

# The best MARCO POLO Insider Tips

## Our top 15 Insider Tips

### INSIDER TIP ► **Magical spot above the waves**

Dinner in the O Farolim Restaurant in Santa Maria with the sound of the sea in the background is an unforgettable experience → p. 37

### INSIDER TIP ► **Coffee in style**

In the elegant Canta Morna café on Boavista you can enjoy the best Italian coffee and delicious homemade cakes → p. 45

### INSIDER TIP ► **Sundowner with the surge of the surf**

A beach of white sand, the crash of the surf and the sun sinks majestically into the sea ... the Tortuga Beach Club on Boavista satisfies all your sunset fantasies → p. 46

### INSIDER TIP ► **Undiscovered beach with silvery sands**

The palm fringed Praia da Prata on Santiago with its dark, fine sand is a little known gem off the beaten tourist track → p. 62

### INSIDER TIP ► **The way the wind blows**

Discover the islands onboard the two-master 'Iceni Queen', visit isolated beaches and dive into the cool ocean from the deck of the boat → p. 108

### INSIDER TIP ► **Veils of mist in the fairytale forest**

The diffused sunlight and ethereal veils of mist conjure up a mystical world in the Monte Velha nature reserve on Fogo → p. 65

### INSIDER TIP ► **Wonderful culinary delights**

Excellent cuisine, friendly and attentive service in a relaxed atmosphere – be pampered in the Santo André Restaurant in São Pedro → p. 82

### INSIDER TIP ► **Fresh from the barrel**

Down-to-earth fun: the tiny tavern in the market hall of the *mercado municipal* in Mindelo (photo above) is definitely not a tourist trap – and it's the perfect place to enjoy a fresh draught beer! → p. 82

### INSIDER TIP ► **Vivid parrots on a tropical patio**

The Orquidea Guesthouse on Boavista is a green paradise where the guests, dogs and parrots are all treated as part of the family. Breakfast is served in their beautiful tropical courtyard → p. 47

### INSIDER TIP ► **Tranquil sea, peace and quiet**

The charming Mar Tranquilidade Guesthouse with its simple, thatched stone cottages on Santo Antão is a secluded oasis of calm – and the food served here is also quite outstanding → p. 93

### INSIDER TIP ► **Culinary delights and a special attraction**

Cape Verde culture meets Senegalese culinary art – experience both in Pipi's Bar on Fogo. The owner serves spicy, fragrant West African dishes and there is live music on Friday evenings → p. 68

### INSIDER TIP ► **French Creole cooking with a view**

A French chef serves wonderful food to match the spectacular scenery in the courtyard of the Pousada Pedra Brabo in the Cha das Caldeiras → p. 103

### INSIDER TIP ► **Absolutely pure!**

In the verdantly tropical Paúl Valley Cape Verde's purest *grogue* is produced according to Tyrolean distillery standards → p. 105

### INSIDER TIP ► **Turtle adventure**

Get up close and personal with these rare animals – with the SOS Tartarugas rangers (photo below) → p. 110

### INSIDER TIP ► **Kingfishers outside the bedroom window**

Kingfishers dive and butterflies flutter past the windows of your room in the Quinta da Montanha Pousada Quinta da Montanha mountain lodge – and the views are stunning → p. 64



# BEST OF ...

## GREAT PLACES FOR FREE

Discover new places and save money

FOR FREE

### ● Full moon festival

Entrance to the *music festival in Baía das Gatas* is free! Every year bands from Cape Verde, Africa and Latin America perform for three days – on the first weekend in August after full moon – on São Vicente's most famous beach → p. 113

### ● Into the water!

If you decide to have Sunday lunch in the four star *Resort Hotel Foya Branca* on São Vicente, you will dine in style and then be able to relax in and around the hotel's pools free of charge ... → p. 111

### ● Aide-memoire

Monique Widmer has been collecting historical objects and documents dealing with everyday life on the Cape Verdes – especially on Fogo – for more than 25 years. Furniture, household effects, old photos and other exhibits tell the turbulent history of the islands in her *Casa da Memória*, and there is no admission charge → p. 67

### ● Birthday celebration

Live music galore – Cape Verde's capital city Praia celebrates the anniversary of its foundation on 19 May. To mark the occasion, dozens of bands and thousands of visitors come together to celebrate for three days at the free concerts given on the *Praia de Gamboa* → p. 113

### ● A little night music

Live music as a free extra with your dinner – this is the *noite caboverdeana* in Mindelo – where you can dine, chat and enjoy the soulful background music as an accompaniment → p. 84

### ● Sunday rhythm

A brass band sets the tone on the *Praça Nova* (photo) every Sunday afternoon in Mindelo. It is a tradition to put on your Sunday best and go for a leisurely stroll to see and be seen → p. 80



●●● Dots in guidebook refer to 'Best of ...' tips

## ONLY ON CAPE VERDE

Unique experiences

### ● Travel with the locals

The *aluguer* is the most common means of transportation on Cape Verde. You should travel at least once with the locals in one of these pickups, such as the trip from *São Filipe* to *Chã das Caldeiras* → p. 102

### ● Swing those hips

You won't know what has hit you when the dancers start swinging their hips at a dizzy speed dancing the *batuco* in the *Sal da Música* in Praia → p. 62

### ● A hearty pleasure

The Cape Verde national dish *catchupa* is a hearty affair. Every cook prepares their own different version of this stew made of sweet corn and beans – in the *Churrasqueira Africana* on Fogo they add pumpkin → p. 68

### ● New braids

Men, women and children wear their hair woven into small braids. If you want to do the same, you can have your holiday hairstyle done in the *shop next to the Mariama Restaurant* in Vila do Maio → p. 51

### ● Pure firewater

No matter whether it is freshly distilled or aged, the Cape Verde sugar cane liquor packs a punch! The freshly brewed firewater (*grogue novo*) that is served in the *Pavilhão* on the *Praça Nova* in Mindelo and elsewhere will really take your breath away! → p. 85

### ● Strategic moves

A typical scene: two men sitting in the shade with a wooden board between them pondering over how they can get as many small pieces as possible away from their opponent. The game is called *oril* and it attracts many players to the *row of shops near the sport stadium* in Sal Rei and numerous other places on the islands → p. 45

### ● Glittering catch

At midday everybody runs to see if the fishermen have made a good catch when their colourful boats return to port or are pulled up on to the beach – as they do in *Tarrafal* on Santiago (photo) → p. 64



ONLY IN



# THE PERFECT ROUTE

## WHITE BEACH AND DESERT SAND

The best thing to do after you arrive at Boavista is to relax a bit on the fine sand beach of **1 Sal Rei** → p. 42. A sundowner in the Tortuga Beach Club or dinner at the Blu Marlin are perfect ways to end the day. On the next day, a trip to the **2 Deserto de Viana** → p. 43 will give you the real feeling of being in a desert. Then take off for Santiago from the airport near **3 Rabil** → p. 43.

## PEOPLE AND HISTORY

Stroll through the country's capital of **4 Praia** → p. 57 with its lively vegetable market and the pedestrian precinct with cafés and a museum. **5 Cidade Velha** → p. 57, where famous seafarers and pirates went on land, is only 15km/9.3mi to the west. End the day at the Quinta da Montanha mountain lodge in Rui Vaz, from where you will have a magnificent panoramic view. Your trip around the island starts the next morning and takes you first to **6 Assomada** → p. 56, where there is plenty of hustle and bustle on market days (Wed and Sat) and then take a break for a picnic in the **7 Serra Malagueta Nature Reserve** → p. 59.

A brief stop for a swim at **8 Tarrafal** → p. 59 will refresh you again before you head off along the rocky west coast to Praia to board the plane for Fogo.

## VOLCANO AND WINE

You land in the picturesque capital **9 São Filipe** → p. 67. Take a taxi or get into a shared one (departure from the *mercado municipal*) and head up to the fascinating volcanic landscape of **10 Chã das Caldeiras** → p. 64 at an altitude of 1700m/5577ft where you can admire the colossal cone of the highest mountain in Cape Verde and the crater that erupted in 1995. Ramiro's Bar is the place to enjoy live music and a glass or two of Chã wine. But beware: only those who are very fit will be able to climb the **11 Pico do Fogo** → p. 66 on the following morning (photo above)! You can then decide whether to stay another night before going back to São Filipe and then flying to São Vicente after a stopover in Praia.

## JOIE DE VIVRE AND MUSIC

**12 Mindelo** → p. 78, the vibrant cultural capital of Cape Verde (photo right) is a place of fascinating contrasts. Magnificent colonial

Experience all the facets Cape Verde has to offer by island hopping in a clockwise direction east, then south and up to the northern islands



architecture next to dilapidated buildings, elegant yachts in the marina and the homeless who have to sleep on the street – but you will feel *joie de vivre* wherever you go. A *noite caboverdeana* is a must before you set sail on the morning ferry to Santo Antão.

## PASS ROADS AND PATHS ALONG THE CLIFFS

The old pass road from **13 Porto Novo** → p. 88 leads at an altitude of 1400m/4593ft past the **14 Cova Crater** → p. 89 up to Delgadim lookout point. It then continues on to **15 Ribeira Grande** → p. 88 and along the coast to **16 Ponta do Sol** → p. 87. Travel to Cruzinha in the morning and hike along the coast of Corvo and Fontainhas back to Ponta do Sol. On the next day, make a trip into the **17 Ribeira do Paul** → p. 88 high up to the Cabo da Ribeira. Make your way down to **18 Vila das Pombas** → p. 89 and from there take a shared taxi back to Ribeira Grande and then on to Ponta do Sol. On the following day take a shared taxi to Porto Novo and then the ferry back to São Vicente.

## SEA BREEZE AND ROARING WAVES

The beach hotel Foya Branca is located near the fishing village of **19 São Pedro** → p. 80. You should not miss out on a walk along the beach and the excellent food in the Santo André restaurant (opposite the hotel). Your plane then takes off from the nearby airport and you fly directly to Boavista or via Sal.



1200km/745mi

Pure travel time: 25 hours

Recommended duration: 2 weeks

Detailed map of the route on the back cover, in the road atlas and the pull-out map