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**Valid for departures:** From July 30, 2018 to May 31, 2020



## Self-Guided Walking on Gran Canaria Trip Notes

- 📍 **Destinations:** Spain
- 🏞️ **Programmes:** Walking & Trekking

Trip Code:  
**W07GC**



**8 Days** Flight Inclusive  
**8 Days** Land only  
**Min age:** 12

### Trip Overview

On this twin-centre walking holiday, you'll mainly follow well-marked, ancient Caminos Reales - centuries-old royal trading paths lined with broom, heather and Canarian Pine - as they criss-cross the island linking the mountains to the sea. Highlights this week include: the iconic blood-red rock of Nublo, the shimmering Chira Dam and the 'magic' volcanic cauldron of Bandama whose eruption, over 2,000 years ago, influenced the entire geography of the island. You'll also pass troglodyte villages built by the religious Guanche (the Canaries' first inhabitants) 4,000 years ago, and have the chance to step back in time in the old part of the island's colourful capital, Las Palmas.

### At a Glance

- 7 nights twin-centre accommodation
- All buffet breakfasts and evening meals
- Management by local hotelier
- Route directions and maps
- Freedom to decide which walk you do on each day
  
- Countries visited: Spain

### Trip Highlights

- Dramatic walking, spell-binding scenery, beautiful ocean views
- Dazzling ochre cliffs, sunny fertile valleys, sweeping plateaux and plunging gorges
- Masses of archaeological, botanical and geological interest

- Tiny white villages, forgotten farming hamlets, fascinating cave dwellings
- Cosmopolitan capital Las Palmas: gorgeous beaches, fascinating museums, UNESCO-listed historic centre
- Extensive walking options available including two level 3 walks

## Is This Trip for You?

### Walking Conditions

**Classification:** Self-Guided

**Activity Level:** 2 (Leisurely/Moderate)

**Average daily distance:** 14.4km (9.1miles).

**No. of days walking:** 5

**Terrain and route:** Walks on this holiday are on village streets, country lanes, farm tracks and rural paths.

**Vehicle Support:** This is a self-guided trip for those who prefer to walk independently, but with our assistance to take out the stress of the logistics and planning. We arrange your accommodation, provide you with a map and route notes so that you can walk at your own pace, while your bags are transported from one hotel to the next.

It is important that you are happy reading maps and following route notes, we make these as accurate as possible and they are regularly checked.

As this is a self-guided holiday there is no group and no leader. There maybe others on the same departure date as you, but you will not be organised together. The routes notes contain a 24-hour emergency assistance telephone number should you need it and in emergencies, the hotels are normally able to dispatch a taxi or pick you up themselves. They may wish to charge for this service.

**Adult min age:** 18

Child min age: 12

**Child max age:** 17

## Itinerary



### Land Only

**Start City:** San Bartolome de Tirajana

**End City:** La Caldera

### Land Only Itinerary

## Day 1

### Arrive in San Bartolome de Tirajana

Collect your hire car at Las Palmas airport and drive (50 mins) to the Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, set just outside San Bartolome de Tirajana and offering stunning panoramic views of the valley and close by mountains. The hotel has a part-covered pool and sun terraces - ideal places to relax after a day's walking. **(Staying at Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Dinner

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## Day 2

### Valleys and Villages walk

It's just a short walk into the white 'sugar cube' village of San Bartolome whose unique volcanic landscape combines rugged agricultural scenery, rich vegetation and a diverse historic architecture. From here, it's a relaxed, easy going walk through the fertile Tirajana Valley and up through extensive palm groves to the pretty village of Santa Lucia for lunch. The museum here displays an impressive range of archaeological finds including Guanche artefacts, farming tools, leather goods - even the odd skeleton! In the afternoon, a panoramic cistus-lined mountain ridge offers continuous views of the yawning Tirajana gorge as you cross the ravine floor and head back via Fataga (stopping for a chilled beer perhaps) to your hotel. **(Staying at Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Distance covered:** 13 km / 8 miles

**Activity (hours):** 4

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## Day 3

### Cruz Grande Circular Walk

A 10-minute drive brings you to Cruz Grande. Your route takes you first south through pine forest then out along an undulating mountain ridge where massive valleys slice through the wooded hillsides to reveal your first glimpse of the magical Chira Dam - a stunning deep blue lake-like reservoir, home to a large habitat of bird, fish and wildlife. You'd be hard-pushed to find a better picnic spot! After lunch, an enchanting tangle of aloes, almonds, figs and prickly pear cacti pave your path as you climb steadily up out of a ravine on one of the ancient Camino Reales. **(Staying at Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Distance covered:** 17 km / 11 miles

**Activity (hours):** 5

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## Day 4

### El Roque Nublo

Balanced on an 1,800m-high rock plateau, the volcanic monolith of Roque Nublo dates to the Pleistocene Era and is a must-visit. Enjoy stunning views from the top - including Tenerife's snowcapped Mount Teide on the horizon - before a gentle, pine-scented descent into the Tejeda Valley and the tiny farming hamlet of La Culata. This is the 'real' Spain - herds of goats and donkeys still tend the fields here and the Bar Roque Nublo doubles up as the village cafe-cum-bar-cum-local shop! After a light lunch, the almond-scented path leads you up to the Mirador de Degollada Becerra viewpoint (arguably the most renowned skyline on the island) and back through pines to your car. **(Staying at Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Distance covered:** 14 km / 9 miles

**Activity (hours):** 6

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## Day 5

### Las Palmas and the Caldera de Bandama

Today you have the option to give your boots a rest and explore by car! Driving north east, we strongly recommend stopping at the island's capital, Las Palmas. The historic colonial district of Vegueta - today a UNESCO World Heritage Site - boasts beautiful buildings, quiet squares, pretty churches, soaring cathedrals and narrow cobbled streets that were walked by Columbus 500 years ago! Lunch perhaps on one of the beautiful twin bays, before a short drive east to the fascinating Caldera de Bandama. If you're feeling fit, the steep hike to the bottom takes about 30 minutes (a bit longer coming back up!) - there's a good chance of spotting flocks of linnets, trumpeter finches and the indigenous Berthelot's Pipit. Your final drive takes you past vineyards, sugar cane and lush banana plantations on the approach to 4-star Hotel Melva Suite, home for your last three nights. **(Staying at Hotel Melva Suite, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

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## Day 6

### Azuaje Nature Reserve

Today's walk starts from the 'sparkling' white village of Firgas where more than 200,000 bottles of sparkling mineral water are produced every day! Take a stroll around the historic village (C16 church, waterfall, stepped fountains) - and, on a clear day, soak up beautiful views out across northern Gran Canaria towards Tenerife and Fuerteventura. A circular route from here takes you through the lush green vegetation of the Azuaje Nature Reserve, famous for both its endemic and medicinal plants - don't be surprised to see locals foraging for natural remedies! You'll gradually ascend a narrow ravine before a final winding descent through eucalyptus forest loops you back to Firgas. **(Staying at Hotel Melva Suite, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Distance covered:** 16 km / 10 miles

**Activity (hours):** 5

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## Day 7

### Cave towns and Villages

The longest drive of the week (1hr) but we think well worth it! The walk starts in Artenara - at 1,270m it's the highest village on the island with an important cave heritage: nearly 400 cave houses, most dating back to C15, can be found here and in the pretty neighbouring hamlets of the Tamadaba Natural Park. The distinctive black outline of the northern face of Roque Nublo provides a stunning backdrop as you descend towards Lugarejos, an old troglodyte village famous for its kiln-free pottery. Bordered by steeply terraced hillsides, you head gently up through dappled, pine-scented forest to a shady poppy-carpeted ridge where you are rewarded with great views down to the Lugarejos Reservoir and out across the north western coast and the sparkling Atlantic Ocean. **(Staying at Hotel Melva Suite, Half Board)**

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Distance covered:** 12 km / 8 miles

**Activity (hours):** 5

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## Day 8

### Leave Gran Canaria

**Meals included:** Breakfast

## Accommodation

### Hotels



You spend your first four nights at the Hotel Rural Las Tirajanas, a mountain lodge style hotel with fabulous views of the valley below. For your final three nights, you'll head north to 4 star Melva Suite, a luxury 8-suite hotel set in a lovely estate of tranquil grounds, just 10 minutes' drive from the postcard-pretty white town of Firgas.

*Where a single supplement is available, paying for a single only guarantees a room for single use. It does not always mean a twin or double room will be provided for sole occupancy.*

Single supplement from \$184.45 USD

## **Food & Transport**

### **Eating & Drinking**

The basis of Gran Canarian cuisine is a variety of fresh vegetables, fruit and fish. Meat usually features as part of a stew, and steaks are mostly imported from mainland Spain or South America. Gofio still forms an essential part of the island diet. It is a sort of flour made from ground and toasted barley, maize and wheat. It is used in many ways, for example, to thicken soups and sauces or perhaps stirred into children's milk. It is also made into ice cream and a kind of bread, not unlike polenta, then mixed with oil, salt and sugar. A traditional accompaniment to many meals are mojos (sauces), based on olive oil - mojo picón (spicy sauce) and mojo verde (green sauce). Not to be missed is the local goat cheese (from Guía), which is very tasty.

### **Transportation**

As the walks do not start directly from the hotels, a hire car is included in your holiday price.

## **Weather & Seasonality**

### **Joining Instructions**

#### **Alternative Air Travel**

Alternative flights, onward rail to your holiday area, and connecting private transfers can be arranged from most UK airports. If you would like to use one of the many 'low cost' airlines, we can book these on your behalf (£30 admin fee per person). We can also book UK shuttles to connect with your onward flight, please call for details and prices.

### **Alternative transfers**

If you require alternative transfers (because you will be arriving at a different time to our standard flights), then we can usually arrange these for you (there may be an additional charge).

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers will be sent to you as part of our Final Joining Instructions. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

## **Transfers Details**

### **Air prices include our standard flights/transfers**

Thomson Airways Gatwick to Las Palmas 10:00/14:20 except Oct 2018 & May 2019 when 14:20/18:10 and car hire (Europcar Group B air-conditioned hire car). Drive to hotel, 1 hr. Return: Drive to airport, 1 hr then Thomson Airways Las Palmas to Gatwick 15:30/19:45 except Oct 2018 & May 2019 when 19:55/23:55.

Extra legroom seats are available on request.

**Location start:** San Bartolome de Tirajana

**Location end:** San Bartolome de Tirajana

## **What to Take**

### **Reading List**

Wild Flowers of Gran Canaria

Gran Canaria - Marco Polo Pocket Guide

Plant List for Gran Canaria: (Canary Islands)





## Practical Information

### Passport

#### Spain

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

### Visa

#### Spain

No visa required for British passport holders.

For further Brexit travel advice please visit <https://www.abta.com/tips-and-advice/brexit-advice-for-travellers>

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

### Vaccination

#### Spain

There are no specific health risks.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of the UK, North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>

#### **Insurance - are you adequately covered?**

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident in the UK we strongly recommend the Exodus travel insurance policy, this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

### Local Time

**Spain's Timezone:** Europe/Madrid CEST (GMT +02:00)

## Electricity

**Spain's Electricity:** European plug - 2 round pins. 230 Volts AC.

## Money

### Spain's Currency

The national currency of Spain is the Euro (EUR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication (October 2017) of approximately 1.1 to the GBP, 0.84 to the USD, 0.67 to the CAD, 0.66 to the AUD and 0.59 to the NZD.

### ATM Availability

ATMs are widely available, but we recommend taking some Euros cash with you in case you can't get to a bank at the start of the trip.



## Responsible Tourism

At Exodus we believe in the power of Responsible Travel.

Every time we travel, we are part of a global movement that creates jobs, builds more sustainable societies, encourages cultural understanding and safeguards common natural and cultural heritage. To learn more about what Responsible Travel means to Exodus click [here](#)...

## Exodus Community

**Join the Exodus online community**

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which have featured in the national media and take advantage of some special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Community Travel Forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the Community you'll need to join My Exodus. It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

## Important Information

### On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorise them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 14 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

### On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Exodus office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the essential information in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel Agent.

### TRAVEL AWARE -STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the NHS have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

Advice can change so check regularly for updates.

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our Travel Safety Advice page.

## How to Book

Ready to book? Please contact your travel agent



