Funchal Madeira Port Guide

View of cruise ships from Jardim Botanico
Toms Funchal Madeira Cruise Port Guide: Portugal

Includes city walking tour maps with details on 72 points of interest, bus routes, cable cars, the HopOn bus map, and sites outside the city; namely, coastal villages, fishing towns, cliffs, Levada walks, etc.

Madeira is a beautiful, mountainous island with high cliffs overlooking the sea and picturesque villages along the coast. The temperature is a near perfect 64-75 F year round. The mild climate, adequate rainfall, and rich soil create an abundance of gardens with over 2500 species of plants and lush vegetation in the mountains to create the largest laurel forest in the world.

Cruise ships dock in Funchal about 2.6 km (1.6 miles) from Center City. Self-guided travelers will be happy to know you can walk from the ship to Center City. The public bus system is excellent, there are HopOn buses to tour Funchal, and low cost bus tours around the island. Cable cars are available to ascend the mountain.

There are many things to see and do in Funchal plus many places to visit outside the city. The tough decision is how to spend your limited time in port. This guide describes popular tourist sites in Funchal, in the Monte area north of Funchal, and sites outside of Funchal along the coast and in the mountains. You can't do it all, so choose wisely between exploring center city markets, museums, churches, botanical gardens, shopping for wine and embroidery, cable car rides, nature trail walks, and/or going into the mountains and visiting fishing villages along the coast. It that's not enough, there's also the possibility of whale and dolphin watching.

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Climate

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CAVEAT

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Tom Sheridan

NOTE:
I would like to thank Gail and Robert Craig, Mike Engelberg, and Carol Mills for their help on this port guide.
Cruise Ship to Center City

The Municipality of Funchal lists Five Must-See Sites; namely, the Cathedral, Museum de Arte Sacre, St John the Evangelist Church, the Market (Mercado dos Lavradores), and Monte. Monte is north of center city and not shown on this map. From the furthest cruise ship, it's a 1.6 km (1 mile), 20 minute walk to the HopOn bus stop and an additional 0.95 km (0.6 mile), 13 minutes to the cable car station.

For more guides, see www.TomsPortGuides.com
Exploring Center City Funchal

Walk or take a taxi (~ 7.50 euros) from the cruise ship to Center City. Once you get to Center City, you can explore popular tourist sites on foot, use the cable car to go up to Monte, and/or access the complete network of public buses serving the entire island. The public bus system is excellent. It goes everywhere.

HopOn Bus Tours = an easy, low-cost, flexible way to tour the city.

City-Sightseeing is the largest HopOn bus company in the world. I've used their service in many cities and been pleased. It's 12 euros to tour Funchal. Buses run on 30 minute intervals; the total route is about 90 minutes with 18 stops. The www.City-Sightseeing.com website is uniquely useful to plan a shore excursion. It has an outstanding, FREE high-resolution, HopOn bus route pdf map showing location of ALL Funchal tourist sites. Below is the list of Museums, Churches, Buildings, Parks, and other sites on this map. WOW!

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Funchal HopOn Bus Tour Map (Download the full size map from www.city-sightseeing.com)

I can't say enough about this map. This is the single most useful document to plan self-guided touring the city because it shows ALL the tourist sites and 72 hotels on a map of Funchal that is easy to read. Note that bus stop #3 at the marina is the closest HopOn bus stop to the cruise ship dock.

This map is 34 x 22 inches and requires 8 pages to print it full size. I print “sections” of the map. I magnify the map to 200% on my monitor to see the detail clearly and move the map to see this view (above) on my monitor. The settings for my Canon MX870 printer are: Page = “Landscape”, set to print “Current View”, with “File Size & Handling” set to “Poster” and “Tile Scale” = 120%”. These setting will print the map as shown above.

www.city-sightseeing.com
GPS Coordinates
Throughout this guide, I make extensive use of GPS Coordinates for tourist sites and key locations. Open this guide in one window on your computer and open Google Maps in a second window. Copy and paste the GPS coordinates into Google maps to find sites, get directions, route, distance, and time for travel by car, walking, or bicycle. The coordinates can be used with any Google map format such as “map”, “satellite”, “earth”, and “terrain” to see detailed views of the location at any map scale.

Using GPS coordinates with Google maps, you can see street views of tourist sites, estimate the slope of streets going inland/uphill from the coast, and plot your own walking route maps.

These coordinates can also be used in hand-held or vehicle GPS devices. Note that these devices can accept different formats. It's important to set your device to accept data in this format:

**Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds shown as N ddd° mm' ss.ss", W ddd° mm' ss.ss"**

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<td>N 32° 39' 05.0&quot;, W 16° 54' 13.8&quot;</td>
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For more guides, see www.TomsPortGuides.com
A  Hop-On bus stop in front of Marina  
N 32°38'47.0", W 16°54'40.5"

This is stop #3 on the City-Sightseeing HopOn bus tour.

B  Jardim Municipal park  
N 32°38'50.6", W 16°54'41.6"

**For a virtual tour of many locations in center city, see**  [http://virtual.visitmadeira.pt/](http://virtual.visitmadeira.pt/)

The photography is spectacular!!!

This is a screen-shot of one of the images of Municipal Park from the virtual tour website above. Using this website, you can “preview” your visit to Funchal city center by viewing the cruise ship dock, the promenade, important squares, museums, churches, etc. It's an excellent way to preview the city.

The [photo above](http://virtual.visitmadeira.pt/) shows the outdoor ampitheatre used for concerts and fairs in Jardim Municipal Park. The park is also known as the Donna Amélia Garden in memory of the Queen. There are impressive large trees, beautiful flowers, and plants indigenous to Madeira as well as exotic species from around the world. There’s a fountain and a pond with swan, ducks, and birds.

C  Old Blandy Wine Lodge  
N 32°38'52.0", W 16°54'38.0"

Location:  28 Avenida Arriaga

Hours:  Monday - Friday 10:00 – 18:30,  Saturday 10:00 – 13:00  
**Closed Sundays & Holidays.**

*Our most comprehensive tour covers the making of barrels at the Cooperage, ageing in the Canteiro, the transformation of grapes into Madeira wine, satinwood storage vats and a tour of our museum with unique items from Madeira wine history, followed by a tasting.*

• Cooperage,  • 'Canteiro' Lodge,  • Vine to Wine,  • Satinwood Vats,  • Museum,  • Tasting

Timetable:  Daily - Duration: 45 Minutes - Price:€ 5,50

**NOTE:** I was in Funchal on Sunday. The wine lodge was closed to the public, but open for a tour by our ship.
Photos of Old Blandy Wine Lodge (below).

**D Cathedral of Funchal**  A must visit site

Location: Rua da Sé
The Sé Cathedral is one of the oldest buildings in Funchal dating back to the early 1500's. It is a Roman Catholic Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption.

The ceiling is a masterpiece of wood carving, one of the best in Portugal. There are also beautiful side altars and carvings on tables and chairs.

Morning mass is usually at 8 am.

There is a virtual tour of D. Manuel I Square of the outside of the Cathedral at [http://virtual.visitmadeira.pt/](http://virtual.visitmadeira.pt/)

**Embroidery Shops**
Portugal is famous for intricate embroidery. Needlework by women of Madeira has long been admired by travelers and gained international acclaim after the 1851 Great London Exhibition. Madeiran embroidery has a distinctive combination of raised stitches and cut work. Hand made needlework is expensive. Look for the stamp of approval that the product is hand made in Madeira (photo right).

The shops below are considered to be very good sources for locally made embroidery. Your cruise ship may provide a list of “recommended” shops and you might get a discount with your cruise card.

**E Embroidery - Oliveiras Embroidery Factory**


Casa Oliveira Address Rua da Alfândega 11 Phone 291/22-93-40

New York Times Article:

There's an embroidery factory on the premises of this shop. The store is primarily a retail outlet for one of the largest embroidery manufacturers in town, and everything sold in this shop is handmade on the island. It turns out everything from embroidered towels to delicate negligees to elegant "heirloom" tablecloths. The outlet is also known for its handmade ceramics, which are hand painted. For those seeking island souvenirs such as T-shirts, there is a large selection here, too.
I Embroidery - Bordal-Bordados da Madeira

Bordal-Bordados da Madeira, Rua Doctor Fernão Ornelas 77  http://www.bordal.pt/

Founded in 1963, Bordal is one of the leading and oldest manufacturers and exporters of embroidery famous Madeira. Linens and cottons become among the skilled hands of artisans Madeira giving way to delicate textures.

Acquired in 1999 by the current owners, Susan and John Cows, the Bordal underwent a reorganization bet on innovation and design. In December 2007, the company published a book by the historian Alberto Vieira Madeira, where there is the story of one of the most iconic products of Madeira. Tribute to the embroiderers and all who contributed to the preservation of this art, the publication also makes known the techniques of embroidery and points that characterize it.

J Embroidery - Patricio & Gouveia

Patricio & Gouveia, Rua do Visconde de Anadia 33  http://www.patriciogouveia.pt/

Patricio & Gouveia is considered the most prominent supplier of locally made needlework products.

The company was founded in 1925. A larger building was built in 1948 at Rua Visconde de Anadia N°. 34. It's the only building in Madeira conceived and constructed specifically for the embroidery industry.

This firm is visited by approximately 120,000 tourists annually, as well as by students of various schools on study visits who thus have the educational opportunity to get to know each of the different manufacturing phases of Madeira Embroidery and in this way to understand better its present and historical significance and consequently, to value it.

Besides local sales in our shop, which represents about 70% of our production, the company still keeps the tradition of exporting our famous embroideries, with exclusive designs, to a variety of countries.

F Cable Car to Monte

Monte Cable Car base station  http://www.telefericodofunchal.com/index_UK.html

Location:  Parque Almirante Reis at the sea front in Funchal City Center
Hours: 9.00 – 18.00 h (last boarding at 17.45 h)   Open every day except Christmas
Admission:  10 euro one way  15 euro round trip

Cable cars are run by a company called Telefericos da Madeira. Their website (listed above) is excellent!

The 15-minute cable car ride provides scenic views from city center to Monte 560 meters (1840 feet) above the Funchal. This website has good information and photos regarding the Monte Cable Car, walking directions, and tourist sites in the Monte area

NOTE:  There are two cable cars in Funchal.
•  This cable car runs between center city and Monte. The station in Monte is next to the Jardim Monte Palace with a beautiful garden.
•  From the exit of this cable car at Monte, it's a short walk east to ride the Jardim Botanical cable car part way down the mountain to the gorgeous botanical garden. That garden is still high up on the mountain. Take a public bus or a taxi from Jardim Botanical Garden to get back to center city Funchal.

The cable car company offers a variety of packages covering both cable cars, admission to the botanical gardens, and bus tours of the city. These packages allow you to personalize your self-guided tour of Funchal.

NOTE:  I will describe the cable cars, the routes, points of interest, etc. later in this port guide in the section on Tourist Sites North of Center City Funchal.
**Story Center**

http://www.storycentre.com/museum.html

Location: In the Largo Almirante Reis, next to the Monte Cable Car Station in Center City

Hours: Open daily from 10.00 to 19.00 hrs  Closed on Christmas

Admission (euros): 9.60 adult, 8.60 seniors 65 and over  You might get a discount with your cruise card

Plan on one to two hours to visit this center. It is an interactive museum covering the history of Madeira Island beginning with the volcanic eruption 14 million years ago. There is a a shop selling local arts and crafts, embroidery, wicker products, Madeira wines, sweets, stationery, books, regional souvenirs, and toys.

**Market – Mercado dos Lavradores**  A must visit site

Market - Mercado-dos-Lavradores

Location: Largo dos Lavradores

Hours: Monday to Thursday from 08.00 to 19.00 h;  Friday from 07:00 to 20:00 Saturday from 07.00 to 14.00 h  Closed Sundays & holidays

The Market is one of the most popular sites in Funchal. It's in a huge, 2-story building that was originally designed to supply a population of 25,000 with fish, meat, fruit, vegetables, spices, etc. It's a colorful, fun place to visit. You will see women in traditional costume selling flowers, fruit, vegetables, wicker items, etc.

**To see a Google, street level photo of the Market,** enter the GPS coordinates into Google maps. Then drag the little yellow man icon onto the map and place it on top of the down-pointing green arrow. Rotate the man icon around on the map until you see the entrance to the Market (photo at right).

Note that the man icon is pointing at the entrance of the building between the streets of Rua Latino Coelho and Rua Brigadeiro Oudinot. You can also move the man icon around to get an idea of what is in the area. Exploring street-level photos is a good way to preview your visit to a city.

See an excellent 360° virtual tour of the Market and several other sites in center city Funchal at http://www.360cities.net/image/madeira-funchal-mercado-dos-lavradores-1-portugal#-275.63,27.38,70.0

**Museu de Arte Sacra**  A must visit site

Museu de Arte Sacra do Funchal  http://www.museuartesacrafunchal.org/eng/homepage.html

Rua do Bispo 21, on Praca do Municipio, Funchal's main square

Hours: Tuesdays to Saturdays  10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and from 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.  Sundays from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  Closed Mondays and holidays.  Ticket: 3 Euros

The Museum has paintings, sculpture, goldsmithery and vestments from the 15th to 19th centuries. Exhibits include religious sculptures and paintings from many of the island’s churches, including a number of Flemish works originating from earlier connections with Flanders. “Treasures of the Cathedral” including the baptismal fountain, altar and pulpit are on display at the Museum of Sacred Art.

Plan on a minimum of 30 minutes at the museum. There's a cafe next to the museum as shown in the photo above. The cafe is a good place to relax and enjoy the views of the main square in Funchal.
**Natural History Museum & Aquarium (Municipal Museum)**

Location: Rua da Mouraria n.º 31
Hours: Tuesday to Sunday - 10.00 to 18.00  Closed on Monday and holidays
Admission: 2.60 Euros

The Natural History Museum is the oldest museum in operation in the archipelago of Madeira. It is installed in the Palace of St. Pedro, Funchal, one of the most significant works of the Portuguese civil architecture of the mid-eighteenth century, built by the family Carvalhal.

Exhibits include fauna, flora and geology of Madeira Island, an aquarium, and the Municipal Library.

One of the advantages of GPS coordinates is that you can use them in Google maps to preview your walk to tourist sites. Assume you are at Jardim Municipal Park and wish to walk to the Natural History Museum.

Enter GPS coordinates for the park and museum into “Get Directions” and click on the walking man icon. I had set the map to “Earth View”. The map at right appears showing the walking route, names of streets, and that the distance is 400 m and it's a 6 minute walk.

If you drag the little yellow man icon onto the walking route, the image at far right appears showing the street-level photo above the map. In this case, you can see there is a church at the end of the street where you will turn left to the museum. You can see from the images that you are walking slightly uphill, but it's not too steep.

Google street-level photos are available only for vehicle streets, not pedestrian streets. The section of Rua da Carrera on the route is a pedestrian zone; there are no street-level photos for this section of your route. Google street-level photos are typically several years old, so there may be some changes since the photos were taken.

**Collegiate Church of St. John the Evangelist**

Location: Near the university  Rua dos Ferreiros 105 on Praca do Municipio square
Across from the Museu de Arte Sacra
This 17th century church was built by the Jesuits. It has an elaborate facade and beautiful baroque interior with fresco paintings. You can climb the tower (1 Euro) for an excellent view of Funchal.

Masses: Monday to Saturday – 17h00  Sunday – 10h00/12h00/19h30
For a guided tour by the Jesuits, see [http://www.madeirapromotionbureau.com/madeira/apm/noticias.asp?id=500&site_lang=en](http://www.madeirapromotionbureau.com/madeira/apm/noticias.asp?id=500&site_lang=en)
The chapel is the final resting place of Zarco. The interior is famous for its beautiful tile work, paintings, and décor. The convent has been changed to a school run by Franciscan nuns. Ring the bell and the door will open. Admission is 2.5 Euros for a “short” guided tour by a nun. Some visitors complain about being “rushed” on the tour with no time to browse, and inadequate time, to study the beautiful setting.

Former house of João Gonçalves Zarco, the Island’s founder. Exhibits of furniture, porcelain, paintings and relics taken from ancient buildings. The site has beautiful gardens with many varieties of orchids.

Madeira Wine Institute is the agency that controls wine production. The museum covers history, method of production, cooperage, export markets, instrumentation, etc. Details are provided on types of wood used for barrels, methods of early wine presses, the casks, sheep or goatskins, or bullock cart modes of transportation. A live cooperage is a feature at the museum. The museum has a photo documentary on changes in technology, the first wooden instruments, etc. Staff are available to answer questions and provide free literature.

This museum recreates the romantic atmosphere of a house on Madeira Island by presenting an introduction to embroidery in the 19th century and the handiwork to appreciate the history and methods of this elegant craft.

Visitors can see the different types of stitches and creative pattern making methods of Madeira embroidery. Work includes embroidery, tapestry, and wickerwork. The centrepiece of the museum is a collection of 19th and early 20th century embroidered cloths and decorative pieces when romanticism style was in Fashion.

The building dates back to the 1940 (photo right) and houses a gallery of paintings, drawings and small sculptures by the Franco brothers.
Estimating Elevation Change - Walking Uphill

Madeira is a mountainous island. As you walk inland from the coast, you'll often encounter steep hills. If you know the elevation change, you can decide whether walking is practical for you.

All Google maps can plot walking distance, route, and time, but the most commonly used Google map programs do NOT show elevation.

Use the stand-alone, Google Earth program to determine elevation for map locations. The windows version of the program is called “GoogleEarth.Exe”. Download it and install it on your windows computer.

Assume you want to know the elevation change to walk uphill from the Old Brandy Wine Lodge to the Museu Quinta das Cruzes. Enter GPS coordinates N 32°38'52.0", W 16°54'38.0" for Old Blandy Wine Lodge into Google Earth; press the enter key. The map below appears. A yellow tack points to the location. The lower, right section of the map shows the GPS coordinates and “elev 85 ft”. The lodge is 85 feet above sea level.

Repeat the process entering N 32°39'03.9", W 16°54'49.4" for Museu da Quinta das Cruzes and pressing the enter key. The museum is 225 feet above sea level.

Enter coordinates for both of these locations into “Get Directions” and click on the walking man icon to get the walking route, distance and time. The walking route is 550 m (1804 ft) and will take 10 minutes. As determined previously, we know the elevation change = 225-85 = 140 feet. During the walk, you will effectively be climbing a 14-story building. I might walk 550 meters on level ground in 10 minutes, but if the walk involves climbing a 14-story building, it will take me more than 10 minutes. Since the standard Google maps cannot determine elevation, I believe their walking time estimate is wrong when walking uphill.

The stand-alone, Google Earth (GoogleEarth.Exe) map program is the only program I've seen that displays elevation above sea level as you move the cursor around the map. This can be very useful. Using this program, you can quickly move the cursor along the walking route from the cruise ship dock to center city and see that the elevation change is from 26 to 55 feet, along the coastal promenade. The walk from the ship to center city is on a flat, scenic, path with “no” significant elevation change.

Funchal is a beautiful city and one of the cleanest cities in Europe. You'll definitely want to explore the city on foot, but it's a good idea to combine walking with use of buses or cabs to move around easily. Study the HopOn bus map noting the location of the stops. Those stops are strategically placed to help you get up the hills to visit tourist sites without strenuous walking.

In addition to the HopOn bus, there is an excellent public bus system that covers the city of Funchal and the entire island.
Options to Tour Madeira and Funchal Center City

Madeira is a beautiful island. Center city Funchal is great, but so are the mountains and villages.

Cruise ships offer some excellent bus tours. The advantage of the ship's tour is that you leave from the dock and minimize unnecessary walking.

My preference for touring sites outside the city is a **pre-arranged, private taxi tour**. Our guide/driver picks us up at the dock and takes us to the sites we've selected. We can stay at the sites as long as we choose and can change the route if we so desire. A private tour is very time efficient and minimizes walking which is important for us due to my wife's arthritic knees.

The driver can drop us off in center city at the end of our tour if we wish to spend the afternoon exploring the city on foot, and either walking, or taking a cab back to the ship.

My friends and I like Daniel Madeira Taxis. Their website = [www.danielmadeirataxis.com](http://www.danielmadeirataxis.com) Email = [booking@danielmadeirataxis.com](mailto:booking@danielmadeirataxis.com) They offer 4, 6, 8, and 15 passenger vans and buses for 40 to 55 people. A half-day tour with an English speaking driver is 95 euros for up to 4 people (2014 prices). That's only ~ 24 euros, plus tip per person for a 4-person group on a private tour! Five and six person groups are priced at 23 euros/person plus tip for a half-day tour. I've described half-day private tours by my good friend Carol Mills, and my private taxi tour for our party of 6 in this port guide.

The **Hop-On bus** is a good, low-cost option, to tour center city and the bus makes a few stops for scenic views from the mountain high above the city. The main disadvantage of the HopOn bus is that you have to walk from the ship to stop #3 near the marina or from stop #10 when returning to the ship from center city. Also, buses may be so crowded that you might have to wait in line for the second bus.

Once you get to center city, you can access the **public bus system** which is very low cost. The buses go everywhere. You can use public bus rides and cable cars to explore scenic areas. Take a cable car from center city up to Monte. Explore that area and take a public bus back to center city. Another option is to walk a short distance east from Monte to the Jardim Botanico Garden cable car. Take that cable car half way down the mountain to visit the gardens, and then take a public bus back to center city. **Note: cable cars are pricey.**

Public Buses

The public bus system is run by a company called Horários do Funchal. Visit this website for routes, timetables, prices, and maps [http://www.horariosdofunchal.pt/index-eng.php](http://www.horariosdofunchal.pt/index-eng.php)

![Public Bus Stops between the Marina and Center City (map below)](image-url)

Note the construction zone interruption of service on the map for 2014.
Bus Routes from the stops shown on the previous page:

2014 Prices for Bus Tickets
On the bus, a ticket costs 1.95 euro per trip
Prepaid, rechargeable bus ticket/cards cost 4.60 euro/day for unlimited trips. An individual trip is 1.35 euro for each of 2-9 trips on the card. Each person must have their own bus ticket card which is called a “Giro Card”.
You can purchase bus ticket/cards at yellow Horários do Funchal kiosks in many areas, or in Post Offices, and in stores.

Two locations to purchase bus ticket/cards:

The Marina at Avenida do Mar - about a mile from the cruise ship dock.
Mon-Sat 09h00-13h00 & 14h00-18h00
Sunday 09h00-12h00 & 13h00-18h00

Teleferico near the Monte Cable Car Station in Center City Funchal
Daily 07h15-23h30

Public Bus Stops
Download the urban bus network map (mapaurbano.pdf) from http://www.horariosdofunchal.pt/images/stories/pdf/mapaurbano.pdf#toolbar=0&navpanes=0
This map is invaluable when planning use of public buses for self-guided touring. I show a section of this map on the next page. It's important to know this is a high resolution pdf file of a huge map. To print the full size map in highly legible form, you'll need to print it as a poster using at least six sheets of paper.
My preference is to increase the view of the map 200% and print individual sections of the map as highly readable documents. I describe this technique for printing pdf maps on page 4 of this port guide.

Funchal-Madeira-03-26-2014
The map above is an enlarged section of the public bus map showing buses to Monte, the Cable Cars, and the beautiful Jardim Botânico. Even though City-Sightseeing HopOn buses do not go to this area, their HopOn bus map shows excellent detail and is better than the Tourist Bureau or Public Bus maps. See the next page.
Monte Area Tourist Sites (section from the HopOn Bus Map)

A Monte Cable Car - top (from center city)  
GPS = N 32°40′31.7″, W 16°54′01.3″

B Jardim Tropical Monte Palace – Entrance  
GPS = N 32°40′31.8″, W 16°54′02.1″

C Nossa Senhora do Monte Church  
GPS = N 32°40′33.6″, W 16°54′09.1″

D Toboggan Ride – Start at Monte Church  
GPS = N 32°40′31.53″, W 16°54′09.35″

E Toboggan Ride – End in Livramento  
GPS = N 32°39′51.1″, W 16°54′16.9″

F Jardim Botanico Cable Car – Top (from Jardim Botanico)  
GPS = N 32°40′34.4″, W 16°53′57.2″

G Jardim Botanico Cable Car – Bottom  
GPS = N 32°39′49.4″, W 16°53′44.9″

For more guides, see www.TomsPortGuides.com
Getting to Monte from Center City Funchal

Unless you're an Olympic athlete going for a medal, you do NOT want to walk up or down the mountain between center city Funchal and Monte. Take the cable car, a public bus, or taxi. On our private taxi tour, the driver dropped us off at the center city cable car and met us at Monte because we wanted to see the views from the cable car.

Monte: Use bus lines = 20, 21, & 48.
The Monte Cable Car and Jardim Botanico Cable Car stations on top of the mountain are near bus 22
The Toboggan Sled ride ends in Livramento. Take a taxi back to town, or walk up the hill a short distance from the end of the sled ride to get bus line 23 back to center city Funchal
Jardim Botanico is near bus lines 29, 31, & 31A

The cable car ride is 10 Euros one way.
See http://www.telefericodofunchal.com/index_UK.html

Cable cars are clean, spacious, and provide excellent visibility (photo left). The ride is very comfortable and you'll have excellent views of the city.

The Ruby Princess (photo below) is at the furthest dock with the longest walking distance, the full length of the pier, to center city. This photo was taken thru the cable car window.
Monte
Monte is a small village 3.7 km (2.2 miles) north, and 560 meters (1800 feet) higher elevation than center city Funchal. When you exit the cable car, you'll see the palace and tropical garden entrance (photo below left).

B Monte Palace & Tropical Gardens Entrance  N 32°40’31.8″, W 16°54’02.1″

Location: Next to the Monte Cable Car station.
Open everyday except Christmas
Visiting hours of the Garden: 9.30am to 6.00pm.
Visiting hours of the Museum: 10.00am to 4.30pm
Admission = 12 euros for adults. I've read the ticket also gives you a free public bus ride down to Funchal
The site is 70,000 square meters (17 acres) with a lake for black swans, fish, etc. Ducks, peacocks, and chickens walk freely in the area. The gardens have tropical flowers and plants from around the world including many orchids. There is also a museum with African art. You'll need ~ 2 hours to properly tour this site.
Entrance to the garden and palace (photo at left).

C Nossa Senhora do Monte Church (photo left)
Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Monte  N 32°40’33.6″, W 16°54’09.1″

There are many steps ascending to the church, but the views are great from the top. Inside the church, you will see the statue of Our Lady of the Mountain, beautiful glass chandeliers, and the tomb of Charles I of Hapsburg. This church is an important pilgrimage site with processions every August. The church was closed when we visited.

D Toboggan/sled – Start of toboggan ride in Monte  N 32°40’31.53″, W 16°54’09.35″
E End of toboggan ride in Livramento  N 32°39’51.1″, W 16°54’16.9″

This ride has been used since the early 19th century. It's popular with tourists. Passengers sit upright in a wicker chair mounted on wooden “skis” that are greased to slide downhill on asphalt paved, public roads. The basket is controlled by two men dressed in traditional white flannels and straw boaters. To get the sled started downhill, the men pull on the ropes and run along side the sled. When it gains speed, the men step onto the skis behind the wicker chair to steer the sled and use their rubber soled boots as “brakes”.

The ride begins near the Nossa Senhora do Monte Church and continues through the public streets to Livramento. It's described as 2 Km (1.2 miles), but if you enter the GPS coordinates in Google maps, you'll find it is 1.3 km (0.8 mile). There are taxis at the end of the ride, or you can walk uphill a short distance to bus 23 in Livramento.

Hours: Monday to Saturday: 09h00-18h00  Sunday: 09h00-13h00  Closed August 14, 15, Dec 31 & Jan 1
Sunday: Open only if/when they get bookings from cruise lines.
Prices per sled (euros): one person = 25, two people = 30, three people = 45. Operators expect a tip

Accidents Can Occur on the Toboggan/Sled Ride.
CAVEAT – I am NOT advising you whether or not you should ride the toboggan, that is your decision. My intent is to provide information which you may not find elsewhere regarding potential risks of this ride and the legal position of cruise lines when passengers are injured on shore excursions.

To understand what the ride involves, watch this video, or one of the many other videos, on YouTube.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pEEH96yjE4

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Photo of Three People in a Toboggan/Sled

Note the red arrow showing the height of the seat relative to the road surface. The center of gravity is relatively high. Also note there is nothing in front of you to protect you. If the basket stops abruptly, you're airborne.

Risk

Because the chair-basket has a high center of gravity and is steered/controlled remotely by men running down the hill, there is a risk that the sled might tip over and eject the occupants if one of the men falls, lets go of the rope, etc. This happened when our Emerald Princess ship was in Madeira on April 20, 2008.

Three passengers (not the people in the photo above) were in the chair-basket. The accident was the “talk of the ship”. I did not see the accident, but spoke with two of the three people who were in the basket that tipped over. I also spoke with several other people who witnessed the accident.
This is a summary of the accident.

One of the men running beside the chair-basket lost his hat and reached back to grab it. In the process, he let go of his rope. The sled proceeded down the hill with only one man trying to steer it. The sled turned, and flipped over, ejecting all three passengers onto the hard surface, asphalt street. The passenger who landed on the bottom of the pile sustained facial lacerations and bruised/cracked ribs. I believe there was also a broken collar bone.

The people who were in the basket with the injured person described our ship's doctor as “not wanting to get involved”. He simply said, “Go home, you won't enjoy the rest of the cruise”. Fortunately, the injured passenger had insurance to cover the 5000-mile trip home.

**Cruise Lines DENY liability for the shore excursions they advertise, promote, and sell.**

When this accident occurred, I read the fine print regarding the cruise line's liability. See [http://www.carnival.com/cms/static_templates/shoreexcursionstc.aspx](http://www.carnival.com/cms/static_templates/shoreexcursionstc.aspx)

**Here's an excerpt from the Carnival website re “Responsibility” (NOTE: Carnival owns Princess)**

“Carnival is not responsible for any losses, damage, death, injuries, or claims whatsoever arising from, connected with, or related to any activities engaged in by guests while off Carnival’s ships or tenders in any port of call. This includes all shore excursions, whether booked online, sold on-board or sold by third parties ashore. Guests engage in all such activities off the ship at their own risk.

Carnival acts only as an agent for the independent tour operators supplying excursions or services. Independent contractors operate all shore excursions, including any related transportation. Carnival neither supervises nor controls their actions, nor makes any representation either expressed or implied as to their suitability. Carnival sells tickets for all excursions as a convenience to guests only. Tour operators, transportation providers, and their employees are neither agents nor employees of Carnival, notwithstanding their use of any signage or clothing which may contain the name “Carnival” or other related trade names or logos. It is understood and agreed that Carnival assumes no responsibility for, nor guarantees performance of, and in no event shall be liable for, any loss, damage, injury, or death in connection with said excursions or transportation. Please review your ticket for further information regarding your rights and obligations as well as those of Carnival.”

**Bottom Line = Passengers Are Responsible for Our Own Safety on Shore Excursions**

As individual travelers, we are responsible to accept the consequences, and safety risks, when we choose shore excursions.

**When you leave Monte, consider visiting Jardim Botanico, a gorgeous garden**

There are two cable cars at the top of the mountain.

**A Monte Cable Car – Top**

GPS = N 32°40'31.7", W 16°54'01.3”

**F Jardim Botanico Cable Car – Top**

GPS = N 32°40'34.4", W 16°53'57.2”

**Jardim Botanico Cable Car - Babosas Square Entrance**


Hours: Open every day, except Christmas, from 9.00 a.m until 6.00 p.m (The last entrance is at 5.30 p.m)

Admission: Cable car one way = 8.25 euros.

Copy both of these GPS coordinates (above) into Google Maps “Get Directions” and click on the walking man icon. It's only a 2 minute, 150 meter walk from one cable car to the other. If you take the cable car up the mountain from center city, consider walking east to the other cable car and taking it halfway down the mountain to Jardim Botanico. See the map on the next page.
**F** Babosas – Monte Station is the top station for the Jardim Botanico Cable Car. This station is accessed via Largo dos Babosas to the circular Babosas Square. The walking route is shown as A to B on the map below.

**G** Jardim Botanico  Cable car station  N 32°39′49.4″, W 16°53′44.9″
Location: Quinta do Bom Sucesso, about 3 kilometers North of the center of Funchal City
This location is at the Southern End of the Botanical Garden Cable Car
Hours: Open every day, except Christmas, from 9.00 a.m until 6.00 p.m (The last entrance is at 5.30 p.m)
Admission: ~ 5.50 euros to enter the garden, 15 euros for a guided tour. Prices are subject to change.

This is one of the most famous tourist sites in Madeira. It is 35,000 square meters (8.5 acres) with 2500 exotic plants from around the world designed into a mosaic. The garden conserves native plants of Madeira which are very rare and extinct in the wild.
Displays include indigenous and endemic plants; an arboretum with plants from the tropics, succulents from South America, fruits such as mango, avocado, papaya, and coffee and sugar cane. There is also Loiro Park with a collection of 300 exotic birds including dwarf parrots, macaws, etc. You will also see peacocks and a large tortoise.
It is not easy/practical to walk downhill from Jardim Botanico to center city. Take bus line 29, 31, or 31A to the city. A cab from Jardim Botanico to Center City will cost ~ 8 euros.

Public Bus Route Map Between Center City and Jardim Botanico
Levada Walk  Rabacal - 25 Fontes (Fountains or Springs) - comments by Gail Craig

On our first visit to Madeira, we took the ship's bus excursion to popular tourist sites. While researching tour options for our second cruise to Madeira, I noted the reference to Levada Walks in Tom Sheridan's Port Guide. Robert and I are hikers. I researched hiking in Madeira, booked a tour with a guide, and we spent a full-day on a Levada Walk in the mountains. It was an amazing, wonderful, experience. Below is a review of our experience. If you're considering hiking, you'll find this useful.

Gail and Robert Craig

Madeira's Levadas described on the tourist website http://www.visitportugal.com/en/destinos/madeira/73834

Levadas are irrigation channels constructed by past generations to distribute the abundant water that flows from springs at the top of the mountains to the slopes and valleys. About 1,500 km of levadas are available to explore and to provide a unique encounter with nature.

Most of the trails are quite accessible, but there are varying degrees of difficulty. Consult professionals in the field, specific publications, and websites on the subject, and use suitable equipment.

Apart from the footpaths they provide, the levadas are sometimes the only means of access to certain places so isolated that they certainly deserve a visit. Explore some of these levadas to discover the soul of the island, away from the beaten track. These magnificent walks give a glimpse of the breathtaking landscapes. From the deep blue of the sea, to the green of the high mountains, the excitement of going from sea level to 1862 metres is guaranteed! Between the levadas and the footpaths, you can enjoy the best panoramas that the exuberant nature of Madeira provides. It's a real tonic for the routine of everyday life!

The Trail We Hiked Is Shown by Blue Dotted Lines Bordered by the Number “4”
This map is cropped and marked to show the Rabacal - 25 Fontes trail relative to the cruise ship dock. Our walk started at Rabacal with the turn around point at 25 Fontes. On the return, the path reached a tunnel (pitch dark), through which it crosses to an alternate path back to the starting point. The walk is 9 km (5.6 miles) and took 3 hours and 15 minutes. We walked pretty much non-stop and were on our feet all the time. We stopped briefly for lunch, but stood while eating because there was no place to sit down and the rocks were wet from a heavy mist and light rain.
Internet Sources of Information on Hiking in Madeira
There are a multitude of websites with photos, videos, and descriptions of different trails, types of levadas, scenery along the walks, maps, and suggested clothes for a wide range of weather conditions.

www.madeira-seekers.com/MadeiraWalks.html We used Madeira Seekers and highly recommend them.
www.madeira-levada-walks.com : (Madeira Explorers).
www.visitingmadeira.com : Short video of Levada das 25 Fontes; map of Madeira; & information about walks.
www.madeira-web.com/PagesUK/levadawalking-UK.html; This website includes links to additional information about Levada Walks and photos of what you could experience on a trail.

Selecting a Company and Hiking Tour
Most of the guided hiking tours are half-day walks. I was looking for a full-day, moderate level hike. We are in our early seventies, and walk at least an hour each day. We enjoy longer hikes in our local and state parks and have taken walking holidays in England and Scotland.

I read reviews of different walks on Trip Advisor and used email and Skype to contact agencies re a full day walk including round-trip transportation from/to our ship which would be in port from 9-5.

Madeira Seekers
We Chose Their Proposal for a Levada Walk to Rabacal-25 Fontes (Fountains or Springs):
Moderate grade, 9 km (5.6 miles), duration of walk ~ 3 hours 15 minutes.
Pick-up at 09:40 in front of the cruise ship and return between 16:30-17:00.
Cost = 36 Euros per person (in cash). This includes:
• An officially certified mountain guide, officially certified driver (our guide was also our driver), and
• Insurance in the vehicle and on the walk.
Walkers are requested to bring a picnic lunch and 1.5 liter of bottled water. A small day pack is useful for your lunch, water, camera, light jacket, or water repellent/proof jacket. You'll need shoes providing adequate support and grip on a variety of different, and wet, surfaces. Sections of the path may be close to the edge of a ravine, but there is usually a safety railing. Some people can experience vertigo. I used my walking pole occasionally. Walking sticks and flashlights were available from our guide.

Everything went according to plan; we had a fabulous experience.
Our guide and driver, Leonardo, picked us up at the ship and stopped at a few hotels to pick up other hikers. There were two vans and 19 hikers in our group.

On the way to Ribeira de Janela, Leonardo received a phone call that there had been a mudslide, so he changed the route. It was a scenic drive along the coast, up through lush mountains, past small villages, and cultivated terraces, many of which included banana plantations. The temperature became cooler, and we encountered heavy mist and drizzle, as we drove higher into the mountains.

Leonardo is multilingual and could switch from English, to German, to French with our group. We enjoyed an interesting running-commentary about Madeira and what we were seeing as we drove in the van. During the hike, he provided information about the trees, plants, flowers, birds and springs. In particular, we learned about the levadas; why and how they were built, and the multiple ways the water is used on the island of Madeira (photo at left).
It was a learning experience.
The walk proceeded at a comfortable pace. We passed another group and a few independent hikers on the trail.

Our guide had offered a light rain poncho to all of us at the beginning of the hike. We declined because our jackets are water resistant and keep us dry.

However, the heavy mist/light drizzle gradually soaked through our day packs which are not water resistant. The poncho would have kept everything dry.

We don't normally walk for hours in the rain and had not considered that water would eventually penetrate our walking shoes. By the end of the hike, our socks were wet, but that didn't bother us as we knew we would be back at the ship soon.

The moral is to be prepared for soaking rain and ensure ALL of your gear will stay dry.

Walking along the levada/irrigation canal (photo left)

There are no toilets available along the walk. On the return trip to Funchal, Leonardo stopped at a small, all-purpose store where we could purchase a drink and/or a snack and use the toilet.

Terraced gardens on a hillside near the store (photo below).
If you're interested in a quiet walk in a beautiful location, hike the Levada Trails.

Gail and Robert Craig
Madeira is a mountainous island with many beautiful, scenic places. Considering the short time a cruise ship is in port, it is not possible to see much of the island. The tours tend to focus on sites relatively close to Funchal. The map above shows some of the most popular tourist sites outside of Funchal. Note that public city buses go to Pico dos Barcelos and the City-Sightseeing HopOn stop #13 is at this site.

See the following pages for a description of these sites.
Tourist Sites Outside of Funchal

There are villages around the perimeter coastline of Madeira Island and many popular sites in the mountains. These tourist sites are close to Funchal so they can be included when the ship's time in port is limited. I have included GPS coordinates to help you find these sites on Google or Bing Maps.

**Pico dos Barcelos**  (photo below)

GPS = N 32°39′31.5″, W 16°56′22.1″

This is a favorite spot for photos from the mountains down to the city of Funchal. This site is 335 meters (1165 feet) up on the mountain northwest of Funchal.

The Funchal city bus network map (at left) shows lines 9, 12, 13 and 48 stop near this site, but the closest bus stop appears to be ~ 1200 feet from Pico dos Barcelos.

**Cabo Girão**  GPS = N 32°39′25.1″, W 17°00′16.7″

This is described as the second highest sea cliff in the world at 589 meters (1840 feet). The entrance sign shows 580 m. Statisticians argue there are five higher cliffs than this in Europe. Not to worry, it is a scenic area to visit and photograph. It is located about 11 miles west of Funchal.
This Google aerial photo shows the cliff.

Photo from cliff (above left).                                           Photo of new viewing stand (above right).

The new viewing stand permits excellent, safe views from the top of the cliff. The site also has clean, new toilets which cost 1/2 euro to use.
Câmara de Lobos  GPS = N 32°38'53.4", W 16°58'26.7"

Câmara de Lobos, wolves' gorge, named after wolf fish, is a small fishing town just east of Cabo Girão. You can walk down to the beach and photograph the cliffs. See photo below.

Google Earth View Below
There are terraced fields in many areas of Madeira (photo below)

Eira do Serrado  GPS = N 32°42'37.3", W 16°57'45.6"
Eira do Serrado is at the head of the pass to Nun’s Valley overlooking the village of Curral das Freiras.
Ribeiro Frio  GPS = N 32°44'05.8", W 16°53'11.2"

Ribeiro Frio (cold river) is an attractive area in the mountains with a trout farm, a souvenir shop, and a small chapel. It is also a popular place to begin Levada trail walks if you have the inclination and the time.

Ribeira Brava  GPS = N 32°40'16.2", W 17°03'54.1"

Ribeira Brava (Wild River) is a small town on the coast with cafes, shops, and scenic views. It is located where rain water used to flow from the mountains providing drinking water to the residents. I haven't been there, but photos of the village indicate it has very attractive views of the coast and cliffs (photo below).

Climate & Weather in Madeira
Madeira has a warm, mild climate year-round with a near perfect temperate range of 64-75 F.
Average monthly rainfall (inches):

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It is no wonder that people want to visit Madeira.

We've been to Madeira three times. As an amateur photographer, I have found there can be fog or mist in the mountains which adds to the charm, but makes it difficult to take pictures. The solution is to spend more time in Madeira than the brief time a cruise ship is in port. Put Madeira on your vacation “bucket list”.

For more guides, see www.TomsPortGuides.com
User Feedback Is Welcome

Goal
My guides are designed to help you plan a great cruise vacation by providing information such as where the ship docks, location of tourist sites, public transit, walking tour maps, things to see and do, travel issues unique to the port, etc. Knowledge of ports is important when planning shore excursions because you have to make many decisions and commitments long before your ship docks. I believe the information in this guide is accurate, however you are responsible to verify accuracy of the information that you use to plan your vacation.

Information on cruise ports frequently changes such as bus routes, admission fees to sites, rental car locations, etc. Cruise Critic is the best source for up-to-date, detailed information on travel details for shore excursions, reviews of cruise ships, etc. There are many knowledgeable people on Cruise Critic who are willing to share their expertise and travel experience. I highly recommend [www.CruiseCritic.com](http://www.CruiseCritic.com); it's free to join.

Why feedback is important
User feedback helps me make corrections and improve the format and content in my quest to produce the “ultimate” port guides. I welcome offers to collaborate with me or provide materials for use in my guides.

PLEASE Help “spread the word” about my website
The only negative feedback I get is, “I wish I knew about your port guides before my vacation”. Please tell your friends and post a reference to my guides and website on the blogs. To receive email notification when new guides are available, send your email address to me at [TomsPortGuides@gmail.com](mailto:TomsPortGuides@gmail.com)

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Tom Sheridan