



COUNTRY HOUSE “LA HIGUERA”

INFORMATIVE GUIDE

VEGA DE SAN MATEO

GRAN CANARIA (Canary Islands)





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1.- PRESENTATION

Welcome to the country house La Higuera!

This guide was created by the hotel direction for:

- Users who want a detailed summary of what they can find in our portal and want to read it in any moment on their computer.
- Users who are looking for specific information about the environment of La Higuera.
- Customers that have decided to live the experience we propose, and want to print and take this guide with them in order to have an unforgettable stay at our place.

We provide you by this guide with all you need to know about his enchanting village where the house is located, Vega de San Mateo, as well as about Gran Canaria Island, where the village is located and general information about La Higuera.

The information layed out here was obtained from the Association of Tourism of Gran Canaria and the town council of Vega de San Mateo. If you wish to receive more information, direct yourself to the following direction of the tourist information which is located in the village:

Office of tourism of La Vega de San Mateo

C/ Doctor Ramírez Cabrera, 9

Phone: (34) 928 661 350 (ext. 45)

Fax: 928 661 241

e-mail: turismo@vegasanmateo.es

Thanks for dedicating your time to get to know the beauties of this beautiful enclave where the country house La Higuera is located. We hope this guide to be useful for you.



2.- GRAN CANARIA

Welcome to Gran Canaria

Gran Canaria Island is considered as a big theme park where centuries of history, beautiful landscapes of great beauty and exciting opportunities to enjoy your free time.

History

The origins of the history of the Canary Islands in general are mixed with myths and legends and there exist various theories concerning the matter. In one or another form it is necessary to go back to the classic epoque to have the first historic refernces to Gran Canaria. The investigations about the first settlers show a connection to the northafrican environment and the cultural background of the berbers that colonized the island in the middle of the first century before Christ. Gran Canaria was the most important island in receiving the many different peoples and cultures that came to the archipelago in the prehispanic epoch.

The conquest of the island which was realized in the last third of the 15th century under the leadership of the Spanish kings, cost five years of fight, as a result of the strong resistance of the native inhabitants. The final incorporation of Gran Canaria to the Spanish kingdom happened through Pedro de La Vera, who in 1483 completed the conquest which had been started by Juan de Rejón. This conquest had to phases: Docking and construction of the camp of Las Palmas in the mouth of Guinguada; and the military campaign of Vera, which ended with the submission of the natives of Galdar, and a pacification campaign in the southern part of the island.

From that time on, the Spanish crown began to infiltrate all the political, social and economic influence in Gran Canaria. The grancanarian capitel was converted into the administrative center and epicenter of the representative of the island (The bishop of the Canary Islands, the Tribune of the holy inquisition, the Real Audiencia of Gran Canaria). In the 17th century the glory of Gran Canaria began to fade, caused by the reduced agricultural exportations to America and the rest of Europe.

It had to be waited until the middle of the 19th century when the free ports were reestablished, a special regime created in order to support the economic relations of the archpelago. It is precisely this benefit, based on tax exemptions, that acted as an attracting point and that multiplied the number of English boats and sea trading companies that docked at the island. Nowadays, the condition of the insularity of Gran Canaria and the archipelago are layed out in the Law of economic and fiscal regime, established within the incorporation of the Canary

Islands to the European Union.

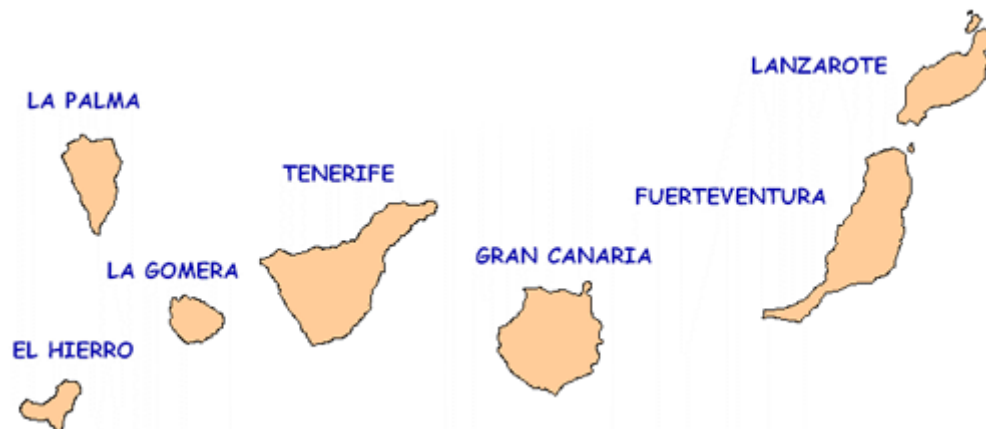
This naval traffic was precisely the cause for the development of the touristic activity on Gran Canaria Island, which by the years, became the major source of income of the island and placed it among the principal touristic destinations of the world. From the middle of the 19th century on Gran Canaria became more popular with the Europeans as a place of relaxation for tourists and all people, which was made use of by the sea companies who provided places on their ships during their voyages. It were also those companies who gave impulses for the construction of the first hotels of the islands, among them the hotel Santa Catalina (1890) in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, the only establishment, which remained open continuously since the opening.

The development of tourism and the services generated around this sector were interrupted by different wars (First and second world war and the Spanish civil war) and it was not until the fifties when this activity registered important numbers again.

At Christmas 1957 a plane of the Swedish aviation company Transair AB with 54 places landed on Gando Airport. It was the first in a serie of charter flights by which the mass tourism and the modern touristic business initiated on Gran Canaria island.

Situation

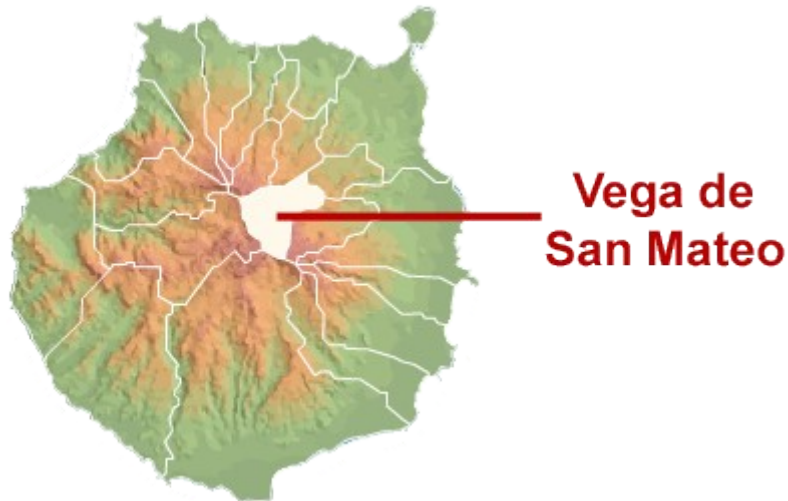
Gran Canaria is located in the atlantic zone of Macronesia, formed by the archipelagos of Madeira, Selvagens, Azores and the Cape Verde Islands. It is about 210 kilometers from the nearest point to the african coast and about 1250 kilometers from Cadiz, the nearest European port. Within the Canarian archipelago Gran Canaria is located between Fuerteventura at a distance of 83 kilometers in the east, and Tenerife at a distance of 62 kilometers in the west.





Of volcanic origin, Gran Canaria unites in its 1560 square kilometers of surface and 236 kilometers of coast longitude a great part of the various landscapes of the archipelago. This fact and the variety of the clima has given the island the qualification of being a miniature continent. The most astounding physical characteristic trait of the island is its roundedness, only distorted by a small peninsula of about 12 square kilometers situated in the northeast (La Isleta) connected to the island through a spit of land consisting of sand. The maximum altitude is situated at the Pozo de Las Nieves, in the very center of Gran Canaria island with 1949 metres. From these altitudes until the coast the island is criss-crossed radically by profound riverbeds, in which a different landscape is exhibited.

3.- SAN MATEO: General information



How to find us

To get to the Vega de San Mateo, where the La Higuera countryhouse is located, by starting from Las Palmas (capital of the island), the visitor should take the road Carretera del Centro, which has the center of the island as its destiny. In order to get to Vega de San Mateo it is necessary to pass the area with most residents of Tafira, as well as the municipality of Santa Brígida.

The Vega de San Mateo is located 22 kilometers from the capital. Nevertheless, the road, which is one of the most beautiful ones of the island through the landscape at its side, partly consists of only one lane and many bends.

If the visitor decides to go by public transport, he should go to the Bus Station of Las Palmas and from there take the bus number 303 with destination San Mateo. This bus leaves every hour, in more frequented traffic time twice an hour.

History

The history of Vega de San Mateo begins not more than 200 years ago. The forestal richness of this place and its geographic characteristics, favourable for the growing of cattle, were the cause for the native inhabitants to settle in this area.



After the conquest of Gran Canaria island the land was distributed among the colonists. The territory of today's San Mateo, whose original name was Tinamar, was framed by what was called La Vega, which enclosed what today are the municipalities of San Mateo and Santa Brigida. Thus, we find how this great landscape called La Vega was divided into three parts itself, La Vega de arriba (above), which corresponded to what is San Mateo (Tinamar) today, La Vega de en medio (in the middle) which we locate in the zone of El Madroñal, and finally La Vega de Abajo (down) which corresponds to the municipality of Santa Brigida today.

In the 18th century, the Vega Alta experienced a population increase. Additionally came the bad situation of the tracks and the great distance to the parish church of La Vega. This made the settlers request the construction of an own church. After obtaining a resolution for the construction of a parish church, a hermitage on costs of Vega de arriba was created under the advisory of San Mateo. This hermitage will be converted into a parish church in 1800. This was converted in a first step like in most of the cases, to obtain the municipality.

After having obtained the religious independence, the neighbours of San Mateo began to take the steps to obtain the total independence of Santa Brigida. Thus, in the beginning of the 19th century, the Audiencia decides to separate the village of San Mateo from the jurisdiction of La Vega. In this epoch San Mateo could count with an average number of 600 households and the economic situation began to concentrate itself on agriculture, cattle and the richness of the water resources. These circumstances remained stabilized continuous until the 20th century, when economic changes assisting to a crisis in the primary sector towards a climax in the tertiary sector, provoked by the urban emigration and the projection of capital to other non-agricultural sectors.

Geografía

The municipality of San Mateo is located in the center of Gran Canaria island, at about 22 kilometers from the capital. The municipality is surrounded by Valleseco, Tejeda, Santa Brigida, Valsequillo and San Bartolome de Tirajana. Its surface is about 37,89 square kilometers and 47% of the territory is part of the nature reserve of Las Cumbres. It is located at an altitude of 800 meters, in the center, where the major elevations of the island can be found: Pico de Las Nieves, at 1961 meters, Los Pechos at 1945 meters and Roque Saucillo at 1850 meters. The highest zone of the territory, La Cumbre, is defined by the head of the Barranco Guinguada, the Barranco de La Higuera and the Barranco de la Mina which together with the elevations of the place make of the landscape a place of exceptional beauty and diversity.



The Barranco de la Mina, crosses the island of Gran Canaria until the northeast zone leading into the capital of the island. La Mina has a small water resource thanks to the transfer which is realized since centuries from the gorge of Tejeda to that one of Guinguada via a tunnel that crosses the mountain and, therefore, received the name La Mina (the mine).

The irregular mountains of San Mateo and its extraordinary climatic conditions for the cultivation have resulted in the place being one of the most beautiful landscapes of the island by its lushness.

Economy

The Vega de San Mateo is a municipality with a big tradition in agriculture and cattle breed, caused by the geografic and climatic conditions favouring the fertility of the land. To that comes an extensive network of small riverbeds that guarantee sources of water to all territories. The agricultural explotations are reduced, fruit of direct work on the territory, a part-time agriculture and the proliferation of the goat breed. In this sense, San Mateo is characterised as one of the places where the best cheese of the island is produced.

The importance of the agricultural and cattle breeding activities today is not comparable with those of the past, as to day the service and construction sectors are the major ones of the municipality.



4.- SAN MATEO: Gastronomy

The cattle breeding and agricultural activity of San Mateo guarantee a wide range of rich plates for the visitor. The different restaurants of the area offer different typical plates like pork meat, salt meat, ribs, grilled sausages, etc. The soups of vegetables, gofio escaldado (typically canarian corn flour) and queso tierno (cheese) of San Mateo are the most consumed plates in the municipality.

But you can also try more traditional and selective plates, always cooked with ingredients of the Canarian land.

The desserts, based on typical Canarian sweets elaborated with bienmesabe and leche frita (fried milk) and frangollo are always at the disposal of the visitor in any of the restaurants.

And all this crowned by the wines of the landscape.

5.- SAN MATEO: Local holidays

The “Fiestas patronales”, the holidays of the patron saint, in the honor of San Mateo are celebrated the 21st of September. The municipalities are converted into a great party for a couple of days and brings together many pilgrims. A sacrifice is also celebrated. Furthermore, a horse race and an important cattle fair is organized.

The first Sunday in July the Holiday of the farmer is celebrated. It is a very popular holiday in the municipality, where typical activities of a farmer are shown to the people, like the milking of cows and the threshing of the horses. All this is accompanied by folklore music and dances that agglutinate the party.

Also in the month of July the holiday of the indians is celebrated, inspired by the emigration of Canarians to Cuba.



6.- SAN MATEO: Free time activities

A walk through the old town of San Mateo really has to include a visit to the parish church of Vega de San Mateo, located on the main street, where we find a building with two naves, (The left one of 1800 and the right one of 1895) whose superior part is crowned by a bell casing created by Jose Lujan Perez. The bell of the church, added four years after the construction, was sent from Cuba by Canarian emigrants of that place. The church shows an eclectic style with neoclassic influences.

The Alameda de Santa Ana was created in 1943 and is located by the church. For this the town council bought a plot of land where originally the old bakery was located, which had its oven where the Quiosco de la Musica is today. Nowadays it forms, together with the town hall a collection of pure neocanarian style.

The natural environment of San Mateo is worth another walk. The visitor can get near to the Roque Bicacarl, in the village of Bodeguilla, halfway from Santa Brigida, which offer fantastic views of the zone.

Furthermore, the visitor can walk the route along the Barranco de la Minam which extends along Las Lagunetas and La Yedra. It is a riverbed filled with water throughout the year, and conserves traces of laurel trees and old water mills of the zone.

The Mirador de la Cabreja situated on the mountain with the same name, consists of a marvellous observatory of the gorge of Guinguada, of the municipal territory and the middle of Gran Canaria and also the town of Las Palmas. The Mirador Natural de la Cruz y el Montanon also show an excellent view of the municipality.

Hoya del Gamonal, Roque y Cruz del Saucillo; are part of the natural of **Las Cumbres**, which is of an exceptional beauty and unestimable value due to the endemic plants growing there.

There exist many recreational zones where you can enjoy the fresh air; the recreative zone of La Lechucilla, a few kilometers from the center of the municipality and integrated in to a zone of chestnut trees, being an ideal place for a barbecue and the zone Los Llanos de Ana Lopez, located in the Cueva Grande in a pine tree wood and surrounded by the vegetation of the peak of Gran Canaria.



7.- SAN MATEO: Market

The agricultural and arts and crafts market is the oldest and most pioneer market of the islands; it is more than 20 years old. The activity was initiated in 1972, when the farmers wanted to help in the acquisition of the plot of land. Today, the market is the principal economic motor of the municipality and it is visited by approximately 15000 persons every weekend who come to buy fresh vegetables, fruits, cheese etc. In this market you can also admire the arts and crafts of the municipality. The cheeses are also excellent and the wines bring much honor to the wineries of the municipality.

8.- SAN MATEO: Arts and crafts

Among the arts and crafts activities of the island that are developing in San Mateo are the basket-making, the elaboration of canarian knives and the working with leather and wood. In the book "San Mateo. Vivencias de un pueblo" (The lives of a village) by the author Domitila Naranjo Mozon disappeared professions like that one of a smith and a brass smith are mentioned and that ones still being alive like the seamstress and spinner. In the book is said: "The professions that are almost being forgotten are the ones like seamstresses. These last ones remain thanks to the people who give their efforts to keep them, as shows our arts and crafts culture (...)"

On the other hand, in the book "Arts and crafts: Obsolete profession or economic source?" by Mari Carmen Naranjo Santana refers to the Vega de San Mateo having counted with a great number of craft workers from the place itself or from other municipalities in order to commercialize their products and sell them to the other sectors. This increase in the arts and crafts sector was caused by the geostrategic situation and its agricultural and cattle breeding character and by the development of the most important fairs and markets of the island.



9.- COUNTRY HOUSE LA HIGUERA

Presentation

The country house La Higuera is located in Vega de San Mateo, municipality situated on Gran Canaria Island, between the gorges of Castillejos and Mireles, an environment of spectacular views.

The possibilities for relaxation, the activities in the nature and the exceptional beauty of the landscape, have brought up country enclaves such as La Higuera, where peace and silence will be your possibility to live an unforgettable experience.

Services

- House with two floors occupying a surface of 282,10 square metres of land.
- Two dormitories, one of them as a suite with fantastic views of the mountains and the sea.
- Three foyers with different functions.
- Garden with Jacuzzi.
- Completely equipped bathroom.
- Barbecue grill with sink.
- Kitchen equipped with the most modern devices: dish washer, oven, extractor hood, washing machine, dryer, fridge with big freezer.
- Design furniture.
- Artwork.
- Flatscreen TV in the hall (with DVD and home cinema) and suite.

Contact information

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