
Noleggio Auto

Gran Canaria - Car Hire

Car hire charges, along with accommodation charges and many other holiday costs can vary, depending on the time of year you're staying here. Whilst each company has their fixed prices, quieter months will see various discounts being offered, so ask first for any special prices that may be available, such as "three days for the price of two".....

My own personal recommendation for car hire to collect from and return to the airport has to be me! I have my own travel agency and personally use a company in Spain called Record Rent a car; their cars are 6 months old or less and the weekly rates we get are amazing and pretty hard to beat! Look at our choices and prices at this link. We also do car hire in the resort for fewer days though the prices are higher, the choices are better and there's info at that same link and car hire on all the other Canary Islands too.

Both Hertz and Avis have an online reservation system where you can check their current rates, availability and book a car online. Around the resort of Puerto Rico & Maspalomas there are about twenty different car hire companies to choose from and double that and more in Playa del Ingles.

Of course you'll need your driving licence if you want to hire a car, along with your passport. Most companies require the driver to be 21 years old or more with a clean license and at least one years driving experience. If the police stop you and you haven't got your passport you'll receive an on-the-spot fine of €400! So don't forget to keep that with you wherever you go in the car. All driving licences are valid here, European or not.

There's often a "hidden extra" charge called SCWD or "Super Collision Waiver Damage" so make sure the insurance you have covers absolutely everything. If the SCWD is optional and you don't take it you're liable for the first €400 or €500 of any damage or scratches incurred and the main insurance kicks in after that's paid.

Driving is on the right hand side of the road, with speed limits and warning signs very well marked wherever you go. Buses and taxis always expect you to give way to them and it's a good idea to do this if you like driving safely! Parking anywhere around the resorts is easy to find and often free. If you want to park in the very center of a resort you'll probably find blue lines/markings which means "pay and display" so look for the ticket machine.

If you're planning a trip to the capital, Las Palmas, you'll have to look hard to find a free space, the multi-storey car parks are your best bet and be warned, there is one car to every two people in the city so it gets busy.

If you're driving at a week-end, avoid travelling southbound by morning and northbound by late afternoon, especially around the south-east of the island as this is the busiest time on the roads. As well as tourists, all the locals are heading to the beach by morning and leaving as the sun goes down. Traffic jams can grow to several kilometres in length at peak times on a Saturday & Sunday until October. (Why October? The new motorway extension opens so we shouldn't have any more traffic jams and tailbacks).

The motorway ("GC1") on the east side of the island will take you easily and quickly to Maspalomas, Playa del Inglés, San Agustín, Las Palmas and the airport. It has also been extended to cover the north coast of the island. The roads on the west side and those through the centre of the island are minor roads, narrow and windy in parts, so plan longer journey times there. These are also the most scenic routes around the island. Highly recommended is a drive into the mountains towards the village of Tejeda and its national park. Located on Gran Canaria's highest mountain, Cruz de Tejeda (2,000m) The best route into or from the mountains is either from the west, passing through the town of Mogán and from the south where you join the road to San Bartolome de Tirajana at Maspalomas.

Be careful if you plan on driving through the mountains in early March, as this is when the world championship motor rally event is held. If you don't find life dangerous on the roads at this time, you'll certainly find it busy! Ask for further details, maps and advice when hiring your car.

To summarise then, there really is a lot to see all around the island. Small as it is, the roads can be narrow and windy so it can take a good 3 days of day-trips to see all of the island, though I highly recommend it. Car hire can often work out to be a much better alternative to seing the island than the holiday "excursions" you are offered by your holidays rep. As well as working out less expensive, you're free to stop off where you want, when you want and for as long as you want.

Note - Getting here from the airport is pretty easy if your car hire starts up there. Leave the airport following the blue signs the say "Sur" (south). This brings you on to the GC1 motorway.

San Agustin (first) Playa del Ingles (second) and Maspalomas (third) & Puerto Rico (fourth) have clear exits marked. Recommended day trips by car

(Puerto Rico (motorway) - Telde - Valsequillo - San Mateo - Teror - Firgas - Arucas then back via motorway to Las Palmas & Puerto Rico)

Puerto Rico - Mogan Village - San Nicolas de Tolentino - Agaete - Galdar - Guia - Firgas (then back via motorway to Las Palmas & Puerto Rico)

Travelling to Tejeda (a "must") in the centre/mountains takes a full day whichever route you take! Try and include Artenara and/or Pinos de Galdar.

Be warned!!!! If you take the "811" road up into the mountains, about 20 minutes after passing through the village of Mogan you're going to find the road peters out to a dust track for about 5km. You'll end up driving no faster than 10km per hour unless you're in a jeep.