

AZORES

MEDIAKIT



Europe's Leading
Adventure Tourism
Destination



World's Leading
Adventure Tourism
Destination



EARTHCHECK
SILVER CERTIFIED



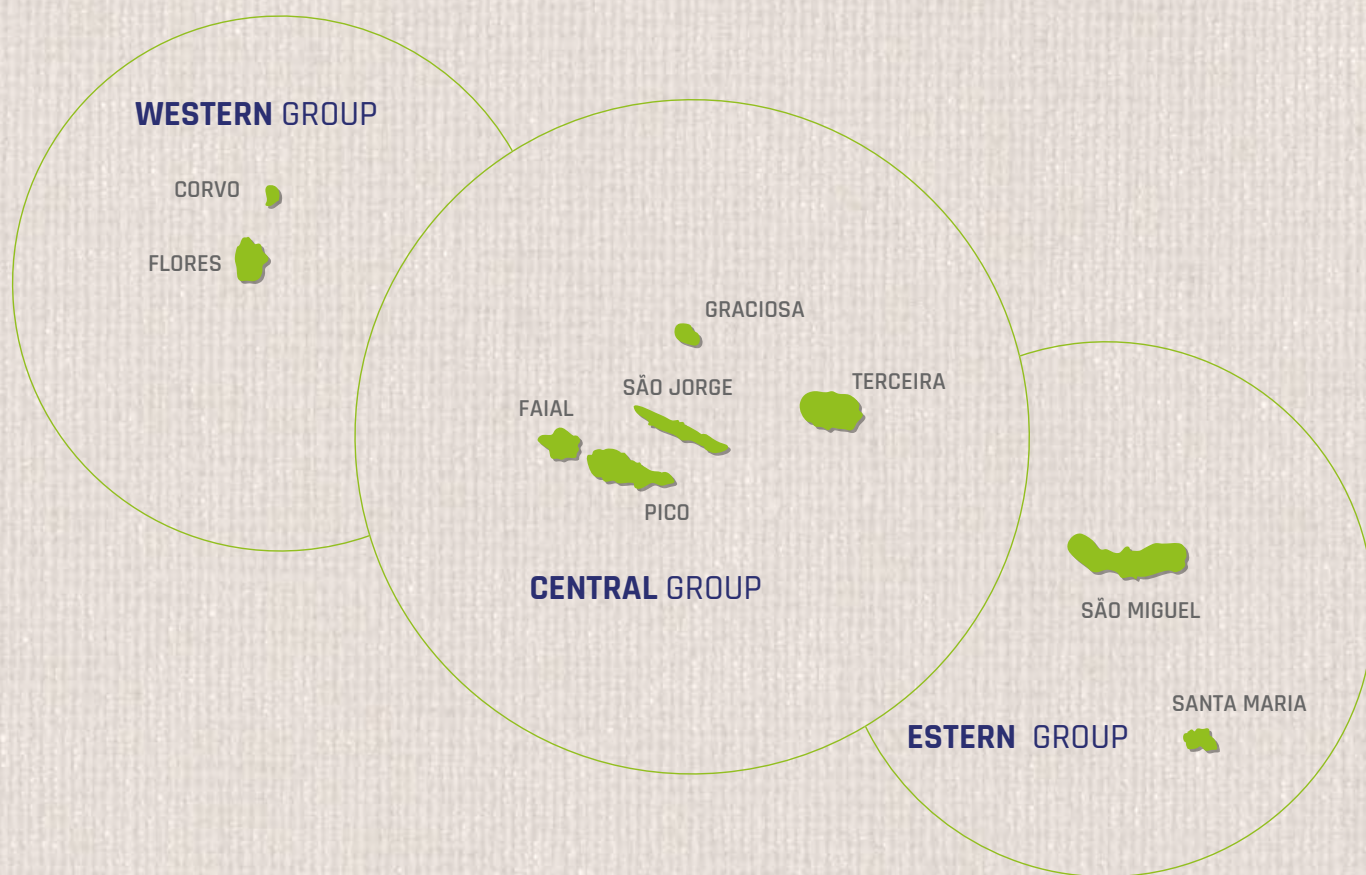
WHY AZORES ?

The Azores is a living authentic place,
where no two days are the same
definitely a place worth discovering
all year round.



THE ARCHIPELAGO ISLANDS

The islands of the archipelago are divided into three geographical groups: the eastern group, comprising Santa Maria and São Miguel; the central group, comprising Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico and Faial; and the western group, comprising Corvo and Flores. Along with the Madeira, Canaries and Cape Verde archipelagos, the Azores make up the Macaronesia Biogeographical Region. Macaronesia signifies “the lucky islands” – both for those who live there and those who visit.



Azores, PORTUGAL

36° 55' 44" N, 25° 01' 02" W

AZOREAN CULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

The architecture is one of the main things to see in the Azores. As for the churches, convents, manor houses, and rural homes spread throughout the archipelago, there is a contrast of colours between their white walls and their black basalt, ignimbrite and trachyte stonework. Windmills and watermills, wrought iron balconies, ovens and chimneys, streets, alleys and lanes, and houses with dark stone walls are the other elements that make each island so typical. Angra do Heroísmo, in Terceira, is a special repository of the architectural identity of the Azores, not to mention the unexpected rainbow colours of the façades of some buildings.



CULTURE

If you are looking what to see in Azores, then the Azorean museums store various ethnographic collections that reflect a history that is deeply connected with the land, cattle breeding, handicrafts and fishing. Whale hunting was most intensive on the islands of Pico and Faial, as per the objects and tales of an era filled with courageous men. Various museum rooms are dedicated to collections of religious artefacts, but most of the pieces are still kept in the churches.

HANDICRAFTS

There are flowers arrangements made with fish scales, scrimshaw, dolls made with corn leaves and miniatures from fig tree pith. These are four samples of the Azorean creativity in using natural resources to create artistic pieces. As for ceramics, weaving and embroideries, the bright colours are mixed with white to achieve various singular patterns.

The local guitar *viola da terra*, inherited from the times of the first settlers, is still played - and made - in various locations in the archipelago. Presently, the Azorean music conservatories teach how to play this guitar, as it requires a specific technique.



AZOREAN HOSPITALITY

This is one of the secrets of the archipelago that greets you the moment you arrive. Azoreans are known for their hospitality all around the world, the indelible sign of a simple people of warm smiles who offer an unrivalled welcome.

From Santa Maria to Flores, this is a common characteristic that remains the same whatever the morphology, history or habits of each island. The art of welcoming outsiders is one of the features that sets the Azoreans apart - offering a hearty laugh, a helping hand and an explanation at all times. Knowing their history and proud of a unique and astonishing heritage, they are keen to share their homes with everyone - there is always room for others in the garden paradise they inhabit in the middle of the ocean.

Committed to preserving the natural abundance they watch over, they invite us to enjoy what they have, be it a luxurious landscape, an ancient recipe made in a wood-fired oven paired with a volcanic wine, a work by a local artist or a traditional sweet from bygone days they want us to remember. Which of course we will.



THE AZORES IS FOR EVERYONE

A destination that is increasingly for people of every kind and every interest, the Azores attract lovers of sport, nature and birdwatching, not to mention golfers and hikers who enjoy long walks surrounded by the green and blue of nature. In addition, the islands also appeal to fans of art and culture, people looking for surprising hotels and lovers of Azorean food - a cuisine rich in tradition yet innovative which uses premium ingredients from certified sources. With lots still to be discovered, there is a special place for everyone in the Azores.



SPECIAL DISHES

Cozido das Furnas, made with various meats and vegetables, is cooked by the geothermal heat in a pot that is placed under the ground. Some delicacies are common during the Holy Ghost Festivals, such as the Sopa do Espírito Santo (Soup of the Holy Ghost) and the Massa Sovada (Portuguese sweet bread). The bread known as bolos lêvedos, typical from Furnas, is served at any time throughout the whole year.

FOOD AND DRINKS

Although there are some common tastes on the Azorean cuisine, each island's recipes have their own imprint. Therefore during your vacations you can discover all the nuances of Azores through a gastronomic tour.

FISH AND SEAFOOD

Fish such as tuna, blue jack mackerel, chub mackerel, forkbear, red porgy, and swordfish are commonly served. Freshness reigns on grills, stews, roasts or in fish broths. There are lobsters, mediterranean slipper lobsters, crabs, spider-crabs and barnacles. Limpets are served grilled, with Molho Afonso sauce or are cooked in rice or mashed bread. The island of São Jorge is the only island that offers clams.

MEAT

The Azorean beef benefits from a protected geographical indication, with some dishes being prepared from it, such as the Alcatra (rump) from Terceira island, boiled beef, and regionally-flavoured steaks. Liver sauce cracklings and sausages are must haves, whilst linguíça can be the main course if served with taro root, and blood pudding an appetiser if complemented by pineapple.



VISIT THE ATLANTIC PARADISE

The Azores comprise nine different islands that combine tradition and modernity with very special cuisine and unique natural landscapes. Everyone deserves the chance to take a break from real life to delight in the work of Mother Nature at least once in their lives. The excellent hospitality is approached from a sustainable perspective that aims to develop a connection with the preserved environment around us rather than act against it.



ONE OF THE BEST DESTINATIONS FOR LAND, SEA & AIR ADVENTURES

With a very diverse range of activities available, the Azores have become an ideal destination for those seeking adventure, with the added extra of close contact with nature and sustainability. Their fame has spread and in 2020 the Azores were voted Europe's Leading Adventure Tourism Destination by World Travel Awards.



ON LAND

ON LAND TRAILS AND MOUNTAIN BIKING

There are roughly 89 different certified and signposted trails on the Azores covering a total of around 800 km. Many were gradually created by the local people in earlier times. The easiest way to travel around an island was by sea, as there were few footpaths and they were often unsuitable for anything other than people and their livestock. This is the network of paths and trails that has been restored for the use of everyone, and which are now of high biogeological and historical and ethnographic interest. The trails are classified according to level of difficulty, distance and type - linear or circular. At any time of the year, with or without a guide, multiple options are open to mountain bikers or those who just want to enjoy a longish walk (trails.visitazores.com/en and biking.visitazores.com/en).



GEOTOURISM

The archipelago's volcanic origins, the small size of the islands and their proximity in some cases mean that at any time of the year and on any island you can explore the geodiversity. There are also various options here, from visiting collapsing volcanic cones and their lakes, walking along the fajãs and seeing volcanic hill ranges and the remains of recent eruptions. You can also descend caves and volcanic tunnels, discover an underground world and witness the bubbling of geysers.

HORSEBACK RIDING

This is a different way to discover the islands that offers a unique perspective. At a lope or a serene trot, exploring the Azores on a well-trained Lusitano or Portuguese Cruzado horse is a memorable experience that connects you closely with nature.



CANYONING

This involves descending steep watercourses by rappelling, jumping, climbing and tobogganing to overcome obstacles, providing the opportunity to discover fascinating scenery. The high cliffs and waterfalls that drop straight into the sea, characteristic features of some Azorean paths, are the main attractions of this activity.

IN THE AIR PARAGLIDING

Around 32 sites exist around the nine islands where it is possible to take off and land safely. Alone or in tandem, the mild weather conditions ensure you can “take a jump” throughout the year.



ON THE SEA

ONE OF THE WORLD'S TOP DIVING DESTINATIONS

An average sea temperature between 22°C in summer and 16°C in the winter and good visibility in the crystal-clear water make the Azores the perfect diving destination. The variety of landscapes - some with volcanic bottoms - rich ecosystems and underwater archaeological sites are some of the main attractions for keen divers and anyone who wants to take their first steps in deep-water aquatic adventures.

From swimming with the world's largest fish (the whale shark) in transparent water to finding yourself surrounded by dozens of giant oceanic manta rays or blue sharks, everything is possible in this oasis of Atlantic marine life. In an area lying between nutrient rich currents from the north and warm currents from the Gulf, Azorean waters are home to five species of marine turtles, over 24 species of cetaceans and around 600 species of fish.

When to dive?

Between June and September/October, due to the combination of various climate factors (higher air and sea temperatures, longer periods of sun, lower rainfall and milder winds), higher water visibility conditions and the occurrence of more shoaling species, have a unique variety of marine ecosystems ranging from more common species to large shoals of pelagic fish like giant oceanic manta rays and cetaceans.



What can be seen?

Coastal marine life is characterised by Atlantic goliath groupers, schools of triggerfish, various species of nudibranches, octopuses and moray eels which hide between the rocks. Small fish such as sand smelt, weakfish, Azores chromis, Mediterranean parrotfish and many others add colour to the background of black rock.

At greater depths, red scorpionfish, barred hogfish and anthias can be seen, often near large outcrops of black coral. But the water column is also filled with schools of needlefish, blue whiting, white trevallies, giant oceanic manta rays, turtles and ocean sunfish. The seamounts far from the coast are undoubtedly the best place to see huge schools of tuna, large blue whiting patrolling the bottom and hundreds of big needlefish floating in the water column. It is at this depth of the Atlantic that the Azores stand out as a unique diving tourism destination.

There are elevations in the seas around the Azores which rise up from the great depths of the ocean - sometimes more than 1,000 metres - to within a few metres of the surface. These are called seamounts and are a product of the islands' volcanic origin, forming part of the chain of underwater volcanoes stretching along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Some of these formed islands that were swallowed up by the sea a long time ago and many others are too far from the islands (or too deep) to be visited. However, the seamounts accessible to diving, such as the Princess Alice Bank, Dom João de Castro Bank, Formigas Islets and Dollabarat Reef, have a unique variety of marine ecosystems ranging from more common species to large shoals of pelagic fish like giant oceanic manta rays and cetaceans.



ON THE SEA WHALE WATCHING

In the waters around the archipelago, you will find around a third of the world's 81 species of whales and dolphins. In addition to a wonderful trip around the coast, it is common to see various types of whale, dolphins and other species, all while contributing to the local economy and preserving these sea animals.



SURFING & BODYBOARDING

The coastal diversity of the different islands, with high cliffs and rocky bases in some cases and flatter and sandier bottoms in others, provide a variety of consistent waves. The mild air and water temperatures make this activity possible throughout the year (surf.visita-zores.com/en).

STAND UP PADDLE, CANOEING AND KAYAKING

Choose between open water or inner waterways. Whether exploring the cliffs around the lakes at the bottom of volcanic cones or paddling around islets to observe seabirds and enter caves, these activities allow a total physical and emotional involvement with the Azorean landscape.



SAILING

The Azores attract sailors from all around the world, mainly due to their location and because all of the islands have ports and moorings, not to mention to participate in the various international regattas. For those who only want to take a trip in a sailboat or hire one for a few days, with or without a skipper, you can find companies ready to provide fascinating sailing experiences between the archipelago's 9 islands.

As a key port on sea routes from the Americas and West Indies, the Azorean archipelago has been shaped by cultural exchange, which has influenced the islands' architecture, art and culture.

For the first settlers, facing the vicissitudes of the weather, fending off pirate attacks and creating shelter were the first priority. Making use of what they had, the first buildings were made of different volcanic materials and wood from the forests, creating simple, rustic single-floor houses with tiled or thatched roofs that still mark the landscape to this day.



AWARDS

THE BEST ADVENTURE DESTINATION IN EUROPE 2024



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The 32th edition of the World Travel Awards distinguishing the Azores archipelago as the big winner of "Europe's Leading Adventure Tourism Destination 2024". The voting had the participation of the public and thousands of tourism professionals spread all over the world, which led to the second consecutive distinction of the destination, in this category: **Adventure**.

We are very happy to re-validate the distinction, in a category that aggregates a large part of our experiences and is a very relevant tool to promote our destination worldwide.



THE BEST ADVENTURE DESTINATION IN THE WORLD 2023



World's Leading
Adventure Tourism
Destination

The 29th edition of the World Travel Awards distinguishing the Azores archipelago as the big winner of "Europe's Leading Adventure Tourism Destination 2021". The voting had the participation of the public and thousands of tourism professionals spread all over the world, which led to the second consecutive distinction of the destination, in this category: **Adventure**.

We are very happy to re-validate the distinction, in a category that aggregates a large part of our experiences and is a very relevant tool to promote our destination worldwide.



THE FIRST ARCHIPELAGO

IN THE WORLD CERTIFIED AS SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

ACHIEVES SILVER LEVEL IV AS A SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DESTINATION

It is a great recognition of the Azores' efforts in promoting sustainability in its tourism. This suggests that innovative policies and practices are producing tangible results and are being recognized internationally. Sustainable tourism is fundamental to ensuring that the natural and cultural beauty of the Azores is preserved for future generations, the Azores are committed to achieving a high level of sustainability, especially in the context of the EarthCheck program. A world-leading certification and consultancy organization for sustainable tourism, so achieving recognition and significant progress with them is a remarkable achievement. The fact that the Azores are moving towards such a high standard of sustainability is promising not only for the archipelago, but also as an example for other regions of the world. I hope the Azores' efforts inspire other communities to follow the same path towards a more sustainable future.

More recent: Azores aim to achieve gold as a Sustainable Tourist Destination:

<https://sustainable.azores.gov.pt/en/2021/09/13/azores-aim-to-achieve-gold-as-a-sustainable-tourist-destination/>

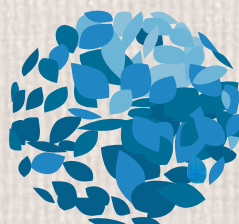
<https://sustainable.azores.gov.pt/en/>

<https://sustainable.azores.gov.pt/en/certification/>

<https://earthcheck.org/news/2019/september/azores-sets-benchmark-for-sustainable-tourism/>

Vídeo:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOKYj-RLe0Y&feature=emb_title



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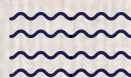


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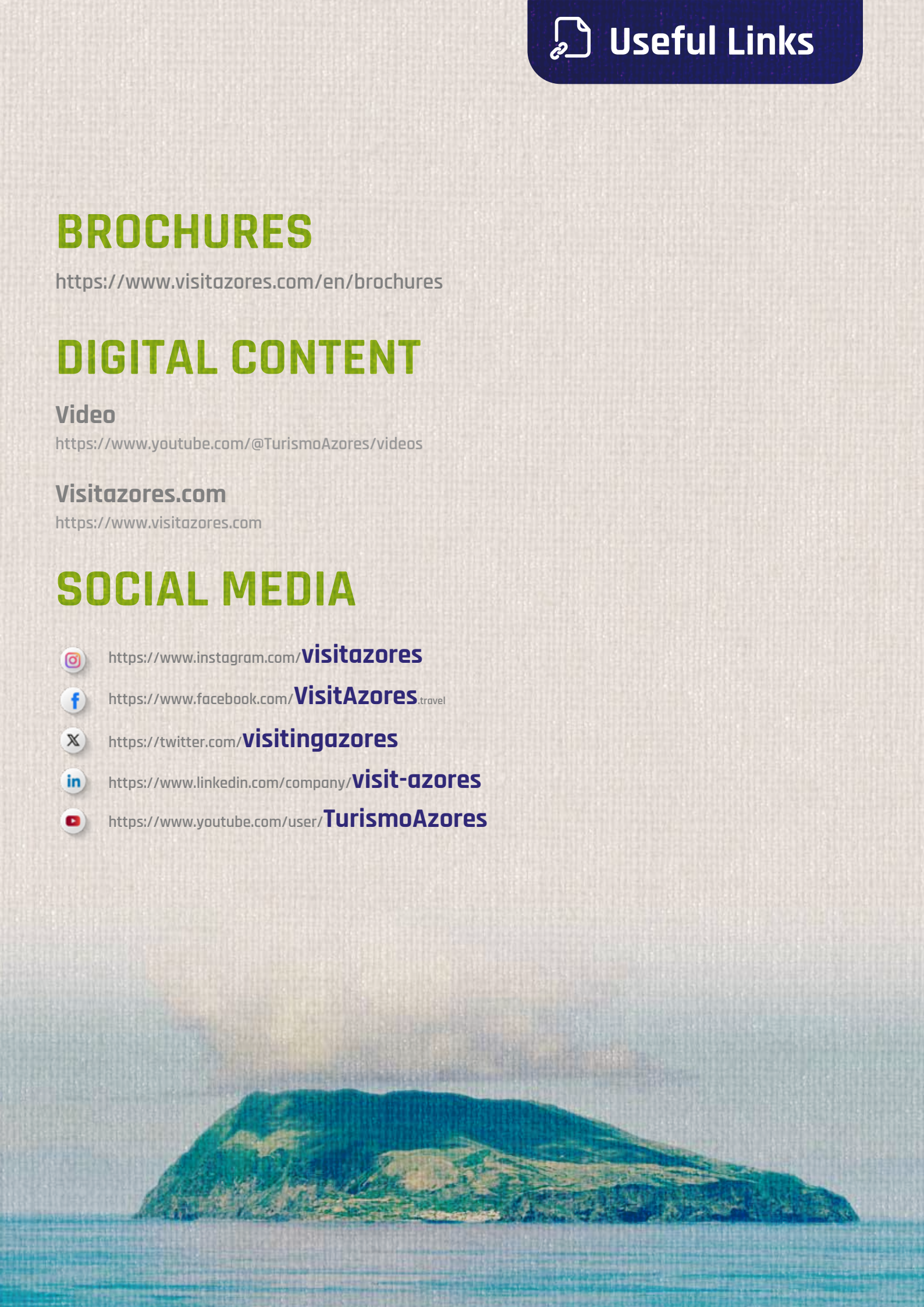
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