

WELCOME TO CANARY ISLANDS



These volcanic islands off the coast of north-west Africa are a Spanish archipelago situated in the North Atlantic Ocean. There are seven main islands, one minor island and several small islets and they form the autonomous community of the Canary Islands, where they are self governing. The status of capital city is shared by the two cities of Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.



The Canary Islands are an ideal year round destination due to their location as they lie 28° north of the equator in a sub-tropical climate with an average annual temperature of 22°C. These beautiful islands have not been named the 'fortunate isles' for nothing. The Canary Islands houses four national parks, 141 natural protected spaces and four biosphere reserves. There are a total of 1,386 native species and 540 endemic species.

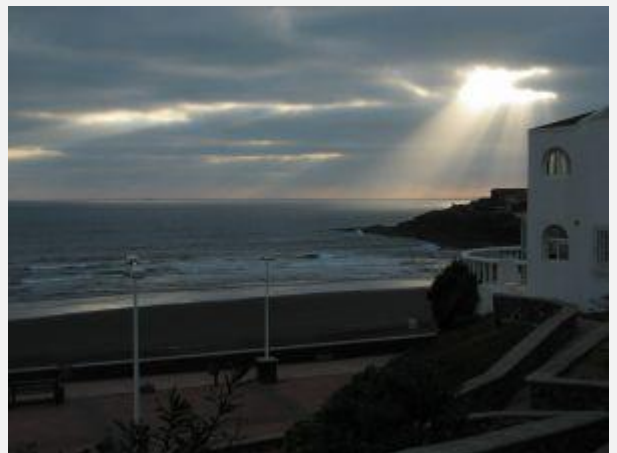
Welcome to Tenerife

Tenerife is known as the island of contrasts and has so much more to offer than the renowned nightlife and beaches so why not get out and explore and discover why. There is something here to suit all tastes, from the snow capped peaks of the volcano Mount Teide, to the picturesque cliffs of Los Gigantes, to the charming old town of Puerto De La Cruz, to the bustling shoppers paradise of the capital Santa Cruz, to the hidden beaches, from the quaint villages where time seems to have stood still, to the cosmopolitan South.



Welcome to Gran Canaria

Gran Canaria is the third largest island which boasts 236 km of coast with sandy beaches, coves, impressive cliffs, hidden corners, magnificent mountains, stunning craters and amazing ravines with their lush, sub-tropical vegetation and natural reserves are some of the many natural delights, which mark Gran Canarias personality, 'so very diversified and unique'.



Canarian Culture

The main religion of the Canarian people is Catholicism and the numerous 'fiestas' which take place all over the islands, all through the year have their roots in religion and old traditions. These fiestas usually include a procession, singers and dancers followed by much merry making, so although you might not understand the purpose of the fiesta, they are always a lot of fun! Witnessing the participants in traditional dress playing traditional instruments and songs, takes you back to a time when everything seemed much less complicated. The main fiesta, of course, is Carnival, which takes place every year in February or March. The second largest Carnival after Rio de Janeiro is actually held in Tenerifes' capital of Santa Cruz. Get your costume ready and wear comfortable shoes for an unforgettable week of celebration. Definitely a must!



Ground Handling Agent and Customer Services

We are represented in the Canary Islands and Cuba, by Viajes Poseidon, an established and well respected agency, founded in 1991. The groups head office is in Gran Canaria, with other offices operating in Tenerife, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Costa del Sol and Cuba. Viajes Poseidon is accustomed to using their extensive experience, commercial expertise and local knowledge to deliver a high level of customer service. Should you need assistance during your holiday, or wish to take part in one of the many excursions offered in resort, please call them using the number found on your accommodation voucher. One of their many English speaking staff, will be happy to assist you.

Handling Agent Information - Emergency Phones

Tenerife - 0034 669 298 052

Gran Canaria - 0034 649 495 020

Money

The Canary Islands are in the 'Euro Zone' where €1 = 100 centimos. The notes are clearly marked with their value, but both the €5 & the €20 are blue, so be vigilant when paying with these, so you receive the correct change

Changing your sterling cash and travellers cheques is possible at most hotel receptions, and you can also go to banks, which are open until 2pm Monday to Friday, and closed on Saturdays and Sundays. There are also many local money exchange offices which are generally open for longer hours, give a better exchange rate and do not charge commission. Credit cards and Maestro cards are widely accepted and you will be asked for photograph ID when paying. American Express is not so popular. ATMs are located everywhere for your convenience.



Main resorts in Tenerife

Los Cristianos was originally a small fishing village and much of the old town still retains a Canarian feel. The crescent shaped bay has a beach over 400 metres long with a wide variety of water sports on offer. Los Cristianos has now developed into a modern, thriving resort with plentiful shops, cafes and restaurants, but still retains its fishing village origins. A regular market is held every Sunday 10am-3pm.



Playa de las Americas is a cosmopolitan, modern, very built up town, the largest resort in the south. It is renowned for its 'Veronicas' area, a long stretch of nightclubs and bars open until the early hours. At the far end of this resort is the mile long sandy beach of Playa Fañabe with many shops and restaurants lining the front. There is also a regular market held near here every Thursday and Saturday 10am-3pm.

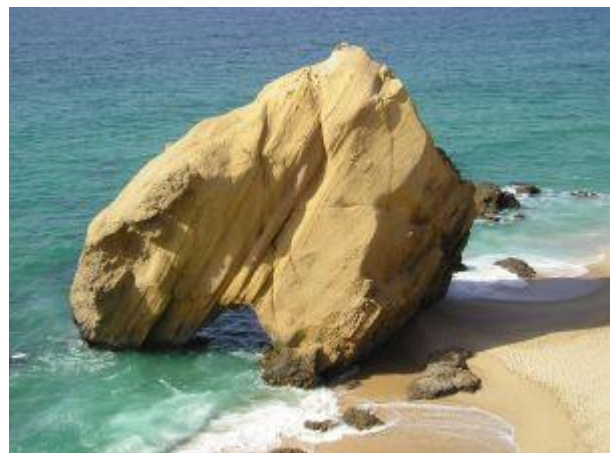


Los Gigantes on the western coast literally means 'The Giants'. The name is derived from the

spectacular cliffs, which rise 1650 feet from the sea to embrace the village. Apart from its' natural beauty, Los Gigantes has a beach, bars and restaurants and a superb modern marina which forms the focal point of the whole village. It also boasts its' own pretty lido area, with freshwater pools.



Puerto de la Cruz was the first major tourist resort on the island of Tenerife, and has much more Canarian culture than the tourist resorts of the south of Tenerife. You can wander around the little cobbled streets and admire the fabulous architecture, or browse the cosmopolitan shops, or simply relax in a pavement café and soak up the atmosphere as you watch the world go by. The beautiful huge water complex of the Lido Martinez complete with its seven freshwater pools and waterfalls is well worth a visit. Puerto is also home to the fabulous Loro Parque.



Main resorts in Gran Canaria

Puerto Rico – Perfect for family holidays with two calm and safe swimming beaches and all amenities, this resort is great for shopping, and you will also find a large selection of bars and restaurants. The resort is built around two hills so when walking around you will feel the benefit in your legs! There is a lot of accommodation at ground level, so choose this area if you have mobility problems. Translates as the 'rich port', there is certainly a rich variety of boat based activities, such as dolphin searches, fishing and scuba diving sailing from the bustling marina.



Playa del Ingles – Gran Canarias' largest resort offers everything you will ever need. Popular with the younger crowd, especially during summer, this is where the days are action packed and the nights are never ending! The beach here is long and has an area for all types; families, nudists, gays, so choose you spot carefully. Located in a flat area, this resort is accessible for all. Also great for shopping with 12 commercial centres.

San Augustin – A quieter, more up-market resort with a 700m, darker sand beach, this is an ideal place for couples and families. With the beach sloping gently in to the sea, this resort is great for swimming and snorkelling and perfect for children. There is an attractive promenade that runs along the beach and much of the luxury accommodation with their in-house casinos is to be found here too. San Augustin is a central location for many of the tourist attractions.

Maspalomas – Home to one of the islands' "treasures" the protected Nature Reserve Lagoon, along with the breath-taking wind sculptured sand dunes, covering a total of 4000 hectares. Some consider it the most beautiful of all the fantastic beaches on the island with its fine white sand and clear waters. The second most popular resort with a nod to gay friendly as well as being more family oriented and less full on party atmosphere.



Puerto Mogan – Known locally as 'Little Venice' because of the fact that it is criss-crossed with archway bridged canals, this pretty fine, pale sandy beach and port area is great for family holidays and couples. The original village with its' white-washed houses covered with bougainvillea is separated from the expanding newly built area by the promenade. With super sea and mountain views and a huge Friday market, Puerto Mogan is a resort with a more Canarian atmosphere.



Beaches

You will find many wonderful beaches to relax upon. There is a real mixture of both natural volcanic sand, with varying shades of grey and man-made beaches, with varying shades of yellow! The longer beaches have sun beds and parasols, which you can hire out daily, and you can also find lifeguard supervision and special access for wheelchairs. Get off the beaten track and discover hidden coves and even your own private beach.



Food & Drink

It's worthwhile discovering & trying the culinary delights of the Canary Islands, which consist of simple ingredients, but will surprise the palate. You may know of paella, but here are a few other recommendations for you to try:

Garbanzos compuestos Chickpea stew.

- Conejo salmorejo** Chunks of rabbit in a spicy sauce.
- Pollo con ajo** Chicken with garlic
- Puchero canario** Stew made up of beef & pork, chickpeas, corn on the cob & sweet potatoes.
- Potaje de verduras** Thick vegetable soup.
- Cazuela de pescado** Various fish cooked in a tomato sauce with potatoes.
- Vieja** Fish similar to carp with a particularly soft, white flesh.
- Papas arrugadas** Wrinkly potatoes - small potatoes cooked in their skins in salt water.
- Mojo picón** Spicy sauce made from spices, red pepper, garlic, olive oil & vinegar.



Shopping

Shopping hours vary from area to area, but as a general rule the shops are open;
Monday – Friday 9.30am – 1pm, and 4pm – 8pm.
Saturday – 9.30am – 1pm. Closed Sundays and public holidays.

Shops in the main tourist areas are usually open all the time and many supermarkets are open for longer hours.

The Canary Islands, enjoy some of the lowest import tariffs in the world and the fact that it's a very competitive market, makes it one of the best places that you can buy your 'duty free'. Other items which are good value are electronic goods, clothes, shoes and locally produced arts and crafts such as embroidered linen, lacework and basket ware. Take home a box of the Bird of Paradise flowers or Strelitzia or even a box of genuine Canarian bananas. Tenerife produced wines have improved immensely in recent years and also make for a great gift.

Nightlife

There is something for everyone to while away the balmy nights. Many bars still cater principally for the UK tourist, with bingo, quizzes and entertainment, and an Irish bar or two is never far away. You will also find many bars with a relaxing and interesting ambience offering a good selection of wines and cocktails. Bars in a residential area will generally close at midnight, others at 2am and there are even some which close at 5am, like the nightclubs.

Sports

Golf enthusiasts of all abilities are very well catered for with 9 courses in Tenerife and 8 courses in Gran Canaria. Scuba diving in the clear Atlantic waters is very popular for the locals and tourists alike. There are many hiking routes for those who like to get off the beaten track and experience the diverse landscapes, flora and fauna and want to see a different side to the islands.

An indigenous sport, which you might want to witness, is the Lucha Canaria, or Canarian wrestling, which dates back to the 15th century. The aim of the sport is to force your opponent to touch the ground with any part of the body other than the soles of the feet. There are clubs in most towns throughout the Canary Islands.

Most popular things to do

Tenerife

Loro Parque - this truly brilliant park cannot be missed. This huge nature reserve has been the highlight of many a visit to Tenerife, housing over 300 species of exotic birds and animals in their natural surroundings. You can marvel at the fantastic dolphin show and sea lion show, brave tiger island or the reptile house and shark tunnel, shop for souvenirs at the Gambian market, saunter through tropical gardens and Planet Penguin and wonder at the newest attraction, the orca whales. The park has been awarded many honours for its work in the conservation of endangered species.

Mount Teide - Once described as the closest image of Lunar Landscape, towering over 12000 feet above sea level, the imposing live volcano is the landmark of Tenerife. You really do feel like you have entered another world, from the lush green scenery on the north side, to the arid sparse vegetation on the south side, with the fantastic lava formations and the fantastic views. You can, weather permitting, take the cable car up to the top, and the views really will take your breath away. On a clear day you can see all of the other Canary Islands. The rugged formations created the setting for many of the big films such as 'Planet Of The Apes' and 'Star Wars'.



Whales & dolphins boat trip – The waters between Tenerife and La Gomera are a migratory route for many species of whale and the pilot whales live in these waters all year round. Usually you will see both the whales and the dolphins but you may be even luckier and also see turtles, flying fish and less common species of whale. Trips vary in length from 2 to 5 hours, departing from Los Cristianos, Playa de la Americas and Los Gigantes.

Waterparks – There are now two water parks in the south of Tenerife, Aqualand and the newly opened Siam Park. These are very popular with kids and adults alike, with Siam Park boasting a surf school and beach and death defying water rides all set in a Thai inspired setting.

Masca - Tucked deep into the rugged Teno Mountains, this picturesque little village was, until recent years, one of Tenerifes best kept secrets. Accessible only by mule, Masca was once truly a Shangri-La. Now easily reached by a carefully constructed serpentine road, the news is out at last. A secret no more, all the charm and appeal of this tiny, ancient hamlet is there for you to discover. Masca is one of the most scenic parts of the Canaries, with breathtaking views, nick-named 'The Hidden Village', legend has it that the village cannot be spotted from anywhere out at sea, and pirates used it as a place to hide their booty.



Gran Canaria

Waterparks – Spend a day getting wet and going wild at either Aqualand, which is situated in Maspalomas or the smaller park of Atlantida in Puerto Rico, which is ideal for children under ten.

Casino Royal Show – Prepare to be impressed with this stunning international dance and music show, 'Las Vegas Legends'. An unforgettable night of glamour and mystery, professionally performed and presented with wonderful costumes, lighting and music. Definitely a night to get your glad rags on!

Sioux City – Travel back in time to the days of the 'Wild West', when cowboys and Indians roamed the plains of America. Feast yourself at the open air BBQ and drink until your hearts content, then get ready for the Cowboys and Indians spectacular show, "the shoot out in the OK Coral," complete with professional stunt men, live cattle stampede, Can-Can girls and much more. The park covers a massive 320 square metres and also features a zoo for young visitors, making it great for the whole family.

Jeep safari – One of the most fun ways to discover the treats of Gran Canaria is by open-top jeep. The guides are pretty zany, which will keep you amused all day. They are also very knowledgeable and make stops along the way to tell you about the Canarian culture and history.

Boat cruising and sport fishing – Sail away on the clear Atlantic waters and search for dolphins, soak up the sun, go snorkelling and relax. Trips from 2 – 5 hours to suit all ages. Or try your luck at catching some of the 'big boys', tuna, marlin or even shark. This is surprisingly very popular with the ladies!



Useful phrases in Spanish

Greetings

Hola (ola): Hello

Buenos dias (bwoo nas deetas): Good day

Buenos tardes (bwoo nas tar des): Good afternoon

Buenos noches (bwoo nas no ches): Good night or good evening

Encantado (en can tar doe): Pleased to meet you/enchanted

Mucho gusto (much o goos toe): Pleased to meet you

Como se llama? (com o say ya ma): What's your name?

Que tal? (kay tal): How are you?

Como esta usted? (como es ta oost ed) How are you (polite)?

Eating/Drinking

Quisiera..... (key sea era): I would like

Desayuno (des aye oono): breakfast

Almuerzo (al moo air tho): lunch

Cenar (sen are): dinner

Un bocado (oon bock ar doe): a snack

Me puede traer la carta? (me pway day try ear la car ta): Could you bring me the menu?

Tienen....? (tea en en): Do you have?

Un vaso de vino (oon vas o de vee no): a glass of wine

Una cerveza (oona ser vay sah): a beer

Una jarra (oona har ra): a pint

Una caña (oona can ya): a small beer

Un cenicero (oon sen e sero): an ashtray

Un bocadillo (oon bock a di yo): a sándwich

English	Spanish
One	uno (oo-no)
Two	dos (dose)
Three	tres (trace)
Four	cuatro (kwat-ro)
Five	cinco (sink-o)
Six	seis (saze)
Seven	siete (see-yet-eh)
Eight	ocho (och-o)
Nine	nueve (new-eh-veh)
Ten	diez (dee-ace)
Twenty	veinte (veh-een-tee)
Thirty	treinta (treh-een-tah)
Forty	cuarenta (kwar-en-tah)
Fifty	cincuenta (sink-kwen-tah)
Sixty	sesenta (seh-sehn-tah)
Seventy	setenta (seh-tehn-tah)
Eighty	ochenta (och-ehn-tah)
Ninety	noventa (no-vehn-tah)
One hundred	cien (see-ehn)

Health and Safety

Flight safety

- Please check with the airline with regard to security updates and advice as to what can and cannot be packed within your luggage.
- As a general rule, do not place flammable liquids, lighters, matches, gasses or aerosols in your luggage.
- Always carry medication in your hand luggage.
- Please pay attention to any safety briefings given by airline staff and crew.
- To help reduce the risk of Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water and reducing alcohol consumption, occasionally walk around the cabin and/or do some simple exercises whilst in your seat to keep blood circulating. For further information refer to the Department of Health website (<http://www.doh.gov.uk>).

Safety and Hygiene

The health and safety of Youtravel.com customers is of paramount importance to us and we want to make sure you have the best holiday possible. Whilst we are working with our accommodation suppliers to ensure the highest possible safety standards are maintained, please bear in mind that safety and hygiene standards overseas may vary from those you have come to expect in the UK.

Whilst we will do our best to make sure your holiday is safe and trouble free, we do ask for your co-operation in taking extra care while you're away. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with your accommodation on arrival, and, if you are travelling with children highlight to them any areas where they need to take extra special care, such as balconies or within pool areas.

The following information has been put together with your best interests in mind and we would ask that you take some time to read through the advice provided. If you should have any particular requirements regarding the safety of your group, please contact us for further advice. In the event of any accident or incident during your holiday, please immediately contact our handling agent in resort on the contact telephone number provided on the voucher and we will do our best to assist you and take any corrective action necessary.

Fire Safety

- Familiarise yourself with the location of your nearest fire exit.
- Read any fire safety notices in your room.
- Do not smoke in bed.
- If a fire occurs, leave immediately, do not stop to collect your personal belongings.
- Proceed to an assembly point well away from the building.

Safety at your holiday destination

When you arrive, please take a little time to familiarise yourself with the layout of your accommodation.

Balcony & Glass Safety

- Please do not lean over, sit or climb on the balcony.
- Children should never be left on the balcony unsupervised.
- Keep all balcony furniture away from the wall/railings.
- Take care in bright sunlight, when exiting to a patio or balcony. It may not be obvious that doors/windows are closed.

Pool Safety

- Familiarise yourself with the layout of the pool, the deep and shallow ends and any unusual features (i.e. bridges, underwater features).
- It is unlikely that your pool will have a lifeguard, so please take care and ensure children and non swimmers are supervised.
- Observe all pool safety rules, in particular "No Diving".
- Please use the showers before entering the pool.
- Do not swim immediately after a meal or when drinking alcohol.
- Pool surrounds can be slippery, so please walk around the pool area rather than run.
- If you are suffering from an upset stomach, please avoid use of the pool.

Beach Safety

- Familiarise yourself with any flag warning system so that you understand when it may not be safe to swim.
- Be aware of any strong currents or tides.
- It is unlikely that the beach will have a lifeguard, so please take care and ensure children and non swimmers are supervised.
- Do not swim near or dive from rocks, piers, breakwaters etc.
- Please ensure that you are aware of any "zoned" areas that are marked out for water sports and do not swim in these areas.
- Never swim alone, at night or after drinking alcohol.
- If utilising any beach water sports ensure the organisers are insured and offer appropriate safety advice/equipment.

Sun care

- Remember to use a high factor sunscreen initially and to re-apply it frequently
- Avoid laying out in the sun during the hottest time of the day
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration
- Take a sunhat, sunglasses and lip salve
- Beware, you can still burn, dehydrate and get sunstroke in the shade or in the water.



Personal safety

- Be aware, as you would be at home - stay away from situations where you feel uncomfortable and avoid walking in badly lit and/or unfamiliar areas.
- Avoid carrying too much money and/or valuables on your person – please make use of safe facilities provided.
- Always lock your room when you go out and remember to close all windows and balconies.
- Please try not to leave accompanied young children in your room.



Road/Transport Safety

- Remember traffic could be traveling on the right hand side of the road - ensure you look both ways before crossing.
- Please do not assume drivers will stop at pedestrian crossings.
- As at home, do not drink and drive.
- Whilst overseas laws regarding mobile phones may not be prohibitive, we recommend not using them while the vehicle is in use.
- Four wheels are better than two – many moped or motorbike hire outlets are inadequately insured and do not automatically provide helmets.
- Always remember to fasten your seatbelt.
- Follow any safety briefing provided by your driver or guide.

Working in conjunction with Docleaf



Summary

So now you know the basics, it's time to start preparing for your holiday in the eternal spring-like climate of this sub-tropical archipelago. Whatever you want out of your holiday, you can see some beautiful sights, meet friendly and culturally diverse people (and maybe even a dolphin or two), dine on healthy, fresh Canarian cuisine and immerse yourself in the inviting clear waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Shake that stress away! Only approx 4 hours away from the UK, the Canary Islands are still a mecca for all your holiday necessities.