

The azores



The Azores is located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean in between North America and Europe. Azores is a region not a country. The main language is Portuguese. The archipelago is 760 miles from Lisbon and 2, 110 miles from New York.

The Azores is made up of nine beautiful and fascinating islands, Corvo, Flores, Faial, Graciosa, Pico, Sao Jorge, Sao Miguel, Santa Maria, and Terceira. A group of islands like this is also called an archipelago. They are divided into three groups. The Eastern group is made up of Santa Maria and Sao Miguel. The central group is made up of Terceira, Graciosa, Sao Jorge, Pico, and Faial. The western group is made up of Flores and Corvo.

The capital of these islands are: Corvo, Vila Nova do Corvo, Flores, Lages, Faial, Horta, Graciosa, Santa Cruz, Pico, Lagis, Sao Jorge, Vila das Velas, Sao Miguel, Ponta Delgada, Santa Maria, Vila do Porto, and Terceira, Angra do Heroismo.

All the islands have there own little story on which they tell their history and important facts and this all makes up the history of the Azores.

First I will start with the island of Sao Miguel: which is also known as the Green island because color given by the Forests. Sao Miguel is the most populated of the nine islands, and has an area of 297 square miles and a population of 250, 000. The discovery of this island took place sometime between 1426 and 1439.

Santa Maria: The island of Santa Maria has an area of 42 square miles. It is the southernmost island in the archipelago and its major settlement is Vila do Porto its capital.

Its exact date of discovery is still a matter of discussion today. It is believed

that it was discovered between 1427 and 1432. The settlement of the island took place during the course of the 15th century. Santa Maria is exceptional for the way its white painted cottages with their unusual chimneys are scattered over the landscape.

Terceira: The island of Terceira has an area of 250 square miles. Its called Terceira because it was the 3rd island to be discovered. About 1450 a Fleming, Jacome de Bruges, began to colonize the island.

Owing to its privileged location, the island was then the port of call for Portuguese ships sailing the Atlantic. Angra was the 1st settlement to be razed to the status of township (1534). The Pope declared it a diccese.

Sao Jorge: This cigar shaped island has an area of 95 square miles and a population of 13, 000 inhabitants who dedicate themselves to farming, cattle raising and fishing. The exact date of its discovery and settlement is uncertain, but one of its 1st settlers was a Flemish by the name of Willheam Van der Haegen (Guilherme da Silveria).

The main settlement of Sao Jorge is Vila das velas located on the southwest coast in a sheltered bay. Sao Jorge is known as the island of dairy farming. It is known for its cheese - Queijo de Sao Jorge-.

Pico: The island of Pico, so named for its mountain that has 175 square miles and a population of 18, 014 as of 1970.

The island of Pico was once a whaling center in the Azores. The presence of whalers, which continued until the 19th century, led many Azoreans to the far corners of the globe. This was when oil extracted from petroleum replace the white whale oil in many uses.

Flores: the island of Flores is the westernmost island in Azores. It has an area of 57 square miles and a population of 5, 302. Manuel Passanha, a Genose admiral in the service of Portugal, discovered the island in 1452. Though the island was discovered in 1452 it was not colonized until 1528 due to difficulties in communication and exploration of products.

Faial: The island of Faial was discovered in the first half of the 15th century. It has an area of 64 square miles and a population of 17, 474. It is 6 miles at the widest point and 11 miles long.

Its colonization took place before 1460 and eight years later a group of Flemish under the nobleman Josse de Hurtere settled in Fail. Even though the number of Portuguese settlers was greater, the Flemish community by 1490 numbered 1500 people.

Graciosa: Graciosa was discovered in 1450 and its first settler was Vasco Gill Sodre, a native of Montimor-O-Velho, from Northern Portugal. Its the most northerly island in the central Azores group.

Its name comes for its abundance of flowers in the island. The island has an area of 27 square miles. Unlike all the other islands in the Azores it is not hilly but like them it has steep and rocky coasts.

Corvo: The island of Corvo was discovered by Diogo Teve in 1452. it has an area of 7 square miles and a population of 469. It is the smallest and the most northern island in the Azores Colonization of the island took place in 1548