

TRAILS OF THE AZORES



SÃO
MIGUEL

PR3 SMI

Vista do Rei - Sete Cidades

Difficulty: Easy Extension: 7,7 km Time Average: 2:00h Category: Linear



Starting point
37° 50' 21.70" N ;
25° 47' 42.53" O



Geosite



Peak

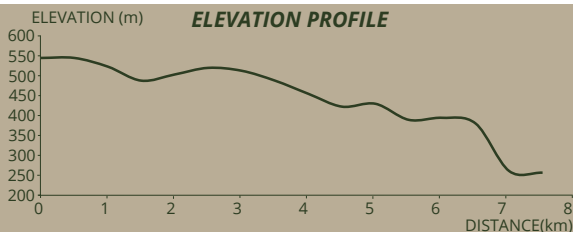


**Environmental
Center**

**Natural Park of
São Miguel**



**Protected
Landscape**



PR3 SMI *Vista do Rei - Sete Cidades*

This trail is located in the northwestern part of the island of São Miguel and extends into the Crater of Sete Cidades, a Protected Landscape Area included in the Rede Natura 2000 (Nature Network 2000). This crater, formed by successive collapses, is one of the largest craters that can be found in the Azores. Its interior contains Lagoa das Sete Cidades, a landscape that was elected as one of the 7 Natural Wonders of Portugal in the category of Non-Maritime Aquatic Zones.



The trail begins at the Miradouro da Vista do Rei (Kings' Belvedere), a postcard location, the name of which was derived from the fact that King D. Carlos and Queen D. Amélia visited it on July 6th of 1901.

After appreciating the view, you will find to the left of the Belvedere an information panel concerning the trail. Consult the map of the trail and continue walking on the dirt road ahead of you. At the beginning of the trail, you will see, to your right, a steep shortcut. Do not take that route. Stay on the pathway that extends around the edge of the western crater of Caldeira das Sete Cidades.

Surrounded by hedges of *Hydrangea macrophylla*, a shrub that flowers in June and is found in all islands of the Azores, this trail offers fine views of the crater of Sete Cidades, with its blue and green lagoons on one side and, on the opposite side, beautiful panoramic views of the western coast of the island.



Approximately 3.5 km into the trail, a descending detour will appear on your left. Ignore it and stay on the same dirt road until you reach the intersection the regional road that connects the village of Mosteiros to Sete Cidades.

At that same intersection, a few metres to the left, you can also appreciate the magnificent view of the village of Mosteiros and its islets from the Belvedere of Lomba do Vasco.

Continue by taking a right, choosing the regional road, descending towards the village of Sete Cidades. Walk a further 600 metres and you will find a dirt road on your left. Advance for a few minutes along that pathway, until you find the intersection of this trail with trail PR4 SMI Mata



THE LEGENDS OF SETE CIDADES

Legends concerning Sete Cidades (Seven Towns) abound in the local oral tradition, the most popular of which tells of a mythical kingdom where a princess, in one of her daily walks in the countryside, met a shepherd for whom she fell hopelessly in love. After several fortuitous encounters, an immense love grew between them. The King, upon learning of the romance of his daughter, prohibited any further meetings of the two youngsters. They met for the last time but, whilst bidding farewell, they cried so profusely that the tears they shed formed two lagoons: one blue, the colour of the princesses' eyes, and the other green, the colour of the shepherd's eyes.

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do Canário - Sete Cidades. Take a right on the shortcut known as Arre-bentões, heading towards the village, passing by a small water tank, used to quench the thirst of the cattle that abounds here. A part of this trail is steep. We recommend caution against slipping hazard whilst descending.

The trail leads to the margin of Lagoa Azul (Blue Lagoon). Follow the pathway that surrounds the margin of the lagoon until you find the Store of the Park of Lagoa das Sete Cidades. We recommend that you visit an area dedicated to the geological/biological interpretation and promotion of the Natural Park of São Miguel. After this visit, turn right on the next street and walk straight ahead, turning right again on Rua de Baixo street. Walk the last few metres to the centre of the village, where you will find an 18th-century church, the church of Saint Nicholas. The trail ends here.