

# Azores Parish Records Online

## Portugal “How to” Guide, Beginner Level: Instruction

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### GOAL

In this guide, you will learn about the parish records of the Azores and how to access them online.

### INTRODUCTION

The Azores Islands are a series of islands in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. They are an autonomous region of Portugal and therefore the language of the islands is Portuguese. As in most predominantly Catholic countries, one of the best record sources for identifying ancestors are the parish records created by the Catholic Church.

### HOW TO

#### Record types

There are three commonly used parish record types used in genealogical research in the Azores. These are:

- Baptisms - *Baptismos*
- Marriages - *Casamentos*
- Deaths – *Óbitos*

#### Information found in the records

**Baptisms, or *baptismos***, are used to identify a child and his parents. Baptism records typically contain both the birth date and the baptism date of the child. In many instances you might also find the names of grandparents of the infant. Every baptism record contains the names of godparents but rarely is their relationship to the child or his parents given. In order to find a baptism record you must have an idea of the name of the town or parish and an approximate date of birth. You should also know the names of the child's parents. This is crucial because many Azoreans have similar names. By knowing the names of the child's parents you can quickly determine if the child's record you have found is the correct person.

- Birth date
- Baptism date and place
- Names of parents (if only a mother is listed, the child was illegitimate)
- Names of paternal grandparents
- Names of maternal grandparents

- Names of godparents

**Marriages, or *casamentos***, are used to identify couples. A marriage record typically names the bride and groom and their parents. The marriage record often identifies the parish where the bride and groom were baptized as well as where they are currently living. It may also indicate where their parents are from and if they are still living. In order to search for a marriage record you must have an idea of when the couple married and where. If you don't know when, you should begin your search with the birthdate of the oldest known child and work your way backwards in time.

- Marriage date and place
- Names and occupations of groom and bride. Possibly their ages.
- Parish where the groom and bride were baptized and where they are living at time of marriage.
- Names of parents of groom and bride and where they're from.
- Names of witnesses

**Deaths, or *óbitos***, are used to identify when a person died. In a typically death record you might find the date of death and the date of burial. If the deceased was married you might expect to find the names of their spouse. If the deceased was a child, you might expect to find the names of his or her parents. Sometimes you may find the names and/or the number of children that the deceased had. In order to find a death record, you need to know when and where the person might have died.

- Name of deceased and their age (often approximated)
- Date and place of burial
- Date of death
- Names of parents, if unmarried.
- Names of spouse, if married.
- Number and possibly names of children left by deceased

## Finding the jurisdiction

There are nine inhabited islands. Santa Maria, São Miguel, Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico, Faial, Flores, and Corvo. Within each of these islands, or *ilhas*, there may be more than one municipality/district or *concelho*. Within each *concelho* there may be more than one parish or *freguesia*. A web search will help you to narrow down the *concelho* and the *freguesia* if all you know is the name of the town or parish.

The Azorean government has digitized and placed almost all of the parish records online in a free website. Before you can access the website you must know the name of the island or *ilha*, district or *concelho*, and parish or *freguesia*.

## How to access the records

There are three ways to access the website. One is through the FamilySearch Wiki.

### FamilySearch Wiki

1. <http://www.wiki.familysearch.org>

To access the Azores site **CENTRO DE CONHECIMENTO DOS AÇORES** go to the Wiki on FamilySearch. FamilySearch.org > Search > Wiki

- In the search box of the Wiki, enter Azores Genealogy.
- Click on the result Azores Genealogy
- Scroll down the page to the section Parish Records.
- Read the instructions and click on the words *Pesquisa de Registros Paroquiais*
- You may also use either of the links below.

2. **Centro de Conhecimento dos Açores**

<http://www.culturacores.azores.gov.pt/ig/registos/Default.aspx>

3. **Registos Paroquiais Portugueses para Genealogia**

<http://tombo.pt/d/acoes>

**Navigating the sites:**

**CENTRO DE CONHECIMENTO DOS AÇORES**

<http://www.culturacores.azores.gov.pt/ig/registos/Default.aspx>

1. Choose the island **Ilha**
2. Choose the municipality or district **Concelho**
3. Choose the parish **Freguesia**
4. Click on the word **Procurar**
5. Choose the record set that corresponds with the date and type of record you're looking for. Click on the word **Ver** next to the record set you wish to view.
6. The images will open in a new browser window. You can navigate the images by clicking on the image number. You may also go from one image to the next by clicking on the arrows at the top of the page.

**REGISTOS PAROQUIAIS PORTUGUESES PARA GENEALOGIA**

<http://tombo.pt/>

1. In the first column on the left side of the page, scroll down to the section **Região**
2. Click on the word **Açores**.
3. Click on the name of the island **Ilha** located in the column on the left side of the page.
4. Click on the name of the municipality/district or **Município** located in the column on the left side of the page. This corresponds to the **Concelho** on the site mentioned above.
5. Click on the name of the parish **Freguesia** located in the column on the left side of the page.
6. Choose the record set that corresponds with the date and type of record you're looking for. Click on the word **Baptismos**, **Casamentos**, or **Óbitos** for the type of record you wish. You may also click on the letters CCA located to the right of the type and date range of the record set you wish to view.
7. The images will open in a new browser window. You can navigate the images by clicking on the image number. You may also go from one image to the next by clicking on the arrows at the top of the page

**Note:** This site also has records for many other areas of Portugal.

## Browsing the images

Once you have opened the record set you wish to browse, click on the first image. If the record set covers multiple years, you can guess where the year you wish to view begins, if the years are not readily indicated on the website. Some parishes have this feature but many do not.

Use the arrows at the top of the page to navigate the site.

- The double arrow takes you to the next image. The arrows pointing to the right take you forward one image. The arrows pointing to the left take you backwards one image.
- The arrow with a line next to its point takes you to the very end of the record set in the direction it is pointed.
- The + and the – sign allow you to zoom the image in and out.

## PRACTICE

A guest's ancestor was born in 1903 in Piedade on the island of Pico in the Azores. To begin you will need to identify the *concelho* or municipality that Piedade belongs to.

1. Using Google.com, enter the search terms Piedade, Azores. According to Wikipedia, which municipality does Piedade belong to? **Lajes do Pico**
2. To discover if records are available for 1903 in Piedade you will need to access the Azores website **CENTRO DE CONHECIMENTO DOS AÇORES**. You can get there following the instructions found above in the section **How to access the records**.
3. Choose the island **Ilha** of Pico. Wait for the page to refresh.
4. Choose the municipality or district **Concelho** of Lajes do Pico. Wait for the page to refresh.
5. Choose the parish **Freguesia** of Piedade. Wait for the page to refresh.
6. Click on the button **Procurar**.
7. Click on the word **Ver** next to the record set that includes Baptisms for 1903. **Baptismos 1903-1904**. The images will open in a new window.
8. How many images are in this record set? **28**

## ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this “How to” Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you’ve mastered the Guide! [Click here](#) to try out the Activity.