

Azores

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Azores** (/əˈzɔːrz/ *ə-ZOHRZ* or /ˈeɪzɔːrz/ *AY-zohrz*; Portuguese: *Açores*, [ɐˈsoɾiʃ]), officially the **Autonomous Region of the Azores** (*Região Autónoma dos Açores*), is one of the two autonomous regions of Portugal, an archipelago composed of nine volcanic islands in the North Atlantic Ocean about 1,360 km (850 mi) west of continental Portugal, about 880 km (550 mi) northwest of Madeira, and about 1,925 km (1,196 mi) southeast of Newfoundland.

Its main industries are agriculture, dairy farming (for cheese and butter products primarily), livestock ranching, fishing, and tourism, which is becoming the major service activity in the region. In addition, the government of the Azores employs a large percentage of the population directly or indirectly in the service and tertiary sectors. The main settlement of the Azores is Ponta Delgada.

There are nine major Azorean islands and an islet cluster, in three main groups. These are Flores and Corvo, to the west; Graciosa, Terceira, São Jorge, Pico, and Faial in the centre; and São Miguel, Santa Maria, and the Formigas Reef to the east. They extend for more than 600 km (370 mi) and lie in a northwest-southeast direction.

All the islands have volcanic origins, although some, such as Santa Maria, have had no recorded activity since the islands were settled. Mount Pico, on the island of Pico, is the highest point in Portugal, at 2,351 m (7,713 ft). The Azores are actually some of the tallest mountains on the planet, measured from their base at the bottom of the ocean to their peaks, which thrust high above the surface of the Atlantic.

The climate of the Azores is very mild for such a northerly location, being influenced by its distance to continents and the passing Gulf Stream. Due to the marine influence, temperatures remain mild year-round. Daytime temperatures normally fluctuate between 16 °C (61 °F) and 25 °C (77 °F) depending on season.^{[7][8]} Temperatures above 30 °C (86 °F) or below 3 °C (37 °F) are unknown in the major population centres. It is also generally wet and cloudy.

The culture, dialect, cuisine, and traditions of the Azorean islands vary considerably, because these once-uninhabited and remote islands were settled sporadically over a span of two centuries.

Azores (Açores)

Autonomous Region (*Região Autónoma*)



Mount Pico and the green landscape, emblematic of the archipelago of the Azores



Flag



Coat of arms

Official name: *Região Autónoma dos Açores*

Name origin: *açor*, Portuguese for species of raptor, erroneously identified as goshawks; also derivation from the word for *blue*

Motto: *Antes morrer livres que em paz sujeitos*
(*English: "Rather die as free men than be enslaved in peace"*)

Country	 Portugal
Autonomous Region	 Azores
Region	Atlantic Ocean
Subregion	Mid-Atlantic Ridge
Position	Azores Platform
Islands	Corvo, Faial, Flores, Graciosa, Pico, São Jorge, São Miguel, Santa Maria, Terceira
Municipalities	Angra do Heroísmo, Horta, Lagoa, Lajes das Flores, Lajes do Pico, Madalena, Nordeste, Povoação, Praia da Vitória, Ponta Delgada, Ribeira Grande,

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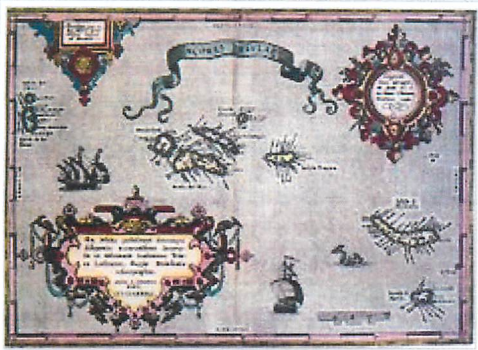
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History

A small number of alleged hypogea, earthen structures carved into rocks that were used for burials, have been identified on the islands of Corvo, Santa Maria and Terceira by Portuguese archaeologist Nuno Ribeiro, who speculated that they might date back 2000 years, alluding to a human presence on the island before the Portuguese.^[9] However, these kinds of structures have always been used in the Azores to store cereals, and suggestions by Ribeiro that they might be burial sites are unconfirmed. Detailed examination and dating to authenticate the validity of these speculations is lacking.^[10] It is unclear whether these structures are natural or man-made and whether they predate the 15th-century Portuguese colonization of the Azores. Solid confirmation of a pre-Portuguese human presence in the archipelago has not yet been published.

European discovery

Capital	Santa Cruz da Graciosa, Santa Cruz das Flores, São Roque, Vila do Corvo, Vila do Porto, Vila Franca do Campo Ponta Delgada ^[1]
Largest city	Ponta Delgada
 - center	São José
 - elevation	22 m (72 ft)
 - coordinates	37°44′28″N 25°40′32″W
Highest point	Mount Pico
 - elevation	2,351 m (7,713 ft)
 - coordinates	38°28′19″N 28°51′50″W
Lowest point	Sea level
 - location	Atlantic Ocean
 - elevation	0 m (0 ft)
Area	2,333 km ² (901 sq mi)
Population	245,746 (2012) <i>Census 2011</i>
Density	105.87/km ² (274/sq mi)
Settlement	15 August 1432
 - Administrative autonomy	c. 1895
 - Political autonomy	4 September 1976
Discovery	c. 1427
 - Santa Maria	c. 1427
 - São Miguel	c. 1428
Management	
 - location	Assembleia Regional, Rua Marcelino Lima, Horta, Faial
 - elevation	46 m (151 ft)
 - coordinates	38°32′6″N 28°37′51″W
Government	
 - location	Palácio de Santana, Rua José Jácome Correia, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel
 - elevation	60 m (197 ft)
 - coordinates	37°44′52″N 25°40′19″W
President (Government)	Vasco Cordeiro (PS)
 - President (Assembleia)	Ana Luís (PS)
Timezone	AZOT (UTC−1)
 - summer (DST)	AZOST (UTC)
ISO 3166-2 code	PT-20
Postal code	9XXX-XXX
Area code	(+351) 29X XX XX
	XX ^[2]
ccTLD	.pt



1584 map of the Azores.

The islands were known in the fourteenth century and parts of them appear in the Atlas Catalan. In 1427, a captain sailing for Henry the Navigator, possibly Gonçalo Velho,

rediscovered the

Azores, but this is not certain. In Thomas Ashe's 1813 work, *A History of the Azores*,^[11] the author identified a Fleming, Joshua Vander Berg of Bruges, who made landfall in the archipelago during a storm on his way to Lisbon.^[11] He stated that the Portuguese explored the area and claimed it for Portugal.^[11] Other stories note the discovery of the first islands (São Miguel Island, Santa Maria Island and Terceira Island) by sailors in the service of Henry the Navigator, although there are few documents to support the claims.

Although it is commonly said that the archipelago received its name from the goshawk (*Açor* in Portuguese), a common bird at the time of discovery, it is unlikely that the bird nested or hunted in the islands.

Settlement

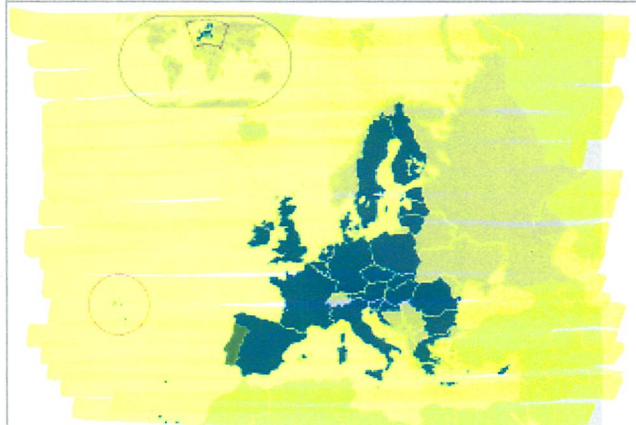


Angra do Heroísmo, the oldest continuously-settled town in the archipelago of the Azores and UNESCO World Heritage Site

Following the discovery of Santa Maria and before settlement began, sheep were let loose on the island to supply future settlers with food, because there were no large animals on the island. Settlement did not take place right away, however. There was not

much interest among the Portuguese people in an isolated archipelago hundreds of miles from civilization. However, Gonçalo Velho Cabral patiently gathered resources and settlers for the next three years (1433–1436) and sailed to establish colonies on Santa Maria first and then São Miguel.

Date format	dd-mm-yyyy
Drive	right-side
Demonym	Azorean
Patron Saint	Espírito Santo
Holiday	51st day (Monday) following Easter (Dia da Região Autónoma dos Açores)
Anthem	<i>A Portuguesa</i> (national) <i>Hino dos Açores</i> (regional)
Currency	Euro (€) ^[3]
GDP (nominal)	2013
- Total	€ 3,694 million ^[4]
- Per capita	€ 14,900 ^[4]



Location of the Azores relative to Portugal (green) and the rest of the European Union (dark blue)



Distribution of the islands of the archipelago

Wikimedia Commons: Azores

Statistics: Instituto Nacional de Estatística^[5]

Website: www.azores.gov.pt (<http://www.azores.gov.pt/>)

Geographic detail from CAOP (2010)^[6] produced by Instituto Geográfico Português (IGP)

Lajes Field

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Lajes Field or **Lajes Air Base** (pronounced: [ˈlaʒiʒ]; Portuguese: *Base Aérea das Lajes*), officially designated **Air Base No. 4** (*Base Aérea N° 4*, **BA4**) (IATA: **TER**, ICAO: **LPLA**), is a multi-use airfield, home to the Portuguese Air Force *Base Aérea N°4* and Azores Air Zone Command (Portuguese: *Comando da Zona Aérea dos Açores*), a United States Air Force detachment unit (operated by the 65th Air Base Group of United States Air Forces in Europe - Air Forces Africa), and a regional air passenger terminal located near Lajes and 15 km (9.3 mi) northeast of Angra do Heroísmo^[1] on Terceira Island in the Azores, Portugal. Located about 3,680 km (2,290 mi) east of New York City and about 1,600 km (990 mi) west of Lisbon, Portugal; the base sits in a strategic location midway between North America and Europe in the north Atlantic Ocean.

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History

The origin of the Lajes Field dates back to 1928, when Portuguese Army Lieutenant colonel Eduardo Gomes da Silva wrote a report on the possible construction of an airfield in the plainland of Lajes, for that branch's aviation service (Portuguese: *Aeronáutica Militar*). However, the location of Achada on the island of São Miguel was chosen instead at the time for the construction of the field. In 1934, the Achada airfield was condemned due to its inadequate dimensions and adverse weather conditions, resulting in the construction of a landing strip of packed earth and a small group of support facilities by the Portuguese military at Lajes.

Lajes Field



Base Aérea das Lajes
Base Aérea N° 4
Aeroporto das Lajes



Lajes Field, as seen from the southeast coast of the island of Terceira

IATA: TER – ICAO: LPLA

Summary

Airport type	Military
Owner	Portuguese Air Force
Operator	Portuguese Air Force
Serves	Praia da Vitória/Angra do Heroísmo
Location	Lajes
Built	1943
Commander	Colonel Tito Mendonça
Occupants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Comando da Zona Aérea dos Açores</i> Base Aérea N° 4 65th Air Base Wing 170 US Military personnel and family members Lajes Search and Rescue Coordination Centre Aerogare civil das Lajes (Civilian Operations Terminal)

World War II

During World War II, the designation of the airfield was changed to Air Base No.4 and the Portuguese government expanded the runway, sending troops and equipment to Terceira, including Gloster Gladiator fighters. The military activities in the Azores grew in 1942, as the Gladiators began to be used to support allied convoys, in reconnaissance missions and on meteorological flights. In addition, the first Portuguese Junkers Ju 52 arrived in July 1942 to fly cargo missions.



A Vickers Wellington Mk XIV, No. 172 Squadron RAF undergoing servicing at Lajes airfield during 1944

By 1943, the British and American armed forces were allowed basing rights in Portugal, and the Royal Air Force took over Lajes Field as RAF Station Lajes. The Azores permitted British and American airplanes to protect Allied shipping in the mid-Atlantic.^[2]

On 1 December 1943, British and U.S. military representatives at RAF Lajes Field signed a joint agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities for the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) and United States Navy (USN) at Lajes Field.^[2] The agreement established guidelines and limitations for the ferrying of aircraft and the transport aircraft to Europe via Lajes Field.^[2] In return, the US agreed to assist the British in improving and extending existing facilities at Lajes. Air Transport Command transport planes began landing at Lajes Field immediately after the agreement was signed. By the end of June 1944, more than 1,900 American airplanes had passed through this Azorean base. Using Lajes Field, the flying time relative to the usual transatlantic route between Brazil and West Africa was nearly cut in half from 70 to 40 hours.

Lajes Field was one of the two stopover and refueling bases for the first transatlantic crossing of non-rigid airships (blimps) in 1944. The USN sent six Goodyear-built K-ships from Naval Air Station South Weymouth in Massachusetts to their first stopover base at Naval Station Argentia, Newfoundland and then on to Lajes Field in the Azores before flying to their final destination at Port Lyautey (Kenitra), French Morocco.^[3] From their base with Fleet Air Wing 15 at Port Lyautey, the blimps of USN Blimp Squadron 14 (ZP-14 or Blimpron 14) conducted night-time anti-submarine warfare (ASW) to search for German U-boats around the Strait of Gibraltar using magnetic anomaly detection (MAD).^[4] In 1945, two ZP-14 replacement blimps were sent from Weeksville, North Carolina to the Bermudas and Lajes before going on to Craw Field (Kenitra Air Base) at Port Lyautey.^[5]

Post-War

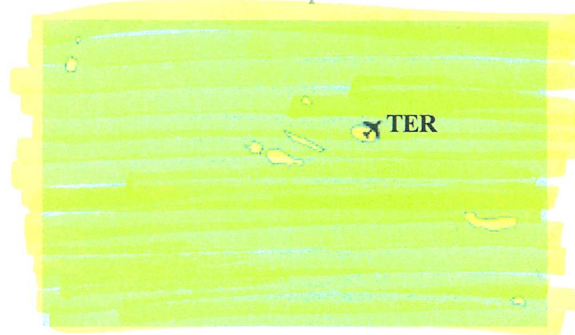
The United States and the United Kingdom transferred control of Lajes to Portugal in 1946. The Portuguese redesignated Lajes as Air Base No. 4 and assigned it to the air branch of the Portuguese Army. However, talks between the U.S. and Portugal began about extending the American stay in the Azores. A temporary agreement was reached between the U.S. and Portuguese governments giving the U.S. military rights to Lajes Field for an

- SATA Air Açores
- Aeroclube da Ilha Terceira
- Light aircraft private operators

Elevation AMSL 55 m / 180 ft

Coordinates 38°45′43″N 027°05′27″W

Map



Location of Lajes Field in the Azores

Runways

Direction	Length		Surface
	m	ft	
15/33	3,314	10,873	Asphalt

Source: Portuguese AIP^[1]

Columbus III

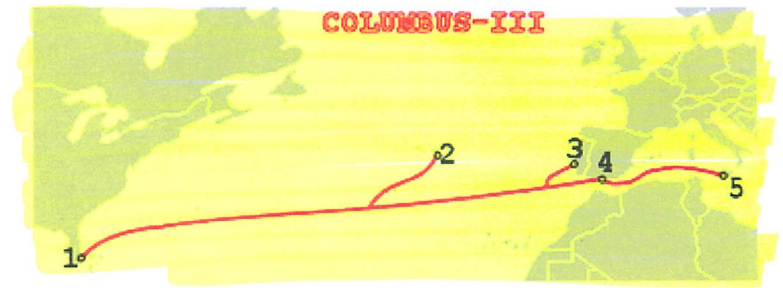
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

COLUMBUS III is a 9900 km transatlantic telecommunications cable. It has 90 repeaters. In service since 1999, it is owned by over 30 carriers.

After a 2009 upgrade, the capacity of the system was increased to 160 Gbit/s initially. The upgraded system can accommodate up to 320 Gbit/s with potential to grow further.^{[1][2]}

It has **landing points** in:

1. Miami, Florida, United States
2. Ponta Delgada, Azores Islands, Portugal
3. Lisbon, Portugal
4. Conil, Spain
5. Mazara del Vallo, Sicily, Italy



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Categories: Transatlantic communications cables | Submarine communications cables in the Mediterranean Sea | Submarine communications cables in the North Atlantic Ocean | Infrastructure completed in 1999 | Telecommunications stubs

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