

Flores named after its abundance of wild flowers

The next to the last Azorean island to be discovered, the island of Flores, has a surface area of approximately 55 square miles, and is the westernmost point of the Azores and Europe.

Its discovery date is not certain, although we do know it was after the seven other islands had been found. Some historians argue that Flores was sighted in 1452 by Portuguese Navigator Diogo Teive and his son João. Initially named São Tomas or Santa Iria, the name was soon changed to Flores (flowers) due to the abundance of wild flowers that cover the island.

In 1471, the Flemish nobleman Wilhem van der Haegen, initiated the first attempt to settle in the valley of Ribeira da Cruz, but the island's isolation and the lack of regular shipping connections led him to abandon Flores and settle on São Jorge instead.

Located far from the other islands and with few export products, Flores was almost isolated for centuries; a situation changed by rare ship visits. However, the isolation didn't prevent the island from being sacked by an English fleet in 1587, nor did it prevent pirates from attacking and pillaging it throughout the centuries.

Flores is undoubtedly the prettiest of the Azorean islands, featuring many natural wonders.



This is one of seven small lagoons situated in volcanic basins, surrounded by flowers: the result is relaxing beauty, which makes them worth visiting. (Courtesy photo)

In fact, Flores is the epitome of nature in all its exuberance, with deep valleys cut by streams, peaks and hills marking the horizon, hydrangea flowers winding across the hills and water cascading from the hilltops to journey toward the ocean.

Flores has seven small lagoons situated in volcanic basins, surrounded by flowers: the result is relaxing beauty, which makes them worth a visit. A curious geological wonder is the Rocha dos Bordões, a majestic cliff formed by the solidification of basaltic rocks, which resembles a pile of sticks

together. Near the base and at sea level are sulfur pits filled with boiling sulfurous water.

Like the other islands, Flores also celebrates the Holy Ghost festival in the spring, the most important on the island. Another major cultural event is the Emigrants' Festival, which is held annually on the second week of July to honor the emigrants who left the island seeking a better life.

The island's main town is Santa Cruz das Flores. Other towns are Lajes, Ponta Delgada, Fajazinha, Mosteiro, Fazenda and Cedros.

Like the other islands, Flores



has an airfield and a seaport. These two infrastructures helped to bring much-desired development to the island and helped reduce the isolation.

From the island of Flores you can take a boat to visit the neighboring island of Corvo, the smallest island of the Azores.

You can travel to Flores by airplane year-round. A ferryboat goes to Flores during the summer but it doesn't have a regular schedule. Round trip airfare costs about 174 Euros, depending on the exchange rate.

Law Day an education for all Airmen

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Law Day is a time to reflect on how far our country has come in creating a legal system that governs the freedoms that so many have fought for. On Saturday, we take the time to view our history and reflect upon the great strides our nation has made to protect those freedoms and the democracy we love.

Every year, the American Bar Association singles out a landmark case that reminds us of where we have been and where we are going. This year we take a moment to reflect on

Brown vs. Board of Education.

Even though Brown vs. Board of Education was the 12th case filed in the U.S. to end segregation in the school system it was the first victory to bring our country closer to living up to the democratic ideals upon which it was founded. Before the Brown v. Board of Education case, segregation was the law even though it came with great resistance.

Segregation meant separate schools, theaters, restaurants, drinking fountains and even public lavatories for whites and African Americans. The separate facilities were supposed to be of equal quality, but in most cases, African-American

facilities were well below those provided to whites.

Oliver Brown saw his daughter Linda traveling a long distance away from their home to attend an all-black school. An all-white school stood just four blocks away. During Linda's walk to school she had to fight bad weather. She was also in unsafe areas in order to catch the bus.

Mr. Brown wanted a safer and better place for his daughter to attend school and was willing to fight for her and many other children in the same situation. He was a man of pride and courage that stood up for what he believed in, and in doing so played a big part in changing our history.

With the help of the NAACP, Mr. Brown and his daughter challenged the segregation of schools in their community. The Supreme Court decided the case May 17, 1954. The court ruled, "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." With this ruling, the court made "separate but equal" illegal in public facilities.

This is but one shining example from countless cases that have become laws as a direct result of our legal system at work. It demonstrates how the legal system can affect social change in our society and achieve "justice for all."