

Fuerteventura



The second-largest island in the archipelago (after Tenerife), Fuerteventura is also the closest of the Canaries to the African coast: Morocco's Cape Juby is just 100km away. There are striking similarities in the landscape, particularly in the houses with their North African-style flat roofs for collecting rainfall. Communities are sprawled across the plains like tossed dice, often with no discernable centre, and punctuated by cacti, scrub and goat farms. In other ways, Fuerteventura emulates its neighbour Lanzarote, only with more colours. The volcanoes resemble piles of saffron, chilli and coriander; surreal triangles of exotic spices.

Most visitors, however, are more interested in mastering the waves and the wind than contemplating the abstract aesthetics of its scenery. Fuerteventura has year-round sunshine and the biggest and best beaches in the Canaries. The Atlantic winds that once propelled hundreds of windmills here now serve as the power for world-class windsurfing and kite boarding.

Fuerteventura has its main tourist resorts at opposite ends of the island. At the northern tip is Corralejo, beloved of the British sun seekers, while deep down south lies Morro Jable, largely frequented by Germans, and a markedly staid place.

Locals are known as Majoreros, or Maxoreros, from the Guanche (the islands' original inhabitants) name for the northern kingdom of the island – Maxorata.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Be a culture vulture and check out the cutting-edge modern art at La Oliva's **Casa de los Coroneles** (p106)
- Dine on catch-of-the-day seafood while gazing over the waves at pretty **Corralejo** (p106)
- Catch the waves at **Isla de Lobos** (p108), just one of the super-cool surfing spots here
- Kick off your shoes and do cartwheels in the soft, powdery sand at the **Parque Natural de Corralejo** (p108) sand dunes
- Be dazzled by the rare verdant green of the evocative valley location of lovely **Betancuria** (p101)



ITINERARY 1

BEST BEACHES

Fuerteventura is famous for its glorious beaches, the best of which are in the south of the island, where the endless stretches of sand resemble more the Caribbean than the Canaries. **Morro Jable** (1; p114) has a spectacular wide arc of sand, an excellent water-sports centre and a long promenade for dodging joggers. The Península de Jandía's top windsurfing beach is **Playa de Sotavento de Jandía** (2; p113) with its 22km of white sand and leeward winds; kite boarding is also taking flight here. **Costa Calma** (3; p113) and **Caleta de Fuste** (4; p103) have superb family beaches with golden sands, shallow waters and kids' activities (like camel rides), while in the north, **Corralejo** (5; p106) sports a small sandy beach at its centre and, south of town, blindingly white sand dunes where you can find secluded beaches and pretty rocky coves. Still in the north, head beyond the castle at **El Cotillo** (6; p111) to discover a wilder beach, complete with sculptures, seagulls and thundering surf.

0 — 10 km
0 — 6 miles

