

Furnas Scenic Drive Guide

The geothermal valley of São Miguel, north out and south back, around 90km

Interactive route map and GPX download: the full Furnas valley loop, with all stops plotted, is on our website. Download the GPX to load the route into Google Maps, a sat nav or your phone.

At a Glance

Stage	Road	Highlights
Ponta Delgada	EN1-1A	Collect the hire car, head East
Gorreana Tea	EN2-1A (north)	Europe's oldest tea plantation, free tasting
Pico do Ferro	Signed off the north road	Panoramic view over the valley and lake
Caldeiras das Furnas	Furnas town	Steaming fumaroles, bubbling mud, cozido pits
Terra Nostra Park	Furnas village	Iron-rich thermal pool, botanical garden
Poça da Dona Beija	Furnas village	Six warm pools, open late
Lagoa das Furnas	EN1-1A	The lake, the chapel and the cozido fumaroles

Safety and Driving Tips

The roads into Furnas are well surfaced but twisting, with steep climbs and tight bends on both the north and south routes, so keep your speed down on the descents and use the passing places. A small or medium car suits the valley roads best. Go out one way and back the other to see both landscapes. Check the weather, as the valley clouds over quickly even in summer. Parking is tightest by Lagoa das Furnas and the thermal pools at peak times, so arrive early. Fuel up in Ponta Delgada or Ribeira Grande before climbing into the valley. Book your cozido at least 24 hours ahead. Take a dark swimsuit for the iron-rich thermal pools. Drive on the right. There are no tolls on the island.

Best For

- A live geothermal valley of fumaroles, hot springs and steaming ground
- Cozido das Furnas, the stew cooked underground by volcanic heat
- Thermal bathing at Terra Nostra Park and Poca da Dona Beija
- Europe's oldest tea plantation at Gorreana and the Pico do Ferro view

Ponta Delgada Airport Gateway Access

Every visitor to São Miguel arrives through Ponta Delgada Airport (PDL), also called João Paulo II, just west of the capital and about 45 minutes from Furnas on the EN1-1A. The rental desks are in the arrivals hall. A hire car is close to essential, as the bus takes over 90 minutes each way and reaches almost none of the valley's spread-out sights. Remember you hire a separate car on each island, as rentals cannot travel between the islands on the ferries.

Book your hire car at getcarhire.com and compare all the main suppliers in one search, with insurance and taxes included. Prices for car hire in São Miguel start from around £12 per day in the low season.

Opening hours, cozido availability and thermal pool slots change, especially out of season, so it is worth checking and booking ahead before relying on any one stop.