

# Walks in the Floating Garden

Single center  guided walking

- Luxury family-run ★★★★★ hotel: pool, tennis, fine cuisine
- Fully guided gentle walking: magnificent coastal and mountain scenery
- Paradise of emerald seas, exotic flowers, rare birds of prey
- Forgotten hill villages, colorful fishing ports, historic Funchal
- Lovely temperate climate; hospitable, generous people



Madeira is like a giant botanical garden with plants from all over the world. Our base in Funchal is the ★★★★★ Quinta da Bela Vista, one of the most exclusive hotels on Madeira. Secluded between the mountains and the sea, and with sweeping views across the Bay of Funchal, this recently extended manor house is the epitome of understated luxury. And it has been in the same family for over 150 years!

All the rooms are stylishly furnished and you'll come across original paintings and rare antiques throughout the buildings. There are two fine restaurants (small supplement to be paid locally for the à la carte dining room), heated outdoor swimming pool, sauna, jacuzzi and tennis court. A regular complimentary shuttle service is provided to and from Funchal (5-10 mins), and there are beautifully established private gardens if you simply want to relax.

Your walking guide will take you by minibus to all the corners of the island, and paths along levadas provide access to remote hill villages. Lunches are either copious picnics or are arranged for you in local restaurants en route. There's a boat trip to the little visited island of Porto Santo, where Christopher Columbus once lived.

*"Extremely high standards. Everything went without a hitch. Our best holiday ever!"*

*Mrs Batchelor*



## WALKS IN THE FLOATING GARDEN | DAY BY DAY

### Day 1 Arrive at Funchal airport

Your guide meets you and takes you to your hotel (20 mins).

### Day 2 Mimosa Walk 10km/6mi/3hr

Today we head south east and walk along the modern Levada dos Maroços lined with mimosas. Starting near the source, we follow the irrigation canal above cultivated terraces filled with a diversity of crops and dotted with flowering plants. As we move along the upper part of the valley, we have spectacular views of the emerald green bay of Machico, nestling below the hills of Santo da Serra. Leaving the canal to wind its way through the countryside, we move on to the sleepy fishing village of Caniçal for lunch, after which there will be time to explore and see the sight before driving back to Funchal.

### Day 3 Lamaceiros Natural Park 14km/9mi/5hr

We stop first at Camacha, a major center for the basket industry. Then up a scented woodland path edged with wild flowers including orchids, Pride of Madeira, gladioli and fuchsias through the National Park. An easy path takes us down to Portela, with majestic mountains behind us and the north coast fishing villages spread out below.

### Day 4 Independent exploring

A free day today to wander around Funchal, perhaps starting with the bustling market, near the harbour. There's every kind of fresh fish and exotic fruit. It's full of atmosphere, and ablaze with local color. A short walk, passing a number of famous old manor houses, gets you to Monte, its church surrounded by beautiful gardens. Then in the afternoon have a cream tea at Reids, or try a spot of vintage Madeira tasting after heading down (perhaps by 'toboggan') into the town.

### Day 5 Porto Santo 8km/5mi/3hr

An early start to catch the 08:00 ferry to Porto Santo (2 1/2 hours, fare included). We start off from Camacha village where we follow the path around Pico Castelo, passing through cedars, pines and eucalyptus. After a picnic lunch it's then off to the island's fine sandy beach and a visit to Christopher Columbus' house (now a museum) before getting the boat back to Funchal.

### Day 6 Porto Moniz 7km/4mi/2.5hr

We head north west today, passing spectacular roadside waterfalls, to the famous black laurel of Fanal. We then follow a forest path through ericas and twisted laurels with firecrests soaring overhead, as we approach the pretty Paul da Serra plateau fragrant with wild mint and oregano. We then have a barbeque where we enjoy *espetada* (beef speared with laurel branches and cooked over an open fire), salad and wine at a forest house. We then head to the sparkling volcanic rock pools of Porto Moniz where there's a chance for a refreshing dip, before making our way back to Funchal.

### Day 7 Levadas and Waterfalls 13km/8mi/5hr

A short scenic drive gets us to the start of the walk, along the Levada do Paul edged with laurels, ericas and blueberry trees. The path is loud with the song of the bis-bis birds (like small finches), and fragrant with oregano, mint and fennel from which Funchal got its name. We picnic under a magnificent waterfall, and return by the Levada do Lageado to Casa Florestal do Paul. Time for a swim before dinner.

### Day 8 Leave Funchal

We give you a lift to the airport for your flight home.



*"The accommodation was excellent and the program of walks and excursions varied and interesting."*

Mr Wood

## Dates and Prices

Departs selected Saturdays	Tour Only
<b>2012 departures</b>	
Jun 16	\$3,229
Mar 3, May 19	\$3,357
Sep 15	\$3,479
Oct 27	\$3,498
Apr 7	\$3,517
<b>2013 departures</b>	
Jun 15	\$3,398
May 25	\$3,516
Mar 16	\$3,533

**Singles:** Add \$89 per night, except Apr 7 2012 when \$166 per night.

**Child:** This holiday is unsuitable for children under 12.

**Room upgrade:** Prices from 13 per person, per night, based on 2 sharing.

**Holiday type:** Guided walking, single center, groups of typically 4-12 people on each tour.

**Departs:** Selected Saturdays from Mar 3 2012 to Jun 15 2013.

**Duration:** 8 days (7 nights).

**Meals:** Buffet breakfast, 5 lunches and all evening meals.

**Other details:** For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

## Tailor-made travel choices

**Nearest Arrival Airport: Funchal Airport.** Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

**The above prices include our standard transfers:** Funchal Airport at 17:45 (Jun 2012, Sept-Oct 2012 & Jun 2013), 10:10 (Apr-May 2012 & May 2013), 10:25 (Mar 2012 & Mar 2013), (transfer to hotel, 20 mins, provided). **Return:** Funchal Airport by 09:45 (Jun 2012, Sept-Oct 2012 & Jun 2013), 15:55 (Apr-May 2012 & May 2013), 16:20 (Mar 2012 & Mar 2013), transfer provided.

## WALKS IN THE FLOATING GARDEN | WALKING DETAILS



The walking is quite gentle and is mostly along old trails and *levadas* (narrow paths following irrigation channels). Our comfy air-conditioned minibus is used to take you to altitude.



**Average daytime temperature (°C):**

19 19 20 21 22 22 22 25 24 22  
FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV



**Average monthly rainfall (mm):**

95 74 40 18 10 2 3 21 68 87  
FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV

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