

NATURE TRAIL LA GOMERA COASTAL



Guide to the
Nature Trails
of Spain



SECTOR
CANARY ISLANDS



AN ISLAND SHAPED BY THE PASSING OF TIME

La Gomera is the second-smallest island, after the El Hierro Island, out of all seven islands that make up the Canary archipelago. It was declared UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve on 11th July 2012, within the 'excellence' category, thus becoming the sixth island that holds this title in the Canary Islands.

The distinguishing marks of the La Gomera landscape are its deep gorges and imposing cliffs. This landscape, wild and unique, is the result of the erosion that happened on the old materials accumulated during different eruptive periods of time, because since more than two million years ago the bowels of the islands have been calm.

Since 1993 the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and the Environment's Nature Trails Program aims to restore former transport infrastructures such as railway tracks, cattle trails and traditional routes, for public use and enjoyment.

These routes take us to the countryside to discover the biodiversity and beauty of our precious natural heritage, and discover the villages, sights, traditions and people that are part of the unique cultural landscape of our country.

We invite you to visit them and offer you the keys to enjoy the trip. In this brochure you will find a brief description of the La Gomera Coastal Nature Trail and the map for the journey, along with recommendations to make the most of this experience. We only ask one thing of you: do not forget to leave everything as you found it. The conservation of these pathways is also your responsibility.

TELEPHONES OF INTEREST:

- La Gomera Regional Government: 0034 922 14 01 06

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STAGE 1: SAN SEBASTIÁN DE LA GOMERA - HERMIGUA

1. The 26,7 km long first stage of the trail begins with a nice walk around the capital San Sebastián de la Gomera. Once the trail leaves the town, the path ascends in order to plunge into the Majona nature park, a beautiful place with abrupt orography. Around the half of this stage, you will cross a dense firetree and heath forest (fayal-brezal), and further on you will leave on the right the Roque Garaballo. On the last kilometres of the stage, the cardonal-tabaibal is the main protagonist of the vegetation surrounding the trail. The traveller will leave, once again on the right, the path from La Caleta to Punta de San Lorenzo, and will then end this stage among the banana plants at the Hermigua beach.

STAGE 2: HERMIGUA - VALLEHERMOSO BEACH

2. This 15,3 km long second stage starts at Hermigua. The trail climbs up the hill among Canary pine trees and heathlands, until it reaches the highest area of the stage, where the most usual vegetation is laurisilva. This way, the trail takes the traveller to the Visitors' Centre of the Garajonay National Park, Juego de Bolas. After walking for some kilometres, the trail encounters Las Rosas and the namesake reservoir. After crossing the reservoir, the trail leaves on the left the beginning of the alternative stage 3.1., which goes from Las Rosas until the Chorros de Epina. Starting from this point, the itinerary alternates ascents and descents to overall go down until the Vallehermoso beach, end point of this stage.

STAGE 3: VALLEHERMOSO BEACH - ALOJERA

3. This stage, 15,5 kilometres long, connects the Vallehermoso Beach Maritime Park with Alojera. The trail moves around landscapes full of the most antique materials in the islands, called basal complex. The erosion of these antique materials has produced some incredible landscapes that, together with the spectacular views offered by the northern coast of the island, make this stage a true pleasure for the senses.

STAGE 3.1: LAS ROSAS - CHORROS DE EPINA

- 3.1. The stage 3.1 is 11,9 kilometres long, and it is an alternative route for stage 2 (its last part) and stage 3. It begins at the Las Rosas reservoir and ends at Chorros de Epina. Its itinerary goes across the town of Vallehermoso, where it meets the Cumbres de la Gomera Nature Trail. The path runs close to the Roque Cano Natural Monument, so the traveller can contemplate this volcanic sharp point, as well as the Canary juniper botanic formations and, on higher altitudes, the so-called monteverde, formed by species such as heathers, firetrees, small-leaved hollies, etc.

STAGE 4: ALOJERA - GRAN REV VALLEY

4. This 11,1 kilometre long stage that connects Alojera with Gran Rey Valley runs across two important natural areas: Lomo del Carreón Natural Monument, imposing basaltic ravine that separates the highland plain of the central plateau from the lowest levels, and the Gran Rey Valley Rural Park, the only natural area that has been given this protection status in the island. The trail runs along the majestic landscapes form by almost-vertical reefs and deep ravines shaped during millions of years.

STAGE 5: LA CALERA (GRAN REV VALLEY) - LA DAMA

5. The route continues along the 16,5 km of this stage, between La Calera and La Dama. The trail goes pass large inclines, such as the Harinero slope or the Argaga gorge, and also soft slopes that separate the gorges of the southern part of the island, until it reaches the town of La Dama, which is home of the largest banana croplands of the island.

STAGE 6: LA DAMA - ALAJERÓ

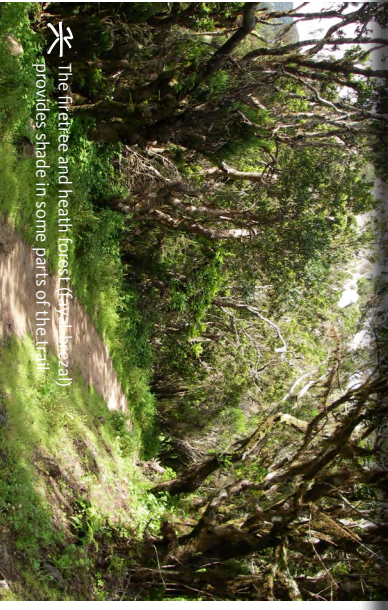
6. From La Dama until Alajeró, the trail crosses, for 12,2 kilometres, several ravines and wide hills lined with terraces and splashed with small rural settlements with great traditional and cultural heritage. This combination of elements conform a harmonious and beautiful landscape, typical of the southern part of La Gomera.

STAGE 7: ALAJERÓ - PLAYA DE SANTIAGO

7. The 10,5 kilometres of this stage run along the towns of Alajeró and Playa de Santiago, among valleys and hills where vast crop areas developed not long ago. The abandonment of most of these crops has transformed the landscape of this part of the island, but the charm of this environment shaped by humans still remains.

STAGE 8: PLAYA DE SANTIAGO - SAN SEBASTIÁN DE LA GOMERA

8. This last stage, 20,1 kilometres long, begins at Playa de Santiago. During this stretch, you will go through numerous ravines and will get access to beaches with great landscape value, such as El Cabrito (Natural Monument) and the Guancha beach. The trail on this stage is witness of the abandonment of agriculture in the many terraces, and the subsequent proliferation of the cardonal-tababail forest. San Sebastián de la Gomera, capital of the island, is the end point of this last stage of the nature trail.



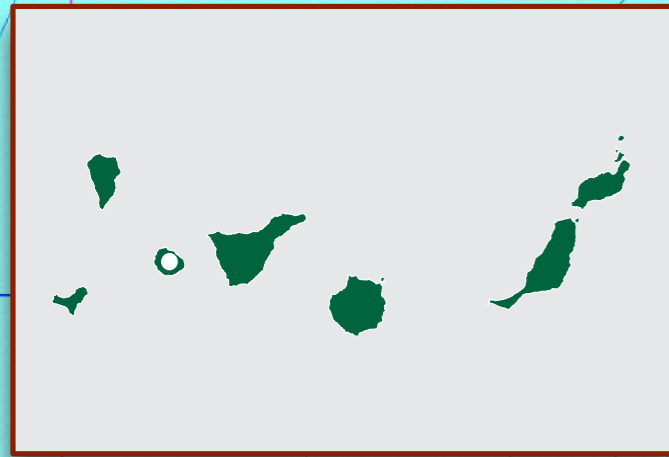
The firetree and heath forest (fayal-brezal) provides shade in some parts of the trail.



Typical gorge floor landscape



Cinco Palmas gorge headwaters



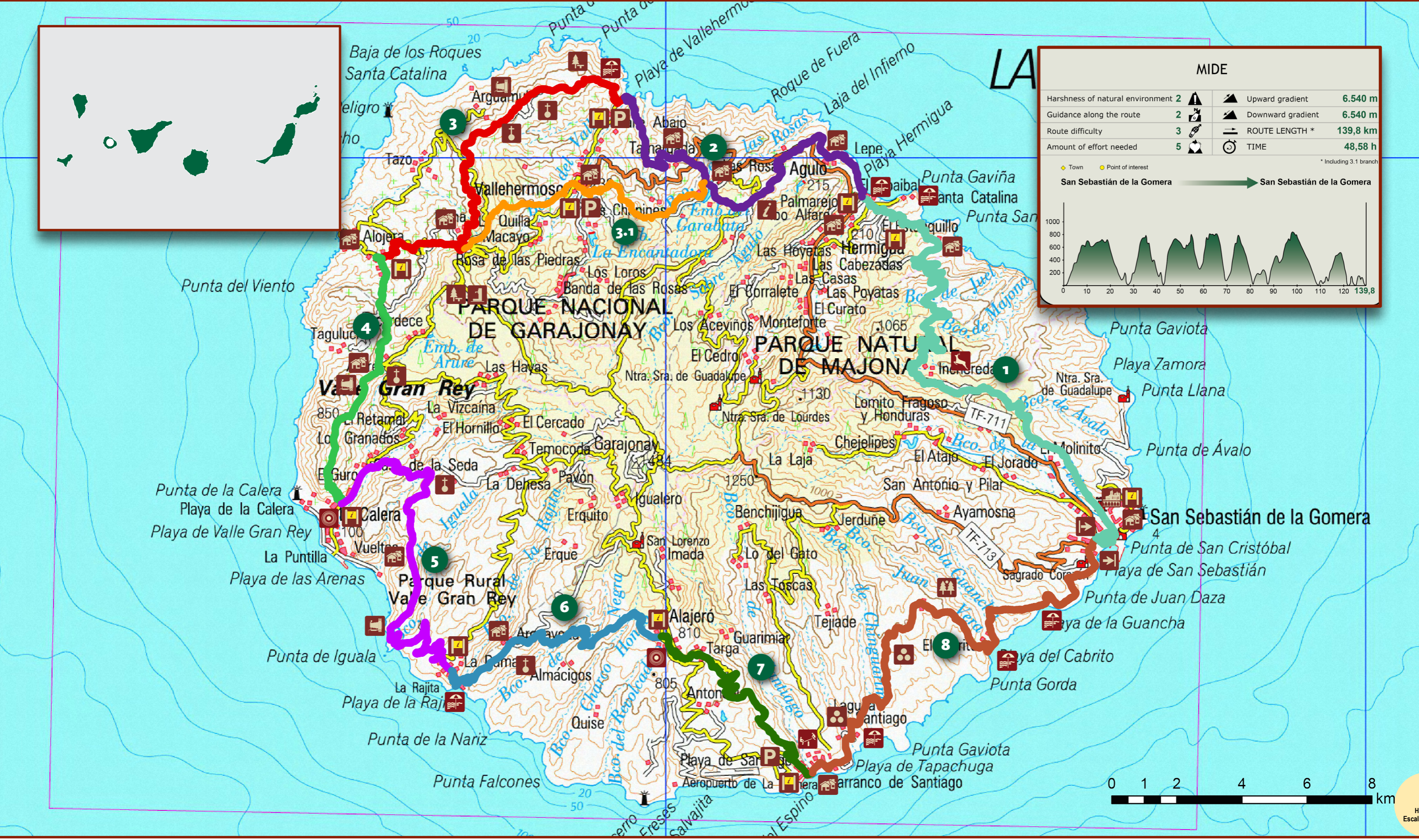
MIDE

Harshness of natural environment	2	▲ Upward gradient	6.540 m
Guidance along the route	2	▼ Downward gradient	6.540 m
Route difficulty	3	≡ ROUTE LENGTH *	139,8 km
Amount of effort needed	5	⌚ TIME	48,58 h

* Including 3.1 branch

◆ Town ● Point of interest

San Sebastián de la Gomera → San Sebastián de la Gomera



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NATURE TRAIL
LA GOMERA COASTAL

- Starting point
- End of trail
- Information panel
- Rest area
- Feature of environmental interest
- Information
- Hermitage
- Downtown
- Town
- Monumental area
- Natural/National Park
- Beach area
- Parking lot
- Children's games
- Viewpoint