

A GUIDE TO LANZAROTE

Lanzarote has a wealth of attractions guaranteed to fascinate every visitor regardless of their age or interest, choose from a variety of beautiful, sandy beaches, modern resorts, marinas and traditional villages. Take time out to view the unique 'Martian' landscape formed from volcanic eruptions during the 18/19th centuries and which you might recognise as the location featured in the film 'Planet of the Apes'. This region boasts a number of vineyards where you can stop at picturesque bodegas to taste the wine and try some tapas should you wish. For the more energetic there are museums, art galleries, caves and fortresses to explore.

The island of Lanzarote is the mostly easterly of the Canary Isles approximately 70 miles off the coast of Africa and has been declared a World Biosphere Reservation by UNESCO. The climate ranges from about 20C in January up to 30C in August making the island is an ideal all year round holiday destination with extremely low annual rainfall.

CAR HIRE

Car hire rates are very economical and hiring a car allows you the freedom to fully explore the islands as you choose.

These are a few things to remember:

- You will need to produce a full driving licence when collecting the car
- You must be at least 21 years old but some companies will state 25 years
- You must carry your driving licence, passport and car rental agreement at all times
- Drive on the right hand side
- All passengers must wear seat belts
- Carry some cash as some petrol stations do not accept credit cards
- Be aware that there are steep on the spot fines for not wearing seat belts, drink driving and speeding
- Park carefully in allocated spaces only.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Buses run regularly between the main areas and resorts, you can pick up a timetable at any tourist office.

Taxis

Taxis are plentiful and the hire rates are reasonable, taxi ranks are easy to find in all resorts/town centres

Here are some contact numbers (remember to add international codes if required):

Arrecife	928 812710
Costa Teguise	928 599863
Puerto del Carmen	928 524220
Playa Blanca	928 524222

in Lanzarote's capital Arrecife and there is also a private hospital in the resort of Puerto del Carmen.

All the private medical centres have 24-hour on call service. They are expensive, so a comprehensive insurance policy is essential before you travel and make sure you obtain a receipt so that you can claim back any medical expenses. Keep a note of the emergency number of the medical centre nearest to you.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Medical treatment and emergency care standards are very high, and the hospital in Arrecife is well equipped and the staff friendly and highly professional. Take your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or proof of private medical insurance.

AMBULANCES: Cruz Roja (Red Cross) is the Spanish emergency ambulance service. If you need an ambulance you must dial 112, or call the nearest private clinic who will arrange one.

CHEMISTS: In Spanish these are called "Farmacia" and have a large green cross which is illuminated when they are open. Most are open shop hours (9-1 and 5-9) but there is always one that is open for longer hours.

DENTISTS: These are all private and not covered by any National Health system. Clinics can be found in all resorts and in Arrecife.

CONSULATES

The local telephone numbers for the consulates are as follows:

Irish Consulate: 922 245671

UK Consulate: 928 267774

ATTRACTIONS IN LANZAROTE

ARRECIFE:

The capital of Lanzarote is home to around half the island's inhabitants, with a population of some 45,000. It is a lively, bustling town full of shops, restaurants, cafes, bars, beaches, parks, promenades, nightlife and weekly market and is well worth taking some time out to visit Castillo de San Gabriel: Located across the stone bridge named "The Bridge of Spheres" in Arrecife. Built in 1574 and has now been converted into an archeological museum.

CASTILLO DE SAN JOSE:

This large fort was built in 1799 at the harbour entrance of the Puerto Naos in Arrecife. It remained in military use until 1890 and then stood empty until it was restored by César Manrique to become a gallery for contemporary art [Museo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo] and a restaurant.

ARRIETA:

The lovely fishing village of Arrieta is located in the north of Lanzarote and you can savour the taste of the fresh catch at the local and reasonably priced restaurants, which are popular with both locals and tourists. Look out for the "Chinese House". The main beach is known as La Garita.

CÉSAR MANRIQUE FOUNDATION:

Lanzarote's world renowned artist, César Manrique, built his unique house in Tahiche on the site of five volcanic bubbles. It was bequeathed to the public and is home to a stunning collection of ceramics, paintings, photographs, drawings and plans. Open Monday to Friday 10.00 - 19.00 hours and Saturday & Sunday 10.00 - 14.00 hours.

CACTUS GARDEN:

Another of César Manrique's wonderful designs is the "El Jardin del Cactus" in Guatiza with more than 1,400 species of cactus. There is a restored windmill and metal sculptures creating a host of photographic vistas against the volcanic landscape. The garden is open from 10.00 - 18.00 hours.

CUEVAS DE LOS VERDES:

The Cuevas de los Verdes ("Green Caves") are part of the Atlantida underground cave system which was formed by the eruption of the volcano "La Corona" approximately 3000 years ago. Stretching over 7.6km long, part of which is under the ocean, this is reputedly the longest volcanic tunnel in the world even though the section underwater still has to be fully explored.

In the days when pirates used to plague the Island, the original inhabitants the "Guanches" used the caves as shelter from these marauders. There are some 2 kms of the cave tunnels open to the public, which were sympathetically transformed by Jesus Soto in 1964 when themed lighting was installed to display their splendour all to the background of soft ambient music.

The lowest cave has been transformed in a concert hall and is a venue for the "Visual Music of Lanzarote".

Opening Hours: 10.00 - 18.00 (final Admission 17.00)

COSTA TEGUISE:

One of the main tourist resorts it has plenty of shops, bars, restaurants and long golden beaches. There is also an 18-hole international golf course.

EL GOLFO:

El Golfo is a semi-circular volcanic crater which has been eroded by the sea, it has a black sand beach and a deep green lagoon "La Laguna de los Ciclos". There are also some fantastic rock formations that show evidence of the island's volcanic history, which add to the stunning scenery in this location. The nearby village of the same name is worth checking out for its wonderful restaurants.

FAMARA:

Located on the West coast of the island, Famara and its lovely beach is set against a stunning backdrop of craggy mountainsides. It is a great place for surfing and surfboarding, but swimming is not recommended as there are strong undercurrents. Just a short walk away over the rocks is the quaint village of La Caleta with its few restaurants and bars.

GUNATE TROPICAL PARK:

Located in the North of the Island, 11.5 acres of botanical and cactus gardens with thousands of birds together with a variety of small animals such as Otters, Meerkats, Lemurs and Monkeys, superb parrot show, restaurant and souvenir

Opening hours 10.00 till 5.00 (365 days of the year)

HARIA:

“The Valley of a Thousand Palms” is given its name following the former tradition of planting a palm tree if a child was born, two if it was a boy. Haria is set deep in a valley and is very picturesque. In the village there is a pretty square and some lovely restaurants and bars and also the weekly craft market on Saturdays.

LA GERIA:

This is the largest wine growing region in the Canary Islands and the vines are planted in the fertile volcanic soil and protected from the trade winds by semi-circular volcanic walls. Some fine wines are produced and can be tasted at the bodegas, where you can also purchase these wines.

LA GRACIOSA:

This pretty island is one of the smallest in the Canary Islands with a population of approximately 500 people. It is reached by catching a ferry from Orzola to La Graciosa. The island is a nature reserve and you are not allowed to take a car over with you. It is a beautiful tranquil place with fabulous sandy beaches and a lack of tourist development. Although there are a few places to eat, it is the perfect place to take a picnic and enjoy a bit of solitude.

The ferry leaves Orzola at 09.00 and 10.00 hours and returns from La Graciosa at 15.00 and 16.00 hours.

LOS HERVIDEROS:

“The Boiling Waters” are a series of caves and blow holes eroded into a former lava flow by the power of the waves rolling in and crashing into the cliff edges and pushing white surf up through the holes with great force.

There are a series of steps down to different levels where you look into the caves and fully experience the effects of the mighty ocean.

You can also walk around the cliffs and stand on the natural “balconies” and watch the breakers crash into the caves.

LOS JAMEOS DE AGUA:

These caves were created by a series of volcanic eruptions approximately 3,000 - 4,000 years ago, forming lava bubbles and a cave system.

“Jameo” is a volcanic cave with a collapsed roof, of which there are many in this area of Lanzarote. At “Los Jameos de Agua” the artist César Manrique helped to adapt this natural phenomenon into an auditorium, swimming pool, gardens and a restaurant. Regular shows are held in the auditorium as it has excellent acoustics, there is also a disco on Tuesday and Saturday.

An underground lake “Jameo Chico” is connected to the sea from underground, and is home to a rare species of blind albino crabs and these can be found nowhere else.

The caves are open every day from 09.30 - 19.00 hours and on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 19.00 - 02.00.

MIRADOR DEL RIO:

César Manrique has left another wonderful legacy on Lanzarote in the shape of the Mirador del Rio. Set hundreds of metres above sea level on the top of a mountain, this lookout point affords breathtaking views of La Graciosa and the Chinijo Archipelago with the islets of Roques del Este and Oeste.

Opening Hours: Every day 10.00 - 18.00 hours.

MONUMENTO AL CAMPESINO AND CASA MUSEO:

The monument is a 15 metre high modern sculpture depicting the Campesino (Farm Worker) and stands in the geographical centre of the island. Located nearby is the Casa Museo, a converted farmhouse showing the local farmers way of life. There is a restaurant serving traditional Canarian food and also a gift shop which sells local crafts and pottery, which is still made using traditional techniques.

MUSEO DEL VINO - 'EL GRIFO':

Located at El Grifo, is the oldest bodega (wine cellar) in the Canaries which was constructed in the 18th Century and still produces wine from its 50-hectare vineyard. At the entrance to the museum is a monument to the Grifo bird by César Manrique. Inside there is an exhibition of the winery, machinery, winepress and winemaking tools.

LAGOMAR:

Built into the mountain in Nazaret “LagOmar” is the former home of the actor, Omar Sharif, and was originally designed by César Manrique.

There is a restaurant which serves superb international cuisine accompanied by live music, a unique museum and an art gallery all set in this fantastic location.

ORZOLA:

This delightful fishing village is located at the North of the island and you can watch the local fishermen returning in the afternoon with their catch.

There are some good restaurants serving the fresh fish. From Orzola you can catch the ferry to the small neighbouring island of La Graciosa, which is a nature reserve.

PAPAGAYO:

The beautiful clear waters and beaches of Papagayo are located at the southern tip of the island on the outskirts of Playa Blanca. Entrance to the beaches costs 3.00€ per car, but the road is very bumpy and there is a bit of a climb down to the beaches, however it is worth it. There is only one small bar, so it is well worth taking supplies. You can also reach the beaches by way of a water taxi from Playa Blanca Harbour.

PLAYA BLANCA:

Located at the southernmost tip of Lanzarote, Playa Blanca was once a small village but with recent luxury developments, it has become a major tourist resort. However, it has managed to retain its charm and is a perfect location for couples and families with its lovely beaches, restaurants, shops and bars. There is also a small market held on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. Ferries make the short trip regularly every day from Playa Blanca Harbour to and from Fuerteventura.

MARINA RUBICON:

The newly constructed Marina Rubicon is situated a short distance from Playa Blanca and has been beautifully designed on the theme of a village. Surrounding the marina are shops, bars and restaurants where you can sit and watch the boats coming and going or feed the fish that live in the waters.

There are also tennis and paddle courts, or you can sample the wide variety of sea excursions ranging from diving, sailing, canoeing, catamaran and the tourist submarine. On certain evenings there is various types of live music and on Wednesday morning there is a small market.

PUERTO CALERO:

Situated between Puerto del Carmen and Playa Quemada is the lovely Puerto Calero marina where restaurants and bars line the harbour, making it a wonderful place to spend the afternoon or evening. Sea excursions and activities are available from here, including a trip on a luxury catamaran or the submarine.

PUERTO DEL CARMEN: This is the liveliest place in Lanzarote with its 12 kilometres of sandy beaches, bars, restaurants, clubs, discos, cabaret shows and casino. If it is nightlife you want, this is the place to be. Just a short distance along from Puerto del Carmen is the quieter resort of Matagorda.

SALINAS DE JANUBIO:

Just north of Playa Blanca is the large saltwater lake of "Laguna de Janubio" which is also the location of the "Salinas de Janubio". These working salt pans have been classified a historic monument and have become a popular tourist attraction as they are laid out like a multi-coloured patchwork quilt and are a photographers dream, the colours are created by the differing amount of water in each salt pan. There is a bar/restaurant overlooking the "Salinas" where you can sit and enjoy this amazing view.

Every year in June to celebrate the Corpus Christ festival, a small amount of the sea salt produced is dyed used to create beautiful decorations in the squares and streets of Arrecife and also in some of the small villages.

Just south of the “Salinas” is a black sand beach which, although not suitable for swimming due to the strong current, is an ideal place for birdwatchers as it is home of many species of birds especially in Spring and Autumn

TIMANFAYA NATIONAL PARK:

This is the home of Montañas del Fuego (Fire Mountains), 51 kilometres of volcano and lava fields created by volcanic eruptions between 1730 and 1736, the beautiful yet eerie scenery it created has been likened to a lunar landscape. The area was declared a national park in 1968, namely the Parque Nacional de Timanfaya. On the road towards the park you can stop and take a camel ride. Once in the park you can watch displays showing the incredible heat still being generated beneath the ground, with brushwood being pushed into holes and igniting and water being poured into holes immediately creating bursts of steam like “Geysers”. You board a coach to take you for a tour round the park to view this magnificent place with its lava fields and volcano craters, there is a multi-lingual narration detailing the events leading up to the parks creation.

In the restaurant “El Diablo” with its panoramic views they cook typical Canarian food on ovens with the heat provided from the volcanic source below the ground. The restaurant is another of César Manrique’s designs. The parks opening hours are daily form 10.00 - 18.00 hours.

TEGUISE:

This charming village is the former ancient capital of Lanzarote and has some beautiful architecture with churches, windmills, the San Miguel plaza and the Castilla de Santa Barbara, which stands on a hill overlooking the village. During the week the pace in Teguiise is slow and tranquil, but on a Sunday morning it is host to a large market and comes alive, bustling and full of people looking for bargains. At the market there is a lot on offer from shoes and sandals, handbags, T-shirts, tablecloths, local ceramics, African artifacts, aloe vera products, wine produce, souvenirs and other local products, to name just a few. The Sunday market is open from 09.00 - 14.00 hours.

YAIZA:

In the South of Lanzarote is the beautiful village of Yaiza, which has twice been voted the prettiest village in Spain. In the centre is a large square where local fiestas and concerts are held, a 17th century church and lovely gardens, trees and flowers. This is also the home of the wonderful “La Era” and “La Casona de Yaiza” restaurants, it is best to book in advance for either of these.