

Self-Guided Cycling on Madeira

Trip Code: SGMM

Version: SGMM Self-Guided Cycling on Madeira



CYCLE



SELF-GUIDED



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Cycle Madeira's coast line as you circumnavigate the island in just one week
- Madeira's floral splendour, its unique laurel forest and amazing botanical gardens
- Be blown away at a sequence of dramatic coastal viewpoints including Cabo Girao
- Spend a day in Funchal with an included cable-car ride to unmissable Monte

AT A GLANCE

- Self-guided
- 5 days cycling
- BIKE HIRE INCLUDED
- Tuesday Thursday and Saturday departures
- Join at Canico / Funchal

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 7 nights Hotel

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

Introduction

Four hundred kilometres north of the Canary Islands, the Portuguese island of Madeira is known as the 'Island of Eternal Spring' on account of its welcoming climate and floral diversity. Popular with hikers, drawn to its rugged landscape and unique 'levada' trails, Madeira also works fantastically well as a holiday destination for confident cyclists seeking a challenge. You can witness the island's distinct charm for yourself on this one week self-guided cycling holiday as you circumnavigate the island on generally quiet roads that twist and turn, almost always within sight of the Atlantic Ocean. We include a number of short vehicle transfers to overcome the longest climbs, but there's still plenty of climbing to be done - all of course at your own pace. Madeira is a revelation with its pretty villages, ancient laurel forest, vivid birdlife, colourful botanical gardens, volcanic geology and breathtaking coastal scenery. Culturally, too, the island is special; colonised by the Portuguese in the 15th Century and boasting a rich history as a focal point of Atlantic trade routes and as a producer of sugar cane. Magnificent manor houses (known as quintas) and monumental fortresses bear witness to the island's colourful past.

You will spend 5 days circumnavigating the island, staying in a fantastic selection of 4* hotels (1 night in a special 2* hotel beside the sea) on a bed and breakfast basis. Plus, we have included 2 nights in the island's capital of Funchal with a day off the bikes for you to do some exploring.

Is this holiday for you?

If you're a regular cyclist with a good level of fitness and looking for somewhere different for your next holiday on 2 wheels, this could be for you. We have included 5 days of cycling, covering a total of 190 kilometres on quiet roads. Averaging less than 40 kilometres per day, the distances are not great, but the distinctly undulating nature of the terrain, including some long climbs, makes this probably our most challenging self-guided cycling holidays. Taking each day's ride at your own pace, there will be lots of time to stop and to take in the sights. Plus, with the option to upgrade to an e-bike, you can always opt for a little extra pedal power on the hills. With comfortable, generally 4-star, accommodation throughout, you will have everything you need to relax on the completion of each day's activities.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Arrive at your hotel in Canico and take a stroll to the nearby botanical gardens.

Check in at your hotel in the charming coastal village of Canico which is on Madeira's south coast and just a handful of kilometres from both Funchal to the west and the island's airport at Santa Cruz to the east. Like many places on the island, Canico sits within a rugged volcanic landscape and there is lots to see and do. Depending on your time of arrival, you may wish to visit one of the nearby black pebbly beaches for a dip. Or check out the Quinta Splendida Botanical Gardens which features more than 1000 species of plants and flowers, many of them native to Madeira. There's also a pleasant promenade, perfect for an evening stroll beside the sea.



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Cycle on a high road with far-reaching views from Camacha to Porto da Cruz.

Your first day of cycling begins with a short transfer inland (and 700 metres uphill) to Camacha, where your bikes will be waiting for you. This village is famous for its basket and wicker furniture making and the local craftsmen give regular displays in a warehouse on the main square. Having picked up your bike, you'll cycle on a lovely high road towards the eastern end of the island. This road contours around and offers great views eastwards to the long and dramatic promontory of the Ponta de Sao Lourenco. The route undulates a little before dropping down to the little fishing village of Porto da Cruz. Here, you may wish to spend some time on the black sandy beach or take a swim in the village's fantastic swimming complex which consists of 2 pools, a sun terrace and restaurant area - perfect for relaxing after your journey. Alternatively, you may wish to delve straight into the culture of the island and pay a visit to the last remaining sugar mill on the island where they have been processing the sugar since 1927. Sugar cane was one of the main agricultural produces on the island and at the distillery you can sample 'poncha', a popular local drink made from sugar cane liquor, honey and freshly squeezed orange juice.

Meals: **B**



Accommodation
Hotel



Ascent
400M



Descent
1100M







Distance
25KM

DAY 3

Discover Madeira's north coast on a ride from Santana to Sao Vicente.

Another short transfer is provided this morning to overcome what would otherwise be a long, steep ascent on the bike. You'll be dropped off in the town of Santana, known for its colourful Madeiran houses (known as 'casas de colmo') with their distinctive triangular shape and high pitched thatched roofs. This part of the island is comprised of six parishes which have been awarded World Heritage status for the continuation of traditional crafts and agricultural way of life. From Santana, your cycle route follows a beautiful road, heading generally westwards through pretty villages and with spectacular coastal panoramas from several prominent viewpoints. The route twists and turns across the landscape and there's a fair bit of up and down too. You'll see lots of fertile agricultural land where the villagers grow sugar cane, vegetables, and sweet smelling fruits including wine grapes. A final stretch from Ponta Delgada skirts the edge of the sea to your home for the night in Sao Vicente. This pretty seaside town, nestling between high promontories has a long beach and is famous for its caves of volcanic origin.

Meals: **B**





	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 1050M		Descent 1460M		Distance 40KM
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DAY 4

Enjoy a stunning descent from the mountains to the sea at Porto Moniz.

You will be picked up again after breakfast and driven up into the centre of the island to begin your ride on the high plateau of Paul da Serra at around 1500 metres elevation. On the way you'll pass through some of the island's important laurisilva forest which is protected under UNESCO's World Heritage Convention. From your starting point today, if it's clear, you can see the sea in both directions, north and south. Grazing cows and sheep line the route as you set off on what is essentially a long descent to the north-western point of the island at Porto Moniz. Leaving the plateau behind, you'll follow an amazing ridge-top road which continues to descend steadily, offering fantastic views on all sides. Arriving at your hotel you should have plenty of time to check out the excellent natural seawater pools, popular with locals and visitors, that are a feature of Porto Moniz.

Meals: **B**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 790M		Descent 1760M		Distance 35KM
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DAY 5

A super day of cycling around Madeira's west coast, from Porto Moniz to Calheta.

Cycling straight from the hotel today, the road climbs steadily for the first 12 kilometres with increasingly

impressive views of the west coast. You'll cycle through fragrant forests and through small villages and no doubt be stopping often, as around every curve there's another unmissable photo opportunity. Madeira's westernmost point is at Ponta do Pargo, where there's a prominent red and white lighthouse, and here you'll turn south, following minor roads that twist and turn above a steep coastal escarpment. There are several places, such as at Lombada dos Marinheiros, where the coastal views are spectacular. You'll overnight at the lively village of Calheta, which has a colourful yacht harbour and a beach filled with sand imported from Morocco. This former centre of sugar cane production has become a popular place for locals to meet.

Meals: **B**




	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 1380M		Descent 1440M		Distance 45KM
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DAY 6

Take in the sights on your final day of cycling along the south coast to Funchal.

Hopping on your bike, you once again follow minor roads that meander above the coastline, never straight nor level for long as you head towards the island's capital of Funchal. After 20 kilometres you'll be back at sea-level at Ribeira Brava where your route once again takes you uphill and away from the coast and then back to the clifftop at Cabo Girao, one of the most dramatic viewpoints imaginable. Here, a transparent platform, 580 metres above the sea, allows you to look down to a thin strip of farmed land at the water's edge. An intriguing stop for those with a head for heights. A long descent will then bring you back to the sea and onwards to your accommodation in the centre of Funchal.

Meals: **B**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 1670M		Descent 1660M		Distance 45KM
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DAY 7

Enjoy a day in and around Funchal. Return cable car ticket to Monte included.

We have included a bike-free day to allow you to experience some of the other attractions of 'fun' Funchal. We've also included a return ticket on the cable car that links Funchal with the suburb of Monte, some 500 metres up the hillside. Monte is a great place to do some exploring - you can visit the pilgrimage church, Nossa Senhora do Monte and the Monte Palace tropical garden. Another attraction is undoubtedly the Monte Toboggan run, where you can get whisked away to the city in a large wicker car on two skis, accompanied by two 'carreiros' in their traditional white uniforms and straw hats. As another option, you could take a walk beside one of the 'levadas', Madeira's famous irrigation channels. You'll soon learn that Madeira is a lot of fun without a bike, too.

Meals: **B**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 8

Departure Day.

Enjoy a relaxed breakfast and perhaps a final stroll around the town before making your onward journey.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Luggage transfers
- Transfers after breakfast on days 2-3-4
- Funchal-Monte cable car return ticket on day 7
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Welcome briefing
- Bike hire

What's not Included

- Tourist tax if due is not included in the price
- Travel insurance
- Travel to Canico on day 1 and from Funchal on day 8
- Visas (if applicable)
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- 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, about 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 signed for courier so that you can track your package and know that they are safely on their 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 you set 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 do 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 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, 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.

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

This trip starts in Canico and ends in Funchal. 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 nearest airport for this trip is Funchal Airport with many departures from regional UK airports.

If you are flying to Funchal Airport you can travel via public transport to Canico, the journey takes 20 minutes by the 'Line 113' bus and tickets cost around 5 euros.

Alternatively you may wish to take a taxi for approximately 15 euros.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the opportunity to enjoy dining in local restaurants.

Food & Water

Madeira's fertile volcanic soils and clever irrigation via the famous network of 'levadas' allow the islanders to grow a mouth-watering array of fresh fruit and vegetables. And, on top of that, there's a tasty selection of seafood brought to port each day by the local fisherman. This holiday is on a bed and breakfast basis allowing you to sample all the great tastes the island has to offer.

The island has many fantastic seafood restaurants serving delicacies such as grilled limpets fresh from the grill served with garlic butter, lemon and local bolo do caco (a typically Madeiran flat round bread). For meat eaters we recommend sharing picado with your travelling companion; made with fried chunks of beef, garlic and red peppers served in a large dish surrounded by French fries designed for everyone to grab a fork and dig in.

Food is varied and plentiful on Madeira and it's not just savoury dishes the Madeirans excel at. Across the island you will find bakeries filled with delicious treats to satisfy any sweet tooth including the traditional Portuguese tarts pastel del nata and bolo de mel, a honey cake traditionally eaten at Christmas time. And let's not forget the aperitif for which the island is famed- Madeira Wine. The fortified wine comes in many forms from a sweet dessert wine to a dry aperitif making the perfect end to an evening meal or a souvenir to remember a great holiday on the island.

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide 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 diet 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

We have handpicked a great range of 4* hotels for your trip, you will also spend one night in a family run 2* hotel in Porto da Cruz. Each hotel has been specially chosen for its great location and warm hospitality. All of the hotels offer something different such as wellness centres, pools and cosy bars perfect for relaxing after a busy day walking on the island.

All of our hotels offer a great breakfast buffet to fuel you for the day ahead and are in close proximity to many bars and restaurants where you can enjoy a traditional Madeiran meal.

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you would like to extend your time on the island. Please speak to our sales team for more information.

Bike Hire

Bikes come with 21 gears and all bikes come equipped with a pannier and handlebar bag for your daily essentials plus a milometer, a bike lock, pump and repair kit. The bikes provided for this trip come in two different frame types- unisex or male bike frame. Unisex bikes being provided for passengers up to a height of 185cm and male bike frames are provided for those above 185cm. If you would prefer a specific frame bike i.e. a male bike frame, please request this with our sales team.

You also have the option of upgrading to bike plus hire on this trip for a supplement of £70. The bike plus option provides a slightly sportier sitting posture and comes with upgraded items such as 27 gears, hydraulic brakes and a front suspension fork. This is a great option for those looking for a slightly comfier ride without upgrading to an e-bike for a supplement of £250.

We strongly recommend that you wear a helmet at all times when on the bike. You can either bring your own - which we recommend - or you can purchase a helmet to collect on your arrival in Canico for an additional €40.

We also suggest you consider packing a gel seat for extra comfort or a pair of padded cycling shorts, whilst you will be riding at your own pace and there will be plenty of opportunities to stop and explore, it is always nice to have some padding for a comfortable ride.

We are also able to arrange tandem bikes, children's bikes, trailers and child seats. Please ask our sales team for details.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your ride. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is under 20KG and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning. You will also need a daypack to carry your daily essentials with you.

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.

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 before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Currency

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

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided cycling holiday is that you decide the pace. This trip is designed for regular cyclists as some of the included day-rides are decidedly hilly. You should be comfortable with cycling 40-50 kms a day on quiet rural roads and short connecting sections on busier roads. It is a good idea to get some additional exercise before going on an active holiday and you should make sure you head out on a few rides before your trip. After all, the fitter you are the more enjoyable your cycling will be.

Climate

Madeira has a mild sub-tropical climate, with the Gulf Stream ensuring pleasant temperatures all year round. The warmest months are July and August with maximum temperatures around 26-27 °C, whilst in February and November it is just a little cooler at 18-20 °C. Madeira generally has sunshine all year around, with May through to September being the driest months and seeing very little rain. October through to March can be wetter, but with still just an average of 6 days of rain per month. Of course, there would be no beautiful greenery on Madeira without a little rain.

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 prior to 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 direct 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

- Madeira Landmark Guide, Richard Sale
- Madeira & Porto Santo – Cadogan Guides
- Madeira – Insight Guide

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.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

- Cycling shorts
- Cycle helmet
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Scarf
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Rain protection
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Sun glasses
- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags

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 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [-> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons on twin or double occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers including solo travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

This trip is available for departures on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays throughout the dates listed.

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.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

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

We offer some transfers to your hotel from the nearest airports, please refer to the 'joining arrangements and transfers' for further details for this trip.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Madeira is popular with KE clients; our walking groups have been visiting this enchanted island in the Atlantic for a decade. It was only logical that we would set up a self-guided cycling holiday on the island - and what makes it even better - none of our competitors has such a trip. Bike hire is included on all of our self-guided cycling holidays. E-bike are also available (at additional cost) for anyone wanting to make the trip a whole lot easier.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 20/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change