

This is the most complete information I have on our proposed tour from Daniel Taxi in Madeira.

I have highlighted my own comments in red. If anyone has any more questions or concern, please let me know. A few good websites about Madeira:

[Madeira Guide](#) [Love Madeira](#) [Madeira Web](#)

Itinerary for tour:

- *Cable Car and Toboggan rides.*
- *Câmara de Lobos – just passing by.* Note from Noel: **See Noel's Note under number 14.**
- *Cabo Girão – a 20 minute stop.*
- *Ribeira Brava – passing by only also.* Note from Noel: From my Thomas Cook Travellers Guide there is not much to see unless you are going for a walk leading up the valley to the Boca de Encumeada.
- *Encumeada – a short stop.*
- *From Paúl da Serra to Santa – a short stop for sightseeing along the way.*
- *Porto Moniz – you'll be able to stay there for something like 1h30m to 1h45m. The people interested can stay in the pool for about 30 minutes, before lunch.*
- *São Vicente – a 30 minute stop. On your tour, you'll be seeing the very last waterfall named Bride's Veil. But apart from this one, you'll also see other waterfalls, along the north coast.*
- *Finally, back to Funchal on the express way.*
- *Drop off at either Old Blandy's Wine Lodge or be returned to the ship*

Facts about our tour from Eusébia at Daniel Taxi are all from her emails to me (blue type):

01. Note from Noel: Tour departure meeting time is 8:30 AM and we will determine a meeting place either on the ship or on the pier. I will try to figure out a van plan once we get a firm number who are participating. I think if we are all there before 9:00 AM, we will get off on time.

The Cable Car ride, usually, starts at 9:30am, so I think 9:00 is a good time for your driver to meet you, will it be ok? We can provide more 15 passenger vans than 16 passenger ones and in order not to split the couples, we'll accommodate 14 people in each one. In case you have any solo cruisers, they can complete a 15 passenger van. We also provide 8 passenger vans and depending on your total number of people we can use them as well.

Noel, as it seems you'll have children in your group, then, please, let me know how many child's or/and booster seats will be necessary.

Note from Noel: Any family that needs car seats or boosters seats just needs to let me know so I can tell Eusébia.

02. Cost is 30 Euros per adult.

In case there are more families with children, interested in the tour, we charge as follows:

05. 0 to 5 year olds – free

6 to 11 year olds – 15 Euros

From 12 years old onwards – 30 Euros

These children's prices are for big groups only, in smaller groups of, say 4, 6 or even 8 people we don't discount this much.

Yes, we're only accepting Euros now, because banks aren't receiving dollars any more. We can't accept payment by credit card either, because vehicles don't have payment devices. In case you don't bring any Euros, your driver will gladly take you to an ATM.

04. Now about our weather. In September we can have all kind of weather conditions, from hot to cold to rainy. Yes, it varies a lot depending on where you are. It can be nice and warm in Funchal, but cold on the mountains. So it's wise to carry a jacket, even if at first it feels like you won't need a jacket

05. If some of you prefer to pay in advance using PayPal, Daniel is willing to accept. As agreed, we're receptive to accepting your payment on PayPal, so here's Daniel's PayPal account address: jd-taxi@hotmail.com in fact it's the same address you're using to send your e-mails to us. If anybody else prefers to pay on PayPal, it will be ok with us too. When the other people pay through PayPal, if they add a note saying that they're coming in "Noel Birkner's group", it will be quite fine.

Note from Noel: If you are using PayPal, PLEASE SELECT PERSONAL TRANSFER as there is no fee as long as you use your bank account or PayPal account. If you use a credit card, you will need to pay a fee. Please don't pass the credit card fee to Daniel Taxi. You will pay a fee for converting dollars to Euros and that should not be passed to Daniel Taxi as well.

06. The drivers of the smaller vans are driver/guides. In fact, these driver/guides are the same people that accompany the groups in the big buses.

07. For those who have difficulty walking, there is room for a folding wheelchair in the rear of the van. Yes, even people with walking difficulties; have taken part in our tours, so your guest will be ok. The lady can choose to stay in the van sometimes, but on the longer stops she'll be able to get out and be with the others.

08. I don't think you'll feel rushed, either by following this plan or the one we have on the website, but it's true that you can't do it too leisurely. **Note from Noel: I think this is the best tour we can receive in the allotted time.**

09. The tour procedure is as follows: the drivers will all be at the pier, with the vans, to meet you all. You won't have to walk much, after you leave Disney Magic, to get to the vans. Before, drivers used to stand right at the end of the ship's gangway, but our pier now has a new platform and cruisers have to get into this platform to see their drivers. Due to security reasons, entrance to the pier is blocked to the people in general, so I didn't visit this new building yet.

10. First stop is at the Cable car station to leave the people taking the ride up to Monte. Anybody not wanting to ride the Cable car will go to Monte in the van. The drivers (who in fact are driver/guides, as I mentioned previously), will be at the end of the cable Car ride in Monte to meet everybody and walk with them to the beginning of the Toboggan ride (something like an easy 5 minute walk). At this point they'll get their vans and drive down to Livramento – together with anybody not taking the Toboggan ride – to collect their groups and start with the West tour. Extra charges will be: the Cable Car ride (10 Euros per person) and the Toboggan ride (12.50 Euros per person sharing). Children usually like both the Cable Car and Toboggan rides.

11. I'm sorry, but not even the people that aren't taking the Toboggan ride will be able to stay for long in Monte to visit the gardens because they'll be taken down to Livramento (where the Toboggan ride ends) in their vans, to meet the others. The Cable Car ride up to Monte takes 15 minutes, plus waiting time to get in, which will depend on how many people are in the line, of course. The drive up to Monte takes something like 15 minutes. You must add drop off time and so forth, meaning time spent in Monte will be approximately the same, either getting there by Cable Car or van.

12. During your tour, you can visit churches, but you'll see, mostly, Madeira's natural beauty. **Note from Noel: If there are any churches on the itinerary that I need to mention to Eusébia to be sure we visit, please let me know.**

13. You'll view both the north and the south coast in Encumeada. Well... let's hope the weather conditions are good! **Note from Noel: Here is a photo of [Bride's Veil falls](#).**

14. For large groups we book the restaurant beforehand and, in the morning, the driver talks to the clients about the different options in the menu, so that everybody decides what they'd like to eat. The driver then calls the restaurant to place the order in advance and when the group arrives, lunch is served straight away, which is very convenient and avoids any waste of time.

15. Please make sure everybody understands that lunch is being paid extra. Sometimes people don't pay all due attention and then they feel annoyed when they discover that the meal is not included in our price.

17. The restaurant is named [Restaurante Salgueiro](#) which is located in the Residencial Salgueiro hotel. Here are some pictures of the restaurant and the hotel.



Here is a [Map](#) link to the location of the restaurants.

18. I have received a copy of the Menu that the restaurants that is going to serve us at a cost of 12 Euros per adult and 9 Euros per child plus tip. Prices per person or child are indicated on the menu. Sangria is also available at both restaurants at a cost of 13 Euros per liter and the smallest serving is 500ml jug.

You may be able to double click once on the link to make the menu larger depending on your browser settings. [Menu Link](#)

On the menu, I believe the Passion Fruit Pudim is a fruity pudding type dessert similar to this [recipe](#).

Since everyone seemed to like the menu, I have told them this is the menu that is to be served.

19. In a previous e-mail I mentioned “espada” which is a very popular fish in Madeira. It’s not too heavy, but if you prefer something more on the light side, maybe you’d rather have, for instance a soup and sandwich. Anyway, the restaurant caters for everything, so it’ll be up to each and every person to choose whatever they feel like having.. Yes, black scabbard is “espada” the fish I told you about. It’s nice, not too heavy and is, usually, enjoyed by all.

Side note from Noel: Here is an article to read on espada:

[Espada](#)



This is a picture of Espada lunch.



20. Note from Noel: For anyone who is interested in what is typical Madeiran cuisine, here are a couple of articles to read:

[Madeira Cuisine](#)

[Recipes and Dishes in Madeira](#)

Here is picture of grilled lapas, a special shellfish.



21. The restaurants will be providing a Bolo de Mel (Honey Cake) tasting when we arrive at no additional charge.



[Honey Cake](#)

22. For those who like or are vegetarian, even if the restaurant doesn't have any special vegetarian dishes, I'm sure they'll be more than happy to make a salad for them or even vegetables.

23. The restaurant will, most probably, make separate bills for each person. They accept credit cards, but Daniel said, as you're a big group, it'll be better if you get your Euros beforehand, to speed up the paying process. There are ATMs in Porto Moniz, in case you need them there.

Please be sure to allow enough in Euros to tip at the restaurant if you are paying in cash.

24. With respect to using credit cards from America, some of our American clients have used their cards here and they didn't have any problems. So I think your group will be ok too. If some want to shop, yes, most shops accept credit cards.

25. *Where's the best place for Poncha? (Since the itinerary below doesn't include time in Câmara de Lobos)* For the Poncha, any souvenir shop will do.

Note from Noel: Here is an interesting article about the Poncha:

PONCHA DA MADEIRA



The **Poncha** is a drink originated in India, brought by the British, and adapted by Madeirans. The Indian name given to the drink, namely *pānch*, was initially composed by five ingredients: Rice or nut coconut spirit, sugar, tea of fresh herbs, spices and water.

It is believed now that the Poncha has been experienced for the first time outside India, on Madeira Island in the middle of the eighteenth century by the English at that time, during their travels between these parts.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Poncha was a popular drink within the Madeira the more or less wealthy families on the island.

Today, the tradition of Poncha remains very much alive among us, on Madeira, and the instruments used to assist in preparation of these drinks, in essence has not changed much.

In Madeira, this drink was adapted to be used with honey, sugar cane spirit, lemon juice and lemon peel. The Poncha has become very popular due to the fact of being considered a good drink to heal the ills of the throat ... has many other things ...

When you are on Madeira experience a Poncha ... and taste the Madeiran culture.

26. Now, the Porto Moniz volcanic pools. You will be able to spend 1/2 hour in the pools before lunch. In the Porto Moniz pools complex there's all facilities (showers, toilets and changing rooms). Five Lifeguards watch over bathers. A snack bar and a first aid center are also on the premises. Yes, you'll have to bring your own towels. Pools are totally visible from the outside so you don't have to go in to see them. Porto Moniz is an interesting little village, so even those people who aren't interested in swimming, can spend some time having a look around or shopping, as there are souvenir shops as well.

Speaking about these pools: maybe I should explain that they aren't really "volcanic pools", they are more "natural pools". They were formed by lava rocks, but they are filled with sea water. Please let the group know, because this may not be what they're expecting.

[Link one about Porto Moniz Pools](#)

[Link two about Porto Moniz Pools](#)



27. I called the Porto Moniz pools right now and they told me they have lockers where you can keep your things, with enough space for your clothes as well. They said every time you open your locker you have to pay 1 Euro. Apart from these lockers they also have hangers for clothes and these are free of charge. I presume they have someone supervising these hangers and probably they'll give you a number, which corresponds to the number on the hanger.

28. **Note from Noel:** If individuals want to do the wine tastings, your individual tasting reservations should be made at Old Blandy's at 4:30 PM. Please sign on their website to make your own reservations:

[Old Blandy Wine Shop Link:](#)

The cost is 5 Euros per adult person when you make your own reservations on the site. You do not pay on the site. This is a reservation only site and you pay on the tour. Minimum age for tasting is 18 and was confirmed by Eusébia.

28. I called Blandy's about children being allowed to take part in guided tours with their parents, they said "Yes, they are" and they even added that from the age of 6 till they are 15, children pay only 2.50 Euros. From then on they pay full price.

29. A question came up about children visiting Blandy's and how to book their reservation. I called Blandy's about your question and they said: — where it says "n. of people" she types the total amount, which, in her case, is 6. Then, further down, in "Observations", she explains that 3 of them are children.

30. I called Blandy's and was told that each guide takes 30 people. In case there are more people interested, if there's another guide available, they'll start another group. Eusébia also said that it's very important to book in advance, so that they are prepared with enough guides on the day so no one is disappointed.

31. For those in your group who can walk well, it will take them 30-40 minutes from Blandy's to the pier.

32. If some of the people in your group aren't doing the wine tasting and would rather be taken back to the cruise ship instead, the driver will drop them off there at no extra charge. People can also choose to do a bit of wine, grocery or other personal shopping before returning to the ship.

33. Something I'm thinking now: the people who aren't going to Blandy's, but want to do some shopping in Funchal before taking the van back to the pier at 5:30pm, better to discuss with their driver what type of shopping they're planning to do, so that the driver leaves them at the appropriate location, otherwise they won't have enough time to shop. On the other hand, if it's souvenirs they're planning to buy, Porto Moniz has some good souvenir shops and their time in Funchal could be used for exploring a bit and some photo taking. This is a mere suggestion, of course people are welcome to do as they please.

34. Once we get the count of who wants to go back right after the wine tasting, Daniel will provide a free ride back to the Magic for those who want to go back. If you want to stay in town, you may and arrange your own transportation back to the ship.

35. Daniel is very pleased to offer you tour members a ride from Blandy's back to the ship. His reason is that, as you need to be back by 4:15pm, your tour will be shorter than usual for a day tour, so no problem extending the drivers' service a bit longer. Daniel also suggested that, if one or more vans happen to have, only, people not going to Blandy's, they can do their tour in a more relaxed way and arrive in Funchal a bit later. Let me know what you think.