

Calheta

Madeira · Portugal

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Calheta is a municipality on the sunny south-west coast of Madeira. It has a small marina, a man-made beach with golden sand and banana fields on the slopes above. Inland, the high Paul da Serra plateau starts the best-known levada walks.

It is a good base for a quiet stay, and it is less crowded than Funchal.

When to visit

The coast here is among the sunniest and driest on Madeira. Spring to autumn suits the beach and levada walks. Mountain weather changes fast, so bring layers for the plateau. Heavy rain in winter can close paths.

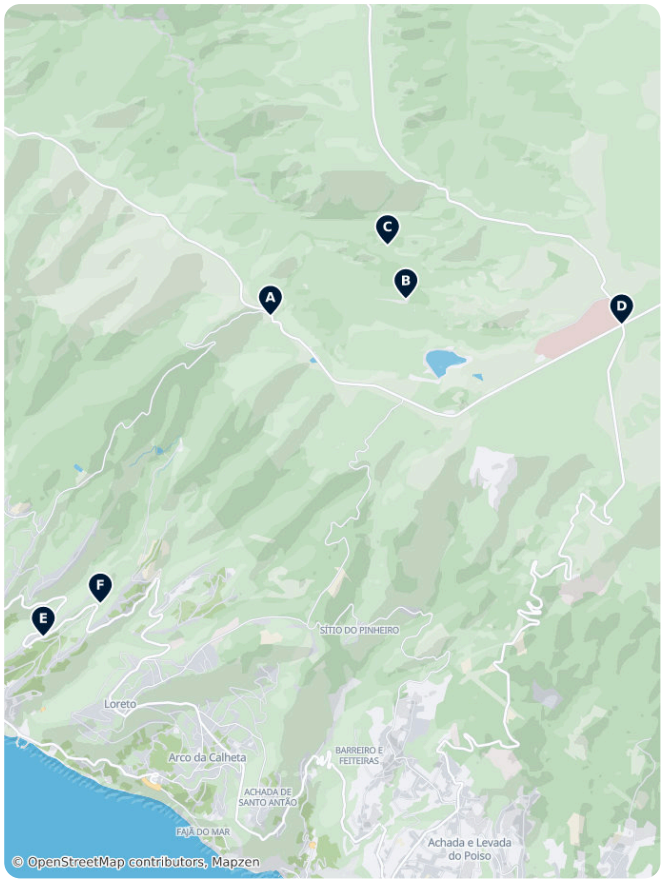
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for hiking	15° / 18° Feels like 12°	13° / 10°	Dry air
February	Great Great for hiking	15° / 18° Feels like 12°	12° / 10°	Dry air
March	Good Good for hiking	16° / 18° Feels like 12°	13° / 10°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	16° / 19° Feels like 13°	13° / 11°	Dry air
May	Great Great for hiking	18° / 21°	15° / 12°	22 sunny days · Dry air · UV 8 (Very high)
June	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 23°	17° / 15°	22 sunny days · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	19° / 17°	26 sunny days · UV 10 (Very high)
August	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 26°	19° / 18°	25 sunny days · Humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	19° / 17°	21 sunny days
October	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 24°	18° / 15°	
November	Good Good for hiking	18° / 21°	15° / 13°	12 rainy days · Dry air
December	Good Good for hiking	16° / 19° Feels like 13°	14° / 11°	12 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, July, August, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Rabaçal is the start of popular levada walks to waterfalls and the spring-fed pools of the 25 Fontes.
- B Risco is a short levada walk to a high waterfall in a rock amphitheatre.
- C Cascata das 25 Fontes is a waterfall with 25 small cascades, reached by a levada walk.
- D Paul da Serra is a high plateau with open views and wind farms.
- E Engenho da Calheta is an old sugar mill, now a place to learn about sugar cane and local rum.
- F Igreja Paroquial de São João Baptista is the main parish church of Calheta.



Calheta – Plan Your Trip

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Getting there

- **From Funchal**: The drive takes about 35 to 45 minutes by the expressway. Buses also run.
- **From the airport**: It takes about 45 minutes by car.
- **Walks**: Levada paths start from the plateau. Check path conditions first, as some close after rain.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Portugal at a glance:

CURRENCY

EUR €

EMERGENCY

112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES

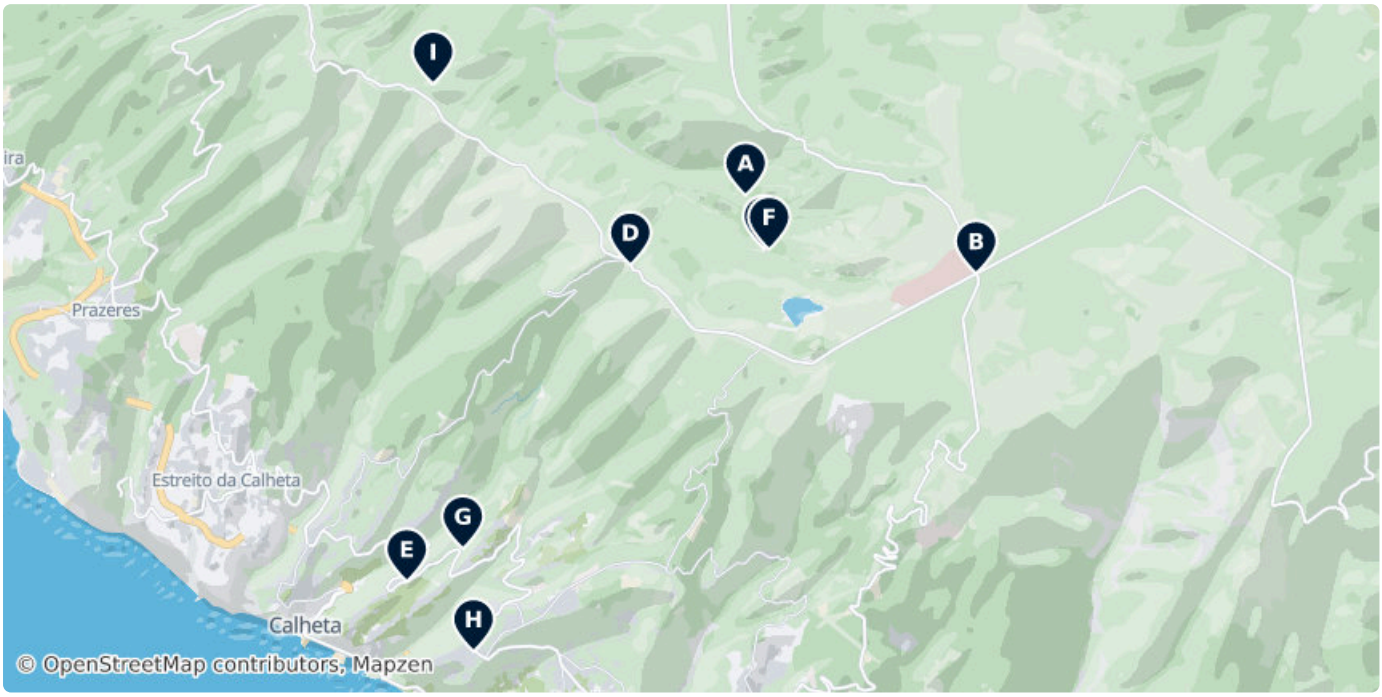
Portuguese

TAP WATER

Safe to drink

Calheta Essentials

Calheta represents the dramatic geography of Madeira's southwest, ranging from coastal sugar cane mills to the high-altitude Paul da Serra plateau. The region is centered on Rabaçal, a gateway to the UNESCO-protected Laurissilva forest where the Levada das 25 Fontes and Risco waterfall originate. Historical sites like the Engenho da Calheta showcase the island's sugar heritage, while 15th-century chapels and high-altitude viewpoints like Pico dos Bodes offer insight into the local architecture and panoramic landscape.





A 25 Fontes Falls

The 25 Fontes is a group of waterfalls located in Rabaçal, Paul da Serra on Madeira Island.

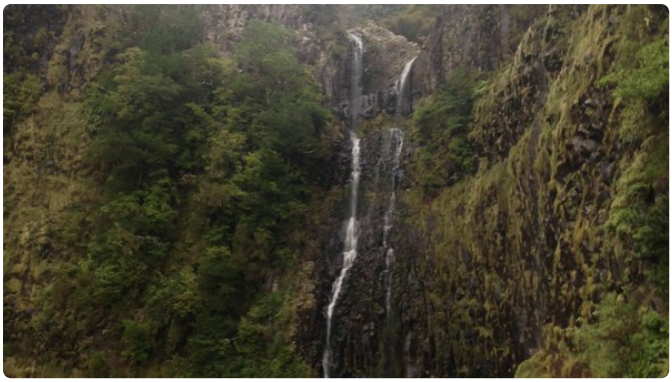
Levada das 25 Fontes, 9370-000 Calheta, Portugal
(32.76564, -17.12513)



B Paul da Serra

Paul da Serra in the municipal county of Ponta do Sol, Madeira, is the largest and most extensive plateau of Madeira, at about 24 km2, with...

Caminho Cales e Chada, 9370, Portugal
(32.75772, -17.09732)



C Risco

A towering waterfall cascading into a pool from the Risco cliff. It is accessible via the Levada do Risco trail starting from the Rabaçal forest station.

9370, Portugal (32.76026, -17.12294)



D Rabaçal

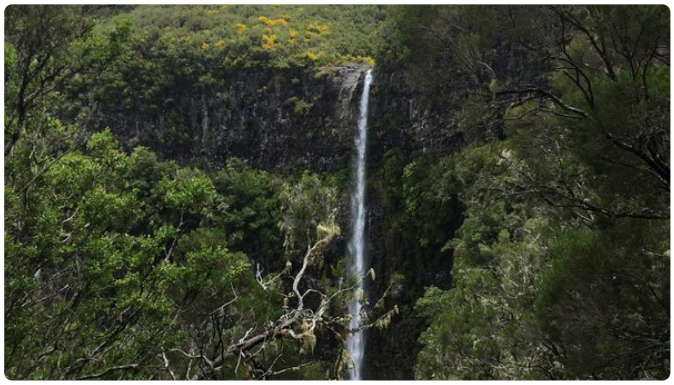
A major hiking hub located within the Paul da Serra plateau. It serves as the starting point for several primary levada walks through the UNESCO-protected Laurissilva forest.

Estrada Regional 211, 9370, Portugal (32.75859, -17.13904)

E Calheta Rum Factory

A distillery producing white rum Aguardente out of sugar cane is still working. You can visit the factory and buy their products.

R222, 9370, Portugal (32.72650, -17.16601)



F Lagoa do Vento

A high waterfall that drops into a large natural lagoon. The site is reached via a trail from Rabaçal that descends through dense laurel forest.

9370, Portugal (32.76018, -17.12229)

G Igreja Paroquial de São João Baptista

A 16th-century parish church featuring a Manueline-style portal and a Moorish-inspired ceiling. It houses a silver processional cross donated by King Manuel I.

R222, 9370, Portugal (32.72982, -17.15924)

H Capela de Nossa Senhora do Loreto

One of Madeira's oldest religious buildings, this 15th-century chapel features Manueline architectural details and is associated with the island's early noble families.

Caminho Cales e Chada, 9370, Portugal (32.71940, -17.15795)

I Pico dos Bodes

A mountain viewpoint offering a 360-degree panorama of the Calheta coastline and the surrounding agricultural terraces. It includes a modern observation platform.

(32.77692, -17.16284)

DATA SOURCES

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