Levada Trails and Peaks of Madeira

Trip Code: MWW

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	5 MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Summit Pico Ruivo (1,862m), Madeira's highest peak
- Cross the UNESCO-listed Laurisilva forest to the Risco Waterfall, one of Madeira's most famous walks
- Walk the dramatic coastal balcony path above Boca do Risco, high over Madeira's rugged north coast
- A botanist's dream - abundant, unique flora on every trail, from agricultural terraces to ancient laurel forest

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking
- Max altitude 1862 metres
- Join at Funchal

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

With its rugged coastal scenery, impressive volcanic geology and lush levada trails, the Atlantic island of Madeira is a walker's paradise and a haven for keen botanists. This varied Madeira walking holiday takes us around the island, staying in different villages and enjoying ever-changing sea views alongside a variety of superb day walks. Following age-old paths and also hiking alongside Madeira's amazing network of irrigation channels known as levadas, we walk and hike through terraced farmland, explore extensive laurel forest, negotiate levada tunnels and cross jagged green ridges to find the best viewpoints. The scenery is far more varied than you may imagine and the floral diversity is remarkable! Highlights of this Madeira walking holiday include the enchanting green valley of Riberio do Poco, the dramatic mountain views at Encumeada and the rewarding ascent of Madeira's highest peak, Pico Ruivo (1,862m). With daily walks of between 4 and 6 hours and plenty of time to enjoy our atmospheric sea-side locations and comfortable hotels, this is one the best walking holidays in Madeira.

Is this holiday for you?

For this holiday we have picked the best walks on Madeira. We'll explore the island on a series of good day hikes and walks, any of which can be considered as optional. The walks themselves are mostly on good trails often following the famous 'levadas' or irrigation channels, but there are exciting sections including levada tunnels (the longest is just over 1km!), which lead us deep inside the hillside, and some places where there is considerable exposure (normally with a protective fence). Generally each day's walk will be from 5 - 6 hours. To fully explore the island's volcanic ridges and dramatic coastline we also need to be prepared for a reasonable amount of ascent and descent (on average around 650m ascent and 850m descent per day). Some walks can be cut short with a short taxi ride if you are feeling a little tired. On the majority of days we will also finish at a café where we can enjoy a coffee (or cold beer!) whilst we unwind after our walk. Our accommodation each night is in well appointed hotels, the majority of which have swimming pools where we can cool off after the walk, and simple spa facilities to which we have free access! Evenings will be spent enjoying the good food and, of course, sampling the local Madeiran wine! The trails on Madeira can be subject to closure due various weather events. If one of the trails in our itinerary is temporarily closed we will follow a suitable and comparable alternative walk.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- All accommodation as described
- All meals

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Tips for local staff
- Airport transfers (other than group transfers)
- €2 per night hotel tax (paid directly to the hotel)
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

Travelling to your Destination

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive that low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet at the group hotel in Funchal.

There will be a single timed transfer from the airport to the group hotel departing at lunchtime on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there will be a single timed transfer from the hotel to the airport.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available and there is a reliable airport bus service.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Madeiran food is fresh and delicious. Many of the local dishes are prepared from ingredients grown on the island or caught from the sea. Popular dishes include:

Espetada - Grilled beef marinaded in garlic, bayleaf and rock salt and cooked on a skewer made from local laurel wood.

Espada com banana e maracuja (black scabbard fish with banana and passionfruit) - This unusual sounding dish features on just about every menu!

Bolo del Mel (honey cake) - This deliciously dark and dense slab of treacle-filled goodness is Madeira's oldest and most moreish dessert and is great with coffee. There is an active coffee culture in Madeira and one of Funchal's small cafes are the perfect place to relax and enjoy your first 'Bica' of the week. A Bica is the Portuguese equivalent of an Espresso, but served in a slightly more generous portion and smoother to the taste.

Madeira wine is world famous and there are vineyards all over the island. However there are also many local wines which are well priced and of reasonable quality – and it will always be plentiful!

Evening meals will be taken either at the hotel or a nearby local restaurant and there will be plenty of opportunity to try all of Madeira's most famous dishes during the holiday.

Breakfasts will be continental with tea, coffee, bread, jams and fruit.

You will be given a packed lunch to carry on each day's walk. This normally consists of a sandwich made with cheese, tomatoes, olives, ham or other meats, or sometimes a pasta salad, plus some fruit. We recommend that you take a small tupperware box (and spork) to carry your lunch.

Accommodation

The group will spend 2 nights at a hotel in Funchal, within walking distance of the port, city centre and market, 1 night in a hotel in the mountains at Encumeada, 2 nights in a sea from hotel in Porto Moniz, with an indoor pool and adjacent to the natural swimming pools, and 2 nights in a hotel with a pool in Santana. All hotels are comfortable 2/3 star, with en suite rooms and well located.

Accommodation is based on twin share. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning to extend your holiday, additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Altitude

This holiday does not involve any significant ascent to altitude and we would not expect any altitude issues with this trip.

Spending Money

We estimate that approximately €100-150 should be sufficient to cover all personal expenses including tips for your guide. If you buy many drinks in the afternoon/evenings you may need slightly more cash. Cash can be withdrawn from ATMs at the airport and the main towns, and credit cards can also be used to pay for most goods and services.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying ‘thank you’ to your leader and local team. Tipping is entirely voluntary and should be dependent on good service. We recommend that you decide levels of tipping and give any tips as a group rather than from individual group members.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of main luggage and a daypack. For operational and safety reasons, the normal maximum weight for your main luggage is 23 kg**.** Please be mindful that this trip is itinerant, with several accommodations where there may be no elevators, and luggage will need to be handled at each stage.

If your luggage exceeds 23 kg, you may be asked to pay a local handling surcharge. We therefore recommend bringing a medium-sized suitcase or a soft travel bag, which is much easier to manage in hotels and during transfers.

For international flights, please also check your airline’s baggage allowance.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 3 to 6 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

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Climate

Madeira has a mild sub-tropical climate, with the Gulf Stream ensuring pleasant warm temperatures all year round. The hottest months are July and August with average temperatures around 23 ºC, in February and November the maximum temperature is around 18-20 ºC. There would be no beautiful greenery in Madeira without a little rain, however there are many micro climates across the island, with the southern lowlands being the driest and the mountainous northern parts receiving the most rain. Madeira generally has sunshine all year around, with May through to September being the driest months with very little rain. October through to March can be wetter, but with still just an average of 6 days of rain per month.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Walking in Madeira - Cicerone Guide, Paddy Dillon Walk!
- Madeira - Discovery Walking Guides, Shirley & Mike Whitehead
- Madeira Landmark Guide, Richard Sale
- Madeira & Porto Santo - Cadogan Guides Madeira - Insight Guide

Maps

Madeira - Freytag-Berndt und Artaria KG, 1:40,000

Large, contoured road map with hiking trails and tourist information marked.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the ‘baggage allowance’ section for further details.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Spare laces
- Trekking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer (wicking) shirts
- T-shirts and/or casual shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Lightweight windproof/waterproof jacket
- Lightweight gloves
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack c. 25 - 30 litres
- Headtorch and spare batteries (on some days we will be walking through tunnels)

- Sun protection (including for lips)
- Water bottles 1 Litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Tupperware box for lunch salad (approx 15x10x3cm)
- Plastic fork/knife/spoon for eating lunch
- Washbag and toiletries
- Basic First Aid Kit. Including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Trainers or sandals
- Gaiters
- Shorts
- Swimwear (most hotels have pools)
- Towel (for swimming)
- Small plastic cup for tea/coffee at lunch (guide carries a flask)
- Antibacterial handwash
- Trekking poles (highly recommended)
- Insect repellant – (DEET)
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The holiday starts/ends at the hotel in Funchal and a single timed transfer is provided from/to Madeira Airport.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

This is one of KE’s all-time best-selling holidays – and it’s easy to see why. We combine the very best walks on Madeira with four carefully chosen overnight bases, giving a deeper and more varied exploration of the island. Our guests consistently rate this trip 5★.Read KE's Ella Pattinson's account of discovering Madeira's Levadas ands peaks.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 12/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change