

The best MARCO POLO Insider Tips

Our top 15 Insider Tips



INSIDER TIP ▶ A view of the dunes

Stay the night in a true oasis! The *Riu Palace Maspalomas* offers not only a spectacular location with lots of palm trees, but also the ambience of a grand hotel → p. 87

INSIDER TIP ▶ Just a pile of stones?

700 ancient Canarian graves: in the *Parque Arqueológico* in Arteara you can find out about the rituals of the original islanders → p. 88

INSIDER TIP ▶ Local arts and crafts

FEDAC in Las Palmas sells traditional as well as trendy articles: material with bright-and-breezy designs and minimalist lava jewellery (photo right) → p. 140

INSIDER TIP ▶ Sleep near “Cloud Rock”

Enjoy the most beautiful mountain panorama to be found at the *Finca La Isa* – from the Roque Nublo across the sea to the Pico del Teide at a height of 4,000 m (13,123 ft)! The night sky here is magical, too! → p. 49

INSIDER TIP ▶ For the sweet-toothed

Chocolates, delicate macarons and calorie-rich cakes: the *Dulcería Nublo Tejeda* in Tejeda specialises in all things sweet made of almonds → p. 55

INSIDER TIP ▶ Little Havana

The terrace cafés on the plaza near the beach in Las Palmas are filled to the brim at the weekend. The best mojitos and daiquiris are served at *Nueva Farray*, which is not surprising because the owner is Cuban! → p. 42

INSIDER TIP ▶ Fresh and salt water

The *Charca de Maspalomas* lagoon is only separated from the ocean by a narrow strip of sand. This is a wonderful place to watch migrating birds and large fish → p. 80

INSIDER TIP ▶ Heaven and earth

The narrow road from *La Aldea de San Nicolás* zig-zags its way through the steep rocky landscape to *Artenara* → p. 51

INSIDER TIP ▶ Pure wine

At the *Bodegón Vandama*, you get earthy, organic wines and tender grilled meat in the atmospheric setting of an old winery → p. 68

INSIDER TIP ▶ Dining with donkeys

Youngsters will be especially attracted by the well cared-for donkeys and children’s zoo at the donkey finca *Burro Safari Las Tirajanas*. And grown-ups will like the traditional food – as almost everything is homemade → p. 102

INSIDER TIP ▶ A park for art-lovers

A walk through the *Finca Montecristo* is a walk through a botanical and artistic paradise – works of art nestle among the exotic plants → p. 82

INSIDER TIP ▶ Mountain panorama

Look down over the wide crater from the airy heights above – at *Las Tirajanas*, the most beautiful mountain hotel on Gran Canaria! The peaceful tranquility of the cave-like spa will also brighten your day → p. 52

INSIDER TIP ▶ Golfing on the crater

The location is almost unbeatable – the *Bandama Golf Hotel* sits at the foot of a volcano, next to the largest crater on the island. Where else are the greens right at your doorstep? Play a round on Spain’s oldest golf course from 1891 (photo left) → p. 67

INSIDER TIP ▶ A flood of pilgrims

Every year on 7 and 8 September, thousands of pilgrims make their way to the *Virgen del Pino*, the festively decorated “Queen of the Island” in Teror. Afterwards, lively festivities are held throughout the month → p. 121

INSIDER TIP ▶ Culinary collection

The proprietors have assembled the best recipes from their many trips around the world and now serve them in the *Bamira Restaurant* in San Agustín. The well-presented dishes can be enjoyed surrounded by unusual works of art → p. 94



BEST OF...

GREAT PLACES FOR FREE

Discover new places and save money

● Free ticket to the art scene

Experimental, provocative and way-out art free of charge. The *Centro Digital* in Las Palmas showcases digital art, exciting film programmes and electronic music → p. 19

● Cultural look across the sea

How about a virtual visit to the neighbouring continent? African artists show their painted, filmed and sound creations in the *Casa África* in Las Palmas – a really exotic day out, and all for free → p. 35

● Uplifting experience

You can witness fervent Spanish religiosity during mass in Las Palmas' main church *Catedral de Santa Ana*. As a nice side effect of this impressive experience, you will not be allowed to take photographs – but admission is free during church services → p. 37

● Taste the rum

Your tour of the *Arehucas* distillery in Arucas, Europe's largest producer of rum, will take you past giant steel tanks and oak barrels. And you can also taste the excellent rum and liqueurs → p. 60

● The Virgin in the rock

The main attraction of the *Virgen de la Cueva* Chapel in Artenara is its artistic craftsmanship: The whole chapel has been carved out of a cave's rock face (photo) → p. 46

● Strolling through a Garden of Eden

You have to pay admission to the Marquise's Garden, the *Jardín del la Marquesa*, in Arucas if you want to see plants from all over the world; however, at the *Parque Municipal*, you can wander around for free, and the wonderful collection of exotic flora is no less exhilarating → p. 61



Dots in guidebook refer to "Best of..." tips

ONLY ON GRAN CANARIA

Unique experiences

● Fun in a labyrinth of caves

Have you ever had tapas and wine in a cave? Labyrinth-like hostleries have been cut into the rock in the *Barranco de Guayadeque* – keeping up an old tradition as Canarios have always lived in caves (photo) → p. 76

● See the island in the sun from "Snow Peak"

The name of Gran Canaria's highest mountain, *Pico de las Nieves*, means "Snow Peak" although it is very rarely covered in white. However, the view of the steep precipices and gorges, high plateaus and needle-like pinnacles is always an unforgettable experience → p. 49



● Flowery cheese

"Flower cheese", *queso de flor*, is the most unusual Canarian dairy product. It tastes especially good accompanied by a glass of red wine in the bistro shop *La Quesera* in Santa María de Guía → p. 68

● Reservoirs

Once intended as a reserve of water for times of need, today the reservoirs are a string of pearls in the mountain landscape. Especially idyllic: the *Embalse Cueva de las Niñas* in the *Pajonales* nature reserve → p. 56

● Fresh fish

No matter how small the restaurant, they all serve fresh seafood. Of course, fish always tastes best not far from where it was caught where there is a fresh sea breeze and the tang of salt in the air such as at the restaurant *Cofradía de Pescadores* in Arguineguín → p. 77

● Living monument

The essence of the Canaries: if you take a stroll through the narrow streets of *Teror*, cross over the *plaza* with the ancient laurel tree and relax over a cup of coffee in one of the bars, you will get the feeling of days long past → p. 70

● Not only for botanists!

The 2000 different plants that grow in a gorge below Tafira Alta can be found nowhere else on earth! Among the many wonderful species in the *Jardín Canario*, you will see dragon trees, various types of spurge and dazzling red campanulas that are threatened by extinction → p. 43

ONLY IN

DISCOVERY TOURS

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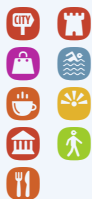
GRAN CANARIA AT A GLANCE



START: ① Playa del Inglés
END: ① Playa del Inglés

1 day
Driving time
(without stops)
4–5 hours

Distance:
📏 214 km/133 miles



COSTS: approx. 100 euros (car, petrol, fees, food for 2 adults)
WHAT TO PACK: swim gear, sunscreen, hat

IMPORTANT TIPS: ② **Las Palmas:** the best place to park is at the *aparcamiento* between the coastal road and the Mercado.
③ **Puerto de Mogán:** a large market is held on Fridays (9am–2pm). Park on the outskirts of town!
GC 200: the road is closed between Agaete and Puerto de La Aldea if it rains heavily.

Every corner of the earth has its own special charm. If you want to explore all the many different facets of this region, head off the beaten track or get tips for the best stops, breathtaking views, hand-picked restaurants or the best local activities, then these customised discovery tours are just the right thing. Choose the best route for the day and follow in the footsteps of the MARCO POLO authors – well-prepared to navigate your way to all the many highlights that await you along the tour.

Starting in the south, this tour circles around the entire island along the coast. You will explore quiet mountain villages, pretty towns on the sea and the old town centre of Las Palmas. A true highlight is the dramatic cliffside road in the north-west – perhaps one of the most beautiful stretches in all of the Canary Islands. While the waves crash against the basalt cliffs hundreds of feet below, you can look out over the sea to Tenerife. But, the island's interior also has its own charm with amazing panoramic views of the rugged mountains.

09:00am Get an early start because this is a long day trip and the curvy mountain roads are sometimes slow going!