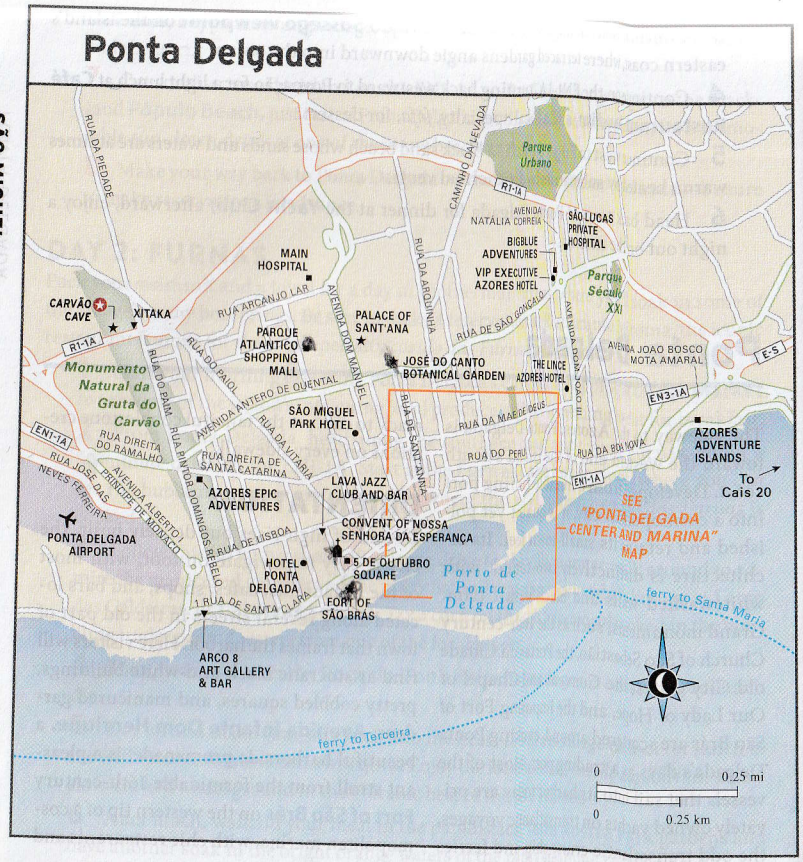


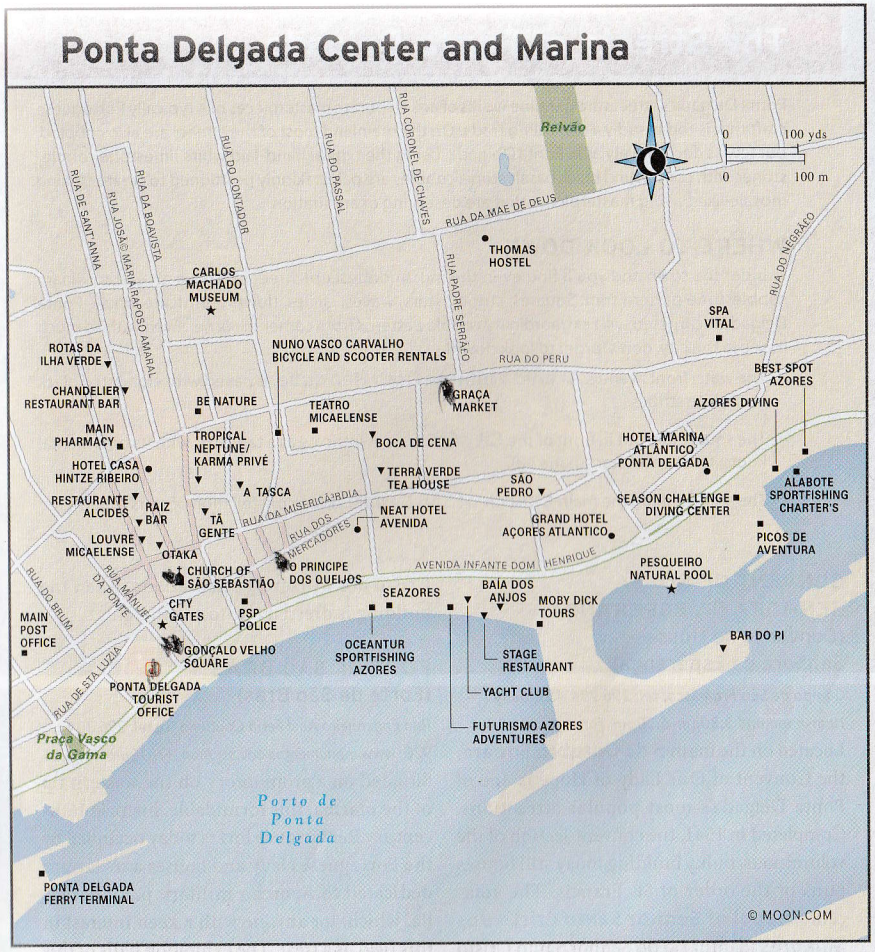
Most of the city's restaurants and hotels are also centered around the waterfront, or scattered among the streets just set back from it. Finding a spot to park in Ponta Delgada can be a chore, even though there is plenty of **parking** along the waterfront (meter fees apply). At busier times there are plenty of parking lots (main city parking lots require payment, while parking on streets on the outskirts is often free) within the city and a large underground parking lot on the marina. Park up and explore the city **on foot.**

SIGHTS

City Center and Marina

CITY GATES AND GONÇALO VELHO SQUARE (Portas da Cidade, Praça de Gonçalo Velho)

The imposing old gates to the city, a trio of large freestanding arches with a royal coat of arms on top, were built in the 18th century and are symbols of Ponta Delgada. This iconic gateway was formerly next to the old quay but was painstakingly deconstructed, relocated,



and rebuilt in the decorative Gonçalo Velho Square at the same time as the main waterfront avenue was being built. An age-old local saying goes that those who walk through the gates twice will return to São Miguel, while those who walk through three times will return to the island to stay.

CHURCH OF SÃO SEBASTIÃO (Igreja de São Sebastião)

Largo da Matriz 62; tel. 296 285 321; Mon.-Sat. 7:30am-7pm, Sun. 7:30am-1pm and 4pm-6pm; free

Rising from its starry cobblestone base like the centerpiece on a fancy cake, the magnificent São Sebastião church, also referred to as the city's Mother Church (or main church), is a wonderful example of 16th-century Manueline architecture, with the Azores' trademark white with black trim. It was built on the site of a small chapel and expanded following extensions in the 18th century. The inside of the church is lavish, with intricate carvings, paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries, and swathes of opulent gilding. It also has the distinction of hosting the only tall clock tower in the city.