

Terceira

Ships in sight, new tales on the tide!
Landscape and traces of the Portuguese India Route



Explore the same theme in other islands of the Azores

AZORES ARCHIPELAGO



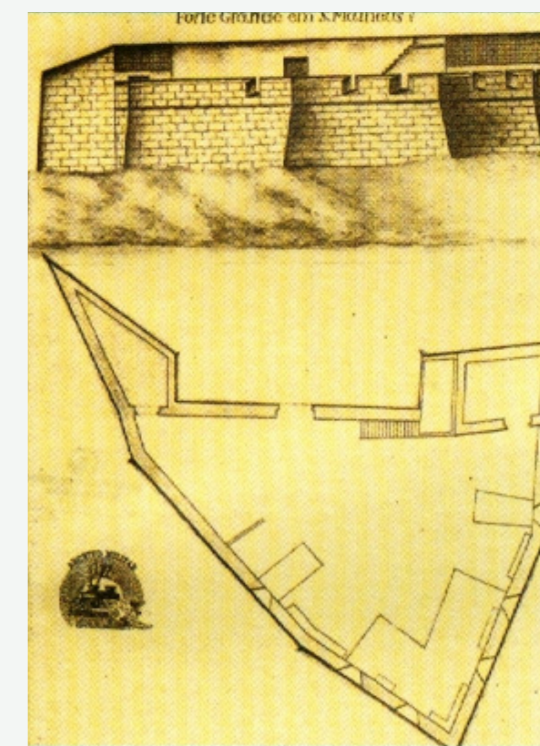
An itinerary with this theme is available for six islands. Learn more about our history.



Forts of Terceira

Over time, a range of defensive forts was built along the coast of Terceira Island, primarily at its most vulnerable points. Initially, they were needed to protect the ships of the Portuguese India Route. Later, between 1580 and 1583, when the island defended the right to the Portuguese Crown of Dom António, Prior of Crato, many other forts were erected to defend the island against the Castilian invaders. While nothing remains from some of these forts, traces of over thirty forts can still be found, as identified by several experts.

1. Fortress of São João Baptista, Monte Brasil
2. Fort of Casa da Salga, Baía da Salga
3. Fort of Greta, Ponta de Santa Catarina, São Sebastião
4. Fort of Laginha, Ponta da Laginha, Feteira
5. Fort of Má Ferramenta, Bravio, São Mateus
6. Fort of Rua Longa, Caminho das Vinhas, Biscoitos
7. Fort of Caninas, Baía das Contendas, São Sebastião
8. Fort of Cavalas, Baía da Salga, São Sebastião
9. Fort of Chagas or Fort of São Francisco, Poço da Areia, Praia da Vitória
10. Fort of Cinco Ribeiras
11. Fort of Nossa Senhora da Luz, São Mateus
12. Fort of Nossa Senhora da Nazaré, Ponta Negra, Porto Martins
13. Fort of Santa Catarina do Cabo da Praia, Baía da Praia
14. Fort of Santo António, Monte Brasil
15. Fort of São Bento, Porto Martins
16. Fort of São Fernando, Porto Martins
17. Fort of São Filipe or Fort of São Tiago, Porto Martins
18. Fort of São Jorge, Ponta de São Jorge, Cabo da Praia
19. Fort of São Sebastião or Castelinho, Angra do Heroísmo
20. Fort of Santa Catarina das Mós, Baía das Mós, São Sebastião
21. Fort of Biscoitinho, Biscoitinho, São Mateus
22. Fort of Bom Jesus, Baía das Contendas, São Sebastião
23. Fort of Espírito Santo, Baía da Praia da Vitória
24. Fort of Negrito, São Mateus
25. Fort of Pesqueiro dos Meninos, São Sebastião
26. Fort of Porto or Fort of São Pedro, Porto dos Biscoitos
27. Fort of Terreiro, São Mateus
28. Fort of Coelhoos, Ponta dos Coelhoos, Porto Judeu
29. Forte Grande de São Mateus, São Mateus
30. First and Second Forts of Ribeira Seca, Baía dos Salgueiros, São Sebastião
31. Fort of Santa Cruz, or of Luz, Baía da Praia
32. Fort of Santo Antão, Baía da Praia da Vitória
33. Fort of São Caetano
34. Fort of São João
35. Fort of São José, Cabo da Praia
36. Fort of Santo António, Porto Martins



Joze Rodrigo d'Almeida.
"Forte Grande em S. Matheus" 1830



Influences on Terceira's Cuisine

The use of spices is common in Azorean gastronomy, which surpasses the use of herbs, typical from the mainland's cuisine. This custom dates back to when spices were abundant in the islands' ports, and each locality adapted their use to their taste. In Terceira's cuisine, Alcatra is a mandatory dish in all secular and religious celebrations. Varying from parish to parish, Alcatra is prepared in a clay pot placed in a wood-fired oven, where the beef is infused with many spices. The use of cloves, allspice, and black pepper is common to all localities. However, in some places, cinnamon sticks, paprika, or chilli peppers are also added.

Cinnamon, which arrived later in Europe, has become another common seasoning in many dishes of local cuisine. In relation to desserts, it is linked to the pastries "Donas Amélias" and "Pudim do Conde da Praia", as well as with "Arroz-doce" (rice pudding) as a decorative ingredient, mainly served during the Holy Spirit Festivities. It is also an important ingredient in the Sopa Azeda (Sour Soup), a nutritious broth with beans, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin, seasoned with vinegar (hence the name azeda, meaning sour), cumin, and, of course, cinnamon. Cinnamon, which arrived later in Europe, has become another common seasoning in many dishes of local cuisine. It is used in rice pudding as a decorative ingredient, mainly served during the Holy Spirit Festivities. It is also an important ingredient in the Sopa Azeda (Sour Soup), a nutritious broth with beans, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin, seasoned with vinegar (hence the name azeda, meaning sour), cumin, and, of course, cinnamon.



Explore TERCEIRA AZORES



(PT) "A ilha Terceira, universal escala do mar do ponente, é celebrada por todo o mundo, onde reside o coração e governo de todas as ilhas dos Açores, na sua cidade de Angra [...] é muito fortificada e defensável com vinte e quatro fortes, antre fortalezas e cubelos que em si tem."

(EN) Terceira Island, a universal scale of the western sea, is celebrated throughout the world, where the heart and the government of all the Azorean islands reside, in its city of Angra [...] heavily fortified and defensible with twenty-four forts, among fortresses and turrets that it possesses.

Gaspar Frutuoso (1586-1590).
Saudades da Terra, Livro VI

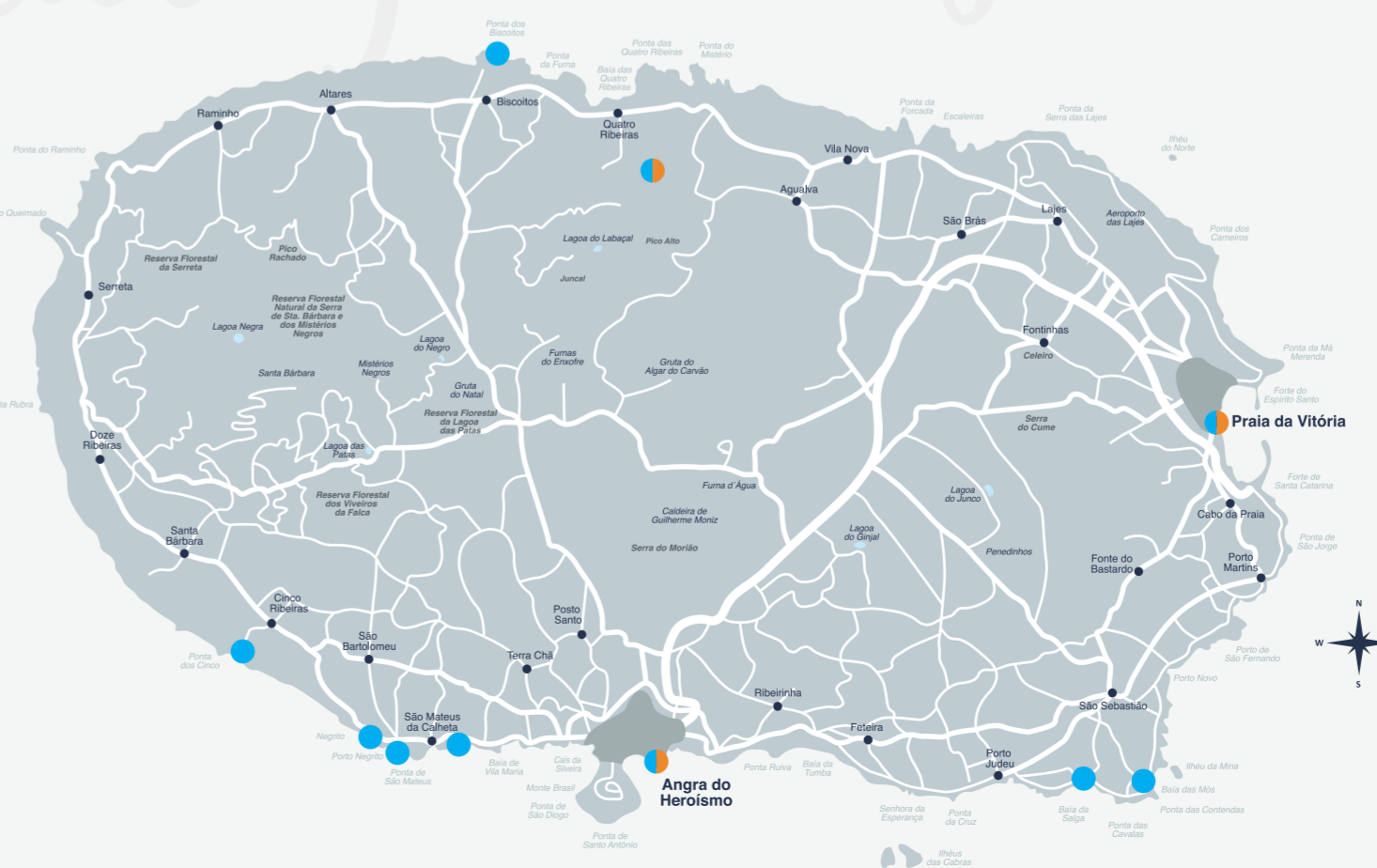


Thematic Routes

Among the innumerable routes on the island, we propose two thematic itineraries: In one, you will be taken to places whose histories came across pirates and privateers, where there was the need for building surveillance and defence measures. In the other, you will be guided to the traces left by the riches brought from the East between the 16th and 17th centuries.

STORIES OF PIRATES, PRIVATEERS, AND INVADERS
1-2-3-4-6-7
11-13-14-15

REVOLVING AROUND SILVER
5-8-9



Ships in sight, new tales on the tide!

Landscape and traces of the Portuguese India Route

In the final quarter of the 16th century, the city of Angra emerged as the most crucial port of call in the Atlantic on the return journey and thus was a target for pirates and privateers. In addition to the increasing influx of vessels and goods, the circulation of people, particularly of artisans skilled in various trades, led to the increase in the construction of fortified and defensive structures (also justified by the local opposition to the Iberian Union of 1580), along with intervention work within the interior of numerous temples. This was when what would later be called the escola dos Mestres da Sé de Angra (School of the Masters of Angra Cathedral) was established – a true workshop for artists who left their mark on many buildings.

In this growing city, one could find gold from Mina in Africa, silver from the Americas, spices from India, and porcelain from China. The city was constructed with wide and regular streets, making it the first city with a Renaissance layout in the Atlantic. Its commercial activity benefited not only from the island's resources but also from those of the neighbouring islands.

As you explore the island, we propose that you take a moment to appreciate some of the imprints and remnants that still testify to the passage of spices and silver through Terceira Island and the prosperity they brought. As the saying goes, there was always a ship on the tide carrying news, although not always the good kind!

Enjoy your walk!

1. Igreja Velha de São Mateus, Caminho da Igreja Velha, São Mateus da Calheta

Igreja Velha de São Mateus (Old Church of São Mateus) was the first temple the ships returning from India greeted as they headed for the Bay of Angra. Knowing that a safe harbour was near and refreshment was guaranteed, the ships celebrated with artillery shots.



15. Fort of Negrito, São Mateus da Calheta

From the Negrito area, to the west of Angra, the indented low coast was vulnerable to enemy approach and landings. Thus, this entire coastline was reinforced with defensive fortifications that crossed-fired. The Fort of Negrito was the first construction in this low-lying area, commissioned by Ciprião de Figueiredo in 1581.



14. Forte Grande de São Mateus. Estrada Regional, São Mateus da Calheta

Forte Grande de São Mateus (Large Fort of São Mateus) was built in 1567 and, like other forts on Angra's western coast, crossed-fired with the others while safeguarding that stretch of coastline. It remained in good condition until the 20th century and was once again garrisoned by the military during World War II.



13. Fort of São Sebastião, or Castelinho, Angra do Heroísmo

Designed by Tommaso Benedetto and erected in the mid-16th century, the Fort of São Sebastião was the first modern fortress in Angra by the coast and was fortified with bastions. It defended the bay and protected it from maritime attacks, crossfiring with the nearby Fort of Santo António, at the southern tip of Monte Brasil, one of the oldest fortifications on Terceira Island's southern coast.



2. Fort of Porto das Cinco Ribeiras, Cinco Ribeiras

Erected in 1581, the Fort of Cinco Ribeiras was part of a line of defence established by the Angra Municipality in 1653, when private attacks were frequent. Located on top of a high cliff, this fort had an extended range for artillery fire and a wide field of vision over the sea or any vessels approaching the island.



3. Fort of Porto, or Fort of São Pedro, Biscoitos

It was likely the first coastal fort with a bulwark design erected on Terceira Island, built in the mid-16th century. Its construction is a result of the island's defence plan designed by Tommaso Benedetto and carried out by Ciprião de Figueiredo.



4. Wall of Praia da Vitória

Between Salga and the former town of Praia, the entire shoreline is a low, pebble-stone coast brimming with forts and defensive redoubts. It was described by the historian Gaspar Frutuoso in the 17th century as a town encircled by sound walls, with its forts and bastions all around, populated by noble and long-standing residents, and one of the oldest settlements on the island. A stretch of this wall can still be found along the waterfront. However, the lack of definitive dating makes it uncertain whether it is contemporary with Frutuoso's description.



5. Main Church of Praia da Vitória, Santa Cruz

The Main Church integrates elements from various periods of construction and reconstruction. In particular, it displays noteworthy 16th-century elements, such as the Manueline portals in white limestone, which came from Lisbon around 1517. They are a testament of the monarchy's interest in embellishing these temples and of the craftsmanship of local artists in this period, such as the altarpiece in the Chapel of Santa Maria Madalena.



6. Baía das Mós, São Sebastião

Extending from Salga, the Baía das Mós also faced the genuine possibility of enemy landing, leading to the construction of the Fort of Greta and the Fort of Santa Catarina das Mós between 1580 and 1583. A protective wall connected them and was later reinforced with the construction of Fort of Bom Jesus in 1644. The entire area recalls the Battle of Mós in 1583 when Álvaro Bazán, Marquis of Santa Cruz, invaded the island, ultimately ending the resistance of Terceira.



7. Baía da Salga, São Sebastião

The defensive complex of Baía da Salga included several forts and redoubts (Fort of Coelho, Casa da Salga Redoubt, Fort of Salga, Fort of Caninas, and Fort of Cavalas) that crossed-fired and were gradually built after 1581, following the restrained invasion attempt by the Castilian army of Dom Pedro de Valdés. Today, most of them lie in ruins.



8. Sé Cathedral of Angra do Heroísmo

The Sé Cathedral of Angra do Heroísmo holds Tesouro da Sé, a treasure trove of religious silverware, paintings, and sculptures of Hispano-Oriental influence. The furniture crafted from Brazilian wood, as well as the works of the *Mestres da Sé*, are part of an excellent 16th and 17th-century experiences repository of this city.



12. Provedoria das Armadas, or Solar dos Remédios, Angra do Heroísmo

In 1527, a nobleman named Pero Anes do Canto was appointed as the Provedor das Armadas e Fortificações (title for the Portuguese Navy and Fortifications Ombudsman). He was in charge of waiting for the India ships near Corvo and escorting them to the port of Angra, where they would be resupplied with provisions, water and any needed repairs. Additionally, he patrolled the waters around the islands, perpetually infested with privateers ready to attack and plunder defenceless ships and settlements. The impressive headquarters of the Provedoria in Angra provided a view of the entire bay. Gaspar Frutuoso described the intense maritime activity supervised by the Provedor: "...it enriches and honours it [the island], with the large number of ships that come from all parts of the world, especially the navigation of the west and the West Indies, from where large fleets often gather in Angra, exceeding one hundred ships..."



11. Fortress of São João Batista, Monte Brasil

During the Castilian rule, the inaccessible natural isthmus that is Monte Brasil was used to build a large citadel to accommodate troops, store supplies, and munitions (in 1591). It had the dual function of safeguarding and preventing external attacks as well as controlling and subduing the city that had previously resisted the Castilian invaders. The Fortress of São Filipe, later renamed to São João Batista after the Portuguese Restoration of Independence, is shaped like a polygon, and its walls are topped with advanced bastions. It has been classified as a "Property of Public Interest" since 1943.



10. Church of Misericórdia of Angra, Angra do Heroísmo

The Church of Misericórdia, established right before the city's pier, marked the arrival at the longed-for refreshment port. Its original construction dates back to the 15th century, attached to a hospital: it was essential to ensure immediate spiritual solace for those arriving, given the hardships they faced at sea, as well as medical care for their weakened bodies.



9. Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, Angra do Heroísmo

The theme of voyages and the importance of the new products they brought with them is also present in the adornments of some ecclesiastical spaces. For example, in the Church of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, there are two gilded cedarwood panels portraying Spanish soldiers carrying a large harvest, and in the Church of Colégio of Angra, some chapels feature carved decorations representing the Brazilian flora and fauna.

