

Walking Cape Verde - Santo Antao & Sao Vicente

Trip Code: SGCV

Version:



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



LEISURELY



HIGHLIGHTS

- **BOOK NOW for 2026 with our 2025 Price Freeze**
- Discover some of the best walking trails on Sao Vicente and Santo Antao islands, with your choice between a leisurely or a more challenging walk option on most days

- Experience the contrasts of Santo Antao: arid mountains, lush valleys and stunning beaches
- Hike the spectacular coastal path along the wild Atlantic from Cruzinha to Ponta do Sol
- Relax in peaceful Tarrafal, soak in the laid back island life and Creole hospitality
- Perfect destination for winter sunshine

AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 8 days walking and sightseeing
- Private transfers included
- Luggage transfer
- Max Altitude 1587m
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Daily departures available
- Join at Mindelo

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Overview

The archipelago of Cape Verde, or Cabo Verde, is a stunning collection of islands of varying scenery, situated in the wild Atlantic Ocean 385 miles off the west coast of Africa. On this self-guided walking holiday, you will visit the islands of Sao Vicente and Santo Antao where you will walk on some of the most incredible hiking trails in the mountains and on the coast, discover rural Cape Verdean life and marvel at the spectacular contrasts of the volcanic island landscape.

Beginning your holiday with two nights in the country's cultural centre of Mindelo, you can immerse yourself into the Creole way of life full of music and dancing, and enjoy an option of two hikes on this arid island. Journeying by ferry to Santo Antao, you will explore the high mountains, the fertile valleys and the stunning coastal regions of this verdant island with the option of a shorter walk or a longer walk available on most days. Your holiday culminates with two nights in the remote beach village of Tarrafal, free for you to enjoy as you wish; the perfect spot to relax and absorb the chilled out island vibes. Staying in a variety of comfortable hotels and small family-run guesthouses, you will experience a true taste of Creole hospitality and no doubt fall in love with incredible Cape Verde.

Is this holiday for you?

We have specially designed this holiday with the option of a shorter or a longer walk available on most days so you can choose the route to suit your preference each day. The shorter options on which the trip grade is based are usually around 3-4 hours of walking, while the optional longer hikes are around 5-6 hours of walking.

Your walks will take you on trails that are typically ancient mule tracks of good condition. The nature of the terrain means that some of the trails are rugged, with sections of steep ascents and descents, but you can set your own pace on each day.

Private transfers are provided to/from your walks as required by the itinerary, making your holiday experience as seamless as possible. You will have plenty of time to relax in each of the spectacular locations you will stay at. Plus, we have included two nights at the end of the trip at the remote beach village of Tarrafal, perfect for a spot of R&R after a wonderful week of walking.

Tourism is still in its infancy at many of the places we visit, some accommodations and facilities can be more basic but this adds to the experience of discovering these special, off-the-beaten-track destinations.

For safety considerations on the more remote mountain trails, this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Private transfers as described in the itinerary
- Return ferry journey between Mindelo and Santo Antao
- Tourist tax

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to/from Sao Vicente island
- Local bus transfer if required on Day 5
- Visas (if applicable)
- Drinks
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Tips
- Airport security fee (TSA)
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts and ends at Mindelo. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The best airport for this trip is Sao Pedro Cesaria Evora International Airport on Sao Vicente island.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 6 lunches and 5 dinners are included on this holiday. Drinks (water and other drinks) are not included.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. You should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

In Cape Verde the cuisine is of a West African origin with Portuguese influences. Ingredients used are fresh and tasty, and meals are often based on regional vegetables along with fish or meat. Being surrounded by water, fresh seafood features in many dishes and can include delicious meaty fish such as tuna, jack fish and the lesser known wahoo. Locally grown crops such as sweet potato, yams, cassava and beans make for a hearty meal, generously seasoned with garlic and herbs. The national dish of Cape Verde is known as Cachupa, a slow-cooked stew made with fish or meat, beans, corn and and vegetables, usually served with rice. Soup dishes such as Canjo are also popular, made with chicken, rice, onions and carrots.

Depending on the catch of the day, you might have the opportunity to try the bizarre-looking Percebes (gooseneck barnacles), also known as sea fingers for their appearance; the end is cracked off and the skin peeled to reveal the meat which has a texture akin to squid.

Fresh fruit including papaya, guava, mangoes, banana and coconuts make for a sweet dessert. For those with a sweet tooth, the Cape Verdean bol de cus-cus is a rich, dense cake made with cornmeal, sugar and cinnamon.

Grogue is a strong rum made from distilled sugar cane and is readily available on Santo Antao where the rum is produced. Mixed with condensed milk or molasses, the sweet cocktail of ponche (punch) is created.

Where included, picnic lunches are provided by the accommodation and typically consist of a pasta or rice salad, with tomatoes, corn and sometimes tuna, with local cheese and fruit. It would be a good idea to bring a Tupperware lunch box for your picnic lunch.

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.

Accommodation

For this holiday we have selected a combination of comfortable hotels and family-run guesthouses in the small villages we stay at, all chosen for their amazing locations, magnificent mountain or sea views and warm welcome. Plus many have positive policies on sustainability and local impact.

In Mindelo you will usually stay at the Terra Lodge Hotel which generates its own power with solar panels and recycles its waste water. Terra Lodge also has a wonderful terrace overlooking the town and its surrounding mountains and out to the sea. There is a small swimming pool.

In Ribeira das Patas you usually stay in a beautiful converted farmhouse with a swimming pool, and a stunning backdrop of rugged mountains.

While at the coast in Paul and Ponta do Sol, your hotel is located on the seafront, just a stone's throw from the wild Atlantic Ocean.

At Tarrafal on the western side of Santo Antao, you stay in a small fishing village untouched by mass tourism, in a simple guesthouse right by the beach. A perfect spot to relax and soak up the laid back island life.

Accommodations can be subject to change depending on availability. Tourism is still in its infancy at many of the places we visit; accommodation and facilities can be more basic at some locations but this adds to the charm of discovering off-the-beaten-track destinations. Additionally your stay at these locations will directly benefit the local economy.

Please note that many places are not able to accept payment by credit card so having a supply of cash is a good idea.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, and a daypack for your daily essentials. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

General Information

Passport & Visas

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 and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice for each country visited before travel.

Visa Cape Verde

UK passport holders do not need a visa for short stays. However there is an 'Airport Security Tax' (TSA) and prior to arrival you must register with the Cape Verde authorities on the EASE website where you can pay the 3,400 escudos (approximately £30) TSA.

You must fill in a [traveller entry form](#) at least 5 days before you arrive in the country. This form includes an airport security fee ('TSA'), which you must pay before you arrive.

US passport holders do need a visa for Cape Verde.

Health & Vaccinations

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](https://travelhealthpro.org.uk).

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you [take precautions to avoid mosquito bites](#).

Zika virus has been confirmed as active in this country. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The mosquitoes that transmit ZIKV are unlikely to be found above 2,000m altitude. For more information, visit the website of the National Travel Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk>

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and Support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Currency

The unit of currency in Cape Verde is the Cape Verdean Escudo.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace however, getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking 3 to 5 hours a day for consecutive days on steep and rugged paths.

Climate

Sao Vicente and Santo Antao has a hot desert climate, with the annual temperature on the coast averaging around 24 degrees C. August and September are the hottest months, with daytime highs reaching up to 33 degrees C.

Sao Vicente island experiences little rainfall, with September being the wettest month with an average of 5 days of precipitation. Santo Antao experiences higher levels of precipitation with the rainy season between August and December, accounting for its lush green landscapes. Even so the months of October, November and December only average around 2 days of rain each month.

Higher in the mountains the temperature will feel cooler, dropping as low as 11-15 degrees C.

The best season for hiking is from October to July, avoiding the hottest and wettest month of September.

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. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

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

Cape Verde - Bradt Travel Guide

Folk-lore from the Cape Verde Islands - Elsie Clews Parsons

Fables & Fairy Tales of Cape Verde - R. I. J. Roulhac

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

Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good-grip soles
- Hiking socks
- Long / short hiking trousers
- Functional base layer top and leggings
- T-shirts
- Fleece / extra warm layer
- Windproof jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Hat, gloves, and neck gaiter
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses

- Sunhat
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Camera (and batteries / memory card)
- Reusable sealable picnic boxes for picnics
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Walking poles
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Personal wash kit
- Your self-guided route notes
- Rucksack (approx. 20L)

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in double or twin occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Our sales team will also be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights from your nearest regional airport (where possible). Flight prices are subject to change depending on availability and seasonality. Flight prices will only be confirmed to you when all services have been arranged and confirmed for your requested dates.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Utilising our years of experience operating guided walking holidays on Cape Verde, we have designed this unique self-guided itinerary to explore some of the most beautiful hiking trails on Sao Vicente and Santo Antao, linking the two islands with a ferry journey. With the option of shorter and longer walks most days, you set your own pace for your holiday. Stopping over in Lisbon? Make the most of your time with our self-guided Walking Lisbon & Serra de Sintra short break.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 10/05/2025 and the trip is subject to change