

## Festivals

### FIESTAS OF THE VIRGIN

The Patron Saint Fiestas in honour of the Virgin of Guía take place during the first fortnight in August, with the most important date on the calendar being the 15<sup>th</sup>. The morning sees the procession, while in the afternoon it is the turn for the Battle of the Flowers. The fiestas include a good number of cultural events, the highlight of which are the passacaglias (street march) featuring “papagüevos” (over-sized papier-mache models who are the authentic protagonists during festivities), the parade of floats and the afore-mentioned Battle of the Flowers.

### FIESTA OF LAS MARÍAS

This fiesta commemorates the tradition of the Voto de Vergara, which occurred in 1811 due to a devastating plague of locusts, leading the peasants to make a promise to come down every year from the hillside to see the Virgin of Guía in a show of gratitude. The fiesta is held every year on the third weekend in September, and comprises two main events: The Bajada de la Rama (bringing down of the branch) from the hills to Guía on the Saturday and the Procession and Pilgrimage on the Sunday at midday. Both these celebrations ring out to the sounds of caracolas and bucios (shell wind instruments) and drums (as an allegory of the instruments used to scare off the plague). As for the pilgrimage, it is said to be one of the purest, most beautiful and most traditional throughout the Canaries.

### THE CHEESE FIESTA

This fiesta takes place on two different weekends, the last weekend in April in the town centre of Guía and then on the first weekend in May in the village of Montaña Alta. Here the cheese-makers and other artisan producers offer their finest products, including the sampling of typical food, as well as organizing demonstrations of traditional activities related to cattle-rearing and shepherding.



Llegada Rama Las Marías.



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# SANTA MARÍA DE GUÍA



## Gran Canaria

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MUNICIPALITIES OF GRAN CANARIA



## Cuisine



### TYPICAL PRODUCTS FROM THE MUNICIPALITY

Flower Cheese  
Guía Sweets  
Lengüillas cakes

## Typical Recipe

### Guía half flower cheese truffles

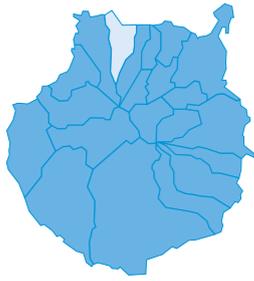


#### INGREDIENTS

½ kg. half flower cheese  
25 gr. butter  
50 gr. peeled pistacho nuts  
50 gr. almonds  
25 gr. sesame seeds  
Fresh herbs for decoration

#### PREPARATION

Shred the cheese and mix in with the butter to produce an even paste. Shape into truffles and put aside. Chop up the pistacho nuts and almonds. Cover the truffles with the pistachos, almonds or sesame seeds and decorate with fresh herbs. Store in a cool place.



At the northwest of the island of Gran Canaria between the municipalities of Moya and Gáldar and 22 kilometres from the capital. It covers a land surface area of 42.59 square kilometres which extend from the sea up to the summit.

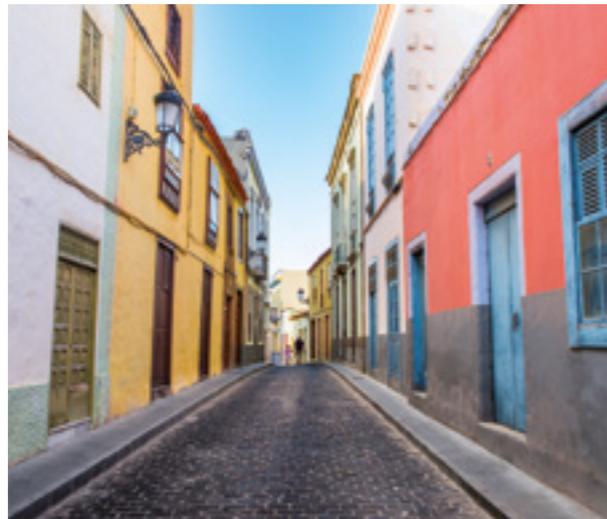
## Did you know?

- The name of Santa María de Guía is in honour of the Virgin of Guía, the patron saint of the municipality, and the town was founded immediately following the conquest of the island.
- Many illustrious figures have graced the region throughout its history; these range from craftsmen and women, politicians, musicians, poets and sculptors, who especially between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, placed the municipality at the forefront of the Canary Islands. Leading examples include sculptor Luján Pérez, clergyman and politician Canónigo Gordillo and the great musicologist and researcher Néstor Álamo, among others.
- Guía Flower cheese has been made at this northwest region of the island since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The name "Guía" features on it because it was at its market, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, where it became famous. What makes it such a special product, alongside the vegetable rennet used in its production, is the rich, green farmland used by the Canary breed of sheep for grazing and the wholly artisan nature of its manufacturing process.

**Cenobio de Valerón** is the gateway to the municipality of Santa María de Guía. This archaeological settlement, comprising nearly 300 caves hewn out of volcanic tuff rock situated in Cuesta de Silva (GC-291), is the largest and most stunning grain store in Gran Canaria.

During the visit, as well as learning about the relevance of agriculture as the productive model of the ancient Canarians representing the fundamental backbone to their survival and their social and political organization, there are references to the region's flora and fauna, its volcanic geological features, and of course, to all the settlement's archaeological characteristics.

After Cenobio de Valerón, a must see is the **Historic Town Centre** (declared a Historic and Artistic Monument) of Guía. A stroll around its streets reveals the beauty of its buildings and takes us back the splendours of yesteryear. Among these are the **Parish Church** (built between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), with its Baroque façade flanked by two neo-classical towers, the inside of which boasts important and carefully preserved works of art, including alterpieces and figures carved by celebrated Guía-born sculptor José Luján Pérez, which are



Historic Town Centre.



Parish Church.

an integral part of the local Easter Week celebrations; the **House of Los Quintana** (a stately building dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century); the **birth home of Néstor Álamo** (17<sup>th</sup> century) and the **Hermitage of San Roque** (from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in an eclectic style). Other places of interest in the town centre are the **factory** where they manufacture traditional Guía sweets; the **craft workshops** where visitors can see the manufacturing process of **Canary knives** (their handles being carved out of goat's horns), plus examples of **wood carvings** and the establishments where the famous Guía Cheese can be sampled. On our way round we can also see many outstanding examples of highly varied

architecture in the city, highlighted by Gran Canarian façades and their neo-classical architecture, here at one of the finest displays to be found on the archipelago.

One of these emblematic buildings is the home for "**La Bodega**" **tourist visitor centre**, where as well as receiving tourist information on the municipality, visitors can sample and purchase cheese and other local products, as well as traditional arts and crafts. Also in the town centre is the **Néstor Álamo Museum**, located in the house where this celebrated musicologist and historian was born in 1906. The visit offers the opportunity to understand and enjoy the evolution of music in the Canaries, from the sounds



Bascamao.



Natural Pools of Roque Prieto.

## How to get there

**BY BUS**  
FROM LAS PALMAS DE G.C.  
**Service 105 and 103**  
**FROM AIRPORT**  
**Service 60** to Las Palmas de G.C.  
**FROM MASPALOMAS**  
**Service 50, 01, 04 y 05**  
to Las Palmas de G.C.  
**FROM MOGÁN AND PUERTO RICO**  
**Service 01** to Las Palmas de G.C.

created by indigenous dwellers some two thousand years ago through to the sounds heard all over the archipelago, gaining an insight into all its musical and cultural influences. This all goes on at the different rooms set within this stately 17<sup>th</sup> century building, with the common theme naturally being the figure and the works of the multitalented Néstor Álamo, who spent most of his life involved in research, the recuperation of traditions, and the dissemination of the history and culture of Gran Canaria.

For those who prefer the sea and nature, the municipality offers them the opportunity to enjoy these too. Given the rocky nature of its coastline, there are two main areas for bathing: **San Felipe beach**, which features superb waves for surfers; and the **natural water pools of Roque Prieto**, where visitors can enjoy the sea in a friendly, family environment. The hills and summit area also offer attractive landscapes and open spaces for relaxation, such as the *Santa Cristina* and *Monte Pavón* recreational areas, plus other areas ideal for hiking and biking.

**El Brezal Special Natural Reserve** is one of the protected areas in the municipality, the home for some beautifully preserved heath and woodland, offering a fine display of Canarian greenery. Also in the hillside area of Montaña Alta is the Casa del Queso. These cheese-making facilities have been converted into a visitor centre, where visitors can sample and buy the wonderful local cheeses plus other local products, as well as learning about the complete artisan manufacturing process of the ethnographic jewel of Canary cuisine that is **Guía Flower Cheese**.