



Santa María de Guía Tourist Information Office

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Gran Canaria Tourist Board

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More Information at the Tourist Website

www.GranCanaria.com

Festivals

FIESTAS OF THE VIRGIN

Patron Saint festival in honour of the Virgin of Guía, and one of the oldest invocations on the island. They are held during the first fortnight of August, with their most important day being the 15th with the morning procession followed by the Battle of the Flowers in the afternoon. During the fiestas there are numerous cultural events, mainly linked to music and traditions such as “papagüevos” oversized puppets (these are the stars of the show), the float parade and the aforementioned Battle of the Flowers (a fun tradition that brings the fiestas to a close).

FIESTAS OF LAS MARÍAS

This fiesta commemorates the tradition of the vote of Vergara, that occurred in 1811, because of an important plague of locusts, by which the country folk made a promise to go down every year from the hills to visit the Virgin of Guía, as a form of thanks giving. The fiesta is held every year on the third weekend in September and is made up of two main events: the Bringing Down of the Branch from the hills around Guía on the Saturday, and the Procession and Pilgrimage on the Sunday at midday. During the celebrations, the sound of *caracolas* or *bucios* shell horn-like sounds, and drums, can be heard (as an allegory to the elements used to scare the plague away). As far as the pilgrimage is concerned, it is considered one of the purest, prettiest and most traditional in the whole of the Canaries.

Beach of San Felipe



Cuisine



TYPICAL PRODUCTS FROM THE MUNICIPALITY

Flower cheese
Lengüillas sponge cakes
Guía sweets

Typical Recipe

Guía Cheese Cachirulos cakes



INGREDIENTS

1kg. of Guía Flower Cheese
6 eggs
125 grs. of sugar
1 small spoon of aniseed
1 pinch of salt
1 small spoon of yeast powder
¼ Kg. of flour
Butter for lining the moulds

PREPARATION

The cheese is cut up and is blended in a basin; the egg yolks are added, along with the sugar, aniseed, grated lemon peel, cinnamon and yeast and it is all mixed in together. The egg whites are whisked separately until fluffy. The flour is added little by little to the basin. This is mixed in and the resulting paste is put into the moulds, previously lined with butter; they are placed in the oven on a medium heat, and when they are golden-brown, they are removed. They are served cold, removed from the moulds and sprinkled with icing sugar.

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Santa María de Guía



MUNICIPALITIES OF GRAN CANARIA

Santa María de Guía



To the northwest of the island of Gran Canaria, between the municipalities of Moya and Gáldar, and just 22 kilometres from the capital. It occupies a surface area of 42,59² that extend all the way up from the sea to the summit.

yesteryear. Among these are the **Parish Church** (built between the 17th and 19th centuries), for its Baroque façade flanked by two neoclassical towers and in whose interior important works of art are carefully preserved, including the alterpieces and images of local Guía sculptor José Luján Pérez; **the House of Los Quintana** (a grand old building from the 16th century; **the House where Néstor Álamo was born** (17th century) and the **Hermitage of San Roque** (16th century, and restored in the 19th century in an eclectic style). Other places of interest within the old town are the Bakery where Guía's typical sweets are made in the traditional style; the craft workshops where



Canary Knife



Parish Church

The **Cenobio de Valerón** is the main entrance to the municipality of Santa María de Guía. This archaeological settlement, made up of nearly 300 caves carved out of the volcanic rock and situated on the Cuesta de Silva (on the GC-291 road), is the largest and most spectacular pre-hispanic grain store in Gran Canaria. During our visit, as well as learning about the relevance of agriculture in the productive model of the ancient Canarians as the mainstay of their sustenance and socio-political organization, there is ample reference to the flora and fauna all around, to the volcanic geology of the area, and of course all the archaeological aspects of the settlement itself.

Moving on from the Cenobio de Valerón, next stop is the **Historic Town Centre** (declared Historic-Artistic Monument), and is a must.

A stroll around its streets allows visitors to take in the beauty of its buildings, and takes us back to the splendour of

visitors can learn how Canary knives are made (including the handle, made with goats horn), and wood-carvings, as well as establishments where the famous Guía Cheese can be tasted. As we make our way around we can observe many more splendid examples of varied architecture that resides in the city, with their outstanding Canary house fronts and neoclassical architecture, which are of the finest to be found in the whole archipelago.

Also in the old town we come to the **Néstor Álamo Museum**, in the house that Guía's illustrious musician and historian was born, in 1906. Our visit here gives us the chance to learn about and enjoy the evolution of music in the Canaries, from the sounds created by the indigenous population some thousand years ago to today's music heard in every nook and cranny of the archipelago, focusing on all the influences that have made the



music and culture here what it is. This is evident throughout the different rooms in the stately 17th century house, with of course, the figure and works of the multitalented Néstor Álamo as the guideline to the visit, and who spent most of his life dedicated to research and to fighting for the recuperation of old traditions.

For those who prefer to enjoy the sea and nature, this municipality offers us plenty of choice. Given the rocky nature of its coastline, there are two main bathing areas: the **Playa de San Felipe**, which has great waves for surfers; and the **natural pools at Roque Prieto**, which is a more family oriented beach. The hills and summit also offer countryside and areas for recreation, at places such as **Santa Cristina** and **Monte Pavón**, as well as others for hiking and biking. The **Special Nature Reserve of El Brezal** is one of the protected areas to be found in the municipality in which great efforts have gone into preserving the natural Canary heath and scrub and evergreen forests.

Also high up in the hills, we find **La Casa del Queso** (the cheese house, in the town of Montaña Alta, the epicentre of cheese production). These facilities have been converted into a visitors' information centre, and here we can try out and buy the magnificent locally produced cheese from this area, as well as other dairy products made with sheep's milk. We can also learn all about the process from start to finish of how this artisan product is made, and the ethnographic component of the gastronomic jewel of the Canaries that is the Flower Cheese of Guía.



Historic Town Centre



Natural Pools of Roque Prieto



Cenobio de Valerón

How to get there

FROM LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA Along the **GC-2** (north motorway)

FROM MASPALOMAS Up the **GC-1**, turning off at the **GC-3** Las Palmas bypass, or carrying on into Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to then take the **GC-2**. Take the GC-60 to Tejeda, continuing along the **GC-15** as far as Cruz de Tejeda and taking the **GC-150** to join up with the **GC-70**. Along the **GC-1** connecting up with the **GC-200** as far as the **GC-2**.

BY BUS From Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: **Services 105 and 103**
From the airport: **Service 60** up to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
From Maspalomas: **Services 50, 01, 04, 05** to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
From Mogán and Puerto Rico: **Service 01** to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Did you know?

Guía, which receives its name in honour of the Virgin of Guía, the Patron Saint of the Municipality, was founded in the time immediately following the conquest by Sancho de Vargas y Machuca, who erected a hermitage dedicated to the Virgin of Guía, from which the nucleus of population started to grow in importance, as time went by, and finally constituting its own urban site, independently from neighbouring Gáldar, in 1526. The current church, built between the 17th and 19th centuries, was raised on the grounds of the former hermitage, which had to be knocked down due to the population increase, in the shelter of the sugar cane cultivation, through the 16th century. Santa María de Guía has always been a home to culture, as not only artisans have been leading lights, but also politicians, musicians, poets and sculptors, who especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, pushed this municipality to the forefront of Canary social life. Testament to this are sculptor Luján Pérez, canon Gordillo and the great musician and researcher Néstor Álamo, among others.