EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Walking The Gran Isla (LOC 2015)

WALK & TREK

TOURDURAT
8
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Standard
Tour Type: Centre Based
Trek Grade: Moderate
tour Code: LOC

Tour Highlights - Walking The Gran Isla

- ✓ La Aldea de San Nicolas - Stay in a traditional Canarian village with local character
- ✓ Anden Verde - Dramatic coastal scenery with stunning views
- ✓ Roque Nublo - a distinctive rock formation and Gran Canaria's most famous landmark
- ✓ Pico de las Nieves - Hike up Gran Canaria's highest peak

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Las Palmas Airport
End Point:	Tour ends: Las Palmas Airport
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m):	1949
Transport:	Bus, Public Bus
Countries:	Spain

Walking The Gran Isla

The Canary Islands offer some of the best walking anywhere in Southern Europe. Gran Canaria in particular offers far more than the beaches it is best known for. Staying off the beaten track in La Aldea de San Nicolas on the western side of the island, we discover dramatic volcanic landscapes, steep gorges, high peaks, semi-tropical valleys and unspoilt hillside villages as we explore the Gran Isla on a variety of walks.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Trek Grade: Moderate

For those who are fit and active, these moderate walks are normally on good paths and tracks at low altitude. Days may include some fairly demanding ascents and descents, so previous experience is preferable but not essential.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organization throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Las Palmas. Drive to La Aldea de San Nicholas

Meeting at Las Palmas airport we make the two hour transfer to our hotel in the authentic town of La Aldea de San Nicholas. Otherwise known locally as 'La Aldea', this will be our home for the next six days. Located in a valley on the west coast of Gran Canaria the town is a big producer of bananas and tomatoes. The main attraction, however, is the beauty of the surrounding landscape.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Walk from Anden Verde to El Risco

We start today with a short transfer by public bus to the heights of Anden Verde (600m) for our first walk. This takes us up into an arid, semi-desert like world and to the heart of Gran Canaria. The peaks afford us great panoramic views across the north coast, which on a clear day include Punta de Sardina, Puerto de las Nieves village (from where the ferry to Tenerife leaves) and the small town of Galdar. Upon reaching the first mountain pass (850m), the green Tamadaba Forest spreads out in front of us while overlooking steep sided valleys. After a picnic lunch on the ancient Camino Real, we walk to El Risco, from where we drive back to La Aldea. (4.5hrs walking time, 13km, +200m/-680m).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Ancient Village Trail

Hopping on the local public bus, we travel a short distance to the start of today's walk at the Aldea Pass (700m). From here we follow an ancient pathway that in former days connected the villages of La Aldea, Tasarte and Veneguera. It is an undulating trail with one steep but short downhill section. On our left-hand side we enjoy the impressive walls of Los Azulejos, green layered rock sheets with the Inagua Forest at the top. When we reach the village church of Veneguara we take a short break for lunch before continuing our walk over the last pass that leads us into the Barranco de Mogan. Here there will be time for a coffee break while waiting for the public bus that will take us back to La Aldea. (4.5hrs walking time, 14km, +250m/-600m).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Free day. Opportunity to walk to Siberio Reservoir

Today has been left free. You may wish to relax around the hotel, enjoying the village life in La Aldea, or decide to go to the unspoiled nearby beach (5km). Maybe you want to visit the city of Galdar and see the Cueva Pintada Museum to learn about aboriginal life on these islands. On your way back you may like to stop off for a dip in the ocean. Keen walkers may wish to take the optional walk from La Aldea to Siberio Reservoir.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Roque Nublo, Pico de las Nieves and Acusa cave dwellings

Today we travel along the Cumbre Viejo, the volcanic ridge that includes three higlights of the island: Roque Nublo (1732 m), Pico de las Nieves (1949 m) and the cave dwellings of Acusa. We drive to the base of Roque Nublo, a striking rock feature that dominates this area, and walk a circular route to admire the views. We can have a picnic lunch (optional) here and then drive to the island's higest peak Pico de las Nieves. We ascend to the summit, from where on a clear day we can see down across the island. We then drive to Acusa and walk down to the cave dwellings there before driving back to La Aldea. (total 4 hrs walking time, 12 km, +/-500m)

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Ascend to Pico Castellet. Walk through Inagua Forest

Today we travel the short distance to the Aldea Pass, (700m) by public bus. From here we walk uphill to Pico Castellet (1186 m), then later walk on through the majestic Canarian firs of the Inagua Forest (1150 m). After lunch (optional) we descent steeply down to the public bus stop at Los Azulejos from where we take a local bus back to La Aldea. (6 hrs walking time, 16 km, +500/-700 m)

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Free day. Opportunity to visit Maspalomas

Today is a free day to relax or explore more. You may wish to venture further afield, taking a local bus to the south coast, to explore the mighty sand dunes of Maspalomas and the Playa del Ingles. This is very much the lively end of the island with shops, beaches and even theme parks for those hankering for a little more 'action'.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Tour ends Las Palmas Airport

Tour ends at Las Palmas airport. If you are staying on perhaps you might want to relax on one of the island's beaches. * Please be aware that if you are booked on a flight arriving back into London after midnight at the end of the tour, you will need to ensure that your travel insurance covers you for a 9 day trip as a minimum.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

We stay in one of the most traditional villages of Gran Canaria, far away from the crowds of the coastal resorts in the south of the island. Our small, family-run hotel in San Nicolas is a well kept, with an excellent breakfast buffet and a central location allowing easy access to local restaurants, and to the start of several of our walks.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Spain

Lunch £: 8.00

Dinner £: 15.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Spain

Bottle of Beer £: 2.5

Water £: 1.40

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Las Palmas - €25, local bus also available
Maspalomas - Sand dunes €25, local bus also available

Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £15 for tipping.

Foreign Exchange

Spain

ATM Availability: In cities and most major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques: Not recommended.

Local Currency: Euros

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend you take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

Where to Exchange: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

The Canary Islands: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Spain

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Tour

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

1949

Trekking Details

We walk for 4 days for an average of 5 hours each day. There is also an optional walk on one day. We generally trek on mountain trails with some occasional short, steep ascents. Vertigo sufferers need to be aware that some of the walks will be along paths next to steep drops. We have graded this trip as moderate.

Walking Boots

A good pair of broken in walking boots are essential. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Climate

Spain

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a Spanish trip - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The high central plains suffer from fierce extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round.

Clothing

Light rainwear may be needed at any time of year, and a warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights early and late in the season.

Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and sunscreen are all essential and you may wish to bring a small torch with you as well. Walking poles are recommended.

Footwear

In addition to walking boots please take with you comfortable trainers/shoes or sandals for evenings / relaxing.

Luggage: On Tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a daypack. A daypack is useful for walking and carrying what you need for the day.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Spain

Population: 46,030,109

Size of Country: 504,782 sq km

Major Language: Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Spain

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety andÂ security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. ForÂ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link atÂ http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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