

The Centre

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Ilustre Ayuntamiento de la Villa de
San Bartolomé de Tirajana
Concejalia de Turismo



238 km.



± 8 h.



Despite its small size, Gran Canaria offers visitors the opportunity to go on various excursions, where you can discover the great diversity of its landscapes and all of its contrasts. Within just an hour's drive, you can travel through a dry, volcanic area and find yourself in a huge forest of Canarian pine trees in the middle of a humid area with lush vegetation. While it is true that the island can be covered in one day, we recommend the following excursions to get to know it properly and enjoy it to the full.



The Centre

From Maspalomas, taking the southern motorway, we arrive at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and take the Tamaraceite road, which leads us to the town of Teror, where you will find the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pine, the patron saint of Gran Canaria. The main visual attraction is the yellow tower of the church, a building made from yellow quarried stone and designed with Manueline influence, built in 1708, and which is the only part that remains of the second original structure which was destroyed by a fire.

The town has preserved its traditional layout with hardly any changes, which is why it was declared a place of Artistic Heritage in 1979. Next to the basilica is the house museum of Patronos de la Virgen, a magnificent example of the architecture of property owned by the noble families Manrique de Lara and Bravo de Lagona, where various objects are on display along with very old memories of the various families that entered the house, including a coach which was used by King Alfonso XIII during his visit to the island. We recommend visiting the town centre with its beautiful manor houses with wonderful balconies and stately homes. We also recommend a visit to the Cistercian Monastery, where the cloistered nuns sell handmade sweet treats through a turnstile.

On the way to Cruz de Tejeda, you can enjoy a magnificent panoramic view from the Balcón de Zamora before arriving at Valleseco. Leaving the town of Valleseco behind, we arrive at Cruz de Tejeda in the centre of the island, at an altitude of 1,300m. The cross carved from green stone marks the centre of the network of ancient royal roads on the island. A few metres away is the Parador Nacional de Tejeda, a recently refurbished complex of restaurants and stalls selling local products, including marzipan and Bienmesabe cakes. The landscape is particularly spectacular, with the Nublo (1,700m), Fraile and Bentayga rocks. If you redirect your journey to the “Pico de las Nieves”, also known as “El Pozo de las Nieves”, you can see the Caldera de Tirajana and the southern beaches, as well as the Nublo Rock and the Teide. If you have time, we suggest visiting the Ermita de la Cueva chapel, carved into the rock, in the neighbouring town of Artenara.

From the Cruz de Tejeda, we go back towards Las Palmas, stopping in San Mateo, one of the main agricultural and livestock farming centres on the island, which holds cattle shows and farmer’s markets every weekend. Typical houses which demonstrate the island’s architecture can be found dispersed around the whole area.

We arrive at Santa Brígida, with a marvellous landscape that covers the Bandama Natural Park, Monte Lentiscal, Atalaya and the Las Goteras Ravine; the entire municipality contains areas of huge geomorphological, botanical, archaeological and ethnographic interest. A legacy from the troglodyte past is the group of cave houses in La Atalaya, where there was a significant pottery industry.

Now close to the capital, we redirect ourselves towards the Bandama summit, 569m high, to observe the character of the volcano (1km in diameter and 200m deep) and the 100-year-old Bandama Golf Club.

The final point to visit before returning to Maspalomas is the Jardín Canario, 7km away from Las Palmas, in the Guinguada Ravine. Founded by the Swiss botanist Sventenius in 1952, it brings together a wide variety of plants and trees from Macaronesia, including over 50 species of trees that used to make up the Laurel forest.



Arucas



San Mateo



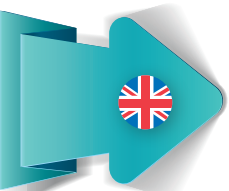
The Centre

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Tejeda





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Maspalomas - Ayacata Route



50 km.



± 5 h.



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Maspalomas - Ayacata Route

We take the GC-60 road which crosses the municipality from south to north, and which is the most significant route from the town of San Bartolomé de Tirajana. We will see the nature of the dry south, where the cardon and tabaiba plants are prevalent, through the ravine declared a Protected Landscape of Fataga, which is included in the network of Protected Natural Spaces of the Canary Islands due to its array of valuable natural and ethno-historical features.

The second section crosses the inside of the Caldera de Tirajana, an enormous crater with a circumference of more than 40km, carved out by erosion over millions of years and open towards the south east through the ravine with the same name, one of Gran Canaria's archaeological monuments and natural, historical sanctuaries.

We arrive at the Protected Landscape of Fataga nature reserve (4.2km) before travelling past the Mundo Aborigen leisure park (6.3 km) and arriving at the La Degollada de las Yeguas viewing point (7.5km). Enjoy one of the most beautiful panoramic views of this huge ravine from the sea right up to the top of the mountain.

A visit to the theme park all about the aboriginal world and the pre-Hispanic Arteara Necropolis are recommended for an insight into the life and death of the ancient Canarian people. The Arteara Necropolis, an aboriginal cemetery from the 4th century BC with over a thousand tumular burials, is one of the most significant archaeological sites on the island.

During the tour, you can see camels and camel riders, which today are for the entertainment of visitors, but in the time of our grandparents, they carried out agricultural work.

We then continue our trip with an aerial view of the Arteara necropolis and palm grove before arriving at the small hamlet of Fataga. Crops, orchards and traditional buildings surround this picturesque hamlet, which is well worth a stop. After passing the old water mill (an important piece of ethnographic heritage) and the beautiful palm grove, we then continue our ascent through the headwaters of the ravine and enter into the Caldera de Tirajana.

From the Vista de Fataga viewing point, we can see the Fataga and Tirajana basins. The road then flattens out into a landscape of pine and almond trees until reaching the administrative capital of the municipality: San Bartolomé, established in the pre-Hispanic settlement named Tunte. In its town centre, there is a mixture of pre-Hispanic architectural styles and traditional architecture with modern public buildings such as the town hall, and religious architecture such as the church of San Bartolomé (with a Neoclassical belfry), reconstructed towards the end of the 17th century. In this church, the equestrian image of "Santiago el Chico" is revered, which was made to be the centre of the Jacobean Pilgrimage on the island. This is where the house museum of Los Yánez is found.

The gastronomy of the island is offered here, with cheese, wine and artisan drinks that are typical of Tirajana, such as the popular "guindilla". You can visit the Bodega Las Tirajanas, the façade of the Cemetery and the country hotels: "Hacienda del Molino" and "Las Tirajanas".

The route follows the Ayacata road at the foot of high walls with some restaurants. The natural surroundings of the hamlet of Ayacata make it an ideal stop, and we then finish our excursion by returning to Maspalomas via the GC-60 through San Bartolomé de Tirajana and Fataga. (34.4km).

You can continue and ascend up the road GC-600 from the cross by the church of Ayacata at Pico de las Nieves and up to the Cruz de Tejada (4.7km). We then go into the Rural Park of the Nublo Rock, the longest of the protected nature reserves on the island, where valuable species of plants and wildlife are preserved. We also arrive at the start of the Nublo Rock trail, a highly recommended walk that takes approximately one hour.

From here, there are several options to continue towards the northern side of the island. One interesting option is to Artenara and returning via Tejada, or you can combine however many variations you can fit into the day or for as long as you feel like driving for.





Maspalomas - Ayacata Route

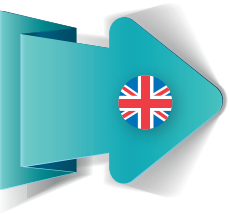
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Maspalomas

Ayacata



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The North



204 km.



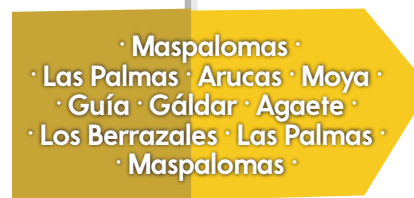
± 8 h.



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The North

Coming from the south of the island via the motorway GC-1, you will arrive at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The tourist route through the city begins in the Vegueta district. Around the Plaza Santa Ana, which dates back to the beginning of the 16th century, you can find the city's main historical buildings: The cathedral, the City Hall, the Casa Regente de la Audiencia and the Episcopal Palace. The construction of Santa Ana Cathedral began in around 1500 and went on until the 19th century, which is why late Gothic designs can be found on the inside and Neoclassical on the outside. In the Museo de Arte Sacro (Museum of Religious Art), you can view the area's artistic heritage, with the works including particular highlights such as Cristo (Christ) by Luján Pérez, which presides in the Sala Capitular room.

At the back of the Cathedral, alongside the Plaza del Pilar Nuevo, you will find the Casa-Museo de Colón, a magnificent example of stately home architecture, where reports state that the admiral stayed during his time on the island, and where various objects are on display relating to his journey through the islands and the history of the city and America. El Museo Canario, which is next to the Plaza del Espíritu Santo (the best example of Neoclassical architecture in the city), holds a complete collection of pre-Hispanic artefacts, as well as an extremely valuable library and newspaper archive. Other points of interest are: The Atlantic Centre of Modern Art and the Church of Santo Domingo.

We recommend taking a walk through the narrow streets of Vegueta to observe the beautiful civil and religious buildings. Other significant points of cultural interest include the Pueblo Canario and the Museo Néstor, Calle Mayor de Triana, Casa-Museo Pérez Galdós, the Literary Cabinet and Alameda de Colón, the Pérez Galdós Theatre, Ermita de San Telmo, as well as the Parish of San Francisco; and in the port area, there is the Castillo de la Luz and Santa Catalina Park.

Coming out of Las Palmas to the north for 17km, we arrive at the city of Arucas, located in the heart of a fertile banana-growing district. Its old town holds the status of "Asset of Historical and Artistic Interest", with a unique, contrasting beauty caused by the white limestone and the black "blue stone" from its quarries. Highlights include the Casa Gourié, the Casa de la Heredad and the Casa de la Marquesa de Arucas, but above all the Parish Church of San Juan Bautista (1909 - 1989) in a Neo-Gothic style, commonly known as the "Arucas Cathedral", an excellent example of quarried stone craftsmanship. There is also the Rum Museum inside the Arehucas distillery, founded in 1884 for the production of sugar and rum. Finally, don't forget to climb the mountain up to 400m to enjoy a spectacular panoramic view of the north of the island.

Following our route to Moya, the "Villa Verde", through the Laurel forest that used to cover the municipalities of Moya, Firgas, Arucas, Teror, Valleseco and Guía, and which only has a few remains left, is the most representative within the Special Nature Reserve of Los Tiles

de Moya, a reserve that forms part of the Doramas Rural Park. We recommend visiting the Casa Museo de Tomás Morales, a museum about the illustrious Gran Canarian poet, as well as the Church of Our Lady of Candelaria. Don't forget to try the typical cakes and pastries of the area.

We then leave Moya and head towards Guía, which is well known for its craftsmanship (especially the country's typical knives) and Flor de Guía cheese. In addition, its old town was declared a National Artistic Monument in 1982. It is also worth highlighting the Valerón Monastery, an archaeological site that was declared an Asset of Cultural Interest in 1978, a group of caverns formed by around three hundred caves carved into the rock, as well as engravings and areas of raised relief. At the top of the cliff there is also a tagoror, where the council of the ancient Canarians used to meet with their king.

In the town of Santa María de Guía, a walk around its streets will reveal some spectacular buildings, such as the parish church with a Neoclassical façade by the distinguished artist Luján Pérez, with many examples of his art on display inside. After enjoying an artistic visit, you must then try tasting Flor de Guía cheese in any of the town's local establishments; it is one of the best cheeses in the country, with a unique, smooth flavour which is made by curdling cow's and sheep's milk with the cardoon flower.

We then continue our excursion towards Gáldar, the "City of Guanartemes" (ancient aboriginal kings). In the square of the City Hall, you will find one of the most monumental religious buildings on the island: The Church of Santiago de los Caballeros, which dates back to 1778. Although it has retained some traces of Baroque, it is a Neoclassical building; the exterior shows off the local quarried stone of a coppery colour, or sandstone. Its numerous works of art, along with a green pillar where several Canarians were baptised after the Spanish conquest, and an organ with 4,776 pipes, are well worth a visit. In the courtyard of the City Hall's Neoclassical building, there is an impressive dragon tree that is over 300 years old. You should also visit the museum of Antonio Padrón and the La Guancha necropolis, but the most important place is the Painted Cave Museum and Archaeological Park, one of the most characteristic archaeological sites on the island of Gran Canaria. It is an artificial cave excavated from volcanic Tuff rock, with walls that appear to be decorated with geometrical patterns. No less spectacular is the settlement that was discovered around it, in which you can observe the remains of houses, inside which personal items belonging to their pre-Hispanic inhabitants have been preserved.

We finish our tour in the charming, picturesque town of Agaete, where it is an absolute must to walk up to Los Berrazales, one of the most beautiful, fertile valleys on the island, with plantations of lemons, oranges, avocados and small coffee plants at the foot of the Tamadaba pine grove. 2Km from the town is the Port of Las Nieves, where you can taste fresh fish and enjoy the majestic landscape of the Tamadaba cliffs, the famous Roque Partido (more commonly known as "El Dedo de Dios", or "God's finger") and the Chapel of Las Nieves. We recommend taking a brief stop in Huerto de las Flores, located in the town centre, where you can enjoy a moment's relaxation among Caribbean and tropical plants.



The North

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TAXI



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TOILET



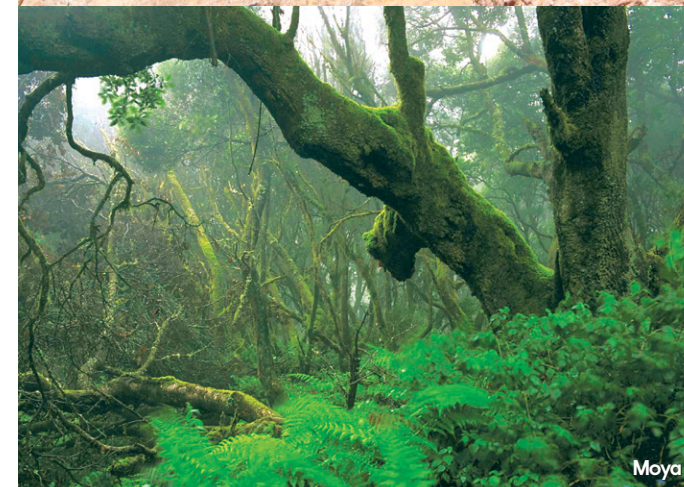
SUPERMARKET



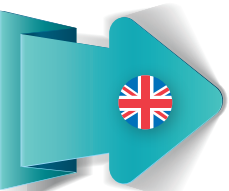
INFORMATION



Guía



Moya



The South

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118 km.



± 5 h.



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· Maspalomas ·
· Puerto Rico · Puerto Mogán ·
· Mogán · La Aldea de
San Nicolás · Maspalomas ·





The South

Leaving Maspalomas and going along the coast, you go through the small fishing village of Arguineguín, with a major fishing port and a pre-Hispanic settlement of over 400 houses in El Pajar. We then travel through Patalavaca to get to Puerto Rico, a pioneering centre for nautical sports with a large marina. Puerto Rico is the Mecca for aficionados of fishing sports, with various world records in deep-sea fishing. Its artificial beach, with a Blue Flag award, is connected to large gardens and various shopping centres.

We then get back on the road and head towards Puerto de Mogán – known as the Venice of the Atlantic –, a fishing village which combines traditional fishermen's houses with a modern port used for fishing and sports, as well as luxury hotels. It also has an artificial beach and offers several nautical activities, boat trips and diving trips.

We then continue to the village of Mogán, 12km away, ascending up a long ravine surrounded by plantations of avocados, mangos, oranges, papayas and other tropical fruit. In the village, you can visit the church, which dates back to 1814 and has a beautiful coffered ceiling made from carved wood, as well as a picture of San Antonio; you can also observe beautiful examples of traditional architecture, such as the curate's house with its typical balcony.

The road that takes us to La Aldea de San Nicolás goes through the headwaters of the Tasartico, Tasarte and Veneguera ravines, at the foot of the Inagua pine forest, with the largest cliffs on the island and only a few beaches, mostly pebbled. The La Aldea and Tocodomán ravines form a large valley of smooth slopes, which is mostly used for agricultural exploitation and is where a large part of the population lives. We finish this tour by visiting the chapel of San Nicolás, one of the oldest chapels in Gran Canaria; CactuAldea Park, a garden with two million cacti, and the beach about 5km away where “El Charco” is found, a lagoon in which people are only allowed to bathe on 11th September, a festival day, to fish for mullets – a long-standing aboriginal custom.

You can then return to Maspalomas via the same road that we came on (a shorter, quicker journey back), or you can continue up to Agaete and take the motorway from the north to the south. This second option is longer, but it goes through the ridges and huge cliffs of Andén Verde, which is extraordinarily beautiful.



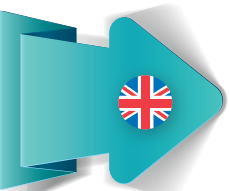


The South

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Round Trip of The Island



200 km.



± 10 h.

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Round Trip of
The Island





Round Trip of The Island

The round trip of the island (approx. 230Km) can be done in just one day. Leaving Maspalomas at 9:00, it is possible to be on the way back at 20:00 without having to rush too much. The trip can be done going northwards or southwards, but it is recommended to begin going south, because it is clearer in the morning.

Taking the coastal road towards Mogán, we can see the beaches of Arguineguín, Patalavaca, La Verga, Puerto Rico, Amadores, El Cura, Tauro and Taurito, as well as a few small bays before reaching Puerto de Mogán. Its marina is reminiscent of Venetian canals, and it is a must for stopping and having a drink a tone of its many terraces and restaurants.

We then leave the coast to delve into the fertile Valle de Mogán, which leads us to the town, and from here we travel through deep ravines and impressive cliffs cut up into peaks, towards the Village of San Nicolás de Tolentino. From here, we go on to enjoy the dizzying landscapes of Andén Verde and Tirma until we reach the municipality of Agaete, where we visit the Port of Las Nieves to try the seafood in typical local restaurants. From Agaete, we go back on the coastal road and travel through the towns of Gáldar (known for its aboriginal settlements) and Guía (famous for its Flor de Guía cheese). Across the Puente de Silva bridge with its spectacular views of the north coast, we then arrive at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, we recommend visiting the Playa de las Canteras, a beach which is sheltered by “la barra”, a striking volcanic reef. Taking the Avenida Marítima road, from which we can see the port, we then join the southern motorway going in the direction of Maspalomas.

If you still have time and you're not too tired, we recommend visiting the city of Telde, the capital of one of the two “Guanartematos” (kingdom) of pre-Hispanic Gran Canaria. We recommend visiting the districts of San Juan, San Gregorio and San Francisco.

In the district of San Juan, you will find the church of San Juan Bautista (Saint John the Baptist) which dates back to the 15th century, with its Gothic-Mudejar style façade and Flemish altarpiece which depicts the Nativity and dates back to the early 16th century. The striking image of Christ at the Main Altar, created by the Tarasco Indians of Michoacán (Mexico) using corn paste, as well as the Flemish altarpiece of the Main Altar, carved in gilded wood and rated as the most precious work of art of this style in the Canary

Islands. It also contains a triptych of the Virgin, brought in from Flanders, and the painting “The Apparition of the Virgin to Saint Bernard” from 1650, as well as sculptures by the Canarian artist Luján Pérez, including Saint Peter Martyr of Verona, Saint John the Evangelist, Christ in the main sacristy, Saint Joseph and Our Lady of Sorrows. Next to the church is the family home and museum of the brothers Fernando and Juan León and Castillo, the prime minister and ambassador in Paris and the second engineer and developer of Puerto de la Luz in Las Palmas.

A walk through the historic district of San Francisco, with little white houses and cobbled streets will delight visitors. In the monastery church of San Francisco, it is worth highlighting the small altarpiece and the coffered ceiling. In the upper part of the district, you will find the architectural remains of an old Franciscan convent from 1610. We finish our visit in the district of San Gregorio, which has become Telde's top shopping area. Built in 1778 over the old chapel, the church of San Gregorio Taumaturgo, a work by Nicolás Eduardo, contains several Neoclassical altarpieces, as well as the image of San Gregorio by Luján Pérez. The houses in this district show quarried stonework on walls and windows under archways; buildings of the merchant bourgeoisie who established their businesses at the street markets.

Just 4km from the centre of Telde is the Montaña de Cuatro Puertas, an old volcanic cone that is 300m above sea level, which houses a major archaeological site from the aboriginal world.



Agaete



Telde



Round Trip of The Island

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Agüimes



Puerto de Mogán