

WELCOME TO LAJES FIELD



Trust* Teamwork* Training

Welcome to the 65th Air Base Group, Lajes Field, located on the beautiful island of Terceira, Azores (Portugal) - home to bullfights, painted tiles, and cows wandering up the middle of the streets.

Terceira is one of the nine inhabited islands of the Azores Archipelago and is located in the North Atlantic Ocean, about 2,300 miles east of Washington D.C., and about 900 miles west of Lisbon, Portugal. Lajes Field, known as the “crossroads of the Atlantic” provides an important mid-Atlantic link for U.S. and Allied Forces to Europe, Africa, and Middle East. Terceira was the third island discovered by the Portuguese giving the island its name, which means “Third”. Terceira has beautiful hills and water is everywhere. The local people of the island are warm and friendly, and eager to try to speak English with you, but enjoy your effort to speak Portuguese.

We have a very proud and tight family here at Lajes, we are a Group of five squadrons and three flights with 585 dedicated professionals. You will hear the words “6-5 in the Fight” over and over. This represents our commitment to enabling expeditionary movement of war fighters, warplanes, and global communications to Combatant Commanders supporting joint, coalition, and NATO operations--promoting regional partnerships. We conduct our operations and take care of our team with pride. Our team is composed of United States military and civilian personnel; and Portuguese local nationals. As our guest, you are now a member of “Team Lajes.” We hope you find this information helpful.

TEMPERATURE

The summers are short, warm, humid, and dry (Jun-Sep). The winters are long, cool, extremely windy, and rainy (Oct-May). It is partly cloudy year round; over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 54 degrees Fahrenheit to 78 degrees Fahrenheit and is rarely below 48 degrees or over 82 degrees Fahrenheit.

IN-PROCESSING

This is easy...around two days and you can make it to just about everything; on Lajes Field almost everything is within walking distance, if need be. Your first stop is at MPF! You will need to attend the Right Start Briefing/Island Orientation.

MPF HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Friday, 08:00 - 15:00 (closed Wednesday/US Holidays/Family Days)

WHERE TO LIVE

Sro. Helio Perpetua is your Housing Management Assistant. You can reach him at DSN: 535-4173, Bldg. T-570

E-4's and below will reside in Dorm T-152 and can move straight into the dorm upon arrival. Also, the 65 ABG Commander and Group Chief resides on base.

E-5's and above will reside off base. You will have 10 days in TLA while you look for a living accommodations. If you are actively searching for a house and having some difficulty, you may be able to stay in lodging for up to 30 days.

You can drive one side of the island to the other in about 45 to 60 minutes.

Praia da Vitoria: 5-10 minutes from base. Praia have a lot of restaurants, bars, one of only two sand beaches on the island, and huge festivals.

Biscoitos: 25-30 minutes from base. Country life, beautiful swimming hole and coastline.

Porto Martins: 15 minutes from base. Referred to as “Little America”, nice houses, some even built with 110v and 220v outlets and have AC. Nice swimming hole and a great restaurant; a little more US presence.

Angra do Heroismo: 20-25 minutes from base. Very historical, lots of shopping, beach, and huge festivals.

Above are a few popular cities/towns on the island, but there are many more with beautiful scenery.

PETS

You can bring a pet; however, it will be at your own expense! You will have to work with an approved vet to get cleared, TMO for airlines that will allow pets, and housing as you cannot have pets in lodging. Therefore you can either have someone watch your pet while you are in lodging or hire a pet sitters on the island. Pet sitters on the island is inexpensive and know that your pet is in good hands (contact Monica Silva for more information). For care, there are vets on the island to care for your pet and to obtain clearance when it is time to PCS again. For more information on bringing a pet to Lajes, I recommend you go on the links below, for Portugal it is the second link. The USDA APHIS is the official agency you should talk to if you have any questions...they are very helpful.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/pet-travel-info-and-guidance-document/steps-to-obtain-intl-health-certificate>

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/by-country/eu/pettravel-portugal>

NOTE: You may have a pet if leaving off base, as long as the landlord allows pets. Make sure to mention you own a pet while house hunting. In the dorm you are welcome to have a fish as a pet.

FINANCE

For current OHA, COLA, MIHA, DLA and utility allowances based on location and rank, please visit <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/ohaCal.cfm>

With Lajes being so small you will get one-on-one service. Finance will ensure you get your travel voucher completed. When you complete all housing paperwork with the Lajes Housing Office, Housing will file your paperwork with finance to pay you for your lodging expense. This payment IS NOT paid direct to GTC and WILL BE in your normal paycheck on the 1st and 15th. This means, at some point, you will be required to pay off your GTC bill on your own. There are no actions ensuring this is done, besides you. There will be two basic payments to GTC, your travel voucher (taken care of via finance) and your lodging expenses (taken care of by you).

DLA: There are members that do and others that do not get DLA, this depends on your PCS orders.

EXAMPLE: Airmen living in the dorms DO NOT get DLA unless authorized to move off-base. If it states that you do not get DLA, ask questions (Finance/MPF).

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday- Friday, 08:00 to 15:00 (Closed Wednesday, US Holidays/Family Days)

CURRENCY on the Island is the Euro. Off base, only euro is used, on base you may use both, dollars and euros depending on the facility.

MEDICAL CARE

There are two IDMTs that can assist in medical care and they are located in building T-333. If you have a serious injury, you will get seen by a doctor at the local hospital in Praia, Angra or go TDY to Ramstein. This also means, have ALL prescriptions you need for the year. If you need a new medication, the IDMT will try to get it for you. Also, there is a local dentist if you need to see one while you are here. All medical requirements should be done within 60 days of arrival; this will prevent any needs, outside of you getting injury/sick while you are at Lajes Field.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday - Friday, 08:00 to 11:00 DSN 535-4233

- Liaison on call for emergencies 24/7

MAIL

Lajes Field Post Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 1000-1730

Wednesday: 1000-1400

Official Mail Center/Registered Mail: 1000-1600

Goal/Family Days (Parcel Pick-up only): 1000-1400

Closed Federal Holidays

TIP: If you are PCSing from an APO, you can get a mailbox 30 days prior to arrival here and ship stuff for free APO to APO!

UNIFORMS

There is no BX or clothing sales. If you feel you will need clothing items, bring extras with you. If you think you will make rank or add a ribbon, I would be prepared for that by having those items already. You will need blues, there are a few events, so bring service dress and mess/semi-formal. Also, you will need PT gear. It is chilly and rainy at time, something long and warm will be useful.

NOTE: If you need to get anything sewed on and/or cleaned there is a Laundry & Dry Cleaners on base, Bldg. T-207, DSN: 535-3630.

HOURS of OPERATIONS:

Monday – Friday 10:00 – 18:00

Closed weedends and Portuguese holidays

FOOD & SHOPPING

Local food is amazing, very delicious and low priced. Grocery shopping is easy off base, the two main supermarkets are Continente and Guarita. In general, they provide about everything: quality meat, bread and wine for awesome prices. You can find clothing, shoes and small appliances. You can just about anything you need on the local economy.

SHIPPING/PURCHASING A VEHICLE

Thinking about shipping your vehicle, ship it as early as possible as waiting time can vary depending on the location, but usually about five to eight weeks for arrival after shipment. Also, keep in mind that roads and parking are narrow, if you ship a larger vehicle/truck you will have to be very careful where you drive and park. Purchasing a vehicle on the island will be easy, on base there are a few resources to aid in that aspect, word of mouth through your squadron/flight is most common, however a more valuable resource is at the A&FRC, Sra. Monica Silva. She runs the Facebook page “Lajes Island Bombs Official”, (LINK: https://www.facebook.com/groups/209048202574679/956202834525875/?notif_t=group_activity¬if_id=1472555857935909) this is a closed group so you must request access. She will send you a private message as she tries to keep the page for Lajes members only. The message will more than likely go to your “others” folder since you are not FB friends. She keeps another list for members that do not have Facebook.

Automatics are rare and a little pricey, but if you ship or purchase one it will then be easy to resale. Manuals, are much less expensive and many more to choose from. The average cost of a decent “island bomb” is about \$800.00 - \$2000.00. Whenever you purchase a vehicle you will then have to get insurance for coverage. USAA is the most common insurance. Just make sure to specify that you are in the Azores and not main land Portugal. Also, you can go through the local insurance companies on the island.

If the vehicle is P-Plated (European), you will have to pay road taxes. These taxes are paid yearly and on the month your vehicle was made. You will **NOT** get a letter notifying you that your road tax is due, you will need to remember. In case you do get a letter about road taxes, it is because your payment is passed due. You will incur a fine because the road tax was not paid on-time. If you ship a U-Plated (American) vehicle, once the vehicle arrives you will have up to 60 days to get your vehicle inspected (tinted windows, automatic fail...if not from manufacture).

WARNING: There is another Facebook page with the same exact name, but it is not a closed group...stay away from it. Also, the base **ONLY HAS** gasoline at the service station, **NO** diesel. Always try to get your gas on base, it's cheaper, you will pay almost double off base.

AAFES GAS STATION INFO & HOURS OF OPERATION:

Tuesday - Friday 16:00 – 18:00

Saturday 11:00 – 16:00

(Closed Sunday, Monday, PT Holidays)

MOTORCYCLES

You are welcome to drive a motorcycle, however, I would not make that a primary form of transportation as the weather is unpredictable. Also, all motorcycle requirements must be done before you get here, they are not offered at Lajes: The requirements are: completed Basic Riders Course (BRC), an endorsement on the license, complete the initial CC's brief, and have an updated MUSTT account, and all PPE.

COMMISSARY

Medium size commissary with all your basic necessities.

HOURS of OPERATIONS:

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 – 18:30 (Closed Sunday and Monday)

FITNESS CENTER

Great Fitness Center!! It has racquetball courts, a large gymnasium for basketball or volleyball, and an exercise area with free weights and nautilus machines. It is 24-hour access, staffed normal times--seven days a week; and free WiFi! There is also, bikes, golf clubs, coolers, fishing poles, tents and other miscellaneous items you can sign-out and use for FREE...the supply is limited, but the equipment is nice!

VISITORS

Visitor can be on island for up to 90 consecutive days. The easiest way to fly is a direct flight from Boston to the island (identifier: TER) or to Ponta Delgada island (identifier: PDL). They fly direct to Lajes (Terceira) weekly. Also, you can flight to Teceirca via Lisbon, but it is a litter longer travel time.

NOTE: If you are planning on having kids come visit with your spouse, you will need to get a notarized letter allowing your spouse to depart Portugal with your child/children without you. This is a very easy letter to get notarized, as long as you know about it before you attempt to check-in at the airport.

If families want to stay longer than 90 days, they can apply for a Residency Stamp that allows them to stay as long as a family member is assigned at Lajes Field on military orders. Here's how that process works:

- 1) Ask MPS for a Residency Stamp memo
- 2) Fill out the application
- 3) Make an appointment with the Customs and Immigration office in Angra (locally referred to as the SEF office).
- 4) Bring family passports and Residency Stamp memo to the SEF appointment. At SEF, your family members will get VISA pics taken and finger printed.
- 5) Once the application(s) is/are approved after 2-3 weeks, SEF will call you to make another appointment for the actual passport residency stamp. Bring the passports back to this appointment at SEF, so they can apply the stamp to a Passport page.
- 6) Whenever traveling off island, be sure to bring passports and a copy of your PCS orders.

*** BAH stipulation***In order to continue receiving BAH for wherever the family is located, you can't stay together on the island for more than 90 consecutive days.

As long as the dependents leave Lajes Field for 1 day every 90 days, you will continue to receive BAH for whichever location you were assigned. Your dependents do not have to go back to where they were assigned to continue receiving BAH. They may travel to another island in the Azores or to the edge of the world. I would recommend keeping a copy of all finance/MPS/ SEF e-mails and applications and all travel receipts in case you get audited.

AGAIN, Welcome!

Most off-base recreational activities are outdoors oriented: scuba diving, fishing, camping, cave exploring, hiking, horseback riding and golf to name a few. Don't get tricked into thinking that a small island is boring, get involve and there won't be enough hours in the day. Also stop by www.lajesfss.com, there you find some additional helpful information. This is a beautiful assignment!

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO HAVE

First Sergeant	964-565-917	DSN: 535-5240
BDOC/LE (65th SFS)	295-573-222	DSN: 535-3222
Emergency (911 off base)	295-571-911 on base just 911	
SARC	966-677-266	DSN: 535-2124
MFLC	967-435-590	DSN: 535-3529
JAG	964-078-882	DSN: 535-3546
Paralegal		
Chaplain	964-335-471	DSN: 535-4211
POLAD	963-413-188	DSN: 535-5228
POLAD	963-835-056	DSN: 535-3381
Medical Liaison	961-379-542	DSN: 535-3615
Medical Liaison	927-156-556	DSN: 535-6843
IDMT	927-154-542	DSN: 535-1086
IDMT	927-156-485	DSN: 535-4233

www.lajesfss.com