



Tenerife

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Best Places to Eat

- » Tasca (p123)
- » Bar El Peton (p129)
- » Restaurante Mil Sabores (p134)
- » Casa Rural la Asomada del Gata (p128)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Alhambra (p219)
- » Hotel la Quinta Roja (p219)
- » Senderos de Abono (p220)
- » Hotel Aguere (p218)

Why Go?

Tenerife, the biggest and best-known Canary Island, receives over 10 million visitors a year, most of whom head straight to the tourist resorts of the south. But step beyond the lobster-red sunloungers, lap dancers and best bitter on tap and what you'll find is a cultured and civilised island of extraordinary diversity.

This potpourri of experiences includes tropical-forest walks and designer-shop struts; dark forays into volcanic lava; a sexy and sultry Carnival celebration that's second only to Rio, and a stash of museums, temples to modern art and creaky old colonial towns. But above all else this is an island of drama, and nothing comes more dramatic than the snow-draped Pico del Teide, Spain's tallest mountain and home to some of the most fabulous hiking in all the country.

When to Go

Tenerife is famed for its eternal spring-like climate and therefore anytime is prime time here. However, there are some moments of the year that are better than others. Sun-worshippers will probably find May to June and September offer the best combination of hot sun and lower crowds. Surfers will find the best waves between December and March, and scuba divers the calmest waters in July and August. Teide can be hiked at any time but deep winter can see snowfall closing the mountain and high summer can be too hot.

DON'T MISS

At 3718m Teide is the highest peak in Spain and one of its most breathtaking natural sights.

Best Old Towns

- » **La Laguna** (p126) Combines old-fashioned elegance with youthful zeal.
- » **La Orotava** (p136) The finest colonial architecture in Tenerife.
- » **Garachico** (p139) Quaint fishing port hemmed by beautiful scenery.

Best Hikes

- » **Teide** (p142) Simply the most spectacular walk in the Canaries.
- » **Barranco de Masca** (p144) A thrilling descent through a steep gorge.
- » **Pico Viejo** (p142) Teide's forgotten peak.
- » **Llano de los Loros** (p130) Beautiful, family-friendly forest stroll.

Resources

- » Official tourism site: www.todotenerife.es
- » The latest on climbing Teide: www.reservasparquesnacionales.es
- » Website of the islands' biggest English-language newspaper: www.islandconnections.eu

Getting Around

TITSA (Transportes Interurbanos de Tenerife SA; www.titsa.com) runs a spider's web of bus services all over the island, as well as within Santa Cruz and other towns.

Car-rental agencies are almost as plentiful on the island as English pubs, so you shouldn't have a problem, even if you want same-day rental. The generally reliable international chains are present in all major resort areas and the airports.

You can take a taxi anywhere on the island – but it is an expensive way to get around. You are much better off hiring a car.

THREE PERFECT DAYS

Day One

Start your tour in **Santa Cruz**, fawning over the classical works in the **Museo de Bellas Artes**. Next head up to some natural art in the **Parque García Sanabria**. Get a load of how creative modern Spain can be in the **TEA**, a modern art gallery. Then learn about life many yesterdays ago at the **Museo de la Naturaleza y El Hombre** and finish your day with a stroll to the **Auditorio de Tenerife**.

Day Two

Explore the gracious streets of pretty **Garachico**, on the island's northwest coast, in the morning before driving west towards wild **Punto de Teno** at the very end of Tenerife. Hold onto the edge of your seat on the drive to spectacular **Masca** and then drop down to the seaside for some bucket-and-spade fun at **Los Gigantes** and **Puerto de Santiago**.

Day Three

Stick your head high above the clouds in the stunning **Parque Nacional del Teide**. The fit and fearless can make an all-day hiking assault on the summit; the fearless but not so fit can take it easy in the cable car ride to just below the summit. Everyone can enjoy the easy walk around the **Roques de García**.

Getting Away from It All

- » **Anaga Mountains** (p129) Dense forest dripping in life and little-trodden hiking trails.
- » **Porís de Abona** (p147) Tiny, tranquil and our favourite east coast beach
- » **Las Américas** (p149) Not the most obvious place to get away from it all, but if you really want a do-nothing break from the nine-to-five, this is the place