

LAS CAÑADAS
DEL TEIDE
AND ITS PARADOR

“...this sea, which brings all to the same level, is the school of equality, the school of freedom: This sea, which breaks down all barriers, giving wings to the soul, the sea of brotherhood, joining and linking peoples.

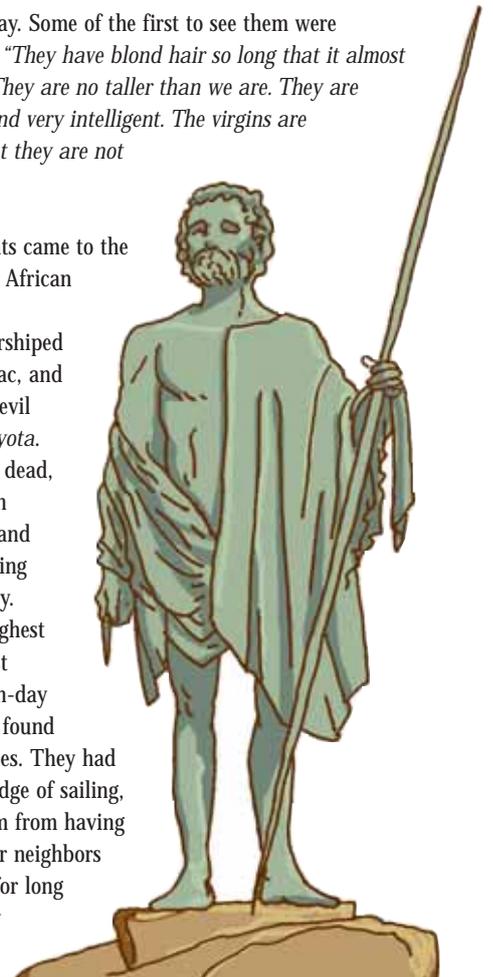
Miguel de Unamuno

Paradise trodden by sun-drenched tourists, native ways of life tamed by the moon and struggles. Free ports with missionaries and warriors, pirates and shameful traders. Indomitable ford of lava calmed by a new world. Dead lands of miraculous fertility. Pure and rebellious native *Guanches*, a wise blending of blood thirsty for art and culture. A kind people with colorful speech. Traces, remains, repository and face of a history with a thousand faces. An unfinished epic of extinguished lava and burning carnivals. Tenerife: vision of a one-eyed god between different worlds.

El Teide is the eye of that first god of this land amidst the sea: *Ach Guayaraxi*, “the Preserver of the World”, always ever-vigilant. He was god, millions and millions of years before Homer discovered that this is the land “where the gods live and where men lead a tranquil, gentle life”, long before this was the garden of the Hesperides, and later only the Fortunate Isles, still so much.

It was at least three thousand years ago that the earliest inhabitants arrived, when the mountain was both whiter and greener than it is today. Some of the first to see them were pleasantly surprised: “They have blond hair so long that it almost reaches their navel. They are no taller than we are. They are strong, rather bold and very intelligent. The virgins are completely naked, but they are not ashamed of this...”

The first inhabitants came to the Isles from the nearby African coast, perhaps from Mauritania. They worshiped the Sun, called Alcorac, and they also believed in evil spirits known as *guayota*. They worshipped the dead, who they preserved in caves, after washing and oiling them, and leaving them in the sun to dry. They lived in the roughest terrain, in places least expected by a modern-day tourist: in caves they found along cliffs and ravines. They had absolutely no knowledge of sailing, which prevented them from having any contact with their neighbors on the other islands for long periods of time. They lived on pigs,



goats and a woolless sheep found here at the time. Using the horns of the goats, the plowed just enough to plant barley, wheat and broad beans, which they used to make a type of bread we call gofio today.

They enjoyed the constant company of a dog, a proud and fierce breed called a verdino which has survived to the present-day. Their morals were relatively strict and surprising: sterility and adultery allowed them to leave their partner, and the man was very severely punished if he dared speak to a woman who he met in an open area or on her own.

In terms of government, their habits were not so different from ours. There were social classes: noblemen, squires and peasants. On Tenerife they were all grouped into a single territorial unit, divided into nine communities. Each was governed by a mency, a king or kinglet, as we might say today, who had to heed the counsel of a senate of elders.

Many centuries would pass until before these shores would see the first ships bearing Goths and greedy discoverers, in at least the 13th century. They were already loaded with powder and prayers, no longer Gothic, when these Guanches were surprised, armed only with toy knives made of stone or wood.

Soon came the Genoese, Lusitanians, Mallorquines, Catalans, Andalusians and even Basques, some dressed as explorers or colonizers, and many others as un-costumed pirates. All came in search of impossible treasures and slaves for the picking, which they found on these shores. There also came missionary brothers, above all after Pope Clement VI sought to build a celestial kingdom on the archipelago.

Or perhaps they were attracted by the rumors of miraculous apparitions on Tenerife. In Guimar a lovely lady appeared to two fearful shepherds. She was later named the Virgin of the Candelaria and Patroness of the Island because of the many miracles she worked here before inhabitants still lacking the grace and faith of conquest.

Starting with the invasion in Lanzarote by the Norman Bethencourt, in the early years of the 15th century, the conquest was bloody and interminable. Trees were felled, there were fires, sackings and prisoners were taken and enslaved. The well-armed knights were surprised by such indigenous resistance.

The waters ended up running a Christian course, particularly after the Catholic Monarchs, having already achieved virtual unity on the peninsula, decided to intervene in this strategic matter. They bought the "conquest rights" to the more lucrative and rebellious remaining islands: Gran



Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife. It was Alonso de Lugo, the most intrepid captain of all, who was charged by the king and queen with conquering the recalcitrant Tinerfeños who still proudly walked their island while Christopher Columbus came and went.

Alonso de Lugo disembarked and built his fort at Santa Cruz. However, his invading army was surprised and defeated by the mency of Taoro, known as Benitomo, at Acentejo Ravine. However, legend has it that the true architect of this victory was Tinguajaro, the king's brother, a valiant warrior so generous that, following his overwhelming victory, *"he did not try to pursue the defeated or slaughter even more of them. Allowing them to retrieve their dead and wounded, of which there were many hundreds, he sat on a rock to rest."* And, when his brother and king criticized his generous conduct towards the enemy, he replied: *"I have completed my mission, which was to defeat; let the butchers do the slaughter."* The reader should know that the butcher's trade was the most denigrated by the Guanches.

Nonetheless, Tenerife would end up being both Christian and Spanish, but only after there were no Moors left in Spain, and only after Spanish was already spoken in another little known continent.

Those Guanches, as if their exploits were stone, deserve a poetic, although posthumous, homage:

*"Huge masses of interrupted crevasses
And volcanic seams,
Which the slow winds of the ages consume,
shade the deep hollows."*

They signed peace treaties which were no more than truces broken by abuses and pillaging with Alonso de Lugo ever at their head. For decades the Indians had to live in inhospitable reservations. Even the many Moriscos of the time resisted so long here that all attempts to expel them were useless. Both ended up gaining a grudging respect.

PARADOR DE LAS CAÑADAS DEL TEIDE: AMBITIOUS COLONIST ADVENTURERS

In the end, at the very least events were irreversible, and at most there was many positive aspects: the Islands left pre-history behind to become the Renaissance Castile of the Atlantic.

Tenerife's lands were filled with much more pacific peoples: colonists from Seville, Cádiz and Huelva, above all. There came many different ways, fashions and customs. New cities appeared: Santa Cruz, La Laguna, La Orotava, Garachico, Icod, Hüimar.

Foreign money came, primarily Genoese. There arose houses and streets, churches and palaces which the traveler will already recognize as familiar. A unique Mudejar style flourished, with exemplary craftsmanship. The cities were laid out with a cord, in what we today call the American style. Island peoples would be the founders of Montevideo and San Antonio, Texas.

Everything came very quickly, and was fortunately very mixed, as is usual in times marked by swings of prosperity. Tenerife and other islands would recover their lost paradise, this time painted with the colors of expanding tax shelters, with taxes much lower even than those

enjoyed in Andalusia itself. So would these islands be the fortunate “*Sugar Islands*”, when the Guanches, never totally Castilian, cultivated the sugar cane brought by their neighbors from Madeira in the 16th century. There were as many as twelve refineries and so much and such exhausting work, that they even needed the help of imported slaves.

Even greater economic delight would come when, one fine day, the foothills of El Teide, who for the moment is only sleeping, awoke adorned by vines which would produce Malvasia wine, the most famous and sought after wine for at least two centuries. The British, Flemish, French, Italians, Spanish, and even the infant American colonies prided themselves on toasting with *Malvasia*. So lucrative was the business that it brought out serious jealousy among the other islanders, and the covetous inconsistency of the English, who came, and were frustrated in their attempts, to appropriate the wine production business.

These beaches and ports received numerous and bothersome visits from pirates and corsairs of foreign powers. Even Nelson himself came in person, although he would end up with his tail between his legs and one less arm. It was in the early years of the 18th century that this war of redundant courtesies took place. If the admiral made it known that “*my greatest desire is that no islander suffer the consequences of my request for surrender,*” the fierce Guanche defenders, following their victory, allowed “*the troops to embark with all their weapons and boats. And let the ships of the squadron undertake not to bother the people.*”

By more or less the same time, the island was already enjoying the pleasant ways and unique appearance it displays for today’s traveler: temples, palaces, stately homes and a festive nature – as yet tourist free – for the venerable amazement of such illustrious visitors as Humboldt, immortal naturalist and first preserver of La Orotava. “*I confess that I have never anywhere seen a more varied scene, one more attractive and lovely than the Valley of La Orotava, with the layout of its masses of vegetation and rocks, not even after having traveled along the banks of the Orinoco, or to the mountains of Peru.*”

There are still many remnants of the houses that adorned these streets. The baroque of Concepción Church; the 17th-century House of the Balconies, which today holds an interesting collection of Canary Islands handicrafts.

At 2,140 meters stands the Parador de Las Cañadas del Teide. Its location in the national park provides an unmatched, and incredibly lovely setting. El Teide, its eruptions quiet since the 17th century, is now a peaceful miracle to be enjoyed by the traveler, perhaps from the cable railway with a stopping place, accommodation and panoramic view surprising in itself provided by the Parador de Turismo.



EL TEIDE: THE SWEET ENJOYMENT OF LEISURE

*I am told that there the beaches are black
From the lava reaching the sea
And that it extends from the foot of an
immense snowy smoking peak
Under a second sun of the wild Canaries*

André Bretón

This Parador was established on the initiative of Cabildo Insular. Its unsurpassable location is offered for the enjoyment of its visitors. We recommend taking in a mountain hike. There are any number of paths, both long and short, and with varying degrees of difficulty which you can take from the Parador.

From the Parador there are excellent guided excursions, inside and outside the park. For the most curious, there are guided observations of the night sky, nighttime walks, and more. The conditions of the Canaries skies are among the best in the world for astrophysics observation, fostering our curiosity upon viewing the virtually infinite stellar universe. In response to the questions and curiosity of its visitors, the Parador offers a telescope for guests.

This Parador was built in 1954 by Tomás Machado, architect of La Orotava. At that time, it had not been imagined that several years later, it would serve as the birthplace of the government of the Canary Islands. On 14 April 1978, the Canaries Council was constituted. This would later become the Autonomous Government of the Canary Islands.

Since then, many have been the guests who have enjoyed this unique place: the Count of Barcelona, father of King Juan Carlos; the magnificent

poet Rafael Alberti; the first man to walk on the moon, Neil Armstrong; and a long list of politicians, writers, businessmen, musicians, and more.

We should remember that El Teide, at 3,718 meters, is the highest point in all Spain. Part of the island is crossed by the Anaga Mountain Range.

Las Cañadas del Teide is the larger of the two craters in this double cone volcano, El Teide. The venerated mass was a divinity for the pre-Hispanic inhabitants. The numerous cliff walls, mixed with volcanic lava, turn the island landscape into a mosaic of colors with vast differences in altitude, cliffs, and from the north, the spring broom of Las Cañadas.

Palm trees, in all their varieties, are found in the more sub-tropical areas; chestnuts in the heights of La Orotava; higher up are pine woods and the tough prickly pear. Taibas, green “*thistles*”, are tremendously drought-resistant autochthonous plants found in the southern regions.

Of all the islands, Tenerife is the preferred nesting place of birds: owls, sparrowhawks, fish eagles, barn owls, and more. The white-tailed laurel pigeon is everywhere. It shares the skies with the European serin, European robin, tits, chats and warblers.

*A dapple and a canary,
A blackbird and a hood,
All four at the nape of the neck,
Dressed in the same wardrobe
Guess what it is.*

Romeu Palazuelo



SECRET STOVES

*If the potato is my food
I eat night and day
And with the potato, perseverance
For the potato is sustenance
The potato is my feelings
Without the potato, I do not exist
And if the potato should leave me
After the potato I will go.*

Justo Morales

These tables have suffered the condemnation – perhaps jealous – and Inquisition of the mainland. Canary Islands cuisine is neither monotonous nor sparing, as we have been led to believe, but with one condition: the diner's palate must be in precise harmony with the frolicking airs of *mojo picón*. More than a sauce, it is rather a way of interpreting the meal's musical score.

The fish is fine and surprising, as pens educated in pot and frying pan have already dared to assert. You will find the delicate white meat of the **Sea Bream**, the grand lady of these waters. But there are also **Porgy**, **Sama Bream**, **Salema**, **Mackerel**, and **Sardines**. Any of these fish may be served in a marinade or fried, grilled or with the inevitable accompaniment of **Mojo**, which can also be found with coriander.

Mediterranean Moray Eels, crispy from the frying pan, boast an ancient lineage dating back to the Roman emperors. Fish casseroles often feature the **Gofio**, an ancient bread.

Pork is the king of meats, marinated, charcoal grilled or fried, it is served at any inn or celebration. **Kid Goats**, sometimes not so young, are roast or stewed with excellent results. **Rabbit** is generally found in **Salmorejo**, a sweet and spicy pepper sauce. And **Potatoes** are there in all shapes

and sizes: **Arrugás**, cooked in their skins; **Bonitas** and **Negras**, two local varieties, the latter yellow and juicy inside.

The **Sweet Blood Sausage**, both black and white, is famous. It is a combination of lean pork loin, lard and pig's blood, with yams, almonds, raisins, a little sugar and bread crumbs.

The prestige of the island's **Cheeses** has at last been recognized. The goat's milk varieties are exquisite. Accompany them if you wish with some **Malvasia Wine**, for two centuries the toast of the most refined and discerning courts of Europe.

Desserts may be festive and sweetened with palm syrup; **Bienmesabe**, with egg yolk and almonds; **Leche Asada**, baked caramel custard. **Mole** eggs are generally considered an exquisite dessert by the greatest sweet-tooths. They are made with egg yolks and syrup, and the recipe is said to have been brought to the island by the Portuguese.

In terms of wine, the traveler could try the reds from **Acentejo-Tacoronte**, or the whites from **La Orotava**. Those who prefer rosé will find them in the **Anaga Mountains**. In any case, the best thing is to ask the advice of the Parador's professionals.

THE SECRET RECIPE

TINERFEÑO STEW

Necessary ingredients: Half a hen, pork ribs and beef shank, which will give the broth substance. Vegetables: pumpkin, yams, string beans, carrots, zucchini. Vermicelli noodles and chick peas, left to soak the night before. The secret is said to lie in a proper balance of meat and vegetables.

RABBIT IN SALMOREJO PEPPER SAUCE

Roast a nice rabbit in the salmorejo with garlic, paprika, hot red pepper and oregano. Pour in the *mojo* sauce. Wait long enough so that it is just done.



PLEASURABLE STROLLS

Santa Cruz

This is the island's capital, a generous, happy and welcoming cosmopolitan city which makes it very easy to feel right at home. Her people enjoy the ample gardens and boulevards. A constant hustle and bustle leaves no time for sorrow or laziness. The city brims with greenness, filled with trees, and an exquisite park: **García Sanabria**, which should not be missed. It is one of those place you will not quickly forget.

There are many important historic buildings, such as the Church of **Nuestra Señora de la Concepción**, with two especially noteworthy chapels inside: San Andrés and Santiago. The church is the repository of the rich evidence of the Conquest and the standards taken from General Nelson during his foiled attack on the city.

The **Círculo de la Amistad 12 de Enero** is a recreational society founded in 1903, the result of the merging of three similar societies. Its building was constructed in the Second Empire style. The locals say that is the loveliest eclecticism in the city. **The Municipal Library of Tenerife** is in the same style, and houses an excellent newspaper and periodicals library.

The Church of San Francisco is a magnificent exponent of 17th-century baroque art. **Carta Palace** is also 17th-century. **Archeology and Anthropology Museum. Insular Palace**, home of the town council. **Municipal Museum of Painting and Sculpture. Paso Alto Castle.**

An interest in art has been a constant among Tenerife residents (*Tinerfeños*) for a very long time. Example enough is the *Surrealist Exhibition*, which took place at the Ateneo Association in Santa Cruz in May 1935. Much was due to the efforts of Oscar Domínguez, the local who left his native land for Paris, triumphed and became famous the world over. He was able to communicate to his painter friends his curiosity about this special land, a land of disquieting beauty, of contrasts. And thus he organized that unforgettable exhibition for Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

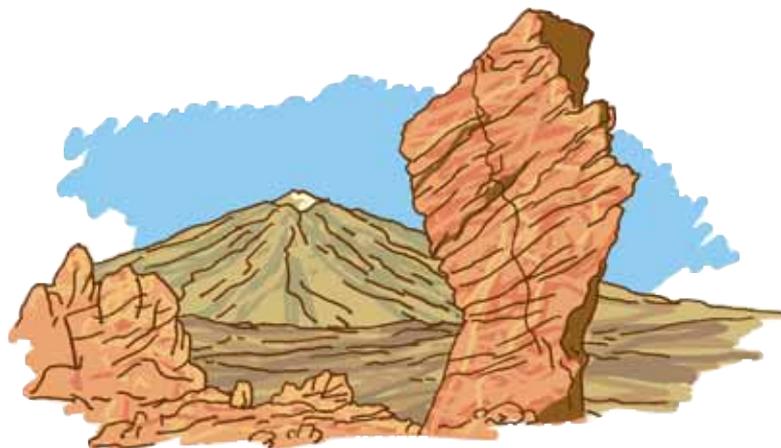
The **Guimerá Theater** is a charming bourgeois 19th-century theater, where Margarita Xirgu and María Guerrero, among others, performed.

Today's Tinerfeños continue to have an interest in culture. They are an inquiring, curious people who meet and organize group events with great regularity. They take pleasure in group efforts. The best expression of this collective excitement is unquestionably **Carnival**, which they spend a great deal of time preparing for. It is during Carnival when one can truly witness all the enthusiasm, humor and imagination of which they are capable. Not for naught has the **Carnival of Santa Cruz** been declared an event of international tourist interest.

The *Chicharreros* of Tenerife flood the streets of their city, which bedecks itself with sequins. Musical groups, street musicians and serenaders mix with cross-dressing characters or those in other costume. Canary Islands rum and joy abound during a festival which is glamorous, colorful and above all, fun.

The Tinerfeños are kind, obliging and good conversationalists. Let the traveler not fear to ask about anything: they will always be offered a spirited reply.

If you have plenty of time and can take a dip, you will find **Teresitas beach**, with its golden sands, not far from the center, near the sailors' quarter.



La Laguna: Proud Pasts, Futures Present

Proud of both past and present, learned and proud headquarters of the long-established university of knowledge, dating from the 17th century, and always a healthy brew of the latest thoughts. The history and art of what was the capital of these beaches can be found in **Casa Osuna**, belonging to the **Amigo del País Society**, and in its neo-classical and neo-Gothic cathedral in which the remains of Alonso de Lugo rest –perhaps somewhat agitated by memories more painful than enjoyable.

In the shade of prosperous British trade, the seeds of early missionary work were germinated. In the first years of the 20th century, the *Añaza Lodge* in Santa Cruz would be the largest Masonic cathedral in all Spain. Some of its members even came to sit in the Parliament of the Second Republic.

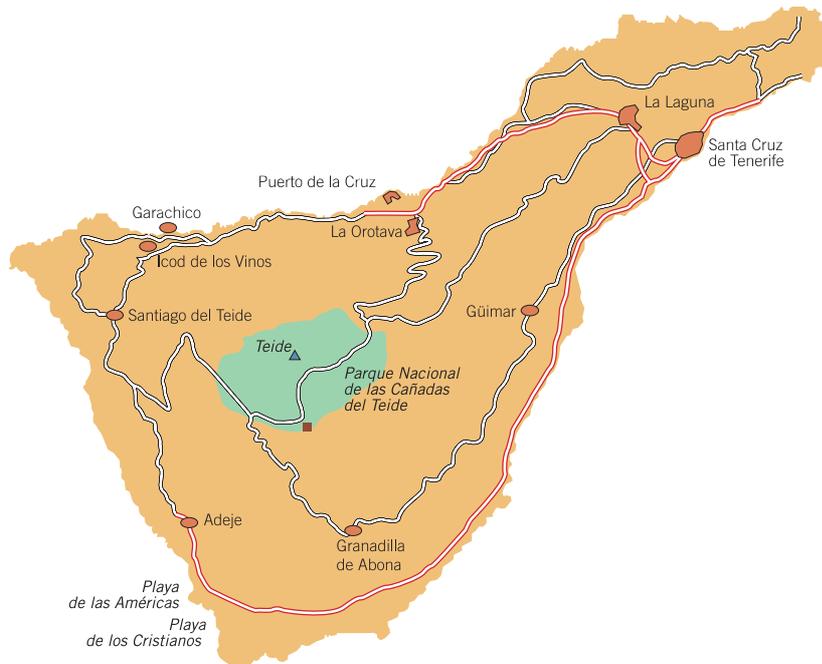
Taraconte should also be seen and visited: it is a land of vineyards and Renaissance stones. Here lie the caves which served as dwellings for the first Guanches.

Puerto de La Cruz is the kingdom of tourism and an eternal homage to César Manrique on long **Lake Martiánéz**: buildings of the pious and the warriors of the 17th century, and a must-see panorama from the Humboldt Viewpoint.

La Laguna: Cathedral with a treasury containing an important collection of silver pieces from the 17th century. **Nuestra Señora de la Concepción, San Francisco Convent. Bishop's Palace** and **Nava Palace. University of San Fernando. Viewpoints: La Cruz del Carmen** and **Pico del Inglés.**

Garachico. This living museum is filled with the past and present. **Güimar**, valley and garden of bananas, potatoes and tomatoes. **Icod de los Vinos**, a Renaissance and baroque site with narrow beaches and a view of the sacrosanct ancient dragon tree, the obligatory postcard photo.

And above all, there is Santa Cruz, beginning, middle and end of proudly bustling geography and history. The amphitheater of the Atlantic does not look away – faded by blasphemies, lit up by hope – from continents near and far. Proud Nelson defeated once again. More baroque and a sailor's way of life. Golden sand beaches and imported blonds. And Carnival, a mystical and pagan explosion, awakening passions with noise and color.



A libertarian and libertine apology for pleasures enjoyed in the shadows. "Without sin there is no Carnival," wisely stated Caro Baroja. A vengeful roar of laughter over the past and a happy smile for the future. The festival of Guanches with memories and without malice.:

*"...The homeland is a crag,
The homeland is a rock,
The homeland is a spring,
The homeland is a path and a hut..."*

Güimar

Churches: San Pedro Apóstol and Virgen del Perpetuo Socorro. Don Martín Viewpoint.

Icod

Convents: San Agustín and San Francisco. Dolores Chapel. Church of San Marcos and City Hall building.

La Orotava

Churches: Concepción and San Juan. Calvario Chapel. Houses on **San Francisco Street.**

Puerto de la Cruz

Churches: San Marcos, Nuestra Señora de la Peña de Francia and San Francisco. San Felipe Fort, now the History and Naval Museum. **Humboldt Viewpoint. Martíáñez Lake** (manmade). **Aclimatación Botanical Gardens.**

South Tenerife

South Tenerife is paradise of sea and sun tourism, with a climate that guarantees swimming 365 days a year. Beaches known the world over, including **Playa de América** and **Cristianos**, are the dream of hundreds of thousands.

And if the climate is special, so too are the sea and the light. The sea allows you to take part in a tremendous variety of water sports every season of the year. They say that the fishing is bountiful in all its forms.

South Tenerife's nights offer all the excitement any tourist could want for their holiday: night clubs, discos, medieval dinners, folklore, and more. Lest the traveler should think that the island has lost its native charm, there are interesting walks, for example, to the **Infierno Ravine**, a delightful hidden **Cove**.

And above all, there are the island's people, generous and obliging, and always ready to help a visitor.



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