

Maio Island, Cape Verde

Cape Verde's quietest island, where empty golden beaches stretch for miles, goat cheese is a local treasure, and the town motto is simply 'No Stress.'

Tender port (large ships anchor offshore)

Typical call: 6-8 hrs

Cape Verdean Escudo (CVE) — Euros accepted

Portuguese & Cape Verdean Creole

UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Tender — ships anchor offshore; tender boats drop at Porto Inglês pier

Walk to center: 5-10 min flat walk from pier to Vila do Maio town square

Best For: Deserted beaches, turtle nesting (Jun-Oct), authentic local culture

Don't Miss: Queijo de Maio (local goat cheese) and the Salinas salt pans

Getting around: **Taxi** 500–1,000 CVE (~) · **Rideshare** not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Salt Pans & Bird Walk** — The Salinas de Porto Inglês north of town shimmer white against a blue sky and attract wading birds, plovers, and migratory species.
- Beach Day at Praia da Bitxe Rotxa** — Calm, turquoise water and golden sand five minutes from the pier.
- 4x4 Island Loop** — Hire a local Aluguer driver to circle the island — stops at the fishing village of Calheta, the acacia Forest of Maio, pottery village Cascabulho...
- Loggerhead Turtle Nesting Tour** — Maio is one of the Atlantic's most important loggerhead nesting beaches.
- Vila do Maio Town Walk** — Stroll the pastel-colored streets to the 1872 Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Luz, the 18th-century Castelo de São José fort, and the main praça — the...

BEST WALKS

- Pier to Town Square & Church** 500 m · 10 min · flat · free — From the Porto Inglês pier walk the waterfront promenade to the main praça.
- Town to Salinas (Salt Pans)** 1.5 km · 20 min · flat · free — Head north from the town square along the coast road to the shimmering Salinas de Porto Inglês.
- Pier to Praia de Ponta Preta** 1.5 km south · 20 min · flat — A sweeping wild beach with sand dunes south of town.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)

	Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr		78°	69°	0d
Jun		80°	72°	0d
Aug		84°	76°	8d
Sep		84°	77°	9d
Oct		85°	77°	3d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY

Apr 6:18AM–6:47PM · Jun 6:02AM–7:03PM · Aug 6:18AM–6:55PM · Sep 6:21AM–6:34PM · Oct 6:24AM–6:12PM

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Bring euros or escudos. Euros are widely accepted at a simple 1:100 rate (e.g., €5 = 500 CVE). There is no ATM at the pier — use the one in town before venturing further.
- Try Queijo de Maio. This local semi-hard goat cheese is famous throughout Cape Verde. Pick up a small block from a market stall or ask a restaurant — it's the island's culinary signature.
- Swim at Bitxe Rotxa, not Ponta Preta. The beach near town has calm water. The bigger beaches south of town have beautiful dunes but strong Atlantic undertows — admire from shore.
- The wind hides the heat. Maio is breezy but the sun is intense. Apply high-SPF sunscreen before leaving the ship — the UV here will burn faster than it feels.
- Negotiate your Aluguer early. Drivers gather near the town square. Agree on a total price (€40-60 half-day) before you get in, and confirm which stops are included.
- Turtle season Jun–Oct. If your call falls in summer, book a nesting tour through the Maio Biodiversity Foundation. Unguided beach wandering at night can harm nests.

Maio Island, Cape Verde — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



1 Salinas do Porto Inglês 19th-century salt flats near the pier, still worked today and known for their geometric colored pools.

3 Church of Nossa Senhora da Luz Colonial-era parish church in the centre of Vila do Maio.

P Cruise port / terminal

2 Fort of São José 18th-century Portuguese colonial fort built to defend Vila do Maio against pirate raids.

4 Praia de Bitchirotcha Long stretch of golden sand considered one of the island's finest beaches.