

# Aluguer, Jassi, Taxi and Parallelos

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Most motorized vehicles in Cabo Verde are rather shaky Toyota minibusses, called "jassi" or pick-ups. Since colonial times the roads are paved with volcanic rocks in a parallel fishbone-like pattern. For every vehicle a permanent shaking test. Moreover they are also extremely unpleasant to walk on. Never have my feet hurt more than after a few kms of road walk on capverdean parallelos. Try to walk on the unpaved sides of the road!

The "aluguer" is a collective taxi, like the Kenian "matatu" or the "dolmus" in Turkey. It services a certain route and takes up everybody who waves at the road-side.

The close contact with dozens of adults, children, chicken, piglets, school-bags, shopping-baskets, jerrycans of diesel and boxes of vegetables certainly is an overwhelming experience. It appeals to the eyes as well as to the sense of touch and the nose, but sometimes you might well find it rather pressing and breathtaking. Europeans might also be attacked by invasions of fleas.

This means of transport is typical for poor, third-world countries. It is very cheap (Pedra Badejo - Praia about ECV 250.-, E 2.50.-) but rather slow, as every driver only starts when the aluguer is full. And there full means: very full.

As a very wealthy European the average tourist can mostly afford to hire the same vehicle as a taxi. If there are passengers waiting inside, they are at once seated in another car, the seats are wiped with a wet cloth, and you can now travel the distance mentioned before, - for ten times the price. (ECV 2500.-, E 25.-) Of course you are much faster now and can stop to take pictures wherever you want.

For a whole day e.g. for a round-trip of Santiago Island the Toyota minibus costs about ECV 8000.-, which are roughly E 80.- Overall taxi costs can run up to quite an amount if you are there for a longer time and want to travel in European style! Taxis at the airports are mostly modern cars.