



Always worth a visit – PENSÃO FRANCISCA

Meanwhile our B&B „Pensão Francisca“ is established in the market. The recent four years we could host clients from all over Europe, Canada, the U.S. and some exotic countries like New Zealand and the Caribbean's. The positive reviews on Tripadvisor are a big motivation to go further on our chosen way.

Since our last newsletter in December 2010 we improved our place. In May 2011 we installed a photovoltaic system. Therefore we are able to cover our consumption of electrical energy by our own. Herewith we are the only ECO-B&B on Santa Maria Island (probably in the Azores) that is using the sun 100% for energy and hot water production (floor heating, in house use). As well we collect rain water which we use for our garden, flushing toilets and laundry washing. In 2013/2014, opposite our B&B, we transformed our ruin and ugly garage in a small little house for storage purposes. Further we remodelled the existing little house (ex cozinha fora) next to our main house into a cosy apartment with cork tiles and infra red heating panels.

That we don't get bored we bought some more land for our organic “gardening hobby”. Last spring we planted approx. 80 fruit and 50 banana trees. We are self-sufficient in producing vegetable for our needs, with the fruit production we still have to improve or to be patient as the planted trees are an investment in for the future. As we are getting older we built some high beeds which is very convenient for „back relaxed“ gardening. Our little wine yard we laid out with the rocks from our ruin, so there no more grows a lot of weed and this way we recycled the old material of the ruin.

On the island there has been done a lot as well. The government decided to invest funds into the old town of Vila do Porto to recover old buildings/ruins and to fight against the aging/deserting process. Already, quite a few ruins and deserted buildings have been transformed in beautiful places like the new bibliothec, a youth center, a day nursery, and the Interpretation center Dalberto Pombo with exibitions about fossils and the geo diversity of Santa Maria Island. Further, the city council managed to buy a closed by old colonial storage house which now serves as administration building. Soon, the former historical building of the island government dating back to the 15th century is going to be transformed in the future museum of Santa Maria, a further pearl in town. Down at the harbour a little whaling museum "Casa do Bote - Núcleo Museológico Baleeiro" was inaugurated.

Finally, some of the old trails got improved and are officially maintained, there are now 6 marked hiking trails available and a “route of the pirates” which can be easily done with our electrical bikes or a rental car. Further, above the light house in Maia, panels were installed which tell about the old whaling days.

For geo cacher, within reach of 2 km around our place there are 9 interesting caches to be discovered. On the whole island there are about 50 caches hidden.

For divers, meanwhile our paradises has been discovered and promoted very well, meantime there are 5 diving companies ready to bring you to the hottest spots.

Come and visit Santa Maria Island – the oldest island of the Azores, the first Azorean Island to be discovered and settled by the Portuguese – whilst visiting the Azores you shouldn't miss Santa Maria Island as the mother of all Azorean Islands, there is a lot to do and see.

With our best wishes from Santa Maria Island
Franziska und Christian

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<http://www.azorean-spirit.com>

http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g189131-d1916408-Reviews-Pensao_Francisca-Santa_Maria_Azores.html

<http://www.atlanticoline.pt/>

<https://plus.google.com/102083918887212820975/videos> (fotos and filmes)