



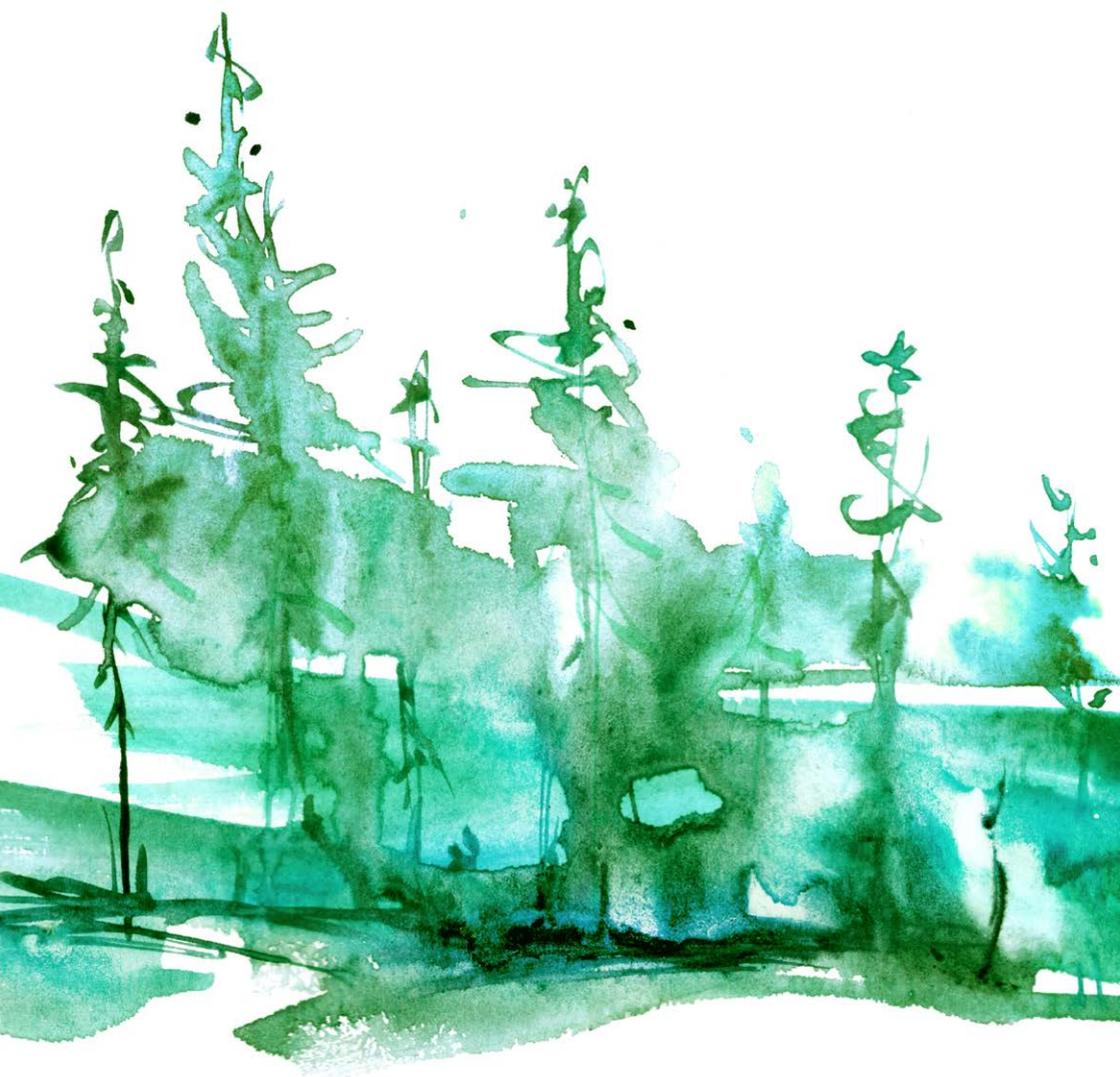
MASPALOMAS

COSTA CANARIA



SAN BARTOLOMÉ DE TIRAJANA

HISTORICAL GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

The town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, at over 333 km², is the largest municipality in Gran Canaria; it is triangular in shape, with its point at 1,900m in the centre of the island, and to the north it borders the municipalities of San Mateo and Valsequillo, to the north west it borders Tejeda, then Mogán to the west, Santa Lucía to the east and the Atlantic Ocean to the south.

“Tunte”, the name of the municipality’s capital, is a name which harks back to an aboriginal settlement, a place in which various Hispanic populations stayed after the conquest. Tunte has become the capital of the region of Las Tirajanas, San Bartolomé and Santa Lucía, and is a capital city which continues to defend its neighbours.

It has been the administrative capital of the municipality since 1813. Tunte lies at an altitude of 890m, holding a privileged position right in the centre of the Caldera de Tirajana, which has made it an intersection linking communications between the north and the south of Gran Canaria throughout history. In the town centre, various architectural styles are mixed together, from pre-Hispanic houses to modern public buildings like the town hall, traditional structures and religious buildings like the Church of San Bartolomé.





DIRECTIONS

Tunte is located 54.5km from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (the capital of Gran Canaria) and around 25km from Maspalomas. The access routes are the GC-65 motorway heading north west, starting from Ayacata and going through Santa Lucía de Tirajana, or alternatively from Maspalomas via the Fataga road GC-60, which is a journey of approximately one hour with spectacular scenery. You can also get there by public transport from the Maspalomas Lighthouse (Global line 18).

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The municipality is the largest on the island, occupying almost 22% of its surface, and it forms part of the large areas of relief in Gran Canaria's landscape. Its highest altitude area is located very close to Pico de las Nieves, at an altitude of 1949m; its mid-altitude area, between 900 and 200m, contains a dense network of ravines which come up from the inside in a radial formation, creating very steep watersheds with ridges on their upper part, some with quite a large surface area. Finally, the lowlands area of the municipality constitutes a large, irregular sedimentary plain that follows the ravines of Fataga, Los Vicentes, La Data and de Charmoriscan, which come to an end at their most southern point in the Maspalomas dunes field.



The municipality is bordered by the Arguineguín ravine to the west, and to the east, the face of the Amurga peak and the Tirajana Ravine, which keeps its name from its source all the way down to the mouth. The capital of the municipality is located in the “Caldera de Las Tirajanas”.

From a geological point of view, San Bartolomé de Tirajana is formed by the southern foothills of a large phonolite volcano, only the southern and western parts of which are preserved, and which probably covered the whole island.

Within the municipality, there is a distinct difference between the rugged, high-altitude area and the large sedimentary plain with a low-lying coastline where sediments that have been dislodged from the high-altitude area end up accumulating. The main feature is the large network of ravines, which come up from the inside in a radial formation, and the Caldera de Tirajana, a large, eroded hollow which forms the top of the ravine of the same name.



CLIMATE

In this municipality, there is a clear correlation between the distribution of the broad-ranging climate and the altitude, configuration and orientation of the relief of the land. Our climate is not affected by the trade winds (as it is across the rest of the island), meaning it stays dry and has consistent temperatures.

In summer, the Tirajana area has clear skies, high temperatures and low humidity. Air from the Sahara (with airborne dust) does occasionally come in, creating a considerable increase in temperature, with records of over 40°C.

At the end of autumn, polar air begins to come in, along with disturbances in the ocean or cold spells (never lasting very long) which characterise the winter in the mountains, making temperatures reach below 0°C with sporadic rain and snow. During this period, gales from the south west create what are known as "southern storms" which bring copious amounts of rain and strong winds.

The temperature along the coast is mild with the benefit of the sea's tempering effect. The low rainfall along the coastal strip is accompanied by clear skies or a just a few clouds for most of the year, with the average annual temperature ranging between 21°C and 23°C. These climatic features make the municipality even more attractive, because all you need is an hour in the car and you can choose between sunbathing and swimming at the beach or playing in the snow at the top of the mountains.





HISTORY

The history of Tunte dates back to the original population of the bold and courageous aboriginal race, which was mainly dedicated to agriculture and livestock farming. There are many historical references to Tunte as the capital of the Tirajana region, including the current municipalities of San Bartolomé and Santa Lucía. There are also mentions of this region as a territorial boundary between the two “Guanartematos” (kingdoms) that the island was divided into: Telde and Gáldar.

The conquest of Gran Canaria ended up being a slow process, as the battles and raids by the Spanish forces were not limited to the set areas of the island’s territory, so the movement and direction of the aboriginal war extended the battle through to areas where the rugged, broken up parts of the territory were brought together at altitude. Tirajana was, along with Tirma, one of the aborigines’ sacred refuges, and the place where one of the oldest Canarian temples stood.

The final phase of the conquest unfolded in the Tirajana region, as the Telde and Gáldar kingdoms had virtually submitted, and only the centre and the south west of the island remained strong. So this is when the Spanish troops intensified their actions against the Canarians, cutting down trees, burning crops and stealing cattle, trying to force the aborigines to submit through starvation.



The most heroic aborigines took cover in the natural fortress of Ansite, but decimated by the superior weapons and downtrodden by poverty and hunger, they eventually surrendered on 16 March 1485, with the conquest of Gran Canaria coming to an end a month later (on 29 April).

During hispanicisation, the island and its people went through a period of deep internal, constructive stagnation, from which a new administration, society and culture was born. For many centuries, this internal peace was threatened by attacks from pirates and invaders such as Sir Francis Drake and Pieter Van Der Does. Both of them tried separately to attack the island's capital without success; when faced with the impossibility of conquering the island, they both looked for shelter on the southern beaches, where the shepherds from the region (who knew they were there) took them each by surprise, attacking them with all their might to defend their land together.

At the end of the 15th century, the current town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana emerged, spurred on by two factors: religion, and then this in turn produced the first chapel of San Bartolomé, and its agricultural nature, continuing the aboriginal tradition of shepherding and crop-growing. This settlement benefited from the introduction of sugar cane cultivation and its proximity to the forest, making it easier to collect wood.

PLACES OF CULTURAL INTEREST



IN THE TOWN CENTRE

THE TOWN HALL

The Town Hall of the Town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana was first based in a 200m² area and house acquired from Carlos Yáñez Matos (from a family of landowners) in 1951, in what is now the town square. This building had two floors: on the top floor were the Justice of Peace court, the Workers' Union and the Local Delegation of the Movement; on the bottom floor were the Casas Consistoriales (seat of local government) with the municipal archive, which shared its location with the plenary chamber.

In 1966, a series of arched passageways were created on the façade leading to the square. In the 70s, it underwent another change, giving it the current appearance it has today and the typical structure of a Canarian house: a central patio with rooms arranged around it. The building has three floors, covered by a gable roof and with two façades, with the main one facing the square. The front façade has a typical Canarian wooden balcony.

Various primary industries began to blossom, along with the richness of its soils providing good harvests, which caused a great increase in population and an economic boom that led to a historic development for the municipality: on 3 October 1894, the Queen Regent María Cristina, on behalf of her distinguished son Alfonso XIII, bestowed the title of "Town" upon San Bartolomé de Tirajana.

In the 80s, the Municipal Offices were built in Maspalomas due to significant popular demand, with the seat of local government remaining in Tunte.





THE SQUARE

Tunte square is the silent protagonist of the town's history and culture. The main boulevard is, as in any town on the island, the heart of the municipality, the central axis around which life turns and a hugely valuable monument for the people of the area. This beautiful square, with the church and town hall, has two Canary Island pine trees that guard the entrance like loyal guardsmen. On the opposite far side, there were two lions that adorned the area, which were substituted by two female statues, which today have also disappeared. The benches, made from Arucas stonework, invite people to relax and provide solace for locals and visitors.

THE CHURCH OF SAN BARTOLOMÉ DE TIRAJANA

The church of San Bartolomé de Tirajana is located in the centre of Tunte. Facing from west to east, it is in a Mudejar style, with a façade made up of three sections, the middle one being the highest. Its belfry protrudes out of the building, housing two bells and a clock. Decorated with local stone, this church replaced the original one in the 19th century.

The inside is in the shape of a basilica with three naves, separated by Tuscan style pillars made from local stone, which support the arches that act as a support for the gable roof, made from wood and in a Mudejar style. The stained glass windows depict



the patron saints of various neighbouring churches. Under the ceramic floor is the original floor of the baptistery made from blue Arucas stone. The rest of the church was made from white Carrara marble.

The nave on the Epistle side to the left and the Gospel side to the right are each overlooked by the image of Saint James “The Greater”, a work by the sculptor Francisco Vila (1903) from Barcelona, and by the tabernacle, which has an image of Our Lady of the Rosary on the right, from the 19th century. The images of Saint Sebastian and Saint Bartholomew are attributed to the works of Canarian artist José Luján Pérez. The main altar is overlooked by the image of Saint Bartholomew, and to the right, the image of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, and to the left, the sculpture of Saint Joseph. The “Cuadro de Ánimas” (Purgatory) is an anonymous oil painting of enormous proportions from the 17th century.

The oldest piece is the wooden sculpture of Saint James “The Younger” or Santiago del Pinar (as it was originally located in the Ermita del Pinar chapel) from the end of the 15th century by an anonymous artist; a multi-coloured, golden ronde-bosse sculpture with different shades of pink on the face. He is dressed

as a soldier on a horse, brandishing a sword in his right hand and with a defeated Moor at his feet. The sculpture's primitivism can be seen particularly in the elbow of one of the arms, which appears to have been sculpted in reverse, with the sculptor respecting the formation of the tree branch on which they were working. It measures approximately 70cm and was restored in 2004 by the Restoration Workshop of the Council of Gran Canaria.

The church falls under the patronage of the patron Saint Bartholomew, and its history dates back to the time of the Spanish conquest, when Captain Hernández Cabrón, on 24 August 1479 (Saint Bartholomew's Day), after having suffered a major defeat at the hands of the aborigines in this mountainous region, he promised the Saint that he would build a church for him in this place if he intervened in his favour when he went to conquer this land. The earliest building was built at the end of the 15th century using soil and mud.



BIRTHPLACE OF PANCHO GUERRA

Francisco Guerra Navarro, a writer and journalist, was born in the Town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana on 11 June 1909. He was known for creating the character “Pepe Monagas”, a model of classic Canary Island humour.

His father, Miguel Guerra Marrero, born in Tejeda and a teacher by profession, moved to Tunte and married Carmen Navarro. Miguel was a severe man of strict education and with conservative ideas, a character which contrasted with that of his son Pancho and his way of understanding life, his bohemian nature and his desire for freedom, which caused a fair amount of upset. He spent his childhood and early youth at home, where he learned to read and write with his father.

In 1923, his father was transferred to teach in the San José district in Las Palmas, and the family moved to the Vegueta area. In the capital, he began to study for his baccalaureate, and after nine years of study he completed it in 1932, as he had very little interest in school or further education. His school record was filled with standard passes. What interested Pancho was observing what happened in the street, the world of culture, intellectuality and politics. The proximity of his family home (on Calle López Botas) to the Luján Pérez School meant that he soon came into contact with the young artists who congregated there.

In 1929, the first exhibition by the students at the school took place, and he adopted the family name of Pancho Guerra as his pen name for his literary work. In 1930, he became involved in editing the *Diario de Las Palmas* newspaper.

During the Civil War he went to the front line, and upon returning he tried to continue with the law studies that he began before the war, but he once again became involved with the *Diario de Las Palmas*, leaving them ultimately unfinished.

In 1947 he left the island and set up residence in Madrid, where he worked as an editor and literary collaborator for the newspaper *Informaciones*. For his work as a chronicler for the *Audiencia Madrileña*, he received the National Manuel Tercero Prize. He stayed in the Spanish capital for 14 years until he died of a heart attack on 3 August 1961, as he was about to marry the second love of his life, Luisa Salvador. He always lived alone in humble accommodation, with the small salary that he earned at the newspaper and for the work he did in the evenings at a mutual benefit society.



CANARIAN HOUSE

Source documents from the 16th century mention the existence of aboriginal houses in the area, as Tunte, Taidia and Montaña de los Huesos were the three aboriginal settlements that inhabited the foothills of the mountain in San Bartolomé de Tirajana. Tunte was the largest of these, with over a hundred inhabited caves, barns, a graveyard and dwellings above ground.

The ancient Canarians had a significant level of population density and there was some emerging urban development in all of the territory across the island where there were large settlements of houses and caves. Research clarified that the building techniques were quite refined, with set walls made from stone, side rooms and indoor paintings. The houses had a quadrangular layout surrounded by a circular wall, with one or two side compartments on the inside, which probably served as a place to rest, open towards the south via a small access corridor. The ceilings were covered in foliage, animal skins and mats. The walls were made of basalt stones, sometimes even perfectly shaped blocks of tuff stone, and they were held together by a mud mortar and stone wedges.

Source documents from the 16th century mention the existence of aboriginal houses in the town of Tunte. The English traveller Olivia Stone published a book in 1887 called “Tenerife and its six satellites”, which gave a description of this house.

The “Casa Canaria” of Tunte, in Montañeta, has a cruciform layout and a circular exterior, with clear pre-Hispanic influences. The only significant difference compared with the original dwellings

is in the construction of the roof. The current building has a gable roof with its original covering of mud and straw, with tiles being added at a later date. The construction of the gable roof probably comes from the Christian influence of the Spanish conquerors. It can be seen that the circular layout of this “Casa Canaria”, made from stone, with no mortar, has been kept in perfect condition. Its interior has a cruciform shape that is 7.50m long by 5.50m wide, with a height of 1.80m. The inside is currently not open to visitors as it is a private property.



“POLVO” VIEWING POINT

The natural and climatic diversity of this municipality can be appreciated from several natural viewing points such as this one, located in the perfect place for getting to grips with the geography, history and people of the area, and enjoying the beauty of the shapes and colours that the island’s landscape has to offer, which change with the turning seasons or the hours of the day. The importance of these viewing points is determined by the scope of the views they offer, the panoramic breadth and angle, accessibility, altitude above sea level and aesthetic value of the landscape.



“EL CALVARIO” CEMETERY

The name of this place reflects the difficult access route than runs between the dead, from the different districts to Tunte cemetery – a real Calvary!

The funeral procession’s access to the town depends on where the deceased person came from: some went to the north and others to the south.

Along both access routes there was a small landing and a cross where the coffin was placed, commonly known as the “resting place of the dead”. This was where people waited for the arrival of the priest, five or ten minutes before the burial, bringing with him elements of the Christian rite: the cross, candles, incense and water. The priest received the funeral procession and led it towards the church, where they then moved on to the prayers and finally onto the cemetery for the burial. Although the “El Calvario” cemetery has been preserved, this practice has changed with the construction of the Fataga and Pedraza cemeteries, as well as the introduction of funeral transport.

ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM “CASA LOS YÁNEZ”

This detached house is an example of domestic rural architecture on the Canary Islands in the 19th century. These types of houses are often located near the church and the main square of the town, and they indicate the power of their owners. This family settled in the town of Tunte, having come from the Town of Teror in around 1867, and this marked a historical moment for the town.

The first to arrive was José Yánez, a priest for the Parish of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, who then summoned his brother, Antonio Yánez. The brothers arrived in Tunte with knowledge and a level of culture that few people had in the town, where illiteracy prevailed, meaning they soon had control of the Town hall and the parish, uniting civil and religious authorities. Antonio Yánez assumed all political power and the financial property of a local chief, facilitated by his marriage to a Tirajanán woman with links



to high levels of society, and of course as the secretary of the town hall.

The first place of residence for this family was the original Town hall, and when it was sole, they moved to the estate which is now Ethnographic Museum of Casa Yánez, a building with two floors, facing onto three streets and with a central patio around which the rest of the rooms are arranged, with prominent features being the high, wooden coffered ceilings, as well as the floor.

As well as the rooms in the urban stately home, there were barns, outbuildings, stables, storage areas, gardens and patios. It is worth highlighting the large living room in the upper part of the house, a clear example and representation of the family's wealth and power. Decorated with luxury furniture and family portraits, the house has some unique rooms such as the doctor's office (the last owner of the house) and the "oil and vinegar" shop that was very common in its time, which not only fulfilled the purpose of selling foodstuffs and their own haberdashery products, but also served as a meeting place for men who came to drink rum "pizco" and to "play the game".

BUST OF PANCHO GUERRA

Francisco Guerra is one of the literary creators who best reflected our idiosyncrasies as Canarian people. The literary richness of "The tales of Pepe Monagas" goes well beyond simple storytelling,



as it doesn't just tell the story of the lively, humorous adventures of a real grass roots character, but it also exudes and reflects the soul of a society, from the most modest parts to the upper levels. His stories describe the local environment, customs and practices.

He has been classified as a writer of the *Costumbrismo* style. However, his contribution to the lexicon of Gran Canaria was huge. Pancho Guerra went well beyond the simple meaning of vocabulary and revealed an enormous richness in every single word, filling them with substance. In his dramatic work "*Tres Lunas Rojas*" ("*Three Red Moons*", a little known work) presents the social structure in the depths of the Canary Islands. He also created an unpublished theatrical adaptation of the novel "*Nada*" ("*Nothing*") by Carmen Laforet, which was considered by some to be better than the novel itself.

Some of his other works include: "*Famous tales of Pepe Monagas*", "*Memoirs of Pepe Monagas*". The following were published posthumously: "*Contribution to the popular lexicon of Gran Canaria*" (A to CH written

by the author, and completed by some of his friends thanks to his notes), "*Seven starters of Pepe Monagas*", and they were grouped into five volumes: "*The famous tales of Pepe Monagas*", "*44 stories*", "*23 stories*", "*31 stories*" and "*32 stories*".

ÍDOLO DE TIRAJANA

This figure, named "Ídolo de Tirajana" is the reproduction of a small terracotta piece that is allegedly identified as a deity or idol, although according to documents from the Museo Canario, it could also be just a simple amulet, votive offering or a figure of past heroes.



Also known as the “Ídolo de Verneau” after the anthropologist who found it in one of the archaeological sites in the Caldera de Tirajana, it is a female *ronde-bosse* figure made from clay and in a seated position. It is an anthropomorphic idol in which prominent features are the enhanced feminine attributes and a shapeless head, in which a human figure can be recognised with a long neck and some kind of hair falling over her shoulders.

The original piece was moved to Paris in Verneau's time for an exhibition of idols in a French museum, but after the exhibition the original piece disappeared and the only reference to it that exists is a wooden reproduction.

“LA ORILLA” VIEWING POINT

From this viewing point you can appreciate the magnitude of the Caldera de Tirajana and the spectacular nature of this rugged landscape, a highlight of which is the pale mass of Risco Blanco. The panoramic view is impressive, with enormous rocky ledges, revealing a large natural amphitheatre which culminates in the mountaintop area of the island. On the inside of the irregular relief of the landscape are a few rural constructions dotted around, which become more concentrated in the towns of San Bartolomé (Tunte) and Santa Lucía de Tirajana. Large palm groves and rich, diverse areas of vegetation give the place a particular charm, making people want to leave the road and start exploring on foot.

TRIBUTE TO THE TIRAJANAN WOMAN SCULPTURE

This sculpture by Luis Alemán Montull presents, in his own words, a compendium of all the artistic styles that strongly depict human vitality and strength. The primitivism, accentuated by the use of stone and wood, emulates the primitive populations who made their hunting tools with these materials and adapted to their environment.



His admiration for the human body and the strength of what permeates from his sculptures evokes a feeling of the purest Renaissance of the 15th century, practically plunging us into the Mannerism of Michaelangelo. The twisting and pain of some of his characters evokes the more obscure Baroque works and the excessive ornamentation and distortion of the figures transports us to African and pre-Columbian cultures. It was first exhibited in the Salon Puteaux de Paris in 1960. In 2003, Luis Montull exhibited at the Agora Gallery in New York.

Luis Montull is an artist with a big personality and great respect for humanity. He is a man who is full of life and who doesn't hide his primitive instincts, but instead channels them into expression, demonstrating a profound respect for what he believes to be the basis and pillar of human creation: the woman. He feels a deep admiration for maternity, for the act of creating life.

This sculpture is entitled: "Tribute to the Tirajanan Woman", and it depicts a woman from the area,

dressed with a typical scarf around her head, in a crouching position and daydreaming. It is made of stone from Tindaya Mountain (Fuerteventura), is 3.5m tall and dates back to 1997. The work is a tribute to the Tirajanan woman as a transmitter of cultural tradition to future generations.



CALLEJÓN PRINCESA GUAYARMINA

This cobbled street with an authentic Canarian feel is one of the most beautiful streets in the town, and walking through it you feel its silent testimony to the history of the Town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana.

You can sneak a peek through one of the houses, filled with plants, open a door, try and discover the secrets that hide between its walls, with hundreds of stories kept in its worn-down stone...

“EL ROSAL” WASH BASINS AND WATER SOURCE

The supply of water to the various settlements created hydraulic architecture within the municipality, in which the public water sources were a particular feature that local people went to with their pails and brass pots, and which acted as a meeting point for locals that were typical of the rural areas.

The “El Rosal” water source was built on a canal which channelled water towards the tank and distribution reservoir situated opposite, and in which an enclosure is made with the addition of three pipes that have heads in the design of a dog, through which

the water flows. Its name comes from the rose bush located close to the tank.

It is also common to find wash basins close to these sources or canals, which were mandatory meeting places for women to come to wash their laundry. Initially, the wash basins were simple flagstones on the edge of the ravines or natural bodies of water where women washed clothes, but over time they became constructions located by tanks and canals. The “Lavadores del Rosal” were opened on 9 April 1955 and are made up of 24 basins measuring 62 m².

The long, complex process of traditional laundry washing was done in “batches” depending on the colour and type of clothes, how dirty they were and the care taken by the washerwomen. The clothes were soaked, lathered with soap and rinsed, then left to stand before repeating the process once or twice more; items were then laid out on the floor on stones and bushes and continuously sprinkled with water to ensure they did not dry before stains were removed. Finally, all the items were wrung out and placed in a bathroom to dry, hanging them up on lines, either outside the wash basin area or in people’s homes.

TILE FURNACE

The manufacturing of tiles and bricks is mostly on the windward area of the island, particularly in the high-up part of the municipality of Arucas and in the mid-altitude levels of Moya and Guía, however, tile and brick furnaces appear throughout various parts of the island. On ethnographic maps of the municipality, around 39 factories have been recorded, although the actual number of them was higher than this.

In every municipality, the main activity has always been agriculture and it is fairly common to find several works of handmade agricultural engineering such as tile furnaces. In Tunte, three furnaces have been preserved: two of them close to the town and one other by the district of El Sequero.

This is located by the picnic area of El Algarrobero, at the city’s exit towards the mountain. It can be found alongside the path

close to a clay area called a “terrera”, making this type of manufacturing and transport easier. Externally, it has a truncated cone shape made from dead stone and mud, with an open top and no roof, with an opening that goes into the upper part at the back, and another entrance into the lower part at the front. Its interior is coated in a clay mud and contains the barrel and the fireplace. Around the furnace there is a space where the mud is churned and mixed, and the tile is aired.



The main product baked in these furnaces was Arabic tiles, although they sometimes produced mud bricks that were used in partition walls. In the 1950s, they began to export products including both French tiles and Arabic tiles, which were produced on an industrial scale in the east of Spain. The spreading of flat, concrete floor slabs ended with this domestic industry.

CEMETERY

he cemetery of Tunte is located tucked away in the area known as La Laguna, the high-up part of the town, a privileged area due to its views. The building has a façade from the 19th century, which follows the artistic trend of this period known as Eclecticism. A Neogothic style can be seen clearly in the pointed arches that shape the windows and the main door. The finial at the top and the plant decorations transport us to the style of large European cathedrals.

It occupies a rectangular surface area with two plots of land on different levels designed for burials, one mortuary room, an ossuary and a chapel which makes up the central axis of the entire premises. A highlight is the stonework on the door and the wall that surrounds it. The central section is topped off by a bronze cast iron sculpture of a herald angel, imported from Paris, which is 2.23m tall, and legend has it that in major storms and above all on dark nights, you can often hear mysterious musical sounds coming from its trumpet.

The cemetery, which belonged to the church, was seized by the government of the II Republic in January 1932, and due to its unique, old nature, it was declared an Asset of Cultural Interest in the Monument category by the Government of the Canary Islands on 22 November 1996.



CASA CANARIA DE LAS LAGUNAS

Throughout the 20th century, this farmstead belonging to the Yáñez family was the centre of production for the lands surrounding it, and it was a home to the families who worked on the “Los Hoyos de la Laguna” estate. In the 80s it was acquired by the Town Hall of the Town of Bartolomé de Tirajana to assign it agricultural activities of the region.

Renovated in 1993, it is constructed in a traditional Canarian style with a gable roof and a bread oven. Until the year 2004, it was



used for recovering the area's wine production activities, which had to transfer to the "Las Tirajanas Winery" due to the large volume of harvests.

These establishments are currently assigned to the Association of Olive Growers in the Caldera de Tirajana Region to recover the olive groves.

"LAS TIRAJANAS" WINERY

Several historical references describe significant economic activity focussed on cultivation and wine production in the 16th century, and "the Cathedral Council of the Canary Islands, focused on the good production of existing wines in Tirajana, paid particular attention to ensure that its farmers delivered a tenth of its harvest every year to the church". In 1483, Bishop Juan de Frías established a regulation with a leasing system for tithing, the process for which consisted of taking the rent at a public auction and assigning its collection to the highest bidder.

The significance of this product in the region is based on the existence of several wine presses and pitchers used for storing and selling wine. Many of these wine presses are truly spectacular, unearthed as sculptures on large stones used for emptying. However, it was from the 17th century onwards that vine growing played a particularly important role in the region's agricultural economy, and prospects for exporting emerged once the sugar cane boom had passed.

In 1990, work began in Fataga to recover the tradition of wine production in the Tirajanas. In its early days, the Las Tirajanas Winery was equipped with various stainless steel vats that held a thousand litres, as well as a press. The farmers carried out a broad

restructuring of their land over several years, planting almost 40 varieties of different grapes, all under the original name, to test their adaptation. Ultimately, they opted for around ten varieties: The white wines included Verjadiego, Verdello, Malvasía, Listán, Moscatel and Pedro Ximénez, and the reds included Listán, Castellana, Tintilla and Negramoll.

The growth in production allowed them to move to new facilities with capacity to store 8,736 hectares. This winery also has a tasting and sampling area in which you can also try a wide variety of natural, artisan products from the area.

The winery rewards farmers producing from their own vineyards and who are members of the Agricultural Transformation Society and markets its wines under the brand of LAS TIRAJANAS, White, Red, Rosé and Sweet Malvasía, as well as carbonic macerated red. Since the very beginning, quality, regulation and personality have been the three premises which have achieved the character, fineness, complexity and harmonious nature of its wines, for which they have received various awards in recent years.

IN THE OUTSKIRTS

ERMITA DEL PINAR CHAPEL RUINS

These ruins are located in the “Pinar de Santiago”, on the road which leads to the district of Cercados de Araña and Presa de Chira. The remains of the chapel are limited to a square surface area with stone in the lower layers and cement on the surface. The original construction was made of stone and mud with a door and a ceiling made from wood and tiles. The last chapel remained standing until the mid-20th century and it had a rectangular layout with a door to the north west.

There is a story which says that some Galician sailors were taken by surprise by a sudden storm to the south of Gran Canaria, and they promised Saint James (Santiago) that they would build a shrine to him if they survived; the storm instantly stopped and they saw the mountaintops of Tirajana. When they landed on the coast of Arguineguín with the hillsides in sight, they walked up to the mountaintop and built a chapel on what is known as “Lomito de Santiago”.

This image of Saint James is now worshipped in the Parish of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, as he is the co-patron saint of the church. It was moved in 1850 when Bishop Codina sent the priest to guard the chapel, alluding to the bad behaviour of the worshippers (references were made to bacchanals, pagan festivals and entering on animals), although it is believed that the real motive for this was economic, as the apostle's coffer had always been very full, and monitoring was difficult in the chapel and it was burgled very often.



Alongside the chapel, until well into the 19th century, there was a beautiful example of a Canary Island Pine Tree, the shadow of which provided shade for pilgrims on hot days. Even though there are very few remains of the chapel, it is worth a visit as it is located in the middle of a recreational area surrounded by pine trees. The panoramic views are splendid.

ARTEARA NECROPOLIS

On the right-hand edge of the Fataga ravine, in the vicinity of the Arteara district, there is a major aboriginal cemetery (dating back to the 4th century B.C.) in which over 800 tumuli burials have been identified. Built from dry stone, it comprises a cist or box made from flagstones into which the body was deposited, and once covered, it was buried beneath piles of stones. The skeletal remains that were uncovered did not make it possible to determine what the funeral rites were, but it was possible to tell from the woven palm leaves and reeds that were used as the shroud. The Mediterranean and Cro-Magnon typology of the individuals also assisted with this, along with their sturdiness and remarkable stature. The importance of this archaeological site justified the creation of a Centre of Understanding, where the most significant cultural remains of ancient Canarians are collected.



PLACES OF NATURAL INTEREST



LA CALDERA DE TIRAJANA

“La Caldera de Tirajana” is a large eroded hollow of around 35 km². The hollow was caused by and evolved due to the occurrence of several landslides. Throughout the Quaternary period, over approximately two million years, what was originally a river bed turned into a deep ravine. The geological material present in the Caldera cover the three magmatic cycles of Gran Canaria. The oldest formations are from the Miocene epoch at 9.5 to 14.5 million years old. The highest walls of rock that surround it to the north and west show geological formations from the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs at 4.6 to 0.15 million years old. In the walls of this huge cauldron are hidden some of the rarest botanic species found in the Red Book of Canary Island Flora (Libro Rojo de la Flora Canaria), as well as some endangered species.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF THE ROSIANA RAVINE AND RISCO BLANCO

A highlight of the Rosiana site is the paintings on the inside of some of the caves. It presents a specific type of habitat belonging to the ancient Canarians, characterised by the artificial construction of complex caves in the rock. There are over a hundred caves connected by tunnels, creating groups of two, three and four; their typology is varied: bedrooms, silos, burial sites or places of worship. They vary in size from 5 to 15 m² by 2m tall, and are



generally cubic in shape. This site can be reached via a pathway that comes out at Rosiana bridge.

Risco Blanco is formed by an ancient structure in the form of a phonolite tip that is 3.7 million years old; it is an off-white colour and has a very unique, dramatic beauty. The Canarian aborigines gave this rock face the name “Umiaga”, and within it there was a temple in the form of a well-fortified castle where they worshipped their gods, but it was destroyed and burned down by the Spanish Conquistadors.

PILANCONES NATURAL PARK

This park is located between the Caldera de Tirajana and the Chira basin, occupying the upper part of the Ayagaures ravine and the Pinar de Pilancones. This park was the first initiative taken to create a protected space on the island in 1973, following a proposal presented to the Institute for the Conservation of Nature. The oldest geological material on the island has acted as a framework within which erosion has etched out a landscape of ravines and sharp ridges. The largest plant covering is the pine forest, which shelters some of the island’s most valuable and endangered bird life. It covers around 5,794 hectares and has been declared as a “Special Protection Area for Birds” by the European Union, as well as an “Ecologically Sensitive Area” by the Canarian Parliament.

THE AMURGA MOUNTAINS

An enormous rock of great natural value located between the Tirajana and Fataga ravines, with very rich and varied plant life. Within this mountain chain, which descends like a ramp down to the coast, there is a series of archaeological sites of significant importance.



PROTECTED LANDSCAPE OF FATAGA

It extends along the length of the ravine with the same name, through dense palm groves, archaeological sites of great importance, and picturesque hamlets such as Fataga and Arteara. This landscape includes the ravine (open due to erosion) which provides an outlet for the water that flows towards Maspalomas. Although the existing stone quarries create a large impact on their southern border, as they rise up inwards, it is possible to observe one of the most breathtaking landscapes on the island. The tabaiba and cardon plants in the lowlands give way to beautiful palm groves, with a few pine trees and Gran Canaria dragon trees hanging from the vertical walls, whilst all the way along the river, the water fosters a dense area of sugar cane plants. There are also various sites of significant archaeological and ethnographic value that are worth highlighting.





SERVICES

CASAS CONSISTORIALES

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CLINIC

c/ San Sebastián, s/n
35290 San Bartolomé de Tirajana
Tel. 928 123 019

LOCAL POLICE

Plaza de Santiago, 1
35290 San Bartolomé de Tirajana
Tel. 928 127 005

PHARMACY

c/ Santiago Cazorla, 23
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Tel. 928 127 388
Abierta de 9 a 14 horas y de 17 a 20 horas
Sábados de 9 a 13 horas.

POST OFFICE

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