

HISTORY OF AZORES AIRLINES AND THE A330-200 SPERM WHALE LIVERY

Reg. CS-TRY (UNIQUE IN THE AZORES AIRLINES FLEET)

Azores Airlines, previously known as SATA International, is an Azorean airline based in the municipality of Ponta Delgada, on the island of São Miguel in the autonomous archipelago of the Azores. A subsidiary of SATA Air Açores, the airline operates as the international arm of the regional network, connecting the archipelago with Europe and North America, from its hub at João Paulo II International Airport.

After May 2009, SATA adopted a new brand image and a new logo which was applied to its first new **Airbus A320-200, registered CS-TKO and named "Diáspora"**. The symbol, called BIA (for "Blue Islands Açor"), consisted of nine geometrical shapes, representing the nine islands of the Azores assembled to form the mythical Açor of Portuguese legend. The "açor" or goshawk was thought to have been the bird found circling the islands of the Azores when Portuguese sailors first discovered the archipelago. This form appeared on the tail fin, in addition to a portion located just ahead of the wings on the fuselage. The new scheme was adopted by both SATA International and SATA Air Açores during the fleet upgrades beginning at the end of the 1990s and lasted until 2015.

In January 2015, the airline announced strategic plans to reduce its debts from €179 m to €40 m by 2020 by reducing its fleet and workforce. Under the plan it would also be renamed Azores Airlines.[7]

In October 2015, SATA International subsequently announced a major rebranding including a name change to Azores Airlines and a change of the colour scheme from blue tones to green tones. **In the same time, a fleet renewal with Airbus A330 aircraft has been announced. The first A330 flight took place on 25 March 2016 from Ponta Delgada to Boston.**

In September 2016, the airline announced a change of plans regarding their fleet renewal. While plans to phase in a second Airbus A330 have been cancelled, Azores Airlines ordered two Airbus A321neo on interim lease for 2017-2019 and four Airbus A321LR which will be delivered in 2019 to replace the interim A321neos and other older aircraft.

Azores Airlines operates scheduled flights to the Madeira Islands, mainland Portugal and other destinations in Europe and North America, as well as charter

flights. Domestic destinations are covered by its parent company, SATA Air Açores. This is a list of the airports served as of June 2017.

Country	City	Airport	Notes	Refs
Canada	Montréal	Montréal–Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport		
Canada	Toronto	Toronto Pearson International Airport		
Cape Verde	Praia	Nelson Mandela International Airport		
France	Paris	Paris-Orly Airport		
Germany	Frankfurt	Frankfurt Airport		
Netherlands	Amsterdam	Amsterdam Airport Schiphol		
Portugal	Faro	Faro Airport		
Portugal	Madeira	Funchal Airport		
Portugal	Lisbon	Lisbon Airport		
Portugal	Porto	Porto Airport		
Portugal	Horta	Horta Airport		
Portugal	Madalena	Pico Airport		
Portugal	Ponta Delgada	João Paulo II Airport		
Portugal	Vila do Porto	Santa Maria Airport		
Portugal	Praia da Vitória	Lages Air Base		
Portugal	Santa Cruz das Flores	Flores Airport		
Portugal	Vila do Corvo	Corvo Airport		
Portugal	Santa Cruz da Graciosa	Graciosa Airport		
Portugal	Velas	São Jorge Airport		
Spain	Barcelona	Barcelona–El Prat Airport		
Sweden	Stockholm	Stockholm-Arlanda Airport		
United States	Boston	Logan International Airport		
United States	Oakland	Oakland International Airport		
United States	Providence	T.F. Green Airport	[11]	

Azores Airlines

Aircraft	In Fleet	Orders	Passengers			Notes
			C	Y	Total	
Airbus A310-300	3	—	18	204	222	To be replaced by Airbus A321LR ^[13]
Airbus A320-200	3	—	12	149	161	
Airbus A321LR	—	4	TBA			To be delivered 2019 - 2021 ^{[9][13]} as replacement for A310-300 ^[13]
Airbus A321neo	—	2	TBA			To be leased from 2017 until 2019 ^[9]
Airbus A330-200	1	—	18	258	276	
Total	7	6				

YOU CAN SEE HERE ABOVE THAT THIS AIRCRAFT IS UNIQUE IN THE FLEET

About the famous and amazing A330-200 with a livery representing a big blue Sperm Whale named "Ciprião de Figueiredo"



Batismo de A330 da Azores Airlines



The new A330 from Azores Airlines was christened this afternoon with the name: "Ciprião de Figueiredo", in a ceremony presided over by Vasco Cordeiro, President of the Regional Government of the Azores, with the blessing of Father Duarte Melo.

The name chosen for the aircraft, "**Ciprião de Figueiredo**", an important historical figure and author of the famous phrase: "Before Dying Free of Peace", adopted as a currency of the Autonomous Region of the Azores, aims to be a symbol of hope and ambition, Virtues embraced by the SATA Group and the Autonomous Region of the Azores.



Why a sperm Whale painted both sides of the aircraft ?

Sperm whales in the Azores

The Azores means pretty much one thing to the avid whale watcher – Sperm Whales. That’s what brings us to these remote islands, strung out like beads halfway across the Atlantic. Of course Sperm Whales are not the only appeal of a holiday in the Azores, but the chance to see lots of Sperm Whales – and see them very close – is irresistible.



Sperm Whale Fluke (Ed Drewitt)

The weather in the Azores can be fickle, so when the sea is calm, you seize the chance to get out to sea, and that is exactly what we did on our September ‘Whales & Dolphins of the Azores’ holiday. On our first four trips out to sea the whale and dolphin sightings came thick and fast – we saw bow-riding Bottlenose, Risso’s (also breaching) and Common Dolphins in quick succession ... and then the whales came! I actually lost count of how many we saw in total, but on our fourth pelagic alone we saw 10! And it was on that fourth trip that we really hit the whale watching jackpot.

10 Sperm Whales in one 3-hour trip is good. Seeing mothers with calves – the calf swimming fast to keep up with the adult and dipping under the surface to suckle – that’s really good. Then we caught up with a Sperm Whale with a calf which was being hassled by a Bottlenose Dolphin. The calf swam tight up against the adult female (either its mother or a ‘babysitter’ while its mother was diving) trying not to leave its side, as the dolphin in turn pressed itself up against the calf, clearly trying to block it or separate it from the adult whale. Getting even better, we thought!

But the best was indeed kept for last on this occasion, with the two Sperm Whales in this underwater footage providing a fitting finale to a superb afternoon's whale watching. From above we could just see that there were two Sperm Whales swimming slowly alongside our RIB apparently oblivious to our presence. It wasn't clear at the time what was happening from a behavioural point of view; we just watched in awe as the whales swam beside us, only metres away. We speculated on whether it was a mother with her calf staying under the water, or two females; however when we reviewed this underwater footage, shot on a small camera attached to a monopod, it became clear that the lower of the two whales was in fact a subadult male, while the one to the left and visible from our RIB at the surface was a mature female (please click here to view the video).

Sperm Whales are highly tactile and it's normal to find them touching each other when they're socialising at the surface – the fact that we saw 10 that afternoon points to this having been a social group, spread across a relatively small area south of Lajes (Pico Island) with some members diving and others resting and socialising at the surface between dives. We're not sure what the male's intentions were – whether he's making a tentative sexual approach, or perhaps trying to suckle (towards the end of the footage). A male Sperm Whale of 15 years old was once discovered with milk in its stomach, so it's not impossible it was trying to suckle. We think the male here is about 5 years old, and as males reach breeding maturity at about 25 years old, he's too young to be a serious contender for mating.

Christian Fonck

Sources: *Internet and Wikipédia.*

Note: You also can watch video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZdzJA6C-A8> realized by a passenger from the departure to the arrival. Amazing !

