated islands, have unique natural settings and are true exceptional places for canyoning as well as for other adventure activities. Terceira Island is renowned for its capital recognized as UNESCO world heritage site. The islands of Graciosa and Santa Maria are both exceptional destinations for diving. Corvo Island is the smallest and most tranquil of the archipelago, a beautiful nook with an impressive caldera has excellent conditions for bird watching enthusiasts.

Canyoning is one of the many nature and adventure activities of great interest in the Azores. Outdoor recreation enthusiasts will find plenty to do including whale watching, diving, hiking and walking, the ascent to Pico Mountain and the discovery of the archipelago geologic monuments.

11

South coast of Santa Maria island



GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

TERRITORY, LOCATION AND SOCIETY

The Azores archipelago is located in the North Atlantic Ocean, in mid-latitudes 37° to 40° North and mid-longitudes 25° to 32° West, about 1.570 km from the European mainland and 3.900 km from North America. The remoteness is striking in the Azorean territory due to its dispersion in nine islands, which are divided in three groups:

- **Eastern Group:** Santa Maria and São Miguel islands;
- **Central Group:** Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico and Faial islands;
- **Western Group:** Flores and Corvo islands.

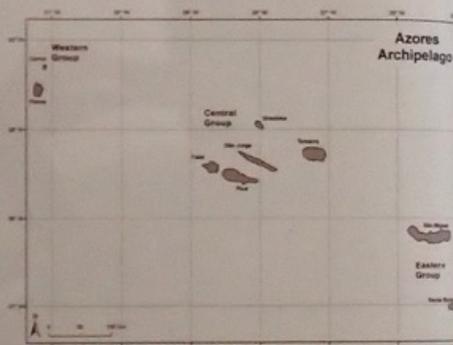


Figure 1 | The Azorean archipelago and its geographical location

The archipelago is located in the middle Atlantic ridge, a vast underwater mountain range, in the region where the boundaries of three lithospheric plates meet. The islands are the result of internal geodynamic forces and rise of magma to the surface through volcanic activity.

The Azores are a Portuguese autonomous region, which has about 246 thousand inhabitants, unevenly distributed across nine islands. São Miguel, the largest island, has about a third of the surface and concentrates almost 55% of the inhabitants of the archipelago. On the opposite side, the islands of the western group, Flores and Corvo, have the lowest population densities (Table 1).

From a demographic point of view the most distinctive aspects of this archipelago result from the late human occupation and strong influence of emigration. The settlement of people in the islands began only in the fifteenth century. The diaspora has also been relevant, with emigration being particularly pronounced in the second half of the twentieth century, the main destinations have been the USA and Canada. Despite some isolation of the region, factors such as its strategic location between Europe and North America, emigration, the importance of the territory as a transit harbour for sailing boats crossing the North Atlantic and, more recently, the expansion of tourism, have contributed to today's relatively cosmopolitan atmosphere and openness to foreigners in the archipelago, in particular in the islands of São Miguel and Faial.

	Size (km²)	Population (inh.)	Highest elevation
Azores archipelago	2.322,10	246.746	Piquinho: 2.351 m
Eastern Group	Santa Maria	96,9	Pico Alto: 587 m
	São Miguel	744,6	Pico da Vara: 1.103 m
Central Group	Terceira	400,3	Sª Bárbara: 1.021 m
	Graciosa	60,7	Caldeira: 402 m
	São Jorge	243,6	P. Esperança: 1.053 m
	Pico	444,8	Piquinho: 2.351 m
	Faial	173,1	Cabeço Gordo: 1.043 m
Western Group	Flores	141	Morro Alto: 914 m
	Corvo	17,1	Estreito: 718 m

Table 1 | Size and population in the Azores in 2011 (Data SREA, 2013)

Landscapes are dominated by volcanic features, rural sceneries and extensive coastlines, bordered by the blue of the ocean. Here and there small traditional settlements are surrounded by a patchwork of pastures bordered by stone walls or hydrangeas hedges. Volcanic terrain deeply sculptured by water covered with the green of natural or manned vegetation often ends in steep cliffs to the sea. The beauty of the islands shores, alternating between high and steep cliffs and low rocky coastline with some rolled pebble or black sand beaches. The combination of these elements confers uniqueness and strong exoticism to the Azorean islands landscape. The colours are striking in the Azorean landscape, fascination travellers with the shades of the green slopes and blue hues from the ocean.

The Azorean landscape as we see it today results from the combined action of natural phenomena and of humans. The natural landscape has undergone major changes with the colonization of the islands and the consequent settlement

and clearance of large areas of the territory for agriculture and livestock production. However, as the population concentrates along the coast and the agricultural activity followed essentially an extensive regime, the impacts on the landscape were minimized resulting in an enchanting balance between land use and nature.

Azorean culture was shaped by isolation and the forces of nature. Cultural heritage is abundant, with highlights as the city of Angra do Heroísmo and Pico's vineyard cultural landscape, both classified by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. These compete in beauty and historical value with several distinct features of the natural landscape, as the Pico Mountain, the lakes of Fogo and Sete Cidades, the Algar do Carvão or the myriad of waterfalls of Flores and São Jorge islands. The vast territory with preserved natural heritage was also recognized internationally namely Graciosa, Flores and Corvo islands which are classified as Biosphere Reserves by UNESCO.



CLIMATE

Located in the mid-latitudes and in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean, the Azores archipelago lies in the contact zone of the tropical and polar air masses, resulting in a temperate climate with strong maritime influence, a transition between the oceanic and the Mediterranean climate, also considered mesothermal (humid subtropical).

Average temperatures are moderate, average daily temperature varying between 13.7 °C in February and 22.1 °C in August, changing little from season to season. However, humidity levels can be quite high, with monthly averages above 70%, and significant precipitation, especially for elevations above 600 metres. On average, precipitation increases in the archipelago islands from southeast to northwest, ranging from an annual average of 748 mm in Santa Maria to 1.479 mm in Santa Cruz das Flores. About 75% of the annual rainfall occurs between October and March. June, July and August are generally the

best months, with little rainfall, as the summer in the archipelago has a predominant influence of the Azores anticyclone (Figure 2).

Precipitation and cloud cover is also influenced by islands' elevation. Due to the steep terrain and maritime influence, the insolation can be relatively low even in summer, especially in the higher lands, often covered by clouds. The weather instability in the Azores is well expressed in a popular saying that states that "one may experience the four seasons on the same day".

The sea has mild temperatures in summer (20-22 °C) and is renowned for its clear waters and variety of flora and fauna species.

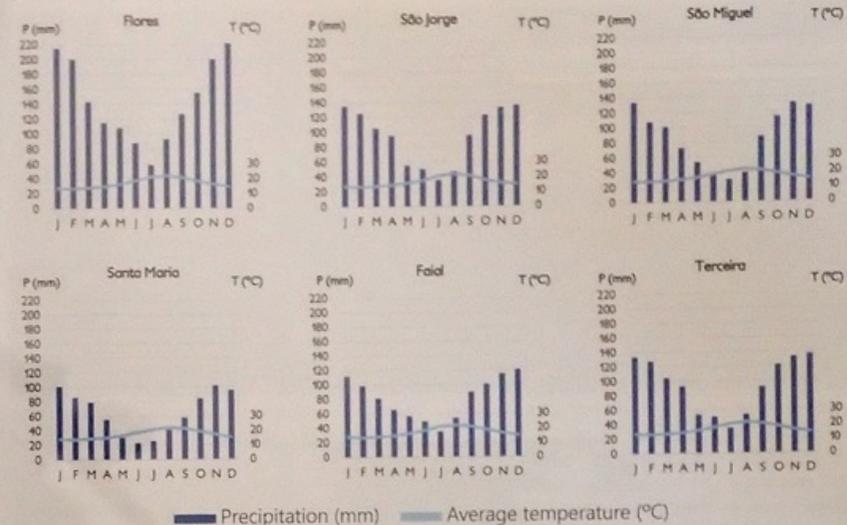


Figure 2 | Thermo-pluviometric charts (Data: CLIMAAT project)

ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE

The Azores islands are volcanic sea mountains that emerge on the surface of the ocean. Its relatively recent formation and progressive volcanic eruptions have repercussions on terrain patterns, characterized by steep slopes and fairly well preserved volcanic structures. The Pico Mountain, with an elevation of 2351 metres, is the highest point of the archipelago and of the country.

The native vegetation of the Azores has extensively changed since first settlers but remains of primitive forests such as the laurel-juniper forest, also called Laurissilva forest, can still be found in the islands. This forest, dominated by broad leaved evergreen trees, which in the European continental land has not survived the several cycles of glaciation that occurred at the end of the Tertiary period, can still be found in the Macaronesia region, due to geographical remoteness and specific weather conditions. The presence of remains of this forest suggests the very remote origin of the vegetation of the Azores.

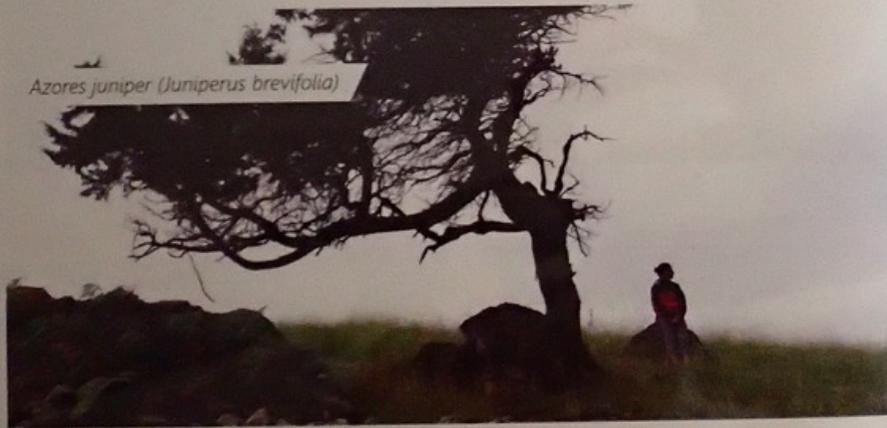
Although the flora has changed significantly, especially due to the replacement of native vegetation by species for pasture and forestry exploration and the introduction of exotic species, some of which are extremely invasive, the Azores flora is very rich in terms of biodiversity and endemic species.

Some of the endemic species that are commonly seen along the canyoning routes include the Azores heather (*Erica azorica*), the Azorean candleberry tree (*Myrica faya*), Azores juniper (*Juniperus brevifolia*), Azores blueberry (*Vaccinium cylindraceum*) and laurel (*Laurus azorica*). In addition to the native species, along streams is common to find some introduced plants and trees such as the cheese wood (*Pittosporum undulatum*), the Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) which is a tree that reaches a large size, and hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), a shrub with flowers associated with the brand image of the Azores.

Hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*)



Azores juniper (*Juniperus brevifolia*)



Lush vegetation in streams



It is also common to find near the stream banks some of the region main weeds such as the butterfly lily (*Hedychium gardnerarum*).

Due to vegetation density and biodiversity, some canyoning routes are quite luxuriant and, at times, some reaches of trails and streams can be obstructed by the shrubs, being harder to proceed, in the streams especially at the upstream sections.

Modifications in the natural environment due to the settlement and clearance of the territory have contributed to today's enchanting character of the islands. Along trails and streams, traces of past human activity can be found, such as houses and dry stone walls in once exploited fajãs¹, but which have been abandoned and reoccupied by vegetation.

Another distinctive feature of the Azorean landscape is the omnipresent coastline, with plenty of coves and hollows, alternating between high and steep cliffs and low rocky coastline with some beaches. Although less noticeable, the underground landscape deserves a special reference since the subsoil is rich in volcanic caves, including lava tubes and cavities inside ancient volcanic cones.

The Azorean fauna is limited by the geographical features of the islands, their remoteness and colonization. Even if land mammals diversity is small, birds are abundant and marine life is very rich. In Azores the only known endemic mammal species is a bat (*Nyctalus azoreum*). The birds constitute an important part of the ecosystems in this set of oceanic islands, including both resident species and an important group of birds whose migratory routes cross the Atlantic Ocean. For the later, the Azorean islands are a safe place for resting, nesting and reproduction. In this group

the Cory's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) and the Roseate tern (*Sterna dougalli*) are especially important due to the high numbers of the population migrating to the Azores, and therefore several environmental protection and awareness actions are regularly carried out.

In terms of marine fauna, the influence of the Gulf Stream in the Azores results in the presence of tropical species in summer and northern species in winter. Within the variety of species occurring in the region and that can be observed are included dusky groupers, marlins, tunas, sharks, moon-fishes, turtles and shoals of sardines and blue jack mackerels. The abundance of cetaceans, both dolphins and whales, allowed the development of cetacean watching as a tourism product, today one of the main attractions for visitors in the Azores, currently existing a significant supply of services for the observation of these species, subject to a code of conduct. The sperm whale is the most frequently observed whale in these waters, which was once the base for the whale hunting industry in the Azores.

In the region there is a vast area classified as protected, including land areas, inland waters and marine waters, where the landscape, ecosystems or other natural occurrences have ecological, biodiversity, geological, scenic or scientific importance, as well as cultural and social value. These areas are classified in categories according to their management objectives as nature reserves, protected landscapes, areas of special protection, natural forest reserves, places and classified sites, currently integrated in island parks. All these areas are unique places in terms of natural or cultural heritage. Given the exceptional geological heritage the Azores Geopark has been created including a network of geosites dispersed by the nine islands and surrounding sea floor (www.azoresgeopark.com).

¹ A fajã is a small coastal flat land that lies at the bottom of seaside cliffs formed by lava flows during volcanic eruptions or by large landslides.

TRANSPORT

The position, size and spatial dispersion of the territory are limiting factors to getting around the archipelago for both visitors and locals. Today the region has an extensive and modern network of transport infrastructures, resulting in significant improvements in transport in recent years. Some limitations continue to exist and visitors should check the transport schedules and fares, since availability and regularity of air and sea connections to some of the islands can be limited. Weather and sea conditions also can

cause delays in travelling especially to the smaller islands. The number of connections is reduced in lower tourism seasons.

Currently, all the islands of the archipelago have flight connections throughout the year, and there are regular ferry services between some islands during low season and in the entire archipelago in the high season (Figure 3).

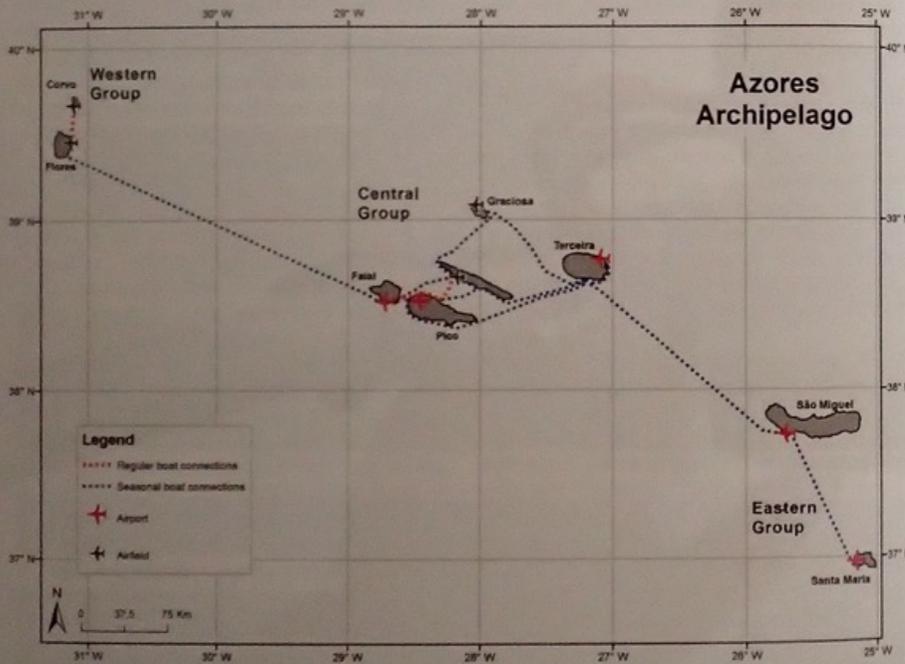


Figure 3 | Main transport connections in the Azores

GETTING TO THE AZORES

The air route is practically the only way to reach the Azores, unless one visits the region as part of a cruise tour or in a sailboat after a long Atlantic crossing. Major airports of entry in the archipelago are Ponta Delgada (São Miguel Island), Lajes (Terceira Island) and Horta (Faial Island). These islands have daily direct connections to Lisbon and regular connections with other destinations, such as Porto and some major European and North America cities. Other non-regular flight connections are also available in high season.

The islands of Pico and Santa Maria are also connected by direct flights to the Portuguese mainland, although not on a daily basis. The weather, especially the wind and fog, may influence some of these flights, especially if the route involves smaller local airports.

More information about the routes can be found at several internet sites, including SATA and TAP airlines, and local tourism information offices.

GETTING AROUND THE ISLANDS

There are daily connections to all the archipelago islands with the exception of Corvo Island that only has flights on some days. Inter-island flights are operated from the major airports in the region and subject to the influence of the weather conditions especially when the route involves smaller local airports.

Maritime connections are another option for inter-island travel. Due to the spatial dispersion of the islands, sea passenger's transportation is only operational between the three groups in the medium to high season. Maritime transportation of passengers is operated by two companies: Atlânticoline (www.atlanticoline.pt) and Transmaçor (www.transmacor.pt). Within each group there are regular or seasonal sea

links, and it is also possible to hire maritime tourism operators, but these water taxi services are naturally more expensive than regular transportation services.

Transmaçor ensures five to seven daily connections between Faial and Pico and two daily trips between these islands and São Jorge Island. Connections with the other islands of the Central Group are seasonal.

The Atlânticoline operates the transports between the islands of Flores and Corvo, usually on daily basis in high season and less frequently in other times, weather and sea conditions permitting. Trips between the islands of São Miguel and Santa Maria, in the Eastern group, are operated several times a week and, in high season, these services are expanded to Terceira and Graciosa (Central group).

LOCAL TRANSPORT IN EACH ISLAND

With the exception of Corvo Island, there is a reliable supply of taxi services, regular buses routes, car hiring (rent-a-car) services and other tourist transportation services. If you opt for car rental, it is advisable to make reservations in advance, especially on the smaller islands in high touristic season, due to limited number of cars and higher demand in the summer months.

Water taxi services are an interesting option for tours along the coast, and certainly for those canyoners since in some routes the only exit is by the sea.

ACCOMMODATION AND EATING

The Azores currently have a wide and diverse range of accommodation alternatives, from standard hotels to traditional and rural tourism accommodations. In all islands where canyoning is practised, the accommodation ranges from modern four star hotels to campsites or camping places. Prices and conditions vary depending on the type of accommodation you select and time of the year. During the months of high season, especially July and August, accommodations can be fully booked, so it is advisable to book these services well in advance.

All islands where people go canyoning have shops and supermarkets to purchase food and a number of restaurants and bars, though supply and variety is restricted in the smaller islands.

The Azores are renowned for the quality of its food, particularly meat, fish, cheese, wine, milk, chocolate and some delicacies such as limpets and barnacles. In general, regional restaurants are based on traditional Portuguese cuisine, yet some regional specialties should not be missed including local dishes typical of each island.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Entry: The Azores are an autonomous region of Portugal so the entry requirements are similar to any other region and country of the European Union.

Language: The official language in the region is Portuguese, but many Azoreans speak English and the main local tourist agents understand and speak different languages, especially English, but also Spanish, French, German and Italian.

Currency: Euro (€) is the currency in Portugal. ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) are available in the main towns and villages of the islands and in most shops, hotels and restaurants accept debit and credit cards.

Local time: UTC/GMT -1 hour, one hour less than in mainland Portugal or the UK and two hours less than most EU countries.

Electricity: Electrical outlets of types C and F and electrical voltage of 220V at 50 Hz.

Telephone: Cell phone network coverage is available in all islands, especially from the main national service providers. SIM cards can be purchased in all islands and can be a cheaper alternative for local phone calls. Country code for Portugal is 351 and the region prefix number code is 29.

Internet: Internet access is available in most accommodation units in the region and in some restaurants and cafes. Free Wi-Fi is also available in public areas in some islands.

Websites with information on tourism and canyoning in the Azores:

www.canyoning.azores.visitazores.com – Official website of Azores Tourism,
www.zoomazores.com – Website with maps and information on nature tourism;

<http://desnivel.pt/canyoning/> – Website of Desnivel with detailed information about canyoning in Portugal.

Safety: The Azores archipelago is a very safe tourism destination but exceptions may occur as in any other European destination, and basic common sense and respectful attitude should be adopted.

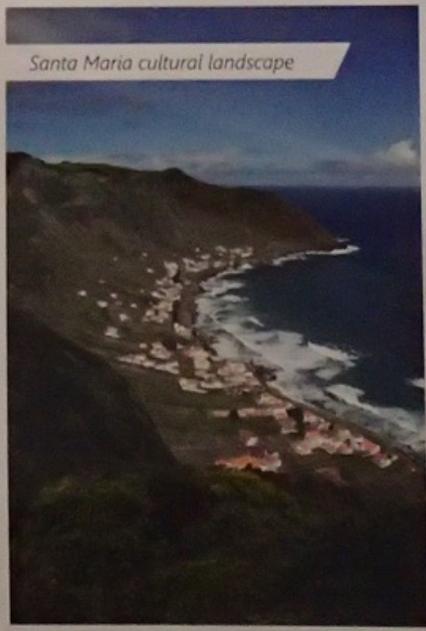
In case of emergency: Portugal uses the European emergency number **112** and should be used in any situation requiring intervention by the authorities such as accidents, health conditions, fire or burglary.

Health: Public health units and pharmacies are available in the islands. Health centres exist in all islands with the exception of Corvo where there is a small health care unit. São Miguel, Terceira and Faial hospitals are fully equipped and provide services in main medical specialties, and there are means of evacuation in case of need. Emergency services in health centres and hospitals are practically free for all EU citizens, only requiring the payment of a fee. The use of the European health insurance card and a specific insurance to cover the practice of canyoning are highly recommended. The rescue services are generally free, but specific resources for canyoning rescue are limited.

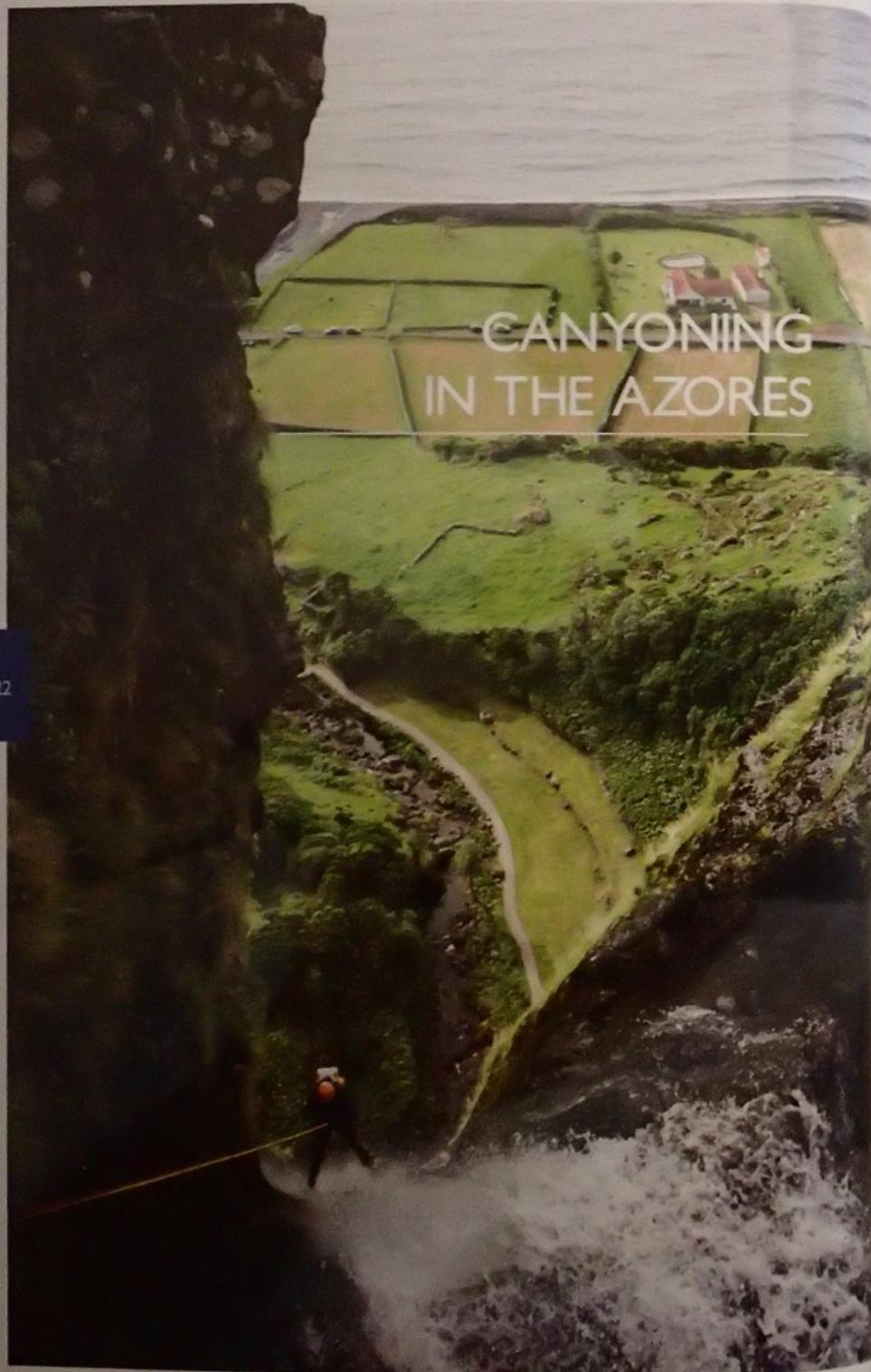
Clothing and equipment: Light and fresh clothes in the summer, and warmer in other seasons are advisable. Due to local weather instability, high humidity and wind it is essential to take some warmer clothes and footwear, as well as waterproof jacket even in the hottest season. Canyoning equipment is not available at local stores and only in São Miguel can be possible to purchase some equipment, with exception for wetsuits that is available in almost every island.

Culture and behaviour: The Azorean population is mainly catholic and people are warm, friendly and hospitable. The tourist behaviour should respect the culture of the local community. Most religious manifestations are common to the several islands, especially those in honour of the divine Holy Spirit. Visitors are welcome by the local population and naturally integrated in the festivities.

Religious and other traditional Azorean events are deeply rooted in local culture, as the festivities and pilgrimages. These events, especially during summer, provide festive ambience including a variety of musical performances, parades, processions, popular marches, gastronomic fairs and other initiatives such as sporting and nature activities. These events have a strong symbolic value, combining religious and pagan festivities with ethnographic and architectural features, such as churches and "impérios", are an opportunity for tourist to feel and enjoy the genuine cultural atmosphere of Azores.



Santa Maria cultural landscape



CANYONING IN THE AZORES

OVERVIEW

The Azores are a territory of excellence for canyoning. Currently equipped routes are available in six of the nine islands in the archipelago. Of these, the islands of Flores, São Jorge, São Miguel and Santa Maria have good conditions for the sport while in Faial and Terceira the supply is limited. Some potential for canyoning might exist in Pico Island but mainly in ephemeral streams; therefore streams are without flow most of the year, running only after rainfall in a torrential flow regime. However, canyoning is still unexplored in this island.

Until 2014, more than a hundred canyoning routes were equipped in the Azores (Figure 4). The islands of Flores and São Jorge stand out due to the number, quality and beauty of the routes, undoubtedly destinations of international excellence for the sport.

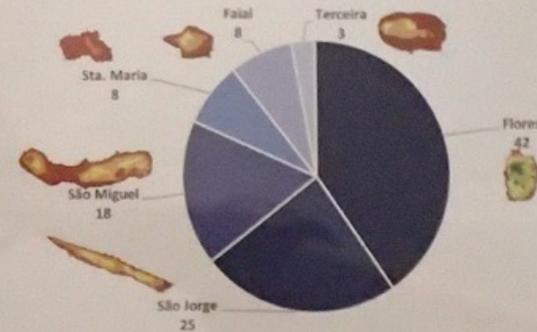


Figure 4 | Equipped canyoning routes in the Azores islands as in 2014

Given the common volcanic origin of the islands, many canyoning routes have similar characteristics across the archipelago, in terms of geological and geomorphological structure. Nevertheless, different types of volcanic rocks, local dynamics and environments explain the different settings that can be found from route to route. In general, the routes are of great beauty and have a wide range in the level of difficulty (Table 2).

Some canyons are characterized by long vertical routes, appropriate and very appealing for experienced canyioners. However, most routes are in the mid-range, having medium to high drops.

The routes are not aquatic as a rule, but some pools allow jumping into the water in places that should always be observed previously to confirm that the safety conditions. Easy, enjoyable and very beautiful routes are also available, naturally most interesting for leisure and tourism service providers.

The abundance of water and the temperate climate allow canyoning during almost all year round in Azores, the best period being between April and October. Severe weather conditions may limit the activity, especially when heavy rainfall occurs and stream flow increases to hazardous levels.

Table 2 | Quality and difficulty of the equipped canyoning routes in the Azores

Island	Equipped routes	High quality ≥ 3.0	Low difficulty (<v4)	Medium difficulty (v4)	High difficulty (>v4)
Flores	42	32	20	11	11
São Jorge	25	20	6	11	8
São Miguel	18	8	14	4	0
São Maria	8	5	2	3	3
Faial	8	4	4	3	1
Terceira	3	1	3	0	0
Total	104	70	49	32	23

Despite the relatively high precipitation, steep slopes and small catchment areas lead to low aquatic difficulty levels in most canyoning routes. Conditions can vary significantly depending on the precipitation. Most aquatic routes can be found in Flores Island. In Santa Maria, Terceira and Faial water flows are low during summer and, in many routes the water only flows after periods of intense rainfall. Evaluation of weather conditions and flow levels in the streams prior to entering the routes should be carried out, to avoid exposure to dangerous and undesirable situations such as sudden floods or hazardous white water movements.

The predominant rocks are of the andesitic complex type, with dark colours, and pyroclastic materials of modern projection. In general, the rock is consolidated, especially in some of the larger drops. Due to its characteristics, this rock has sharp edges, can be highly fragmented at places but also with consolidated strata, which may present some difficulties for canyoning.

The geology of the islands also influences the characteristics of the routes, prevailing quite consolidated basaltic rocks alternating with softer strata. Some canyoning routes can be quite slippery and require good technique in management of the ropes to avoid damages due to rock edges and from falling rocks.

The omnipresence of the sea in the landscape is a major attraction, along with the luxuriant greenery along most routes, creating the feeling of an exotic environment.



D'Aleim route in Flores



Salto stream in São Jorge island



EVOLUTION OF CANYONING IN THE AZORES

In Portugal, the first canyoning routes were explored and equipped on the mainland, in the Cabril and Fafão rivers (Gerês), by Francisco Silva and Manuel João Pinto in the summer of 1989. Few years later, many active canyoning enthusiasts in the country created Desnivel Adventure Sports Association (Desnivel), which in time became a pioneer organization in the training of canyoning enthusiasts, organizing internships, workshops and equipping routes, initially on the mainland, then in Madeira between 2002 and 2007 and in the Azores since 2003.

In the Azores, probably the first descent of a stream for sport and leisure purposes, using abseiling techniques, occurred in 1997, with descent of the Praia Superior route in San Miguel, by the brothers João Pacheco e Paulo Pacheco. Since 2002, other sportive descents have been undertaken by a group of members of CALAG, a local club in São Miguel, namely the routes of Lime and of Caldeirões Inferior. The latter route became one of the most used routes in the Azores, mostly by commercial service providers generally taking inexperienced tourists in day tours.

The organized and systematic work in the region started later, with a first exploring visit to evaluate canyoning potential in several Azores islands, in August 2003, by Francisco Silva and Maria do Céu Almeida. New routes were equipped in São Miguel (2003), Flores (2004), São Jorge (2007) and Santa Maria (2009), by a team from the

Desnivel, headquartered in Cascais, first a group from Lisbon, later including Azorean canyoning enthusiasts. This work consisted of broad exploration and equipment of new routes, gradually training and involving locals in the several islands, divulging of routes topos, and organization of meetings, initially mainly for Portuguese, later international dissemination. Support to new commercial initiatives was also aimed and, with the support of Azorean Tourism organizations, today most islands with potential for canyoning have commercial service providers operating.

All this voluntary work has had the support of several organizations from Azores Regional Government (Azores Tourism Association, Regional Tourism Board, and Regional Tourism Association), some municipalities and other local entities and companies. In the last pages of this guidebook a summary of the canyoning routes exploration and equipment is presented, including the dates and people participating in the teams.

The result of this continued work until mid-2014, were explored and equipped most routes with potential for canyoning in the Azores (Table 3). Other potential routes exist, many ephemeral, therefore without running water most part of the year, some hardly accessible, requiring some additional logistics. Some explored routes were not described in this guidebook because they are less interesting.

Table 3 | Exploration and equipment of canyoning routes in the Azores by year and island

Island	97-02	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Flores	-	-	5	8	12	4	5	3	2	1	-	-	2	42
São Jorge	-	-	-	-	9	4	7	2	2	-	-	-	1	25
São Miguel	7	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	18
Sa. Maria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	-	-	-	8
Faial	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	2	-	8
Terceira	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	3
Total	7	2	5	10	21	10	12	11	7	10	9	2	3	104

Another important step for the development of this activity in the region was the creation of Azores canyoning section of Desnivel, in 2011, coordinated by Paulo Pacheco, facilitating the training of local technicians and trainers in the various islands. Marco Melo and Henrique Simões, respectively, in Flores and in Santa Maria, started to collaborate ensuring the coordination of canyoning activities in these islands and also started their tourism specialized businesses.

Since 2005, Desnivel has regularly undertaken canyoning training activities in the islands, in a training scheme with three technical grades, from an introductory level, to improved skills level and advanced canyoning courses. The first advanced level course was held in Flores in 2011 and a second one in São Jorge in 2014. These courses have helped to ensure the technical qualification of local tourism companies currently offering commercial canyoning services, and the development of a local canyoning community, some of which took part in the exploration of new canyoning routes.

The collection, organization and dissemination of information about canyoning routes have been a priority since the beginning of this project.

Since 2008, the short guide "Azores Nature and Adventure Tourism Guide", authored by Francisco Silva and Maria do Céu Almeida and edited by the Regional Tourism Association, includes summary information about the main canyoning routes. The most appealing routes were also divulged in many specialized websites in Portugal, France and Spain.

Since 2013, the potential for canyoning gained further institutional support in the region, leading to various local associations and the Azores Tourism Association to develop several actions in partnership with Desnivel and Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril, which contributed significantly to dissemination of canyoning in the region, with projects such as the internet platform ZoomAzores (www.zoomazores.pt), the edition of nature and adventure maps of São Jorge, Flores, Faial and Terceira islands, and the canyoning international meeting in October 2014 (Canyoning International Meeting Azores - CIMA).

Given the number of equipped canyoning routes and the increasing number of local canyoning experts, conditions exist to offer a mature adventure tourism product and to continue to invest in the promotion of safety.



First descent of Grande route in Santa Maria

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND RESPONSIBLE CANYONING ACCESS

The Azores pursues a tourism development model based on the potential of the territory, authenticity and sustainability of tourism, which implies the involvement of both local communities and tourists to respect the environment and local culture.

Despite the small size of the territory, places with cosmopolitan living as well as quite traditional corners can be found. The respect for the local way of life, culture and traditions is essential when visiting as a responsible visitor. Tourism is important for the local economy. Preference for local services providers, valuing those promoting sustainability and quality of service is an important way of contributing to the development of the Azores and of a responsible tourism.

Even if the landscape appears to be predominantly natural, most of the territory is the result of human action, with numerous pastures, forests of exotic trees and abundant shrubs several introduced species, some particularly invasive, especially along the streams.

Due to low population density, mostly by the coast, water quality in streams is generally good even if not always clear. Water in some streams in Flores and São Jorge has a brownish colour, resulting from natural conditions of water circulation and local vegetation.

Canyoning in the Azores involves the access to environmentally vulnerable places, some routes being located in protected areas. Although no legal restrictions exist today on canyoning in the region, it is important to obtain up to date information about access conditions and to adopt a responsible conduct, minimising adverse impacts and respect other canyoning. Special care is required when accessing canyoning routes using trails crossing especially vulnerable areas or private properties or in situations where there are no paths at all. Whenever possible, existing trails should be used, avoiding crossing pastures or cultivated fields and taking care to always close the gates.



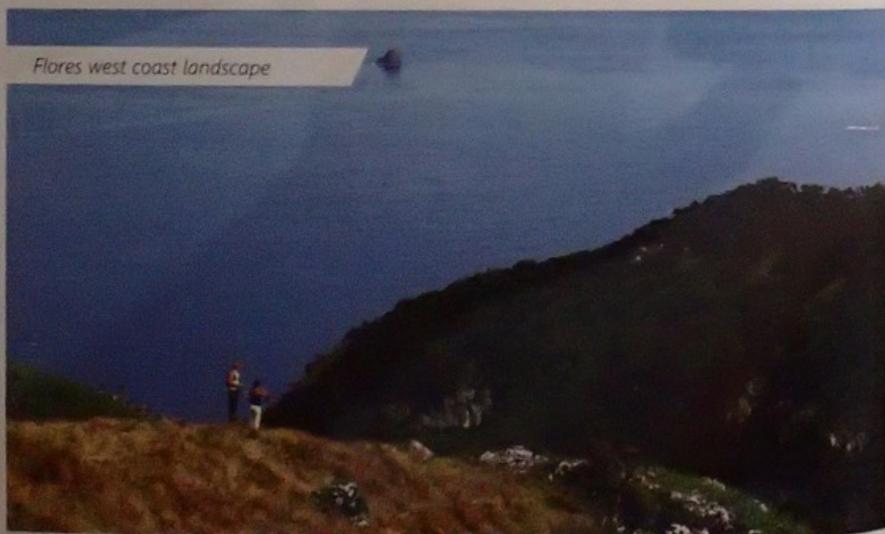
Columnar disjunctions in Maloás stream, Santa Maria island



Once on the canyoning route, if good practises are adopted, the impact of canyoning in the stream is reduced. As canyoning is usually done over the stream bed, environmental vulnerability is lower because these are places often washed by floods. Water quality is also not significantly affected and only in a few places, with fine sediments accumulated in the bottom, temporary increase in water turbidity can occur. The only artificial elements introduced in this environment are the anchors for rappelling, usually two stainless steel bolts installed in the rock. This equipment has been placed considering the minimization of environmental impacts, canyoning safety, and possibility of use with the expected range of flow rates as well as the durability of the anchors. Canyoning should avoid installing permanent equipment, unless if necessary for ensure the safety of the group, preferably, non-permanent

anchoring options should be used and, in case of damaged or insufficient anchors, send the information to Desnivel canyoning group or to local canyoning service providers.

Canyoning is usually quite sensitive and aware of the value of nature conservation and need to minimize the impacts on the environment. Common sense measures should be followed such as not leaving garbage behind; avoiding walking over vulnerable places or vegetation; preferring small canyoning groups and keeping noise levels low.



Flores west coast landscape

CARTOGRAPHY, INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION

Access and exit points of canyoning routes are not signed and some are not obvious. Additionally, fog can occur quite frequently especially at the higher elevations. Therefore, whenever canyoning is not familiar with local terrain and are not accompanied by a local guide, it is recommended the use of a topographic map and GPS.

In this guidebook extracts from topographic maps are provided indicating the access options for each route and the cartographic coordinates of canyoning routes entrances and exits, which can be valuable in some situations. The UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) coordinate system was adopted, since it is easier to read on topographical maps than geographical coordinates and the GPS accepts both. These coordinates are rounded to the metre although due to the accuracy of the current global positioning system, an approximation to ten metres should be considered. The WGS84 reference system is used, being currently the most common and used in the most recent topographic maps of the Azores islands at the scale of 1/25 000.

The topographic maps can be purchased at the Instituto Geográfico do Exército (IGeoE - www.igeoe.pt), with contour lines with intervals of 10

m. However, the recently published maps by Turismo dos Açores, based on the 1/25.000 IGeoE topographic, are more convenient for leisure and tourism since they are updated to include tourist information such as hiking and walking trails and canyoning routes. These 2014 versions of the original maps have the additional advantage of being printed in fewer sheets and are already available for the islands of São Jorge (reduced from 7 to 2 sheets) and Flores (from 2 to 1 sheet). Similar maps are currently under development for Faial and Terceira islands.

The website ZoomAzores (www.zoomazores.pt), with dynamic maps and information on the Azores nature and adventure activities, including canyoning, are also useful for planning the trips.

Canyoning are also a good source of information, either local canyoning guiding services providers or members of Desnivel, the former are certainly aware of route and access conditions and stream flows. Take into account possible changes in the routes after periods of heavy rainfall.



Using the GPS to confirm the canyoning route

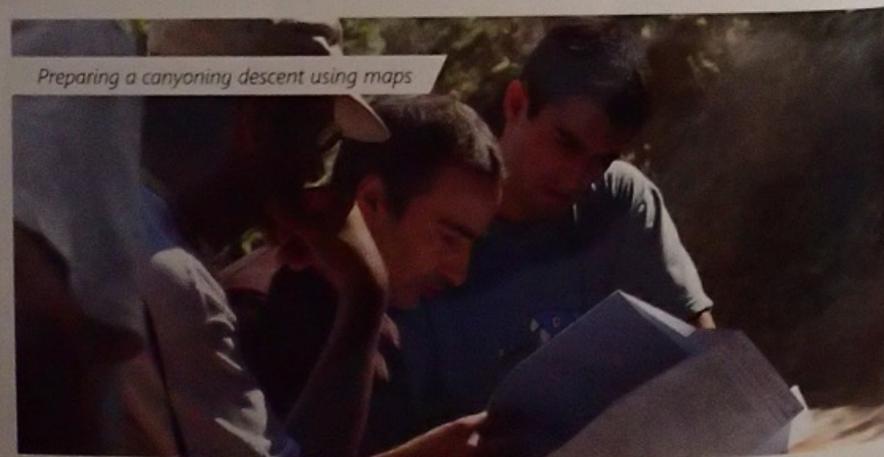
WHEN TO VISIT

The best season to visit the Azores archipelago is during summer when rainfall is low and air and water temperatures are higher. However, in the mild climate of the Azores, with monthly average temperatures between 13 °C and 22 °C, canyoning trips can be done in during almost all seasons. Visiting during low to mid-season has the advantage of finding the places with fewer tourists and usually lower prices.

The conditions for canyoning in the region are quite variable, depending on the island and the type of route. If one willing to enjoy a first experience of canyoning, probably the summer months are the best, if in the islands of Flores, São

Jorge or São Miguel. In Santa Maria, Terceira and Faial, spring is the best season to go canyoning since most streams will be dry during summer time.

For experienced canyoning, visiting with the main purpose of canyoning, there are many opportunities, since good conditions for canyoning can be found throughout the year, depending on the specific each island, allow a wide range of choices. For those willing to do canyoning in the most appealing islands, namely Flores and São Jorge, there are streams with water during the whole year (Table 4).



Preparing a canyoning descent using maps

Table 4 | Conditions for canyoning per month and island

Island	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Flores	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	-	-
S. Jorge	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	+	-
S. Miguel	-	-	+	++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	++	-	-
S. Maria	+	+	++	+++	+++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+
Faial	+	+	++	+++	+++	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
Terceira	+	+	++	+++	+++	++	+	+	-	+	+	+

Legend: - less favourable, + reasonable, ++ good, +++ best period

During the visit, even in summer, you should be expecting some rainfall due to weather instability in the territory. This can even be an advantage since it allows having running water in streams even when catchments are small. Winter conditions can limit canyoning if temperature is lower, precipitation is high or if sea conditions are rough for routes ending at sea. In these islands the practise of canyoning in winter is conditioned mainly by lower temperatures, a minor factor when compared to the conditions for canyoning in mountain

CANYONING GEAR

INSTALLED ANCHORS

The exploration and equipment of routes were based on current good practices, using durable materials, taking into account the possible use in different seasons and flow levels in the streams. In most cases, existing trails are used to access and return from the routes.

Whenever possible, natural anchors were used, instead of artificial anchors, thus reducing installation of artificial elements. In situations where it was feasible to use natural anchors, such as trees or robust shrubs, criteria considered included allowing the installation of ropes while avoiding sharp edges and having good rope recovery conditions. In this case, it is strongly recommended a pre-assessment of the material in place, used with the purpose of facilitating rope recovery (ropes, slings or maillons),



Equipment used in the 1st expedition to São Jorge

regions or in the continental countries of the middle and high latitudes

Another major advantage of these islands is that, with almost all weather conditions, it is possible, safe and pleasant to go for a canyoning, selecting between mountain and coastal routes, opting for shorter and reduced water flow routes or other possibilities more exposed to the effects of precipitation.

replacing it when the gear do not appear to be in good condition.

The installed metal anchors, are mainly 10 mm stainless steel bolts with ring hangers, usually two at each place. In some places, when for some reason the complete equipment was not possible, and routes were not yet repeated, the standard solution is not installed. In these particular cases or in others where other anchors were used, the routes are identified as semi-equipped, in the summary tables.

When the rock was not compact enough to install bolt anchors, as in soft or in fragmented volcanic rocks, metal pitons or longer length stakes were placed.



As a safety precaution, it is recommended that groups always carry an emergency anchoring kit (rock hammer, hand drill, adjustable wrench, and blow out tube) and extra anchors including bolts, hangers and pitons. This care is particularly important in canyoning routes that have never been repeated or only occasionally used; but also in other situations where placement of additional anchors might be necessary due to higher flows or when the original anchors are no longer there. Anchors might not be found because they are covered with vegetation, have disappeared or been torn by water action or due to falling rocks or small landslides.

Most long drops have been equipped so that they can be descended using ropes up to a maximum of 60 metres. However, it is advisable to take into account that it is not always easy to find the anchors in multi-tiered drops. To reduce the risk from falling rocks, it is usual to have consecutive anchors shifted from the vertical alignment of the previous one. Where possible, positioning of anchors is made in order to protect them from falling rocks or action of water flows. Therefore, sometimes it might be necessary to do a pendulum to reach the anchors. In some cases, as in the

Mouco or Privada routes (Flores), the anchors were installed in places without platforms and canyoners are hanging, being useful the use of slings or pedals to footrest. In these places it might be difficult to accommodate more than three people.

In most cases the anchors have hangers with rings and are positioned in a horizontal alignment and not connected. Ropes should be placed through both rings proving the desired redundancy, distributing forces and allowing for separation of the ropes lines which facilitates rope recovery. Where anchors are placed in a vertically alignment, it is necessary to connect both hangers with small lengths of rope or slings, which should be replaced regularly. In either situation, it is essential to ensure that both anchors are actively connected.

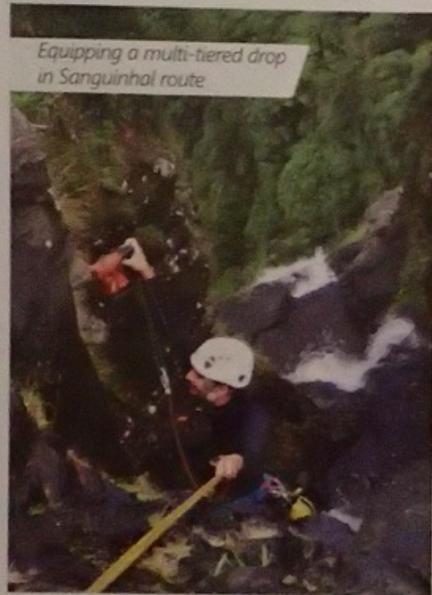
The placement of anchors took into account several constraints, particularly the quality of the rock, the prevention of rope friction in rock sharp edges, the easiness to recover the rope, the avoidance of dangerous swift water, and exposure to water or falling rocks during the descent. However, in some cases, particularly in multi-tiered drops, or streams with higher

CANYONING IN THE AZORES

flows, it was not always possible to ensure all these conditions.

It is important to note that the description of the location of each anchor refers to conditions

of summer or dry weather flows. When the water level is higher it might be harder to locate the anchors. Vegetation growth can also hide anchors, especially moss.



Equipping a multi-tiered drop in Sanguinhal route



Placing the anchor in Badanela route

34

GEAR TO BRING

Safe canyoning in the Azores requires the use of the complete set of personal protective equipment (PPE), including helmet, harness with double lanyard, a descender, several karabiners, various stitched slings or tapes, rope for the valdostano knot, blockers (e.g. shunt, accessory cords for making blocker knots), backpack, watertight drum, headlamp, whistle, knife, thermal blanket, two-piece wetsuit preferably 5 mm thickness, inner layer, neoprene socks, gloves and resistant boots with good grip.

Canyoners should be prepared for slippery and abrasive rock. Although the climate is relatively mild, low levels of insolation should be expected. Strong winds can occur and, in higher elevation areas, air and water temperatures are

lower especially in less warm months, when water temperature can be as low as eight degrees Celsius.

Equipment for each team should include sufficient rope length to always ensure, at least, three times the longest rappel. Additionally, team safety and rescue equipment should also include some pulleys, extra blockers, a fully equipped first aid kit, a GPS, some maps and means for emergency communication. The group should always carry an emergency anchoring kit (rock hammer, hand drill, adjustable wrench, and blow out tube) and extra anchors including bolts, hangers and pitons as well as some rope length and maillons to anchors in trees.

In longer routes, consider taking bivouac equipment and for multi-tiered and long drops with poor visibility, it can be useful to have radios for communication.

For canyoners intending to hire local guiding services, usually they provide the necessary gear.



35

DESCENT TECHNIQUES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

SPECIFICS OF CANYONING IN THE AZORES

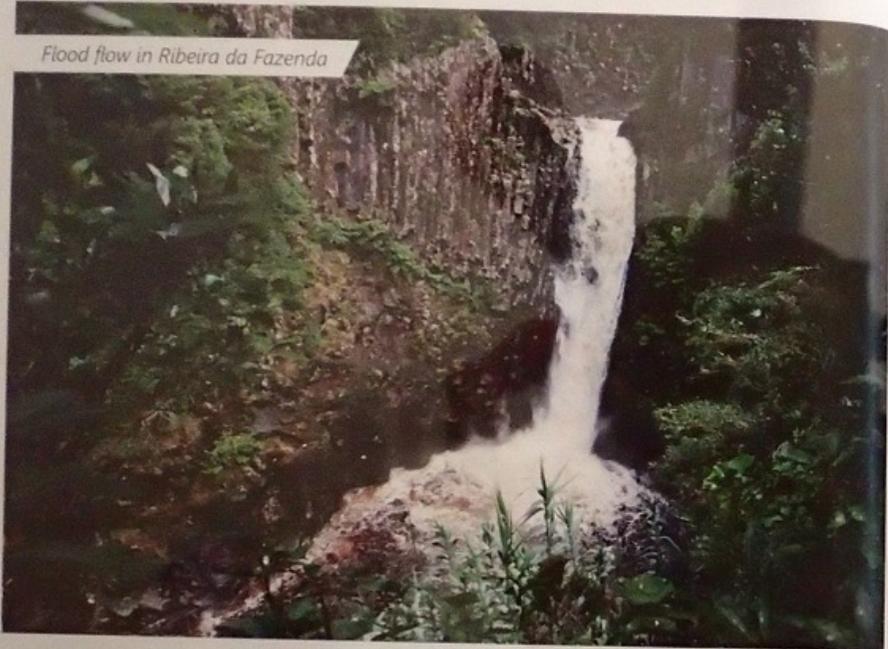
Environmental and technical characteristics of the Azores canyoning routes are much determined by local climate and geomorphology. In general, the streams have small to medium length, with sections varying in narrowness and drops height, quite enclosed in softer rock and wider valleys in consolidated basalt, often with long steep drops.

The distribution of rainfall, the type of rock and slopes are important factors influencing flow regimes. The geological structure of the islands, especially rock masses and soil perviousness, largely determines the type of canyoning routes. While in Pico and Terceira porous soils are predominant, leading to low runoff, on islands such as Flores or in some regions of São Jorge,

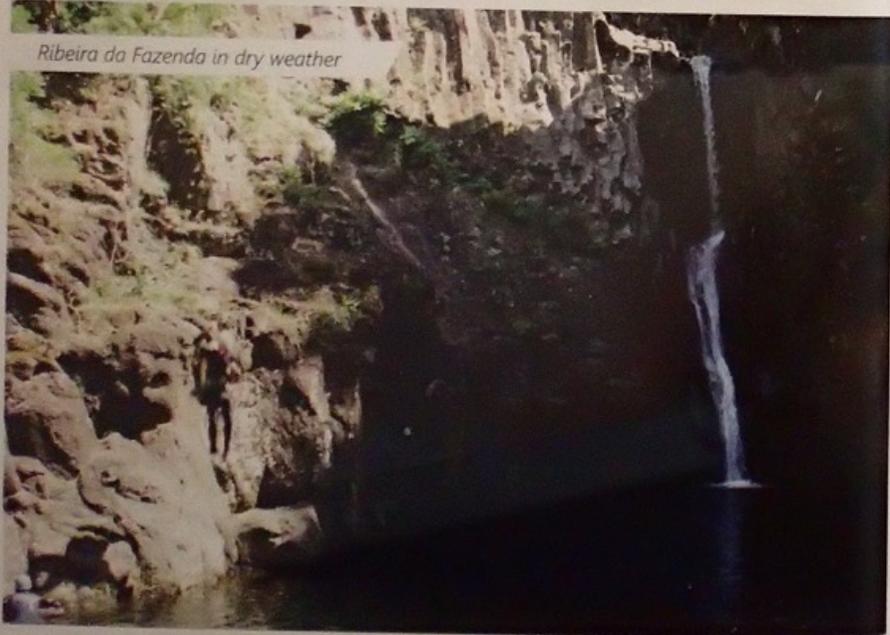
conditions are favourable to higher flow rates in runoff and permanent stream flows.

Given the small catchment area of most streams, except during floods, the flow rates are relatively low. However, there are some exceptions, such as the Badanela stream, in Flores Island, or the Grande stream, in São Miguel. In these cases the flow rates can increase quickly when heavy rainfall occurs, with potentially higher flows in rocky catchments and when dams or other retention structures may accentuate the sudden variation in the flow rates and the flash flood effect.

Flood flow in Ribeira da Fazenda



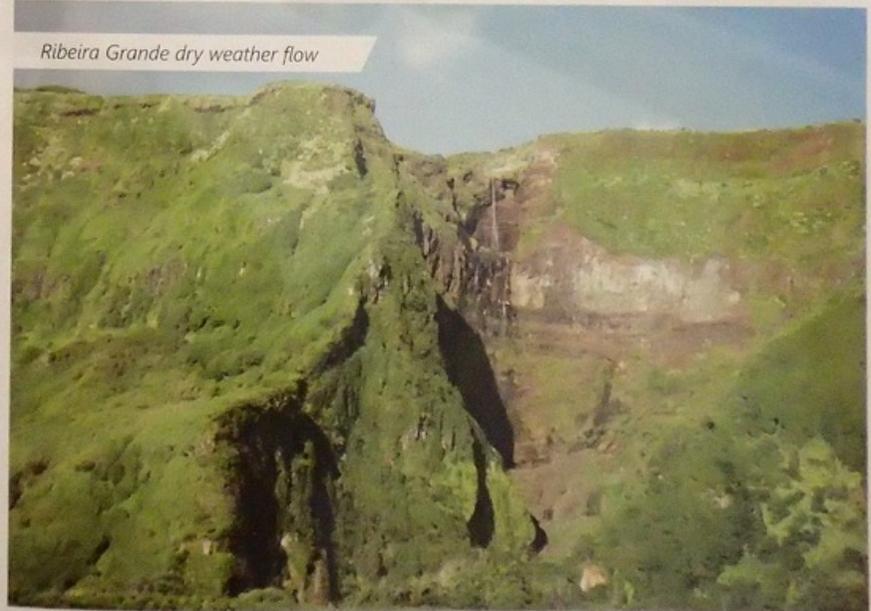
Ribeira da Fazenda in dry weather



Flood flow in Ribeira Grande



Ribeira Grande dry weather flow



CANYONING IN THE AZORES

In summary, the main characteristics of canyons in the Azores are:

- routes alternating soft and fragmented rock strata with harder rock layers;
- natural environments with abundant lush vegetation;
- frequent occurrence of fog in the upstream areas;
- often difficult progression in stream beds due very slippery rocky bottom;
- existence of sharp rocky edges;
- risk of falling rocks in rappels;
- good water quality, although water can have a brownish colour in some streams due to vegetation and soil;
- routes with low level of aquatic difficulty although flows can increase rapidly following heavy rainfall;
- several routes have long drops, some multi-tiered;
- routes are not frequently descended some rarely done, limiting the monitoring of route and equipment condition;
- non-existence of rescue teams knowledgeable about canyoning techniques and routes.

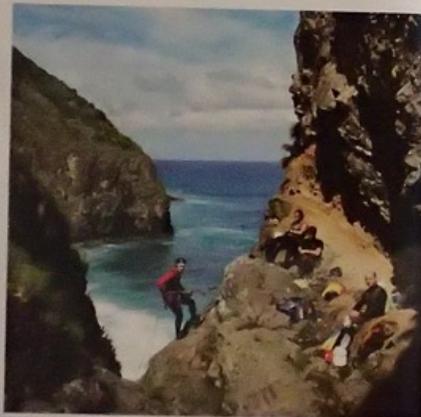
These imposing and heavily vegetated environments can be very demanding, so canyoning have to be physically, technically and psychologically prepared in order to safely enjoy canyoning in the Azores.

Most canyoning routes in the Azores have low aquatic difficulty and deep pools allowing jumping do not abound. These routes are primarily characterized by large drops, plenty of waterfalls and narrow valleys surrounded by lush greenery. The climate of the islands favours canyoning since it is possible to go for a canyoning almost throughout the year and the existence of varied conditions in

the islands in terms of the distribution of rainfall provides supply and increases the alternatives.

Due to its characteristics, most canyoning routes are not appropriate for people who do not master the techniques and rope work. However, for those who have adequate training, the challenges are appealing and the adventure will be an added motivation to accentuate the flavour of discovering unique landscapes.

Risks associated with access and exiting difficulties, insufficient information about the routes and escape trails, lack of equipment, falling rocks and sharp edges in rocks should not be taken lightly by those who choose the Azores for canyoning. Best practises should be adopted for safe descents and routes selected according to levels of competency of group members.



CANYONING ROUTES CLASSIFICATION

The classification of canyoning routes is relatively complex, either because it requires the control of a set of variables and expertise knowledge in different areas (abseiling techniques, rescue, aquatic manoeuvres, among others), or the inaccessibility of many environments and changing conditions during the progression with variations that can be sudden, in terms of flow rate and weather.

Therefore, it is useful to use a multi-criteria classification system. Normally, canyoning routes

are classified based on their quality and grading. This can be divided into vertical difficulty, aquatic difficulty and exposure and continuity difficulty. The main factors contributing to set the difficulty level of a canyoning route are:

- stream anchors (totally equipped, partially equipped, not equipped);
- distance, including access and exit times;
- technical difficulty related to obstacles overcoming and progression in the canyoning route.

- flow rate and water movements;
- morphology;
- exposure to hazards, including falling rocks, flash floods caused by intense rainfalls, discharges from reservoirs, among others;
- existence of possible escapes or help and rescue accesses;
- easiness in getting out of the streambed during the occurrence of a sudden flood;
- temperature of the water and air;
- length of stay in contact with water;
- easiness of communication and rescue;
- available information;
- human factors – knowledge, group size, among others.

Regarding the classification on the difficulty, the French system, as defined by the French Federation of Mountain Sport and Climbing

and the French Federation of Speleology, was adopted with few modifications. Therefore, the grading system used in this guidebook is divided in three indicators:

- vertical difficulty – v (vertical);
- aquatic difficulty – a (aquatic);
- exposure and continuity difficulty.

In all these cases, the upper limit remains open. The vertical difficulty (Table 5) and the aquatic difficulty (Table 6) scales are divided into seven classes, from 1 to 7, while the exposure and continuity scale has six classes, from I to VI (Table 7).

The overall grading of difficulty assigned to a canyoning route is defined by the highest level of difficulty obtained in the three indicators.

Table 5 | Vertical difficulty scale

Grade	Difficulty	Description
V1	Very easy	No rope, climbing or down climbing is required.
V2	Easy	Easy rappels lower than 10 m. Easy climbing or down climbing.
V3	A little difficult	Rappels: low flow, easily reached; 10 to 30 m. Difficult and slippery terrain. Simple hand lines, climbing or down climbing steps up to III +.
V4	Difficult	Rappels: medium flow, difficult access; 30 m to 60 m; abseiling end not visible from the top; multi-tiered drops with comfortable anchor platforms; reception in deep pool. Need to manage rope in sharp edges. Difficult hand lines; climbing or down climbing steps up to IV + or A0.
V5	Quite difficult	Rappels: waterfalls with average to strong flow. Difficult abseil exceeding 60 m or multi-tiered with anchor places exposed to verticality. Hard recovery of rope. Climbing or down climbing steps up to 5c/A1.
V6	Very difficult	Rappels: highly difficult, in waterfalls with strong to very strong flows. End of abseils in pools with hazardous white-water. Setting and placement of anchors, hand lines and multi-tiered abseils in very hard situations (suspended pendulums, difficult placing of anchors, etc.). Exposed climbing or down climbing steps up to 6a/A2. Difficult management of rope crossing sharp edges. Exposure to falling rocks in abseils.
V7	Extremely difficult	Rappels: in waterfalls with extremely strong flows. End of abseils in pools with very dangerous white-water. Extended passages in apnea. Exposed climbing and down climbing steps up to 6a/A2. Suspended anchors in areas with strong water flow and high exposure to falling rocks.

Table 6 | Aquatic difficulty scale

Grade	Difficulty	Description
A1	Very easy	No water or calm water, optional swimming
A2	Easy	Calm water, jumps lower than 3 m, less than 10 m swimming
A3	A little difficult	Weak current, jumps lower than 5 m, less than 30 m swimming
A4	Difficult	Medium current, simple jumps up to 8 m and difficult jumps up to 5 m; need to spend much time in contact with water. Siphons, white-water features and slides requiring special care.
A5	Quite difficult	Prolonged immersion in cold water. Progression in relatively strong current. Difficult white-water features. Difficult jumps from 5 to 8 m or simple execution jumps from 8 to 10 m. Simple siphon traverse.
A6	Very difficult	Progression in strong current with very difficult white-water features. Danger of getting blocked in a difficult situation of white-water feature. Difficult jumps from 8 to 10 m or simple jumps from 10 to 14 m. Delicate siphon traverse.
A7	Extremely difficult	Progression in very strong current with quite violent water movements. Danger of getting blocked and immersed by white-water currents. Difficult jumps above 10 metres or simple jumps from 14 metres. Traverse of technical and very delicate siphons.

The exposure and continuity difficulty level of canyoning routes depends essentially on factors such as the descent time, the existence of possible escape points, easiness of access, characteristics of the rock (deterioration, edges, etc.) and easiness to exit flow area in case of flash flood.

Quadro 7 | Níveis de exposição e continuidade dos percursos de canyoning

Nível de exposição e continuidade	Tempo máximo para sair de zona de cheia	Tempo máximo de acesso a uma escapatória	Tempo de percurso (aproximação, descida e regresso)
I	0 min	0 min	Até 2 h
II	15 min	30 min	2 a 4 h
III	30 min	1 h	4 a 8 h
IV	1 h	2 h	8 h a 1 dia
V	2 h	4 h	2 dias
VI	> 2 h	> 4 h	> 2 dias

The quality of a canyoning route is a relatively subjective matter. A classification was established taking into account route interest and natural beauty, technical and sport interest and leisure character. In this guidebook, the selected classification scale ranges from values between 1 and 5 rounded to one decimal place, in which:

1. Not interesting;
2. A little interesting;
3. Interesting;
4. Very interesting;
5. Exceptionally interesting.

The route grading and descent time results from the application of the classification system shown above with reference to normal conditions (relatively low water flows), associated with the more favourable periods for the descent, considering a group of five canyoning with appropriate level of expertise to the selected route difficulty and descending the route for the first time. Additionally, it assumes that the group has information about the canyoning route and that equipment is as indicated in the topos.

It is important to bear in mind that the difficulty of a canyoning route may, in adverse situations, increase significantly or become impracticable (e.g. when in a flood or in very bad weather). In addition, grading assumes the use of appropriate common techniques. For instance, a guided abseil can be used to ensure the descent of the group, reducing the difficulty of the drop. The psychological effect associated to exposure, verticality, etc., is not taken into account in this grading system. The difficulty associated with jumps is also not considered in this classification since there is the option of abseiling instead.

Exposure to hazards, such as fragmentation of the rock, difficulty in managing ropes on sharp edges or falling rock, is not adequately considered in the French system used in this guidebook. Due to the specific features of canyoning routes in the Azores these criteria were included herein for higher degrees of difficulty (Table 6).

Considering that most canyoning routes in Azores have relatively low flow rates, with low aquatic difficulty and are relatively short, only the vertical grading is given in the description of the routes in this guidebook. The other difficulty indicators are only included for routes where they are relevant.

CANYONING SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Responsible canyoning implies consideration of environmental as well as safety aspects. Canyoning is an adventure sport with increased risk, in which the aquatic component is combined with the verticality, in places difficult to access and progress, in imposing natural environments where existing hazards and risk factors require the adoption of best practices to ensure safety.

Acceptable levels of risk should be based on the adoption of a preventive approach, implemented timely and using appropriate measures to ensure the safety of canyoning, following the advancement of the sport in terms of techniques, equipment and best practices. Canyoning must have the suitable level of competencies and experience for the routes selected.

It is essential that the routes are adequately equipped and that there is enough information about the equipment in place. Emergency response must be planned according to available local resources. In case of less experienced people, a specialised guide to ensure a safe progression and evaluate environmental conditions should be hired. If these criteria are met, canyoning is a safe and leisurely activity.

Accidents can result from both human error, sometimes due to lack of skills or risks being underestimated, or unexpected situations arising from environmental conditions, such as rock falls, flash floods or falls. Most serious accidents reported internationally resulted from sudden changes in flow due to heavy rainfall or from high jumps without prior assessment of pool conditions.

Care in the practice of canyoning implies the adoption of a set of common procedures and consideration local conditions specific to canyoning routes selected. In the Azores, many routes have specific conditions of imposing landscapes with large verticals, requiring psychological preparedness, being important that canyoning feel at ease to evolve in these environments and master the techniques of rappelling. There are important risk factors that should not be overlooked, such as the walled routes, difficult accessing reaches of streams and geological features, such as very abrasive and fragmented basaltic rocks, increasing the likelihood of frictions that can damage the ropes. Thus, in these environments, it is essential to master the techniques to abseil in long drops and to minimizing friction of ropes in sharp edges or abrasive rock. Moreover, since specialised canyoning rescue services are not available in the islands, take responsibility for your own safety and be self-reliant. It is advisable that canyoning master technics of group self-rescue.

For an enjoyable and safe canyoning experience, plan ahead, adopt good practice in canyoning and region-specific conditions, and take the following precautions:

- all participants must have suitable insurance covering canyoning;
- routes should be properly selected (extent, duration, difficulty, access time), taking into account the skills of canyoning, available time, equipment and physical condition;
- before starting a route, assess weather conditions and get information about the route conditions and equipment, check the flow rate and evaluate if it allows a safe descent, especially in more difficult and narrow routes, with hazardous white-water, without rappels anchors out of main flow route and few escapes;
- if the route exit by sea is mandatory, sea condition forecast should be checked before, only entering the route if safe conditions are expected;
- always inform third parties of the routes and schedules;
- start by simple routes to get used to the characteristics of canyons in the region and to the information described in this guide;
- take appropriate individual and group equipment. It is important that each group takes

- a rescue rope, anchoring kit, communication and land navigation equipment;
- start the canyoning allowing enough time to have room for any unforeseen delays;
- never leave anyone progressing alone in the canyon;
- at the bottom of the rappel line, move away and protect the rope in case of falling rocks occur;
- check the condition of the anchors and avoid using only a single metal anchor;
- when rappelling out of the water use a self-blocking system, for instance, a valdostano knot;
- when rappelling in cascades or with significant flow do not use blockers; install a releasable system and ensure the rope length is correctly adjusted at the water surface level;
- at multi-tiered rappels, ensure that a knot is tied at the end of the rope or that rope ends are tied to the anchors;
- in large rappels, especially when overhanging, do not carry heavy packs on the back; hang them from the descender using a karabiner and a sling;
- in long rappels, to avoid problems with rope recovery, the last to descend should use a sling with a karabiner placed in one of the ropes to prevent them from twisting;
- good rope management is essential, protecting it from falling rocks and frictions, using sleeves taking care on the descent and seeking to better position the rope during descent; using the technique of rope releasing between each canyoning descent or installing deviations or guided rappels;
- study the bottom before jumping or going down a slide, check pool depth and inspect the landing zone with a mask to confirm the absence of hidden obstacles in the water;
- during the trip be observant to signs of a sudden rise of flow particularly if the weather is unstable;
- when ending at the sea, take into account the swell and be careful to avoid contact with jellyfish (*Pelagia noctiluca* and *Aurelia aurita*) and Portuguese caravels (*Physalia physalis*);
- in case of an accident, carry out a quick assessment of the situation, if necessary remove the victim from danger, and put it as comfortable as possible, never leaving the victim alone, and promote first aid. Alert emergency services dial 112.

EXITS BY SEA

In routes where exit must necessarily be made by the sea, it is essential to previously evaluate its conditions. Take into account factors like the coastline orientation and its exposure to the swell in the exact exit location because even if the sea seems generally calm in other places conditions may be quite different.

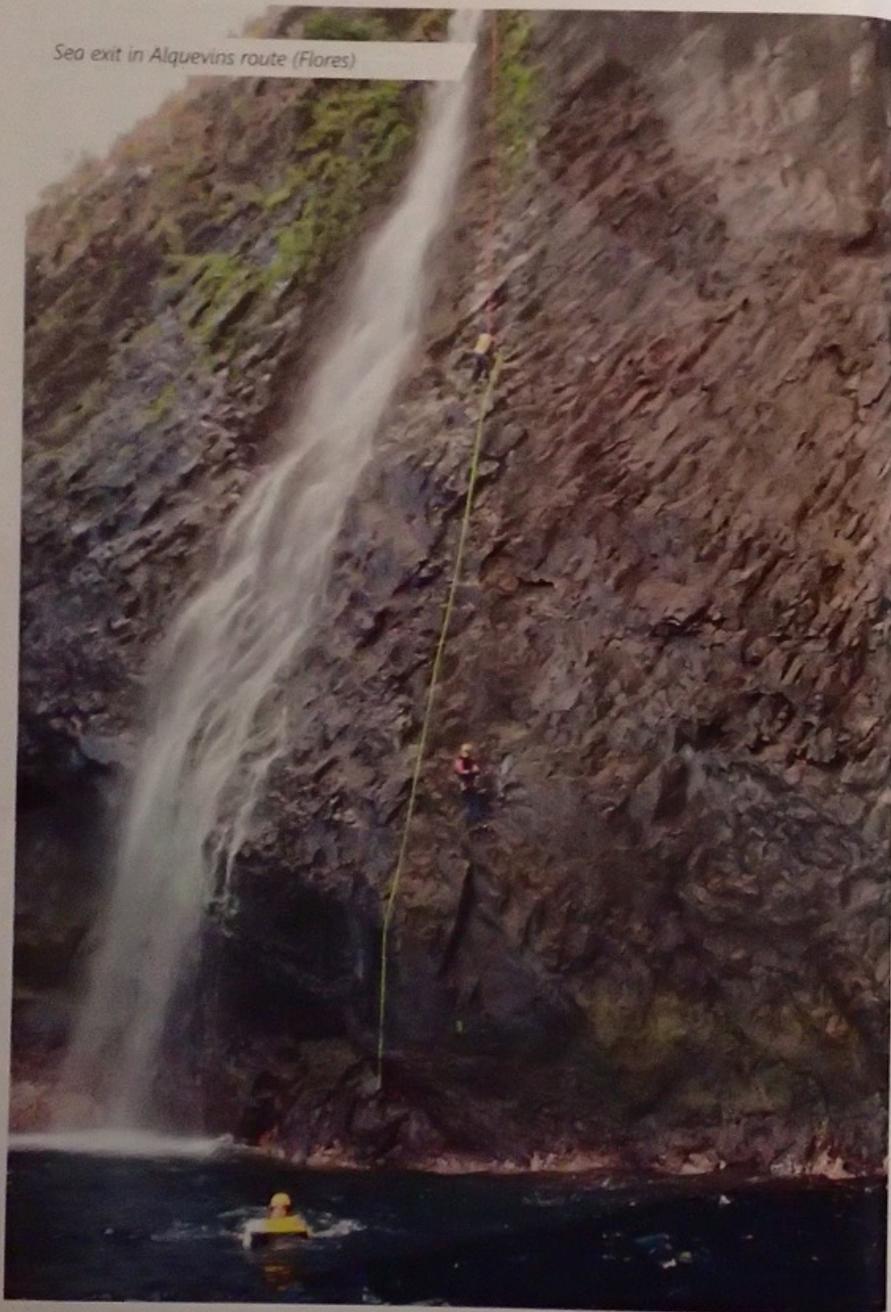
While in some exits it is possible to swimming across short sea sections, others are only feasible with the support of a boat. In the latter situation, it is necessary to arrange the service with a local company. In these situations, ensure to share contacts, take at least one mobile phone but make all arrangements since some places do not have enough signal. When communication is hard or in case of an event or other difficulty preventing the boat transfer of the canyoning, it is recommended to take the minimum gear to stay overnight on the shore.

Exits by sea are quite different depending if they occur directly to the water surface, as in Alquevins and Barrosas routes, in Flores, or to a rocky pebble beach. When exiting directly to the sea surface, it is recommended to abseil the last rappel only after the boat arrives. In the second case, canyoning should pay attention to wave breaking on rocky areas that make entrance difficult, being necessary to do the crossing swimming a stretch of sea to reach the boat, which cannot be too close to shore. If a canyoning has difficulties in crossing the sea breaking section, a possible technique is the crossing of a more experienced person carrying a rope to the boat. After, when the swell is quieter the boat can pull the rope with the other canyoning clinging to the rope that must have the backpacks attached to the rope in front of the people. The backpacks prevent the submersion of the canyoning during the initial entry phase when the boat pulls the rope.

Sea exit in Barrosas route (Flores)



Sea exit in Alquevins route (Flores)



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook includes all explored and equipped canyoning routes in Azores until August 2014, in six islands: Flores, São Jorge, São Miguel, Santa Maria, Faial and Terceira. The data is presented by island following an order based on relevance to canyoning. A detailed description and the respective topo are presented for routes with quality evaluated as interesting (equal of higher than 3 on a scale from 1 to 5), while for others routes only simplified and essential information is presented.

In either situation, it is important to consider that these canyoning routes are placed in highly dynamic environments, many being seldom used or not even repeated until the issue of this guide. Moreover, it is expected gradual improvement of the anchors but equipment in less used routes they may not be in the described conditions. Thus, this guidebook information should be seen as purely indicative and subject to continuous updating. Up-dated versions are expected to be

available on the website desnivel.pt/canyoning/. Additionally, it is recommended both the contact with local canyoning to confirm the information for each route and the use of the ZoomAzores topographic maps, if available to the islands where you intend to do canyoning.

The presentation of the routes in each island starts with generic information about the island, including information for visitors, followed by a summary table of all routes explored and equipped in the island. In islands with higher number of routes, description is by regions, presented in a map. For each region the canyoning routes are indicated by their name and location of entrance or exit using a specific symbol. Then each canyoning route is described, outlining its general features, using the symbols listed in table 8. More specific information is also presented, including data about the access and return, the description of descent and the route's topo.

Table 8 | Canyoning route summary table legend

Quality of the canyoning from 1 to 5	Vertical difficulty from v1 to v6	Time	Distance	Difference in level	N rappels	Longest rappel	Highest drop
Entrance elevation	Exit elevation	Access time	Exit time	Entrance UTM coordinates	Exit UTM coordinates	Stream anchors	Other information

The information presented in the table considers the following guidelines:

- quality has a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is not interesting, 3 is interesting and 5 is exceptionally interesting;
- in each route, as a rule, only the vertical difficulty is indicated, v1 (very easy) to v6 (very difficult),

being the aquatic difficulty only specified when relevant;

- grading and descent time are presented considering normal canyoning conditions (dry season flows) during the most suitable periods for descent, assuming a group of five canyoning with appropriate skills for the route

characteristics and a first descent;

- data on access and return logistics consider the most common options, but there may be alternatives which are presented in the detailed description. If the logistics requires the use more than one car, one at the entry and the other at the exit, or the support of a driver (in both cases, reference in the text is as a transfer), the symbol of a red car is indicated in the route topo. If this option is only recommended and not essential, the colour of the symbol is green. The same colours are used in the case of boat transfer;
- the coordinates used are cartographic (Cartesian or rectangular) and according to the WGS84 system;
- indication of equipment of anchors in the streams considers three different options, although this information is likely to have changes in time, being essential to always take a anchoring kit for each group:

46

- a) equipped - when all rappels are equipped with at least two metal anchors or could be prepared using natural anchors, generally good trees or shrubs;
 - b) some equipment - when canyoning can descend the route occasionally using their own removable equipment or because not all anchoring places are equipped with two metal anchors;
 - c) not equipped - the routes are not sufficiently equipped so that the descent can take place without setting up new anchors.
- in the column "Other information", specific aspects of the routes considered relevant are indicated, for instance if exit by sea or car transfer are needed.

Regarding the description of accesses, entries, exits and returns, often there are several options. Only the best or recommended options are presented, considering the easiest and more interesting possibilities for logistics. In canyoning routes where the exit must be necessarily made by sea, it is essential to check if sea conditions allow a safe exit and if a boat is required. If so, arrangements need to be made with a local maritime recreation service provider.

The topos are schematic and simplified graphical descriptions of the main route features. A set of symbols used as explained in figure 5. The indication of the anchors is indicative. When the symbols are displayed in the left side of the route draw it means that the anchors are on the left bank of the stream and vice versa.

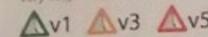
The indication of the banks (left or right) always considers the direction of water flow, from upstream to downstream.

Some topos will not continue to be updated due to installation of new anchors, renovation of equipment, possible modifications in the stream bed and banks or natural destruction of anchors.

Canyon quality
(de 1 a 5)



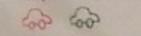
Vertical difficulty (1 to 6)
Very easy / Medium / Hard



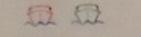
Stream anchors
Yes / Some / No



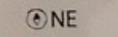
Land transfer
Required / Optional



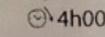
Sea transfer
Required / Optional



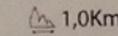
Region
(e.g.: Northeast)



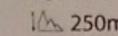
Time
(e.g.: 4 hours)



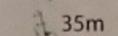
Distance
(e.g.: 1 km)



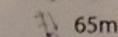
Difference in level
(e.g.: 250 m)



Longest rappel
(e.g.: 35m)



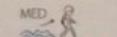
Highest drop
(e.g.: 65 m)



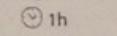
Entrance
(SUP / MED / INF)



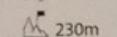
Exit
(SUP / MED / INF)



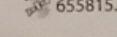
Access or exit time
(e.g.: 1 hour)



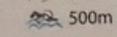
Access or exit elevation
(e.g.: 230 m)



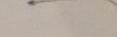
UTM coordinates
(e.g.: 655815.4373590)



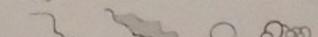
Swimming distance
(e.g.: 500 m)



Time or distance between two points



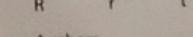
Stream profile
Regular / Narrow section / Large rock / Rock chaos



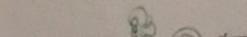
Pool / Reservoir



Rappel / Drop / Slide
R r t



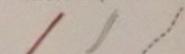
Anchors
Bolts / Pitons / Tree / Rock / Handline



Bridge



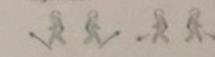
Road / Unpaved road / Trail



Ocean



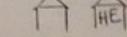
Escape point / Alternative entrance
Right / Left



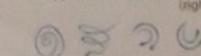
Tributary / Confluence
Right / Left



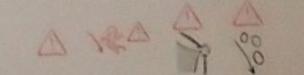
House / Hydroelectric plant



White water
Stopper wave / Syphon / Entrapment risk
(right / left)

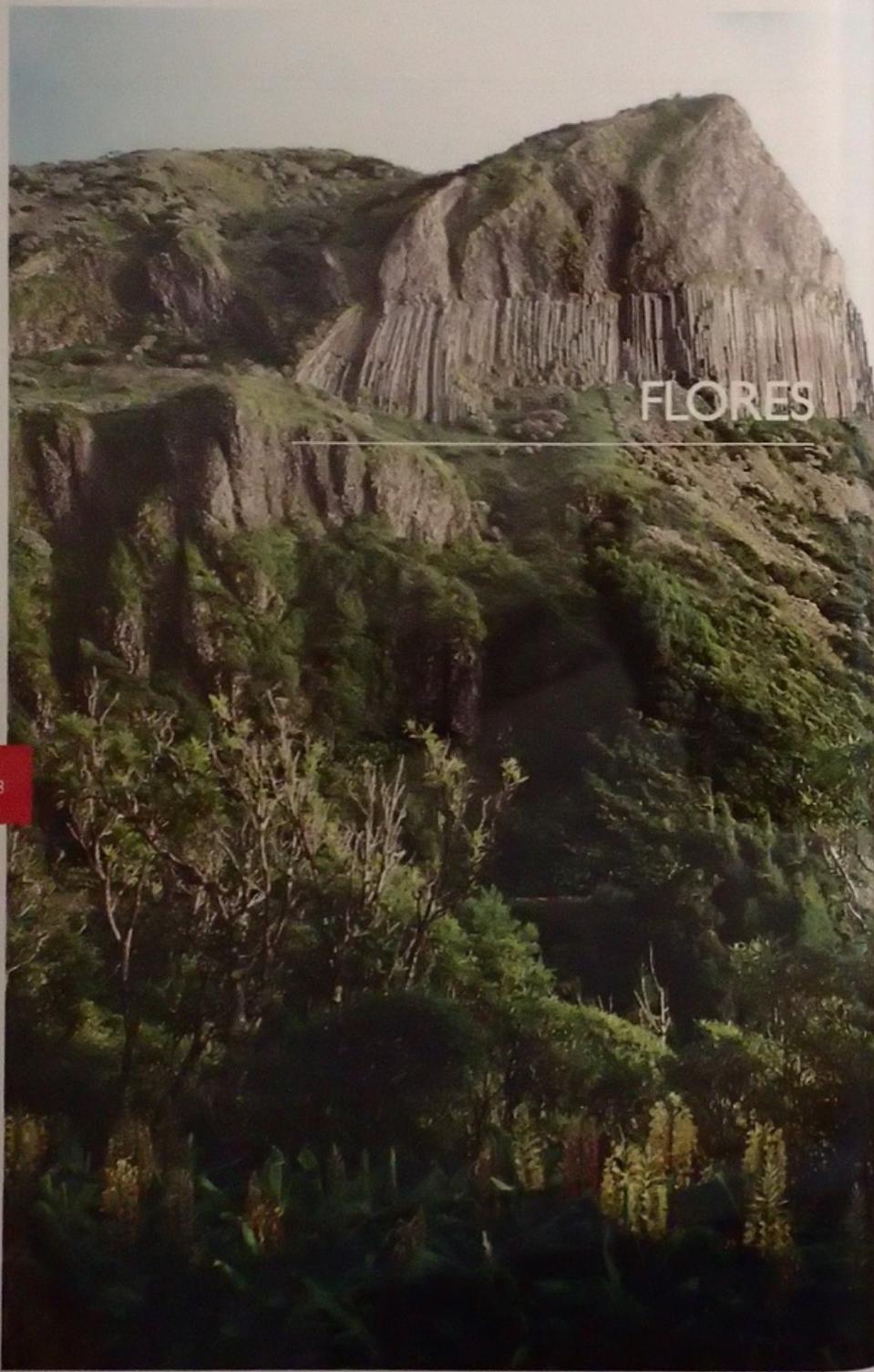


Hazard
Caution / Don't jump / Sharp edges / Rock fall



47

Figure 5 | Legend and symbols used on the topos



CANYONING IN FLORES



CANYONING IN FLORES

Flores island is located approximately at latitude 39° 30' North and longitude 31° 10' West. Although it has only 142 km² and a little over four thousand inhabitants, it is the sixth largest island of Azores. The island has two municipalities: Santa Cruz das Flores and Lajes das Flores.

The access to the island is mostly by air, but there are weekly ferry connections to other islands during the high season. The ferry gateway is in Lajes das Flores, but most visitors establish their base in Santa Cruz, where there is abundant accommodation and other tourism services. The serenity and beauty of Fajã Grande scenery induce many visitors to opt for this area, which also has several accommodation options. Due to the island small size and distribution of canyoning routes, any of these places is good to serve as a basis for canyoning activities.

The island has qualified canyoning guiding services suitable for those wishing to have a first experience in the activity or looking for some support to semi-independent or independent groups (check at the end of this guidebook for the list of businesses). For independent groups and skilled canyoners, it is recommended to hire a car at local rental companies, but be aware that, in high season, the demand may affect the availability of vehicles. For boat services renting, required for exiting from some canyoning routes, there are several local maritime companies that can provide the service.

Flores is considered by many one of the most beautiful islands of the Azores archipelago. Nevertheless, due to its isolation, longer access and unstable climate is relatively less visited with most visitors arriving in July and August. Beyond canyoning, Flores has excellent conditions for nature activities such as walking, diving and bird watching, and even boat tours. Visits to Corvo Island and to the stunning east coast of Flores are highly recommended.



The landscape is dominated by green fields, bushes and forests, which contrast with the bright blue ocean and sky. Due to its location northwest of the archipelago and high relief, with steep valleys and cliffs, this is one of the Azorean islands with more unstable and rainy weather. Rainfall is abundant throughout the year, although the summer months are less rainy. The temperature is moderately mild, with monthly average temperatures varying between 13.6 °C in February and 23.8 °C in August.

Due to the precipitation regime and rugged terrain, this island has a high density of streams and waterfalls, which are a great attraction for those interested in canyoning.

Regarding its geomorphological features the island is characterized by a central plateau, with many peaks and lakes, located in elevations between 500 and 600 m. The highest point of elevation is located in Morro Alto, with 914 m. On the coast, the terrain is usually very steep and

rugged presenting numerous coves, caves and steep cliffs cut by streams, sometimes forming magnificent waterfalls, eventually falling in the sea. Within the limits of the plateau some streams drain into lower levels forming long cascades in the large drops. Usually the most accessible canyoning routes are found in the downstream sections of streams.

The island of Flores is the one with the greatest potential to canyoning in the Azores, due to the abundance and diversity of routes and to a unique landscape and stunning environment. Between 2004 and 2014, several expeditions promoted by Desnivel, allowed to explore and equip more than 40 canyoning routes in the island, mostly of great beauty and diverse levels of difficulty.

There are both technical routes, characterized by large drops and intended for skilled and experienced canyoning, and quite accessible routes with great interest for tourist recreation. The uniqueness and diversity of the existing routes, as well as the beauty of the landscape and the existence of canyoning exits directly to the sea, are certainly factors of distinction and excellence.

Although the catchment of most routes is relatively small, the flood response time, and rainfall frequency and intensity, may induce large and fast variations in flow rates. Nearly all streams with canyoning routes maintain the flow throughout the year, although some presenting very low flows in the drier periods.

Another advantage of the canyoning routes in Flores results from the wide distribution of the equipped routes, being possible to practise the activity almost every day of the year, opting for hills when the weather conditions favours water flows with lower exposure to meteorological phenomena.

Canyoning can also count on local canyoning experts and availability of a detailed topographic map of the island including the location of the existing canyoning routes (ZoomAzores), both a great help for independent canyoning who wish to visit the island.

In this guidebook, Flores canyoning routes are distributed in four regions:

- NE** - Northeast region between Santa Cruz and Ponta Delgada (21 routes);
- SE** - Southeast region between Santa Cruz and Lajes (7 routes);
- SW** - South and Southwest region between Rocha Alta and Caldeira (3 routes);
- NW** - Northwest region north of Fajãzinha (11 routes).



SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES IN FLORES ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Ithaus superior	NE	2,9	v3	2h00	242	9	22	22	0h05	0h30
Ithaus medio	NE	4	v4	2h00	125	7	40	45	0h35	0h10
Ithaus inferior	NE	4,4	v3	2h00	105	6	20	20	0h10	0h30
Alquevins superior	NE	1,5	v2	1h30	265	6	10	10	1h30	0h30
Alquevins medio esq.	NE	1,9	v3	1h00	170	3	22	22	1h00	0h30
Alquevins inferior	NE	4,5	v4	4h00	235	10	30	55	1h00	0h30
Barrosas inferior	NE	4,3	v3	4h00	175	8	30	30	0h25	1h30
Funda superior esq.	NE	2,6	v3	2h00	195	13	26	26	0h05	1h00
Esguihãlo	NE	3,5	v3	3h00	215	11	30	30	0h05	0h20
Funda Ponta Ruiva	NE	3,3	v3	3h00	190	7	20	20	0h20	0h30
Privada	NE	4	v6	4h00	255	13	55	75	0h05	0h20
Cascalho superior	NE	2,5	v3	3h00	325	13	30	30	0h05	0h05
Cascalho inferior	NE	1,3	v2	1h30	165	2	15	15	0h05	0h45
Badanella superior	NE	4,2	v5/a4	5h00	335	36	50	75	0h02	1h30
Badanella medio	NE	4	v4/a5	3h00	135	7	20	20	1h30	1h00
Badanella inferior	NE	3,5	V3/a4	4h00	130	3	20	20	1h00	0h10
Pico da Sé	NE	3,3	v4	2h00	145	3	45	45	0h30	1h30
Além superior esq.	NE	3,2	v4	5h00	350	9	50	125	0h05	0h15
Além superior	NE	3,4	v4	4h00	350	6	35	58	0h05	0h35
Além inferior	NE	3,5	v3	1h30	200	6	18	16	0h00	0h20
Fazenda	NE	3,5	v3/a2	1h30	65	3	22	22	0h05	0h20
Algares	SE	4,4	v5	5h00	330	10	40	87	0h10	0h05
Meio	SE	3,9	v4	4h00	324	10	50	70	0h45	0h10
Cabo	SE	4,4	v4	4h00	325	8	50	50	0h10	0h10
Moirato	SE	2,2	v4	3h30	200	12	18	18	0h10	1h00
Silva	SE	4	v3	4h00	335	11	40	40	0h15	1h20
Urzela	SE	2,8	v2	3h30	250	10	40	40	0h15	1h20
Funda Fazenda Lajes	SE	2,8	v2	1h00	100	3	10	10	0h05	0h30
Rocha alta	SW	4,1	v6	5h00	300	9	52	173	0h25	1h00
Fundão	SW	1,5	v2	3h30	320	8	25	25	0h20	1h00
Mosteiro	SW	4,3	v5	5h00	245	10	40	75	0h05	0h15
Grande	NW	4	v6	4h00	270	5	80	105	0h05	0h15
Ferreiro	NW	4,4	v6/a4	4h00	240	9	45	120	0h10	0h20
Casas superior	NW	3	v4	2h00	190	5	20	20	0h15	0h30
Casas inferior	NW	4,5	v6	5h00	340	14	60	115	1h15	0h10
Cão superior	NW	3,5	v3	2h00	175	10	30	30	0h05	0h30
Cão inferior	NW	4,5	v6	5h00	440	13	55	225	1h40	0h10
José de Fraga sop	NW	3,8	v4	6h00	350	9	40	60	0h45	0h30
José de Fraga inf	NW	4	v4	2h00	250	8	45	45	0h45	0h30
Morte Gordo	NW	4,1	v5	3h00	308	5	76	95	1h00	0h20
Mouco	NW	4,3	v6	4h00	320	15	40	100	0h20	1h30
Moritos	NW	3	v2	1h30	135	5	30	30	0h20	0h10



Northeast coast of Flores island



Ponta das Barrosas and Ponta Ruiva

ILHÉUS

The Ilhéus stream is divided into three routes (Ilhéus superior, Ilhéus médio and Ilhéus inferior) a trip of approximately 6 hours if done in one go. The access to the upstream route (Ilhéus superior) is easy and starts on the road ER 1-2 where it crosses the stream at Km 12.7 at coordinates 0654870/4372820. The entry point to this route is by the left bank, upstream of the bridge, or by a possible shortcut on the right bank downstream of the bridge. However, the descent of this upstream route is not done often since it is less interesting than the other two and, for these other two routes, access and return is easily done parking the car at a convenient location. Only the two downstream routes are described in this section.

ILHÉUS MÉDIO

4,0	V4	2h	0,8 km	125 m	7	40 m	45 m
230 m	105 m	0h35	0h10	0654620 4373664	0654671 4374125	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

Easy access route where a 45 m waterfall in a narrow section flanked by impressive basaltic rock with columnar structured walls, is the route high spot.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

From Ponta Delgada, follow the secondary road leading out of the centre and running along the coast to Ponta dos Ilhéus. Leave the car at the end of the asphalt road or a bit later in the first fork. The trail to right leads to the entrance of the intermediate section (Ilhéus médio) and the trail to the left goes to the exit point of this route and entrance to the downstream section (Ilhéus inferior). Follow the trail to the right for about 30 minutes until it crosses the Ilhéus stream, where the route begins.

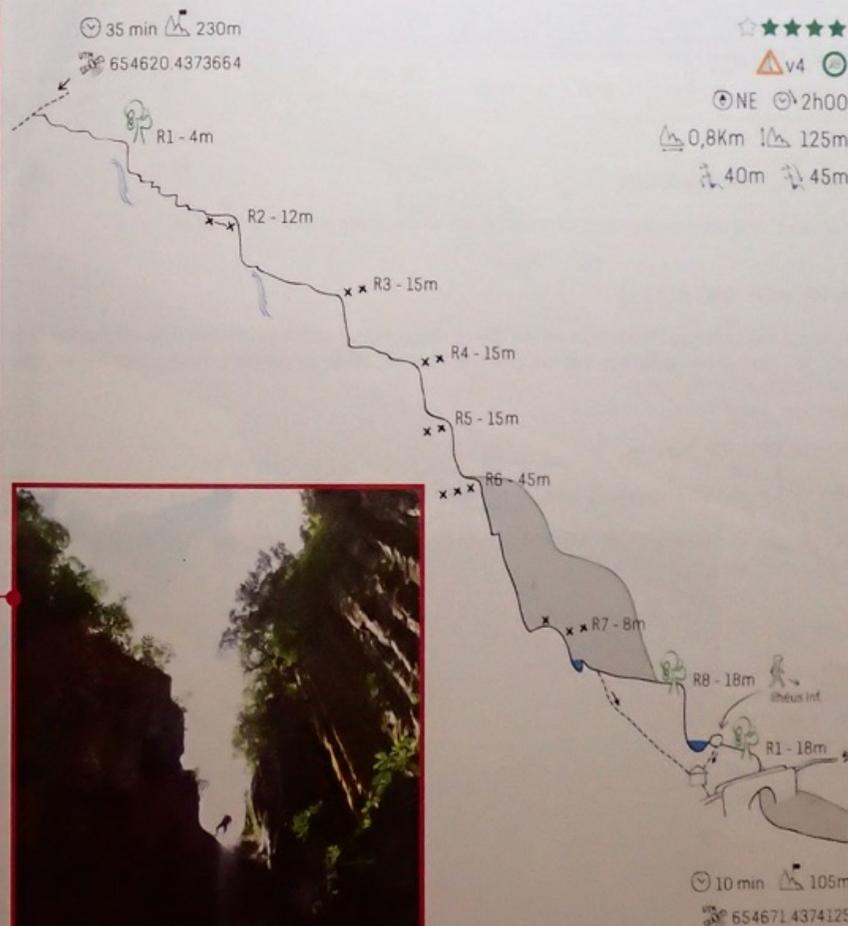
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

In the beginning the valley is a little wider and the stream bed has abundant vegetation. Gradually the stream narrows along a forest. In case of high flow, precaution is required in the main rappel (R6), being important to take the rope in the backpack or bag rope since it is likely to get stuck in the rock crevices. At the end of the rappel, anchors were installed in the left bank allowing to easily installing a guided abseil.

EXIT AND RETURN

To exit this route, as soon as you see the bridge over the stream you should climb the right bank, following the old channel leading to an ancient mill ruin by the trail. Cross the bridge to the left bank and follow the trail for 10 minutes to the place where the car is parked.

TOPO OF ILHÉUS MÉDIO ROUTE



CANYONING IN FLORES

ILHÉUS INFERIOR

GENERAL INFORMATION

Easy, short and very narrow route, of great beauty, where some jumps are possible.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

To access this route use the same as for the Ilhéus médio route, but follow the trail to the left at the fork until you reach a bridge nearby the ruin of a mill. Start the route by abseiling from a tree in the right bank upstream of the bridge.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

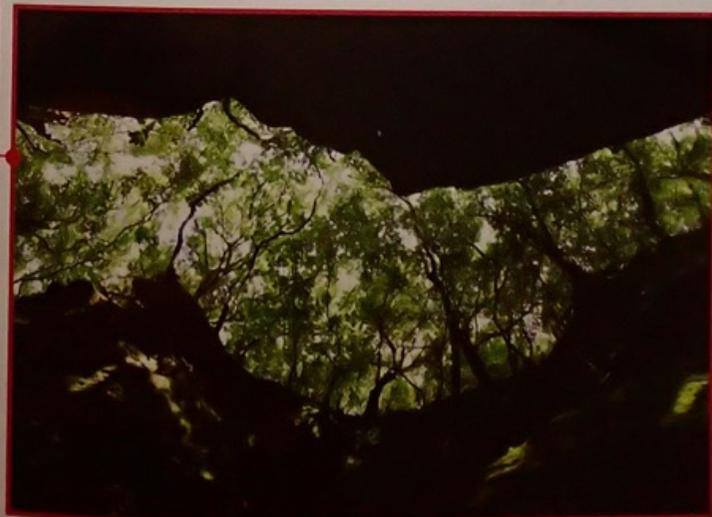
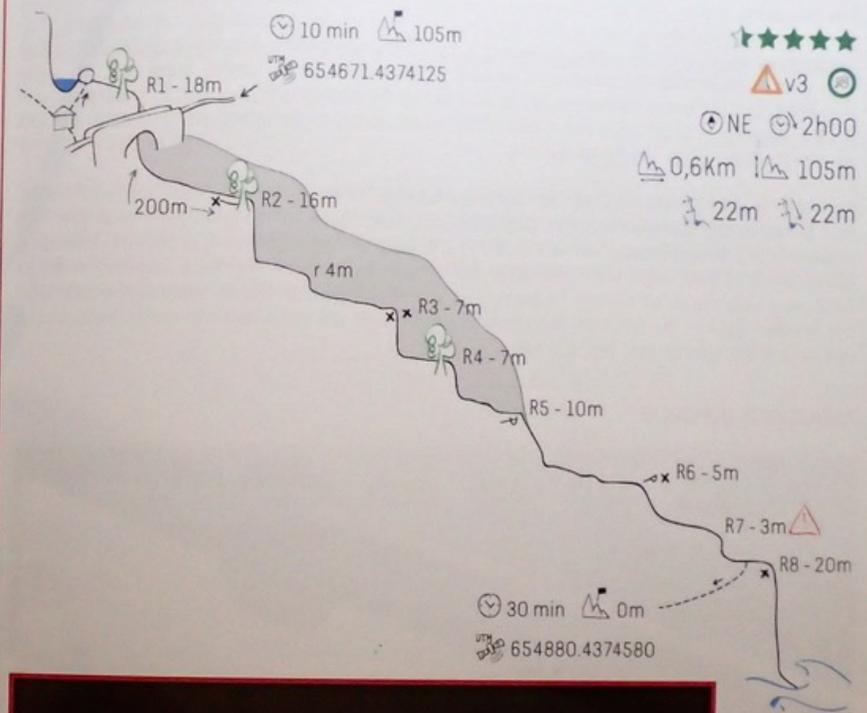
Very narrow and aquatic route, should be avoided if there is the possibility of heavy rainfall to occur.

Despite having relatively simple rappels and being a suitable route for beginners is undoubtedly a canyoning route not to be missed.

EXIT AND RETURN

There are two exit options in this route, being the most common alternative to climb the trail on the right bank, immediately upstream the last rappel to the sea. Follow the trail until you reach the trail from Ponta do Ilhéu, turning to the right and continuing up to the bridge and back to the car. The second option, when the sea is calm, is to abseil down to the sea and then swimming to the left, crossing to the shore for about 500 m until the first pebble beach is reached then following a path that ascends to the paved road.

TOPO OF ILHÉUS INFERIOR ROUTE



CANYONING IN FLORES

ALQUEVINS

The Alquevins stream has several routes (Alquevins superior, Alquevins superior esquerdo and Alquevins inferior), having been explored all major upstream confluences that can be descended using some fixed anchors, complemented with other non-permanent equipment. For those who want a longer descent or want to explore small streams in the island, these may be some interesting routes. Surely, canyoning will be amazed by the beauty of this stream at its downstream route (Alquevins inferior) since this is one of the nicest routes in the island with a spectacular exit on a multi-tiered drop directly to the sea.

Considering the full descent from the upstream sections to the sea it may take around 7 hours. The access to the upstream section (Alquevins superior) starts in the road ER 1 2, at Km 11,2, approximately at an elevation of 530 m. Enter the wooden gate accessing a pasture, and keep going down to your right until you enter the stream by crossing the thick vegetation on its banks reaching the small stream. To access the intermediate route, follow the existing trail after the wooden gate in the left side of the pasture. The path will cross two tributaries before your entrance in the coordinates 0655811 / 4372924.

ALQUEVINS INFERIOR

4,5	V4	4h	1,1 km	235 m	10	30 m	55 m
235 m	0 m	1h00	0h30	0655815 4373590	0655720 4374400	Ok	Exit by boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

Route of great beauty ending in a rappel on a rock wall that drops into the sea. Along the route, impressive basaltic rock with columnar disjunctions worn out by water flows in the stream bed and several small narrow ponds having the sea as background, are some of the highlights that give to this route a special geotouristic interest and beauty. Not a route for beginners but is one of the best on the island of Flores, certainly not to be missed.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

From Ponta Delgada, follow the secondary road out of the centre, heading SE along the coast to Ponta dos Ilhéus. Leave the car at the end of the asphalt road or a bit later in the first fork. Follow the trail to the right, which will cross Ilhéus stream and some of its tributaries. Continue bypassing north of the crest and follow the path to the left on the next fork. Cross Alquevins médio esquerdo route and one more tributary until, a few metres latter, you find Alquevins inferior entrance. It is possible that some sections of the trail are covered with vegetation. If you choose to exit the route by boat and straight to Santa Cruz, it is important to previously make car logistics arrangements.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route is in a relatively wide gorge, having a few rappels in high drops and very slippery rock sections. The access to the last multi-tiered drop is exposed (R9) and its intermediate anchor (R10) is equipped so it can accommodate 3 to 4 people. Immediately above the sea surface a bolt is placed to allow the last canyoner to pull the rope before jumping to the sea, which is especially recommended if the sea is rough.

EXIT AND RETURN

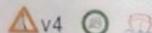
To exit this route the recommended option is the use of a boat transfer to Ponta Delgada port, from where you can walk back to where the car is parked. Alternatively, you can choose to go straight to Santa Cruz port by boat. There is also the option to swim to Ponta do Ilhéu, about 1 km from the exit, where you will find a trail (coordinates 0655245/4374855) that climbs until it reaches the return path of the downstream section of Ilhéus route (Ilhéus inferior).



View to Ponta do Ilhéu

TOPO OF ALQUEVINS INFERIOR ROUTE

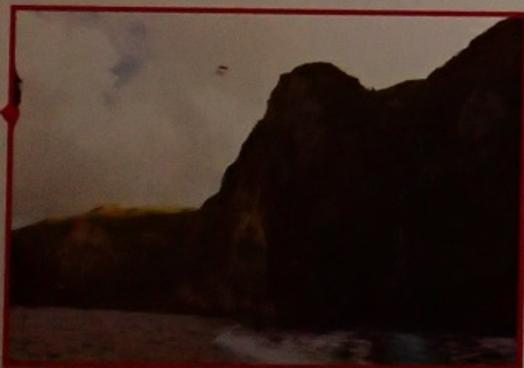
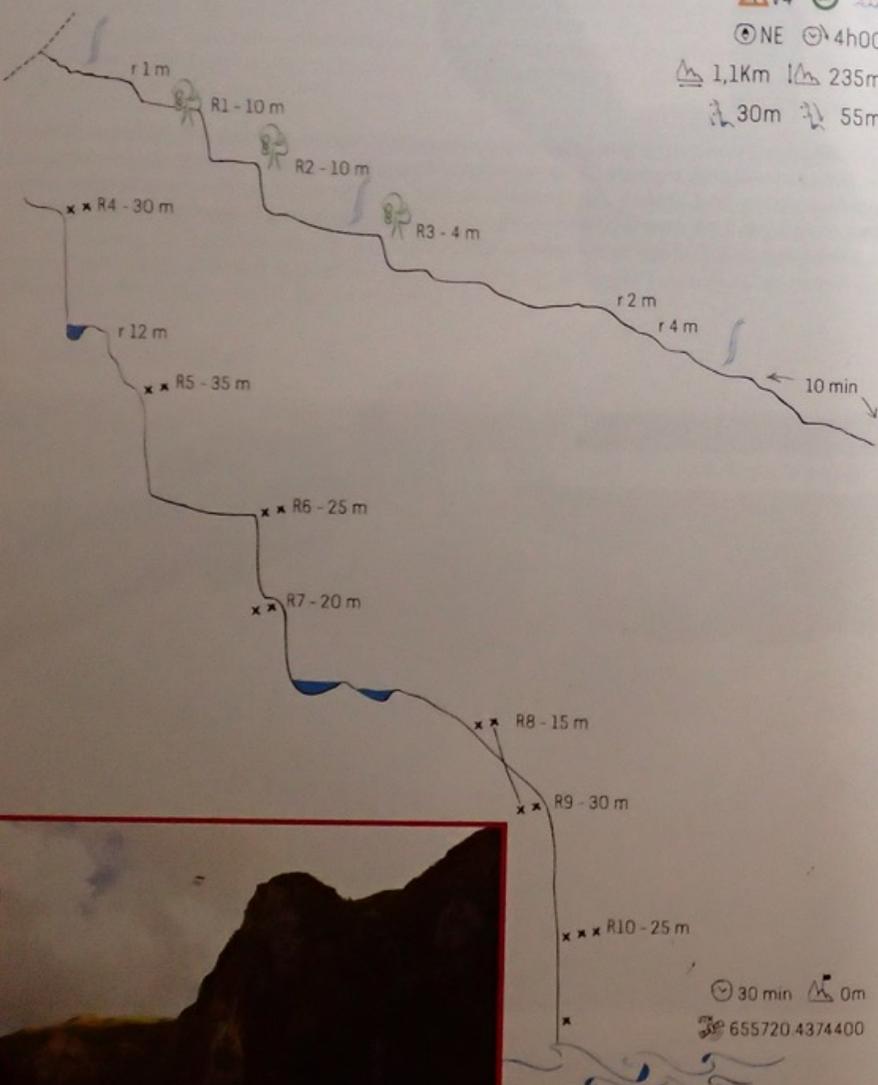
☀ 1h 🏔 235m
📍 655815 4373590



⊙ NE ⌚ 4h00

🏔 1,1Km 🏔 235m

👤 30m 🏔 55m



BARROSAS

4,3	V3	4h	1,3 km	175 m	8	30 m	30 m
175 m	0 m	00h25	1h30	0656603 4373115	0656845 4373935	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Barrosas route is also a beautiful high quality canyoning, having only its downstream route equipped due to the existence of a disabled rubbish dump at the top of the valley, therefore the upstream route is not recommended. The downstream section is reasonably clean with clear waters, although some residual trash might exist in the beginning, despite some cleaning initiatives.

This route has an especial ambience due to the crossing of an area with a distinct geological composition, with several rough deposits and volcanic breccia, a softer rock that was sharply eroded by water flows, forming a narrow gorge which ends in a coastal cliff 25 metres above the sea, from where the water falls to the ocean. Immediately next to the waterfall the impressive cave named Gruta do Galo, crossed by the light from the opposite end reveals the crystal blue sea water. This route is certainly one of the nicest in the island, ending in a spectacular hanging abseil to the sea.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 1-2 towards Ponta Delgada, turn to Ponta Ruiva just before Km 10. Turn left a kilometre after entering an unpaved road and parking the car about 500 metres ahead. Continue the trail on foot, above the cliff and descending the valley heading SW. After crossing three tributaries, enter the main water line, before the trail starts ascending again to Ponta das Barrosas.

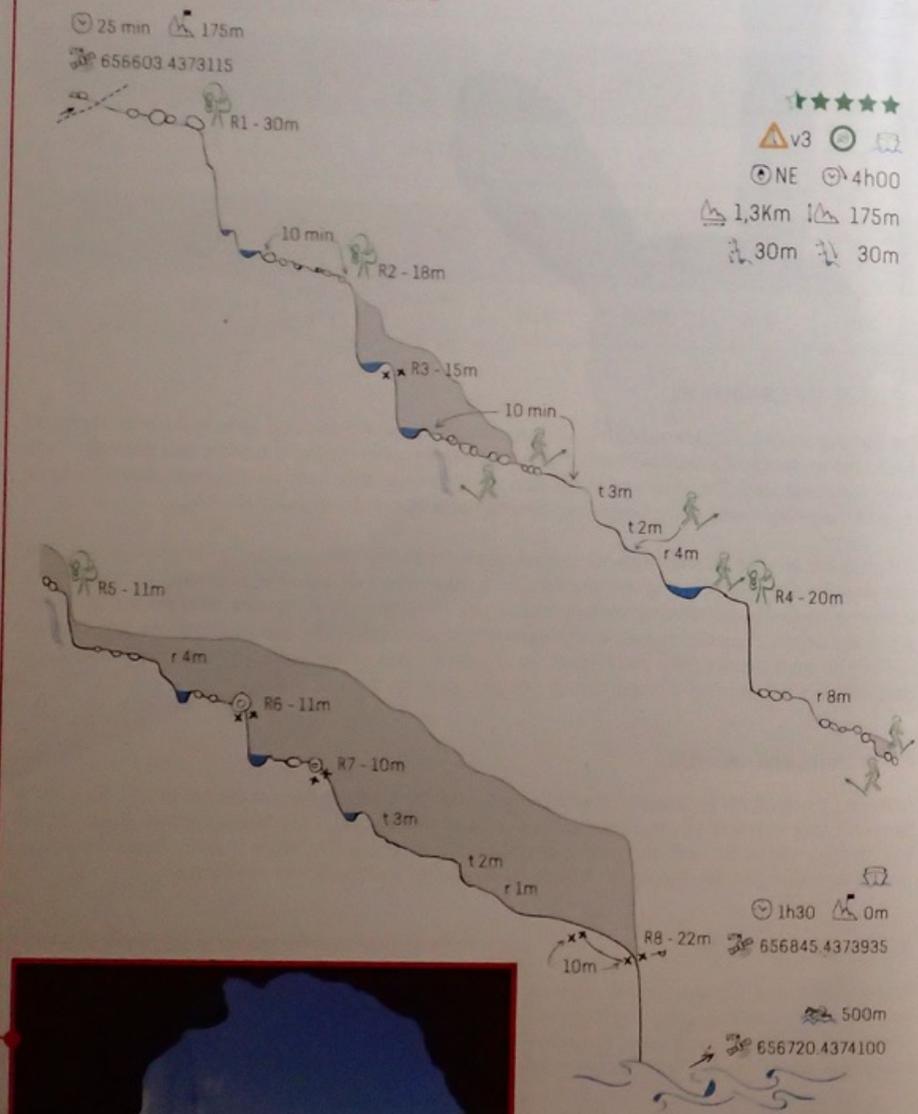
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Route begins on a relatively closed valley and narrowing in the stretch where the rock is softer. On the way there are some pools allowing for jumps and slides, being necessary to previously check the water depth and absence of underwater obstacles. High quality route ending with a overhanging allowing an hanging abseil to the sea. Rope recovery from the sea is straightforward.

EXIT AND RETURN

To exit this route there are two alternatives: the first using a boat transfer to Santa Cruz, alternatively, if the sea is not too rough, you can swim about 400 m to the left, around Ponta das Barrosas, until its NW coast where, at coordinate 0656572/4374100, some steps cut in the rock lead to a trail that climbs to the crest, continuing up to the route's point of entrance. Then just follow back the same way used for the access to get to the car.

TOPO OF BARROSAS INFERIOR ROUTE



★★★★★
▲ v3 ● ⌄
⌄ NE ⌄ 4h00
⌄ 1,3Km ⌄ 175m
⌄ 30m ⌄ 30m

ESGUILHÃO

This stream is one of the two upstream watercourses that after their confluence originate the Funda da Ponta Ruiva stream. The other upstream watercourse is the Funda superior esquerda stream. From these three routes, Esguilhão is the most interesting, ending on a trail that crosses the stream. Alternatively continue down to Funda da Ponta Ruiva stream until it reaches the sea. It has a total descent average time of six hours.

★★★★★	▲ v3	⌄ 3h	⌄ 2,2 km	⌄ 215 m	⌄ 11	⌄ 30 m	⌄ 30 m
⌄ 415 m	⌄ 200 m	⌄ 0h05	⌄ 0h20	⌄ 0657325 ⌄ 4372103	⌄ 0657810 ⌄ 4372715	⌄ Ok	⌄ Preferential transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

The stream has an interesting continuity and some water flow even in dry weather seasons, being surrounded by abundant vegetation and presenting some pools. The landscape on the return trail from the stream is of great beauty.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

This route is easily accessed by a short trail, after leaving the car at road ER 1-2 towards Ponta Delgada at Km 8.8, from where a short trail leads to the entrance.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route has a sequence of rappels with maximum 30 m high. If continuing to the next route of Funda da Ponta Ruiva, some pools allow jumping provided a prior check is done, and has a good continuity to the sea. The last rappel to the pebble beach is not equipped since the trail to ascend the cliff starts in the left bank before this last drop.

EXIT AND RETURN

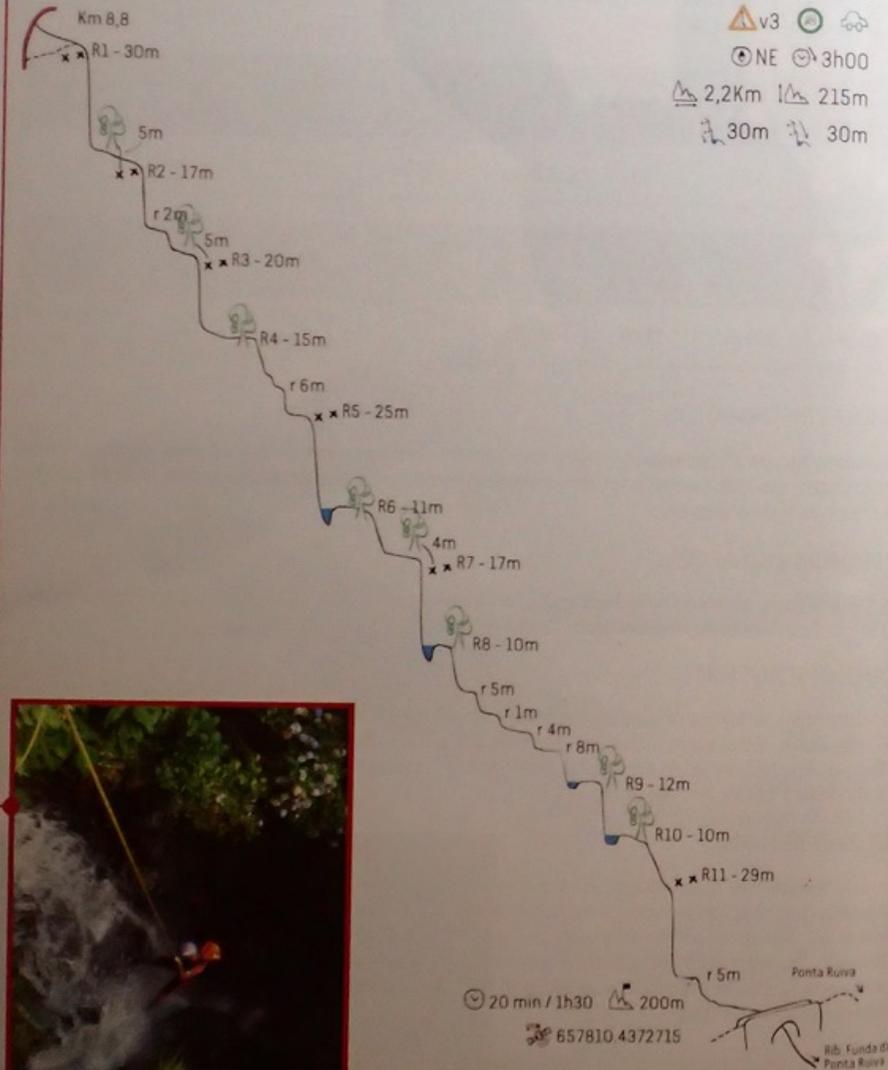
The exit of Esguilhão route is done via the Cedros-Ponta Ruiva trail, which crosses the stream near its confluence with the Funda superior esquerda route, at an elevation of 200 m. Follow the trail towards Ponta Ruiva, for about a kilometre, until you reach the paved road where a car can be parked. The distance to the entry point of the route is about three kilometres. You can also follow Cedros-Ponta Ruiva trail towards Cedros, in which case you will need to walk for about two kilometres but arriving at the main road nearest to Santa Cruz.

When the stream is descended until the seashore, continuing through Funda da Ponta Ruiva route, the return is by a path with some exposed steps that starts at the left bank before the route's last rappel, ascending the hill to Ponta Ruiva.

TOPO OF ESGUILHÃO ROUTE

⌚ 5 min 🏔️ 415m
📍 657325 4372103

☆☆☆☆☆
⚠️ V3 🕒 3h00
🏔️ 2,2Km 🏔️ 215m
📏 30m 📏 30m



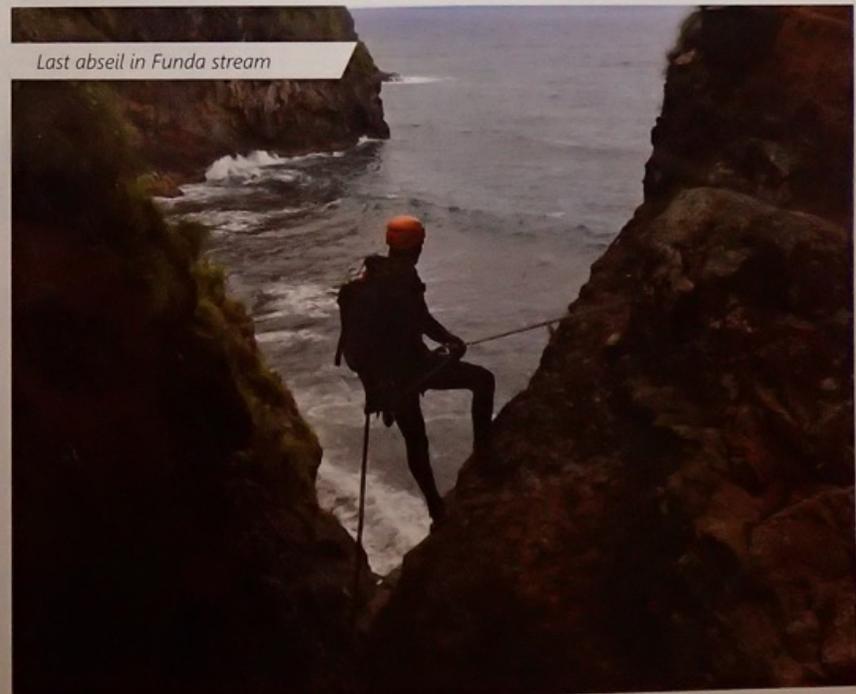
FUNDA DA PONTA RUIVA

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,3	V3	3h	1,4 km	190 m	7	20 m	20 m
🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤	👤	🕒	🔍
200 m	10 m	0h20	0h30	0657810 4372715	0658650 4373110	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ACCESS

This route is recommended as a continuation of Esguilhão route or if canyoning look for a short and simple route ending by the seashore. This downstream section of Funda stream has an interesting view over the ocean.

For access and return information check the description of Esguilhão route.

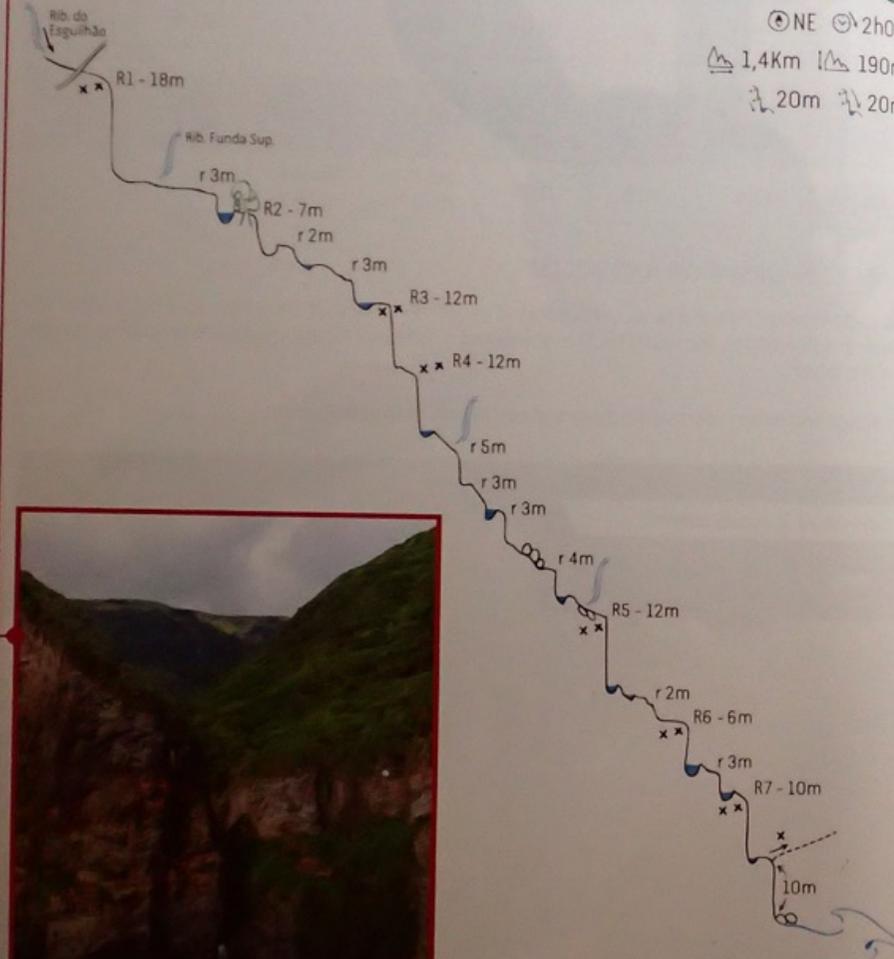


Last abseil in Funda stream

TOPO OF FUNDA DA PONTA RUIVA ROUTE

⌚ 20 min 🏔️ 200m
📞 657810 4372715

☆☆☆☆☆
⚠️ v3 🕒
⌚ NE ⌚ 2h00
🏔️ 1,4Km 🏔️ 190m
📏 20m 📏 20m



⌚ 40min 🏔️ 10m
📞 658650 4373110

PRIVADA

The Privada route is short but has a significant difference in level, ending in a large drop to a pebble beach in a beautiful bay with a set of islets around it.

☆☆☆☆☆ ☆☆☆☆☆	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
4,0	V6	4h	0,6 km	255 m	13	55 m	75 m
🏔️	🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	🕒	?
255 m	0 m	0h05	0h20	0658685 4372135	0659050 4372245	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This gorgeous route is relatively short and has a difference in level of 255 metres, ending in a large multi-tiered drop of 75 metres. Despite its easy access, the return is either made by boat or implies to swim a stretch of coast for more than one kilometre with several walkable sections on pebble beaches. As its catchment is small, is a good canyoning option when many others in the island are not recommended because of higher flows.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

On the road ER 1-2, coming from Santa Cruz to Ponta Delgada, turn right to Cedros, and go onwards to the cemetery and park the car. Follow the trail starting in front of Cedros cemetery, descending the pastures towards the stream's right bank and entering the route just below its confluence with Lajes stream. Since the return will be made by boat, you need to previously ensure car logistics.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

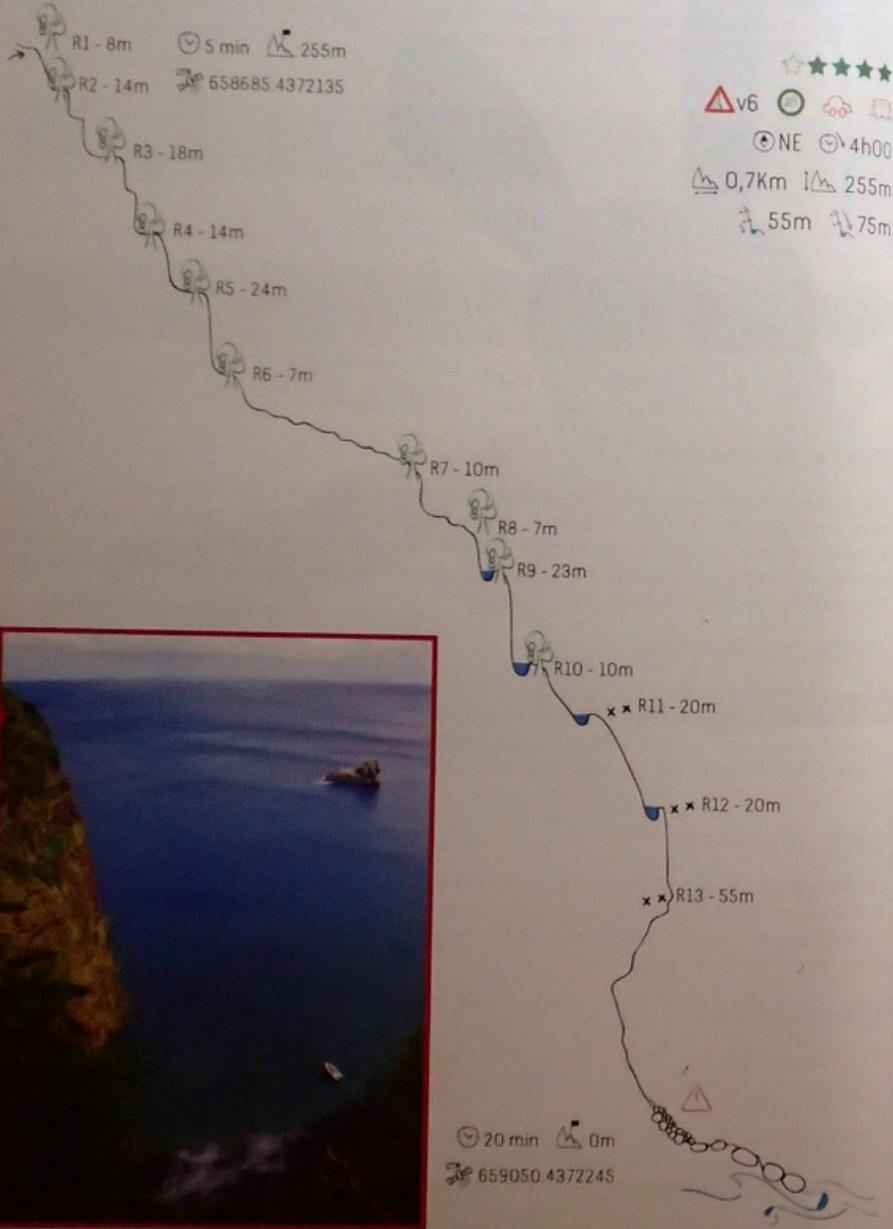
Despite being a short route, due to the number of rappels and large vertical drop, it can be a relatively time consuming canyoning, especially if done by larger groups. Be aware that the multi-tiered has its intermediate anchor on a straight vertical wall, where no more than three people can be suspended in the anchor simultaneously.

EXIT AND RETURN

This route ends at a rocky beach with no land access, so a previous arrangement for boat transport is recommended. The boat can transport the group directly to Santa Cruz port.

The alternative is to go south following the seashore until Baía da Alagoa is reached, swimming and progressing by rock or pebble beaches for more than a kilometre. From Alagoa, ascend the trail until you reach the camping area and from there continue to the paved road to where a car transfer should be arranged.

TOPO OF PRIVADA ROUTE



D'ALÉM

The uplands of D'Além stream are located in the central plateau of the island, on the slopes of Pico da Sé, Testa da Igreja and Pico dos Sete Pés peaks, having a significant catchment area for the island. Two canyoning routes are equipped in the upstream section, called D'Além superior and D'Além superior esquerdo, within the limits of the plateau. The two routes converge after the upstream section that has almost a third of the total stream length. Although nearly parallel, these two routes are quite different. Additionally, there are two downstream routes, the D'Além médio and the D'Além inferior. The further downstream route, the D'Além inferior route, begins on the bridge crossing the stream and finishes in the reservoir. This downstream route is short and simple but is a beautiful and aquatic route.

D'ALÉM SUPERIOR

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,4	V4	4h	2,4 km	350 m	6	35 m	58 m
🏔️	🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	?
630 m	280 m	0h05	0h15	0655660 4368880	0657115 4368845	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This canyoning starts in the central plateau border, in the unpaved road that goes to Chão das Cruzinhas. Here, the highlight is the impressive view over the forest and the whole valley of the D'Além stream. In the first third of the route total length, almost half of the total route's difference in level is descended. After this part there are several sections where you have to walk greater distances going down smaller drops.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

In the road ER 2-2, from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande, turn in the intersection with the sign "Zona Central - Morro Alto, rede Natura", at Km 4.1. Follow this road towards Chão das Cruzinhas, driving until practicable and then walking. Entrance is made next to the bridge over the first tributary that crosses the dirt road at an approximate elevation of 630 m. Transport logistics is required since the route exit is in Fazenda de Santa Cruz.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route begins with a significant difference in level descended with four abseils, one of which a multi-tiered drop of about 60 metres. Then there is a section that mainly requires walking and wading, until it crosses a path and another abseil is found, emerging the left confluence (D'Além superior esquerdo). Downstream, apart from several small drops there is only one rappel.

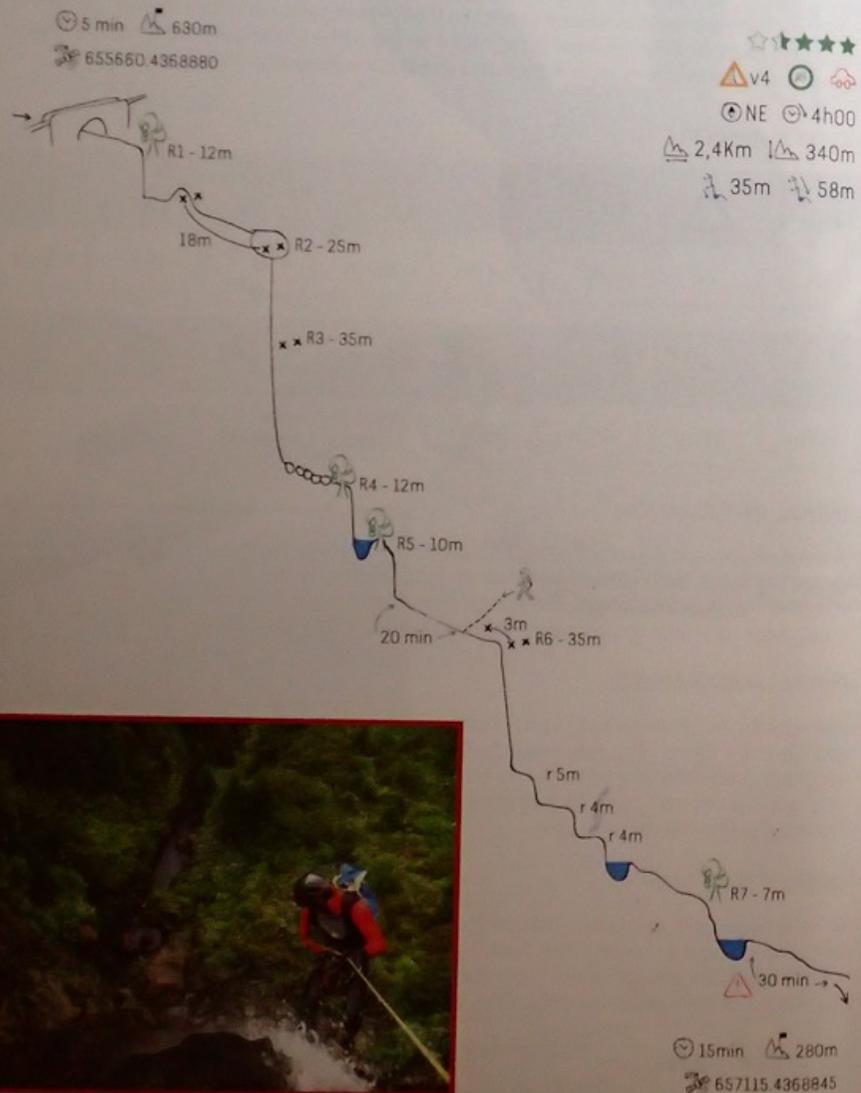
EXIT AND RETURN

The exit of the route is at elevation 280 m, following in the downstream direction the trail in the right bank, ending at a dirt road where cars can be parked. There is an option to return to the Chão das

CANYONING IN FLORES

Cruzinhas road, starting in the same trail in the upstream direction, uphill parallel to the stream on the right bank, along a Japanese cedar forest, then after crossing an important tributary of D'Além stream, climb the slope between the trees until reaching the unpaved road leading to Chão das Cruzinhas and then walking back to where the car is parked.

TOPO OF D'ALÉM SUPERIOR ROUTE



D'ALÉM SUPERIOR ESQUERDA

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠	🕒	📏	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,2	V4	5h	2,8 km	350 m	9	50 m	125 m
📏	📏	👤	👤	👤	👤	🕒	🕒
630 m	280 m	0h05	0h15	0655670 4369032	0657115 4368845	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is essentially a continuous ramp along which are consecutive abseils are carried out, mostly using trees as anchors. This ramp is rather impressive given the colours of the rock and vegetation and magnificent views over the valley of the D'Além stream.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

On the road ER 2-2, from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande, turn on the intersection with the sign "Zona Central - Morro Alto, rede Natura", at Km 4.1. Follow this road towards Chão das Cruzinhas, driving until it is feasible and then walking. Entrance is made in the second tributary that crosses the dirt road next to the bridge at an elevation of about 630 metres, just after the entrance to the D'Além superior route.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route consists essentially of a continuous ramp along which consecutive abseils are carried out, mostly using trees as anchors, until the confluence with the D'Além superior route, following a common route thereafter.

EXIT AND RETURN

Same exit as for the D'Além superior route.



PICO DA SÉ

3,3	v4	2h00	1,0 km	145 m	3	45 m	45 m
505 m	360 m	0h30	1h30	0655415 4370070	0656010 4370520	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Pico da Sé route is a tributary of Badanela stream located on the right bank of Badanela superior route. Being located in a remote area of the island, the access is relatively difficult. It starts in a broad valley that gradually narrows, presenting several small gorges and pools. This route ends at a 45 m waterfall to Badanela stream, being necessary to descend a portion of the route in the main stream to reach the exit.

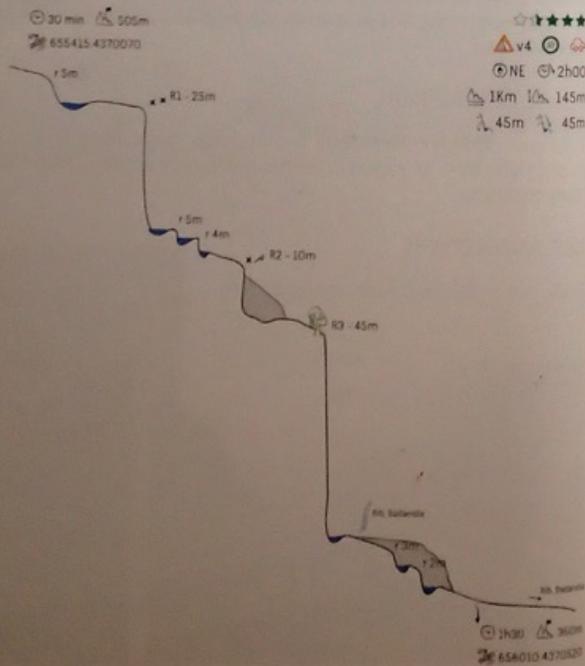
ACCESS AND RETURN

In the road ER 2-2, from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande, turn in the intersection with the sign "Zona Central - Morro Alto, rede Natura", at Km 4.1. Follow this road towards Chão das Cruzinhas, driving until practicable and then walking (passing the entries to D'Alem superior and to D'Alem superior esquerda). Follow the trail and then head northwest towards the stream. It is necessary to manage the car logistics since the exit is on Fazenda de Santa Cruz.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit is the same as the indicated for the upstream route of Badanela stream, being possible to continue down the Badanela intermediate route (Badanela médio).

TOPO OF PICO DA SÉ ROUTE



BADANELA

Badanela stream has some canyoning long sections and a large catchment area for the island. The uplands are located in the central plateau of the island on the slopes of peaks as Morro Alto, Pico dos Sete Pés, Testa da Igreja e Pico da Sé. The stream crosses the long valley towards Fazenda de Santa Cruz until it reaches the seashore after Pisão. Nearby Fazenda there is a reservoir from which water is derived for power production on a hydroelectric power plant in Pisão. The explored and equipped canyoning routes in Badanela are three sequential sections of the stream. Because of its catchment area and geologic characteristics, this stream has a significant aquatic difficulty, which may be higher if rainfall occurs. Access to the stream is also difficult in most of its length with some long narrow sections with very steep walls and very few opportunities to escape. The full extent of Badanela stream is a very long, steep, committing mountain stream with 26 rappels and long nice narrow sections, a significant undertaking.

BADANELA SUPERIOR

4,2	v5/a4	5h	2,5 km	335 m	16	50 m	75 m
720 m	385 m	0h02	1h30	0654206 4379618	0656964 4370522	Semi-equipped	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This upstream route begins still in the central island plateau, having a very steep section, with large difference in level. After a long multi-tiered drop, a proper canyon begins, in a narrow gorge which then opens into the valley. The views are rather impressive, as is the rich vegetation dominated by endemic species. The stream banks have a unique palette of colours. This route is a canyoning of exceptional beauty.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

To access the upstream route, follow the road ER 2-2, from Santa Cruz to Fajã Grande, turning right at the junction at km 7.4, following the road up to the mountain lakes of the central plateau (Caldeira Seca, Caldeira Branca and Caldeira Comprida). Continue by the road for about five kilometres and then find the bridge that crosses Badanela stream. It is necessary to arrange the transport logistics because, the exit is far away near Fazenda de Santa Cruz.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

To enter Badanela upstream route, go down the drainage gutter on the left bank upstream of the bridge until the stream bed. The route starts with a 400 m length section with mild slope over slippery rocks. Reaching the limits of the plateau the main drop of the route begins in a sequence of seven rappels, the last two being in the same multi-tiered 75 m drop. A narrow gorge section starts just after the drop.

widening some metres later into a beautiful valley area. After three more rappels, the latter of which hanging from a beautiful rock edge, walk until another narrow section starts, not fully equipped, being possible to do some rappels in the surrounding trees and go around some down climbs especially with higher flows. After the valley turns into a new wider section you will find a tributary to the right (Testa da Igreja stream). Two more equipped rappels downstream and another tributary on the right bank is found (Pico da Sé route), where you may observe its last 45 m waterfall. Again a narrow section is found and the exit is when the valley opens again at an elevation of approximately 385 m, by a hardly visible path on the right bank.

EXIT AND RETURN

Although it is possible to proceed to the next route in Badanela stream (Badanela médio), this upstream section exit is by an old path, no longer visible, that follows the stream right bank, crossing the hills, until it reaches an open trail that follows to the road parallel to the D'Além stream. From there you should follow the paved road to Fazenda de Santa Cruz. It is possible to go by car until the exit from the trail.

BADANELA MÉDIA

4,0	v4/a5	3h	1,3 km	135 m	7	20 m	20 m
385 m	265 m	1h30	1h00	0656964 4370522	0656965 4370347	Semi-equipped	Delicate rappels

GENERAL INFORMATION

The intermediate route in Badanela stream is characterized by the very narrow canyon, with very steep walls and no obvious opportunities to escape. Some anchors are delicate and require a backup, or belayed scrambling to reach, and there are very few natural anchors options. Even with normal flows some rappels by the flow are quite aquatic and exposed to dangerous white-water. This is aggravated if flow rate is significant, which is frequent. This route is not a recommended when the flow rate is high. Additional anchoring equipment should be taken since often flood flows damage or tear the existing anchors. Canyoners should always consider that this route is semi-equipped. The rock is soft being necessary to use pitons to equip some rappel anchors.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

The common option is to descend the upstream route (Badanela superior). If you are willing to start at this intermediate route the access can be by walking the upstream section return trail in reverse way. Following the road ER 1-2 (from Santa Cruz to Ponta Delgada), turn to Fazenda de Santa Cruz, choosing the left road at the fork that gives access to the reservoir. You can park the car next to this fork, and follow the left way until the end of the paved road, continuing by the cement road that climbs uphill to the right and crosses the D'Além stream. Continue until the end of the road (it is possible to

drive until this place). Take the trail at road's end, choosing the right at the following forks, except in the three paths where you should follow the middle path. Keep walking while the path gradually narrows approaching the right bank of Badanela stream. You can leave the trail and enter the right bank of the stream with an abseil from a tree, reaching the canyon at several possible locations, or continue through the vegetation until the start of the route.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Following the upper route, some small drops and unequipped rappels are found, being possible either to jump or swim in some pools but only after checking their depth. Just before a 25 m drop there's a stake and a piton on the left bank from which it is possible to approach the rappel, a delicate move at higher flow rates. In the left wall in the drop wall there is a bolt from which the abseil can be done, allowing a good recovery of the rope. Until the next rappel you will find some blocks whose descents can be delicate and are not equipped.

The next abseil is only anchored with a piton in the left bank that allows, with additional pitons, to place a hand line to facilitate the access to the stake placed ahead. This is a delicate passage but allows to abseil slightly downstream and out of the waterfall. The abseiling straight by the waterfall is very aquatic and exposure to dangerous white-water in the bottom in the pool. These anchors should always be checked and complemented if needed. No obvious natural anchors are available. Continuing in the narrow canyon, climbing down some small drops and the next rappel is reached, which is often necessary to equip. This is also a tough abseil considering the vertical walled narrow canyon and water flow. Just ahead a tributary waterfall is found on the left bank. The exit of this route is possible when the valley opens, by an ancient trail that crosses the stream.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit and return from this intermediate route is by the trail to the right bank, until the concrete road that was referred to in the description of the approach to this route. At the end of the cement road turn left to the paved road that then continues to Fazenda de Santa Cruz along the D'Além stream.

BADANELA INFERIOR

3,5	v3/a5	4h	2,0 km	130 m	3	20 m	20 m
265 m	120 m	1h00	0h10	0656965 4370347	0658148 4369612	Semi-equipped	

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is a relatively simple descent, although it is quite a long walk in a very aquatic canyon and ends at Badanela's reservoir.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Choosing not to do the upstream Badanela routes, this route can be accessed by following the return trail from the intermediate route (Badanela Médio) in reverse direction. Otherwise, following the road ER 1-2 (from Santa Cruz to Ponta Delgada), turn to Fazenda de Santa Cruz, by the left road at the fork giving access to the reservoir. You can park the car nearby this bifurcation, and follow the left way until the end of the paved road, continuing through the concrete road uphill to the right and that crosses the D'Além stream. Continue until the end of the road (it is possible to drive until this place). Take the trail at road's end, choosing the right way at all forks, gradually approaching the right bank of Badanela stream. Enter the canyoning when the trail crosses the stream. In case of difficulty in following the trail you can abseil from a tree reaching the right bank at various locations.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route implies a lot of walking in a fairly aquatic canyoning. It only has three rappels, the last two at its ending before the arrival to Badanela's reservoir, all from the left bank. The first and last rappel anchors are equipped with two bolts each and the middle one is on a tree.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit should be done just before entering the reservoir, crossing the pastures on the left bank and taking the trail that descends to the dam. From there it is possible to follow the road until the fork where the car is parked. It is also possible to park the car next to the dam.

78

Beginning of the stream in central plateau



Multi-tiered drop in the upstream section (Badanela superior)



Abseil near the end of the upstream section (Badanela superior)



79

FAZENDA

The Fazenda route corresponds to the downstream section of the stream after the confluence of Badanela and D'Alem streams, immediately downstream of the reservoir until the stream mouth at the sea, after the hydroelectric power plant in Pisão.

This stream has two quite different routes. The first, Fazenda Superior, is a very slippery aquatic walk without any rappels, which starts downstream of the reservoir and goes down to the bridge of the road ER 1-2; the second, Fazenda Inferior, goes from this bridge to the sea.

Given the large catchment area and the existence of a reservoir upstream, the flow rate must always be checked as well as the weather conditions, especially the possible occurrence of rainfall in upstream catchment areas, which may lead to flash floods.

FAZENDA INFERIOR

3,5	v2/a2	1h30	1,0 km	65 m	3	22 m	22 m
75 m	10 m	0h05	0h20	0659175 4370330	0659855 4370570	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This canyoning is quite short and has an easy logistic, being an interesting and enjoyable route, suitable for canyoning beginners. Along the route, is worth mentioning its basaltic rock, with columnar disjunctions, eroded by the water flows, paving the stream bed, and the sequence of deep pools that allow jumps (check conditions previously).

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Follow the road ER 1-2 from Santa Cruz das Flores to Ponta Delgada. After Fazenda de Santa Cruz leave the car at the junction with the road to the hydroelectric power plant, Km 3. Walk back to the bridge that crosses the stream and enter the route by a narrow path on the right bank a few metres upstream of the bridge.

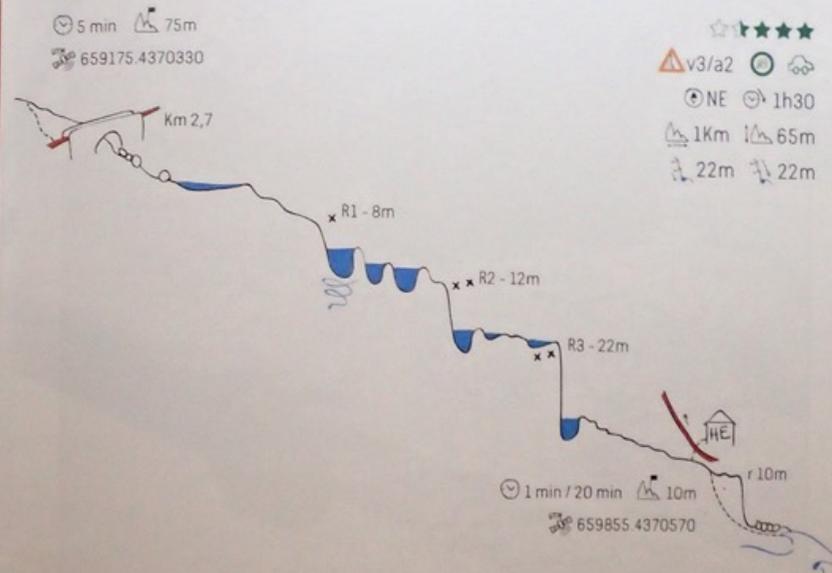
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

After entering the route, walking down the stream, cross the bridge, and continue walking along the stream until you reach the first rappel where it begins a sequence of pools. After one more rappel, the route has the last rappel on the right bank. It is possible to jump to the big pool from a height before the end of the rappel. From this point it is just an easy walk to the sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit is before reaching the sea, climbing the stairs next to the hydroelectric power plant. An option is to walk up to the junction where the car was parked but it is also possible to reach the power plant by car.

TOPO OF FAZENDA INFERIOR ROUTE



SOUTHEAST COAST – SANTA CRUZ DAS FLORES TO LAJES DAS FLORES

This region has seven explored and equipped canyoning routes, being presented with higher detail the ones with higher quality (Algares, Meio, Cabo and Silva).



ALGARES

The Algares stream is one of the three main tributaries of Cruz stream, all beginning in the uplands of the central plateau of Flores island. From the first part of the route the wide and amazing scenery of Cruz stream downstream valley can be enjoyed.

★★★★★							
4,4	v5	5h00	1,2 km	330 m	10	40 m	87 m
500 m	170 m	0h10	0h05	0657000 4367720	0657930 4367130	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is known for its large drops, being the largest an 85 m multi-tiered drop with three rappels. It is also an interesting route in terms of geological features, with an impressive set of basalt columns where a beautiful hanging abseil is located. This is a very enjoyable canyoning allowing some jumps into deep pools. This route is only recommended for experienced canyoning.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande) leave the car at Km 4.3, and walk for about 150 metres by the dirt road on the left. Turn right to access the stream. The first rappel is optional. It is necessary to arrange car logistics because the exit is quite far from the entrance to the stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

After entering the stream on its left bank, there are two small abseils. After, the large 85 metres multi-tiered drop, is equipped with two intermediate anchors and therefore made in three abseils. Continuing downstream there is a sequence of rappels, one of them a 40 metres drop, in a stunning amphitheater with walls made of basalt columns. Along the route there are several deep pools allowing to jump, adding a playful component to this beautiful stream.

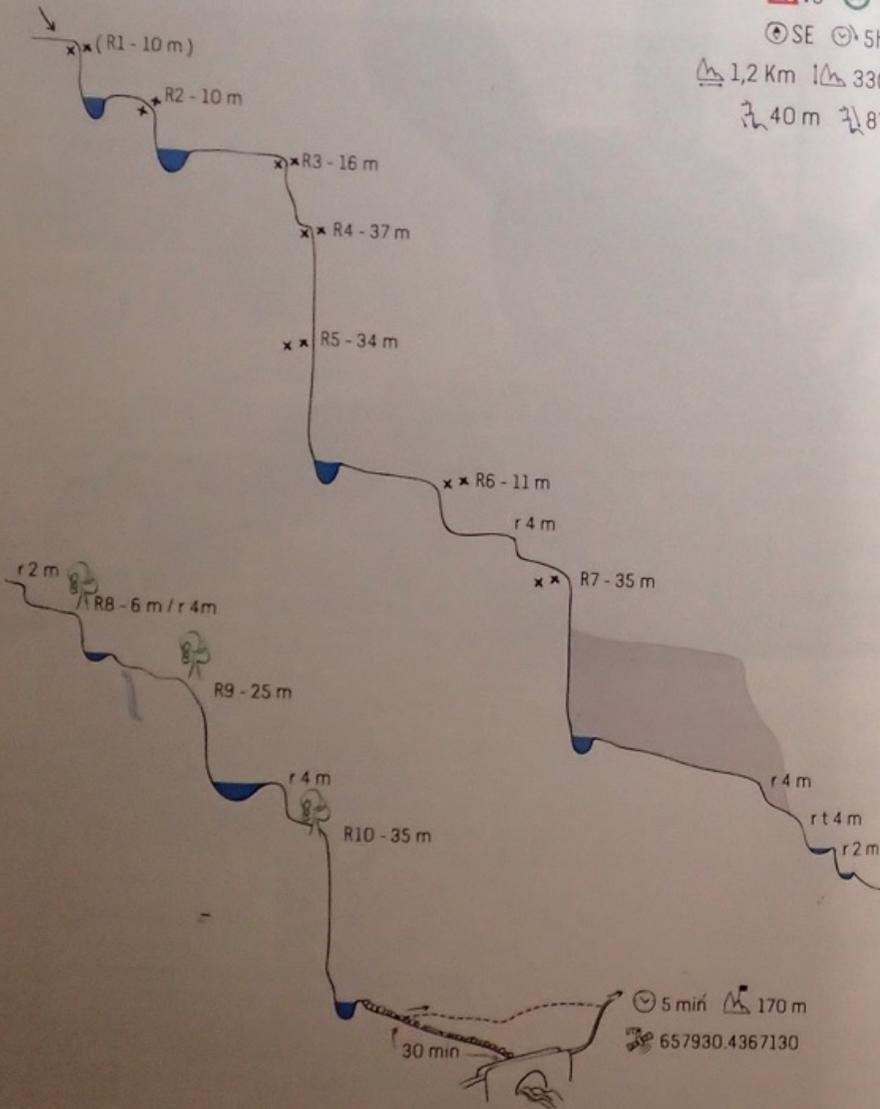
EXIT AND RETURN

The complete route has its exit just upstream of the bridge that crosses the stream with an unpaved road. Following this road to the stream's left bank, the place where a car can be parked is reached. Alternatively, an exit about 400 metres before the bridge, on the left bank of the stream, can be followed leading to an unpaved road, until its junction with the road previously mentioned that crosses the Algares stream. Continuing on the road to the left, the road ER 1-2 from Santa Cruz das Flores to Lajes das Flores is reached at its Km 4.5.

TOPO OF ALGARES ROUTE

🕒 10 min 🏔️ 500 m
📞 657000.4367720

☆☆☆☆☆
⚠️ v5 🕒 5h00
🏔️ 1,2 Km 🏔️ 330 m
📏 40 m 📏 87 m



MEIO

Meio stream route is the middle main tributary of Cruz stream, all beginning in the uplands of the central plateau of Flores island. From the first part of the route the wide and amazing scenery of Cruz stream downstream valley can be enjoyed.

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠️	🕒	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,9	v4	4h00	1,5 km	324 m	10	50 m	70 m
🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	🕒	⚠️
504 m	180 m	0h45	0h10	0657020 4367180	0657740 4366915	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route has an interesting sequence of 8 rappels in its first section, followed by a section walking until the last drop is reached. This route is only recommended for experienced canyons.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande) leave the car at Km 4.3, and walk for about 150 metres by the dirt road on the left. Turn right and cross the Algares stream by the small water retention structure, continuing by the pasture land, following the crest to the left, heading southeast. Cross another small stream, slightly upstream and then walking downhill to the left corner of the pasture on its lower side. Cross the fence and enter the stream in the Japanese cedar forest. It is necessary to arrange the car logistics because the exit is quite far from the entrance to the stream.

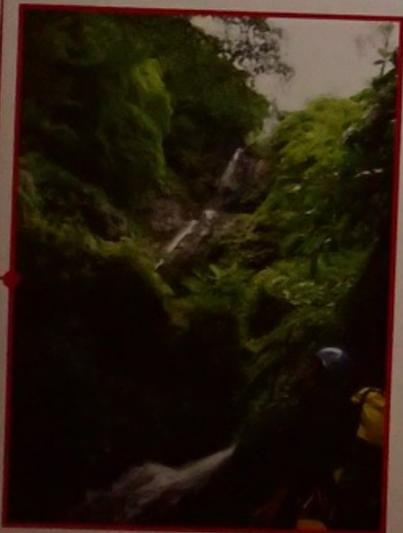
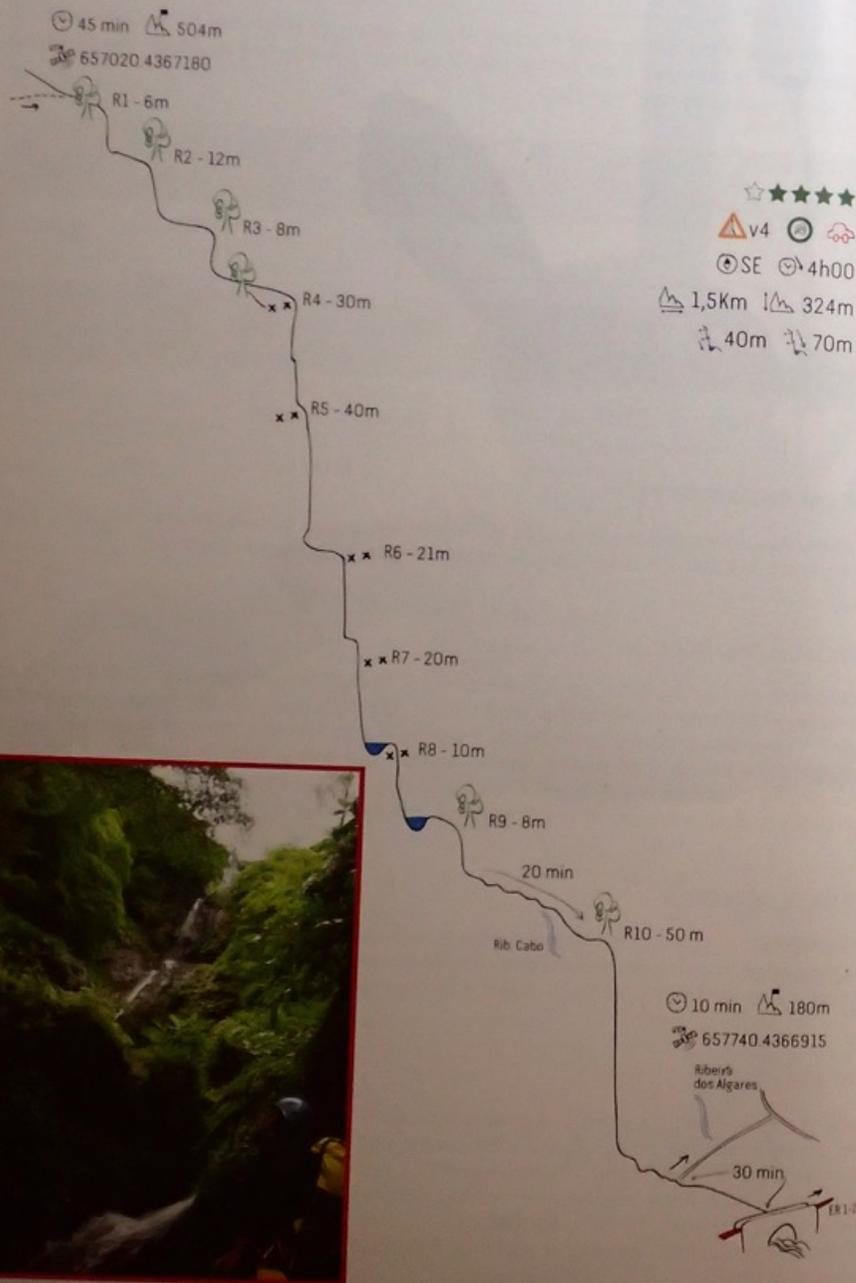
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

After entering the stream on its left bank, there is a section with three small abseils after which the route reaches a large 70 metres multi-tiered drop divided in two rappels. Downstream, there are four more rappels until the confluence with Cabo stream, finishing with a 50 metre rappel common to both routes.

EXIT AND RETURN

Leave the route when the valley opens, after a tributary in the right bank, and when a metal wire hanging from the trees cross high above the stream. Follow the wire to the left bank, approximately at an elevation of 210 m. If you miss this exit route, its another 900 metres walking by the river until you reach a bridge where you should exit downstream to the left bank. Leaving the route by the trail, follow it until you reach the unpaved road that crosses the Algares stream and reaching a location where the car is parked. This road leads to the ER 1-2 road from Santa Cruz das Flores to Lajes das Flores at its Km 4.5.

TOPO OF MEIO ROUTE



CABO

The Cabo stream is the most southerly stream of Cruz stream three main tributaries, all beginning in the uplands of the central plateau of Flores island. From the first part of the route the wide and amazing scenery of Cruz stream downstream valley can be enjoyed.

4,4	v4	4h00	1,6 km	325 m	8	50 m	50 m
505 m	180 m	0h10	0h10	0656840 4366620	0657740 4366915	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This beautiful route has a first section with small rappels and drops, reaching its highest drops from where excellent views over the landscape can be enjoyed. This route is only recommended for experienced canyoneers.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajã Grande) turn left on the road after Cruzeiro Padre Alfredo towards Caldeira da Lomba. At the next intersection, follow the road towards Caveira (unpaved road), and enter the pastures at an elevation of approximately 565 metres, after the trees, crossing the fields towards the stream. Take the path through the Japanese cedars to cross trenches and reach the canyoning (do not descend too much).

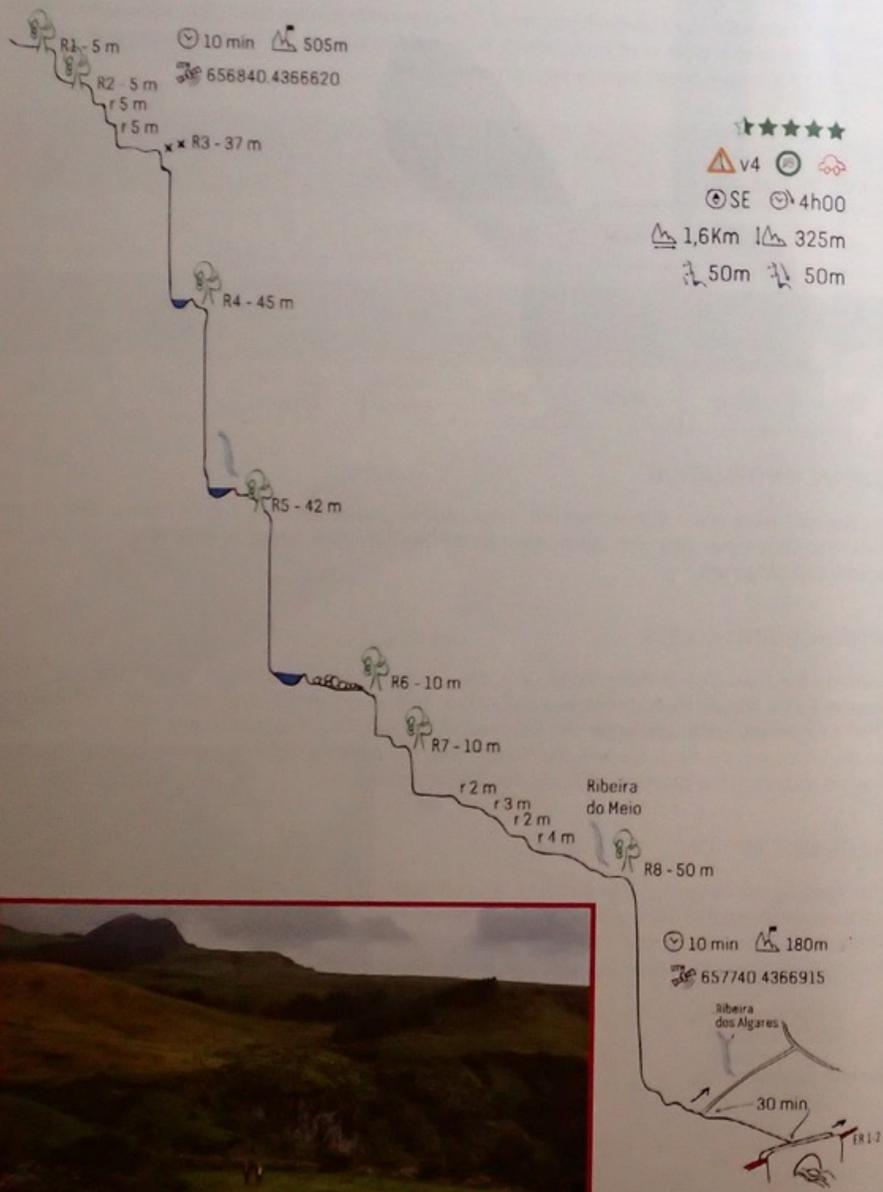
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

After entering the stream on its right bank, you will find a section with two short rappels and some additional small drops to reach a large drop, with platforms that allow you to make consecutive rappels. Downstream, there are another two small rappels and some small drops before the confluence with Meio route, finishing the canyoning with a 50 metre rappel common to both routes.

EXIT AND RETURN

Same as for Meio route.

TOPO OF CABO ROUTE



SILVA

Silva stream is a beautiful watercourse with a canyoning route in its downstream half, from the road ER 1-2 to the sea.

4,0	v3	4h00	2,2 km	335 m	11	40 m	40 m
335 m	0 m	0h05	1h30	0658000 4365700	0659520 4365550	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

Most rappels in this route are small in height. The stream has both narrow sections and areas with slightly more open valleys, in a beautiful light and shadow play.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 1-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Lajes das Flores), after Caveira, at Km 8.4, park the car near the bridge over the stream. Enter the stream by the right bank upstream of the bridge.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

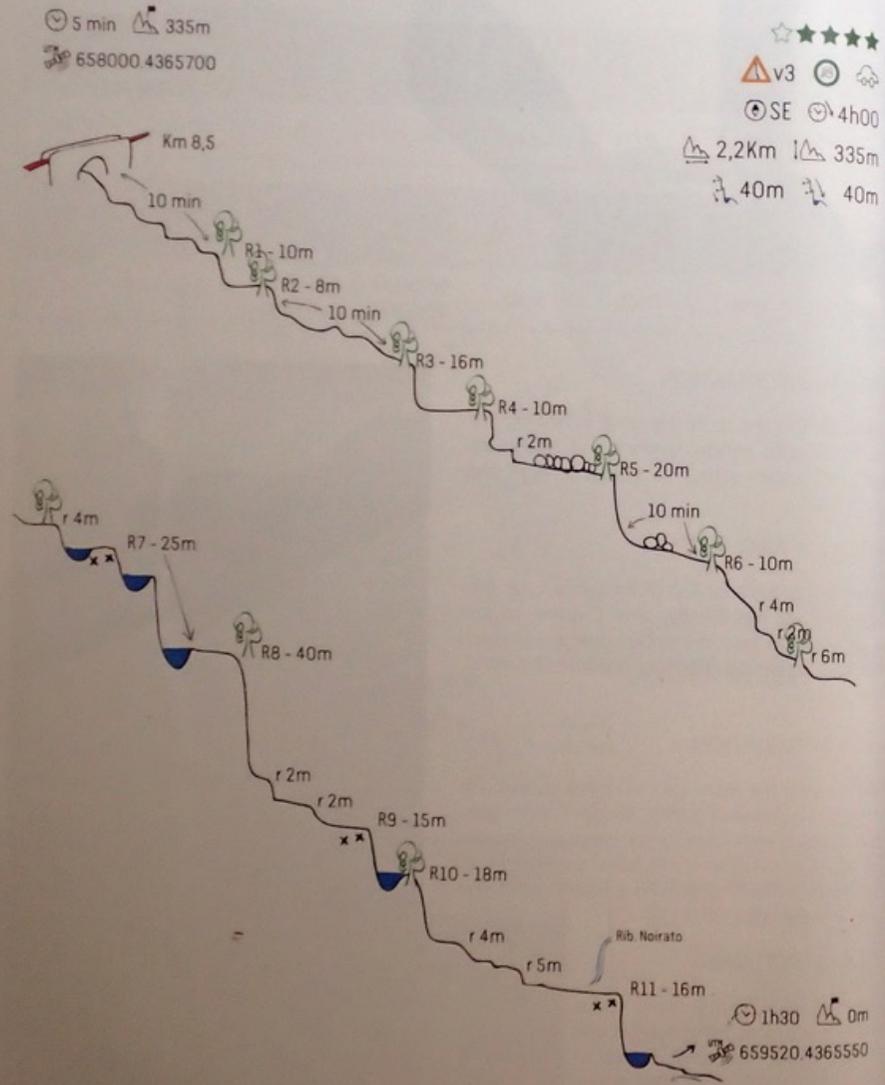
After entering the route you will need to walk for about 10 minutes until its first rappel. It then goes into a descent, with some drops where progression is without abseils. There are some possibilities to jump. After the last rappel, it is a section with mild slope until the sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

Climb the clearly visible trail on the stream's left bank hillside, from the mouth of the stream. This switchback trail steeply climbs up to Caveira and reaches the main road after about 30 minutes, by José Pereira Borges Street, always having the stream on the left. Walking by the regional road, direction to Lajes, the place where the car was parked is reached.



TOPO OF SILVA ROUTE



SOUTHWEST COAST



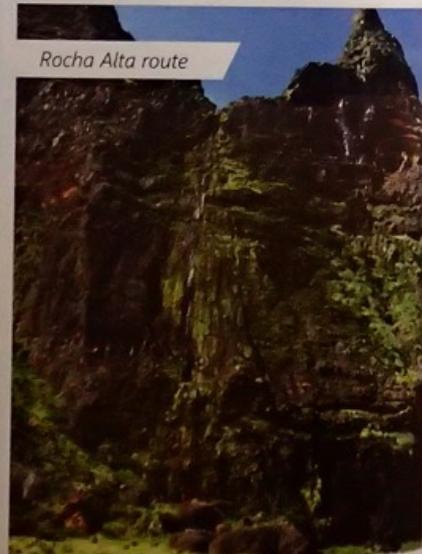
The southwest coast is the region of Flores Island with fewer equipped canyoning routes. This happens because the southern region is the driest part of the island and some of the explored streams did not have much interest. However, both Rocha Alta and Mosteiro canyoning routes are very interesting although they present difficulties in terms of transport logistics.



Southwest coast



Access to Rocha Alta route



Rocha Alta route

ROCHA ALTA

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is located in an amazing place, in a remote part of the island. The route descends the steep hills on the east side of the island and ends in the detritic fajã of Ponta da Rocha Alta. Both in the access trail and during descent, the views are impressive. It is necessary to arrange transport logistics.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the road ER 1-2, turn to Portal da Fajã, approximately at Km 23.5, turning immediately to the left to a recently paved road which steeply climbs Rocha Alta slopes, towards Frades. About 2 km later, when getting to the Outeiro da Madeira Seca area, looking at the sea side, the stream valley can be clearly seen. Stop the car at an elevation of approximately 590 m and descend the left bank crest, first by pastures and then following a barely visible path between bushes toward the Japanese cedars forest. Cross the woods to reach the rock section and at an elevation of 300 m, and abseil from a cedar to the left bank of the stream, about 30 metres below.

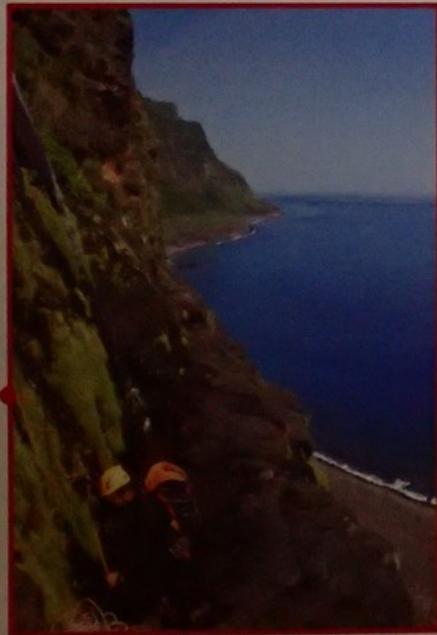
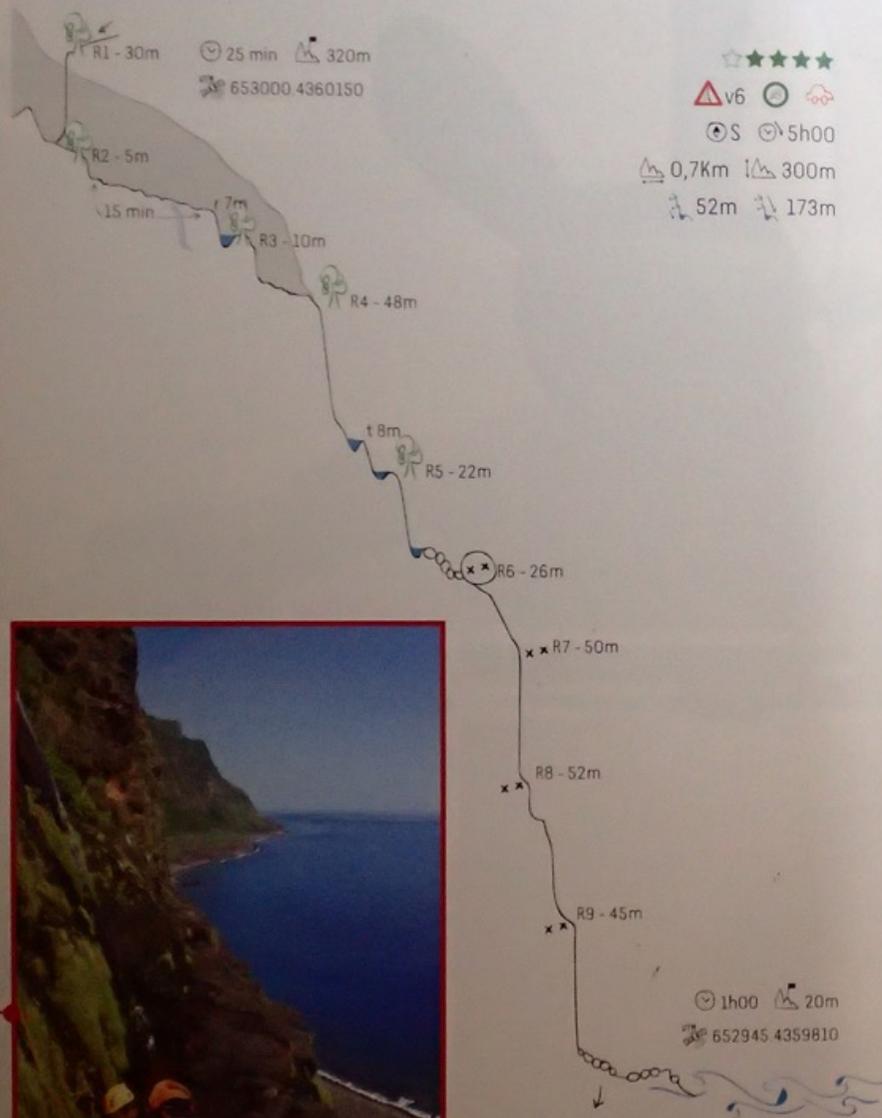
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The beginning of this canyoning follows a narrow stream section with several drops and rappels. Next to an elevation of 200 m, the valley opens, showing the cliff and introducing a sequence of rappels with longer height. At the top of the long drop, there is an anchor where canyoningers hang suspended only allowing up to 3 people simultaneously. The last two abseils on the right bank, are anchored slightly off the stream line to avoid being in the alignment with the abseil descent. The final abseil is to the pebble beach.

EXIT AND RETURN

Cross the fajã of Ponta da Rocha Alta towards Lajedo, ascending the trail that goes to Castelo, and which then has a cemented section. Continue up to the road where a car can be parked to ensure the transfer.

TOPO OF ROCHA ALTA ROUTE



MOSTEIRO

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
4,3	v5	5h00	1,1 km	245 m	10	40 m	75 m
🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	🚰	⚠️
245 m	0 m	0h05	0h15	0650430 4364200	0649895 4364295	Ok	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Mosteiro canyoning route is located in a beautiful valley that ends in a long drop above the sea. The access is quite easy but the exit is only possible by the sea with boat support, so it is necessary to ensure both car and boat logistics previously.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following by car to the Mosteiro, from Fajã Grande, take the concrete road to the right. Take the PR2FLO pedestrian route towards Fajã Grande until you find the bridge over the stream, where you should enter the canyoning.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route has several rappels with significant height, being possible to jumps to some pools, but only after prior verification of depth and absence of obstacles.

The route has two possible escape points but after R7 rappel the only way out is by/sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

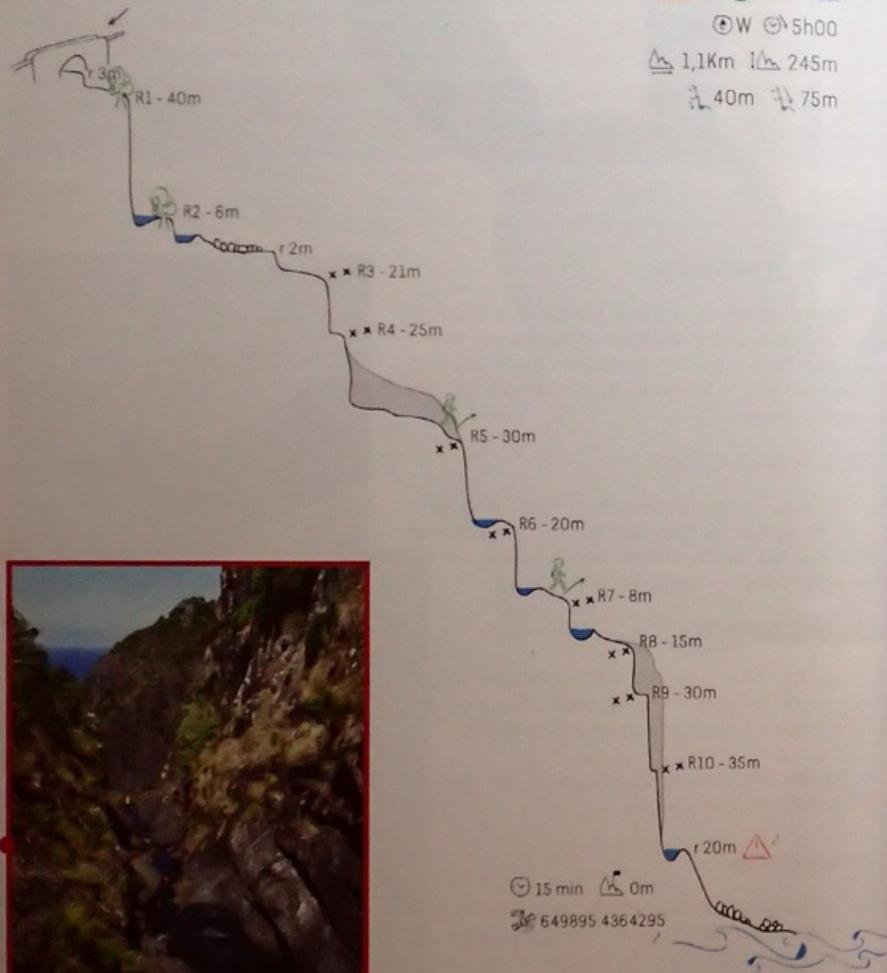
The exit is made by the sea with the support of a boat to ensure the transport to Fajã Grande port, where you can leave a car. An alternative if the sea is calm, not a recommended option, is to go along the coast, mostly swimming to the north, passing a vertical rocky cliff, until a rocky coastal zone where, in the middle, it is possible to climbing by a loose terrain slope, using a rope that is usually there for the fisherman, until the beginning of a trail ending at a paved road near Caldeira. At forks always follow the trail climbing uphill. Either alternative is only possible if the sea is not too rough.



TOPO OF MOSTEIRO ROUTE

⌚ 5 min 🏔️ 245m
📍 650430 4364200

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
⚠️ v5 🚰 🚰 🚰
🕒 W 🕒 5h00
🏔️ 1,1Km 🏔️ 245m
📏 40m 📏 75m



NORTHWEST COAST



CANYONING IN FLORES

Most streams in this region drain to a major geographical depression where the villages of Fajãzinha and Fajã Grande are located. North of this depression are the routes of the streams Monte Gordo and Moinhos, up on the seacoast, and Moinhos, up on the hills.



98

Overview of Fajãzinha and Fajã Grande



View to Ponta da Fajã and Fajã Grande

99

CANYONING IN FLORES

GRANDE

4.0	v6	4h00	0,9 m	270 m	5	80 m	105 m
490 m	220 m	0h05	0h15	0652055 4366505	0651490 4366380	Semi-equipado	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Grande route has the largest catchment area of Flores Island, generates extremely high flows following intense rainfall, occasionally resulting in extensive damages to local populations due to flooding.

This canyoning route starts at the edge of the plateau, and continues through an impressive gorge, where regularly large flows go through. To date this canyoning has only been done once, in 2005. Therefore, it is possible that the anchors installed then are no longer in the stream. It is necessary to arrange transport logistics.



APPROACH AND ACCESS

The road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajãzinha) crosses the Grande stream at Km 9.3. Leave the road near this bridge, walking on its left bank until you reach an elevation of about 490 m, where you should start the canyoning.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning, although not very long, has a high steep verticality which is enhanced by the grandeur of the place. The multi-tiered drop of 105 metres, with its second leg of 80 metres, is one of the few routes in Flores requiring the use of ropes above 50 metres. The descent of this canyoning requires additional anchoring equipment. There is a significant exposure to flash floods in this route because of its large catchment.

EXIT AND RETURN

The last section has several down climbing drops, progressing in a succession of block chaos, until approximately 220 metres of elevation, where you should leave by the left bank to arrive to an unpaved road that ends on the road to Fajã Grande.

FERREIRO

4,4	v6/a4	4h00	0,7 km	240 m	9	45 m	120 m
500 m	260 m	0h10	0h30	0651890 4367030	0651582 4366675	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is short but vertical, in a relatively unstable zone. This stream has an impressive landscape and ends in a small lake. The flow is very variable. In dry periods can be almost dry, but can have high flow after the occurrence of intense rainfall. This was the first stream equipped as a canyoning route in Flores.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

On the road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajãzinha), turn right at Km 9.3, go along the unpaved road for about 300 m. Enter a path in the left side of the road, walk across the pasture towards west (5 min) until you reach the stream, near long drop.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning begins with a 2 m drop followed by a rappel of 45 metres into a pool. Two drops follow, with 20 and 10 m, which may be done individually or in a 40 m rappel. After another 15 m abseil followed by a section with many blocks in the stream bed, you reach the highest multi-tiered drop ending in a pool.

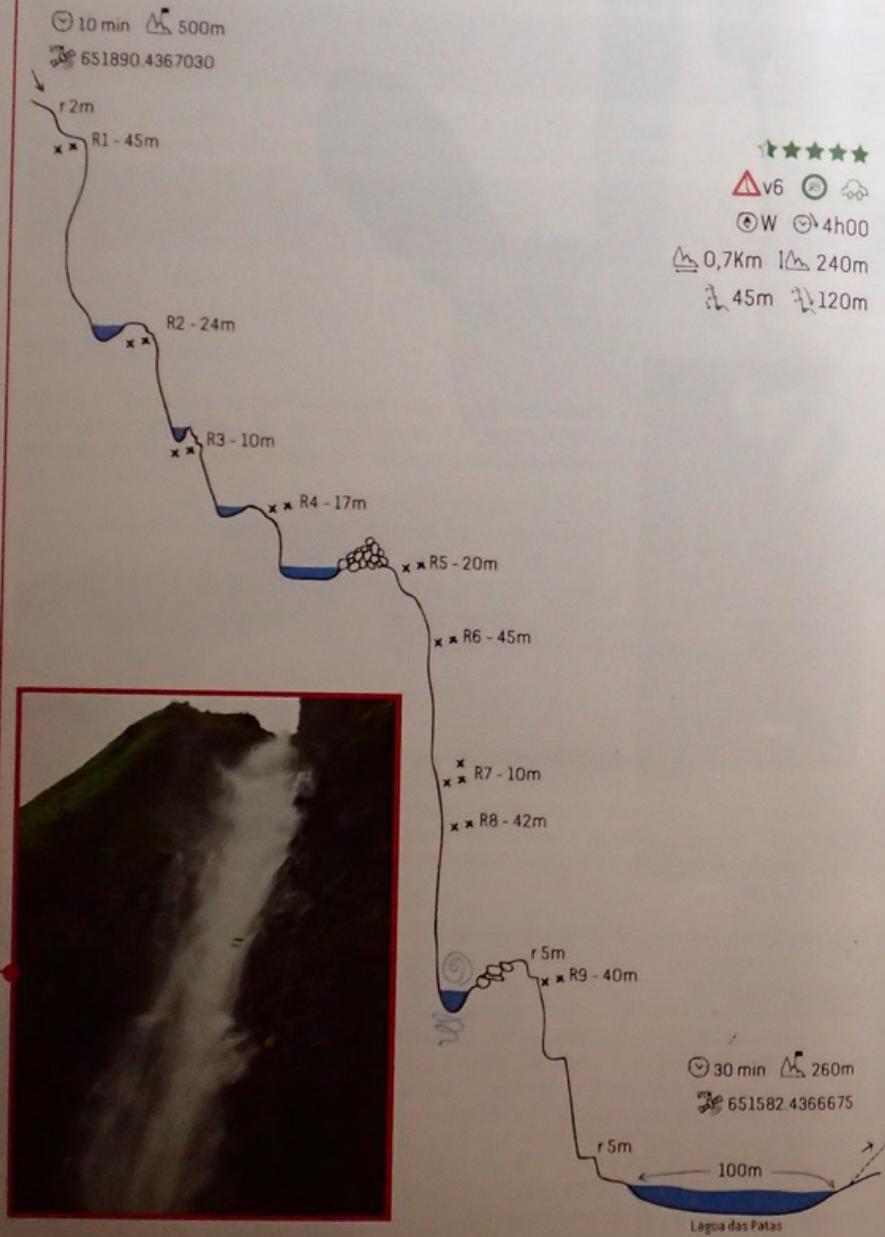
The remaining section of the route is straightforward.

EXIT AND RETURN

Swim across the lake, the Lagoa das Patas, by the narrowest section to the other end and then follow the trail (15 min) that ends at the road to Fajã Grande. The lake crossing can be quite difficult if aquatic vegetation is abundant. It is recommended to ensure good buoyancy in the backpack or taking additional floating devices (e.g. a diving buoy). It is necessary to ensure either transport logistics or a 6.3 km walk by road to reach the car at the starting point.



TOPO OF FERREIRO ROUTE



CASAS

The Casas stream is one of the most emblematic watercourses in Flores due to its last drop, with more than 100 metres, falling into Poço do Bacalhau, in Fajã Grande. It is the first of a succession of waterfalls on the island southern hills, north of this fajã. Although it is possible to undertake the full descent of this stream, as it was done in the first time, the most interesting route is the downstream section (Casas inferior). The upstream route (Casas superior) is semi-equipped.

CASAS SUPERIOR

3,0	V4	2h00	2,2 km	150 m	5	20 m	20 m
520 m	370 m	0h15	0h10	0651310 4368620	0650725 4368820	Ok	-

CASAS INFERIOR

4,5	v6	5h00	1,7 km	340 m	14	60 m	115 m
370 m	30 m	1h15	0h10	0650725 4368820	0650725 4368820	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route has a prime location presenting a wonderful view over the ocean and Fajã Grande. Its logistics are relatively easy and can be performed with only one car, although preferably using a transfer.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

The approach to this canyoning, both its upstream and downstream section, is from the road ER 2-2, turning to an unpaved road heading north at Km 9.3. Continue uphill by the road until the pedestrian trail PR3FLO – Poça do Bacalhau leaves the road turning left, walking along the trail. From this point to

CANYONING IN FLORES

the beginning of the upstream route (Casas superior) walk about 400 metres and turn right, through the pastures, in order to reach the stream at an elevation of 520 metres, immediately after a tributary.

To go straight to Casas downstream route (Casas inferior), continue the PR3FLO until it turns left to the SW steep cliff, where you should turn right to the north, following the trail that descends the valley down to the stream, entering in it at an elevation of approximately 370 m (around 30 minutes walking). In these two options it is preferable to arrange the car logistics.

Alternatively, to descend the downstream route of the stream, in independent groups, the car should be parked on the road to Ponta da Fajã, from where you can walk the PR3FLO – Poça do Bacalhau to the top of the hills, turning left to a path which then turns right and descends to the stream (around 1 hour and 15 minutes).

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The downstream route of Casas stream (Casas inferior) begins with a small drop to reach a rappel equipped on the right bank, entering in a narrow section. The stream turns right finding a waterfall of 15 metres. As the rock is soft, this rappel is equipped with pitons. After a short walk along the stream bed there are several drops from 8 to 30 metres, until the large multi-tiered drop with its two rappels is reached. It is very important not to pass the intermediate anchor because the cliff is overhanging and is a suspended abseil. This intermediate anchor is placed on the right, before a more exposed descent, in a relatively uncomfortable platform.

The exit is usually done by a trail on the left bank, being the last rappel optional. It should be noted that the pool of Poça do Bacalhau is visited by holidaymakers when the weather is good.

EXIT AND RETURN

After the large drop, rappel to the pool or leave the route to the left, towards a house and continue to the road, where it can be a car, or climb the trail PR3FLO to get the car parked in the beginning.



ALONG WATER TRAILS... IN THE AZORES | CANYONING GUIDEBOOK

TOPO OF CASAS INFERIOR ROUTE

🕒 1h15 🏔️ 370m
📞 650725.4368820

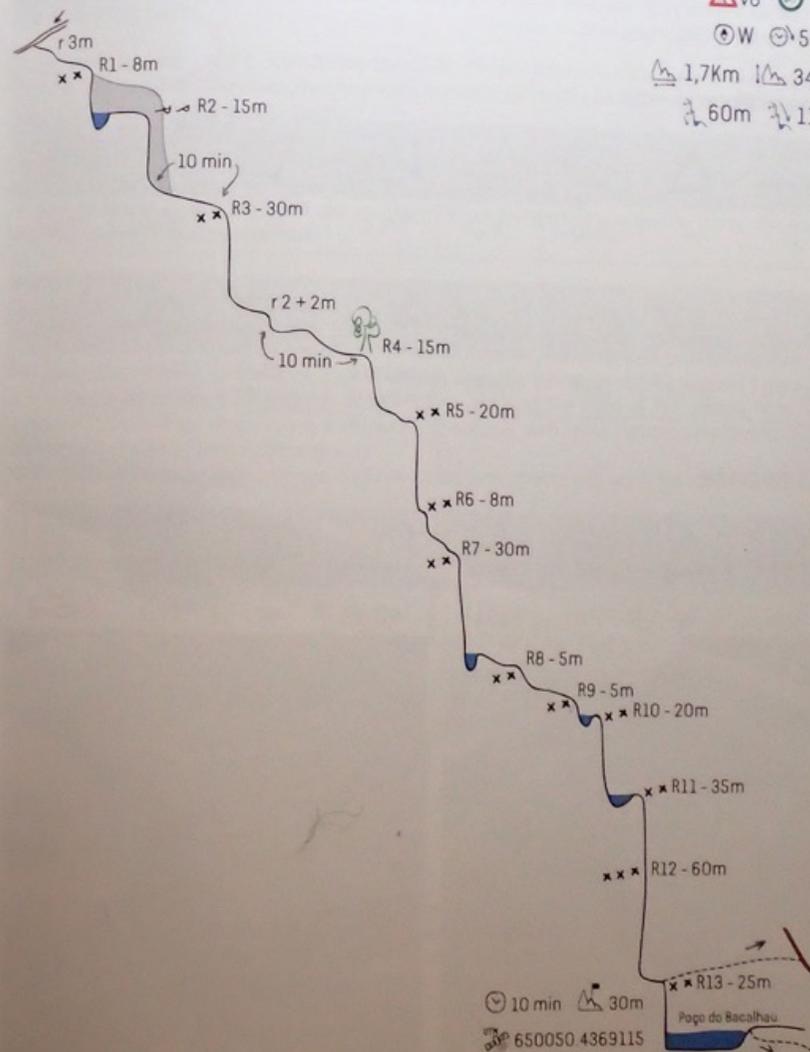
★★★★★

⚠️ v6 🌀 🌧️

🕒 W 🕒 5h00

📏 1,7Km 🏔️ 340m

📏 60m 📏 115m



CANYONING IN FLORES

CÃO

The Cão stream stands out in the landscape with its outstanding final waterfall in an almost straight alignment from the top of the cliff to the fajã. Although it is possible to do the full descent of this stream as it was done in its exploration, the most interesting route is the downstream section (Cão inferior). The upstream route (Cão superior) is semi-equipped. In either case, arrangement of car logistics recommend avoiding a long walk.

CÃO SUPERIOR

3.5	v3	2h00	1,8 km	175 m	10	30 m	30 m
685 m	510 m	0h05	0h30	0651400 4369810	0650570 4369780	Semi-equipped	-

CÃO INFERIOR

4.5	v6	5h00	1,5 km	440 m	13	55 m	225 m
510 m	70 m	1h40	0h10	0650570 4369780	0650180 4369720	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This downstream route has an amazing outlook when the final part consisting of a sequence of long drop waterfalls is reached, with wide views over the ocean and the fajã. Despite being the largest drop in Flores, is not too difficult because the waterfalls are in a rocky wall with good platforms. However, in the case of relatively high flow rates, difficulty may increase significantly. Rope recovery can be a delicate manoeuvre since they can get stuck.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

On the road ER 2-2 (from Santa Cruz das Flores to Fajãzinha), turn right at Km 9.3, following and ascending the hill by an unpaved road towards Ponta Delgada. Already at the top of the plateau, heading north, stop the car next to the concrete bridge that crosses the Cão stream at an elevation of 710 metres. To enter the upstream route (Cão superior) walk through the pastures along the right bank entering at an approximate elevation of 685 metres.

In the direct approach to the downstream route (Cão Inferior), follow the Casas Inferior route approach, crossing that stream and continuing heading north, in a trail that may be a bit hidden by vegetation, until you reach Cão stream where the route begins.

Alternatively, to avoid car logistics, you can park the car on the road to Ponta da Fajã, near the beginning of the trail that goes along the José de Fraga stream. Follow the trail until a junction at an elevation of about 400 m, turning right and continuing south until you reach the point where it crosses the Cão stream. This trail can also be relatively hidden by vegetation.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

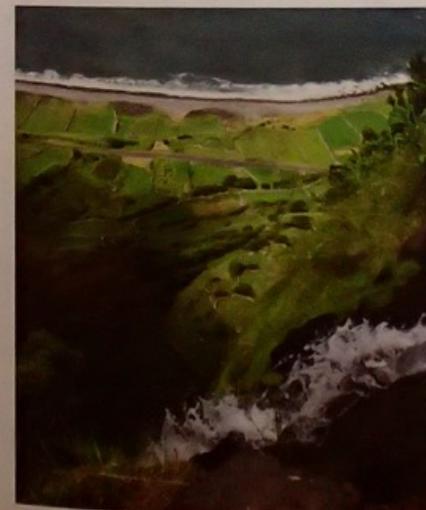
In the upper route some rappels may need to be equipped.

The downstream route, properly equipped, unfolds splendid scenery over Fajã Grande. It starts with a first sequence of rappels along the stream valley, reaching the edge of the plateau from where it descends by a large drop having a sequence of rappels, with some options considering that the anchors are placed at various distances.

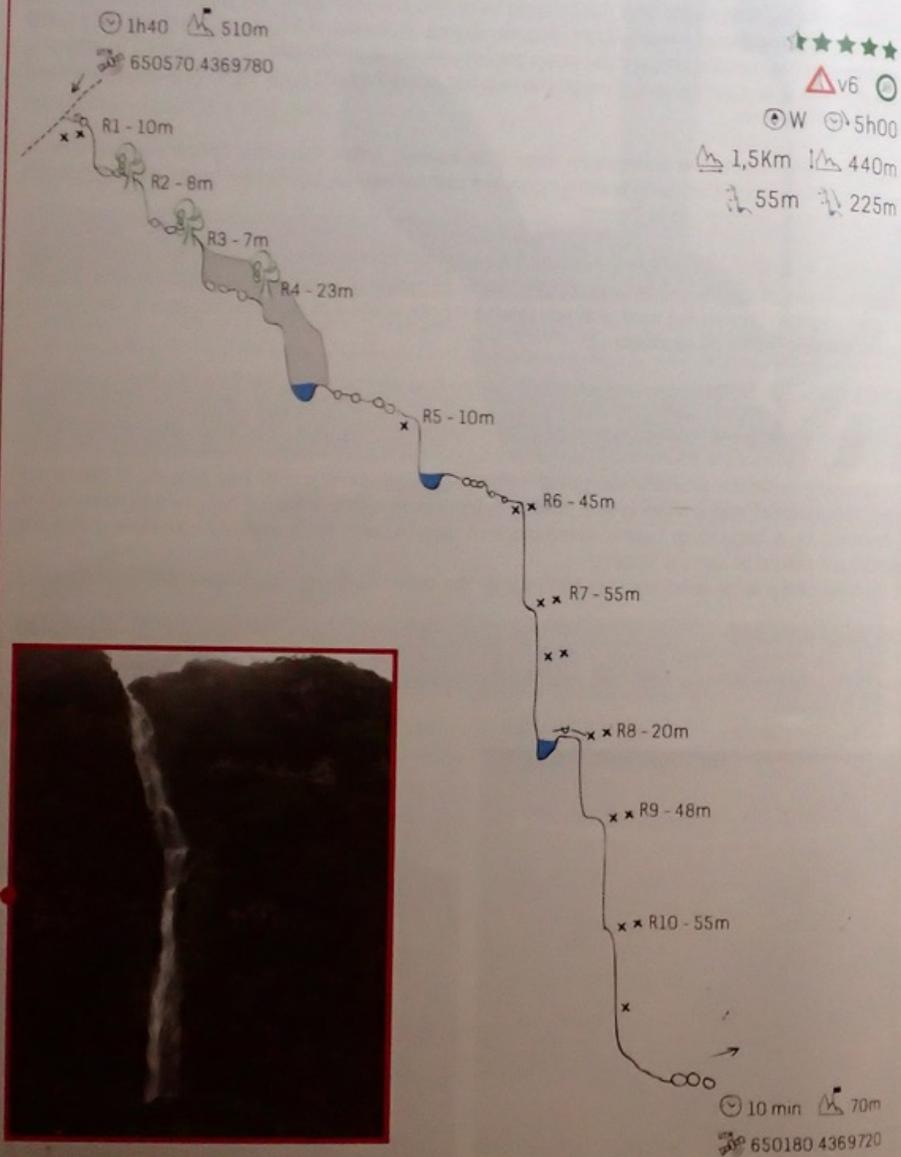
At the base of the large drop, you can continue by the stream until you reach the road.

EXIT AND RETURN

Follow the stream until you reach the road to Ponta da Fajã, from where you can continue to where the car is parked.



TOPO OF CÃO INFERIOR ROUTE



JOSÉ DE FRAGA

José de Fraga stream begins in the highlands, descending on a beautiful sequence of waterfalls to Ponta da Fajã, ending behind the houses of this small village, and crossing them until it meets the sea. The upstream section has a lot of vegetation beginning at approximately at 560 metres of elevation. This stream is divided in two canyoning routes, the upstream section (José de Fraga superior) and the downstream section (José de Fraga inferior). In most of its way it offers a broad view over the fajã and the sea.

JOSÉ DE FRAGA SUPERIOR

3,8	v4	6h00	1,0 km	350 m	9	40 m	60 m
560 m	310 m	0h20	0h30	0650875 4370410	0650440 4370410	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

The upstream section of José de Fraga is beautiful and diverse, with both wide landscapes and narrows.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Following the same access of Cão superior stream, on the road towards Ponta Delgada, after passing over Cão stream continue driving for over half a kilometre, crossing two José de Fraga tributaries. After passing these tributaries, on a sharp left turn, stop the car (elevation 740 m). Descend the fields on the stream's right bank, parallel to the watercourse and avoiding the first section in an open reach of the valley. Enter the route at an elevation of about 560 metres, just before a tributary in the left bank, near a steep drop. This route involves the arrangement of car logistics.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

After the tributary in the left bank, climb down to a narrow after which a multi-pitched drop, the first rappel with 12 metre by the cascade, followed by a 27 metre rappel. The stream will then divide into two branches but keep following the right branch, until you reach a 60 metre drop. This long drop has an intermediate anchor 20 metres below, on a wide straight wall. After this, walk for a while until reaching a section with a narrow canyon and where surrounding vegetation is already mostly trees. This route ends when a trail crosses the stream at roughly north-south direction, just before a 40 metre rappel. There are several possibilities to escape the stream along this route.



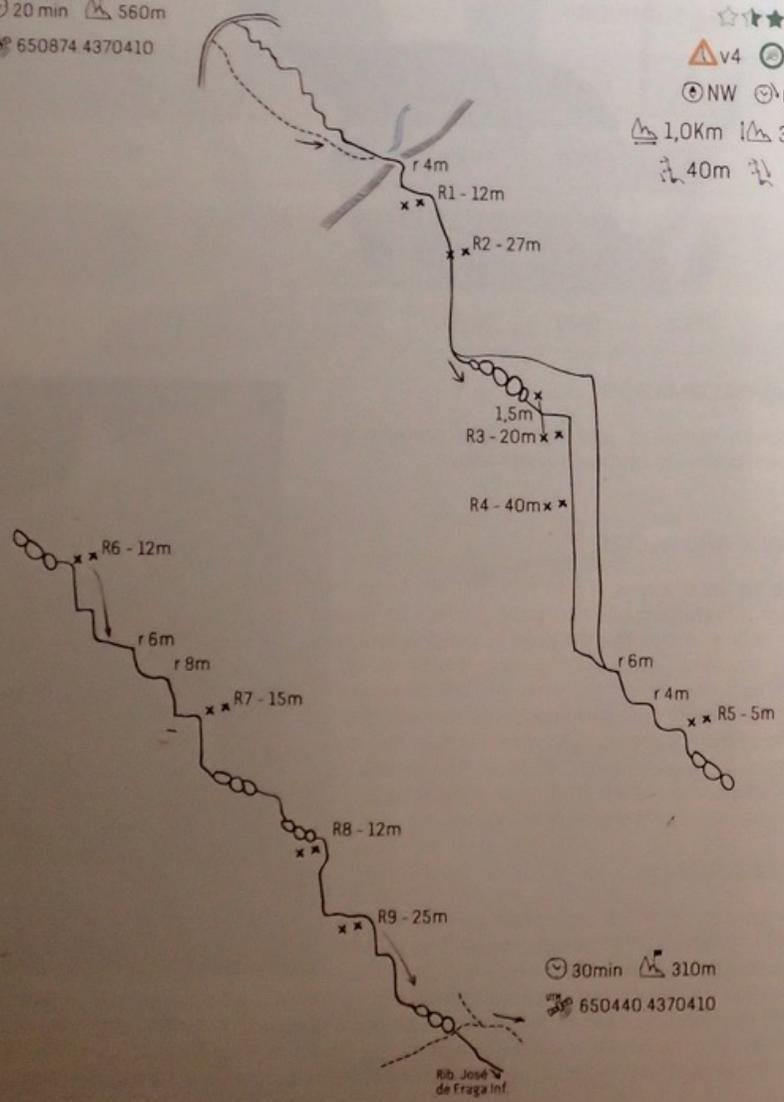
EXIT AND RETURN

The exit of this route is by the trail crossing the stream, to the left bank down to Ponta da Fajã. The trail goes most way down parallel to the stream, and nearby an old water mill, crosses the stream to the right bank. When arriving to a main fork, follow to the right, away from the stream, reaching a deep gorge. After a while, the trail turns left and ends at the asphalt road.

TOPO OF JOSÉ DE FRAGA SUPERIOR ROUTE

🕒 20 min 📏 560m
📍 650874 4370410

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
⚠️ v4 🕒 6h00
📍 NW 📏 1,0Km 📏 350m
📏 40m 📏 60m



🕒 30min 📏 310m
📍 650440 4370410

JOSÉ DE FRAGA INFERIOR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★	⚠️ v4	🕒 2h00	📏 0,7 km	📏 250 m	📏 9	📏 45 m	📏 45 m
📏 310 m	📏 60 m	🕒 0h45	🕒 0h10	📍 0650440 4370410	📍 0650220 4370290	📍 Ok	📍 ?

GENERAL INFORMATION

This beautiful route descends the hill to Ponta da Fajã, in a sequence of quite vertical waterfalls in the middle of lush vegetation, having nearly always a pedestrian trail along its left bank.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

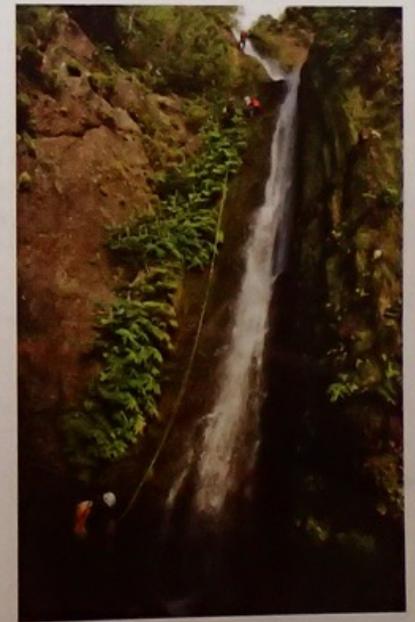
Park the car at Ponta da Fajã and take the trail climbing the hill and that crosses the stream at about 138 m of elevation, near an old water mill. Keep following the trail, which remains on the left bank of the stream until it returns to cross it at an elevation of 310 m, where you should enter the stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

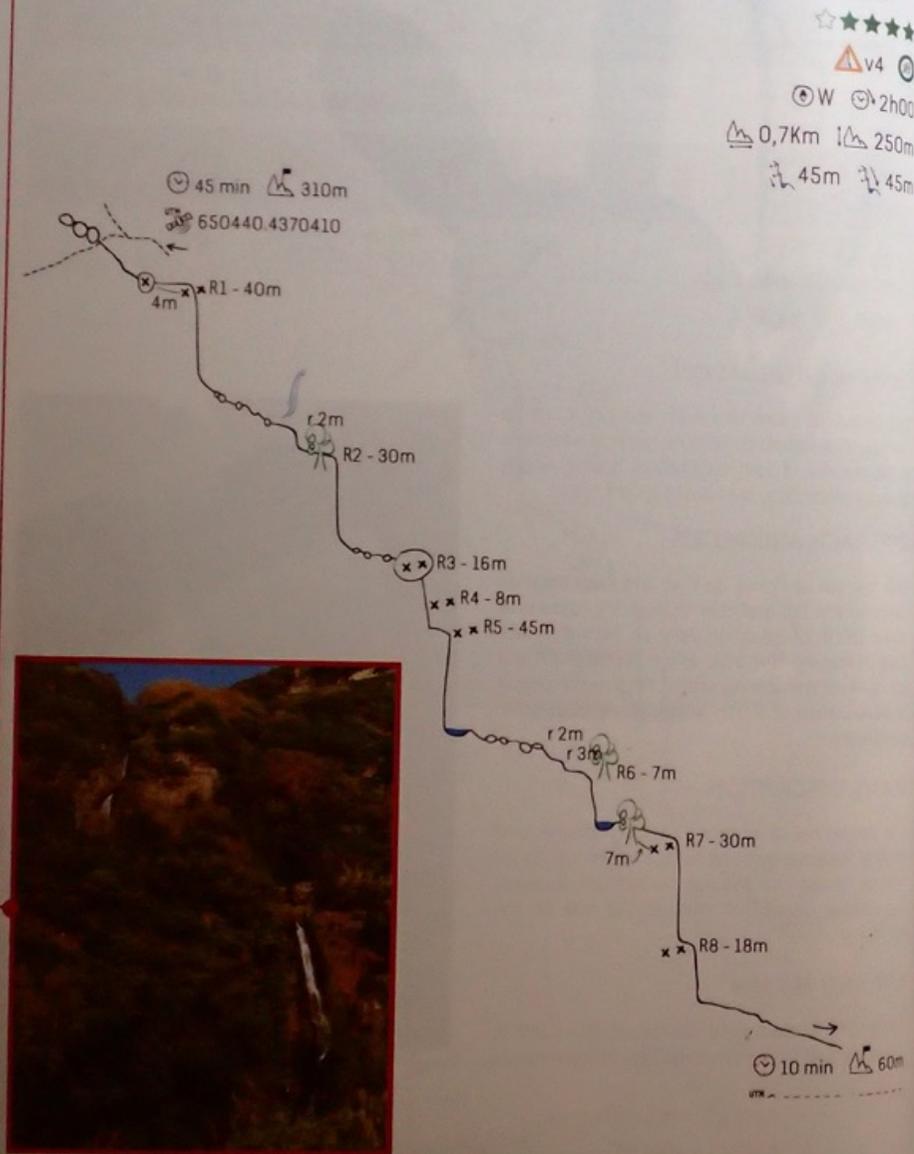
The route has a number of long abseils and several narrow sections, with rappels up to 40 metres. There are several possibilities to leave the stream along this route to the trail on the left bank.

EXIT AND RETURN

Follow the stream until you reach the road to Ponta da Fajã from where you can walk to the car.



TOPO OF JOSÉ DE FRAGA INFERIOR ROUTE



MONTE GORDO

4,1	v5	3h00	0,9	308	5	70	95
310	2	1h00	0h20	0650150 4372460	0649900 4372525	Ok	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

This is the most western canyoning route in Europe. It has a sequence of large vertical drops from the 305 metres of elevation to the pebble beach, and the only possible exit is by the sea with the support of a boat. Except after significant rainfall, count with low water flow.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Start the PR1FLO - Ponta Delgada - Fajã Grande pedestrian trail at Ponta da Fajã (60 m) and climb to the top of the cliff (410 m). After descending the first open valley the trail crosses the stream. Another possibility of access is to start the same pedestrian trail (PR1FLO) in Ponta Delgada from where you can drive by car up to 255 m elevation. Then follow the trail southwest for about 2.2 km until you reach Monte Gordo stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route has few rappels but most of them are large drops, being the shorter of 25 m and the longer of 70 m. Intermediate sections have mild slopes. After the third rappel, a trail crosses the stream, allowing an exit to the right. You can also leave right after the R4 in another possible escape point. The last rappel is the most interesting one, in an overhanging cliff and ending at the pebble beach.

EXIT AND RETURN

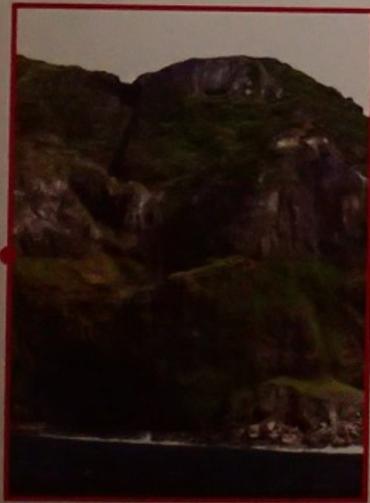
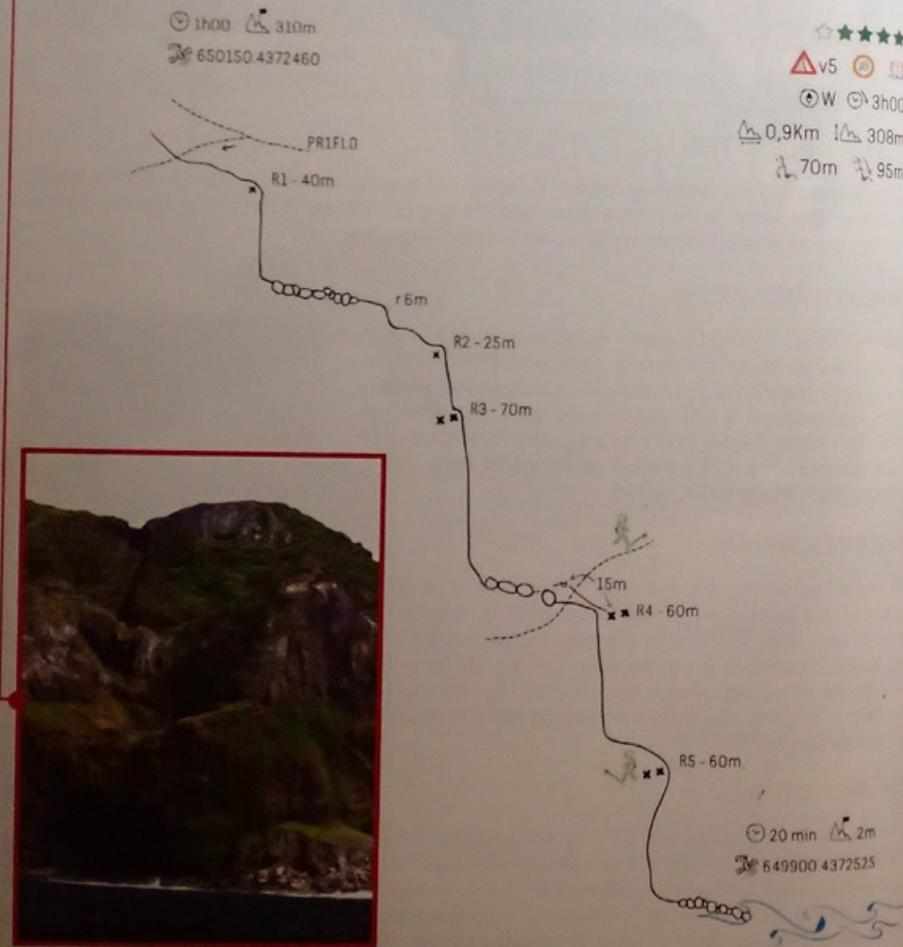
After the last rappel, the only way out is by sea. Boat transportation can be arranged with a maritime tour operator from Fajã Grande, yet the boat cannot approach the pebble beach, being necessary to swim to reach it. Observe the sea condition and its possible changes before starting the last rappel to assess the conditions of exit. It may be hard to leave the pebble beach with strong waves.



CANYONING IN FLORES

Another possibility of exit is by an existing trail before the last rappel, although this path is not very clear. Follow this trail heading north for about 100 m along the slopes, until you reach the spur from where an ancient trail goes to Quebrada Nova. Follow the trail to northeast, passing Quebrada Nova and Mouco stream, and continuing along the coast. After passing the Maria Vaz islet, in the middle of the bay, follow the trail that climbs the hill until you find on its top the pedestrian trail PRIFLO - Ponta Delgada - Fajã Grande. From here, if access has been made from this side, just climb up to where the car was parked. This return may not be feasible with strong swell and high tides once it requires the crossing of some obstacles with delicate passages.

TOPO OF MONTE GORDO ROUTE



MOUCO

4,3	V6	4h	1,1 km	320 m	15	40 m	100 m
330 m	10 m	0h20	1h30	0651420 4373385	0651065 4373690	Ok	Hard return

GENERAL INFORMATION

This stream is relatively short and with long vertical drops. It begins with a first segment of several rappels, followed by a spectacular amphitheatre with a 100 metres multi-tiered drop, divided into three rappels and ending on a short but narrow canyon section. Considering its diversity and surroundings this route is one of the most interesting descents of the island. Nevertheless, expect little water flow and a long and difficult return way. Undoubtedly, this route is an adventure for experienced canyoneers.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

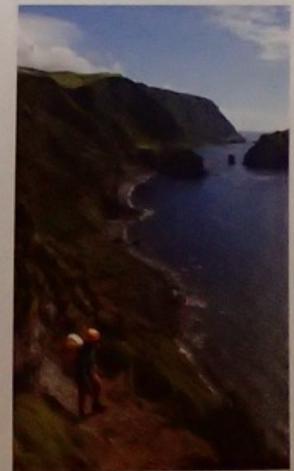
From Ponta Delgada, leave the car in the cement road about 1,5 km after the junction that leads to the Albernaz lighthouse. Walk the pedestrian trail PRIFLO - Ponta Delgada - Fajã Grande, passing the first two streams and entering the third at an elevation of approximately 330 m.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route begins with a sequence of rappels to transpose some small to medium drops. This section is followed by a large multi-tiered drop in a large amphitheatre with about 100 m. In this drop, the first anchor is at the edge of an overhanging rock layer, the anchors implying up to 3 canyoneers to be suspended. Below, there is a thick layer of soft rock. The next anchors are in a basalt block embedded in the soft rock layer, and to reach it, it is necessary to do a small pendulum. At the bottom of this amphitheatre you will find a short narrow section which continues to the sea. This route is only recommended for experienced canyoneers with good technical level in rope work.

EXIT AND RETURN

Exit to the right along the coast heading northeast. Pass the Maria Vaz islet and in the middle of the bay start ascending the trail that climbs the cliff. At the top, the pedestrian trail PRIFLO - Ponta Delgada - Fajã Grande can be found. From here, if access has been made from this side, just keep going to where the car is parked. This return may not be feasible with strong swell and high tide once it requires the crossing of some obstacles with delicate passages.



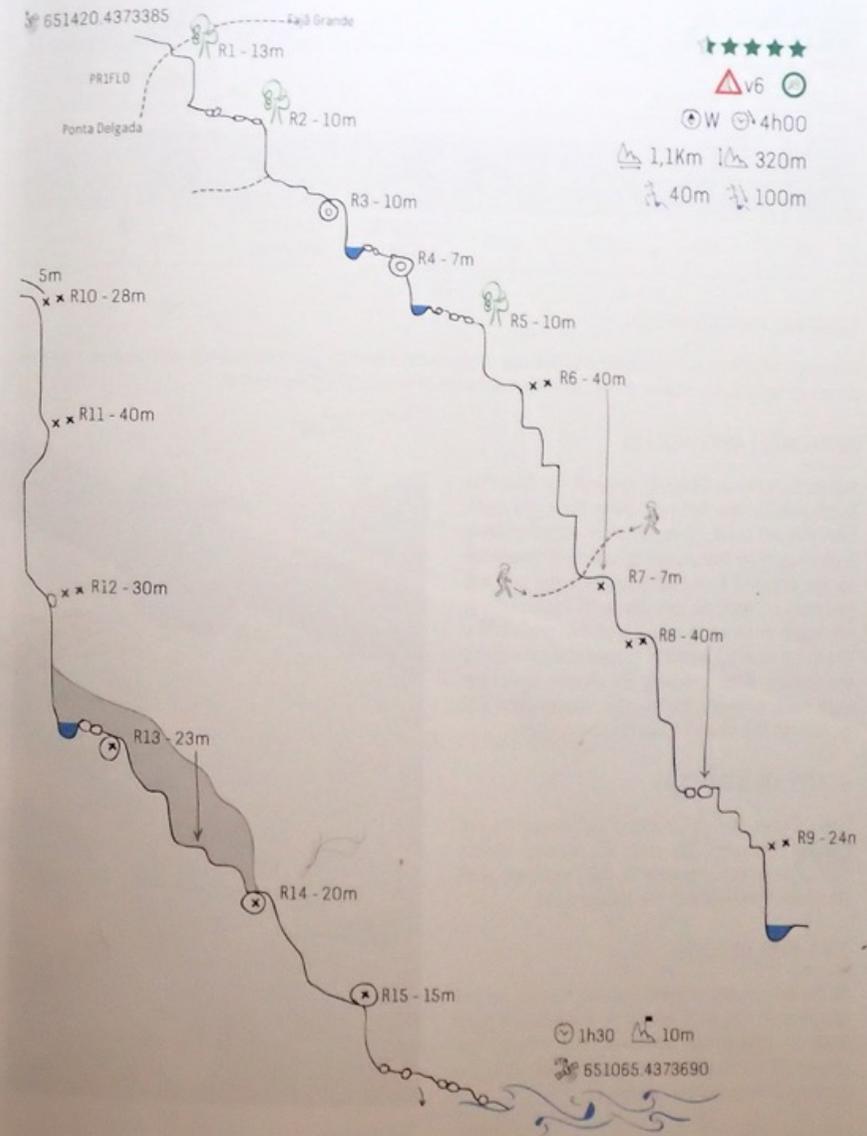
Highest drop of Mouco route



TOPO OF MOUCO ROUTE

20 min 330m

651420 4373385



MOINHOS

★★★★★							
3,0	v2	1h30	0,5	135	5	30	30
565	430	0h30	0h10	0652765 4372345	0652735 4372645	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

Although Moinhos is a relatively short route it has quite interesting surroundings with a view towards Albernaz lighthouse. Water flows can be reasonable at times of higher rainfall.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Follow from Ponta Delgada towards the Albernaz lighthouse. In the last turn, near the lighthouse, take the left road, continuing for approximately 3 kilometres to find a path to your left that leads to the slope of Entre Ribeiras. Park the car and proceed on foot by this unpaved road, turning left again in order to take a trail that crosses the stream. It may be possible to take the car nearby the stream. After crossing the stream climb the right bank following the its crest. At elevation 570 m, turn to the stream to begin the descent.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route has a continuous sequence of rappels between 20 and 30 metres, always with a beautiful overview of the landscape with Albernaz lighthouse in the background.

EXIT AND RETURN

At the end of the stream, passing the last rappel at about an elevation of 430 m, leave by the right bank to where the unpaved road crosses the stream. Then do the reverse way of access to the location where the car is parked.



TOPO OF MOINHOS ROUTE

⌚ 30 min 565m
📍 652765 4372345

★★★★★

v3

⌚ N ⌚ 1h30

0,5Km 135m

30m 30m



⌚ 10 min 430m
📍 652735 4372645



With 243.6 km² of surface and just over nine thousand inhabitants, São Jorge is a predominantly rural island with a unique landscape. By its geographical proximity to the islands of Pico and Faial, São Jorge is part of a subgroup called "The Triangle Islands". Regular boat connections exist throughout the year between these islands.



Its long shape (56 km long and 8 km wide) and the chain of volcanoes along its "backbone" relief, gives the island a very peculiar morphology that is at the origin of being known as the "Dragon Island". Most of its territory lies above 500 metres of elevation, with its main settlements concentrated in the lower areas, mainly on the south coast, between the villages of Velas and Calheta.

São Jorge's coast is generally quite steep, with many waterfalls, bays and fajãs, which have been formed by large landslides or lava flows. These fajãs, relatively flat areas surrounded by sea and cliffs, are prime sites for human occupation, often rich and diverse ecological niches. The north and south coasts of the islands are contrasting since the former are wetter and wilder and the latter are sunnier.

Some natural phenomena resulting from the island volcanic nature can be seen, as the central volcanic ridge where, in addition to volcanic cones with lakes, ponds and peat bog areas, fantastic views over the ocean and nearby islands are observed.

The built heritage, concentrating along the coast from Velas to Ribeira Seca, shows some good examples of civil, military, agricultural and religious heritage. Also worthwhile are the examples of traditional production such as the wind and water mills.

This island traditional culture is strongly noticeable in today's life, reflected in several festivities such as the Festas do Santo Espírito (May to September), with roped bullfights throughout this period, the Cultural Week at Velas (1st week of July), Calheta's July Festival (2nd half of July), the peregrination Romaria à Nossa Senhora do Carmo at Fajã dos Vimes (July 16th) and the peregrination Romaria do Santo Cristo at Fajã de Santo Cristo (1st Sunday in September).

The gastronomy is also an important cultural aspect of the island, for instance the production of the most famous Azorean cheese, the "queijo da ilha". Other specialties worth mentioning include the clams from Caldeira de Santo Cristo Nature Reserve and Special Ecological Area, some alcoholic beverages and sweets. Also the local production of coffee, an exception in Europe, possible because of the microclimates in the island, is worth tasting in Fajã dos Vimes.

For its nature and cultural heritage, São Jorge is one of the islands in the archipelago with the greatest potential for nature and adventure tourism, especially for canyoning, hiking, surfing, caving, geotourism, boat tours, diving and underwater fishing, among other. São Jorge has a large number of streams and waterfalls with excellent potential for canyoning

SÃO JORGE

both on the northern and southern slopes, especially in the eastern part of the island.

Due to the abundance of water and mild climate, canyoning is possible during most of the year, being the best season between April and October, although always limited by the weather and stream flow conditions.

The long drops and waterfalls to the sea are the main attractions of the island that has conditions to be an relevant canyoning destination internationally together with Flores island. Until August 2014, around 25 canyoning routes were explored and equipped, offering a vast selection in terms of difficulty and quality. São Jorge has canyoning routes to meeting expectations of both the experienced independent canyoningers, and beginners. Specialized service providers are available in the island, and for beginners the Caldeira has a simple but amazing route. Unlike the other islands of the archipelago, São Jorge still has many unexplored streams with good potential to canyoning.

Selection of routes in this island should take into account its location and exposure to weather conditions, as well as technical difficulties and access and return requirements. Some routes require the support of a boat and favourable sea conditions for exiting. In other cases, access to begin or to return implies long hikes. It is also important to consider the time of year and the distribution of the rain, because some of routes may be dry or have very low flows in summer. The possibility to choose between canyoning routes in the southern slope, sunnier, drier and less windy, or in the northern slope, increases the opportunities for canyoning during visits to the island.

Since canyoning routes are concentrated in the eastern part of the island has logistic advantages for teams to stay in Calheta, where accommodation alternatives include a youth hostel, a campsite and several guesthouses. A detailed map of the island (ZoomAzores) can be obtained from the local tourism office with the canyoning routes and other relevant information to canyoning and other visitors.

In this guidebook, São Jorge's canyoning routes are divided in three regions. Except for Fonte route, located northwest of Fajã do Ouvidor, all other routes are located in the eastern part of the island, either in the northeast (NE) coast or in the southeast coast (SE):

SE – Southeast of the island, between Ribeira Seca and Topo (14 routes);

NE – Northeast of the island, between Fajã de Santo Cristo e o Topo (10 routes);

N – North coast between the Ouvidor and Ponta Furada (1 equipped route).

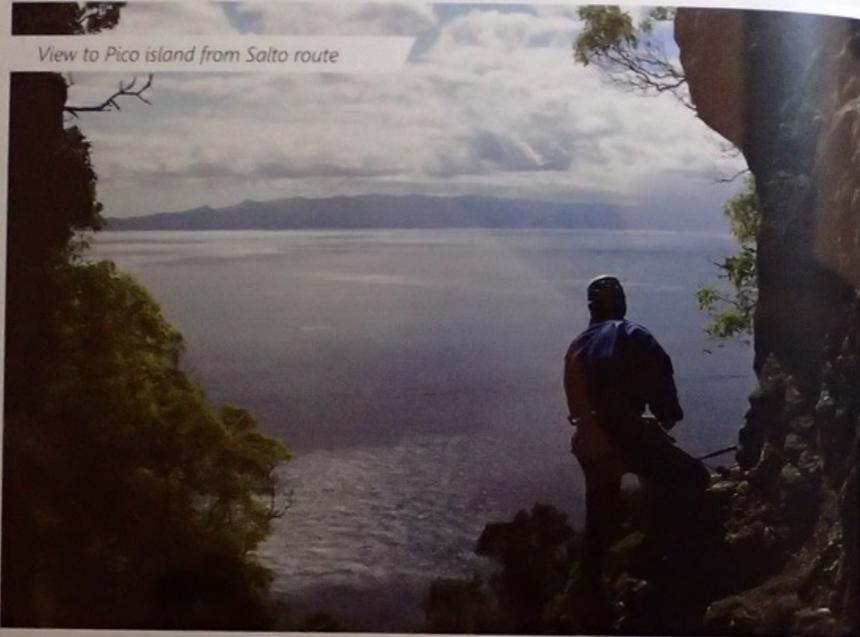


SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES ON SÃO JORGE ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Funda Rib ^a Seca	SE	1,3	v3	1h00	185	3	20	20	0h05	0h45
Virmes	SE	2,5	v4	3h30	390	9	35	33	0h20	1h25
Caimbro/Bodes	SE	3,8	v4	5h00	580	20	35	35	0h10	0h05
Rumanias/Romanas	SE	3,4	v4	6h00	580	14	50	63	0h10	0h05
Cavaletes	SE	3,9	v4	6h00	540	18	60	60	0h15	1h25
Cedro sup.	SE	2,8	v2	1h00	47	2	7	7	0h10	0h15
Cedro médio	SE	3	v4	1h30	248	7	33	33	0h10	0h30
Cedro inf.	SE	4,4	v4	2h30	265	9	45	45	0h20	1h30
Salto sup.	SE	3,9	v3	2h00	145	8	20	20	0h10	0h40
Salto médio	SE	3,9	v4	1h00	168	4	40	40	0h10	0h10
Salto inf.	SE	4,4	v4	4h00	360	17	40	40	0h10	1h30
São Tomé inf.	SE	4	v3	1h30	180	4	45	45	0h05	0h25
São Tomé sup.	SE	2,6	v4	2h00	305	4	15	15	0h05	1h00
Meio	SE	4	v5	2h00	120	5	30	72	0h15	0h45
Caldeira esq.	NE	4	v3	1h30	145	7	15	15	1h15	1h40
Caldeira dta.	NE	3,8	v3	1h30	165	6	15	15	1h10	1h40
Fajã Redonda	NE	3,9	v4	1h30	150	6	35	35	1h15	2h30
Sanguinhal esq.	NE	4,4	v6	7h00	750	16	45	80	0h30	3h00
Sanguinhal dta.	NE	4,4	v6	6h00	710	25	45	80	0h40	3h00
Entre Ribeiras	NE	4,4	v5	2h30	242	5	40	51	1h30	0h40
Casteihano	NE	3,9	v5	3h00	295	12	45	57	0h50	0h40
Salto Verde/Fachos	NE	4,4	v5	3h30	360	17	41	79	0h40	0h40
Funda sup.	NE	2,6	v4	2h00	320	14	35	35	0h10	0h50
Funda inf.	NE	3,8	v5	3h00	210	11	40	95	0h40	1h00
Fonte	NO	4,4	v5	5h00	520	19	47	130	0h05	0h25

In addition to these routes, others have been explored to date but are not included herein because of its relatively low interest or lack of information, for instance the Caldeira superior direita and the São João routes.

View to Pico island from Salto route



Last drop in Salto route



VIMES

2,5	v4	3h30	1,3 km	390 m	9	35 m	35 m
550	160	0h20	1h25	0419475 4272107	0419095 4271462	Ok	Transfer advisable

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route can be dry or have low flow stream out of rainy season and has an easy logistics. Can be an interesting option in a rainy period when other routes are not feasible. Canyoning takes place on a forest environment and is facing south. It has a sequence of drops requiring some down climbing and abseils and a rather lengthy progression.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Access is made from the road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo) at Km 6.5, descending by the pedestrian trail PR2SJO. Cross Capadinho stream and continue until you reach Vimes stream. Enter the stream on its left bank where the slope increases and there is a first rappel, approximately at 550 m of elevation.

EXIT AND RETURN

Exit in the bridge at the road that goes to Fajã dos Vimes. Take the road and descend about 50 metres to reach at your left the PR2FLO trail. Follow this trail to the route entrance point. It is also possible to arrange logistics for transfer at the beginning and end of the route.



View to Pico island

CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

CAIMBRO / BODES

3,8	v4	5 h	2,1 km	580 m	20	35 m	35 m
590 m	10 m	0h10	0h05	0420120 4271370	0419740 4270285	Ok	Transfer advisable

GENERAL INFORMATION

This stream extends over a steep valley in a dense forest, with frequent views to the sea. The route is much more interesting when it has flow, which occurs only during rainfall periods.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

The most convenient access is made using transfer support. In this case, start the access at Km 9 of the road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo), from where you can follow a trail that descends the pastures (500 m), until it reaches an unpaved road to the right, leading to the bridge over the stream where the canyoning is started. Without a transfer you can leave the car at the beginning of pedestrian route PR25JO (see access to Vimes) and follow the trail to the fork where the descent of the main hill, and from where you can follow the left trail between the fields and the wooded forest to reach Caimbro (25 min).

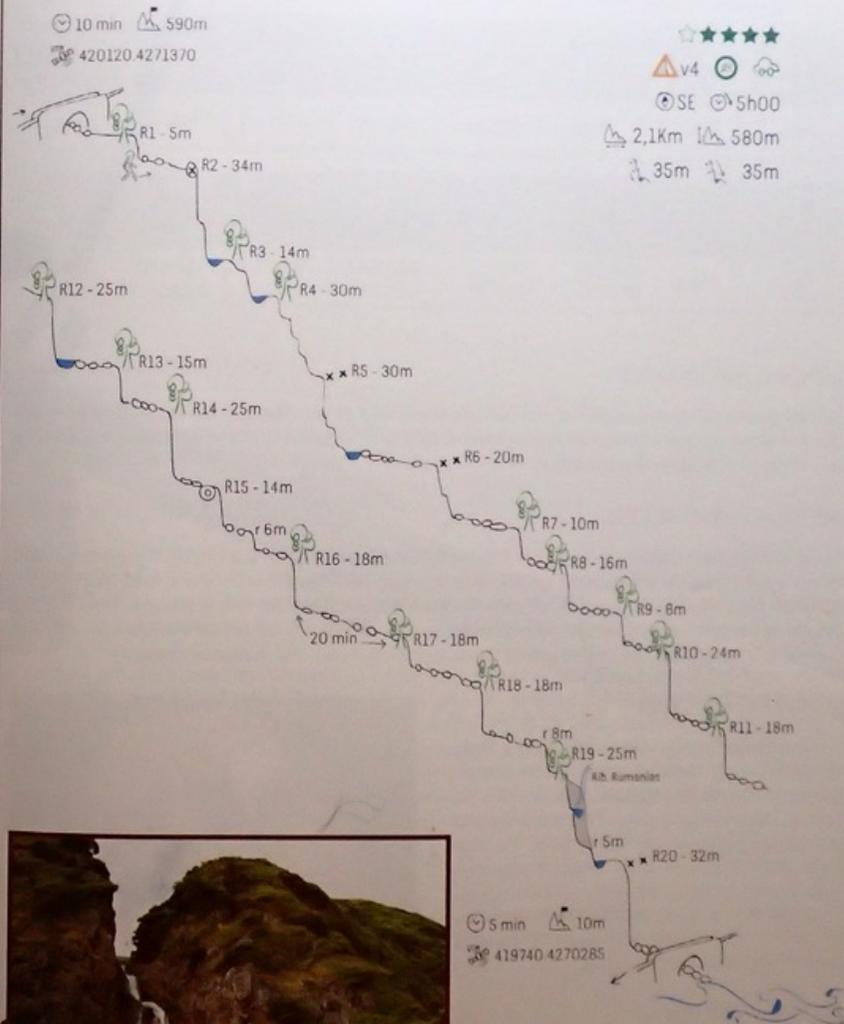
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning takes place in a dense forest valley that rips the steep hills and leads down to the sea. It has a sequence of drops with many abseils and down climbing, which makes it very tiring to descend. In the last but one rappel, with sweeping views over the sea, the confluence with Rumanias route is on the left side.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit is made along an unpaved road where cars from Fajã dos Vimes arrive. Without the use of a transfer, you can turn right and follow that road to Vimes, following the asphalt road that climbs the hill until you reach PR25JO trail that continues rising right before the road crosses Vimes stream. Follow the trail to the paved road where you left the car (1.30).

TOPO OF CAIMBRO (BODES) ROUTE



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

RUMANÍAS / ROMANAS

3.4	v4	5h30	2,0 km	580 m	14	40 m	73 m
590 m	10 m	0h10	0h05	0420643 4271170	0419740 4270285	Semi- equipped	Transfer advisable

GENERAL INFORMATION

This stream has similar characteristics to Caimbro route, and the confluence with this watercourse is in its second to last rappel. In less rainy periods the stream may be found dry, or water may disappear due to infiltration in its downstream section.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Using transfer, start the access at Km 9.5 of the road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo), from where follow down a path through the pastures on the stream's right bank until the unpaved road (600 m) and continue until the small bridge that crosses the left tributary of the stream. Without a transfer leave the car at the beginning of PR2SJO pedestrian route, from where you can follow the same access as to Caimbro route, passing this stream and continuing until you reach the Rumanias stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

If the weather is clear, sea views are practically along the whole route, except in narrow sections or due to the dense vegetation that borders the stream. The route has a sequence of drops, some of which can be bypassed by the left bank. The large multi-tiered drop with its 73 metres is effectively a succession of drops, with two equipped rappels. The difficulty of these abseils results from the continuous progression and down climbing of drops and high difference in level.

EXIT AND RETURN

The two exit options, with or without transfer, were previously described to Caimbro route.



CAVALETES

3,9	v4	6h00	1,5	540	18	60	60
560	20	0h15	1h25	0420737 4270565	0420412 4269715	Ok	Transfer advisable

GENERAL INFORMATION

Quite interesting route especially if descended after a period of rainfall. Usually in the drier periods the flow is low. The route has 540 metres of difference in level from its entrance to the fajã at sea level, and is on a green valley with good exposure and slope, always with views over the ocean.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Using a transfer, the access is similar to the Rumanias route, by continuing the unpaved road to east until the second stream which is Cavaletes is found. Alternatively, drive by the unpaved road that goes off the road to Loiral, following it to the entrance of the stream. For the return a transfer car in Fajã dos Bodes is needed, following the trail at the exit to the left for 250 metres.

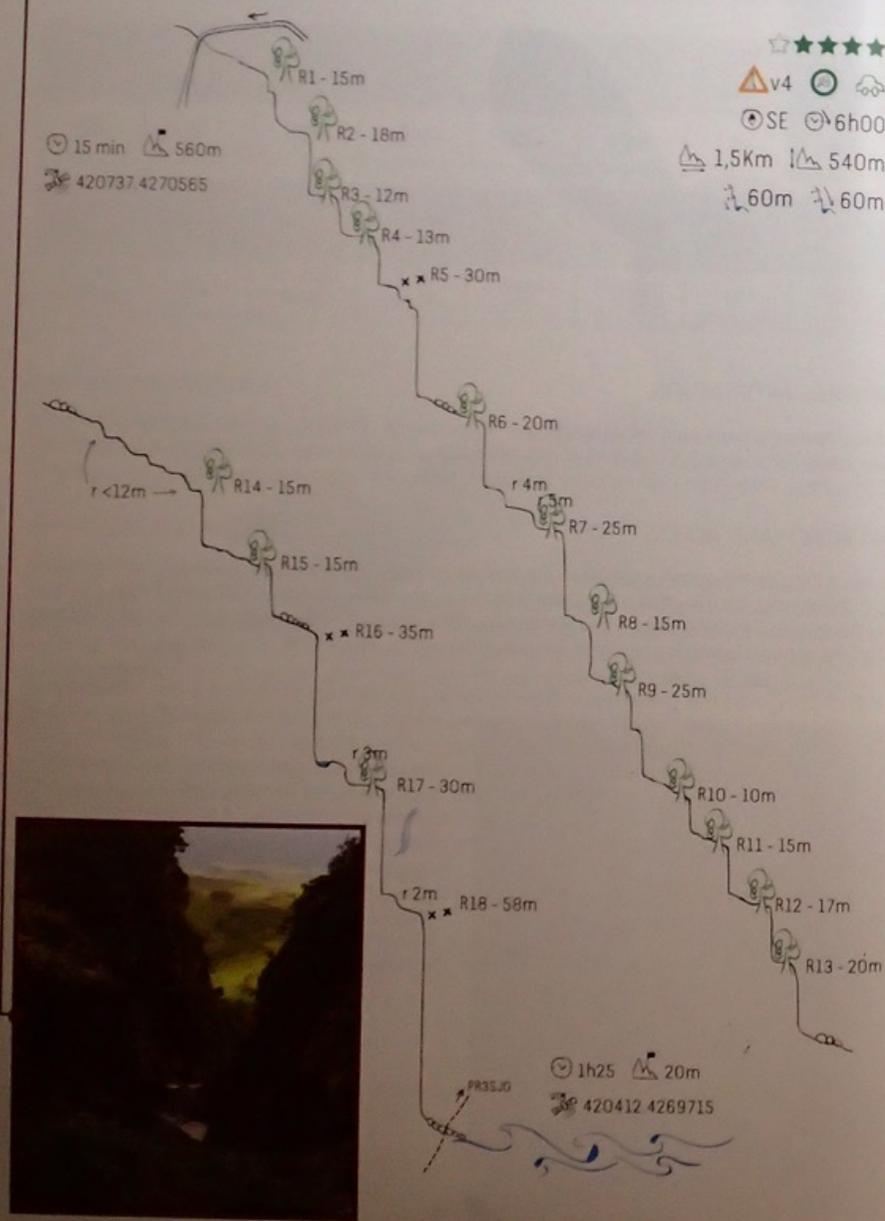
Without using a transfer the access is done by leaving the car near the chapel at the intersection of roads from Loiral 2º and Loiral 3º. Ascend the paved road for about 200 m and turn left to an unpaved road. Pass Cedros stream and two tributaries before reaching the main stream of Cavaletes. With fog the use of a GPS can be quite useful to confirm the entrance point. At the exit, follow PR3SJO trail to the left up to an elevation of approximately 420 metres, here turning left to a trail that climbs to Loiral 2º. At this point turn right to the road with the chapel where the car was parked. If this deviation is missed, continue to Loiral 3º and from there turn left to the chapel.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Sequence of rappels, many of them from trees, in an environment with a wide view over the sea, weather permitting. At its final section the stream narrows, having a final rappel of 58 metres, on a gorge that is an authentic window to the ocean.

CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

TOPO OF CAVALETES ROUTE



CEDROS

This stream is divided into three canyoning routes: the upstream, intermediate and downstream section, the Cedros superior, Cedros médio and Cedros inferior, respectively. The most downstream route is one of the most beautiful routes in São Jorge with a simple access but requiring a short passage by the sea. The upstream route is very short and less interesting but it is easily descended together with the other two routes. Alternatively, start in the intermediate route and descend the two downstream routes to reach the sea.

In the table the first and second rows are for the intermediate and downstream routes, respectively

3,0	v4	1h30	0,9 km	248 m	7	33 m	33 m
4,4	v4	2h30	1,0 km	265 m	9	45 m	45 m
518 m	270 m	0h10	0h30	0421365 4269925	0421260 4269560	Ok	Optional Transfer
270 m	5 m	0h20	1h30	0421260 4269560	0421020 4269225	Ok	Optional Transfer

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Leave the car at Loiral 2º and if you want to start the stream in Cedros Médio route follow by foot the unpaved road up to the second and main watercourse of Cedros stream (10 min). The entrance to the downstream route of Cedros inferior is by descending a trail from Loiral to the pedestrian route PR3SJO. Follow this marked trail, turning right and a few metres after the third stream that is crossed, on a sharper curve, and you will find the entrance to the canyoning.

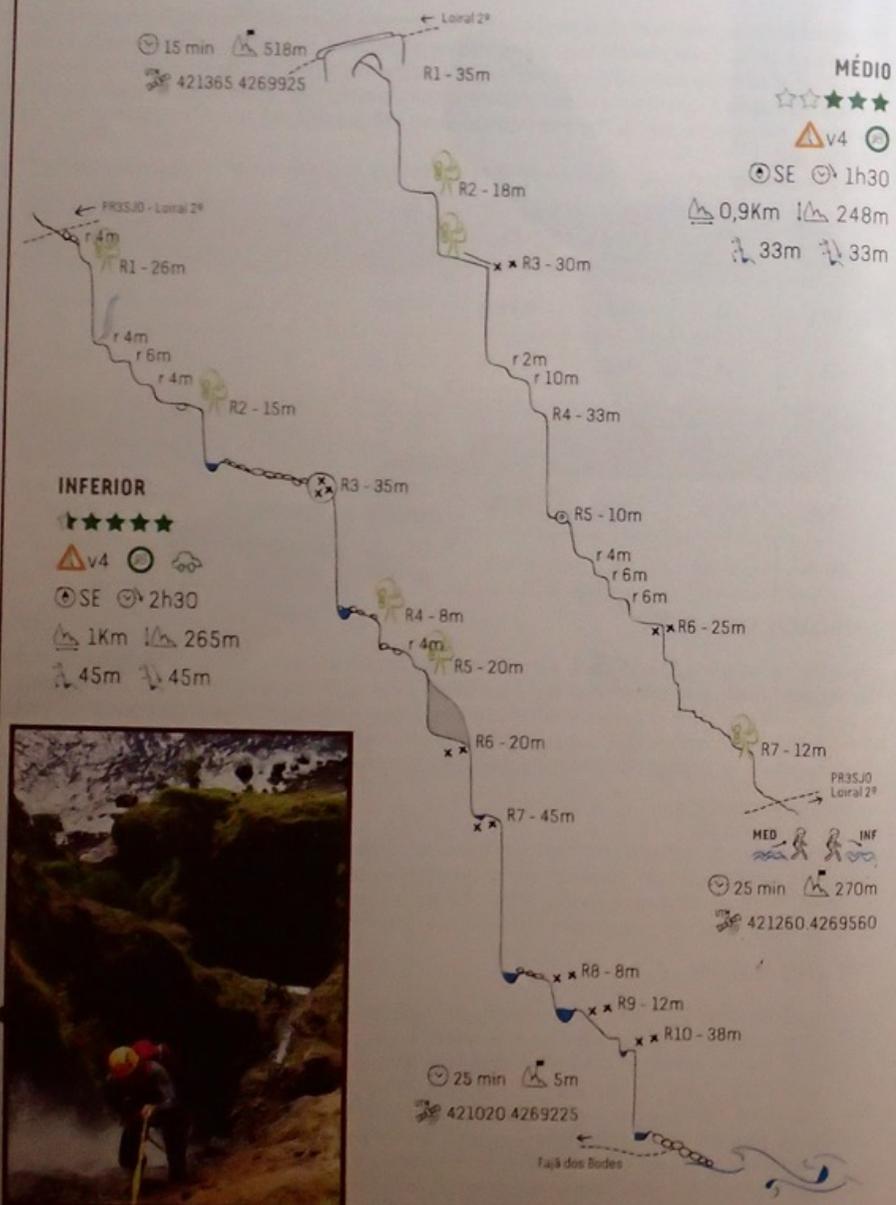
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning route starts on a narrow valley flanked by relatively dense woods. Before its final section, with seven nearly successive rappels, there is a possible escape point, on the left, ascending the hills where old fields are now occupied by trees. This last section, with the sea in the background, has amazing views, especially if the stream has some flow. Avoid this canyoning route with high flows.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit of the Cedros médio route is done by the pedestrian route PR3SJO, ascending towards east (left) up to an elevation of approximately 420 metres, where you turn to a trail on the left that goes up to Loiral 2º. The exit of the Cedros inferior route is by the pebble beach, walking along the rocky coast to the west (right). There is an obligatory sea passage, if the sea is calm and in low tide is simple and not necessary to swim. If the sea is rough, avoid this passage, but the alternative is to make a delicate climb of that rock, then following a very slippery and not defined path to bypass the sea passage. Before the mouth of Cavaletes stream, climb the fields to reach and follow PR3SJO trail to the right, which rises about 500 metres to the Loiral 2º (see Cedros médio exit). There is also the possibility to turn left on the PR3SJO trail and in five minutes get to Fajã dos Bodes where cars arrive.

TOPO OF CEDROS MÉDIO AND INFERIOR ROUTES



SALTO

Salto stream is divided into three canyoning routes, all of them very interesting but quite different. This is one stream in the island with good water flows, having a brown-reddish shade resulting from uplands vegetation effects. The stream can be descended in its total length, by the three subsequent routes, is about 7 hour long but very interesting descent considering its diversity and continuity.

SALTO SUPERIOR

★★★★★	▲	🕒	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,9	v3	2h00	0,7	145	8	20	20
🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤
675	530	0h10	0h40	0423425 4269610	0423070 4269275	Ok	Optional Transfer

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Follow the trail that goes off the road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo) at Km 12,7, just after the bridge over the Salto stream. Follow the trail south and when it deviates to the left descend by the pastures into the stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Quite interesting route, even if short is a very diverse canyoning, alternating between hard and soft adherent rocks, in which the valley narrows. A nice slide is found at the confluence with a tributary on the right bank.

EXIT AND RETURN

This route ends where the intermediate route begins; the exit of the stream is to the right on the top of a 30 metres waterfall. Follow an existing path above the fields until you reach a trail flanked by walls. To return to the car, climb this trail to the paved road (170 metres of difference in level) and then proceed to the right to find the car. Using a transfer, descend the trail (5 minutes) to Loiral 3º. If following the stream for another three abseils (30, 10 and 5 m), an alternative exit is possible using a clear trail that crosses the stream.



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

SALTO MÉDIO

★★★★★	⚠	🕒	📈	📈	👤	👤	👤
3.9	v4	1h00	0.5	168	4	40	40
📈	📈	👤	👤	👤	👤	🚫	?
530	362	0h10	0h10	0423070 4269275	0422915 4269045	Ok	-

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Small and narrow canyoning route, with few rappels, is easily combined with the upstream or downstream routes and having an alternative exit with a good trail up to Loiral 3°.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

From Loiral 3° follow a rising rail towards the exit of the upstream route (Salto Superior). See the description of that route return description.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route is through relatively consolidated basalt, quite different from the upstream section.

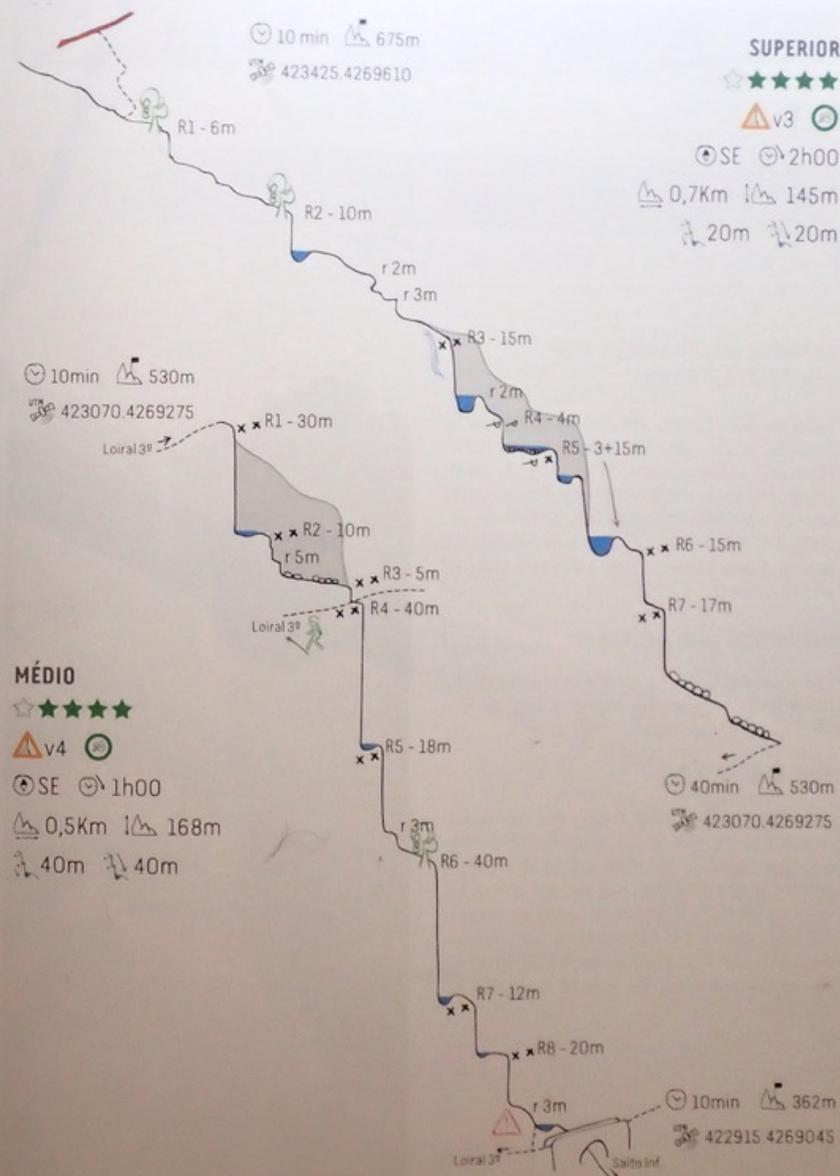
Canyoning starts a 30 metres abseil, from which becomes quite narrow. Before R4 with 40 metres, next to a bridge, there is possible escape path to the right accessing a trail to Loiral 3°. By the end, the stream valley widens and has view to the sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

The return is by the pedestrian route PR3SJO, turning right up to Loiral 3° (10 minutes).



TOPO OF SALTO SUPERIOR AND MÉDIO ROUTES



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

SALTO INFERIOR

4.4	v4	4h00	1,7 km	360 m	17	40 m	40 m
362 m	10 / 2 m	0h10	1h30	0422915 4269045	0422575 4268595	Ok	Optional Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Together with Cedros inferior, this is the most beautiful route on São Jorge south coast. However, unlike Cedros, this route is quite interesting in its entire length, having an initial section with beautiful waterfalls flanked by an abundant forest. The last rappels, interrupted by several drops, allow fabulous views over the sea and Pico Island.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

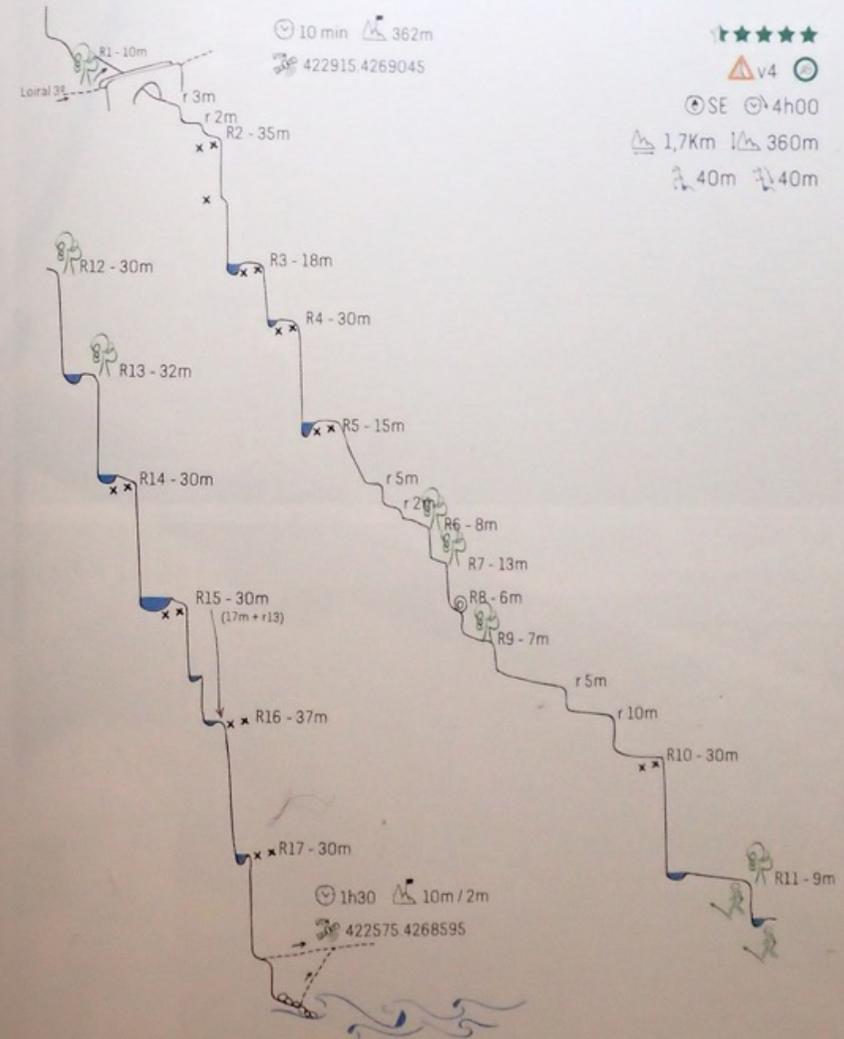
This route has a very quick and easy access from Loiral 3º by descending to the stream by the PR35JO pedestrian trail.

EXIT AND RETURN

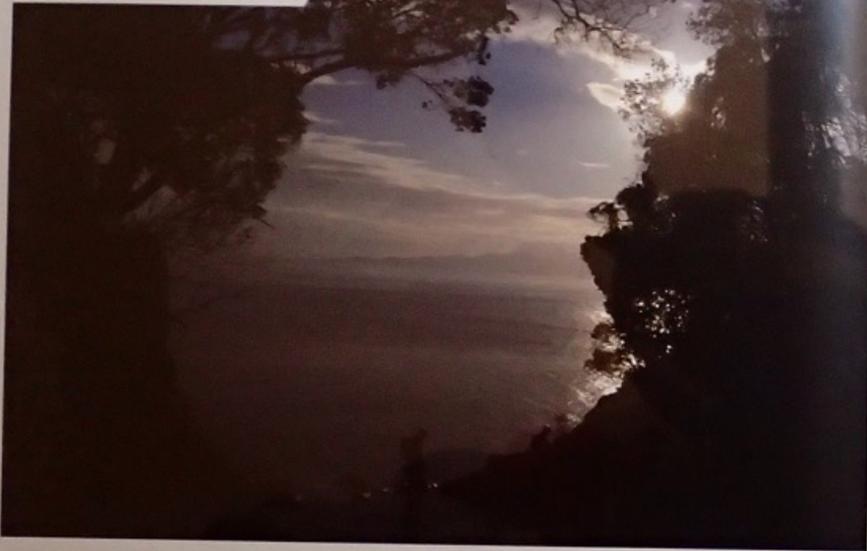
Leave the route before ending the last abseil, crossing to the left, or go down to the pebble and then climb a bit. Walk left to the pebble beach for about 1.2 km, until you get up the hill to enter PR35JO. To return to Loiral 2º, ascend this trail passing the beginning of Salto inferior, and continue. If you use a transfer, continue by the unpaved road to the right to reach Fajã de São João.



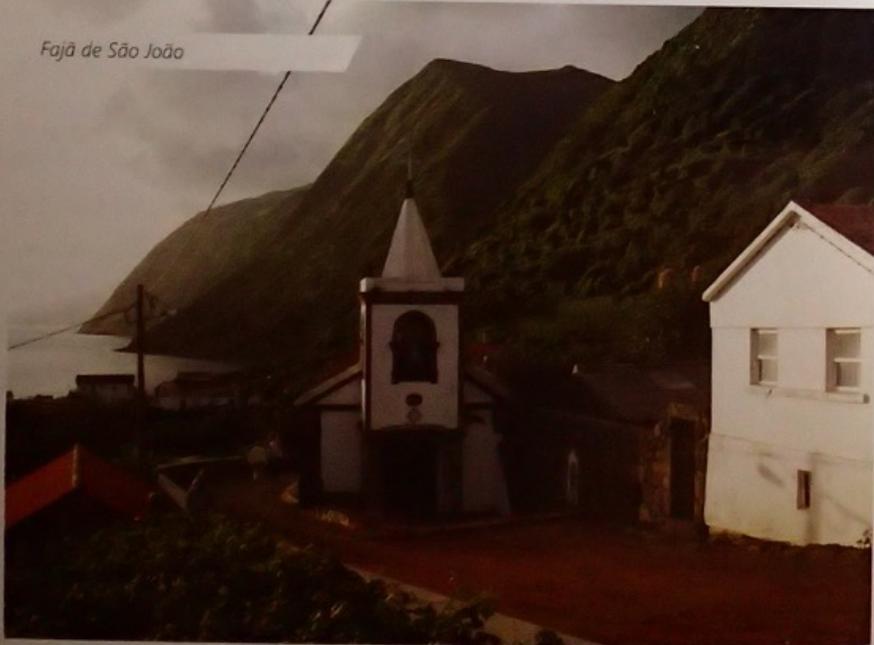
TOPO OF SALTO INFERIOR ROUTE



Salto inferior route



Fajã de São João



SÃO TOMÉ

São Tomé is one of the streams located further southeast, a region with an abundance of pastures and milk production, so the water of this stream besides ferruginous may not have an excellent quality in periods with less rainfall. Because it has a relatively large catchment, in large rainfall periods the flow may increase considerably. The stream valley is quite open and has two routes. The last waterfall is especially remarkable plunging from an overhanging rock edge in a suspended abseil to a small pebble beach.

In the table the first and second rows are for the upstream and downstream routes, respectively.

2,6	v3	2h00	2,3 km	210 m	5	15	15
4,0	v4	1h30	0,7 km	180 m	4	45	45
485 m	180 m	0h05	0h05	0427490 4267010	0428035 4266045	Ok	-
180 m	0 m	1h00	0h25	0428035 4266045	0428290 4265385	Ok	Optional boat

APPROACH AND ACCESS

To the upstream route enter the stream at the bridge of road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo) at Km 19, just after the village of São Tomé.

For the downstream route, on the road ER 2-2, at Km 20,5, turn to Lameiro and continue down to Fajã do Cruzal. In the last sharp turn, continue to the right, crossing Meio route and following to São Tomé, or leave the car in Fajã do Cruzal.



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The progression is simple in the stream but the bed is slippery and the darker water does not help. In the final part of the stream is necessary to install a recoverable hand line to reach the anchors allowing access to the last abseil, which apart from being done in a magnificent environment and ending in a small pebble beach, is mostly suspended.

EXIT AND RETURN

The logistic is using the support of a boat to take the group to the port in Topo or Calheta. Without the support of a boat, follow east, and after a short sea passage, continue along the narrow pebble coast, passing Meio stream and almost reaching the second, Lexivias stream. Just before that second stream there is a climb to Fajã do Cruzal, by a path partly exposed where there are small fishermen ropes.



TOPO OF SÃO TOMÉ SUPERIOR AND INFERIOR ROUTES

5 min 180m

427490.4267010

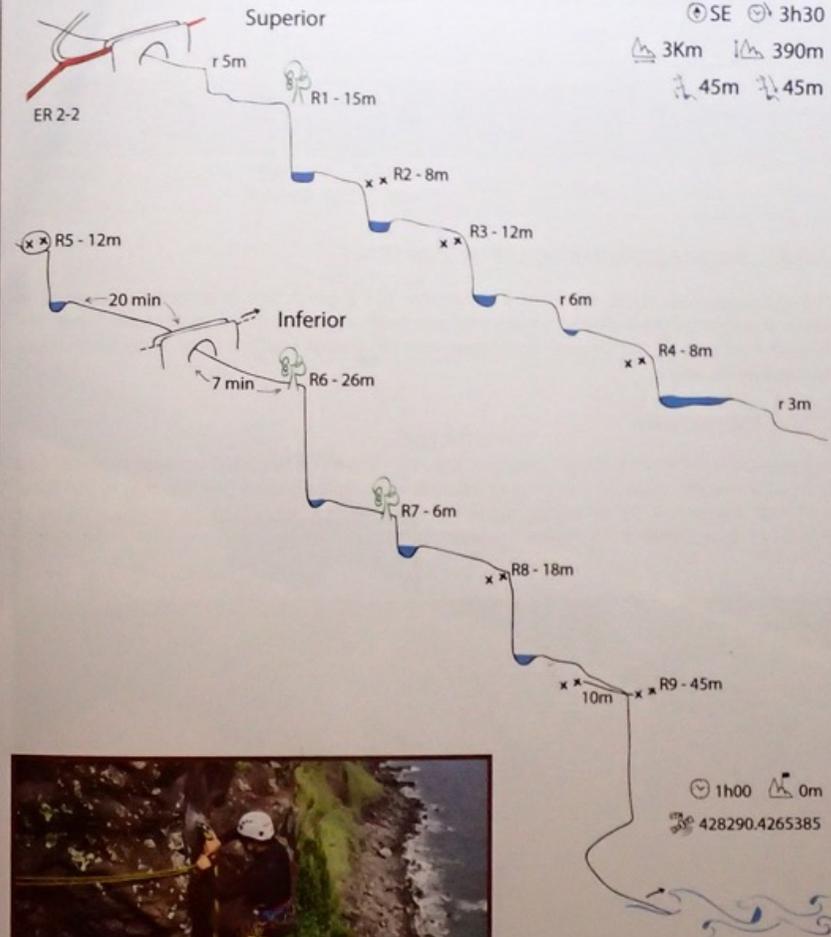
★★★★★

v4

SE 3h30

3Km 390m

45m 45m



1h00 0m

428290.4265385

CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

MEIO

4.1	v5	2h00	0,2	120	5	30	72
120	0	0h15	0h45	0428620 4265580	0428625 4265400	Ok	Optional boat

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Small but spectacular route, especially if the stream has a good flow. It consists on a series of rappels ending in a pebble beach. The descent begins with a small 12 metre rappel from a tree. The final part involves a 72 metres multi-tiered drop with some small platforms that allow fairly simple intermediate anchors.

ACCESS AND RETURN

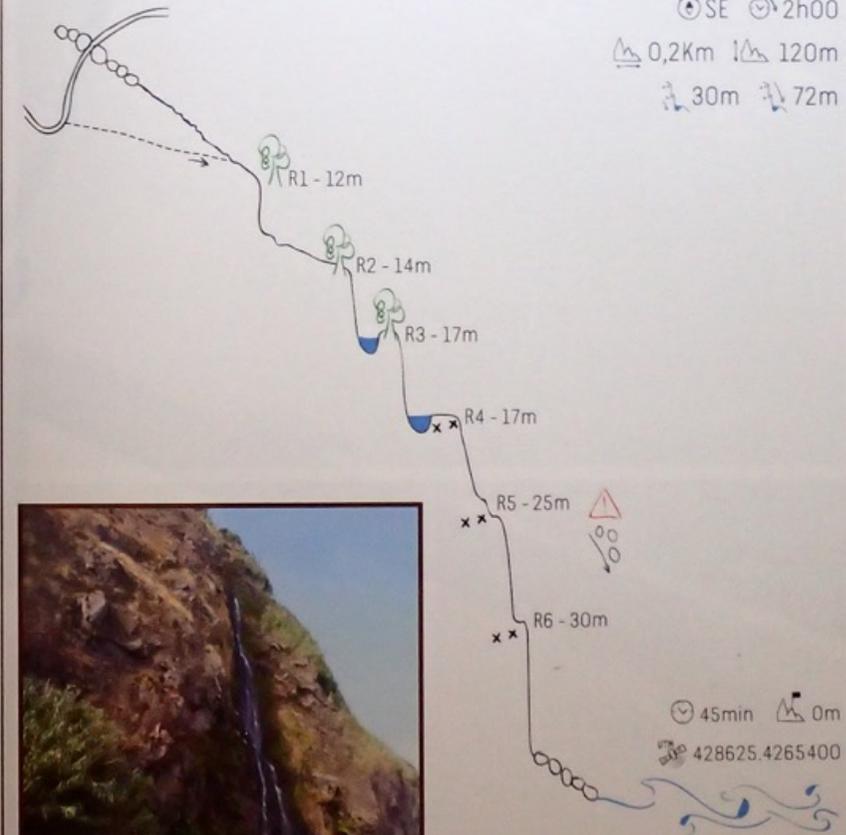
On the road ER 2-2 (from Calheta to Topo), at Km 20,5, turn to Lameiro and continue down to Fajã do Cruzal. In the last sharp turn, continue to the right, crossing Meio route (see the map in São Tomé route). Walk the path on the left leading to the fields over the sea. Descend to the stream, entering at elevation of 120 m, next to the first abseil. The return options are the same as in São Tomé inferior route.



TOPO OF MEIO ROUTE

15 min 120m
 428620.4265580

★★★★★
 v5
 SE 2h00
 0,2Km 120m
 30m 72m



45min 0m
 428625.4265400

NORTHEAST COAST

All routes in this region end in fajãs or pebble beaches, implying either returning by sea with the support of a boat or walking a long way back. Most routes are located in an adventurous and wild environment, having long drops and unique beauty, especially Sanguinhal by its ambiance and extension, with a total difference in level of about 800 metres. The adventure environment is enhanced if weather conditions are rough, quite usually in this coast, since it is wetter and more exposed to winds and fog.

Few decades ago the hills and small coastal plains (fajãs) were inhabited and cultivated, with trails reaching every corner with potential to be used by humans. But this whole north coast, between the Fajã da Caldeira and Topo, was gradually abandoned and consequently the houses became ruins, especially after the 1980 earthquake, and many trails disappeared or are currently covered with thick vegetation. All these difficulties, together with the remoteness and impressive landscape, make the north coast very appealing to today's explorers.

Apart from canyoning a visit not to be missed is the Poça Simão Dias located next to Fajã do Ouidor. The PR15JO trail from the mountain to Caldeira de Santo Cristo is also a must do, since it is certainly the most emblematic site of the island and still relatively protected since there is no car access.

The water of the streams in the north coast is clear and transparent, unlike some routes located on the southern coast.



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

CALDEIRA

Although relatively short route, it can be combined with one of the most beautiful hikes in the island, if access is by the PRISJO pedestrian route descending from the mountain and continuing after the canyoning to Fajã de Santo Cristo and then following the trail to Fajã dos Cubres.

You can stay overnight in Fajã da Caldeira where there is a bar serving food. This is a top location for any visitor in the island especially for surfers. The lagoon is a rich ecosystem where one of the gastronomic delights of São Jorge grows, the clams of Santo Cristo. This canyoning route requires some logistics.



CALDEIRA INFERIOR ESQUERDO / DIREITO

4,0	v3	1h30	1,0 km	145 m	7	15 m	15 m
3,8			1,2 km	165 m	6		
150 m	5 m	1h15	1h40	0419784 4274277	0420060 4274640	Ok	Optional transfer
170 m		1h10	1h40	0419878 4274182			

In the table the first and second rows are for the downstream left and right routes, respectively

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

These two stream branches converge at a wider confluence after which the stream becomes more interesting. Despite having small drops, the stream is quite narrow offering a mixed environment of beauty and some uneasiness due to the instability of some slopes. The left route has higher quality but is more exposed to potential rock falls. Being a narrow stream with a slim stream bed it should be avoided in times of more intense rainfall or unstable weather. The stream has a good flow rate throughout the year.

It is relatively easy to climb part of the other arm, if there is time and curiosity to explore it.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Option 1: Descend PRISJO from the car park at the top of the mountain range, to the bridges over the stream. At the first bridge starts the right route (Caldeira direita), and a few metres ahead the left route (Caldeira esquerda). This option requires 1h00m to 1h15m of descent and 535 m of difference in level.

Alternative 2: start the PRISJO in Fajã dos Cubres, cross the fajã de Caldeira de Santo Cristo and ascend this trail that will cross the stream at the above mentioned bridges. This option requires a walk of 1h30m to 2h00m.

It is recommended to use the first option to access and the second to return, this way having the opportunity to discover magnificent environments, being necessary the support of a transfer car.

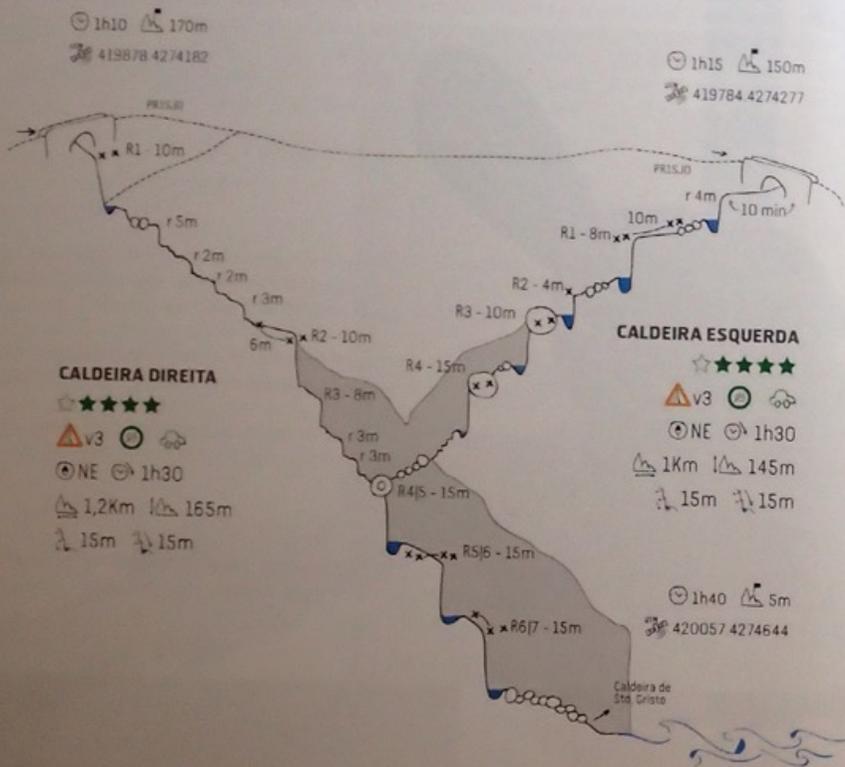
EXIT AND RETURN

Exit left following the pebble beach for about 500 metres until you the trail PRISJO. Turn left to ascend to Serra do Topo back to the start, in steep trail upstream, or right towards Fajã de Santo Cristo and from there Fajã dos Cubres where another car can be parked.



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

TOPO OF CALDEIRA INFERIOR ROUTES (DIREITO AND ESQUERDO)



FAJÃ REDONDA

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠ v4	⌚ 1h30	🏔️ 0,7 km	🏔️ 150 m	👤 6	👤 35 m	👤 35 m
🏔️ 160 m	🏔️ 10 m	👤 1h15	👤 2h30	📞 0422245 4273545	📞 0422250 4273820	🗋️ Ok	🗋️ Difficult logistics

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route is very short but quite interesting, particularly in its final section that narrows significantly. The long walk to access and return may discourage canyoneers but it is worth the effort. It is also an interesting option for those who want to descend Sanguinhal route and stay overnight in its fajã, making in Fajã Redonda route the second day of canyoning before return.

ACCESS AND RETURN

Follow the unsigned and not always well-defined trail linking the mountain range to Fajã do Sanguinhal. Start the descent when the trail crosses the stream, after following it for a while. The return is made by the same trail (see Sanguinhal logistics).

TOPO OF FAJÃ REDONDA ROUTE



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

SANGUINHAL

This watercourse drains the waters of a catchment that begins at an elevation of 941 m in Pico dos Frades, on the mountain range of the Topo volcanic complex. Sanguinhal stream is one of the most special canyoning routes in São Jorge, surrounded by a wild environment that is often wrapped by fog. This linear valley descends regularly to the coast, where it abruptly drops into a series of waterfalls to Fajã do Sanguinhal. This fajã, as Fajã Redonda, is a large detritic platform by the sea east of the Fajã da Caldeira. These two fajãs already had telephone, school and post office, but never electricity or road. From the sixties many of inhabitants emigrated and the fajãs were finally abandoned after the earthquake in 1980. Currently, these places have several houses in ruins and the remains of cultivated fields and are only accessible by boat in good sea conditions, or through an old unsigned trail that links the coastal fajã to the top of the mountain ridge and then down to the paved road from Calheta to Topo.

The stream can be divided into four sections, one of which upstream where the watercourse is little defined and has very low flow, but quite steep in an ecosystem of bogs and shrubs, including the Azores juniper. However, the left arm of the stream is different from the right, having more and larger rappels. In the following section the stream gains a more expressive dimension and some wooded vegetation. From the confluence of the two branches at an elevation of approximately 310 metres, the stream is less steep and the valley widens in the middle of higher vegetation and blocks chaos, until reaching the final section, which is an authentic window to the ocean, where the stream plunges into a set of waterfalls, one with almost 80 metres to the fajã.



Last section of Sanguinhal route

SANGUINHAL ESQUERDA

4,3	v6	7h00	3,1 km	750 m	16	45 m	80 m
750 m	10 m	0h30	3h00	0422285 4272110	0423145 4273390	Ok	Difficult logistics

APPROACH AND ACCESS

The access is made by a trail from Km 10,2 of road ER 2-2, half kilometre before the turn to Loiral. Crossing the gate, climb the trail, initially wide and straight, turning gradually to the left. Almost in its highest section, in a relatively flat segment at an elevation of 835 metres, leave the trail by turning right, rising slightly between bushes and bog to then descend into the valley along the incipient water line.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The initial section runs along the right bank of the small waterline down between bog and bushes, to then enter the stream, progressing using some abseils in bushes. The down climbing and rappels, progressively larger, will be made in sequence as the stream gains size.

After the confluence with the right stream the slope significantly decreases, until a set of seven rappels to overcome the final waterfalls.

EXIT AND RETURN

You can exit the stream to the right before the bridge in ruins or continue to the pebble beach. Then take a trail that runs northwest to Fajã Redonda and climbs along the left branch of the stream that runs through this fajã. The trail then turns left, crosses the stream and continues up the hill to the right branch of Fajã Redonda stream. After climbing a few metres along the streamside the path inflects to the left and then ascends along the ridge between Sanguinhal and Fajã Redonda valleys. Follow the trail until you reach its highest point, at 835 metres, the point where you had left that same trail to start the descent of the stream. From there the trail descends steadily to the paved road (15 minutes).

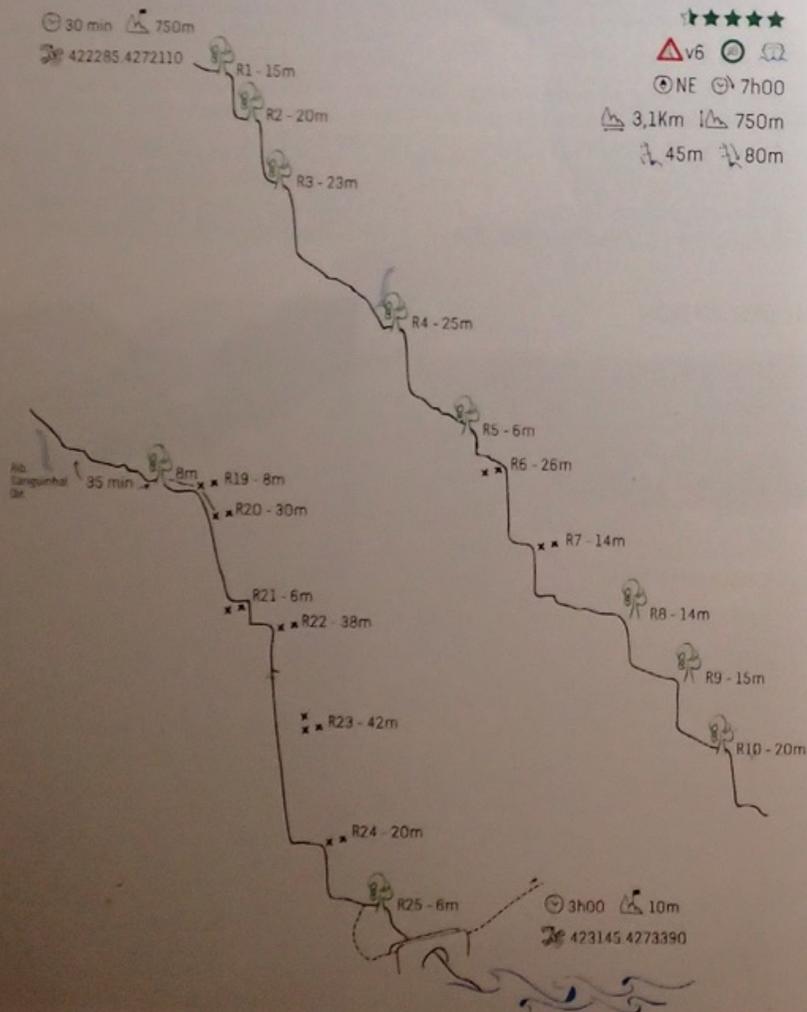


CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

This trail can be difficult to follow in some sections and may be damaged due to landslides, or even covered by vegetation, so it is recommended to download the georeferenced file in desnivel.pt/canyoning/ and to bring a GPS.

There is also the option, with low tides and calm sea conditions, of walking the pebble beach and continue to Fajã da Caldeira (4 km) or return by sea, using a boat to the ports of Fajã do Ouvidor or Topo, being necessary to organise the logistics previously.

TOPO OF SANGUINHAL ESQUERDO ROUTE



SANGUINHAL DIREITA

★ ★ ★ ★ ★	⚠️ v6	⌚ 6h00	📏 3,0 km	🏔️ 710 m	📏 25	📏 45 m	📏 80 m
🏔️	📏	🕒	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶
710 m	10 m	0h40	3h00	0422890 4271860	0423145 4273390	Ok	Difficult logistics

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Similar to the left route, although having more drops. The routes have a common final section. The first drop starts with a small abseil using a large bush at the right bank, to reach the right anchor located near the top of the vertical. Abseil is made down the right bank, bypassing several drops, until you get into the stream, which begins to narrow. Before R17 (40 metres), some ancient terraces can be identified on the left bank. In the past a trail existed linking this site to the trail that follows the crest in the right bank of the valley. After the confluence with the left arm the stream is wider and has a small difference in level, until you reach the final waterfalls.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

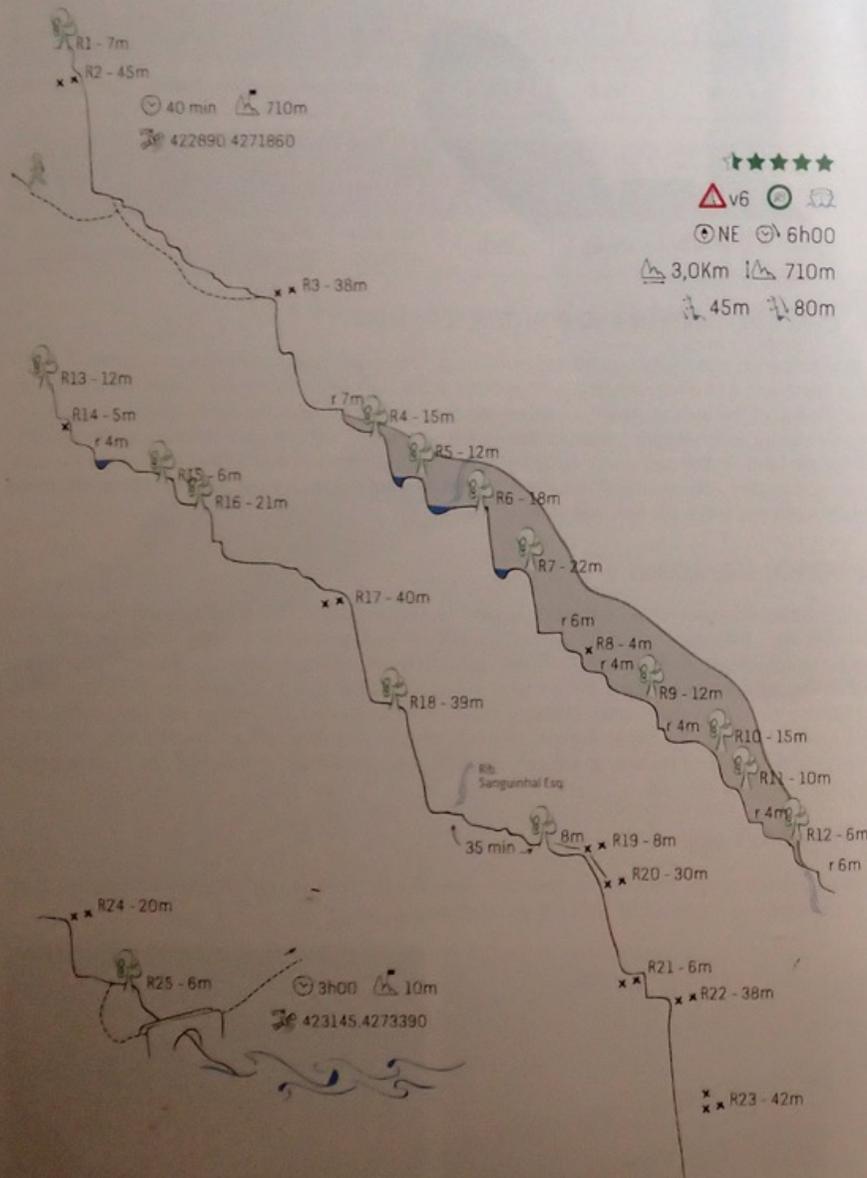
Access by an unpaved road on the left at Km 11.7 of the road ER 2-2, after crossing the road fork to Loiral. Pass the gate and go up the path until you reach a wired fence. Bypass the fence on the right and where several trails cross turn left uphill to reach a flatter platform without shrubs. Take a trail to the right along creeping shrubs, which rises after a flat area to an elevation of 900 metres at the right side of Pico dos Frades. Descend the southern hill over small ridges that characterize the beginning of the stream, bypassing it by the left until the first drop with 45 metres. With fog it can be very difficult to find the way so the use of a GPS is recommended at least with the coordinates of the point of entrance.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit options are the same as the ones recommended for the left route. After reaching the road turn left, and continue for about 1.5 km, until you find the car.



TOPO OF SANGUINHAL DIREITO ROUTE



ENTRE RIBEIRAS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★	▲	⌚	📏	🏔️	👤	👤	👤
4,2	v5	2h30	0,7 km	242 m	5	40 m	51 m
🏔️	🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤
242 m	0 m	1h30	0h40	0424390 4272385	0424620 4272700	Ok	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

The equipped route in this stream starts just above the trail that used to connect Entre Ribeiras and Sanguinhal fajãs, but that was partially destroyed during the earthquake in 1980 and has been abandoned since. Like in all equipped canyoning routes to the east of Fajã Redonda, this route location is in an adventurous environment, especially beautiful by the direct waterfalls to the pebble beach and sea. This stream's name is not clear, being also referenced as Penedo or Salgada stream.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Access by car is made from the road in the mountain range, that leaves Lameiro village (Topo), rising to the left along pastures. At its highest elevation point, 590 metres, on a 90 degree left turn, follow by an unpaved road and the car can be parked just before the road becoming inaccessible. Continue on foot by the unpaved road, which later turns into a trail, passing several streams, some also equipped canyoning routes (Salto Verde and Castelhanos). The final part of this trail, after the Fajã de Entre Ribeiras, may be partially covered by vegetation being progression difficult. Depending on the vegetation and difficulty to access the stream, enter the canyoning where the trail crosses the stream near a bridge, or further upstream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The first part of the route follows some ancient terraced pastures on a wooded bank. Later the stream has a narrow section, widening again after a sharp left turn, where there is a possible escape by the right bank. After this point there is a sequence of rappels, above the sea, to the pebble beach.

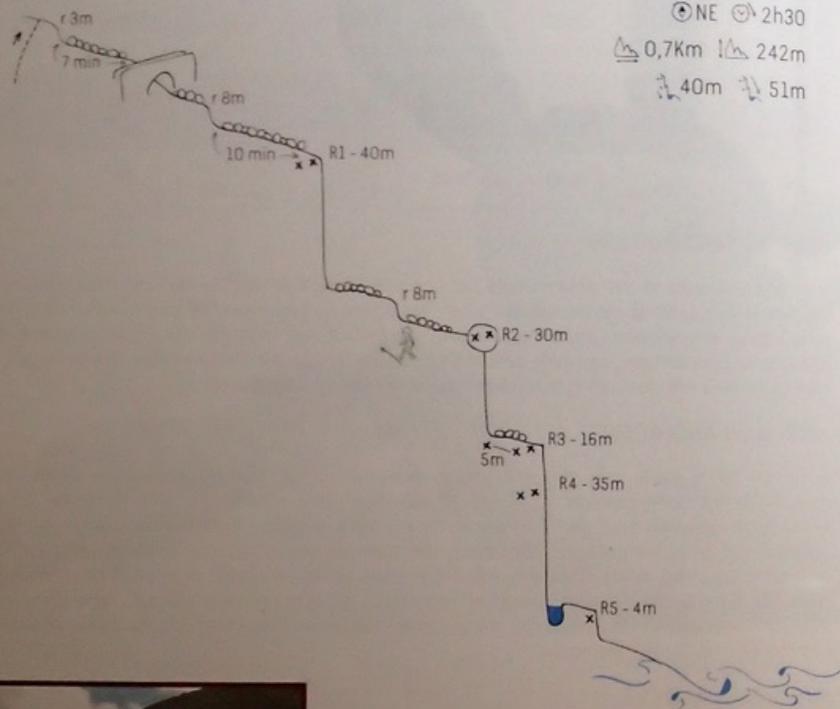
EXIT AND RETURN

The return of this route is made by sea, using a boat for the transport to the Fajã do Ouidor or Topo ports. Although a more difficult and costly logistics, this option allows discovering and admiring the north coast from the sea. It is not possible to dock the boat in the pebble beach, so it is necessary to cross the wave breaking zone and swim to the boat, which implies a relatively calm sea and some experience in these crossings. Another possibility, quite hard, is to walk northeast along the pebble beach, do a few sea crossings to Fajã do Sanguinhal and from there climb the trail, or walk southeast to Fajã da Ribeira Funda and then climb by a difficult path until the Ribeira Funda trail and from there up to the paved road and the car. Both options are very long requiring difficult sections with several sea passages (in particular a spur between the exit of Castelhanos and Salto Verde routes).

CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

TOPO OF ENTRE RIBEIRAS ROUTE

⌚ 1h30 🏔️ 242m
📞 424390 4272385



★★★★★
 ⚠️ v5 ⌚ 2h30
 🏔️ 0,7Km 🏔️ 242m
 📏 40m 📏 51m

⌚ 40 min 🏔️ 0m
 📞 424620 4272700



CASTELHANOS

★★★★★ 3,9	⚠️ v5	⌚ 3h00	🏔️ 1,5 km	🏔️ 295 m	👤 12	👤 45 m	👤 3,9 m
🏔️ 295 m	🏔️ 0 m	👤 0h50	👤 0h40	📞 0425010 4271703	📞 0425140 4272420	👤 Semi-equipped	🚣 Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is quite interesting, especially its final section with two waterfalls plunging into the pebble beach, making an almost 80 metres drop.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Same access as the Entre Ribeiras route but the entrance is in the valley just after Salto Verde valley. There are two possible entrances to the stream, one as soon as the trail approaches the stream, at 280 metres of elevation, and another after rappel R3, at 225 metres, where the trail crosses the stream.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route begins in an open valley that progressively narrows. The first part has a sequence of drops which can be down climbed or abseiled, the firsts using trees and the following using bolts.

Already with a broad view over the sea, there is a large platform overlooking the pebble beach. An abseil of 22 metres allows reaching the final drop. This waterfall is a multi-tiered drop of 57 metres with an intermediate anchor after the first 42 metres.

EXIT AND RETURN

See information about Entre Ribeiras route return.

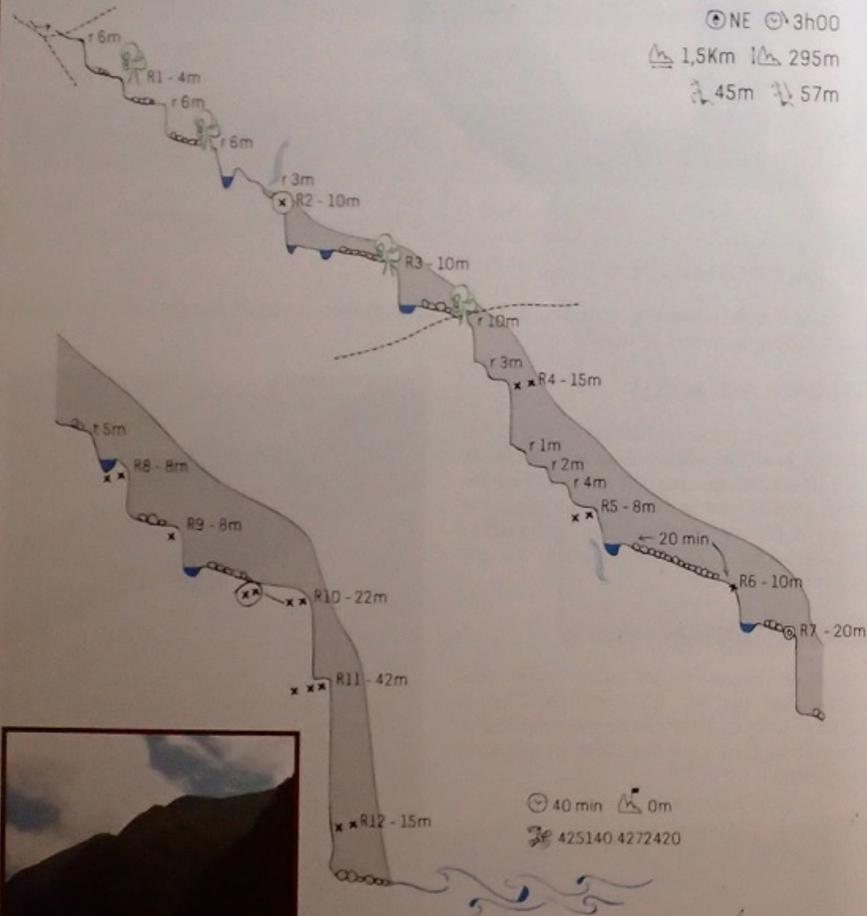


CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

TOPO OF CASTELHANOS ROUTE

⌚ 50 min ⚓ 295m
📍 425010.4271703

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
⚠ v5 Ⓞ Ⓜ Ⓜ
⌚ NE ⌚ 3h00
📏 1,5Km ⚓ 295m
📏 45m 📏 57m



⌚ 40 min ⚓ 0m
📍 425140.4272420

SALTO VERDE / FACHOS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	⚠ v5	⌚ 3h00	📏 1,1 km	⚓ 360 m	👤 17	👤 41 m	👤 79 m
📏 360 m	0 m	0h40	0h40	0425500 4271435	0425805 4272000	Semi-equipped	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

From the three streams with common accesses and returns, this is the one with smaller catchment, so in the driest seasons flows can be low.

Since the original name of the stream is now known, the option was to name the route as Salto Verde or Fachos.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

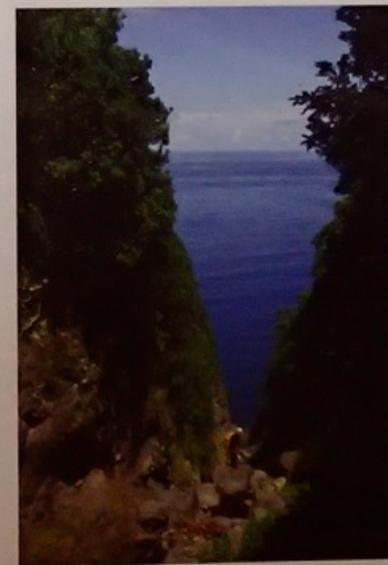
Same access as to Entre Ribeiras route but the canyoning starts in the first valley that clearly cuts the northern slope, the stream immediately before the Castelhanos route. Start the canyoning where the trail crosses the stream, with a 12 metre abseil from a tree.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Following a narrow walled valley, the route is linear and abrupt, allowing ocean views along the way. Half way through, a large multi-tiered drop appears unexpected, with almost 80 metres, which is descended using an intermediate anchor 39 metres below. The final part has less steep than the two previously described streams.

EXIT AND RETURN

See the return information of Entre Ribeiras route. Since this stream is closer to Fajã da Ribeira Funda, should be easier to walk or swim along the rocky coast, especially if the sea is calm and preferably with low tide, for about 2 km southeast until you reach the mouth of a small stream that crosses the Fajã da Ribeira Funda (not to be confused with the exit of the Funda canyoning route which is located 600 metres ahead) Before the stream, climb the coast to find a trail possibly hidden by vegetation, to reach the ruins of some houses



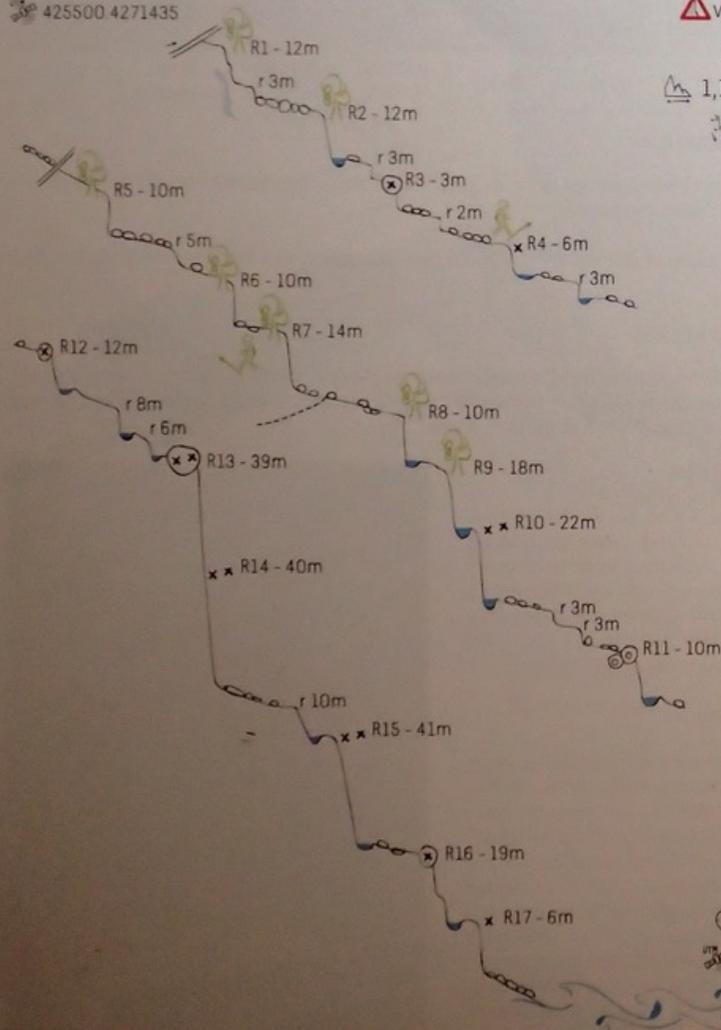
CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

Continue crossing the watercourse and walking uphill until finding the trail of the Funda canyoning route. When at the trails junction, go to the right and continue walking up to the paved road. Follow the road to the right for about 500 m and, at the 90 degree road bend turn to the road on the right, which is the road where the car was parked to start the access to the canyoning.

TOPO OF SALTO VERDE / FACHOS ROUTE

⌚ 40 min 🏔️ 360m

📍 425500 4271435



★★★★★
 ⚠️ v5 🚗 🚶
 ⌚ NE ⌚ 3h30
 🏔️ 1,1Km 🏔️ 360m
 📏 41m 📏 79m

⌚ 40 min 🏔️ 0m
 📍 425805 4272000

FUNDA

The north coast Funda stream has two canyoning routes, the Funda superior upstream and the Funda inferior downstream.

The first has simple logistics but is far less interesting than the second with exit by the sea.

★★★★★	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	🚶	🚶	🚶
2,6	v4	2h00	1,0 km	320 m	14	35 m	35 m
3,8	v5	3h00	0,5 km	210 m	11	40 m	95 m
🏔️	🏔️	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶
530 m	210 m	0h10	0h50	0427725 4269690	0427895 4270370	Ok	-
210 m	0 m	0h40	1h00	0427895 4270370	0427965 4270680	Ok	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION

In summer this stream is often dry, being much more interesting with a good flow. The two sections are quite different, the upstream route along a wooded valley with a sequence of several drops to down climb, while the downstream route has beautiful final rappels until the sea, on a large narrow drop with good platforms.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Access by car is by the road to the mountain range, from road ER 2-2 Km 20.1 at Lameiro village not far from Topo, rising to the left along the pastures. At its highest elevation point, 590 metres, after a 90 degree right turn, continue by the road for another 600 m and park the car. Follow a trail that starts on the right bank of the stream, but shortly after crosses it at an elevation of about 530 m. For the upstream route start the canyoning here. For the downstream, continue by the trail down on the left bank of the valley until it crosses the stream again, at an elevation of about 210 m.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The first part of the canyoning unfolds in a wooded environment, in a valley with a steady slope and several small waterfalls, until at the stream plunges in a coastal cliff into the ocean on a set of more imposing and wide waterfalls.

EXIT AND RETURN

The last rappel ends on a small rocky area by the sea, being necessary the support of a boat for the transport, and is feasible only when the sea is relatively calm. The nearest port is in Topo village. At the rocky spur northeast of the exit, a rope was there for sea access, which was used by fishermen, but currently is not

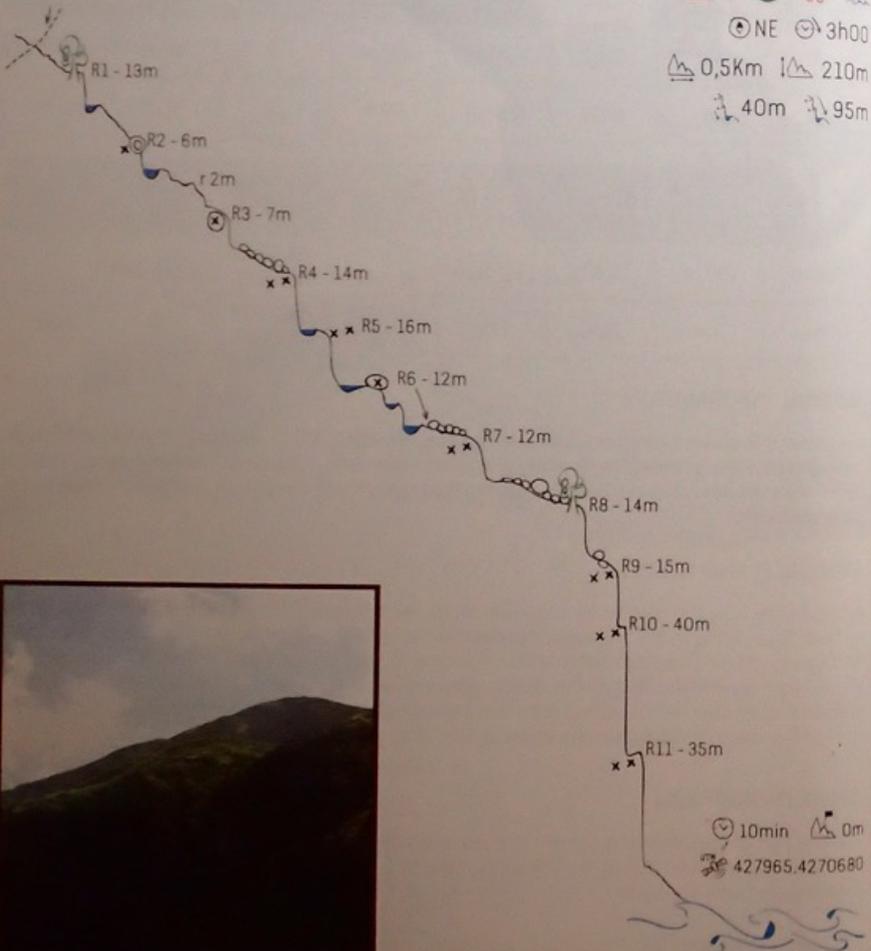
CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

possible to climb. If new ropes are eventually installed, it may be possible to climb this edge to then find a trail that continues until the one used for access the canyoning.
An alternative is to follow the coast to northwest and try to find the path at Fajã da Ribeira Funda.

TOPO OF FUNDA INFERIOR ROUTE

⌚ 40 min 🏔️ 210m

📍 427895, 4270357



☆☆☆☆☆

⚠️ v5 🕒 3h00

🏔️ 0,5Km 🏔️ 210m

📏 40m 📏 95m

⌚ 10min 🏔️ 0m

📍 427965, 4270680

NORTH COAST

This region, from Fajã do Ouvidor to Ponta Furada, has numerous small streams that end in successive and long waterfalls in the steep coast. The interest of these streams is limited since the catchments are small and the streams are often dry. Until August 2014 there was only one equipped route in this region, Fonte route, near Ponta Furada.

FONTE

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	📏	📏	📏
4,2	v5	5h00	1,7 km	520 m	19	47 m	130 m
🏔️	📏	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🕒	⚠️
520 m	0 m	0h05	0h25	0403107 4282628	0403333 4283192	Ok	Boat

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This very short stream in the northern slope begins in a small but rugged wooded valley, finishing with a 130 metres drop with good intermediate platforms. The route ends in a pebble beach. The flow rate is usually low and in some drier periods may even be dry.



CANYONING IN SÃO JORGE

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Shortly after the Outeiro da Cruz, at road ER 1-2, Km 44.2, descend by the fields on the left bank of the stream almost until the beginning of the vertical slope and enter the stream with a small abseil.



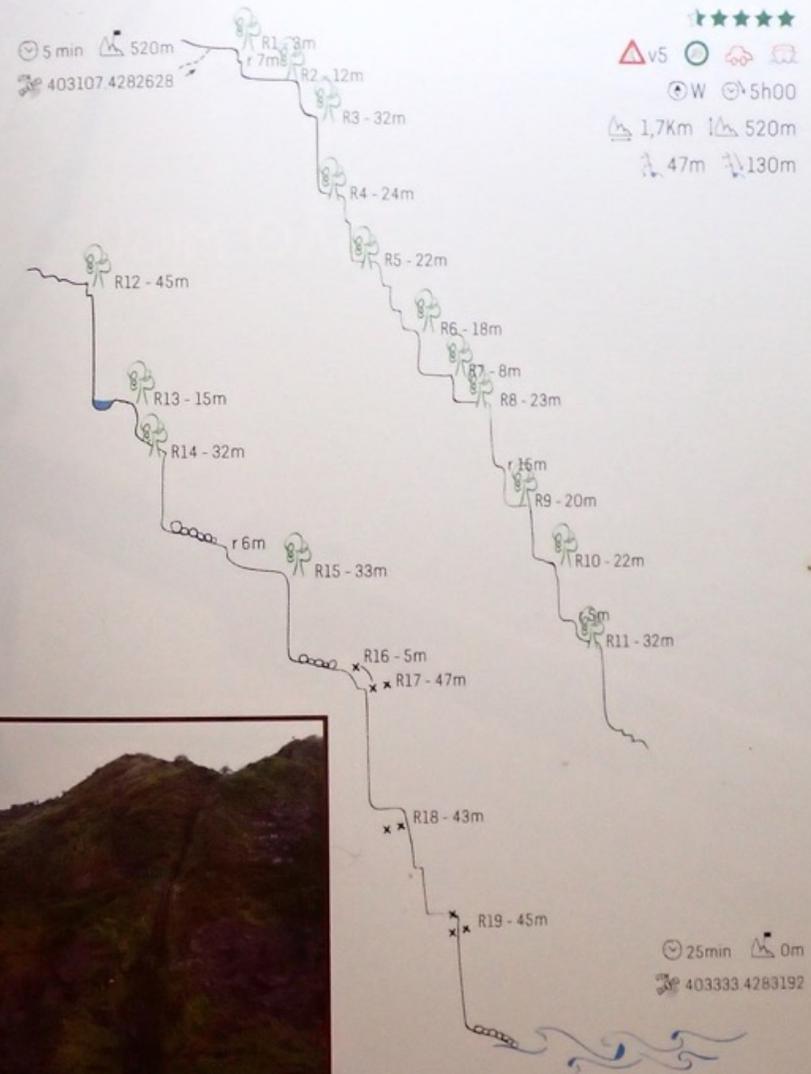
EXIT AND RETURN

Once on the pebble beach, just walk along the narrow stony coast to the left, towards Pedra Furada. About 50 metres before its end, there is a trail that climbs the hill until a path that goes from the Ponta Furada spur to the road along the ridge.

Another option is to arrange a boat transfer, arranging the logistics with a service provider from the small port in Ouvidor, if the sea is relatively calm, which is not common in this north coast.



TOPO OF FONTE ROUTE





CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

The Island of São Miguel is the largest of the archipelago, with a surface of about 745 Km², 65 km of length and 8 to 15 km wide.

Together with Santa Maria Island, it constitutes the Azorean eastern group. São Miguel is also known as the green island, and its highest elevation is at Pico da Vara, with 1103 metres.

Most of the population in the Azores inhabits in São Miguel, with more than half of the archipelago's total population. It is divided into six municipalities: Ponta Delgada, Lagoa, Vila Franca do Campo, Ribeira Grande, Nordeste and Povoação.

Among the various existing religious festivities in São Miguel the most well known are: the secular festivities of Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres that last for three days around the fifth Sunday after Easter Sunday; the Espírito Santo festivities represent an Azorean religious tradition, which is celebrated on all the islands, taking place around the "impérios" from May to September; and the pilgrimage of "Romeiros" at the time of Lent, that are groups of men who walk the island on foot, praying and visiting churches and chapels dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Regarding the local cuisine, local specialities include the cozido (typical steamed meat dish) with bolo lêvedo (cake) from Furnas, and the

queijadas (sweets) from Vila Franca do Campo, among other products from the island such as tea, pineapple or passion fruit.

The volcanic lakes of this island are the largest of the Azores, including Verde and Azul lakes in Sete Cidades, Fogo Lake and Furnas Lake. Also noteworthy are the lakes of Serra Devassa, Empadadas and Canário, as well as the Congro and São Brás lakes, in the central region of the island.

The natural hot pools, particularly Poça da Dona Beija and Terra Nostra Park on Furnas should not be missed. At Ponta da Ferraria is also possible to swim in the warm seawater heated by local thermal water spring of volcanic origin.

The most interesting canyoning routes in São Miguel are located in Fogo's volcanic massif which includes Praia and Grande routes, both with permanent flow even in summer. In addition to these streams, also the Caldeirões route is also worth a special reference, especially its upstream route, a true land of adventure, while the downstream route is more for a relaxed and leisure descent, being highly used for local tourism recreation.

In São Miguel 18 canyoning routes are already explored, in general routes not too vertical, predominantly with small to medium size drops.

SÃO MIGUEL



SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES IN SÃO MIGUEL ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Praia superior Pico da Vela	LFS	4	V4	7h00	460	9	40	40	1h30	0h00
Praia superior Nascentes	LFS	3	V3	4h00	300	5	15	15	1h15	0h00
Três Voltas superior	LFS	3,7	V4	4h00	410	6	35	70	0h00	1h30
Três Voltas inferior	LFS	1	V3	4h00	490	3	30	30	0h00	0h00
Barreiras superior	LFS	1	V3	2h00	120	2	15	15	0h45	0h15
Grande Sup. / Lombadas	LFN	3,7	V4	5h00	250	6	45	45	0h00	0h10
Grande Inf. / Salto Cabrito	LFN	3,2	V3	3h00	115	5	15	15	0h05	0h20
Lime inferior / Moinhos	LFN	2	V3	3h00	170	7	20	20	0h00	0h10
Cnelhas / Salto Farinha	NE	3	V4	4h00	315	7	40	40	0h30	0h05
Caldeirões superior	NE	3,5	V3	5h00	350	17	25	25	0h05	0h10
Caldeirões inferior	NE	3	V2	3h00	125	6	10	10	0h00	0h05
Cachaço	NE	2,5	V3	3h00	160	8	20	20	0h00	0h05
Lanho	NE	2,5	V3	4h00	260	10	20	20	0h00	0h05
Tosquiada inferior	E	1,5	V3	2h00	200	3	20	20	0h00	0h30
Faial da Terra superior	SE	2	V3	3h30	300	5	15	15	0h00	0h00
Faial da Terra inferior	SE	1,5	V3	2h30	145	3	12	12	0h00	0h30
Purgar	SE	1,5	V3	1h30	300	1	30	30	0h00	0h00
Lagos	SE	1,5	V3	1h30	170	1	30	30	0h00	0h00

Regions: **LFS** - South of Lagoa do Fogo; **LFN** - North of Lagoa do Fogo; **NE** - Northeast; **E** - East; **SE** - Southeast.

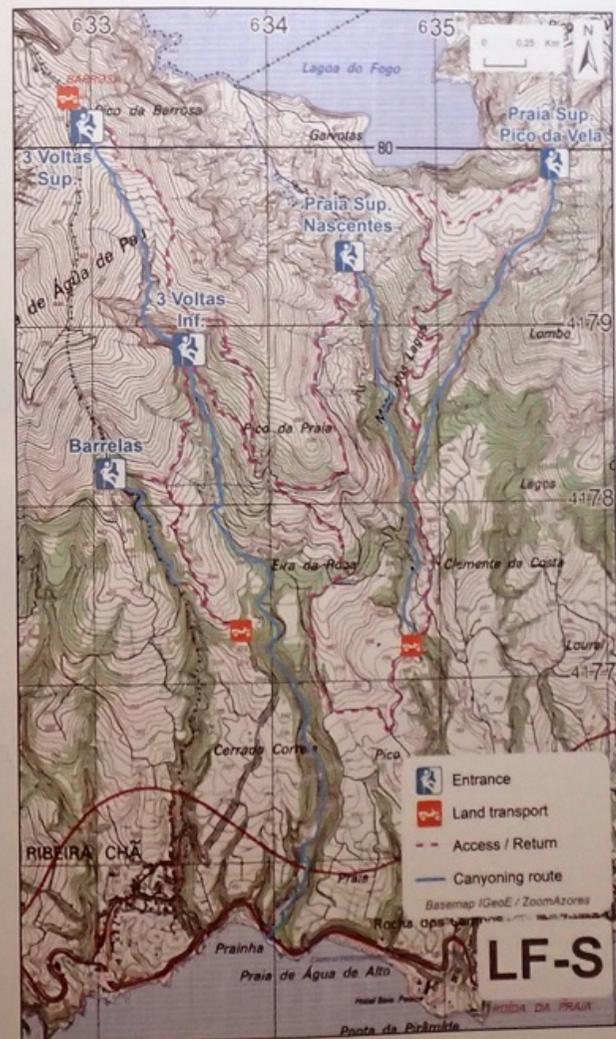
Apart from these streams some others have been explored to date, but are not included since its quality is lower, as Grota do Inferno in Sete Cidades and Água de Alto routes.

GENERAL MAP OF SÃO MIGUEL CANYONING ROUTES



LAGOA DO FOGO – SOUTH

Some of the most interesting routes of the island are in this region, specially the Praia Superior – Pico da Vela route and also the upstream route of Três Voltas. In both access ways to these routes it is possible to enjoy different perspectives of the beautiful Lagoa do Fogo.





PRAIA SUPERIOR - PICO DA VELA

4	v4	7h	4.3 km	460 m	9	40 m	40 m
660 m	200 m	1h30	0 min	0635716 4179907	0634832 4177193	Semi-equipped	-

DESCRIÇÃO GERAL

The approach walk is mandatory, once it passes on a private propriety where the passage of vehicles is not allowed. The uphill walk has a difference in level roughly similar to the canyoning route, but in the final section of this walk perspectives of Lagoa do Fogo and later the beauty of the surrounding stream are really worthwhile this effort. To the author's knowledge, this was the first canyoning route to be explored in the Azores. The route has a sequence of drops, with low flow in the beginning, increasing to a significant flow after R7. The only possible escape point is located in the final part of the canyoning before its last rappel (R9), upstream of the stone bridge on the left bank.

APROXIMAÇÃO E ACESSO

From the beach of Água de Alto follow east (Vila Franca do Campo direction) and turn left next to a house before the bridge over Praia stream. Ignore the first three paths to the left until the stream, where its flow is diverted to a small channel passing under the road and following to a water reservoir. Start the approach continuing the same road and turning left to a dirt trail. Pass the iron gate and the stone bridge ascending the slope of Lagoa do Fogo (elevation 675 m). Abandon the main dirt road, and continue to the right by a trail that keeps following a line of trees (Japanese cedars) left of the ridge. At the end of this line of trees continue by the trail on the east crest of Lagoa do Fogo, to a small valley where you should enter the stream to the right.

DESCIDA

The route starts with a walk along the stream bed with small drops until a platform where is the first rappel (R1), just before a beautiful amphitheatre. After this point a sequence of four drops with short intermediate walking sections ends in another sequence with two drops after a longer walk. Soon after the stone bridge is the last rappel, where the stream joins with its confluence (Nascentes stream), and the last section is without significant drops.

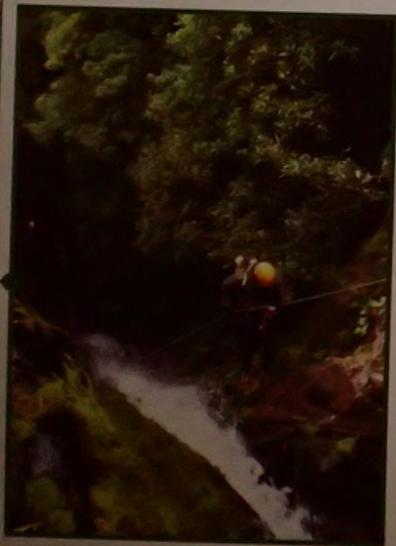
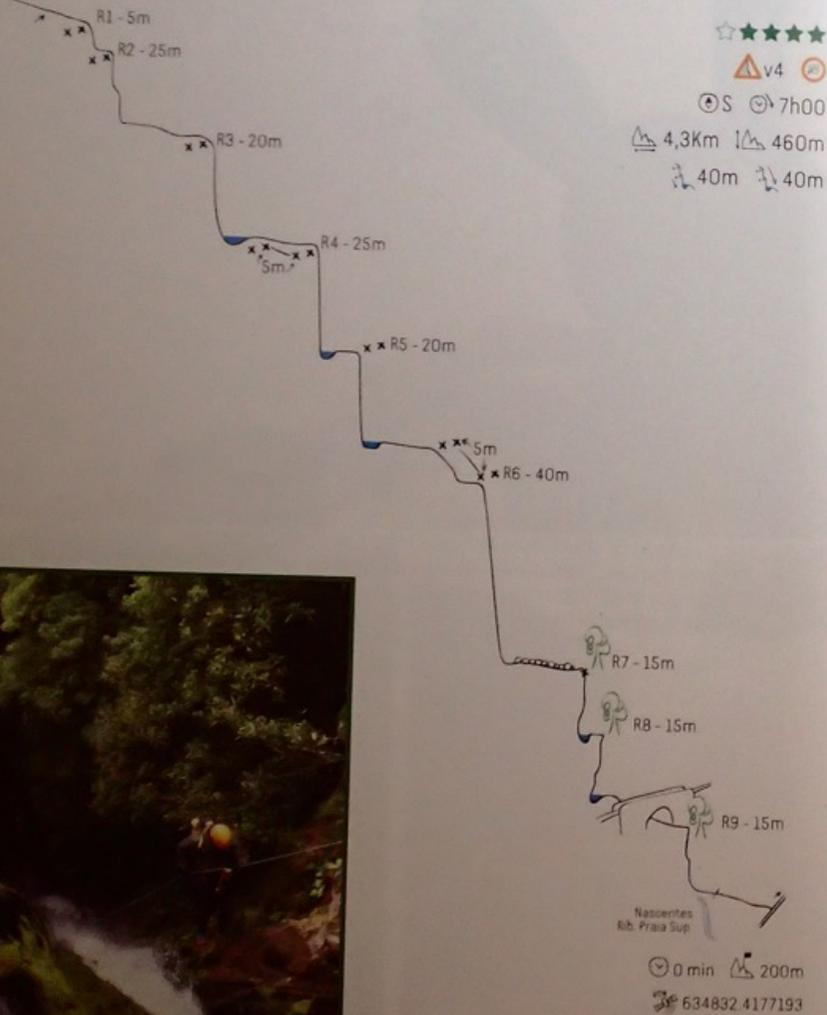
SAÍDA E REGRESSO

The exit is through the left bank next to the road.



TOPO OF PRAIA SUPERIOR - PICO DA VELA ROUTE

🕒 1h30 🏔️ 660m
📞 635716 4179907



PRAIA SUPERIOR - NASCENTES

★★★★★ ★★★★★	⚠️	🕒	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3	v3	4h	3 km	300 m	5	15 m	15 m
🏔️	🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	⚠️
500 m	200 m	1h15 min	0 min	0634480 4179380	0634832 4177193	Semi-equipped	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This watercourse has an important contribution of underground water flowing from Lagoa do Fogo. However, the flow in the stream is low, because the water is abstracted to a small channel at the dam reservoir upstream. The approach, by the pedestrian route to Lagoa do Fogo, follows the small channel, in a very pleasant journey along with the initial section of the stream.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

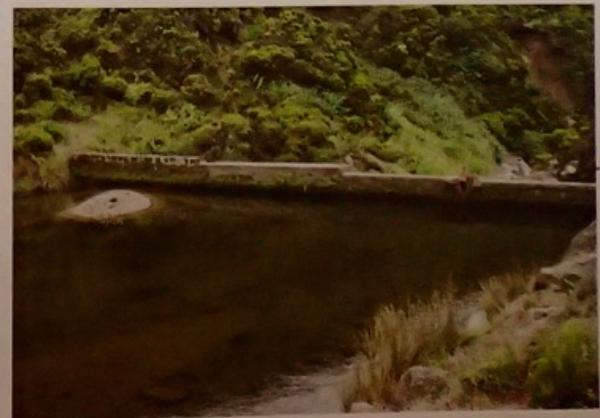
From the beach of Água de Alto follow east, in the direction of Vila Franca do Campo, and turn left next to a house before the bridge over Praia stream. Ignore the first three paths to the left until the stream, where the stream is diverted to a small channel passing under the road and following to a water reservoir. Start the approach following the road in the opposite direction, turning right to a dirt road and follow the marks of the pedestrian route to Lagoa do Fogo. At the end of the small channel, when seeing the reservoir (see picture), enter the stream to the right.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route is not very interesting due to the last part, after R5, where the descent becomes just a scramble by the stream bed with down climbing several drops. Nevertheless, the beginning of the stream until R3 has an exotic environment.

EXIT AND RETURN

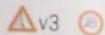
The exit is by the left bank, next to the road.



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

TOPO OF PRAIA SUPERIOR – NASCENTES ROUTE

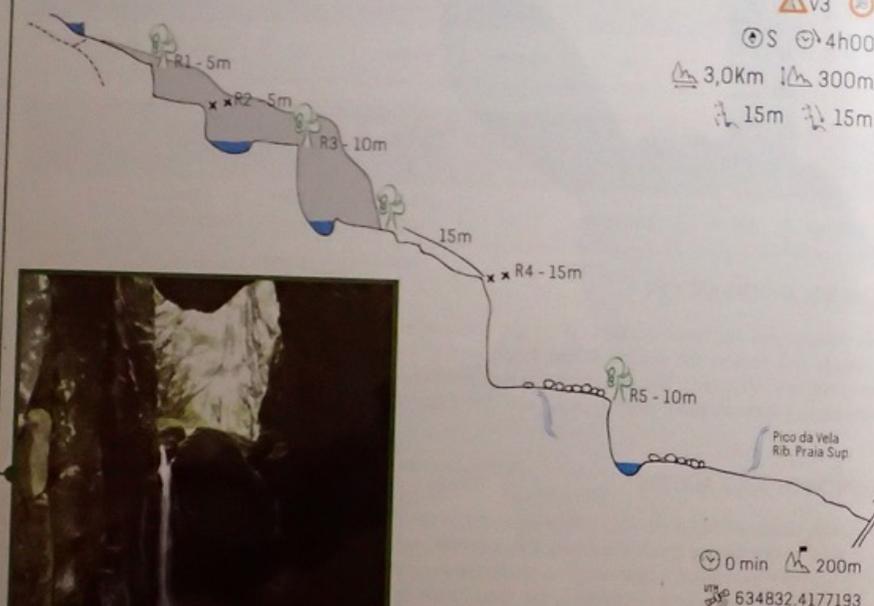
🕒 1h15 🏔️ 500m
📞 634480.4179380



🕒 4h00

🏔️ 3,0Km 🏔️ 300m

📏 15m 📏 15m



🕒 0 min 🏔️ 200m
📞 634832.4177193

176

TRÊS VOLTAS SUPERIOR

★★★★★	⚠️	🕒	🏔️	📏	👤	👤	👤
3,7	V4	4h	2,2 km	410 m	6	35 m	70 m
🏔️	🏔️	👤	👤	👤	👤	🕒	⚠️
900 m	490 m	0 m	1h30	0632983 4180120	0633548 4178871	Ok	-

DESCRIÇÃO GERAL

The upstream section of this stream is a recommended route, especially for its amphitheatre in R2, where the gorge with its surroundings becomes a true stream. But the most interesting part of this route is the last drop with three rappels (R4, R5 and R6), separated by well-defined platforms.

APROXIMAÇÃO E ACESSO

Ascend to Pico da Barrosa, passing the antennas until reaching a point where the paved road ends, at an elevation of 930 m. Follow the beginning of the valley and enter the route (gorge) that is flanked by Japanese cedar trees.

DESCIDA

The route begins with down climbing many drops until arriving to R1 and R2. There is a possible escape by a trail on the right bank shortly after, at an elevation of 790 m. After, there go down the stream bank passing small drops, interrupted only by R3 until the final drop, with three rappels, is reached. At the top of the R4 (elevation 625 m), there is a trail on the left bank of the stream that goes downstream to the bridge. On this trail there is an underground clay conduit to transport water from the stream to the house next to the bridge.

SAÍDA E REGRESSO

Leave the route upstream of the bridge (water channel) by the left bank and follow the trail to Pico da Barrosa. In the option of having a transfer to the beginning, follow the trail to the right on the bridge.

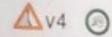


177

CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

TOPO OF TRÊS VOLTAS SUPERIOR ROUTE

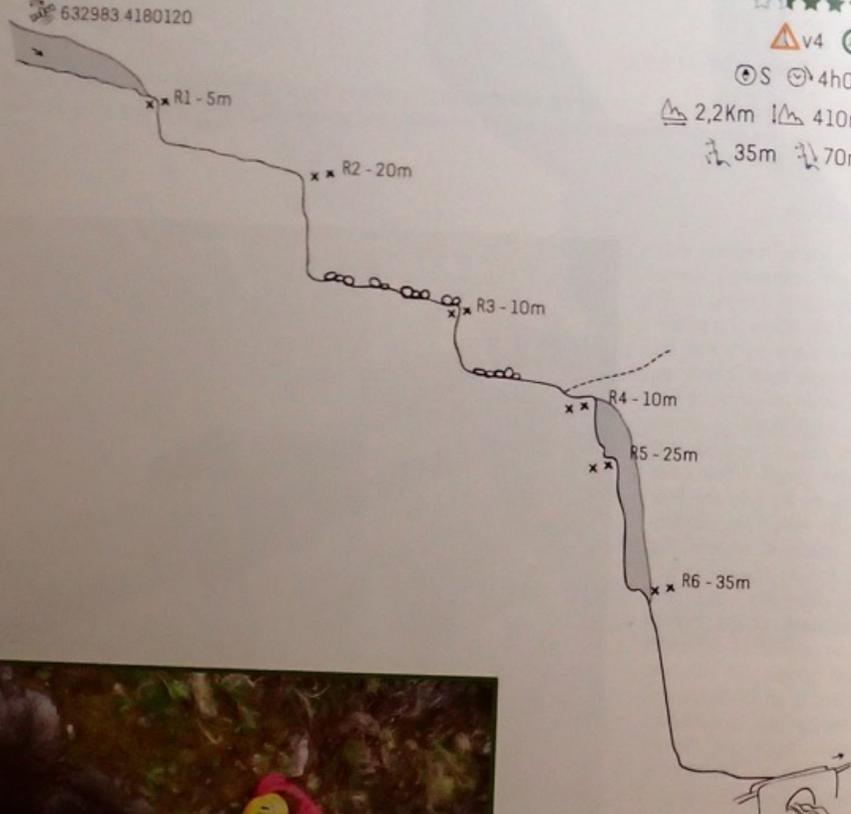
☀ 0 min 🏔 900m
📞 632983 4180120



⊙ S ☀ 4h00

🏔 2,2Km 🏔 410m

📏 35m 📏 70m



☀ 1h30 🏔 490m

📞 633548 4178871

LAGOA DO FOGO – NORTH

The most interesting route in this region is in the Grande stream, one of the largest streams in the island, both by its length and the significant permanent water flow. The upstream route is more interesting than the downstream route, mainly due to the well-known Lombadas waterfall with 45 metres. The lower route it is also quite interesting in its final section, because of the Salto do Cabrito, a well-known touristic point of interest.



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

GRANDE SUPERIOR - LOMBADAS

3,7	v4	5h	4 km	250 m	6	45 m	45 m
560 m	310 m	0 m	10 min	0635600 4182122	0633724 4183547	Ok	Transfer

GENERAL INFORMATION

This canyoning route highpoints are both for the magnificent highest drop (R3), which may be viewed from the access road, and the volcanic phenomena of hot water sources along a stretch of the stream which gives a yellowish tinge to the water flowing. After this drop, the stream has long walks interspersed by its latest drops. There are no escapes in this route.



APPROACH AND ACCESS

From Grande stream calderas follow the main road towards Monte Escuro. At the first intersection with a dirt road at your right at an elevation of 300 m, park the car. Continue along the main road and turn right at the junction to Lombadas (old thermal water works), continuing until you find the bridge over the stream where the road ends.

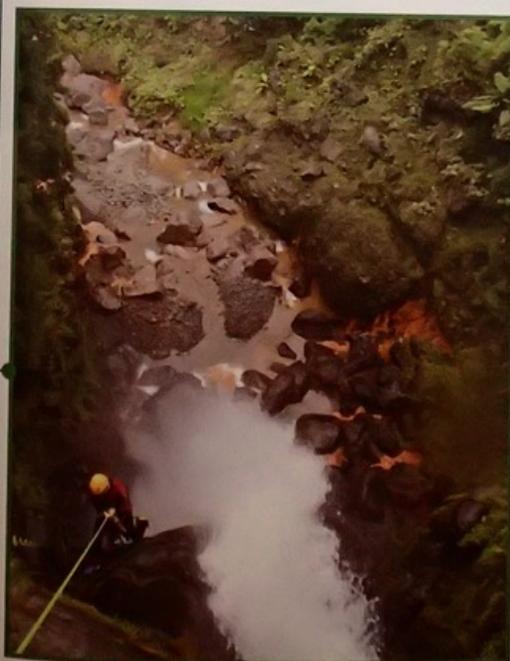
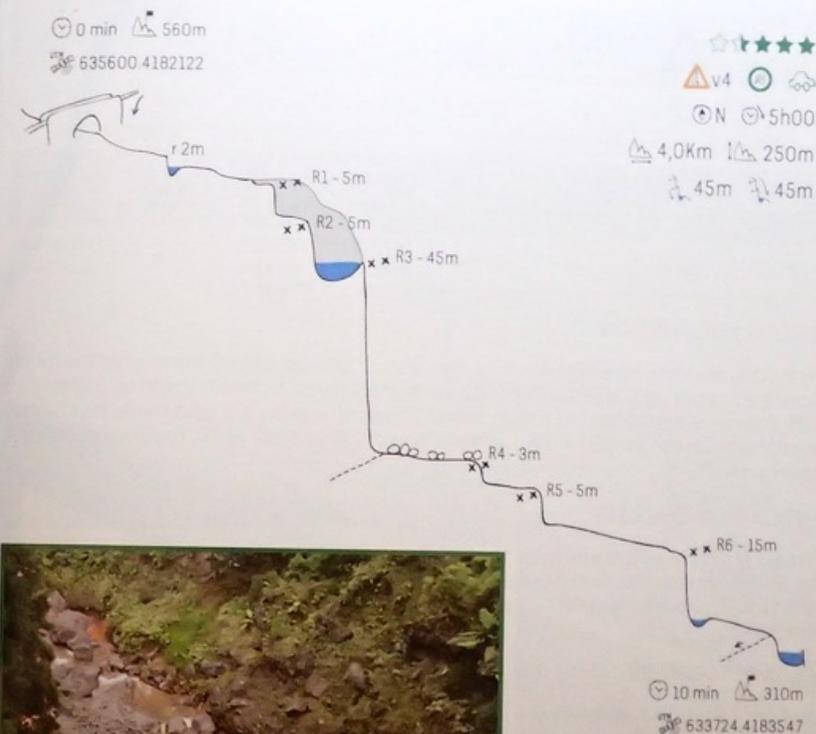
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

From the beginning of the route you will notice that the stream flow has, even in the summer season, a significant flow. After a series of turns the route is narrower and there are two small drops followed by the route highest vertical (R3). After this long drop, countless sources of volcanic degassing and thermal waters are found along the route. After the third rappel, following a small tributary on the right bank, there is a possible escape point that goes to Lombadas. Until the end of the route three more rappels and some small drops are found on the route.

EXIT AND RETURN

Leave the stream by a trail on the right bank, upstream of the reservoir, to find the paved road in the end of the small channel. It is necessary to organise the transfer.

TOPO OF GRANDE SUPERIOR – LOMBADAS ROUTE



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

GRANDE INFERIOR - SALTO DO CABRITO

3,2	v3	3h	1,2 km	115 m	5	15 m	15 m
275 m	160 m	5 m	20 min	0633303 4183962	0632520 4184281	Ok	Entrapment risk at R4/R5

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is especially interesting due to its final section, Salto do Cabrito shortly after the former hydroelectric power plant of Fajã do Redondo. Upstream of the route there is a reservoir, where part of the stream water is deviated to a small channel. For safety reasons, it is advisable to be informed about possible discharges (EEG / EDA - contacts: phone: 296 202 000, email: eeg@eda.pt, internet: www.eeg.eda.pt).

APPROACH AND ACCESS

From the Grande stream calderas follow the main road towards Monte Escuro, until its first intersection with an unpaved road to the right at an elevation of 300 m. Follow the trail, perpendicular to the water conduit, until a bridge at about 285 m of elevation. Enter the route upstream of the bridge on the left bank.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The route starts with a short walk until R1 immediately followed by R2. You can also leave the stream after R3, near the old hydroelectric power plant at an elevation of 180 m. Along this route it is common to find sand in the stream bed. With strong water flows, be aware of the entrapment risk at the end of R4, on the right bank.

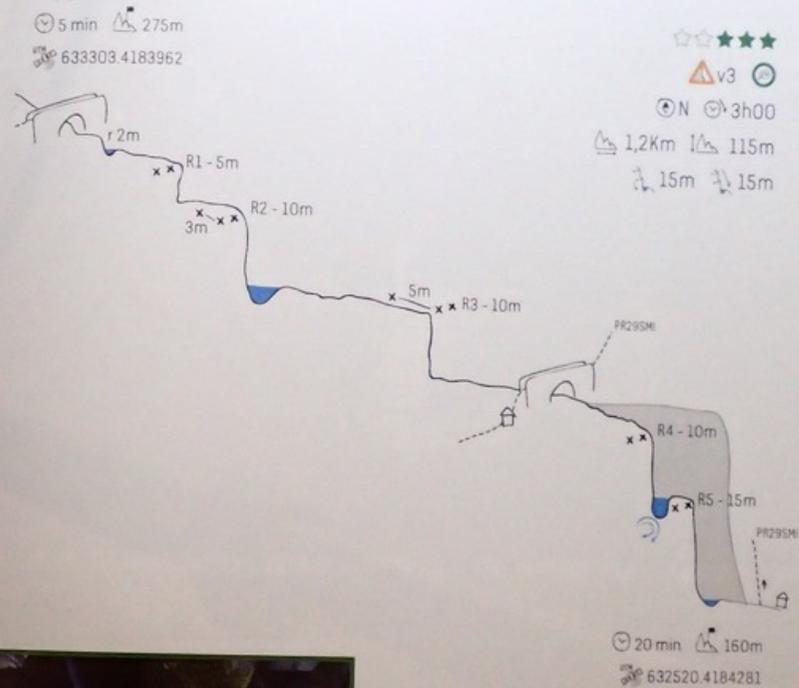
EXIT AND RETURN

Exit by the left stream bank shortly after R5, by the new hydroelectric power plant, passing the iron staircase. Walk to the old hydroelectric power plant, crossing the bridge over the stream. Walk uphill to the gate at an elevation of 260 m and turn right in the unpaved road to the junction with the paved road, close to the water pipe.

As an alternative to this option, you may park a vehicle for the transfer at the end of the route. To do this, follow the north access to Lagoa do Fogo, then turn-left to an unpaved road after a house and restaurant, following by the left in the next two junctions.

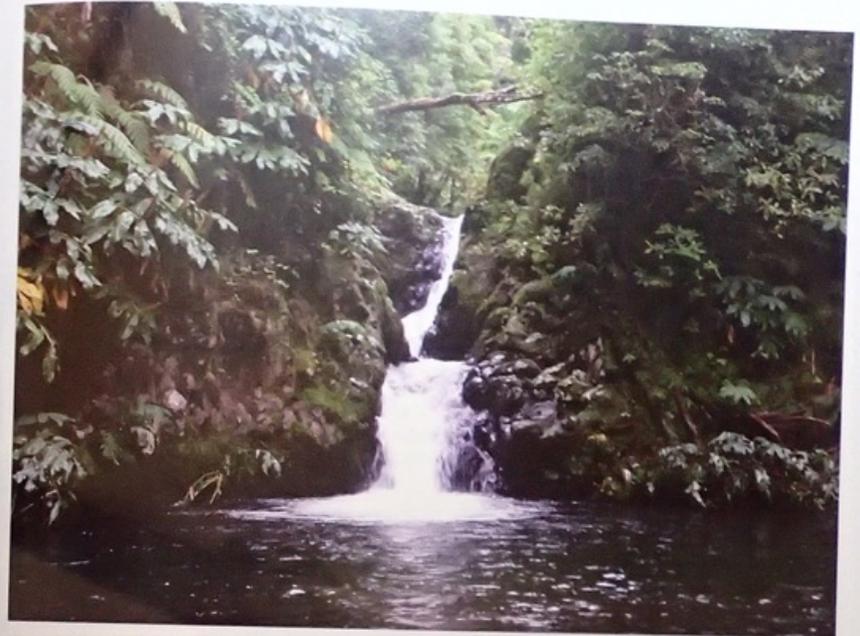


TOPO OF GRANDE - SALTO DO CABRITO ROUTE



NORTHEAST

In this region, the Caldeirões stream with its two routes is the stream of greatest interest to canyoning, allowing for very recreational descents due to their nature and good water flows. The Coelhas stream, especially the final section with Salto da Farinha, only has an acceptable flow in torrential regime, so its interest depends on rainfall.



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

COELHAS - SALTO DO FARINHA

3	V4	4h	3.4 km	315 m	7	40 m	40 m
315 m	0 m	30 min	5 min	0649953 4188822	0649891 4191088	Semi-equipped	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

The highest drop of this stream (R3) is usually a visited place both to locals and tourists, from the viewpoint with the name of the waterfall – Salto da Farinha. The main point of interest in this stream lies in this cascade, with a fantastic view over the sea.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Drive to Nordeste by the SCUT road until the exit Achadinha / Salga / Ribeira dos Caldeirões. Continue by the regional road to the right towards west and turn right at Miradouro do Salto da Farinha, until the end of the road near the sea at an elevation of 30 m. From this place, start the walking approach or, if you a second car for transfer is available, follow the road in reverse direction. There is a trail to the left that goes to a bridge (135 m), where you can enter or exit the watercourse next to an old water mill on the right bank. To reach the entrance of the route, turn right to the main road and then immediately left towards Salto do Cavalo. Leave the main road by a dirt trail to the left at an elevation of 300 m, until another bridge at an elevation of 315 m, entering upstream by the right bank.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route has two routes. The first until the bridge at an elevation of 135 m, has some drops where it is possible to jump and some abseils from trees.

The second route has four sequential drops, being possible to leave the route before R7, at an elevation of 60 m, by a trail on the right bank.

EXIT AND RETURN

Exit by the left bank near the sea, to reach the road.



TOPO OF COELHAS - SALTO DA FARINHA ROUTE

⌚ 30 min 315m
 📞 649953 4188822

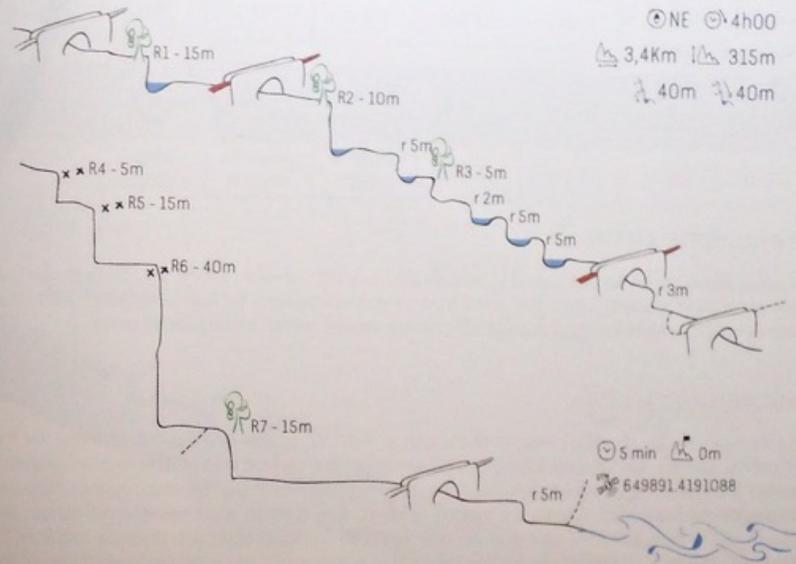
☆☆☆☆

⚠️ V4 ⌚

⌚ NE ⌚ 4h00

📏 3,4Km

⬇️ 40m ⬇️ 40m



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

CALDEIRÕES SUPERIOR

3,5	V3	5h	3,6 km	350 m	17	25 m	25 m
570 m	220 m	5 min	10 min	0652889 4187031	0652439 4189311	Semi-equipped	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route allows for an adventurous and leisurely descent, with several rappels and drops, as well as many pools most allowing jumps. It is a trip in a canyon surrounded by lush vegetation, with clear waters, where only in its final section there are possible escape points and equipped drops.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Drive to Nordeste by the SCUT road until the exit at Achada. At the roundabout continue by the regional road on the right towards Ribeira dos Caldeirões, to the parking area of Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park. Leave one car and drive in the opposite direction towards the roundabout, turn right and continue on the main road. Finding the forestry services, turn right to an unpaved road. Ignore the two exits to the right and park the car at the next junction. Start the approach distance to the right, continuing until you find the bridge and the stream valley. Entrance can be made downstream of the bridge by the right bank.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

In most drops it is possible to use trees as natural anchors and in others allow an easy down climbing steps. Some pools allow jumping, but always check the depth. There is a possible escape point in the final section of the route by the right bank at 245 m of elevation, which follows along the stream downstream to the exit.

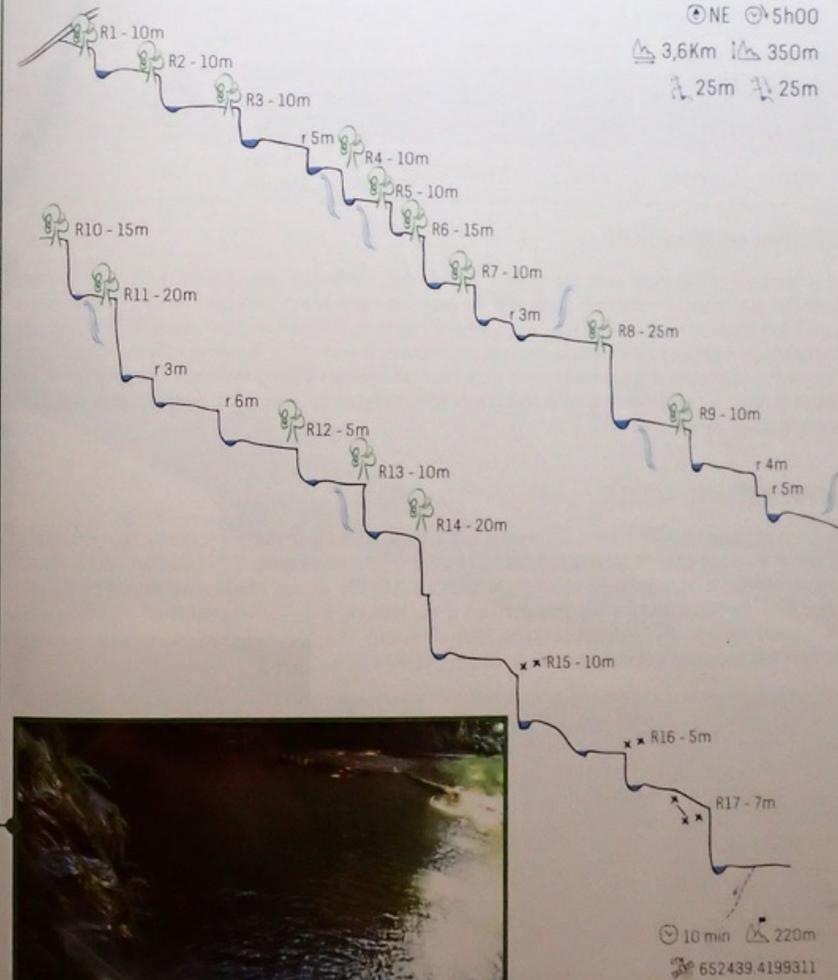
EXIT AND RETURN

Exit by a trail on the right bank, shortly after the last rappel, ending near the bridge of the regional road at the elevation 190 m. The final section of the route before to the bridge, is not advised because with summer flows it is usually dry due to diversion of flow to a small channel. For transportation logistics you will need to use a second car or transfer. Leave one car in the parking area of Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park and another near the entrance of the route.



TOPO OF CALDEIRÕES SUPERIOR ROUTE

5 min 570m
 652889.4187031



CANYONING IN SÃO MIGUEL

CALDEIRÕES INFERIOR

3	V3	3h	1,5 km	125 m	6	10 m	10 m
190 m	65 m	0 min	5 min	0652444 4189659	0651965 4190507	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

The first part of the route, until R2, is within Ribeira dos Caldeirões natural park, with many parallel paths to the stream on the right bank and the watercourse passing through one of the mills in full operation. Due to the natural beauty of this area surrounding the park and the possibility to reach the waterfalls, in addition to the barbecue and picnic areas as well as a bar, a former miller's house, this is one of the must stop sites for tourists and local population when visiting Nordeste municipality. In the summer months, the stream has an acceptable flow for canyoning, being often used by groups guided by canyoning service providers.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Drive to Nordeste by the SCUT road until the exit Achada. At the roundabout continue by the regional road on the right towards Ribeira dos Caldeirões. Turn right, passing the SCUT viaduct and keep left in the next two road forks. Keep walking until a bridge over the stream, where a car should be parked. With the other car follow the opposite direction to the regional road, turning right into a parking area, where the Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park is located. The entrance to the route is upstream of the bridge by the right bank.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

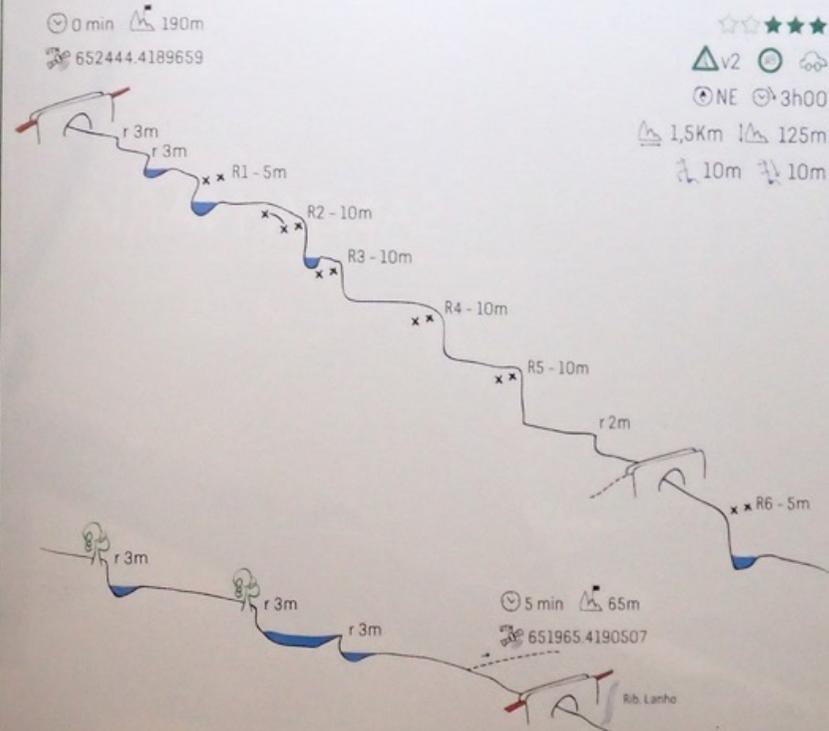
The beginning of the trail has several small drops and aquatic zones. After R2 the stream becomes narrower with two consecutive drops. There is a possible escape point by the right bank upstream of the stone bridge.

EXIT AND RETURN

Leave the route next to the SCUT bridge by its left bank, or ahead by the right bank, following the dirt trail to the paved road and then down the left to the bridge. For transport a car should be parked in the parking area of Ribeira dos Caldeirões Natural Park and another at the end of the route.



TOPO OF CALDEIRÕES INFERIOR ROUTE



SANTA MARIA

CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

The island of Santa Maria is located in the archipelago's southeast extreme. This location and the island are relatively low elevation, contributes to a less humid climate and higher average insolation when compared to other Azores islands. With an area of 97 Km² and a little over five thousand inhabitants, its major attractions includes its climate, the coastline, white sand beaches and geological features.

Besides an intense agricultural and fishing activity, Santa Maria currently has a significant aeronautic activity, especially the Air Traffic Control Centre that manages Santa Maria's Oceanic FIR (Flight Information Region).

Tourism is gaining an increasing importance, especially for its excellence as a diving destination with the possibility of observing large pelagic species. But its tranquillity, culture, rural environment, jagged coastline of great beauty and very interesting walking routes are enough attractions to justify a visit to the island. From a cultural perspective, one of the biggest attractions in the island, with high number of visitors, is the Maré de Agosto Festival, held annually on the fourth week of August for three to four days.

Regarding the natural heritage, the island jagged coastline deserves special attention, with several deep bays and some white sand beaches, and various geological phenomena, such as the Barreiro da Faneca, known as the "red desert" and the prismatic columnar disjunction in Maloás stream. In terms of geology, although the entire archipelago is of volcanic origin, this island is known for being the oldest of the Azores and the only one with rock layers of sedimentary origin. In terms of its geomorphology, Santa Maria can be divided into two regions, with a relatively large flattened region with a maximum elevation of 277 metres, in its western side, and a mountainous region that culminates at 587 metres of elevation at Pico Alto, in its eastern side.



Access to the island of Santa Maria can be by plane or by boat. The island has regular air connections with São Miguel and less frequent links with Lisbon. In the mid and high season there are regular ferry services to the island of São Miguel.

For canyoning who enjoy short canyoning routes with large drops, the visit to this island is amply justified. Of the eight existing routes, four have large multi-tiered drops in impressive and beautiful environments. However, as catchments are reduced and this is the island with less rainfall, the best time to canyoning is late winter and spring, as the streams in summer have low flows and may even be found dry.

The routes are divided in three regions:

- N** – Three routes leading into the north coast of the island;
- E** – Four routes on the east coast, but three of which are distinct routes of the Salto stream;
- S** – One route on the south coast.

CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

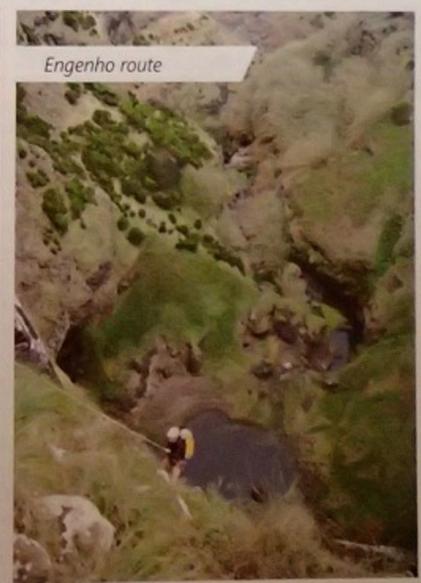
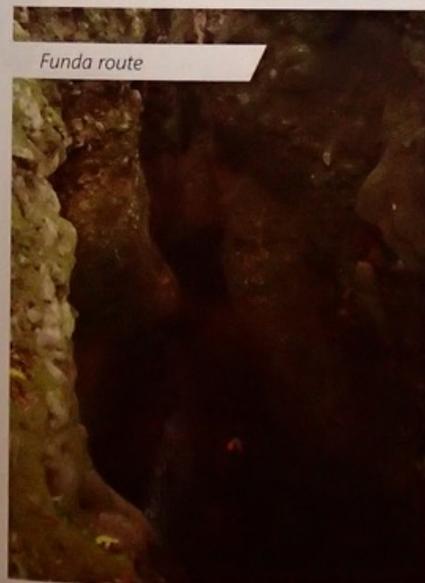
SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES ON SANTA MARIA ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Engenho	N	3,1	v5	1h30	135	6	38	75	0h10	0h30
Funda	N	3,5	v3	2h00	200	4	20	20	0h10	0h45
Amaro	N	3,5	v5	1h30	150	4	40	65	0h05	0h45
Salto esq.	E	2,4	v4	1h00	80	2	40	40	0h10	0h10
Salto dto.	E	2,5	v4	1h30	90	2	40	40	0h05	0h10
Salto int.	E	1,5	v1	0h45	110	0	0	0	0h05	0h25
Grande / Aveiro	E	4	v5	2h00	160	4	60	115	0h15	0h45
Maloás/Malbusca	S	3	v4	2h00	135	3	45	80	0h15	1h30

GENERAL MAP OF SANTA MARIA CANYONING ROUTES



NORTH COAST



CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

ENGENHO

3.1	v5	1h30	0.5 km	135 m	6	38 m	75 m
135 m	0 m	0h10	0h30	0667752 4096564	0667752 4096564	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

Short route characterized by its large 75 metres drop, good to discover very interesting landscapes on the north coast of the island. The best months are from November to April, in the rainiest periods, as the stream can be dry in the summer.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Turn left at Km 4.7 intersection on the road ER 2-2, in Feteiras de Baixo, nearby an information board about Azores trails, heading to Baia do Raposo. Continue on this road for about 400 metres until a sharp right turn. Park on the unpaved road ahead and continue on foot. Follow the directions of the trail PRISMA until its fork. The right trail goes to Baia do Raposo, which is the exit point of the canyon. Follow the left trail until it cross the stream, beginning the descent.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning starts in Bananeiras stream. After two drops, about 100 metres later, this stream has the confluence with the main stream of Engenho. Shortly after, there is the main 75 metres drop. On the left, about 17 metres from the waterfall, there are two bolts for a hand line. The anchors for rappelling are in the drop but rather to the left. This abseil with 37 m ends at a small platform with two bolts and slightly below there are another two bolts that should be used to make the second 37 m abseil, to avoid rope friction with rock edges. The route then follows the deep but relatively open valley, with simple progression, requiring some down climb of small drops and two more abseils, until it ends by the coast.

EXIT AND RETURN

At the end of the stream, follow the trail PRISMA to its right, coming out near the water mill in ruins and climbing the hill. At the fork take the left to reach the place where the car is parked.



TOPO OF ENGENHO ROUTE



FUNDA

3.5	v3	2h00	2.0 km	200 m	4	20 m	20 m
200 m	0 m	0h10	0h45	0670995 4096916	0670847 4097868	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

As its name indicates (meaning deep), this stream has a fairly narrow section, which makes it unique on the island. With water flowing is a very attractive route.

CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

APPROACH AND ACCESS

From Santa Bárbara take the road to Feteiras, and about 1.5 km after turn to the small village of Lagos. After two very tight curves, park the car at the end of the straight part of the road. Follow the unpaved road in front, turning left and then immediately right. Before a steeper slope to the right leave this trail and go down the fields on the left to the stream, turning a little upstream before entering the stream. Another possibility is to leave the car on the main road near Marquesa and follow the unpaved road to the right and after 550 metres turn left.

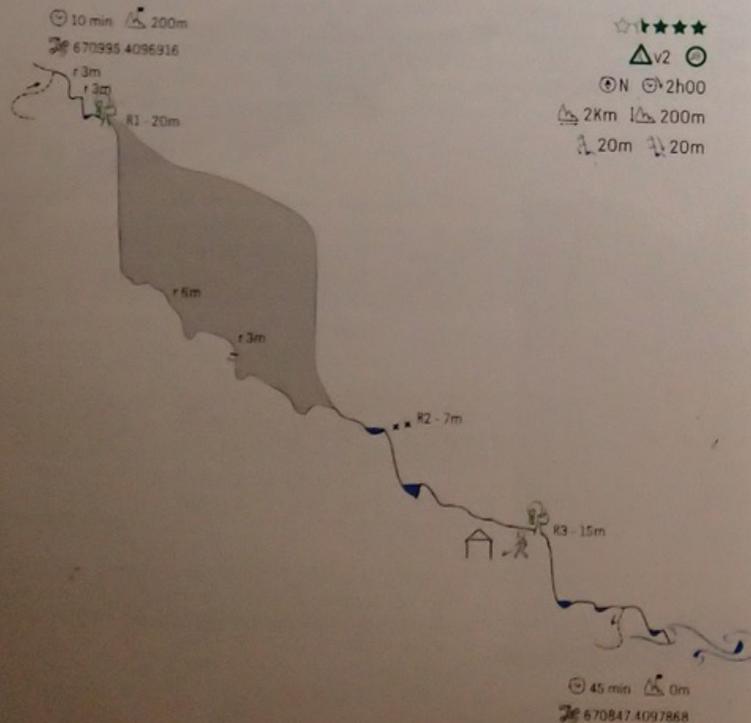
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The stream starts with two small drops before a 20 metre rappel from a tree in the left bank that allows the descent to a narrow section. After two more drops the valley widens and there are two more rappels before reaching a trail on the right by the sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

Exit through the trail to the right, or by a trail before the R3, climbing the hills to Tagarete crest. Follow the large trail and at its end follow one of the following ways: turn left and then right to the place where the car was parked in the first option; or turn right to find the paved road.

TOPO OF FUNDA ROUTE



AMARO

☆☆☆☆☆	△v2	Ⓞ1h30	1,6 km	150 m	4	40 m	65 m
150 m	0 m	0h05	0h45	0671575 4096850	0671360 4097660	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

The final section of this stream has an interesting canyoning route. This route follows a deep valley, with an impressive 85 metres drop, interrupted by a broad platform at 20 metres from the top.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

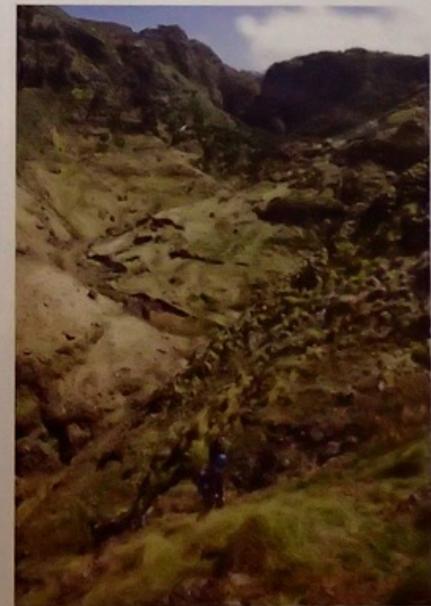
Follow the same directions and logistics for cars as in Funda stream. From the place where the car was parked in Lagos, follow the unpaved road to the right until the end and from there continue down to the stream by the PRC3SMA trail where the canyoning begins.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The first part of the canyoning requires 10 minutes of progression in a section with mild slope, to reach the large multi-tiered drop, with three rappels, the last one from the middle of the wall, with its anchors being located at the right bank. This last rappel ends in a big pool, so in drier periods the water may not have the best quality. From this point the route has again mild slope with just one smaller rappel until it reaches the sea.

EXIT AND RETURN

The exit and return from this route is along the trail on the stream's left bank that, after climbing the hill, follows the crest of Tagarete, between Funda and Amaro streams. After about 1 km, at the unpaved roads junction, turn left and then right to reach the parking spot where the car was left. See other logistical options at Funda route description (access and return).



CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

TOPO OF AMARO ROUTE

⌚ 5 min 🏔️ 150m
📞 671575 4096850

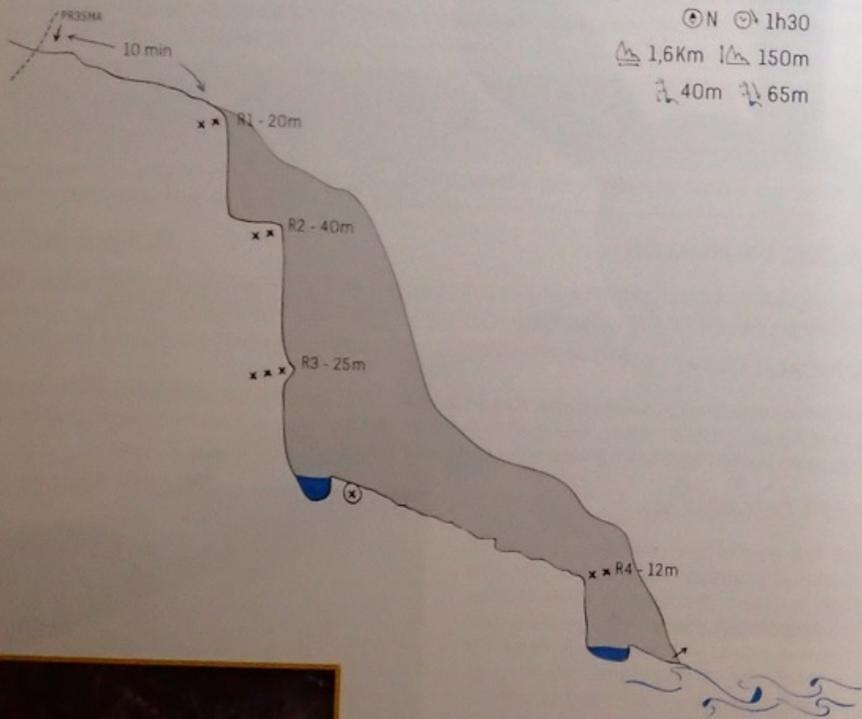
★☆☆☆☆

⚠️ v5 ⌚

📍 N ⌚ 1h30

🏔️ 1,6Km 🏔️ 150m

📏 40m 📏 65m



⌚ 45 min 🏔️ 0m
📞 671360 4097660



ALONG WATER TRAILS... IN THE AZORES | CANYONING GUIDEBOOK

EAST COAST

SALTO

This stream has three routes, the downstream section (Salto inferior) corresponding to the last part of the stream, from the bridge on the paved road to its mouth, a route with several down climbing drops, being the return by climbing the stream. This route allows discovering interesting landscapes and a bay protected by the São Lourenço islet. Both upstream tributaries, left and right routes, Salto esquerdo and Salto direito, respectively, are basically two waterfalls that plunge into the same pool. In the table the first and second rows are for the left and right routes, respectively.

☆☆☆☆☆	⚠️	⌚	🏔️	📏	📏	📏	📏
2,4	v4	1h00	0,6 km	80 m	2	40 m	40 m
2,5	v4	1h30	0,7 km	90 m	2	40 m	40 m
🏔️	🏔️	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶	🚶
200 m	120 m	0h10	0h10	0672485 4094110	0672860	Ok	-
210 m	120 m	0h05	0h10	0672530 4094020	4094335	Ok	-

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Follow the road from Arrebentão to Forno. For the left route, park the car at the first right turn, and proceed on foot by a trail that descends the fields towards the stream. To the right route park the car at the sharp curve before Forno.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The left route begins with a small rappel or hand line that gives access to an anchor with two bolts in the left bank from which there is a 40 metres rappel ending in a big pond. The right route, a little more interesting, has a 25 metre abseil on a ramp, anchored to a tree on the right, to access the following abseil anchors with two bolts on the right. This 40 metre rappel to the pond can be done with 35 metres rope stopping a little higher, down climbing the remaining metres. The last part is common to the two routes and is just walking by the stream bed.



CANYONING IN SANTA MARIA

EXIT AND RETURN

Leave the stream at the elevation of 120 m following a trail on the right bank until the main road, where a car can be parked. Without car logistics, continue to the left by the road turning left again at the next intersection and again when you get to Arrebentão. It will take about 3.5 km to the entrance of Salto superior esquerdo route and 4.5 km to Salto superior direito route.

GRANDE / AVEIRO

4.0	v5	2h00	0,4 m	160 m	4	60 m	115 m
170 m	10 m	0h15	0h45	0676125 4090960	0676330 4090960	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route is a succession of waterfalls in a high coastal cliff at the south-eastern coast nearby Baixa da Maia. With significant flows this canyoning certainly gains beauty and an extra interest. The landscape view during descent and access trail is amazing.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Leave the car in Maia, near the road, just after crossing the bridge over the stream. Follow the signaled trail PR4SMA uphill, starting on the left bank of the stream. When you reach the top of the hill descend right down to the stream. If using a car transfer, follow the road ER 1-2 and at Km 19.4, in Calheta, turn left to the unpaved road that heads towards Lapa de Baixo. At the fork go to the right and park the car soon after crossing the stream. Follow PR4SMA trail to the right, following the stream on its left bank. When the trail crosses the stream, before the hillside, start the canyoning.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This route consists of two long drops only separated by a large pool and a rock platform. The access to the third rappel in the larger drop is by a small abseil down the right bank. To reduce the risk of falling rocks, the intermediate anchor of the last rappel is located on the left side of the waterfall.

EXIT AND RETURN

At the end of the route, on the paved road, turn right and proceed towards Maia to the place where the car is parked, or have the second car at that point to the transfer.



TOPO OF AVEIRO / GRANDE ROUTE

⌚ 5 min 170m
📞 676125.4090960

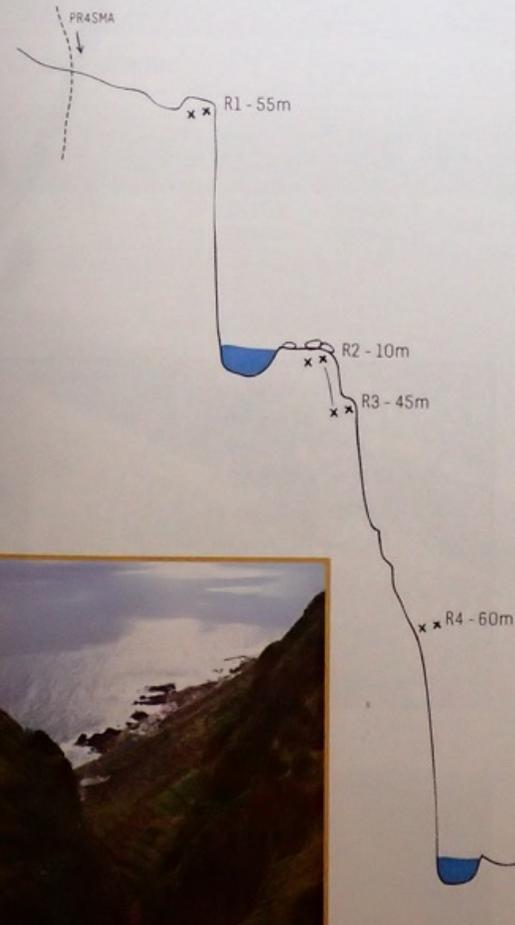
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

⚠ v6 Ⓞ

⌚ E ⌚ 2h00

0,4Km 160m

60m 115m



⌚ 45 min 10m

📞 676330.4090960

SOUTH COAST

MALOAS / MALBUSCA

3,0	v4	2h00	0,3 m	140 m	3	45 m	80 m
135 m	5 m	0h15	1h30	0672390 4088995	0672285 4088805	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This route has two sections which coincide with two drops. The first one is an abseiling of 12 metres in a basaltic wall with columnar structures and the second a long drop to the seaside. The flow is low or even non-existing most of the year.

APPROACH AND ACCESS

Follow the road that connects Panasco to Malbusca by the coast side, and after passing the Panasco stream turn left, parking the car at the first sharp right turn. Take the trail in front, heading southwest towards the coast, and then turn west until you see the valley and the impressive rock wall with its columnar disjunctions. The stream has its first drop in the middle of this wall.



ROUTE DESCRIPTION

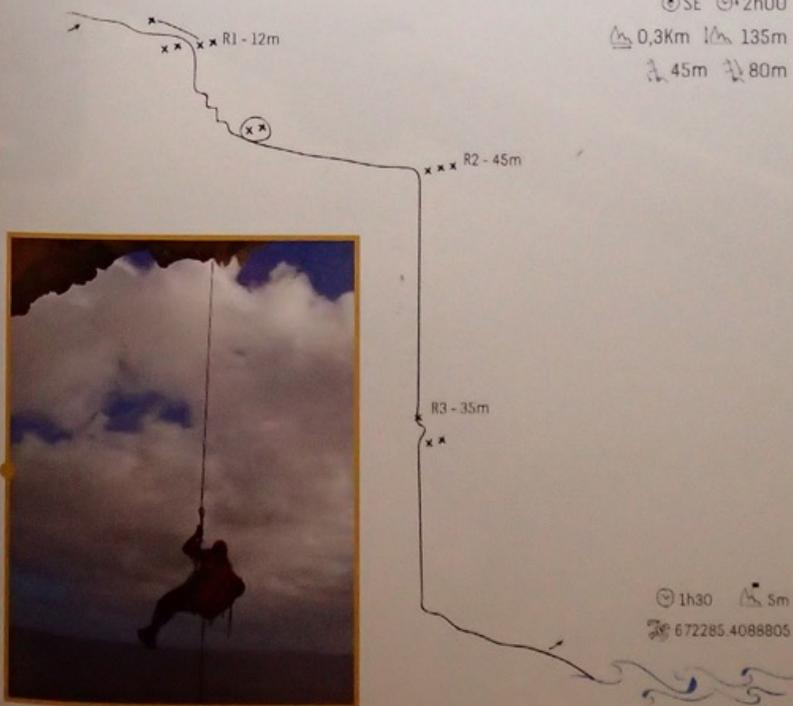
The second rappel is after the first descent and by relatively short walk, or bypassing the small basaltic wall by its right bank. A hand line should be installed from a rock block to the safe access to the anchors in the vertical part of the wall. Part of the abseil is suspended and it ends in a platform where there is a good anchor. For the next abseil use the anchors placed a little below to avoid rope friction on sharp rock edges. Care with falling rocks is required because the second rappel is vertically aligned with the first. At the end of the last rappel there is a very interesting artificial cave, excavated by men.

EXIT AND RETURN

Descend the blocks to the sea and swim towards Ponta Sul, where you can ascend the trail that climbs the hill to the left and gives access to the top of the cliff. The trail continues then to the right until the place where the car is parked. Another possibility is to take an unclear path to the left, with climbing steps and vertical passages, up the slopes until finding the middle of the track described above.

TOPO OF MALOÁS / MALBUSCA ROUTE

15 min 140m
 672390.4088995



672285 4088805



CANYONING IN FAIAL

CANYONING IN FAIAL

Although only with an area of 173 km² and 15 000 inhabitants, Faial is one of the most visited and cosmopolitan islands of the Azores, being the main port of passage for sailors crossing the North Atlantic.

The island is dominated by its central volcano, which reaches its maximum elevation at 1031 metres, in Cabeço Gordo, with a breathtaking Caldeira with nearly two kilometres of diameter. To the west, the Capelinhos volcano is a reminder of the most recent major eruption in the Azores, which occurred between 1957 and 1958.

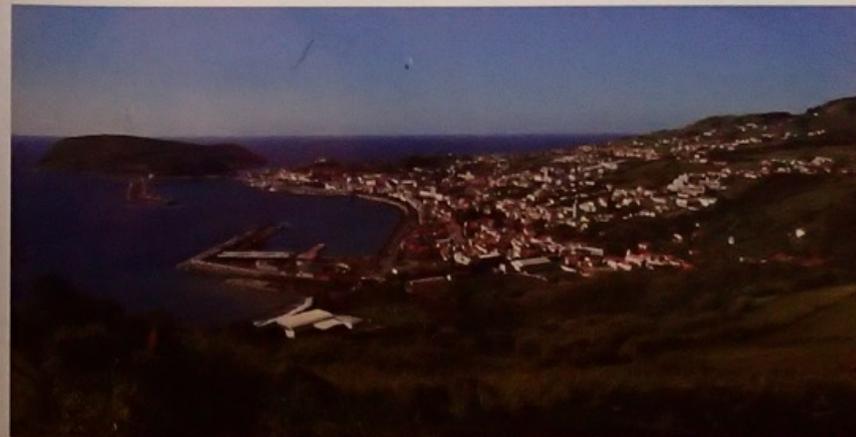
Most of the population resides on the east coast of the island, in particular in the city of Horta, which concentrates most of the available accommodation and tourism services namely maritime recreation services, especially whale watching, diving, boat tours and sport fishing activities.

The island is an important port of entry and passage of visitors. Its international airport and daily boat connections with the islands of Pico and São Jorge gives an important centrality. The



existence of a university centre and the Regional Assembly bring an economic, scientific and political importance to this island.

Canyoning in Faial only began recently. The potential is relatively limited due to the geomorphology and hydrogeology of the island, as most streams only have flow in wet periods or even just after rainfall events. However, there are a few equipped canyoning routes in the island and some in very appealing environments.



SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES ON FAIAL ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Abreu	E	3.2	v2	3h00	170	4	8	8	0h15	0h20
Jejum	E	1.5	v2	2h00	175	5	10	10	0h15	0h00
Corte / Falca medio	E	3	v3	2h00	180	4	15	15	0h20	0h00
Corte / Falca inf	E	2	v4	1h30	190	2	45	45	0h00	0h25
Ribeira do Cabo	SW	3	v4	1h30	240	7	35	65	0h15	0h15
Serrado Novo	NW	2.8	v4	1h00	175	7	46	46	0h10	0h30
Cabras	NW	3	v5	1h00	280	4	35	75	1h30	0h15
Santa Barbara	N	2	v3	2h30	220	4	20	20	0h05	0h05

Apart from these streams others have been explored to date but are not included here because of its relatively low interest: Serrado Novo médio (NW), Bom Dia (NW), Funda (NW), Corte superior (E) e Fonte Nova (E).

GENERAL MAP OF FAIAL CANYONING ROUTES



EAST COAST

The largest and most extensive catchments of streams in Faial's Island area in this region. The routes with potential to canyoning in Faial are located in mid elevation, above the flatter and most populated areas of the island. From these routes the most interesting are Abreu and Corte streams, the latter a tributary of Flamengos stream.



Abreu route



Corte médio route

CANYONING IN FAIAL

ABREU

3,2	v2	3h00	2,0 km	210 m	4	8 m	8 m
700 m	490 m	0h15	0h20	0352613 4271964	0353949 4272534	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

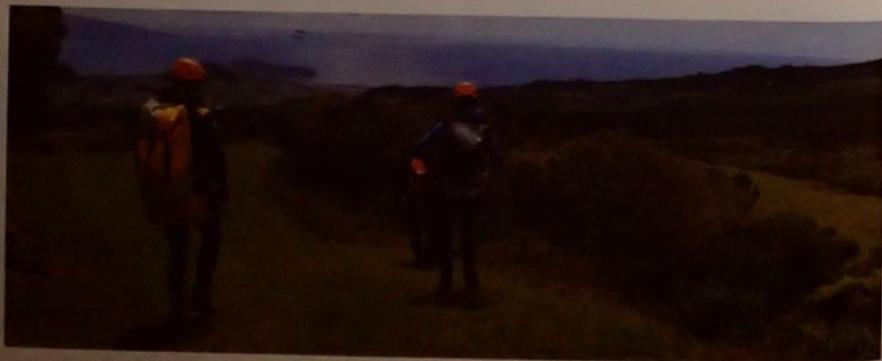
With flow this may probably be the most interesting canyoning in Faial Island. Surrounded by a narrow strip of forest, the stream develops into a lush and playful environment over the grazing fields in the east slopes.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning follows in a small and slightly noticeable valley, with a succession of drops climbed down or descended using simple abseils, jumping being possible in a few pools. After R7 and some small drops the flow is reduced. From this point it is possible to leave the stream through the fields on the left bank, or continue down until the bridge, climbing to the road by the left bank upstream of the bridge.

ACCESS AND RETURN

The most comfortable access and exit requires the use of a transfer, leaving one car in the exit (Km 12.9 of the road from Flamengos to Cabouco Velho) and another in Km 5 of the road that goes up to Caldeira, before its last tight turn to the left. From there, walk down by the fields to northeast and into the stream just above the confluence of the two watercourses. Alternatively, from the exit of the canyoning, follow on foot the trail heading north of the bridge and then up the pastures, passing small streams and turning at elevation 650 metres to the left to enter the canyon.



TOPO OF ABREU ROUTE

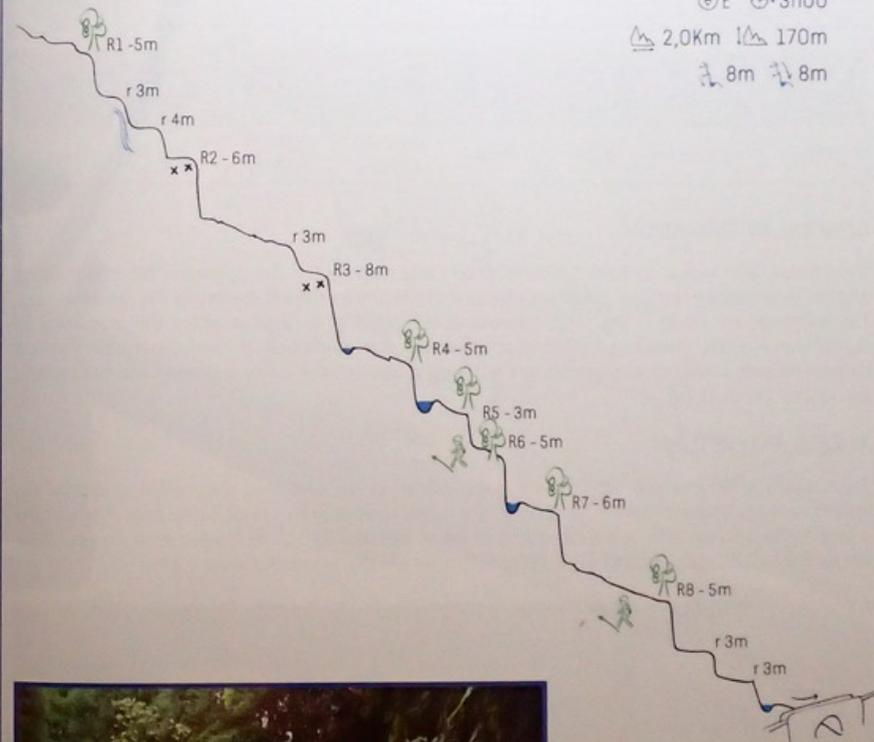
15min 650m
 352613 4271964

v2

E 3h00

2,0Km 170m

8m 8m



20min 480m
 353949 4272534

CANYONING IN FAIAL

CORTE / FALCA MÉDIO

3,0	v3	2h00	1,3 km	180 m	4	15 m	15 m
550 m	370 m	0h20	0h00	0352686 4269662	0353718 4269137	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

This stream, also known as Falca, presents three canyoning routes: the upstream, the intermediate and the downstream sections. Count with about 4 to 5 hours for the full descent of this stream routes. The intermediate route is the most interesting, particularly because it offers the possibility of doing some jumps, therefore it is a trip to be undertaken preferably in rainfall periods. This is a canyoning with similar characteristics to the Abreu route, but the valley is deeper and the rappels are higher (10 to 15 m).

ACCESS AND RETURN

The logistics is very simple, with the exit being made on the bridge of the road that crosses the watercourse upstream of Flamengos. To enter the route, walking or by car, go to the road that links the bridge to Falca forest park. In the last right turn (at an elevation of 512 m), leave the car and continue left ascending the pastures until elevation of 550 m, where the canyoning route starts.



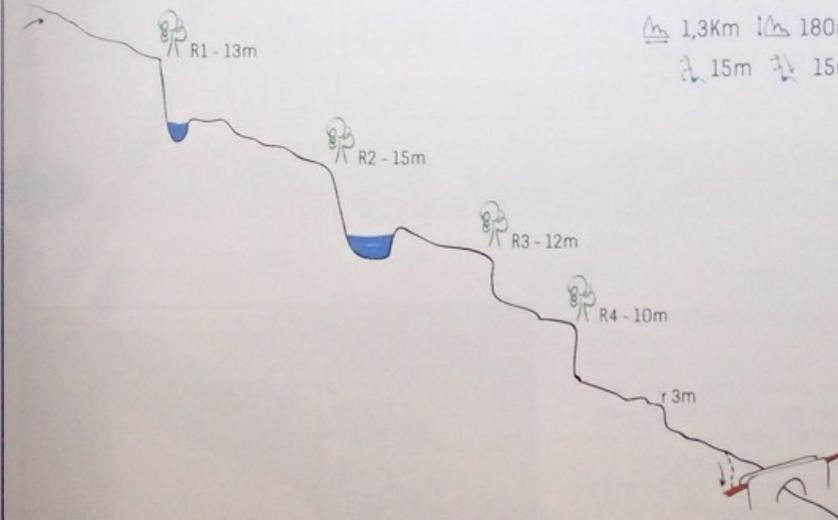
TOPO OF CORTE MÉDIO ROUTE

20min 550m
 352686 4269662

E 2h00

1,3Km 180m

15m 15m



0h00 370m

353718 4269137



SOUTHEAST COAST

CABO

3.0	v4	1h30	0,2 km	240 m	7	35 m	65 m
245 m	5 m	0h15	0h15	0346351 4270283	0346207 4270071	Ok	-

GENERAL INFORMATION

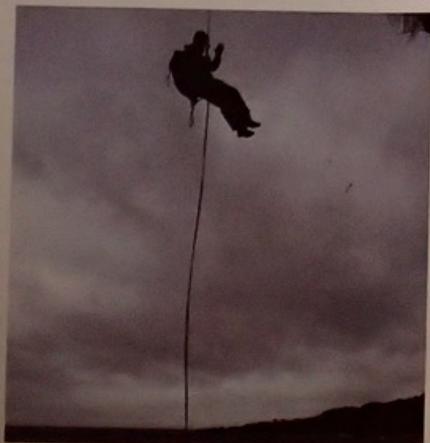
Short route at a very steep coastal slope. Most of the year is dry because much of its water is abstracted upstream. The route has a series of relatively long drops, easy to descend, being the anchors in large platforms. This stream has a beautiful environment not only because of the long drops but also for the vegetation and the omnipresence of the ocean.

The multi-tiered drop is quite easy to descend and the main difficulty is the entrance to the last rappel. The final part of the abseil to the pebble beach is suspended and beautiful.

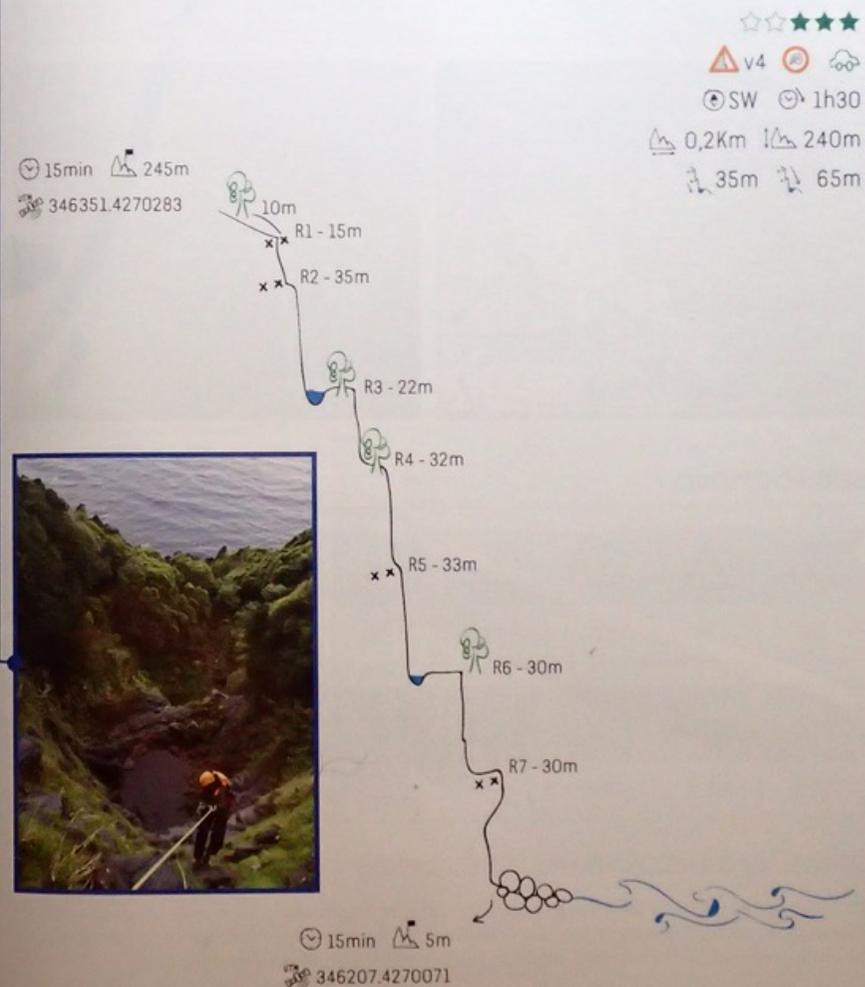
ACCESS AND RETURN

Follow a trail that descends the fields from the Km 17.3 of road ER 1-1, in the village of Ribeira do Cabo. After about 100 metres turn left between the fields and enter the stream.

The exit is on the pebble beach. Walk about 250 metres to the right to arrive to Varadouro. Ideally there will be a transfer otherwise it is necessary to walk back approximately 4 km by the road.

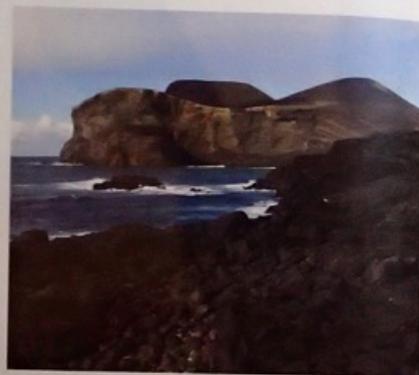
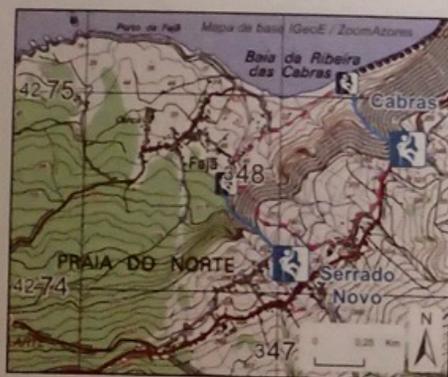


TOPO OF CABO ROUTE



NORTHEAST COAST

This region has two explored routes with similar characteristics, being both short and usually dry, but with large drops.



SERRADO NOVO

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

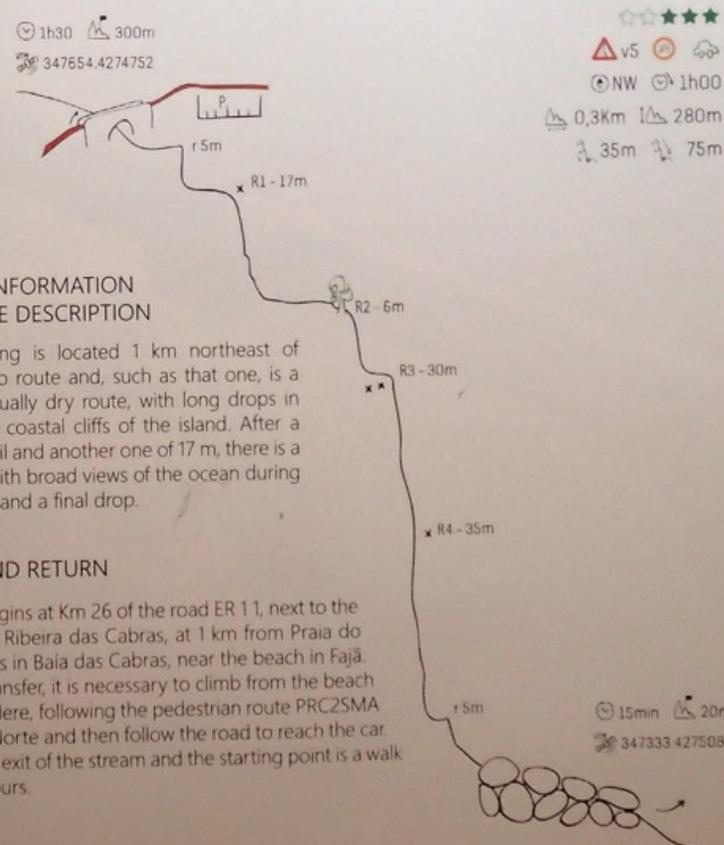
This is a generally dry and fairly steep stream. The descent begins with a short walk to reach a difficult drop to down climb, followed by two short abseils. From this point the view is wider to the ocean and the route is vertical, with three long abseils to reach the final part with some more drops.

ACCESS AND RETURN

With the support of a transfer, the entrance is made in Praia do Norte, near the bridge that crosses the stream, and the exit is in Fajã. Without a transfer, leave the car in Fajã and follow the pedestrian route (PRC2FAI) to Praia do Norte.

CABRAS

TOPO OF CABRAS ROUTE



GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This canyoning is located 1 km northeast of Serrado Novo route and, such as that one, is a short and usually dry route, with long drops in the northern coastal cliffs of the island. After a first 5 m abseil and another one of 17 m, there is a steep drop with broad views of the ocean during three abseils and a final drop.

ACCESS AND RETURN

The route begins at Km 26 of the road ER 11, next to the belvedere of Ribeira das Cabras, at 1 km from Praia do Norte. It ends in Baía das Cabras, near the beach in Fajã. Without a transfer, it is necessary to climb from the beach to the belvedere, following the pedestrian route PRC2SMA to Praia do Norte and then follow the road to reach the car. Between the exit of the stream and the starting point is a walk of 1 to 1.5 hours.

CANYONING IN TERCEIRA



CANYONING IN TERCEIRA

With approximately 400 Km² and about 56 500 inhabitants, it is the third largest island of the Azores and the second most populated, and a main entry point in the Azores.

Terceira Island is distinguished by its cultural wealth, with particular expression in the festivities, impérios (small chapels), roped bullfights, gastronomy and built heritage, especially the city of Angra do Heroísmo, classified as UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The geomorphology of the island, together with the anthropogenic activities, provide a wide variety of beautiful landscapes, from plains and plateaus with grazing fields to imposing volcanic reliefs, such as Monte Brasil and Serra de Santa Bárbara which, with its 1021 metres of elevation, is the highest point on the island. From the natural heritage are worth mentioning the Algar do Carvão, Gruta do Natal and Furnas do Enxofre.

The Terceira Island is also known for its outstanding cuisine, variety of hotel and rural accommodation, a golf course with 18 holes and abundant supply of tourist recreation services.

Despite having an extensive network of natural streams and a relatively sharp relief in a significant part of the island, the potential to canyoning is quite limited because, with the exception of rainfall periods, the streams are mostly dry. Until August 2014 there were only three equipped



canyoning routes, being Agualva route the most visited by local commercial groups by a local tourism recreation company. There are probably other routes to explore, with canyoning potential during the rainy months.

One of the advantages of this island is its accessibility, being the airport in Lajes one of the main ports of entry for tourists in the Azores archipelago. There are also several weekly connections by ferry to the main islands of the Central Group and sporadic connections to islands of other groups.

SUMMARY TABLE OF CANYONING ROUTES ON TERCEIRA ISLAND

Route	Region	Quality	Grading	Time	Difference in level	Number of rappels	Longest rappel (m)	Highest drop (m)	Access time	Exit time
Agualva	N	3	v2	0h45	60	3	8	8	0h05	0h15
Fontinha	E	2	v3	0h45	100	4	30	30	0h30	0h10
Casa da Ribeira	E	1,5	V3	0h30	40	3	18	18	0h15	0h10

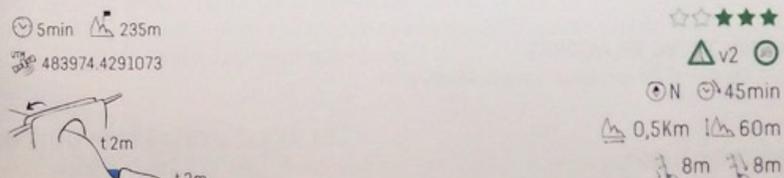
GENERAL MAP OF TERCEIRA CANYONING ROUTES



AGUALVA

3,0	v2	0h45	0,5	60	3	8	8
235	175	0h05	0h15	0483974 4291073	0484350 4291260	Ok	-

TOPO OF AGUALVA ROUTE



GENERAL INFORMATION AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This is a very short but playful route, especially during rainfall periods when the stream has higher flow. The route begins in a wooded area of a forest park, and the stream gradually narrows, showing some small slides and rappels. In its final part the canyoning opens near a housing area where there is a retention basin.

ACCESS AND RETURN

The access and return logistics for this canyoning are very simple. From Agualva centre take the Moinhos road until its end. The route starts near the forest park and finishes in the retention basin downstream. At the end of the route, just return to the starting point following the road for about 500 metres.

15min 175m
 483974 4291260

TOURISM AND TOURISM INFORMATION

- Official website of Azores Tourism | www.visitazores.com
- Regional Tourism Association | www.artazores.com
- Azores trails | <http://trilhos.visitazores.com>

CANYONING IN AÇORES

- Desnivel Association | www.desnivel.pt

METEOROLOGY

- Portuguese Sea and Atmosphere Institute | www.ipma.pt
- CLIMAAT project | www.climaat.angra.uac.pt
- Windguru | www.windguru.cz
- Azores Webcams | <http://www.spotazores.com>
- Tides forecast | <http://www.hidrografico.pt>

CARTOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- ZoomAzores | www.zoomazores.com
- SIGAM | <http://sig.sram.azores.gov.pt/SRAM>
- Geographical Institute of the Portuguese Army | www.igeoe.pt
- Portuguese Geographic Institute | www.igeo.pt

TRANSPORTATION

- Inter island ferry - Atlânticoline | 296 282 092/3 | www.atlanticoline.pt
- Inter island ferry - Transmaçor | Horta: 292 200 381 | www.transmacor.pt
- Airline - SATA | 707 227 282 | www.sata.pt
- Airline - TAP | 707 205 700 | www.flytap.com

CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

- Inventory of the Azores Built Heritage | inventario.iacultura.pt
- Azores Regional Network of Museums | <http://museus.azores.gov.pt>
- SIARAM | <http://siaram.azores.gov.pt>
- Island Natural Parks | <http://parquesnaturais.azores.gov.pt/pt>
- Natura 2000 Network – Açores | <http://redenatura2000.azores.gov.pt>
- Azores Geopark | www.azoresgeopark.com

CANYONING RECREATION SERVICES

In July 2014, the following registered tourism recreation companies were providing canyoning services:

FLORES

- Westcanyon | www.westcanyon.net
- Extremocidente | www.extremocidente.com

SÃO JORGE

- Aventour | www.aventour.pt
- Discover Experience Açores | www.facebook.com/DiscoverXperience

SÃO MIGUEL

- Azorean Active Blueberry | www.azoreanactiveblueberry.com
- Azores Adventure Islands | www.azoresadventureislands.com
- Picos de Aventura | www.picosdeaventura.com

SANTA MARIA

- Bootlá | www.facebook.com/bootlatours

TERCEIRA

- Rope Adventures | www.ropeadventures.pt

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In the next table, the dates and teams who participated in the canyoning routes exploration and first descent are presented. In some few cases the precise date or who participated is not exactly known.

Canyoning route	Opening date	Who participated
Flores		
Ilhéus sup.	28/08/2006	FS, MCA, PS
Ilhéus médio	28/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, PS
Ilhéus inf.	28/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, PS, RV, LC
Alqueiros sup.	27/08/2006	FS, MCA, PP, PS, MM
Alqueiros m. esq.	12/08/2006	FS, MCA, MS
Alqueiros inf.	27/08/2006	FS, MCA, PP, PS, MM
Barrancas inf.	20/08/2006	FS, MCA, MM
Funda sup. esq.	30/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, PS, RV
Tigualho	26/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, FSa
Freira Ponta Ruiva	30/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, PS, RV
Pinhada	18/08/2009	FS, MCA, BS
Cascalho sup.	28/08/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS
Cascalho inf.	03/09/2006	FS, MCA, PS, MS, RL
Bacanelo sup.	05/08/2007	FS, MCA, PS, BS, MM
Bacanelo médio	05/08/2007	FS, MCA, PS, BS, MM
Bacanelo inf.	18/08/2008	FS, MCA, MM
Pico da Sé	05/09/2010	FS, MM
Além sup. esq.	03/09/2006	FS, MC, CT, HS, RR, DF
Além sup.	01/09/2006	FS, MCA, MS, PS, RV
Além inf.	11/09/2004	FS, MCA, CP
Fuacada	14/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS
Algares	31/08/2005	FS, MCA, MS, PS, PeP
Meio	04/08/2007	FS, MCA, PS, BS, MM
Galho	03/09/2005	FS, MCA, PS, MS
Micasto	19/08/2004	FS, MCA, CP
Silva	10/09/2009	FS, MCA, PS, MS, PP, PwP, RL
Uroala	06/08/2007	FS, MCA, BS, MM
Funda Paz Lager	31/08/2005	FS, MCA, PP, MS, PS, PwP, RL
Rorita Alta	20/08/2009	FS, MCA, MM, BS
Fundão	14/08/2006	FS, MCA, MM, GA
Mesuro	30/08/2005	FS, MCA, MS, PS, PwP, RL
Grande	29/08/2005	FS, PS, MS, PP, PeP
Ferrete	19/08/2004	FS, MCA, PHA, PS, PV, GP
Leste sup.	14/09/2004	FS, MCA, PHA, PS
Leste inf.	18/08/2004	FS, MCA, PHA, PS
Cão sup.	13/08/2004	FS, MCA, PHA, PS
Cão inf.	13/08/2004	FS, MCA, PHA, PS
Salto de Trigo sup.	25/08/2006	FS, MCA, MS, MM
Salto de Trigo inf.	11/08/2006	FS, MCA, MS, MM
Monte Grande	02/09/2009	FS, MCA, PP, MS, PS, PeP
Alforno	13/08/2009	FS, MCA, MS
Mesuro	04/09/2010	FS, MCA

Canyoning route	Opening date	Who participated
São Jorge		
Funda rib. Seca	06/09/2007	FS, MCA, PP, PS, RR
Vimes	05/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS
Cambro / Bodes	09/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS, LPB
Rumanias / Romanas	13/04/2014	FS, NA, CP, JC, PM
Caveletes	09/09/2006	FS, MCA, MS, PHA, PR
Cedro sup.	06/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
Cedro médio	06/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
Cedro inf.	06/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
Salto sup.	07/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
Salto médio	07/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
Salto inf.	07/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PS, PeP
São Tomé sup.	08/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS, LPB
São Tomé inf.	08/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS, LPB
Meio	26/08/2010	FS, MCA, LC, PB, LPB
Caldeira inf. esq.	04/09/2006	FS, MS, PHA, PS, PeP
Caldeira inf. dta.	27/07/2007	FS, MCA, PS, RR, LPB
Faja Redonda	26/07/2007	FS, MCA, PP, PS, RR
Sanguinhal esq.	24/07/2007	FS, MCA, PP, PS, PR, RR
Sanguinhal dta.	07/08/2009	FS, LPB
Entre Ribeiras	07/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS, LPB
Castelheiro	03/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS, LPB
Salto Verde / Fachos	06/08/2008	FS, MCA, MS, BS
Funda sup.	08/09/2006	FS, MCA, PHA, MS, PeP
Funda inf.	17/08/2010	FS, MCA, LC, PB, LPB
Fonte	09/08/2009	FS, MCA, LPB
São Miguel		
Praia / Pico Vela	1997	PP, JP
Praia Sup. Nascentes	2011	FS, PP, RB, DC, TB, MC, RA, NA
Três Voltas Sup.	2003	FS, MCA, PP, JP, RL
Grande / Lombadas	1997	PP, JP
Grande / Salto Cabrito	1999	LG, GR, NC, FS, PP
Coinhas, Salto Faneira	29/12/2010	PP, RR, DC
Caldeirão Sup.	22/12/2010	PP, RR, MC
Caldeirão Inf.	1999	LG, GR, NC
Cachaço	2012	PP, RR, DC
Lanho	2012	PP, RB
Lima Inf. / Moirinos	2001	LG, GR, NC
Touquada Inf.	08/09/2005	FS, PP, RB, JG
Faial da Terra Sup.	31/07/2013	FS, MCA, PP, RB, RL
Faial da Terra Inf.	2000	LG, GR, NC
Porgas	08/06/2007	PP, MC
Lagos	20/07/2007	FS, MCA, PP, RB, MC
Três Voltas Inf.	2002	LG, GR, NC
Barral Sup.	06/09/2005	FS, PP

Canyoning route	Opening date	Who participated
Santa Maria		
Engenho	04/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB, RC
Funda	22-04-2011	FS, MCA, HS, CK, NA, HuC, HeC
Amaro	05/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB
Salto esq.	06/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB, RC
Salto dta.	06/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB, RC
Salto inf.	06/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB, RC
Grande / Aveiro	06/04/2009	FS, MCA, PP, LPB
Maloás / Malbusca	22-04-2011	FS, MCA, HS, HeC, CK, NA
Faial		
Abreu	2013	PSe, JO
Jejum	2013	PSe, JO

Canyoning route	Opening date	Who participated
Faial		
Corte médio	2011	JO, HM
Corte inferior	2011	JO, BSi
Ribeira do Cabo	2012	CP, MF
Serrado Novo	2011	?
Cabris	2011	AV, GG, TBe
Santa Barbara	2011	AV
Terceira		
Aguialva	28/10/2011	ER
Fontinha	28/11/2011	ER
Casa da Ribeira	01/06/2012	ER

The following tables the number of first descents per team member are presented, all members of names of Desnivel association.

Team member	Number of routes
FS Francisco Silva	82
MCA Maria do Céu Almeida	72
PS Pedro Simão	37
MS Mário Silva	32
PP Paulo Pacheco	29
PHA Paulo Hagendorf Alves	20

Team member	Number of routes
LPB Luís Paulo Bettencourt	16
PeP Pedro Pacheco	14
MM Marco Meio	13
BS Bruno Sebastião	13
RB Rui Borges	8
MC Manuel Câmara	5

According to available information, about 38 other people were involved or joint the team when exploring the routes, whose names are shown in the next table.

Participant	Participant	Participant	Participant
AV António Varela	HS Henrique Simões	PR Paulo Rosa	
BSi Bruno Silveira	HuC Hugo Carvalho	PSe Paulo Sérgio	
CP Carlos Pinheiro	HM Hugo Medeiros	PB Pedro Batista	
CT Carlos Toste	JC João Câmara	PV Pedro Vieira	
CK Carola Kallmeyer	JG João Gouveia	RA Ricardo Andrade	
DF Daniel Ferreira	JO João Oliveira	RV Ricardo Vitorino	
DC Dionísio Cardoso	JP João Pacheco	RC Rita Câmara	
ER Emanuel Raimundo	LC Luís Castanho	RL Rita Lourido	
FSa Francisco Sancho	LG Luís Guimarães	RR Rui Romão	
GR Geraldo Rocha	MF Mark Faria	SP Susana Paima	
GA Gilberto Andrade	NA Nélson Afonso	TBe Tiago Bento	
GG Gonçalo Graça	NC Nuno Cordeiro	TB Tiago Botelho	
HeC Hélder Chaves	PM Paulo Medeiros		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The canyoning guidebook results from the extensive work that has been carried out, since 2003, in the Azores islands. This work was carried out step by step, with exploration, first descents, equipment, promotion and training of local technicians. A voluntary project of this scale naturally required the cooperation of numerous individuals and organisations, namely the team of skilled technicians from Desnivel association that contributed voluntarily. For all members of this large team, for accompanying the authors of this guide, a friendly thank you. Among those who were involved in this project we would like to especially thank to Paulo Alves, Mário Silva, Pedro Simão, Bruno Sebastião, Marco Melo, Pedro Pacheco, Luís Paulo and Manuel Câmara.

In each island, and each expedition, many friendships were built, people that were very helpful, and the many small or big contributions were essential to accomplish this project.

In Flores, Carlos Toste and Marco Melo are friends and companions of exploration, always ready to help in logistics. Pierluigi Bragaglia and Luisa Madruga are friends who discovered and enjoy canyoning as well. Carlos Silva and Teotónia, from Cuada, an excellent place where tranquility and authenticity opened their doors in the first expeditions, in a great place to rest from the canyoning long days and to get ready for new adventures and explorations.

In São Jorge, we had valuable contributions from people like Luís Paulo, Perry, Jorge Santos, Dina, Paulo Rosa, Serafim and "Morango", among others. We will always remember the many dinners with freshly caught fish, the perfect ending for a day of canyoning exploration.

In São Miguel, the friends Manuel Câmara and Lena who always welcome us, allowed us to enjoy Furnas Lake Villas and Poça Dona Beija. Also Rui Borges and Dionísio Cardoso were exploration friends as well as Tiago Botelho with his good humour.

In Santa Maria, we must acknowledge the contribution of the helpful and enthusiastic Rita Câmara, of the lively Henrique Simões and of a surprisingly large group of adventurers, including Nelson Afonso, Hélder Chaves, Nuno Costa, among others.

The development of this project over several years was certainly fostered by the warm hospitality of the Azorean people and the support of several regional organizations, in particular of some municipalities and Turismo dos Açores. A special thanks to the Regional Tourism Association, led by Sandro Paim and José Toste, which have been contributing for more than a decade to the development of nature tourism in the Azores.

The institutional and financial support of the Regional Tourism Board and Regional Tourism Association, were essential to facilitate the development of this project especially for logistics and equipment.

For those who collaborated in the writing of this guidebook an especial friendly thank you: important contributions were made by Rui Romão with graphical work; Tiago Lopes in the edition of the maps; and Joaquim Duarte by his proof reading assistance in the English version. Many provided information about canyoning routes, such as Carlos Toste, Jorge Santos, Henrique Simões, Carlos Pinheiro and Emanuel Raimundo.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the people from Desnivel who, behind a desk or in the association management, continue to give their contribution to ensure that the associative spirit remains alive.

Finally, to all those who contributed somehow to the success of this project in the course of these ten years and we have not mentioned herein, our acknowledgment and wishes of many adventures!

THE AUTHORS

FRANCISCO SILVA

Francisco Silva is a canyoner since 1989, pioneer of this activity in Portugal with the exploration and descent of the first routes in the country. Since then, he has lead more than a hundred first descents of canyoning in Portugal mainland, in Madeira and in Azores.

After being accredited as a Canyoning Monitor by the École Française de Descentes de Canyon of the Fédération Française de Spéléologie, in 2003, developed an extensive work on the structure of the canyoning section of Desnivel association, implementing a training model with which many canyoners and technicians in Portugal have been qualified.

Founder and president of Desnivel, a non-profit association, between 1994 and 2008, continued the collaboration with the association as the coordinator of its canyoning section. His involvement with adventure sports started quite before canyoning, once he was also a pioneer in other adventure sports in Portugal, such as ice climbing, white-water kayaking and coasteering. In 1999, he was accredited as Trainer of Mountain and Climbing by the Federação Portuguesa de Campismo e Caravanismo and, in 2004, as Trainer of Climbing, Mountaineering and Canyoning by the Federação Portuguesa de Montanhismo e Escalada.

His professional activity has been quite varied. Started as a Geography teacher, has been photojournalist and is trainer of adventure sports technicians. Currently, he is professor at Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril (ESHTE) and a tourism consultant. In ESHTE he has been the Director of the Tourism Leisure and Recreation Management undergraduate course, is currently President of the Pedagogical Council and member of the Master in Tourism coordination board. He is PhD in Geography, specializing in Urban and Regional Planning (IGOT-UL), with a thesis using the Azores as study case, has the title of Specialist in Tourism, Leisure and Recreation Management (ESHTE) and a Master degree on Geographical Science and Information Systems (ISEGI).



MARIA DO CÉU ALMEIDA



Maria do Céu Almeida is a canyoneer since the early 1990s and trainer at Desnível association. She has participated in the exploration and first descent of about one hundred canyoning routes in Portugal, joining the canyoning team of Desnível association from its start. As a canyoning trainer, she has collaborated regularly in training activities from canyoning levels NI to NIII, including modules on rope work, canyoning descent techniques, rescue techniques, risk management, environment, hydrology, hydraulics and white-water.

Pioneer and proactive in the exploration and first descents of canyoning routes in Azores, is part of the core team of the project since its beginning, in 2003.

Practitioner of various adventure sports and nature activities, including climbing, mountaineering, hiking, kayaking, and coasteering, among others, was part of the National School of Mountain of FPCC and is accredited as Mountain Walking trainer by FPCC Rope Work trainer by the National Institute of Sports, IDP.

She is PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Master in Operations Research and Systems Engineering and Civil Engineer. Currently is a Senior Research Officer at the National Laboratory for Civil Engineering, Professor at ESHTe and consultant in tourism.

PAULO PACHECO

Paulo Pacheco pioneered the exploration and opening of canyoning routes in Azores in 1997, thus beginning a connection to the sport. Part of the Desnível association canyoning team in the first exploration of new routes in archipelago since 2003, has participated in several expeditions to the islands of São Miguel, Flores, São Jorge, Faial and Santa Maria.

In 2005 he finished his canyoning accreditation which began in 2003 in Desnível association. Subsequently, he developed several training actions from the beginner to the advanced level. Since 2011, is responsible for coordinating the Desnível association Canyoning section in Azores.

In 2004 he concluded the degree in Sport, specialization in Sports, Recreation and Leisure by Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior.



Professionally, Paulo Pacheco started his journey in 2005 as a technician in Picos de Aventura tourism recreation company, assuming the position of operations coordinator. During eight years he was guide in canyoning, climbing, hiking, kayaking and mountain biking activities. He was also responsible for planning and organizing various programs and group events for organizations.

He has been instructor at the Tourism Technical Course from Nordeste Professional School between 2008 and 2010. Since 2005, he is a 3rd class firefighter of Ponta Delgada's Volunteer Fire Department. In 2014, founded the Active Azorean Blueberry tourism recreation company, devoting himself mainly to the organization of tourism activities such as canyoning, coasteering and climbing on the island where he was born, São Miguel.