

Community-Based Sea Turtle Conservation Programme 2023



FMB International Volunteer Program

“Djunta mon”

Together we are stronger

Practical Informations



Maio Biodiversity Foundation (FMB)

Porto Inglês city - Maio Island, Cabo Verde

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1. Travel Documentation

Please check your visa requirements well in advance before your planned trip to Cape Verde. For most volunteers (for example coming from the EU and other European countries, US, Canada, Mexico, Australia, or Brazil), you can use the following advice:

Passport

To enter Cabo Verde, you need a passport valid for at least 6 months at the time of entering the country.

Visa

If you stay less than a month, there is no need to request a visa in advance to enter Cape Verde; you can purchase your tourist visa (only for 1 month) upon your arrival at the airport, at a cost of €25 to €45, depending on where you are landing. If you stay more than one month, we strongly recommend for you to get the visa in the Cape Verdean embassy in your country. The cost will depend on the duration of your stay and your country of origin. FMB would provide you with the support letter for your application.

N.B. Renewing your visa in Maio after the first month, even for just a few days, requires a lot of bureaucracy, and can become quite expensive and time consuming. Therefore, we strongly recommend requesting a visa for the duration of your stay before arrival. If you leave Cabo Verde with an expired visa, you will pay a fine in the airport.

Registo da Embaixada

Alguns países têm embaixadas e/ou consulados em Cabo Verde, principalmente na Praia. Se ficar mais de um mês, recomenda-se que se registre como residente temporário em Cabo Verde na embaixada do seu país de origem.

2. Insurances

Travel/Health insurance is compulsory for all volunteers and must cover medical emergencies abroad, **please note that due to the current pandemic situation all volunteers are required to take out insurance to cover costs in case of covid 19 infection.** We recommend insurances with good medical coverage and, if you bring expensive things (photography or video cameras, etc.) we recommend additional insurance for those. Luggage may not arrive with the plane (doesn't happen often, and in case it happens, luggage usually arrives with the next flight). As precaution, you could bring some basic clothing/personal items in your hand luggage.

3. Health

There are no compulsory vaccinations to enter Cabo Verde except if you come from areas where there is yellow fever. However, you need to check with your doctor and/or a tropical medicine center in your country to know the recommended vaccinations for you before coming to Maio. If you take medication on a regular basis, please make sure you bring enough with you since some drugs can be hard to get locally.

The sun is always shining, so bring sunscreen. Mosquito and fly spray and mosquito net is also important. There is a very basic hospital here, with two Doctors of General Medicine, where most medical procedures are quite limited and, in some cases, non-existent. Dentists come to the island twice a month, as other specialists. General practitioners and nurses are available at the public hospital for consultations and emergencies, but ultrasonography and clinical analyses services are not provided in the island. In case of emergency, transfer to Praia may be necessary, which is expensive. Bring all the medicine you think you could need for little things

you are prone to (for example canker sores, yeast infections, dandruff, or sore throat). There is a pharmacy in Vila but the diversity of medicines and materials are scarce.

Please note that the island is windy, sandy, and dusty – if you wear contacts, bring also disposable ones, glasses and any other prevention needed (especially if you will be working at beaches). Some items like shampoos, razors and shaving cream, lotions, lipstick, sunscreen, tampons, and other hygiene items can be found here but they are more expensive and sometimes of lesser quality, so they may not be up your standards.

Drinking the water from the tap is common, although it might be better not to do it for short stays. For longer stays, it is advisable to wait a week or two before you start, to give your body time to adjust. However, if you prefer, you can buy bottled water in any store or grocery. Pay attention to drinks with ice.

Covid-19 test

A negative test for covid-19 or the full vaccination certificate is required for inter-island travel. International volunteers are advised to organise their inter-island travel within the validity period of the test they must take to enter the country 72 hours (validity period of the test 72 hours for PCR tests and 24 hours for Antigen tests), as this will avoid having to take another test before leaving Santiago Island if the volunteer is not fully vaccinated.

Important: This year we only welcome volunteers who are vaccinated and in possession of their COVID vaccination certificate.

If you have to travel inter-island after the expiry date of your screening test (done in your home country) and you do not have your certificate yet, here are some clinics and health centres where you can be tested before your journey:

- Laboratório da Policlínica Cardiomed, address: Plateau - Cidade da Praia – in front of Hospital Agostinho Neto; contacts [\(00238\) 262 76 00](tel:+2382627600) / voip: [356 19 12](tel:+2383561912); cardiomed.clinica@cvtelecom
- Laboratório Santa Maria, Plateau, Praia - Ilha de Santiago, contact [\(+238\)262 31 30](tel:+2382623130)
- Labmed - Praia Clínica, Chã de Areia, Praia - Ilha de Santiago, contact [\(+238\)261 47 68](tel:+2382614768)
- LAC – Laboratório de Análises Clínicas, Achada Santo António, Praia - Ilha de Santiago, contact [\(+238\) 262 46 62](tel:+2382624662)
Public servise (<https://www.facebook.com/ministeriodasaude.cv/posts/2631779867086436/>)
- Centro Saúde Fazenda;
- Centro Saúde Achada Santo António;
- Centro Saúde Tira Chapéu;
- Centro Saúde Ponta de Água;
- Centro Saúde Achada Grande Tráz.

More information: https://www.turismo.cv/pt_PT/page/covid19

Important: It is important to be aware of the changes caused in the system because of the pandemic, as you all know the policies and restrictions are constantly changing, being altered so that you can better fight the pandemic experienced around the world.



Figure 1 - Maio Health Centre (c) Município do Maio

4. Travelling to Maio

There are four international airports in Cape Verde, which are Praia, Mindelo, Boavista and Sal. Flights to Cape Verde can be expensive, depending on which airline you book with and how much time in advance. The main airlines serving Cape Verde are TACV, TAP (from Portugal), Royal Air Maroc (through Casablanca), Thomson (UK), TUI (Germany, Belgium), Binter (Canary Islands), Arke and Transavia (Holland), Thomas Cook (UK), Vueling (Spain), Jet Air (Belgium), Senegal Airlines (Dakar), but there are others. Your cheapest option might be to purchase a connecting flight from your home country to one of these countries with a low-cost airline.

N.B. Internal flights between islands, that can be done exclusively with BestFly Cabo Verde (<https://bestflycaboverde.com/>), so it is recommended to check the overall cost of your trip from your point of origin to Maio (including layovers) before making a decision and purchasing the tickets.

To Praia - To get to Maio, either by boat or by plane, it is necessary to do it from Praia. There are several ways of getting there:

- 1) **TAP**: There is a direct flight from Lisbon to Praia. You can get with TAP to Lisbon from most big cities in Europe and elsewhere. Flights can be as low as 500 euros for both ways. - <http://www.flytap.com/>
- 2) **TACV**: Lisbon, Boston, Paris, Milan, Amsterdam (via Mindelo), Dakar, Fortaleza. You can get some cheap offers if you book in advance.. - <https://cabovertairlines.com/>
- 3) **Royal Air Marroco**: You can fly from most European and African cities to Casablanca and then to Praia. You can find cheap offers with them. As low as 200 euros one way. - <http://www.royalairmaroc.com/cv-pt>

There are several low-cost airlines flying to those islands. Please note they change over time, as well as their schedules. Here follow some of the airlines flying there:

- 1) **TUI** (Germany): You can fly from most big airports to Sal or Boavista for very cheap prices. <https://www.tuifly.com/de/index.html>
- 2) **JetAir** (Belgium): Twice a week to Sal or Boavista from Brussels. Very cheap flights. <https://www.jetairfly.com/>

- 3) **Thomson** (UK): You can fly from most big airports to Sal or Boavista for very cheap prices. You will have to separately book your national flight with TACV. <http://www.thomson.co.uk/>
- 4) **Neos Air** (Italy): Direct flights from major Italian cities to Boavista. <http://www.neosair.it/>

Once you get to Boavista or Sal you will need to book a plane to Praia or Maio (via Praia) with Binter.

From North America - Your best bet is to come with TACV from Boston or Providence (depending on the season) in the US. Flights twice a week.

From South America - Your best bet is to come with TACV through Fortaleza or Recife (depending on the season), Brazil. Flights twice a week.

From North/Western Africa - Your best bet is to come with TACV or Senegal Airlines through Dakar, or with RAM through Casablanca.

Others – You will need to combine several flights that include previous options. Consult with your travel agent or specialized websites.

Some sites to check for cheap flights (TACV is not represented on most online booking sites):

www.skyscanner.com

www.kayak.com

www.opodo.com

<http://reisen.kelkoo.de/>



Figure 2 – Bestfly/TIC Plane serving Maio

To and from Maio

Once you get to Praia you have two options to get to Maio, by plane – twice a week (Tuesday's and Saturday's) or by boat, usually thrice a week (Wednesday, Friday and Sunday).

- 1) You can take a plane on Tuesday or Saturday, (confirm with BESTFLY - BestFly Cabo Verde é a designação comercial da TICV – Transportes Interilhas de Cabo Verde).

- It is possible to book the flight from Praia to Maio online (<https://bestflycabo Verde.com/>).
- 2) The other option is the boat. Usually, it is done by the Praia D’Aguada boat, and goes to Maio from Praia on Friday, Sunday afternoon and very early in the morning on Wednesday. The boat returns to Praia on Sunday, Friday and on Wednesday afternoon. But those schedules can change, so you need to inquire at a travel agency, at the hotel when you get to Praia or with FMB.
- The ticket cost 13 EUR one-way, 22 EUR if you book in a shared room
 - The company serving this route is “CV inter-ilhas” (<https://www.cvinterilhas.cv>), it has offices in the Avenida Cidade de Lisboa, Várzea, Edif. BAI Center Loja 2, Fração AD - Mezanino, Praia - Cabo Verde, phone +238 350 033 0).
 - You cannot book the boat ticket in advance; you can just buy it in Praia a few days before departure (usually 2 days before). We can hook you up with our taxi driver in Praia who can help you to buy a boat ticket. If you want us to buy the ticket, please let us know in advance.

N.B. This is a passenger and cargo boat, so facilities are of a low standard, but absolutely recommended!



Figure 3 - The port of Santiago and the boat Praia D’Aguada

5. In Praia

Accommodation

While you are waiting in Praia for your flight or boat to Maio, we recommend that you stay at either:

- “Pet Shop” in Plateau, next to Pão Quente (+238 9966797).
- Residencial Lidia, Rua Serpa Pinto No. 130, in “Plateau.” Lidia also speaks French, which is convenient (+238 261 50 66).

These are simple places but clean and cheap (c. 15 euros/night with breakfast). Call them well in advance to book a room. If you have problems with this let us know. There are several hotels in Praia, usually quite expensive (from 50 EUR a single room). Check in any travel guide or specialized website for contacts.

- ✦ **Food:** There are several affordable options in Plateau close to the recommended accommodations, like Pão Quente, Pastelaria Vilu, Casa de Pasto or a Chinese place in front of Lidia. There are also more expensive options like Café Sofia or Quintal da Música.
- ✦ **Security:** Praia, contrary to Maio, is not a safe city: DO NOT WALK BY YOURSELF AFTER DARK. For a group of girls, it is not safe either after dark. After sunset you should travel by taxi. Please ask to local people your intended trip before going to certain areas, especially after dark.
- ✦ **Transport:** Taxis have regular fares depending on your journey, ask for the cost beforehand (e.g. Plateau to Achada Santo António is 150 ECV, 200 ECV at night; to and from the airport between 800 and 1000 ECV depending on the origin and the time; to and from the port between 200 and 500 depending on the origin and the time).
- ✦ **Internet:** There is free internet on all main squares with slow connection. Some bars have Wi-Fi and there are internet cafes in all main areas.

Recommendations

If you stay in Praia more than a few hours or a night, we recommend visiting Cidade Velha, the first city established by Europeans in the tropics and former capital of Cape Verde, to learn on the history of the country.

If you stay longer in Praia, we recommend visiting the ‘interior’ of Santiago, for example the Serra Malagueta or Pico de Antonia Natural Parks, to experience the difference between Maio and the mountainous and rural parts of Cape Verde.

6. Finances

You should bring some cash, preferably in Euros. Exchange into local currency (Escudos) will be possible on Maio or Praia upon your arrival (recommended to exchange in a bank office). You can also get money with your credit card or via Western Union. Credit cards should work normally, however in some cases they don’t work in the cash machines in Maio, for unknown reasons. If you have a VISA, please tell your bank you will be traveling to Cape Verde, as often Credit Cards are blocked by default by the bank in African countries. Please check with your bank before travelling and have a second option for getting money or bring cash. If you have any fees to pay to FMB, we will inform you if you need to make a bank transaction before coming (account details provided upon request). The existing banking entities in the island are BCA – Banco Comercial do Atlântico, Caixa Económica and BCN – Banco Cabo-Verdiano de Negócios.

The exchange rate between Euros and Cape Verdean Escudos is fixed: 1 EUR = 110 CVE (ECV).



Figure 4 - BCA bank offices in Cidade do Porto Inglês (c) BCA

7. Clothes and equipment

The weather is always warm here, except at night in winter (November to April) that can be quite fresh, and in summer (May to October) it can be VERY hot. With a hot, arid, and windy climate, modest cotton clothing is usually a good choice. Swimming suit is essential, and a hat and sunglasses are important for sun protection. A sweater or a long-sleeved shirt for cool evenings and the boat trip can be useful.



Figure 5 Beach Time! Bitxe Rocha (c) EnHaut

Again, people take care of their clothes and appearance here. Also bring something nice (but not fancy) to wear to parties. You will probably have to wash your clothes by hand while here.

The type of clothing and equipment to bring depends on the type of activities to be carried out. If you will do night patrols it is advisable to bring a sweater, long trousers, raincoat and comfortably and light shoes and dark clothes. Have in mind that summer is the rainy season here.

Other important things to bring are your personal computer, snorkeling equipment, mosquito net, camera, binoculars, batteries, books and also a backpack for day trips. It is important to note that most electronics items are at higher risk to break because of weather and environmental conditions (rust/erosion, dust, sand and/or proximity to sea) and climate (heat and/or humidity).

Bring also, if you can, any educative material that can be useful here for educational activities and community trainings like books and manuals (for example nature books or English language manuals or dictionaries), pencils and pens, notebooks, etc.

8. Phone and Internet

FMB has free internet access in the office, and it is good enough to use skype most of the time. Also, there is free wireless internet at three squares in Vila do Maio.

Within Cabo Verde calling with a mobile phone is expensive, but when you're here we'll give you a few tips. If you want, you can buy your internet pen and/or SIM card of one of the national telecommunication networks (CV Móvel or Unitel t+), we recommend that you buy a CV Móvel SIM card. For international contacts, there is the option of rechargeable calling cards.

9. Transportation within Maio

The transportation within Maio is mainly ensured by a system of privately owned mini-vans, called *hiaces*, which run regular routes between rural communities and Vila. Transport is available Monday to Friday in the morning and return in early afternoon. Transport in the afternoon and on the weekend depends on the village and the driver.

FMB has its own pick-up truck, used for airport/port pick-up and drop-off, transport to the communities, emergencies and in all field work and day-to-day activities.

Behavior expected by FMB

1. Prepare your personal and professional life to make a commitment to serve abroad for a full term of your established time.
2. Commit to improving the quality of life of the people with whom you live and work; and, in doing so, share your skills, adapt them, and learn new skills as needed.
3. Recognize that your success and sustainable development work is based on the local trust and confidence you build by living in, and respectfully integrating yourself into, your host community and culture.
4. Recognize that you are responsible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your personal conduct and professional performance, so don't do nothing that may put this on cause (ex: not getting drunk on working days, do not use drugs, do not cause, or participate on violence, etc.)
5. Work within the rules and regulations of the FMB and the local and national laws of the country.
6. Respect diversity, local culture, and other volunteers. Religious or political views must be kept privately.



Figure 6 – Turtle beach party in Morro (c) EnHaut

Welcome to Maio and FMB!

Please let us know if you have any questions!