



MADEIRA TRAIL RUNNING self-guided

The Grand Traverse trail running



Trail running is developing in Madeira and more and more Madeirans are taking up the sport, especially at weekends. A trail and ultratrail event (MIUT®) has even been created. The varied trails between coastlines, forests, crops, villages and sharp ridges, sometimes peaceful along levadas with tunnels or in places demanding with a series of rocky steps or overlooking precipices, offer sports enthusiasts an unforgettable experience. Here's a grand tour of the island from east to west along some of its most beautiful routes.

🕒 8 days

👤 Self-guided / without a guide

🚚 With or without baggage transport

🏠 Accommodation : Hotel ***

🏔️ Level : ****

🏠 From : 660€

You will like

- Crossing the crests of mountains, levadas and wild coastlines
- Few transfers, with luggage transfer so you can run light
- Opportunities to shorten or lengthen stages
- A "little Reunion" 4 hours away by air
- GPS tracks available

The route

Day 1

PORTO DA CRUZ

You will be met at Funchal airport and transferred to the small coastal village of Porto da Cruz, in the north-east of the island, where you will stay for 2 nights. Overnight stay + breakfast in a *** residence overlooking the ocean.

Variant: In summer, the village of Porto da Cruz offers a municipal seawater swimming pool, while the rest of the year, a few surfers take to the waves at the foot of the cliffs. A traditional rum factory can still be found here.

Day 2

MACHICO - SENTIER DE LA CÔTE NORD - PORTO DA CRUZ

Public bus to Machico, a small coastal town in the south-east, where you can do some shopping and pack a picnic lunch. A short day to warm up and acclimatise: from the beach and the São João Batista fort, climb to Pico do Facho (322 m) along a path, then a short stretch of road to join the Levada do Caniçal, which runs into the Ribeira Seca. Climb up to the Boca do Risco pass, where there is a magnificent panoramic view of the north coast, the Pointe de São Lourenço and the island of Porto Santo in the distance. An incredible coastal path cut into the cliffs and overhanging the sea by more than 200 m. leads back to Porto da Cruz via the farming hamlet of Larano. Overnight on a half-board basis in a *** hotel facing the ocean.

17km / Elevation: +/- 580m

Day 3

PORTO DA CRUZ - PORTELA - LEVADA DO FURADO - RIBEIRO FRIO - CRUZINHAS - SANTANA

Climb through narrow streets and cobbled paths to the Portela pass, 600 m above sea level. A good path starts here, bordering the Levada do Furado, which flows swiftly and clearly eastwards. The views from this route are increasingly sumptuous. The high peaks of the island are opposite and the path, which is wide at first, becomes narrower and then runs alongside deep ravines. Well protected by tree heathers and a few fences, the path penetrates the laurisilva with a touch of adventure. At Ribeiro Frio, there's a short round trip to Balcões, an extraordinary balcony overlooking the Faja de Nogueiras and the island's great peaks, then a descent to Cruzinhas. Short climb to Lombo do Galego and arrival in Santana, at the heart of the island's agricultural life. Overnight on a half-board basis in a hotel **** with indoor pool and jacuzzi.

32km / Elevation: + 1410m - 1005m

Day 4

RIDGE TRAVERSE : PICO DO ARIEIRO - PICO RUIVO - ENCUMEADA

Morning transfer by taxi or minibus from Santana to Pico do Arieiro (50 min), or on request to Achada do Terceira (30 min). Discover the island's most beautiful peaks, from Pico do Arieiro (1,818 m) to Pico Ruivo (1,862 m, the island's highest point) via Pico das Torres (1,851 m) and Miradouro Ninho da Manta (1,798 m). Steps and paths cut into the rock, galleries and tunnels! A magical journey along the sharp, multi-coloured ridges that often emerge from the sea of clouds. Arrive at Pico Ruivo (1,862 m) before setting off on the long ridge that bisects Madeira from east to west as far as Encumeada (1,000 m), at the gateway to the Paul da Serra plateau. The trail wanders along a ridge line, between passes and peaks, passing Pico das Eirinhas (1,649 m), Pico Casado (1,725 m), Pico Jorge (1,691 m) and finally the Col das Torrinhas (1,400 m). Overnight on a half-board basis in a three-star hotel in Encumeada, in the heart of the mountains, right in the centre of the island.

19 km / Elevation: + 1060 m - 860 m

Variant: This walk can be shortened by a morning transfer to Achada do Teixeira (instead of Pico do Arieiro). You then begin a short ascent to Pico Ruivo. The route to Encumeada is the same as above.

14 km / Elevation: + 560 m - 920 m

Day 5

RABAÇAL - LAGOA DO VENTO - CASCADES DE RISCO ET 25 FONTES - ARCO DE CALHETA

Transfer early in the day by minibus (30 mins) across the Paul da Serra plateau to the Rabaçal car park. From the Rabaçal car park, on the western edge of the Paul da Serra plateau, follow the levadas first along the edge of the plateau, among the grasses, then into the heart of the laurel forest and its majestic tree heathers. You first climb up to the source of the Levada do Alecrim and its waterfall before reaching the small lake of Lagoa do Vento. Descend to the Rabaçal forest house, and continue back along the levada do Risco and the 25 fountains to see the waterfalls (this easily accessible area is very busy, but the heather forest is very beautiful). You escape the area by following the levada of the 25 fountains through the riders' tunnel (800 m long), to reach the southern slopes and descend via the Rocha Vermelha and Calheta irrigation channels to the hamlet of Loreto. At the end of the hike in Loreto, transfer by taxi or minibus (20 mins) to the coastal village of Jardim do Mar. Overnight in a family-run inn on a half-board basis.

22.5 km / Elevation: + 180m - 1090m

Optional: in the evening, the village of Jardim do Mar is a little paradise where cars cannot enter. All you can hear here are the waves and birdsong.

Day 6

JARDIM DO MAR - PRAZÈRES - PAUL DO MAR - THE SUD-WEST COAST

Discover the island's south-west coast and its villages. From Jardim do Mar, climb steeply to the village of Prazères, from where you can follow the Levada Nova to the villages of Raposeira and Fajã da Ovelha. A descent along a cobbled path through Aloes and Agaves leads to Paul do Mar. Here, small white fishermen's cottages seem to be wedged between the pebble beach and banana plantations. It is then possible to reach Jardim do Mar via the coarse pebble beach (at low tide) for a "short" version. The bravest will climb back up the cliffs along a paved path to the Jardim Atlantico lookout before returning down the path to Jardim do Mar. Overnight in a family-run inn on a half-board basis.

20 to 25 km / Elevation: +/- 650m to +/- 1200m

Day 7

FONTES - CHAO DOS TERREIROS - BOCA DO CERRO - PICO GRANDE - CURRAL DAS FREIRAS - FUNCHAL

Early in the day, transfer by taxi or minibus (40 mins) along the south coast to Fontes (drop-off at Boca da Corrida available on request). From the village of Fontes, at an altitude of 950 m, wide paths lead up to the Chão dos Terreiros (1,436 m). A path then leads down to the Boca da Corrida pass and on to the ridges leading to Pico Grande (1,654 m). At Boca do Cerro, facing the highest ridges on the island, the return climb to the summit of Pico Grande is optional and requires sure footing, but offers incomparable panoramic views. The day ends with a descent into the caldera of Curral das Freiras, a village nestling at the bottom of a steep mountain cirque. Take the local bus to the capital (1 hour) and check into a hotel in the city centre for a pleasant evening. Night and breakfast in a *** hotel.

16 to 22 km / Elevation: + 700 to + 1320 m and - 1000 to - 1640 m

Day 8

END OF STAY

Depending on flight times, free time to explore the capital: market, old town, wine-tasting cellars, marina, tropical gardens, Monte cable car, etc. Transfer by taxi or minibus to the airport (20 min).

The programme has been drawn up according to the latest information available at the time of writing; unforeseen circumstances are always possible and situations beyond our control may alter the programme.

The trip

LEVEL ****

17 to 32 km daily with between 500 and 1400 m of positive and negative gradient.

Some steep climbs and descents, sometimes made difficult by a series of stone steps. Some aerial passages. Also some tunnel crossings on the levadas.

This tour is accessible to trained runners, but also to sporty walkers, as the long stages can be completed without running on a brisk walk. Excellent physical fitness and regular training will enable you to fully appreciate this magnificent route.

This trip is organised in collaboration with our local partners, who share our commitment to offering you an authentic holiday.

ROAD BOOK

- 1 route map (list of accommodation and services provided)
- 1 map of the island (1:30,000 scale)
- 1 hiking guide
- 1 day-by-day itinerary description

ACCOMODATION

2 nights in a *** residential complex in Porto da Cruz

1 night in a *** hotel in Santana

1 night in a *** hotel in Encumeada

2 nights in a family-run hostel in Jardim do Mar

1 night in a *** hotel in Funchal

In all cases, rooms for 2 or 3 people or single rooms (with supplement).

MEALS

Half-board in accommodation, except in Funchal where only breakfast is included.

Please inform us about your food allergies and special diets **at the time of booking**.

We do our best to accommodate special diets (gluten-free, vegetarian, etc.). However, we encourage you to bring some additional products for your own picnics.

WEATHER

The weather is relatively dry on the south coast, wetter in the mountains and on the north coast. Temperatures are noticeably cooler at higher altitudes (snow sometimes falls on the highest peaks in winter).

- June to September: 20°C to 25°C

- October to May: 15°C to 20°C

Practical information

ACCESS TO THE DEPARTURE POINT

Flights from Paris to Funchal and back on scheduled or low-cost airlines. Flights available from the provinces with or without a stopover in Lisbon. Flights are also available from Brussels and Geneva.

Flights not included.

ACCOMMODATION BEFORE AND AFTER

We can offer you extra nights in Funchal in a *** hotel or tailor-made extended stays.

INSURANCE

In accordance with regulations, we are covered by Professional Liability Insurance. Under no circumstances, we can replace your personal civil liability.

The repatriation insurance EUROP ASSISTANCE that we offer is dedicated to French speaking people living in Europe. If it is not your case, we advise you to subscribe to another travel insurance which will cover you in case of injury and repatriation during your trek.

If you chose to take out repatriation insurance with EUROP ASSISTANCE whom we propose, Altitude Mont Blanc will only serve as an intermediary between the client and the insurer. We cannot influence either party. We adhere to strict conditions of sale. You are responsible for compliance with the reporting procedures of any incident.

Before making any decision, **contact EUROP ASSISTANCE.**

Dates & prices

DEPARTURES AND PRICES

8 days / 7 nights. With departures all year round, running in Madeira can be enjoyed in all seasons.

***Trip fully booked from 25 April to 15 May**

930 € for 2 people
770 € for 3 people
720 € for 4 people
690 € for 5 to 6 people
660 € for 7 to 8 people

Prices per person

Options available:

- > Single room (subject to availability)
- > Additional night in Funchal in a hotel**** with breakfast

THE PRICE

The price includes :

- Half-board accommodation except dinners on days 1 and 7;
- Taxi transfers required for the tour;
- Luggage transfers;
- The Route Book, 1 copy per registration pack;
- 1 hiking topo-guide with subsidiary suggestions.

The price does not include :

- Return journey from your home to the meeting point and dispersal;
- Dinners on days 1 and 7;
- Public bus on day 2 (€2.50);
- Lunches;
- Drinks and personal expenses, visits, ... ;
- Insurance ;
- Registration fees.

The price applies from departure to end point.

Equipment and baggage

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

Clothing:

For the walk/run, runners should wear :

- for maximum comfort, use a "multi-layer" clothing system: underwear (tights + jersey) made of perspiration-wicking hollow fibres + sweatshirt or fleece jacket + jacket with a waterproof, breathable membrane ("gore tex" type or equivalent) for bad weather.
- 1 pair of tights - shorts - T-shirt
- 1 jumper or fleece
- 1 waterproof, breathable jacket
- 1 cap
- socks
- 1 comfortable change of clothing for the stage
- 1 pair of trail running shoes (well notched soles)
- 1 cap
- 1 hat and 1 pair of gloves

For the stage :

- a change of clothes
- 1 pair of light shoes
- earplugs or ear plugs
- minimum toiletries + towel + swimming costume

Miscellaneous equipment :

- 1 pair of sunglasses
- 1 knife (to be left in checked baggage for the plane)
- 1 or 2 water bottles or thermos flasks or water pouches
- 1 headlamp per person, strong enough + spare batteries and bulbs (essential for going through some of the tunnels on the levadas)
- Small personal first-aid kit (aspirin or paracetamol, plasters, elastoplast, protective cream for the skin and lips, etc.)
- Toilet paper
- Identity card

LUGGAGE

We recommend that you divide your baggage as follows:

- A "trail" style rucksack (12 to 20 L with a waist belt, able to hold 1 water bag of 1.5 L to 2 L and possibly 2 small 250 mL bottles, as well as a rain jacket, a survival blanket and a telephone, a picnic and a small first-aid kit): you will keep this with you on the plane as hand luggage and carry it with you every day (water bottle, food, jacket, etc.).
- A travel bag to be checked in the hold for the plane and given to the carrier each day (20 kg maximum): this will contain all your belongings.

HOW TO REGISTER

- Online: www.altitude-montblanc.com

- By telephone: +33 (0)4 50 79 09 16

-Please provide your details

- Surname, First Name, Date of birth
- Address
- Email
- Telephone
- Mobile

Please specify whether you wish to take out an optional cancellation insurance (4.2% of the tour price).

On receipt of your registration we will email an invoice (per couple) with a request for a deposit of 30% in association with your account details at Altitude Mont-Blanc ('My Account'). Payment can be made by credit card, bank transfer or by cheque. On receipt of your deposit you will receive a registration confirmation. The balance must be paid one month before departure without a reminder from us. For self-guided tours, we will then send your tour pack (includes maps, descriptive book etc.)

Our terms and conditions of sale can be found on our website.



Registration by mail form

Last name:

PRENOM:

Date of birth:

Address:

Phone number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

SEJOUR DEMANDE:

Number of days:

Insurance:

Price:

x 30% =

Deposit

Locality where signed:

Date

Signature:

Return with your deposit to:

Altitude Mont-Blanc, 62 Passage du Nant Devant, 74110 Montriond, FRANCE