

Travelling in Cabo Verde.

Travel in the month of September 2020. (please note rules for testing for travel between islands have changed since writing this article)

With the borders to Cabo Verde shut and no holiday makers allowed to enter, all of us that have businesses here for tourism have basically found ourselves with nothing to do. I wanted to go and have a little break on some of the other islands but also need to do it as cheaply as possible so this was my 'budget trip round the islands'

We did all our travel by boat which I was pretty nervous about at the start but when you see how the Cape Verdeans travel by boat and you pick up some hints and tips it becomes a really cool, comfortable and enjoyable way to get around.

*TIPS FOR BOAT TRAVEL IN CABO VERDE – Invest in a cool box, take a pillow and 2 bedsheets, Jumper, take LOTS and LOTS of food and drink (explanation later)

All the boat tickets I brought online at <https://www.cvinterilhas.cv/home>, really good and reliable website but don't take any notice of the duration times of travel its a lot longer than it says.

At the moment obviously with COVID19 once you buy the ticket you need to take your ticket and a copy of your passport with 1900 escudos to Clinitur to do a rapid test for travel. The rapid test is a pin prick on your finger and takes around 15 minutes for your result at clinitur. On arrival you need to sign a document which says that if you are positive you are required to do a PCR test. You then go for the pin prick test. You then go and wait for the result. When you get the result you get taken to another room to have your temperature taken and then you go to a doctors office where she types out the test for travel form. Check your passport number and name are correctly typed on the certificate.

You will then need to take your formular for travel, ticket and Covid19 certificate with you to travel. (Now no longer needed for travel from Sal Island only to Sal Island)

Formulário de vigilância sanitária / Health Surveillance Form

O presente formulário deve ser preenchido por cada passageiro antes da emissão do cartão de embarque.
Each passenger shall fill this form before the boarding pass is issued.

* Nome completo do passageiro/Full name of the passenger	
* Data de nascimento/Date of birth: dd/MM/aaaa	* Idade/Age
* Género/Gender	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> Outro/Other
* Morada/Address	
* Número do documento de identificação (CNI/Passaporte)/Number of Passport	
* Data de validade do documento de identificação/Expiration date of the passport	
* Telefone fixo/telephone	* Email
* Telefone móvel/mobilephone	
* Endereço na cidade de chegada/Address in city of arrival	
* Endereço da residência permanente/Address of permanent residence	

1. Fui diagnosticado com COVID-19 nos 14 dias anteriores à data da minha viagem.
I was diagnosed with COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to the date of my trip. Sim/Yes
Não/No

2. Tive algum dos sintomas relevantes do COVID-19 (febre, tosse, perda de paladar ou olfacto, falta de ar) nos 8 dias anteriores à data da minha viagem.
I had any of the relevant symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath) in the 8 days prior to the date of my trip. Sim/Yes
Não/No

3. Estive em contacto próximo (por exemplo, menos de 2 metros por mais de 15 minutos e sem máscara) com uma pessoa com COVID-19 nos 14 dias anteriores à data da minha viagem.
I have been in close contact (for example, less than 2 meters for more than 15 minutes and without a mask) with a person with COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to the date of my trip. Sim/Yes
Não/No

CLINITUR DECLARAÇÃO MÉDICA

Maria Antónia Alves Araújo Bonilla, licenciada em Medicina pela Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de Havana, Cuba, titular da Cédula Profissional nº 270, da Ordem dos Médicos de Cabo Verde.

Declaro pela sua honra e responsabilidade profissional (portador(a) do número de Documento de Identificação após ter sido submetido(a) à Triagem Clínica e Teste Rápido Para Anticorpos (Anti-Coronavírus - IgM+IgG) cujos resultados foram ambos negativos, apresenta condições para viajar de acordo com as Normas Sanitárias do Ministério de Saúde de Cabo Verde.

Esta declaração destina-se a Viagem.

Por ser verdadeira e lhe ter sido solicitado o presente, assina e autêntica.

Clinitur Lda, Santa Maria, 17 de Setembro de 2020

(Dra. Maria Antónia Bonilla)
Reg. prof. n.º 270

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The first boat we took was Sal to Sao Nicolau 2,400 escudos (21 euros) ((*TIP – DO NOT pay for luggage the luggage that you pay for online is oversized luggage, you can take normal luggage with you for free))

The boat leaves from Palmeria and you can either go in the day or in the night, boats run around 2 times a week.

The trip takes 8 hours which sounds horrific but its really good fun, if you sit outside there are people playing guitars and singing traditional songs, this is why you need lots of food and drink to share around with people. Also during COVID the normal snack counter is closed within the boat and the only food you can get onboard is toasted sandwich and CV equivalent Pot Noodles.

When you see Sao Nicolau don't get too excited because it takes about 3 and a half hours to travel up the side of the island by boat until you get to Tarrafal which is where the port is!

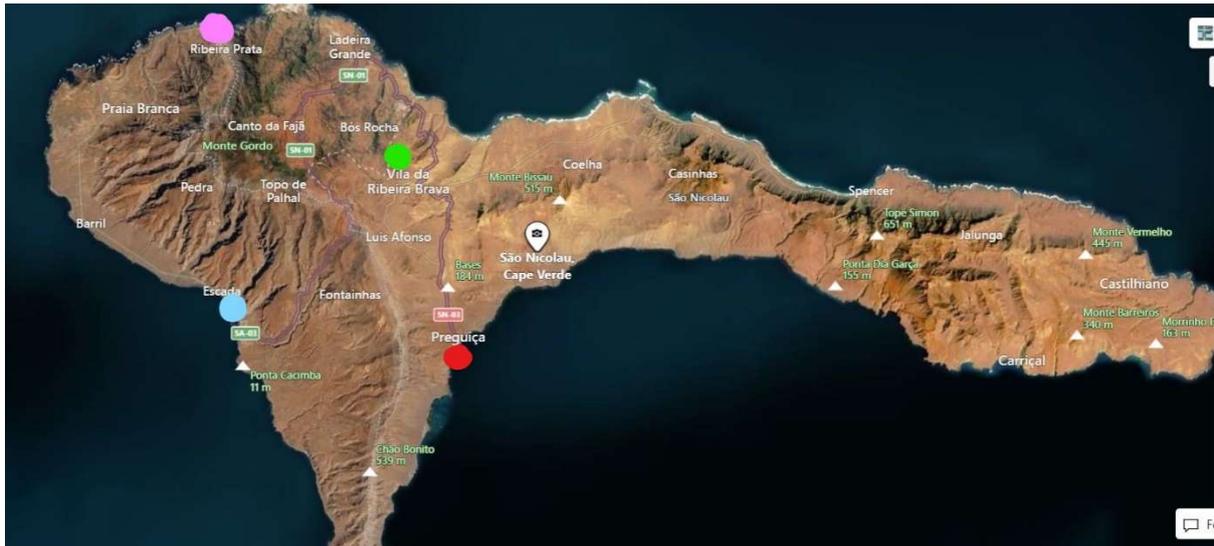


When we arrived at the port we were met by the police and people in white suits with tanks of disinfectant on their backs and a spray hose in hand. They enter the boat and spray down all the luggage.

When you leave the boat you pick up your luggage from the lower deck, go onto the port where you have your luggage sprayed again, they take your temperature, your travel form is handed in and checked and so is your COVID certificate. We were very surprised to see military police at the port and outside on the streets of Tarrafal but later found out that as there are only 8 police officers in Tarrafal the government have put military police to help with enforcing social distancing etc. Actually it is a pretty good idea and not as scary as it sounds. They were controlling queuing outside shops, congregations of people and alugar cars (small buses) checking people had seats between them and that the cars were not full. They were also enforcing the use of masks in shops and cars. Apart from this Tarrafal was pretty normal, no restrictions on beach usage, everyone's jobs and lives are pretty normal there as they do not rely so heavily on tourism. Bars and restaurants are closed at 9pm and shops have to close by 7pm.

The small hotels that are there are open as normal with alcohol gel by the entrances and signs about masks. There are some great deals on apartments in the centre of Tarrafal for around 10 euros a night. The small hotels like Edificio Magico are charging around 3000 escudos (27 euros) a night for 2 people again a much lower price than normal.

The local transport is easy to use and it is around 1 or 2 euros depending on where you want to go so this is a great budget way to get around.



The first day trip was to Ribeira Prata (Pink dot on map) so in local transport blue dot (Tarrafal) to pink dot = 2 euro per person one way (unbelievable I know!!!). It is a very beautiful little village with waterfalls and tanks which are filled with natural spring water from the mountains that you can swim in.



Second trip Tarrafal (blue dot) to Vila (green dot) 2.50 euro per person one way, Nice little market town where you can buy local produce, goats cheese 1.50 euros !!!!, Passion Fruit 2 euros a kilo !!!!! vegetables, fruit, ponche, grog (when you live on Sal Island you get really excited about buying vegetables and fruit)

Third trip to Preguiça which is the first town that was founded in Sao Nicolau, this is where the Portuguese landed and lost a lot of their fleet on the dangerous coastline. It also had to be abandoned in 1653 due to pirate attacks! It is one of the most famous fishing villages in Cabo Verde and is famous for free divers who go spearfishing for Morea Eel, Octopus etc. We had brought with us some of the donations for Dreambig we had in the school which were not needed in Sal, here we were able to give out some masks, flippers and wetsuits to the kids who are already learning to freedive and spearfish. (thank you to everyone who donated) Preguiça is the red dot on the map, to get there you need to go to Vila first 2.50euro one way and then it is 50cent one way from Vila. Vila is also where the women of Preguiça go to sell the fish the freedivers catch.



Fourth Trip Lagoa which is one of the main tourist spots in Sao Nicolau, obviously empty as there are no tourists at the moment in Cabo Verde. The main Lagoa is nice but the natural pools that are further round to the right are much more beautiful. After we stopped at the one bar in town to wait for a car to take us back to Vila. Beer 1 euro, Passionfruit ponche 50 cents.





Other highlights of Sao Nicolau: There is a place just outside of Tarrafal called Scada which has a small restaurant at the top of a hill which sells amazing seafood. Morea Eel 4 pieces for 2 euros, Grilled Octopus 7 euros, beer 1 euro, wine 50 cent, ponche 50 cent. On the way all the walls are painted with murals.

SAO NICOLAU

Accommodation 10 – 30 euros per night

Transport 2 – 3 euros

Food 3 euros plate of the day

Drink – beer 1 euro, wine 50 cents

Next island was Sao Vicente, we needed to do a rapid test to leave Sao Nicolau to go to Sao Vicente. The easiest way to do this is to buy a ticket online with Interilhas. Sao Nicolau to Sao Vicente was 1419 escudos (12euros) and it is 4 hours on the boat. Once you buy the ticket (remember DO NOT pay for extra luggage) you need to print the tickets to be able to get a test. The test centre is at the Football Club! You go with your passport and your ticket for travel and take a number (be warned this took us 5 hours to do) Once you have your pin prick rapid test and the result comes (20 minutes after) You then get given a paper and you go to the hospital to pay and get your certificate for travel. The test was 1000 escudos (9 euros). Remember to also print the formular for travel and fill it out again.

On the way to Sao Vicente we saw Dolphins swimming alongside the boat (amazing)



Again in Sao Vicente everything is pretty much normal apart from mask wearing and washing hands. Restaurants and bars are open till midnight, there are no military police on the streets and Airbnb



apartments and most hotels are functioning. We spend 2 nights in the Foya Branca hotel (we were the only people there) quite nice to be the VIP guests. Bed and Breakfast with swimming pool and towels and free transfer to and from Mindelo (main town) 50 euros per night for 2 people. As we were in Foya Branca resort our first trip was a walk in Sao Pedro the little town by the airport. Very small town, very amazing beach and obviously fish hanging on a washing line to dry hahahahaha xx



After two night in Foya Branca in Sao Vicente we were off to Santo Antao. Again brought our tickets online at interilhas, no test needed for COVID but still need to fill out form to travel AGAIN!!!. Sao Vicente to Santo Antao is 723 escudos per person (around 6.50 euros) Time on boat 50 minutes. TOP TIP (when you get on the boat sit on the sunny side because when the boat leaves the port it turns around so you have your whole crossing in the shade)

Santo Antao is COMPLETELY NORMAL!!!! Zero COVID stuff here, you don't even need to wear a mask on transport and everything is open as normal. When we get to the Port we always go straight to Paul which is one of the most amazing places on the island. At the port it is always a little scary as you have all the guys with the buses shouting at you to go on their bus. There is a guy called Bronk who is (because of a skin condition) almost completely white but Cabo Verdean (hence the name), he is great and will help you out for your whole trip (he also charges fair price for transfers etc) From the Port to Paul it is 3 euros. (Red dot to blue dot)



In Paul you can eat a meal and drink wine in a local restaurant for 3 euros all in. A ponche/local alcohol is 30 cents. All the hotels were open in Paul but again with no people in. The hotel we stayed at we were again the only ones there. Accommodation ranges in price from 15 euros a night to 40 euros a night (with breakfast) (this is the price for 2 people)



The first place we stayed was Hotel Paul Mar which was doing a special discounted rate of 30 euros a night for 2 people with breakfast. It is right by the ocean and very modern rooms with a great buffet breakfast in the restaurant in the mornings. This is the view from the roof of the hotel

The way we normally explore Santo Antao is to get the local transport up the mountain (1 euro per person) and then walk down the mountain to the different places we want to visit. Normally in Paul in the mountain there are lots of little bars and restaurants but with the lack of tourism this time there were not many open but all the bars and restaurants in the main part of the town were open as normal. Due to the recent rainfall there was a lot of rivers and streams and there are tanks and waterfalls you can swim in in Paul.



We decided to stay in Paul and then travel around from there, our trips included JANELA, this is the first place that people lived in Santo Antao and it is also where my partners grandmother was born so we went to visit. It is a small village with a MASSIVE mountain which we climbed up. There are no roads on this mountain for cars or vehicles just people and donkeys. At the top there is a town on top of a mountain where lots of people live. It was literally like another world, completely unbelievable.



Everyone was so friendly and we got invited to 3 peoples houses for lunch. After an amazing lunch of fish and home grown vegetables we faced the walk down the mountain and once down had a very well deserved Beer and grog (local Alcohol) at the village shop. PAUL – JANELA on local transport 1 euro per person.

Next trip was to Ribeira Grande (yellow dot on map) This is one of the bigger towns on Santo Antao and up the mountain there is a place called Ribeira Doctor which has a tank to swim in and a lovely local restaurant next to it which sells plate of the day with lots of lovely home grown vegetables and they also have a none alcoholic local drink made from sugar cane which is lovely. Transport from Paul to Ribeira Grande is 1.5 euros per person and transport from Ribeira Grande to Ribeira Doctor is 50 cents per person. After some swimming and a nice lunch there is a great BBQ place by the ocean where you can get a pinch or a chicken leg and a beer and wait for a bus to take you back to Paul.



Santo Antao is a truly magical place, when you drive through the mountains from the port you can imagine it being used as a location for jurassic park or a vampire movie or something. It is also believed in Cabo Verde that Santo Antao has a lot of witches and this is where cape verdeans come to buy potions and herbal remedies.

Definitely needed – walking boots and a swimming costume!!!

Since returning I have been intouch with some of the hotels in the mountains of Paul who are offering longterm room rental. One of the hotels is offering one month rental with breakfast for 2 people with a room with private bathroom for 300 euros for the month!!!!

Make sure when you leave to get to the port early and pick up for goats cheese and some ponche to take with you.

SANTO ANTAO

Accommodation 10 – 40 euros per night

Transport 1 – 3 euros

Food 3 euros plate of the day

Drink – beer 1 euro, wine 50 cents

From Santo Antao we travelled to Sao Vicente 723 escudos per person (around 6.50 euros) Time on boat 50 minutes. This time we had booked a room on Airbnb which was right next to lagnia beach and was 14 euros per night (2 people) Lagnia Beach is great for a cocktail or 2 but is slightly more



expensive so your looking at 4/5 euros a drink and around 7/10 euros for a meal but they do and amazing calamari.

Sao Vicente is the cultural hub of cabo verde and a really busy city, there is Art and music EVERYWHERE and it's a great place to walk around, it also has lots of shops and things are much cheaper than in Sal so we always have a big shopping list when we come here. There is a great bus service around the city also that you can hop on and off



for 40 cents a journey. The marina is also a lovely place to go and have a look at and there is a floating restaurant that's a great place for lunch. They are also building this amazing music studio on the water (pic above) which I thought looked great. And across you can see one of the amazing pieces of art on the streets of Mindelo. On previous trips to Sao Vicente we have gone outside of Mindelo to stay as normally we come for festival which is in a place called Bahia which is also by a town called Salamanca which is the kitesurfing beach of Sao Vicente. This time however we just stayed for a couple of days on our way too and from Santo Antao.

For our final boat trip we made sure we were prepared with lots of food and drinks as this one was the big one. During the pandemic the boat from Sao Vicente to Sal stops at Sao Nicolau as normal but no one is allowed to leave the boat which means a 5 hour wait at the port making this trip 16 hours long. Make sure you have wine in the cool box!!!!

SV to Sal 2451 escudos per person, again tickets purchase online, at this time there was no test needed from SV to Sal just the form for travel (this rule has now changed and you need a test to enter Sal)

You leave around 16:00 in Sao Vicente and get back to Sal the next day in the morning, we got to Palmeria at 8am.

So from always being the person who told everyone never to go by boat and always take the plane when travelling between islands I have now completely changed my mind! If you have the time to spend on the boat and you don't suffer with sea sickness its an amazing way to travel here and super cheap. Travelling during the pandemic and travelling while the international borders were closed was also great and a real VIP experience being the only people in hotels on the islands. I was initially worried that people would be a bit standoffish when they saw people coming from the other islands

especially as at the time Sal had the 2nd highest amount of cases but they weren't, they were completely the opposite, welcoming and happy to have people come and spend some time and money on their islands.

Travel = 7716 escudos / 70 euros per person

Accommodation (23 days) = 34,450 escudos / 313 euros per person (13.6 euros per night average)

Testing (COVID19) = 2900 escudos / 26 euros per person