

La Palma Island: The Canary Island's Best Kept Secret

While this southern-most region of Spain has been a favorite holiday locale for Northern Europeans and fellow Spaniards alike, for North Americans, talk about the Canary Islands has largely amounted to people saying "Where?"

It is true that the Caribbean offers more than enough spaces to lie out on the beach and soak up the Sun. However, one could argue that the Canary Islands offer up more biodiversity on one *isla* than all the islands of the greater and lesser Antilles combined. With Volcanos on one end and Astrological telescopes on the other, these islands may just be the honey hole more adventurous travelers didn't know that they were looking for.

And while all 7 islands have their own treasures to share, any frequent traveler there will tell you that La Palma is the Canary Island's Best Kept Secret! Here's why:

Location, Location, Location

Have you ever dreamed of being in two places at once? North and South, East and West, Europe and Africa? Well, the Canary Islands are one of the handful of places that allow you to do just that. Unlike Spain's other famous seashores in the Balearic Islands which are located less than an hour away from the Peninsula from Valencia or Barcelona, a journey to these islands is one that requires journeying to another continent. Well, kind of.

Located just a few miles offshore from the Morocco and its former colony of Western Sahara. The islands have been occupied by people since pre-history and was officially conquered by Spain in 1402. There even though they are mere miles from Africa, the Canary Islands are technically considered to be the most Southern Region of Spain.

Take a Look at the Stars

If that isn't enough to pique your fancy, consider this: the island chains are also considered one of the best places in the world to stargaze. Palma is home to one of the largest collections of high-powered telescopes in the world. If you are an amateur astronomer or just love to gaze at the stars, you can take a trip to some of the best star-gazing spots on the island. You can see the list of them [here](#). If you are slightly more serious and would like a bit more guidance from those who know the island well, you can arrange for an actual guided tour of the island. You can check one out [here](#).

Finally, you can also partake in a guided tour of [Rogue de Muchachos Observatory](#). The Observatory is one of the scientific research centers in the Canary Islands and one of the most important astrological centers in Europe. For parents, it is a great family trip. And for lovers,

well, is there anything more romantic than gazing up at the stars with the one you love? No. We didn't think so.

Lava Power

As the Canary Islands are volcanic, they do not offer the wide stretches of beaches you may be used to if you have traveled to other locales. But what it lacks in sand, it makes up for in spades in terms of ecological diversity. In fact, in 2002 the entire island was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO.

On Palma alone, there are forests, beaches, drylands, national parks and, of course, mountains. All this within the bounds of only 700 square kilometers. In many ways it offers the best bang for your buck of any place in the world that you can visit.

Transportation

Now that you've decided to visit Palma, let's talk about how to get around once you are there. Unlike many other regions in Spain, Palma has a great public transportation system. There are buses that run to nearly every region of the island—from the main city to the most remote outpost. That being said, the tickets for the bus may be more expensive than you expect.

In fact, you may find that it may be cheaper to rent a car, especially if you are traveling in a group. It will give you a level of freedom that you may not experience otherwise. Furthermore, as the island is so small, it is nearly impossible to get lost. And if on the rare occasion that you do, you can just take some time and enjoy the island as you find your way again.

Where to Stay?

This all depends on what you want to do while you are there. If your goal is to explore as much of the island as possible, you may want to base yourself in the capital city of Santa Cruz. That way, whether you are driving or taking the bus, you'll have access to all the main roads of the island.

If you are looking to get away from it all, you may want to consider staying in a smaller village—particularly on the East side of the island. There you will find yourself surrounded by Banana Plantains. And hopefully, you will experience a bit of what Spaniards call *España Profunda* roughly translated to the essential culture of Spanish. Or in this case you'll experience *La Palma de Canarias Profunda* and experience the best of what the island has to offer—her unique people and culture.

Adventurer's Paradise

Now that you know where you should stay, how to get around, and where best to stargaze, let's talk about who should head to La Palma. While a trip here would be a treat for anyone, for the adventures among you, you may have just found your own personal paradise. While Santa Cruz is lovely, the best way to experience this island is through within nature.

For the sporty type, there are plenty of activities including hiking, diving and caving. La Palma is also great for those whose shoes were made for walking. Airbnb offers a great walking tour experience that you both inform, delight and exhaust you (in the best way possible) among the island's amazing biodiversity.

Combine any of these things with star gazing and a view of the banana plantations, you'll be set to take in all the island has to offer. And as the plane takes off on the last day, you'll be secure in knowledge that La Palma really is the Canary Islands' best kept secret!