

Description of other walks available in the Artenara area

The following 4 walks are all excellent walks that are not included in my two walking guides “Don’t leave Gran Canaria without seeing it”. You will walk past many occupied cave houses and villages, all on well maintained paths, often signposted with excellent scenery. These 4 walks are available in single page booklet style and are available from Octavio in the Artenara tourist office.

Walk 1:- A 2 hour 15 minute circular walk to Las Arbejas, then onto a wonderful viewing area above Artenara. Returning via many cave houses, a cave church and museum. **Ascent and Descent approx 275m.**

Walk 2:- A 2 hour 15 minute circular walk around the Tamadaba forest. This walk can be extended to make a 4 hour plus walk back to Artenara. **Ascent and Descent approx 300m**

Walk 3:- A 2 hour 20 minute circular walk that heads towards the Tejeda valley on an excellent Camino Real, returning to Artenara on a delightful forest path. **Ascent and Descent approx 300m**

Walk 4:- A 3 hour 15 minute circular walk with excellent views around several villages of occupied cave houses. **Ascent and Descent approx 400 metres.**

There are many other excellent half day and full day walks, in this area, in both Volume 1 and Volume 2 of my walking guides “Don’t leave Gran Canaria without seeing it”. All the walks in both of my guide books have full descriptions, maps and downloadable GPX tracks and waypoints.

Here is a Suggested drive around the area that I believe is hard to beat. Leave Artenara on the **GC 21** going past a metal sculpture, La Atalaya Mirador, as you leave the town, heading towards Las Palmas. You will drive through Las Arbejas, and several minutes later, after passing the red topped sign for **GC 21 Km 34**, turn left onto the **GC 220** to Juncalillo. There is an option of turning left 5 minutes later on the **GC 224** into the village of **El Tablado**. At the next junction keep straight on to Juncalillo on the **GC 223**, do not take a right turn to Galdar on the **GC 220**, and continue through the small village of **Juncalillo**. After passing the village you then go past the village cemetery, and then continue down through the fascinating Barranco Hondo. Drive slowly to enjoy this wonderful area, especially the Barranco Hondo Cave Church. This tarmac road is narrow in places, but continue down until you reach a cross roads. Straight on is to El Hornillo, which is an interesting hamlet of cave houses, but the main route turns sharp left to drive past 3 reservoirs (**Presa de los Perez, Lugarejos and Las Hoyas**) and numerous small farms and cave houses. After the last reservoir, at a Y junction turn left on the **GC 215** to **Las Cuevas**, to return to Artenara.

Don’t Leave Gran Canaria Without Seeing Artenara



Written by Rambling Roger

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Why visit Artenara?

Artenara is the highest county town in Gran Canaria at 1220m, it also has the lowest population of any county of the island, approx 1,500. The county stretches from the high mountains (approx 1770m) down to the West coast, with a surface area of about 67 Km squared. Artenara is famous for its occupied cave houses many of which date back at least 1,500 years. There is some outstanding scenery in this area, including several large reservoirs, the Tamadaba forest and many wonderful walking routes, many now with signposts.

Information in this booklet

Page 3	Map of Artenara town
Pages 4 and 5	Walks around Artenara Town
	Walk A:- La Cilla restaurant, Statue of Jesus and back
	Walk B:- Short Circle, including Cave Church and Cave Museum.
	Walk C:- Longer circle, including Mirador de las Poetas, as well as part of Walk B above
	Walk D:- Artenara Cemetery to Brezos and back
Page 6	Map of the Artenara area
Page 7	What to see and do in the Artenara area.
Page 8	Description of other walks available in the Artenara area.

How to get to Artenara

From **Maspalomas** take the **GC 60** from **San Fernando** through **Fataga, San Bartolome, Ayacata and Tejeda**. The **GC 60** ends at a roundabout just after Tejeda, continue straight onto the **GC 210 to Artenara**, turn right at a roundabout 15 minutes later and **park near the Gama Supermarket and Tourist information office** about 300 metres up this road, a total drive of about 1 hour 30 minutes

From **Las Palmas** there are several possible routes, I recommend the **GC 21** all the way from the **GC 3** on the outskirts of Las Palmas to Artenara.

The Bus Service to Artenara is very limited, this is the Global service 220, you can get the latest timetable from www.globalsu.net/
There are taxis available in the town, enquire at the tourist information office.

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What to see and do in the Artenara area

Artenara town has 2 Churches, the main church of San Matias, which is usually open, is on the town plaza in the centre of the town, and “La Ermita de la Virgen”, which is a small cave church which is open to the public. The town is dominated by a large statue of Jesus, Gran Canaria’s own version of Rio de Janiero’s famous statue. There is a pleasant park with public toilets, and a municipal open air swimming pool which is only used in the summer. There are a couple of supermarkets, a bakery, a pharmacy, and several bars and restaurants. Under the statue of Jesus there is the ‘La Cilla’ restaurant which has magnificent views, and an impressive tunnel entrance. We recommend La Esquina and Cueva del Molino for your refreshments. The excellent local museum, “Casa Museo Santiago Aranda” is well worth a visit as is the tourist information office, which has a shop next door selling local products as well as the Discovery Walking Guides map.

There are many other places of interest in this area. Acusa is an area where there has been a settlement of cave houses since 500 AD, that is 500 years before William the Conqueror. Both Acusa Verde and Acusa Seca are worth a visit. Barranco Hondo for me is unique, there is an abundance of occupied cave houses, from rather basic to luxurious, there is also another cave church and a small ethnographical museum here. There are also several short ‘there and back’ signposted walks. In this area is also the impressive Tamadaba Forest at over 1300m, this has an excellent picnic area, and many signposted walks. There is also a succession of 3 man made reservoirs, Las Hoyas, Lugarejos and Presa de Perez, Lugarejos was where most of the local pottery was made. There are several other small attractive villages in the area, such as El Hornillo, Las Arbejas and Juncalillo etc. Artenara has several Miradors (viewing points) from where there are excellent views.

Many people tell me they have seen caves and cave houses on other holidays etc. but everyone I have shown this area to has commented that they have never seen an area quite like Barranco Hondo with its terracing and high density of occupied caves.

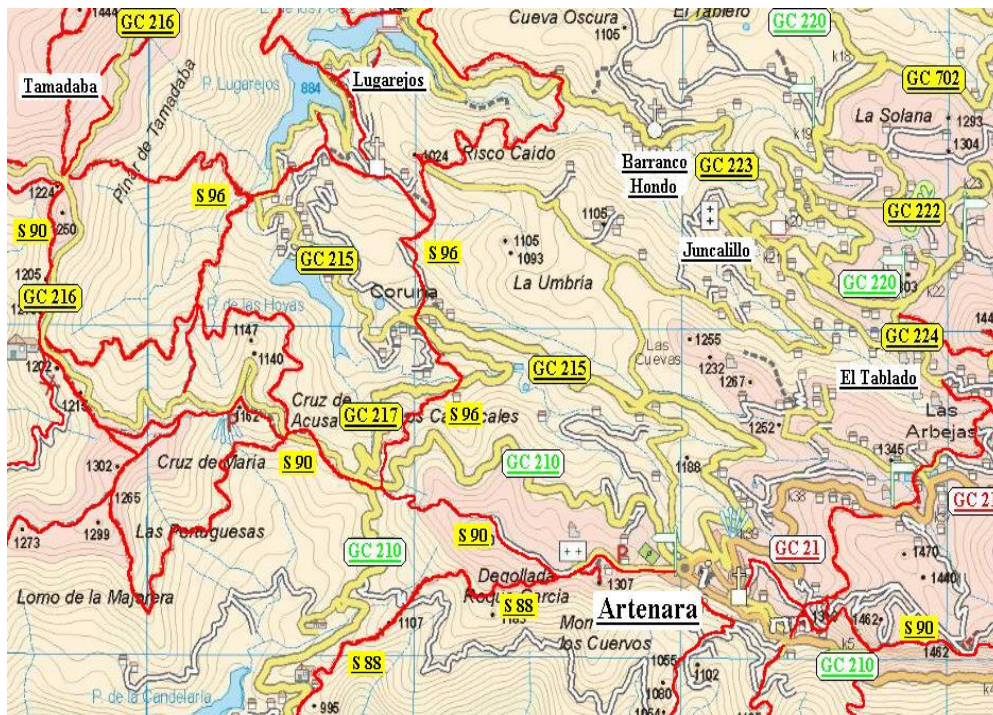
There is no hotel in Artenara, the nearest hotel is Fonda de la Tea in the nearby town of Tejeda, www.hotelfondalatea.com There are several good casas rurales (rural houses) for rent in this area - see www.grantural.com and there are a couple of good hostels in this area

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Map of the Artenara area

The map below shows the main roads in this area, all coloured roads on the map are asphalt, the white roads are dirt tracks. The dirt tracks can all be walked to increase the number of walking options. The Red lines show many (but not all) of the walking routes in the area.

The best map for hikers is the **Discovery Walking Guides map of Gran Canaria**. The map below shows this area, but is not the true scale of 1:50000. The printed version is available from the shop next to the tourist information office, digital versions for Smartphones and GPS devices can be purchased from www.dwgwalking.co.uk

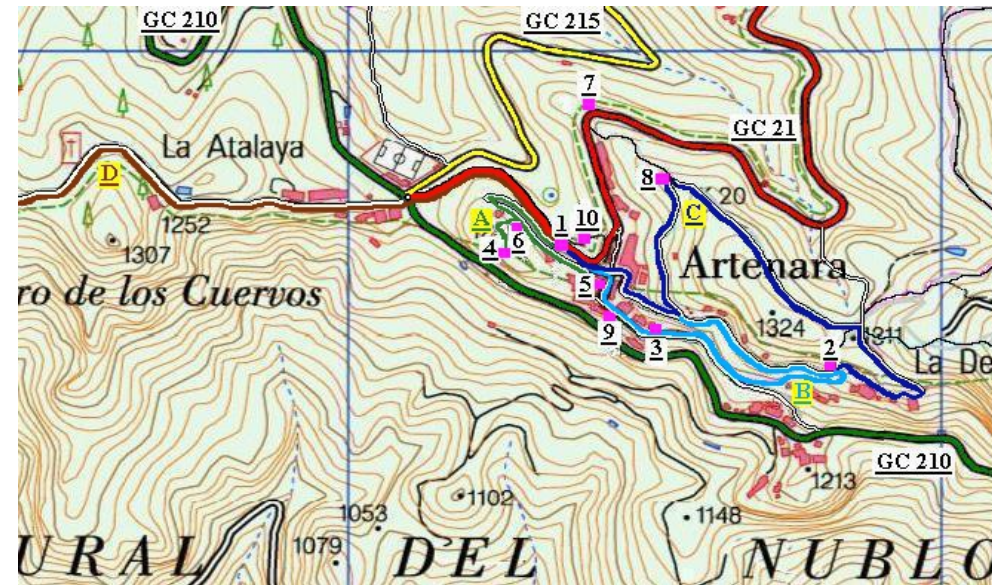


For any other information in English, about walking in the Artenara area, or anywhere else on Gran Canaria, please contact Roger on (0034) 633 399 570 or e-mail Roger@Ramblingroger.com

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Artenara Town Map

Your recommended first stop should be the tourist information office, near the Gama Supermarket, on the **GC 21**, to collect the excellent, and free tourist guide in English titled **Artenara “Cumbre de la Naturaleza”**



Points of interest

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1:- Tourist information Office | 7:- Mirador La Atalaya |
| 2:- Cave Church “La Ermita de la Virgen de la Cueva” | |
| 3:- Cave Museum “Casa Museo Santiago Aranda” | |
| 4:- Statue of Jesus | 8:- Mirador de Las Poetas |
| 5:- San Matias Church and Plaza | 9:- Unamuno Mirador |
| 6:- La Cilla Restaurant | 10:- Artenara Municipal Park |

The coloured lines on the map represent the 4 walking routes around the town described on pages 4 and 5. There have been many new signposts erected in this area recently to aid you navigation.

All walks are undertaken at your own risk

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Description of 4 walks around Artenara Town

All of these walks start from the tourist information office

GPS 1 N 28.01.240 W 15.38.840

Walk A:- To the statue of Jesus and back to the town centre

From the tourist information office head N.W. on a minor road soon reaching an information board on your right, “Los Picadores”. Continue around a sharp left hand bend; **turn right immediately after passing house No. 11 Casa Isabella.** Your path starts as constructed stone steps then turns into steps cut into the rock, bear left at the top to get to the statue of Jesus, from where there are panoramic views. **You must return the same way;** take care as the path can be skiddy in places. Upon re-joining the tarmac road, **turn right to soon reach the La Cilla Bar and Restaurant which has an impressive tunnel entrance and great views from its terrace.** To get to the town centre walk downhill, continue straight ahead past the Gama supermarket, **to turn right by Bar Tamadaba for the Church and Plaza of San Matias.** The Church is usually open. **There are excellent views from the terrace of Bar-Restaurant La Esquina** which is highly recommended for your refreshments. A walk of no more than half an hour.

Walk B:- Circle including La Ermita de la Cueva and the Cave Museum

From the tourist information office head uphill towards the town then continue straight on at a junction by an information board. You walk steeply uphill past a police station and some public toilets. **After bearing left at a new building which houses a pharmacy turn right at a wooden walker’s signpost.** There are great views on your right from this tarmac road, after you pass the last house **No. 9, Ca’ Cele** bear left to walk on a nicely paved street to soon come to a small plaza with a cave church on your left, ‘**La Ermita de la Cueva**’, the entrance is shaded by a large Canarian pine tree, where there is also some local information. There is usually just a bolt across the door so you can go inside the Cave Church. **GPS point 2.** From the Cave Church turn left and head downhill on some concrete steps, within a minute turn right at house No. 29, continue downhill until you reach tarmac. Turn right past a Casa Rural, No.27 continue on tarmac looking out for house No.13 on your right. This is a museum “**Casa Museo Santiago Aranda**” inside there is information about the local area and a display of rooms in a typical cave house etc. Return to the road, continue uphill for a couple of minutes, where you will find a bronze statue of the famous Spanish writer, Miguel Unamuno, who described this central area as a petrified storm. A minute later you come to **Bar / Restaurant La Esquina** on your left, there are great views from the terrace, and excellent local food is served. The town centre is to your right past the San Matias Church & Plaza.

Walk C :- Circle including El Mirador de las Poetas and the Cave Church

From the tourist information office head uphill towards the town then continue straight on at a large junction by an information board. You walk steeply uphill past a police station and some public toilets. After passing a new building, which houses a pharmacy, **turn left at a wooden walker’s signpost S 90 to Cruz de Tejeda.** Continue uphill heading N.W. ignoring a couple of minor turn offs. **At the top of the hill there is the “Mirador de las Poetas”** with excellent views and some local information. **Turn right to continue on a concrete track that heads S.E.** until you reach another signposted junction with an information board. **Turn right here to walk through a cutting to soon walk S.E. steeply downhill on a concrete road with metal crash barriers.** At the end of the concrete road, **bear right down some concrete steps, with a wooden handrail,** follow this path down past more cave houses on your right. **Then bear right by house No.16 and right again at No.10 to go uphill on some concrete steps** and soon you will come to a small plaza with a cave church on your right, ‘**La Ermita de la Cueva**’, the entrance shaded by a large Canarian pine tree. There is usually just a bolt across the door so you can go inside; there is also a local information board here. **From the cave church you can either follow the instructions for Walk B from GPS point 2 or continue on the nicely paved street heading N.W** You reach tarmac at house **No.9 Ca’ Cele** and continue N.W. with great views to your left. You follow this road all the way back to the town centre. The actual walking time is no more than an hour.

La Ermita de la Cueva GPS point 2 N 28.01.120 W 15.38.560

Walk D:- Artenara Cemetery, Brezos and back

From the tourist information office head downhill away from the town centre, this is part of the **S 90 to Tamadaba and Agaete.** Cross straight over the **GC 210 at a roundabout,** to head uphill on tarmac past a school on your left. At the top of the hill continue on tarmac past a fire station and some “Medio Ambiente” buildings. A few minutes later you come to Artenara Cemetery on your right and a helipad. You could also drive to this point. From here bear left uphill or a dirt road heading West to soon reach “**Degollada de Roque Garcia**”. There are very good views from here, there are also several information boards. **One option is to turn sharp left and go uphill on a seldom used track to the top of a hill, under 10 minutes;** the best views are up some concrete steps by the side of a large mast. **Another option is to bear right uphill to continue to Mount Brezos for panoramic views across the Lugarejos area, approx 15 minutes each way.**

The best map for hikers in Gran Canaria is the **Discovery Walking Guides map of Gran Canaria.** See www.dwgwalking.co.uk for more details.