

Fiestas

THE ALMOND TREES IN BLOOM ROUTE

In the second half of January the hilly rural municipality of Valsequillo de Gran Canaria holds its Almond Trees in Bloom Route, an annual event which extols the virtues of its flowering almond trees. This route is celebrated all around the neighbourhoods of La Barrera, Valsequillo town centre, Las Vegas and Tenteniguada. Each year, on the Saturday before the Almond Trees in Bloom Route kicks off, they celebrate "Tourist Day" there. This event features different folkloric groups, a craft fair, a sampling of locally grown products and the Rancho de Ánimas of Valsequillo de Gran Canaria, making it a social and cultural phenomenon which has been passed down from generation to generation. Singing is accompanied by the playing of string and percussion instruments. The Rancho de Ánimas is a permanent fixture during celebrations of these fiestas held at the different neighbourhoods making up the route.

FIESTAS and FAIR OF SAN MIGUEL ARCÁNGEL

The municipality's Patron Saint fiestas are dedicated to San Miguel Arcángel, and these are celebrated on 29th September every year. Their standout events include the traditional Pilgrimage, the Select Cattle Fair, the Magic Night, Pub Miguelito, the 1960^s Guateque Dance Fiesta, the Holy Mass and Procession and the *Suelta del Perro Maldito* (meaning unleashing the evil dog) in which locals re-enact the following popular saying:

*On the night of San Miguel
I knocked on your window
I won't open up
the San Miguel Dog is on the loose.*



Fiesta de La Ruta del Almendro en Flor.



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MUNICIPALITIES OF GRAN CANARIA



Cuisine

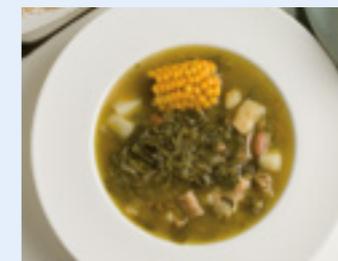


TYPICAL PRODUCTS FROM THE MUNICIPALITY

Cheese	Almonds
Honey	Wine
Strawberries	

Typical Recipe

Hedge Mustard Stew



INGREDIENTS

1 Kg. hedge mustard
500 gr. potatoes
300 gr. butter beans
250 gr. pork ribs
200 gr. sweet potatoes
1/2 green pepper
100 gr. yam (optional)
3 cloves of garlic / salt to taste
1 small spoonful of paprika
1/2 small spoonful of cumin
1/2 small glass of olive oil
1 small spoonful of food colouring

PREPARATION

Firstly boil the butter beans which need to have been left to soak overnight, together with the pork ribs, in a pot of abundant boiling water. Meanwhile, boil the hedge mustard separately for a moment and then throw away the excess water, otherwise the stew will have a bitter taste. When the beans are nearly boiled (after approximately 1 hour)*, we add to the stew: the hedge mustard, potatoes, yam, sweet potatoes, pepper; all chopped up into little pieces, along with a squirt of oil and the mashed up garlic, cumin, paprika and salt. Finally add the colouring, which will give the stew a pleasant colour without affecting the taste. This is all left to cook through on a low heat (for 30 minutes)*, until all the ingredients are thoroughly cooked and mushy. Leave to settle for a while, and then it will be ready to be served. It can be accompanied by a large piece of cheese from Valsequillo de Gran Canaria.



Situated in the mid-hills to the east, from around 400 to 1800 metres altitude.



El Colmenar barracks.

Did you know?

Local residents are known as Valsequilleros/as, and are identified by a popular saying that goes:

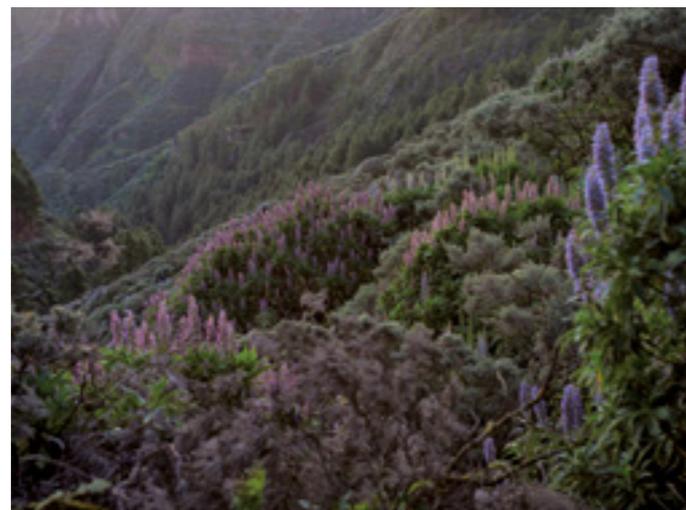
...“valsequilleros will split a fig in two in order to make up a full kilo” ...

This refers to the fact they pay attention to the last detail to the point of exaggeration. They say that they don't skimp on efforts to save every last penny (meaning they economize a great deal). This has been accepted gracefully and with a touch of irony, and even the locals from this hillside location in Gran Canaria flaunt it, boasting about their sense of justice and honour.

A walk around the municipality of Valsequillo de Gran Canaria starts at the heart of the town centre, where we can visit the **church of San Miguel Arcángel**, the site of a former little hermitage which used to be owned by the neighbouring Parish of San Juan de Telde until 1800. The current building was built with no plans between 1903 and 1923. It is eclectic in style, featuring different artistic styles, especially classicism and neo-gothic.

The church is home to important pieces of work such as “*San Miguel El Chico*”, the first carving of San Miguel Arcángel measuring just 20 centimetres high, and the Green Baptismal Font, made from baked mud and glazed ceramic, brought over from Sevilla towards the end of the 15th century.

Another highly acclaimed artistic work is the figure of San Miguel Arcángel, carved in 1804 by sculptor Luján Pérez, inspired by the primitive image of the hermitage. Other important works at the church include the Crucified Christ, carved in 1801 by Luján Pérez, plus paintings such as San Jerónimo, which appeared in the inventory of 1889. The artistic and religious heritage to exist in the Church of San Miguel is explained through identity plaques which go into great detail on all of them.



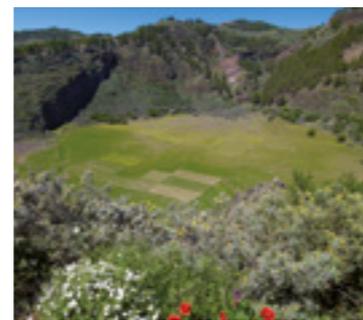
Tajinaste Azul.

On our visit to the church we can also appreciate the 15th century Flemish Carvings, considered to be of cultural interest. They are five sculptures of equal size that represent Santa Catalina de Alejandría, Santa Clara de Asís, Santa Lucía, San Bernardo and Santiago el Mayor, located in the oratory of Our Lady of La Salud, from the neighbourhood of Era de Mota. These figures are said to be part of the primitive alterpiece at the collateral chapel of the Gospel of the church of San Juan Bautista in Telde.

These figures were found at the Oratory of the Virgin of La Salud, in the neighbourhood of Era de Mota, and were subsequently restored by the Cabildo de Gran Canaria.

As we continue our stroll around the pedestrian area of Valsequillo de Gran Canaria, we come to **Plaza de El Pilar**, the **Benito Pérez Galdós Municipal Library** and the **Town Hall**. On the way we will find some information plaques on the historical and ancient buildings of fine heritage to be found all around.

We now reach Calle el Sol where we have a gorgeous panoramic viewpoint from where we are treated to stunning views over **San Miguel Ravine** and **Roques de**

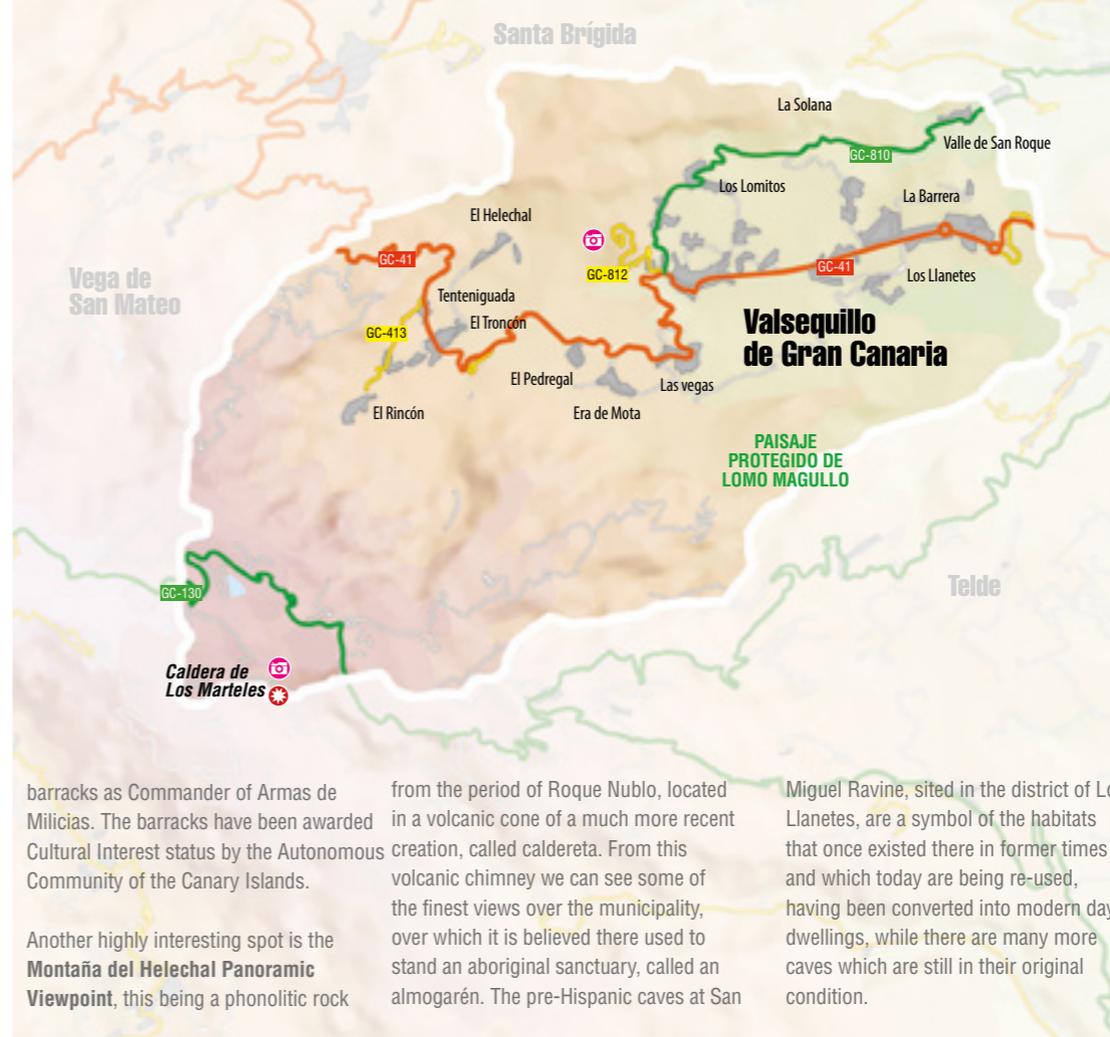


Crater at Los Marteles.

Tenteniguada, as well as **El Colmenar barracks**, built back in 1530 on San Miguel Ravine, in amongst other buildings linked to military life. This building comprises two floors with a wooden corridor. The ground floor on the right wing was designed to house horses while the upper floor was where the troops lived, while the higher ranking officials had their living quarters on the left hand side, where provisions were also stored. The centre was taken up with a soldiers' courtyard. These barracks were created with the aim of fighting against the assailing conquerors who came up from the coast to Valsequillo de Gran Canaria along San Miguel Ravine. We should point out that second lieutenant D. Antonio Pérez Gutiérrez, the grandfather of writer Benito Pérez Galdós, was posted to Colmenar



Church of San Miguel Arcángel.



barracks as Commander of Armas de Milicias. The barracks have been awarded Cultural Interest status by the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands.

Another highly interesting spot is the **Montaña del Helechal Panoramic Viewpoint**, this being a phonolitic rock

from the period of Roque Nublo, located in a volcanic cone of a much more recent creation, called caldereta. From this volcanic chimney we can see some of the finest views over the municipality, over which it is believed there used to stand an aboriginal sanctuary, called an almogarén. The pre-Hispanic caves at San

Miguel Ravine, sited in the district of Los Llanetes, are a symbol of the habitats that once existed there in former times and which today are being re-used, having been converted into modern day dwellings, while there are many more caves which are still in their original condition.

Another **ravine** worthy of a mention is the one at **Los Cernicalos**. It is an intra-canyon kind of ravine, which originated from the phonolitic lava from Las Canadas volcanos, containing picón gravel and lapilli on higher ground. We should highlight its great ecological value and stunning landscape value, as on its hillsides stands one of the finest wild olive tree woods on the island and along its permanently flowing water bed is an important wood of willow trees. This ravine allows visitors to go hiking virtually all the way along it.

Besides this hikers' path, Valsequillo de Gran Canaria features a guide



Vista al pueblo.

How to get there

BY BUS FROM LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA
25 Km.

25 km away, **service 80** or **12** to the municipal of Telde and then **service 13** to Valsequillo, or **service 43** through district of San Roque to Valsequillo.

DESDE MASPALOMAS
55 km from Playa del Inglés.

Service 90 as far as Telde and then **service 13** from there to Valsequillo, or again **service 43** through the district of San Roque to Valsequillo.

comprising a further 10 walking paths that meander all around the municipality. The main highlights of these are the **Blue Tajinaste Plant route**, which runs from Caldera de Los Marteles as far as Rincón de Tenteniguada, in which we can see different species such as Flor de Piedra, Salvia Blanca, Col de Risco, Flor de Mayo Leñosa, Bicácaro and the Blue Tajinaste, which only grows at this part of the municipality and bursts into colour in springtime. On these routes we can glimpse the different rocks sticking out around Valsequillo de Gran Canaria, namely Roque Grande, Los Picachos, Roque El Saucillo, Roque Jincao,...

Lastly, we highlight **Caldera de Los Marteles**, an elliptic-shaped crater measuring 500 metres in diameter and with a depth of 80 metres. It was formed by a volcanic explosion, produced by the interaction between water and hot magma and which today comprises a closed off hydrological basin, making it ideal for farming.