



GUIDE LENS

POCKET GUIDE

Gran Canaria

Practical information for travelling around the island, the weather, transport and safety.

Practical travel information · Updated: October 2026

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Basic information

CURRENCY	Euro (€)
LANGUAGE	Spanish; English is widely spoken in tourist areas
TIME	The same as in the UK
DOCUMENTS	A valid passport; UK citizens do not need a visa for stays of up to 90 days in any 180-day period
DRIVING	On the right
SOCKETS	Type C/F – you will need a European adapter
WATER	Safe; bottled water is commonly used for drinking
TOILET PAPER	Usually flushed; follow any instructions where you are staying
CAPITAL	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
POPULATION	870,608 (2025)
AREA	1,561.5 km ²
HIGHEST MOUNTAIN	Pico de las Nieves, 1,949 m – traditionally considered the island's highest mountain; the highest natural point is Morro de la Agujereada, about 1,956 m



Weather and the interior

A miniature continent

Gran Canaria has rightly earned the nickname of a miniature continent. The weather can change dramatically depending on which part of the island you are in. In the south, expect steady warmth and sunshine for most of the year. In the north and in the mountains it is usually cloudier and noticeably cooler, especially in the winter months.

Something warmer for the mountains

If you are planning trips inland or to the north, always pack something warmer to wear – a jumper and a waterproof jacket – even if it is warm enough to swim on the beach. This applies above all in winter and spring; in summer and autumn it is usually warm in the mountains too.

Check the weather for the specific place

Always follow the current forecast for the specific place you are heading to. If you are going into the mountains – towards [Roque Nublo](#) or [Pico de las Nieves](#) – enter the village of [Tejeda](#) in your weather app as a reference point for an approximate local forecast.

Weather apps

I have found the most reliable forecast on the iPhone's built-in Weather app; for Android I recommend the Windy app.

Calima [↗](#)

During calima, visibility can drop significantly and air quality can worsen. Follow the current warnings and, in strong calima, wind or fire risk, respect the instructions of the local authorities.

Buses

Guaguas – the island's buses

On Gran Canaria, buses are called guaguas. Intercity and airport services are run by Global; within Las Palmas de Gran Canaria itself, the city buses are Guaguas Municipales. Connections are fairly good in the tourist areas, but services to mountain and more remote places tend to be less frequent.

From Gran Canaria Airport (LPA)

Routes 60 and 91 in particular run to the capital, Las Palmas. Routes 66 or 90 will take you to the San Agustín, Playa del Inglés and Maspalomas area. Route 91 also links the airport with the south-western resorts, including Puerto Rico and Puerto de Mogán. Route 5 provides the night connection between Las Palmas and Maspalomas via the airport.

Trips around the island

Route 1 links Las Palmas and Puerto de Mogán and also serves a number of places in the south. Route 18 runs from the Maspalomas lighthouse through the mountainous interior towards Roque Nublo and Tejeda. On these scenic routes, pay attention to the specific timetable, direction and stop.

Where to check routes and timetables

Times can change, and some services have different stops depending on the day or direction. Before you travel, look up the current timetable for the specific route on the operator's official website.

[Global – routes and timetables](#)

[Global – connections from the airport](#)

[Guaguas Municipales – city buses](#)



Cars, parking and safety

Staying safe with a hire car

Hiring a car is the best way to explore the island, but it requires following a few basic safety rules.

Watch out for thieves

Never leave anything visible on the seats of your car. Experienced thieves can open a car very easily and quickly. They lie in wait above all at mountain lay-bys and popular photo viewpoints, where tourists often leave their cars unattended for a few minutes.

Speed cameras

Speed cameras on the island are well signposted, but be careful – they photograph from behind. Once you have passed a camera, do not speed up straight away, or the photo will catch you.

Parking: how to avoid fines and towing

Finding a free parking space in larger towns and at popular tourist spots is generally a huge problem. Use paid car parks. You will save a lot of time and stress, and avoid circling one-way streets. Avoid parking in spaces for people with disabilities or in reserved taxi bays, where your car may be towed away.

How to deal with a fine

If you do find a parking ticket under your windscreen wiper, it may have a QR code that takes you straight to a payment page when scanned. Pay the fine as soon as possible. For most ordinary traffic fines you can get a 50% reduction if you pay within 20 calendar days; always follow the details on the specific notice.

It pays to blend in

The Canary Islands are generally very safe, but in crowded places common sense is in order. A big DSLR camera swinging around your neck is a clear signal to thieves. Keep it in an inconspicuous bag instead, wear your backpack on your front in crowds and cover up your colourful all-inclusive wristband. The more you blend in with the locals, the better.

Healthcare and practical information

The main medical facilities in the south of the island

In the south of Gran Canaria there are two large private hospitals that routinely treat foreign tourists and work with many travel insurers.

Hospiten Roca – San Agustín

Calle Bugarvilla 1, San Agustín. The hospital has a 24-hour emergency department, including paediatric emergencies. Hospiten says it works with a wide network of national and international insurers.

Hospital Universitario San Roque Maspalomas – Meloneras

Calle Mar de Siberia 1, Meloneras. A large private hospital in the south of the island with a 24-hour emergency department, used to foreign patients and working with insurers, hotels and tour operators.

Call the assistance line

Do not go to a doctor on your own. Always discuss and report the visit to your travel insurance assistance line first. The assistance service will open a case and recommend a doctor or medical facility that works with your insurer. Some examinations or treatments may also need your insurer's prior authorisation. In a life-threatening situation, call 112.

Water

Mains water is regularly tested and is safe in most areas. Because of its taste, hardness and higher mineral content, however, bottled or filtered water is commonly used for drinking. Tap water is usually fine for washing and brushing your teeth. If there is a local restriction, follow the instructions where you are staying.

Toilet paper

On Gran Canaria, toilet paper is normally flushed down the toilet. If your accommodation says it should go in the bin, however, respect the local instruction – the building may have a specific drainage system.

Top 10 places on Gran Canaria

1. Maspalomas Dunes [↗](#)

An iconic nature reserve in the south of the island covering about 404 hectares. The golden dunes are complemented by La Charca lagoon and the nearby lighthouse. The atmosphere is at its best before sunset.

2. Roque Nublo [↗](#)

One of the symbols of Gran Canaria and the island's best-known rock monolith. From the summit area there are beautiful views as far as Tenerife when visibility is good. Check the current access rules before you visit.

3. Puerto de Mogán [↗](#)

A picturesque harbour with colourful houses, flowers and canals, which earned it the nickname Little Venice of the Canaries. Ideal for a stroll, lunch or a stay by the sea.

4. Las Palmas – Vegueta [↗](#)

The historic heart of the capital. Santa Ana Square, the cathedral, Casa de Colón and the narrow lanes of Vegueta are among the most interesting places for discovering the island's history.

5. Pico de las Nieves [↗](#)

A well-known summit and viewpoint at 1,949 m. When visibility is good, beautiful views open up across the mountainous interior as far as Tenerife and Teide. One of the most beautiful places on the island for sunset, often above a sea of clouds.

6. Tejeda [↗](#)

A mountain village in the middle of the island, surrounded by the dramatic landscape of the caldera. A lovely stop on a drive through the mountains and a good starting point for Roque Nublo.

7. Teror [↗](#)

A historic small town with typical wooden balconies, the Basilica of Virgen del Pino and a Sunday market. One of the best places to soak up the traditional Canarian atmosphere.

8. Agaete and the Valle de Agaete [↗](#)

The green north-west of the island, Puerto de las Nieves and a valley with coffee plantations, fruit and a completely different climate from the touristy south.

9. Gáldar and the Cueva Pintada [↗](#)

The former royal town of the island's original inhabitants, with the important Cueva Pintada archaeological site. A great place to understand the pre-Hispanic history of Gran Canaria.

10. Barranco de Guayadeque [↗](#)

A deep green ravine with cave dwellings, a chapel and restaurants carved into the rock. A combination of nature, history and traditional island life.

Where to stay? Gran Canaria resorts

More places and details at guide-lens.com/gran-canaria/



Quick summary

The most important things on one page

S / N

WEATHER

the south, the north and the mountains can differ a lot

112

HEALTHCARE

call your insurer's assistance line before seeing a doctor

HILLS

IN THE MOUNTAINS

a jumper and a waterproof jacket, especially in winter and spring

CAR

CAR

do not leave anything visible on the seats

P

PARKING

a paid car park often saves time

TOWN

IN TOWN

it pays to blend in

Contacts and links

Emergency number

112 – police, fire brigade and ambulance.

Help for British nationals

Contacts for British consular services in Spain and the Canary Islands are on gov.uk/world/spain.

FCDO – 24/7 consular line

+44 20 7008 5000

Travel advice

Before you travel, check the current entry requirements and safety information on gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/spain, where you can also sign up for email alerts.

Sources for factual information

- AEMET – weather and warnings
- DGT – traffic fines and rules
- FCDO – travel advice for Spain
- Gobierno de Canarias – the island's highest point
- Turismo de Canarias – Pico de las Nieves and viewpoints
- Hospiten Roca and Hospitales Universitarios San Roque – healthcare
- Global and Guaguas Municipales – bus routes and timetables



More on the website

More articles, places and up-to-date information about Gran Canaria.

guide-lens.com/gran-canaria/



Recommended apps

Practical tools that may come in handy during your stay on Gran Canaria.



GasBu

Compare petrol and diesel prices at filling stations in Spain. A practical help when travelling around the island by car.

gasbu.app/en ↗



IslaBu

An overview of conditions in the Canary Islands: weather, beaches, sunshine and calima. Useful when planning trips.

islabu.app/en ↗

The links are clickable and lead to the official websites of the apps.