

LANZAROTE TOURIST GUIDE

Island Journal

Lancelot

WHERE TO GO

WHAT TO SEE

HOW TO GET THERE

Winter 2017

33rd

Year

Issue 139

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Unesco Awards Lanzarote "Geopark" Status

**Sustainable Hotels
on the Island**



**Distinguished
Services to Tourism
Prizewinners**

Culture Dining Out Holiday Homes Tourist Attractions

Geosite Los Hervideros was formed when the lava flow met the sea during the eruptions of the Fire Mountains.
Photograph Richard Maslonka

EDITORIAL

"Treat the Earth well. It was not a gift to you from your parents, it is on loan to you from your children."

Kenyan proverb

GeoPark Lanzarote Biosphere Isle

Welcome to Lanzarote and welcome to Lancelot, the island's quality publication now in our 33rd year of publication and the oldest English-magazine in Spain.

There are many beautiful locations in the world, many of which are holiday destinations, but very few of them hold the United Nations distinction as a Biosphere Reserve, and fewer still, have been declared a Geopark by the global organisation. Lanzarote was declared an Island Biosphere Reserve in 1993 because the influx of mass tourism was not allowed to affect the overriding policy of conservation of the environment due to legislation introduced by the Cabildo Island Government.

Lanzarote was, and still is, considered a veritable real scale laboratory for sustainable development in which economic and social progress go hand in hand with the preservation and improvement of their natural and cultural heritage. Because these principles have been upheld for over two decades, the island has once again received the highest environmental distinction of being named a Geopark by Unesco as is reported in the leading article of this issue. Further to this, the majority of Lanzarote's hotels and their association Asolan also promote environmental policies as an essential component in the running of their establishments.

Having enjoyed your holiday, you may wish to buy a holiday-cum-retirement home on an island with 12 months year sunshine and is only a few hours away from the UK, Ireland and most of Europe. Have a wonderful vacation, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Our next issue is out on 1 March.

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No. 139, 2017

*Geosite Timanfaya in the
Fire Mountains has been
a national park since
1974 and forms the major
tourist attraction on
Lanzarote*



Lanzarote Declared UNESCO Global Geopark

Combining Conservation with
Sustainable Development

The Fire Mountains of Timanfaya are
an Extraordinary Geological Heritage

Photography: Centros Turísticos
Richard Maslanka, courtesy Memoria de Lanzarote

A Geopark is defined as a location where visitors can “feel, understand and discover, the geological history of our planet.” The following article explains which features of Lanzarote’s geology have qualified the island to be declared part of the United Nations Global Geopark Network.

The project Lanzarote Geopark which was promoted by the Insular Cabildo Council’s Casa de los Volcanes was approved by Unesco in 2015 which named Lanzarote and the Chinijo Archipelago – the isles of La Graciosa, Alegranza, Montaña Clara, Roque del Este and Roque del Oeste - part of the European Geoparks Network. The Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.

Nature and Culture

The recognition of Lanzarote and its small islands as a Unesco Global Geopark in addition to its recognition as a World Biosphere Reserve by the same entity in 1993, is mainly due to the huge value of its natural and cultural heritage and to the people’s capacity to promote and organise a social economic model based on tourism.

A model seeking to harmonise the preservation and protection of the

natural heritage of the island with a quality tourism industry and capacity to promote key traditional sectors and develop new activities related to sport, cultural, culinary and to scientific tourism which includes interest in visiting and exploring scientific landmarks, monuments and museums.

Lanzarote’s Major Geological Features

The **Geosites** are: **La Geria** which is the largest field of wind dispersal in the Canary Islands in terms of surface and thickness. Known as tephra, called picón or rofe by the residents of Lanzarote, this fragmental material was produced by the volcanic eruption of Timanfaya 1730-1736. **Los Hervideros** is characterised by a cliff derived from the historical lava flows of Timanfaya, which are very thick at this location. Coastal erosion processes caused the flows to form passages for water infiltration. On days of heavy swell, ocean spray foam reaches several metres in height over the external surface of the flows.





The volcanic landscape acts as a backdrop for the rocky shoreline



El Golfo has an interior lagoon known as the Charco de los Clicos, of a greenish colour caused by algae and is separated from the sea by a beach of pebbles. **Cones of Timanfaya** includes La Caldera de los Cuervos, which initiated the eruption in 1730 and Caldera Colorada, located nearby, corresponds to the last volcanic pile formed during the final stage of the eruption in 1736.

Historical Eruptions

They are the representative central vents of the beginning of the largest historical eruptions in the Canary Islands. **Calderas Quemadas**, their alignment forms a small volcanic chain formed by four ring-shaped volcanic piles which determines the main direction of the eruptive fissure that gave rise to the historical eruption of Timanfaya. This is part of Geosite VC007, Timanfaya National Park, recognised as of national importance. La Caldera de los Cuervos was the one that initiated the eruption

El Jable is a passage of active Aeolian sand that crosses the



The Saltpans of Janubio attract wild ducks and other waterfowl

island from north to south from Caleta de Famara to Playa Honda-Arrecife. El Jable is still very active and its activity is easily visible to the human eye. It is especially representative of the Aeolian dynamic of the eastern islands and one of the largest geosites in extension of the inventory of Lanzarote. **Risco de Famara** is

a large cliff 25 kilometres long and 400-600 metres high and its origin is linked to a great landslide. It extends parallel along the current coastline showing steep escarpments along most of it that stretches continuously, which lends landscape homogeneity. The Famara Massif was formed between the two main eruptive cycles.



Geosite La Geria wine cultivation region is unique in the world and is described as a Unique Cultural Adaption

UNESCO Global Geoparks empower local communities and give them the opportunity to develop cohesive partnerships with the common goal of promoting the area's significant geological processes, features, periods of time, historical themes linked to geology, or outstanding geological beauty. They are established through a bottom-up process involving all relevant local and regional stakeholders and authorities in the area (e.g. land owners, community groups, tourism providers, indigenous people, and local organizations). This process requires firm commitment by the local communities, a strong local multiple partnership with long-term public and political support, and the development of a comprehensive strategy that will meet all of the communities' goals while showcasing and protecting the area's geological heritage.




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Sustainable Hotels – An Essential Ingredient → at a Recognised Geopark Destination



Geopark Chinijo Archipelago

One of the most important elements of the recognition of Lanzarote and the Chinijo Archipelago as a Geopark is that holidaymakers who are attracted to eco-tourism destinations are able to find suitable accommodation at hotels which practice the efficient management of basic natural resources. The majority of Lanzarote's leading establishments have received the Spanish Ministry of Tourism's SICTED Award for Excellence in Destination for having achieved the highest standard of quality and professional service. They can truly be described as Geopark Hotels.



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UN World Tourism

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, the business volume that tourism is generating today equals or even surpasses that of oil exports, food products or even automobiles. A primary goal in sustainable development has been to ensure that tourism protects and sustains the world's natural and cultural resources and meets its potential as a tool for poverty alleviation. Based on these principles, Unesco declared Lanzarote a World Biosphere Reserve in 1993. This distinction was awarded due to the efforts of César Manrique in tandem with the Lanzarote Cabildo, by imprinting the philosophy of harmony between Man and Nature upon the collective conscience of the inhabitants of the Island.

This principle resulted in conservation of the environment practises in areas such as to restrict development in line with available infrastructure; careful management of the reduction and disposal of wastes;



Fields of tunera cactus at Gnatiza

adopting wind and solar energy-efficient practises thereby minimising environmental risks and undertaking "green" marketing which includes providing complete and credible conservation information

for visitors to the island. In the 23 years that have elapsed since Lanzarote was declared a World Biosphere Reserve the island has maintained its reputation as a pioneer in




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Merry Christmas

Enjoy the company of your nearest & your dearest. We'll do the rest for you!



the field of Sustainable Tourism as the first commercial tourism destination in the world to do so. This honour is reserved for establishments whose management operate an eco-efficiency policy resulting in minimum pollution due to the maximum use of alternative resources.

Local Hotel Industry

Lanzarote's hotel industry has been at the forefront of providing the best facilities to attract eco-tourism to the island. Eco-tourism is best described as an alliance between conservation of the environment and travel. To practice co-efficiency developers need to consider the environment creatively throughout project design, construction and operation. Once completed, those responsible for delivering services and products to tourists must examine their operations in light of sustainable resource management.



Flowers bloom after a rare spell of rainfall

SPEL Overseas Promotion

SPEL, the Lanzarote Cabildo overseas promotion arm under Tourism Councillor Echedey Eugenio with the day to day running in the hands of Managing Director Héctor Fernández has an executive board comprising public officials as well as representatives from the hotel sector who jointly fund the ope-

ration. They are very much aware that the classic definition of a 'sun and beach' vacation destination attracts holidaymakers to the glorious spring-like climate and glorious beaches of the Canary Islands.

However, in addition they take into account that today's holiday market is much more demanding than in the past and bear in mind

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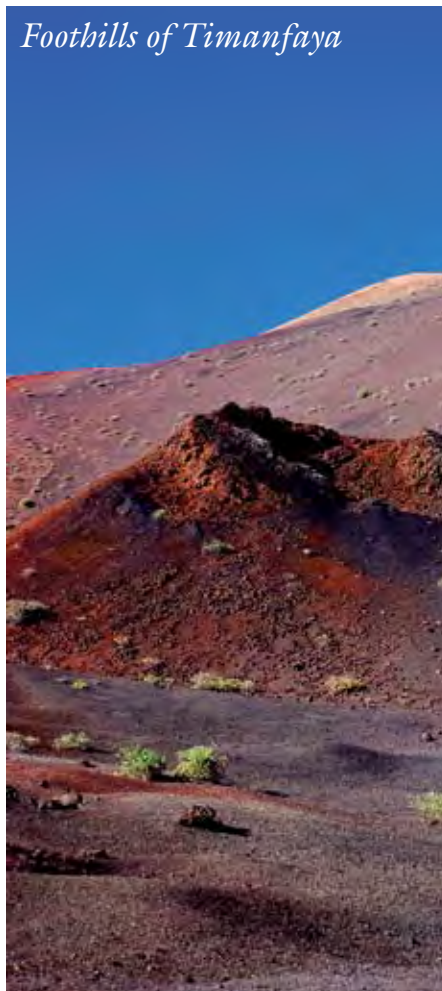


when improving and adding facilities for tourists, SPEL works on the principle that eco-tourism in natural areas is distinguished by its emphasis on conservation, education, traveller responsibility and active community participation. Specifically ecotourism possesses the following characteristics: conscientious, low-impact visitor behaviour: sensibility towards, and appreciation of, local culture and bio-diversity in tandem with sustainable benefits to local communities.

Eco-System and Culture

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) establishes and manages global sustainable standards with the aim of increasing sustainable tourism knowledge and practices among public and private stakeholders. They have established the guiding principles and minimum requirements that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach in order to protect and sus-

Foothills of Timanfaya



tain the world's natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation.

Lanzarote has long realised that increased tourism to sensitive natural areas without appropriate planning can threaten the integrity of eco-systems and local cultures. An increase in visitors to sensitive natural areas can threaten the integrity of eco-systems and lead to significant environmental degradation. On the other hand well managed eco-tourism can provide much needed revenues for the protection of national parks, as is the case with Lanzarote's most visited tourist attraction the Fire Mountains in Timanfaya National Park, which might not be available from other sources. Moreover, eco-tourism can increase the level of education and activism among travellers, making them more enthusiastic and effective agents of conservation.

Nowadays, before holidaymakers decide on a destination they want



Typical Canarian Architecture

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Aetur offers comprehensive advice for starting up new Tourist Sector businesses in the Canary Islands; the required legal obligations for registration with the Hacienda and Social Security; Employment and Self-Employed assessment, as well as guidelines for quality and standards.

Membership of Aetur is open to anyone associated with the tourist industry

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to know what there is to do besides “sun and beach.” The Canary Islands have several decades of experience in attracting holidaymakers from the UK and Ireland, Germany and Scandinavia but new destinations are emerging all the time equipped with the very latest infrastructure and to be able to compete we must satisfy the demands of our traditional guests in Europe at the same time as appealing to potential new markets like China and North America.

Tourism Lanzarote does not rest on its laurels based on the geographical location of the Canaries to increase its market share but is constantly on the lookout for innovation in the diversification of activities for holidaymakers to suit every taste and every pocket. SPEL is in the vanguard of the use of new technological advances, which continue to grow day by day, but always in harmony with conservation of the environment on the principle of sustainable tourism.



300 volcanoes dominate the landscape

Luxury Marinas

The latest entities to join SPEL in its European Sports Destination bracket are Lanzarote’s three luxury marinas which between them attract over 2,500 yachts to the island every year. Over the past few years sustainable tourism has been on an upward spiral as a result of which consumer demand is growing, travel industry suppliers are developing new green programs, governments and international agencies are creating new policies to encourage sustainable practices in tourism. But what does

“sustainable tourism” really mean? How can it be measured and credibly demonstrated, in order to build consumer confidence, promote business prosperity and foster community benefits for the local community.

Ecology Hotels

Lanzarote has long realised that ecology is a very strong trend as caring for the Earth has become an ideal of many. As a result, sustainable eco-hotels have become an increasingly popular alternative in the





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*Geopark La Graciosa
Isle as seen from the
Mirador del Rio*

tourism industry, the increase in demand has led therefore to a large range of hotels with planet-friendly options for all requirements.

According to the Royal Spanish Academy, one of the interpretations of the term ecology includes “the defense and protection of nature and environment.” To be green is to defend and protect our natural surroundings so that making contact with nature is an inherent factor of our holiday in as much as it provides us an opportunity to participate in environmental conservation. In order to help consumers identify sustainable tourism destinations, standards set down by the

GSTC serve as basic guidelines.

Natural Environment

The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for Destinations were conceived as the beginning of a process to make sustainability the standard practice in all forms of tourism. Sustainable hotels follow strict green guidelines to ensure that their guests are staying in safe, non-toxic and energy-efficient accommodation. Establishments are expected to meet most of the following criteria: Dependence on the natural environment; Ecological sustainability; Energy-efficient lighting; Re-

newable energy sources like solar or wind energy; Proven contribution to conservation; Provision of environmental training programs for the staff; Incorporation of cultural considerations; Bulk organic soap and amenities instead of individual packages to reduce waste; A towel and sheet re-use alternative whereby guests can tell housekeeping not to change slightly used items in order to reduce water consumption.

In an effort to come to a common understanding of sustainable destinations, the GSTD believes there are the minimum undertakings that any tourism management organization which wishes to be sustainable should aspire to reach. To satisfy the definition of sustainable tourism, destinations must take an interdisciplinary, holistic and integrative approach which includes three main objectives: to demonstrate sustainable destination management (as mentioned above) and to maximize social, cultural and economic benefits for the host community while minimizing negative impacts. →

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SMART HOTEL Project for Lanzarote, the “Intelligent” Biosphere Reserve



Asolan President Susana Pérez

Asolan first introduced the SMART HOTEL concept in 2015 in tandem with the Institute for Responsible Tourism, ITR, to ensure that visitors to the island enjoy the very latest technology and innovation when staying at local hotels. It involves the installation of data networks to carry phone calls, video and internet connections to connect individual rooms to network servers which can now keep track of guests' preferences and change the room conditions suited to them for on any future visits.

Some state-of-the-art equipment can also personalise the electronics in the rooms so that the music of John Coltrane, for instance, greets jazz buffs when they enter their rooms! They also allow hotels to connect, the lights, air-conditioners and other room devices to a central computer so that they can be remotely controlled or monitored.

A second phase of this concept is



Canarian Government Tourism Councillor Maria Teresa Lorenzo and Cabildo Tourism Councillor Echedey Eugenio with Asolan President Susana Pérez during a televised debate on “Canarias: Smart Tourism” Hotels under the auspices of Telefónica



Asolan was present during the presentation of the “Smart Hotels” Project together with representatives of the Cabildo and Responsible Tourism authorities. A debate on Sustainability and Energy Efficiency was also hosted by Asolan

already materialising in a 2016/17 project financed by the Lanzarote Cabildo entitled “Smart” Policy and Management for the Tourist Sector to continue updating the required rapidly advancing technology and improve the experience of clientele at hotels. This will promote the competitiveness of the Island and clearly demonstrate why “Lanzarote is Different”. Among participating establishments on Lanzarote are Club

La Santa, La Isla y El Mar Boutique Hotel, Relaxia Lanzasur, Las Acacias and El Guarapo Apartments.

The introduction of “Smart Hotel” by Asolan, continues to set the excellent standards for the Island as a quality tourist destination as it has done in the past with distinctions such as: “Reserve of the Biosphere,” “Sustainable Tourism” and “Geopark Lanzarote” in conjunction with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



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Merry Christmas!!

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