

TENERIFE

CANARY ISLANDS

Tenerife, located 180 miles from the coast of Africa is the largest of the Canary Islands at 790 sq. miles and a population of 700,000. It is also the most diverse in terms of climate, landscape, and places of interest.

Mt. Teide, the highest mountain in all of Spain, has attracted visitors from all parts of the world. At a height of 12,198 ft. the mountain provides for a variety of microclimates and landscapes throughout the island which can give the impression that in a few kilometers, you have traveled from one country to another.

To the North is the green and lush Orotava Valley, with a mild climate producing 300 endemic types of flora and fauna. In the hot, dry, arid South you will find beautiful golden sand beaches and resorts. Along the Anaga mountain range, the actual spine of the island, one can admire the laurelwood; a vegetable relic from prehistoric times which can be found only on Tenerife. Just a short drive from the beautiful sand beaches, you can climb through the mountain mist to the snow covered tops of Mt. Teide.

Santa Cruz de Tenerife, population 225,000, is the capital of Tenerife. Aside from being the administration and commercial center, its port facilities receive more than 8,000 vessels a year of all types and nationalities. The port city of Santa Cruz de Tenerife has a few tourist attractions, but visitors to the island are encouraged to explore the beautiful landscape of the interior and coastline.



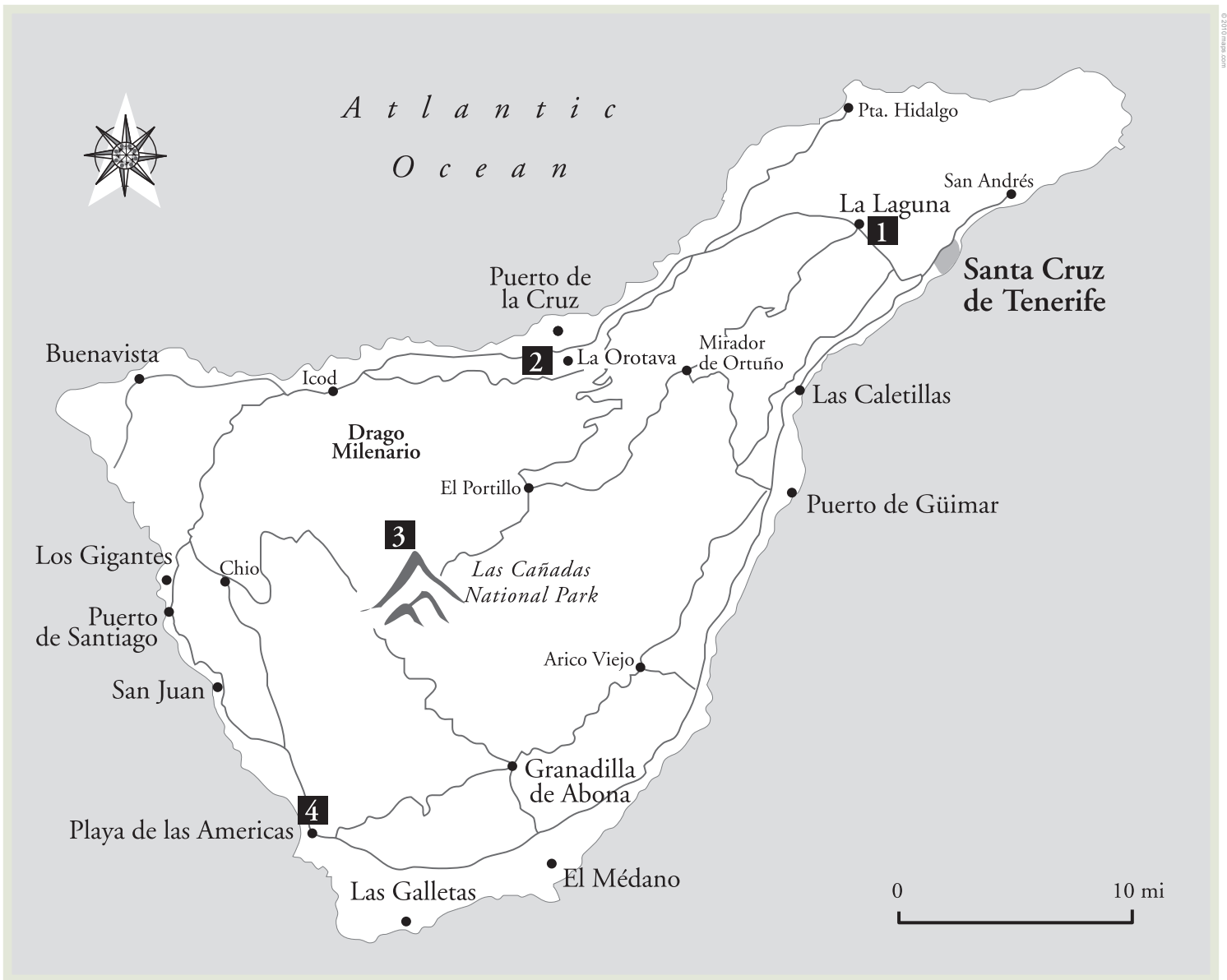
HISTORY

Since classical antiquity, the Canary Islands have been a land of legends. The existence of the Canaries can be traced back to famous Greek authors such as Homer, Plato, and Plutarch. These imaginary islands were known as the Fortunate Islands and remained only a myth and a mystery until after the middle ages.

It is believed the first inhabitants, the Guanches, arrived in the 1st or 2nd century B.C. They were a white skinned, blue eyed, blonde haired race related to North Africa's Cro-Magnon man. The Guanches were cave dwellers who like the ancient Egyptians, carefully embalmed their dead, presumably for a ceremonial passage to the next world.

The first European visitor was Lanzarotto Marcello, a Genoese sailor, who colonized the Island of Lanzarote in the early 14th century. The real European conquest began in 1402 and was led by Jean de Bethencourt, under the service of Henry III, King of Castile. By the end of the 15th century the Spanish had conquered all seven islands, but not without resistance from the Portuguese who also fought for ownership in the mid 1400's.

With the Canaries being the world's most westerly charted point, the islands became the last stopping point for the explorations of Christopher Columbus before venturing into the unknown. For the next several centuries, the islands became a bridge between the Old and New World.



In the 17th – 19th centuries, the Canaries experienced economic ups and downs due to their dependence on various crops. Sugar became the first staple crop but profits declined with the arrival of cheaper sugar from the West Indies. Grapes became the main crop producing a sweet white wine called Malmsey which retains worldwide recognition.

In the mid-19th century the Canaries were given free port status which lowered duties and trade barriers. Las Palmas and Tenerife became two of the world's busiest ports. With the introduction of the banana crop as a major export and the increasing growth of tourism, the Canaries continue to have a stable economic base.

SANTA CRUZ PLACES OF INTEREST

Plaza de España is the location of the tourist office as well as the local government headquarters (Cabildo Insular). You will also find the Museo Arqueologico with exhibits pertaining to the life and death rituals of the Guanche society.

Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes contains several Spanish and Flemish works.

Iglesia Matriz de la Concepción (Church of the Immaculate Conception), dating from the early 16th century, is the town's most important historical building.

Around the Island

1 La Laguna is the second largest town in Tenerife and most noted as the ecclesiastic and cultural capital of the island. Points of interest here include the Cathedral of La Laguna, Iglesia de Nuestra Senora de la Concepcion, and the Plaza del Adalento.

2 La Orotava is one of the better preserved old towns with state-ly mansions, historic churches and cobble stone streets. One can also get excellent views of the famous Orotava Valley.

3 Las Canadas National Park (Mt. Teide) is the highlight of Tenerife as well as one of the most visited parks in all of Spain. On your way to Mt. Teide, you will drive through the Las Canadas, a barren volcanic rock and mineral area created by millions of years of volcanic activity. A cable car will take you close to the top. Another 534 foot walk and you will be at the 12,195 ft (3,717 m) summit. On a clear day, you can see all other Canary Islands as well as the coast of North Africa.

4 Los Cristianos and Playa de Las Americas are two of the most famous resort areas with beautiful beaches and a variety of restaurants (mostly German or British).



SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Tenerife we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult azamaraclubcruises.com or contact the onboard Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, guests are advised to take with them only the items they need and to secure any valuables.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: is acceptable in some stores.

Tipping: All prices on a menu include tax and a service charge. It is customary however to leave a tip of 5% -10% if you are happy with the food and service. Taxi drivers generally are tipped approximately 10%.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

Paella is the Spanish national dish, a combination of seafood, chicken, and vegetable mixed together in a saffron-flavored rice. Tapas is another cuisine unique to this culture. Tapa is a small portion of food usually served in a bar to encourage you to keep drinking.

The Canaries are famous for Malmsey wine made from the volcanic soil. These wines tend to be very sweet. Sangria is also a popular drink throughout Spain. Bottled water is recommended.

SHOPPING

Shopping hours are generally from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, and 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm. In 1852 the Canary Islands were declared a duty-free zone in order to stimulate trade and growth. The Canaries remain duty free to this day and goods are imported without restrictions from all over the world. With a lower luxury tax, you may find some bargains but not as many as one would expect. The items with a slightly lower luxury tax are similar to what one would find in a duty free shop at the airport – cameras, watches, perfume, jewelry, leather goods, spirits and tobacco.

The most celebrated local handicraft item is embroidery. You will find excellent and detailed needlework on bedspread, towels, napkins and tablecloths.

The main shopping area is located in Plaza de la Candelaria, C. Castillo and C. San Jose.

US dollars are accepted in some stores. All major stores accept credit cards.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The unit of currency in this port of call is the euro. There are 8 euro coins denominated in 2 and 1 euros, along with 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 cent pieces. Every euro coin carries a common European face. On the obverse, each Member State decorates the coins with their own motifs. No matter which motif is on the coins they can be used anywhere inside the Member States. There are 7 euro notes. In different colors and sizes, they are denominated in 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, and 5 euros. The notes are uniform throughout the euro area; unlike coins, they have no national side. All euro notes are legal tender in all countries of the euro area. Most stores accept major credit cards.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES

There is a post office located in Plaza de los Patos.

Phones are available throughout the town. Coins or a calling card are required for local phones. Calls using a personal calling card may be dialed using the following access numbers:

AT&T: 1.800.55.0000

MCI: 1.800.55.1001

TRANSPORTATION

Taxis are available at the port. It is advisable to negotiate a fare before departing.

There is a local bus system, but it is not designed for tourists. There are infrequent timetables to locations outside the city.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The Tourist Information Office is located in Santa Cruz in Plaza de España.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

- Good Morning • Buenos Dias
- Good Afternoon • Buenas Tardes
- Good Day • Buen Dia
- How Much • Cuanto Es
- You're Welcome • De Nada
- Thank You • Gracias
