

Climbing the highest mountain on Santiago Island: Pico d'Antonia, 1400m



Taxi to Rui Vaz. 4 to 5 hrs hike through forests and over grassy slopes. Breathtaking views! Good restaurant at the end!

About the height of Ben Nevis or the Schöckl, but you don't have to climb from sea level and not in alpine conditions. But clouds and mist can be a problem even here. Do not go if visibility is bad!



The taxi takes you to the radio-mast in Rui Vaz. The trail first winds around the wall of the station, then descends into the forest. A jungle of *Lantana camara* and eucalyptus trees, later a few pine trees. After about an hour you reach a saddle, where a path leads down east into the crater towards Longueira and the Jardim Botânico. We met two children here who were carrying a heavy load of *palha* (straw) for their animals. Their houses were lying below us like toy-boxes, a slippery downhill march of maybe an hour away. Do not attempt to cross into the steep mountainside on your right! This is the former inside part of a huge crater that has been eroded away in most places, leaving only the Pico and the „Organ Pipes“ Orgaos. Always stay on the western, left-hand side, which is the outside of the old crater and offers a gentle slope to climb one of the rugged peaks that form the typical shape of Pico d'Antonia.



The second part of the walk is without shade, straight uphill on a grassy slope. Sometimes slippery on soft rocks and sandy ground. Take care when going down!

Views towards SW and as far as Fogo.

Then on the top precipitous towards the east. Stay away from the edge, it is a sheer drop of a few hundred meters!

You look down into the valley of Sao Jorge, Orgaos and the Botanical Garden.

2 hours on the same path should bring you back to the radio mast and the car.



In Rui Vaz, only 5 min by car from the trailhead, there is „Quinta da Montanha“ a nice hotel and restaurant which offers an excellent buffet lunch on weekends. Book your meal when you drive past on the way up! A bottle of mineral water, a few beers or a glass of white Fogo wine will recharge your batteries after the victory on Pico d'Antonia