

HISTORY OF HOLIDAYS TO THE CANARY ISLANDS



The beautiful and picturesque Canary Islands have been attracting visitors for centuries. However, long before destinations like Fuerteventura and Lanzarote were synonymous with sunshine, sunbathing and snorkels, the Canary Islands were a mysterious, uncharted beauty and later an important colonial outpost.

Here's a look at the turbulent past of one of today's most popular tourist destinations:

A land of diversity

The islands that make up the Canaries archipelago were the product of several underwater volcanic eruptions, following the collision of tectonic plates many millions of years ago. Interestingly, the islands that we now see above the water are the peaks of gigantic underwater volcanoes.

With the different islands emerging at different times (over millions of years) the Canaries offer unique landscapes. From the desert-like terrains of Fuerteventura to the lush forests of La Palma, diversity is a central component to life on the Canaries.

Uncharted territory

The Canaries have been known since the beginning of our written records. The indigenous population, known collectively as Guanches, inhabited the mysterious network of islands, with records dating back to the Romans and Ancient Greeks.

Throughout history different countries have kept records of visit to these beautiful islands, including the Arabs, Portuguese and the Italians during the Middle Ages.

Colonial rule and new world discovery

In 1402, Spain invaded the islands as colonial conquerors. The Guanches resisted for well over a century, with the mountainous landscape making for effective guerrilla warfare. By the mid 1500s the uprising was quelled, with Spain maintaining its grip ever since.

The islands became a starting point for several landmark world discoveries, including the voyages of exploration for none other than Christopher Columbus. Cities like Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and Santa Cruz de Tenerife were buzzing with explorers, missionaries, traders and ship captains.

It was this geographical importance that helped the Canaries grow in prosperity and infrastructure, with holidays to Gran Canaria and the other islands now commonplace.

Visiting today

This combination of fascinating history and stunning natural scenery are what make Canary island getaways like holidays to Lanzarote so popular. One of the real calling cards is the wonderful weather no matter what season it is. With balmy spring time conditions right throughout winter, the Canaries are great to visit all year round.

Sun lovers will be delighted with the diverse range of beautiful beaches, while more active holidaymakers will love water sports, beautiful hikes and surfing. Best of all, the Canaries can easily be visited affordably, with cheap holidays to Tenerife and other favourite locations available all year round.

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