

## Madeira – Trail Through the Point of St. Lawrence

Vereda da Ponta de São Lourenço, the trail through the Point of St. Lawrence, is worth starting from the Baía d'Abra car park. I will tell you right away that since October 2024 access to some tourist trails in Madeira is paid. When going to the Point of St. Lawrence, a fee of 3 euros is required.

Generally, this trail is considered as easy, but as a matter of fact, it does not belong to the easy ones. It is not the length that is challenging, but the terrain. As we walk, we are constantly either descending or climbing. These climbs are often fairly steep but short. The only genuinely demanding climb is the ascent to Pico do Furado. This is mainly due to the poor condition of the path which is why it is officially closed. By climbing to the summit, we take full responsibility for any accidents. Of course, this does not frighten those eager to enjoy the views from the top. On another note, I will say that it is worth it.



*Pico do Furado. Picture: Krzysztof Tęcza*

In the beginning, looking from the car park, the trail may seem effortless, but after a few hundred meters, it becomes clear that it will not be like that. Mainly, it is because of the ground, which is very slippery when it is slightly damp. Add to that the constant hills. This is why it is best not to rush, but to walk at a steady pace and take from time to time breaks to admire the views. It is interesting that airplanes are flying all the time over our heads. This is the route taken by aircrafts landing at Funchal Airport.

Before setting off on the trail, it is worth taking a look at the map. So that when we are here, surrounded by the ocean on all sides, we will know that we are not on an island, but on a peninsula. Although, in some places, we might feel that the land could be cut off from the rest of mainland by the first storm. But, exactly in those places the view of the ocean is breathtaking. We cannot get enough of those beautiful landscapes.

The first real rest awaits us at the Casa do Sardinha shelter. Essentially, it is worth stopping here for a snack and rehydration, but also for the use of the only proper toilet. Unfortunately, as a rule, we need to wait in a long line. It is not easy. But the toilet is civilised, equipped with towels and water.



*Picture: Krzysztof Tęcza*

After this rest, the climb up to Pico do Furado is not fearsome for us. Though it will give us a hard time. How it turned out, the damages on the trail, steepness, and slipperiness all play their part. Though I do not know if the descent was more demanding, but for sure it evolved many emotions. Still, the view from the summit more than made up for all the effort. We could not get enough of the beauty of the ocean seen below. Despite this, the fact that we are standing almost at the end of the peninsula also had significance. As we have seen, most people did not make the effort to go there.

After all these experiences, we thought nothing else could surprise us. How wrong we were. Just a moment later, as we reached a notch carved by the water into the coastline, the wind swept us toward the barrier above the cliff. We sweated in shock. Luckily, no one was hurt, and we were able to leisurely make our way back to our minibus to drive to the next interesting spot.

For the curious, I will add that the name of the peninsula is no coincidence. During a great storm, when it seemed that the end had come for a group of sailors, they managed to reach the shore safely. It was a true miracle. They could hardly believe that they had survived. In gratitude, they decided to name this place after the patron of sailors-the Point of St. Lawrence.

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