
VENTURA

The Port Briefing Series

Landfall

Las Palmas

de Gran Canaria

The Canaries' biggest city - a great Atlantic port of golden beaches and colonial streets, where Columbus paused for the New World

Las Palmas in a Nutshell

Capital of Gran Canaria and the largest city in the Canaries - a Spanish port off the coast of Africa, with one of the world's finest city beaches, a colonial old town, and the house where Columbus stayed in 1492

Port Day

Saturday 7 November 2026

A short orientation before you step ashore

Where in the World





A City Off Africa

A Spanish port far out in the Atlantic, nearer the coast of the Sahara than the Spanish mainland

A Continent in Miniature

Gran Canaria packs every climate into one round island - Saharan dunes, green valleys and pine peaks

Local Time - Same as the UK

The Canaries keep British time, and sit an hour behind mainland Spain

0h	0h	+5h
vs GMT	vs UK	vs New York

The Facts at a Glance

380,000 in the City

Las Palmas is the largest city in all the Canary Islands

The Euro

Part of Spain, and a low-tax isle - cheaper tobacco, perfume and spirits

Spanish

he language, with English widely spoken in the tourist heart

The Isles of Dogs

The name Canary comes from the Latin for dogs - the little bird is named after the islands, not the reverse

A World-Class Beach

Las Canteras is rated among the finest city beaches anywhere on Earth

A Continent in Miniature

From Saharan dunes to pine-clad peaks in one round island



The Spanish Flag the red and gold of Spain - flown here at the empire's Atlantic threshold, the springboard for Columbus and the ships that sailed west after him

What Gran Canaria Is Known For

A Continent in Miniature

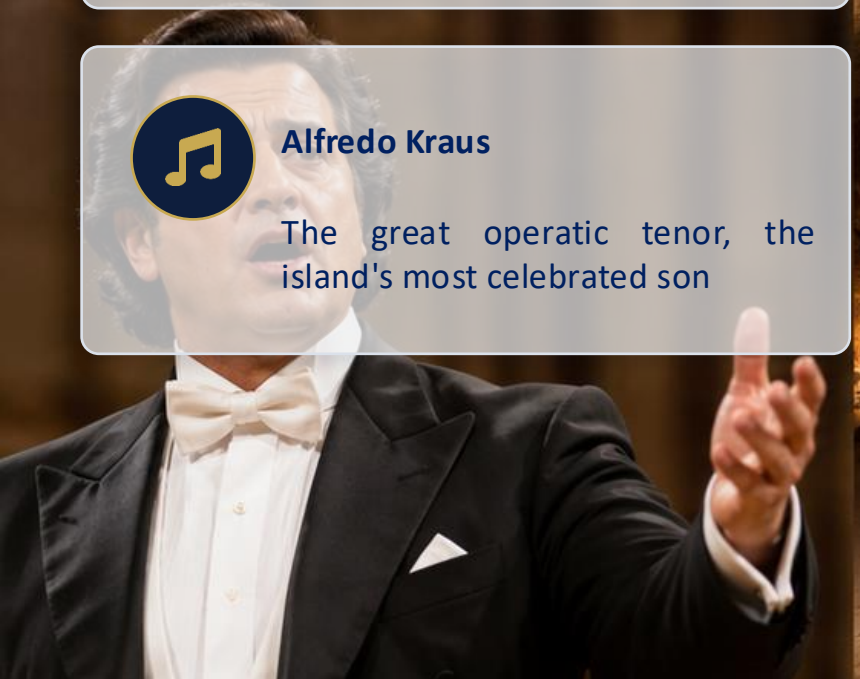
Every climate on one round island - Saharan dunes to pine-clad peaks

The Maspalomas Dunes

A great Saharan dunescape rolling down to the southern beaches

Endless Sunshine

Warm and bright the year round - a winter-sun favourite for generations

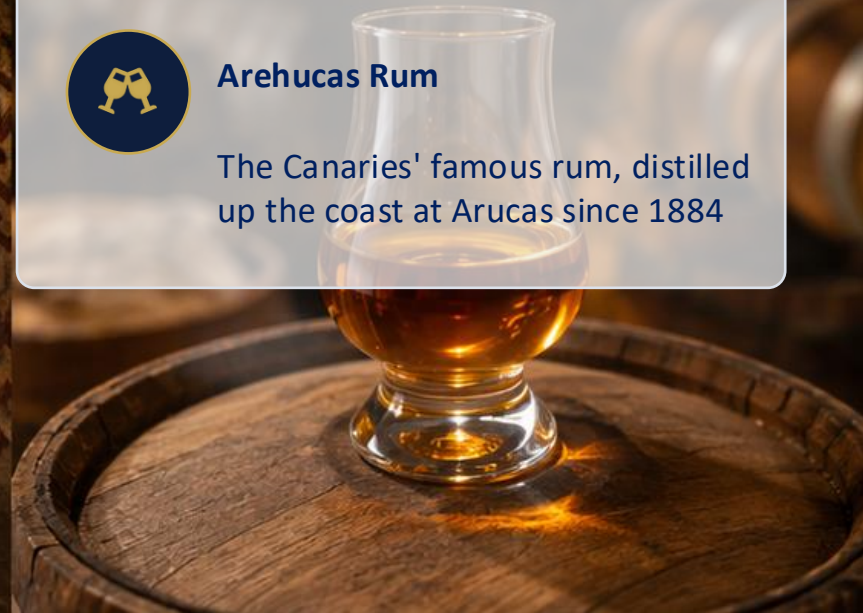


Alfredo Kraus

The great operatic tenor, the island's most celebrated son

The Canarii

The aboriginal islanders, and their painted caves in the interior



Arehucas Rum

The Canaries' famous rum, distilled up the coast at Arucas since 1884

What Las Palmas is Known For



Las Canteras Beach

One of the world's finest city beaches - a golden, reef-sheltered bay



Vegueta

The colonial old town, cobbled and handsome, the cradle of the city



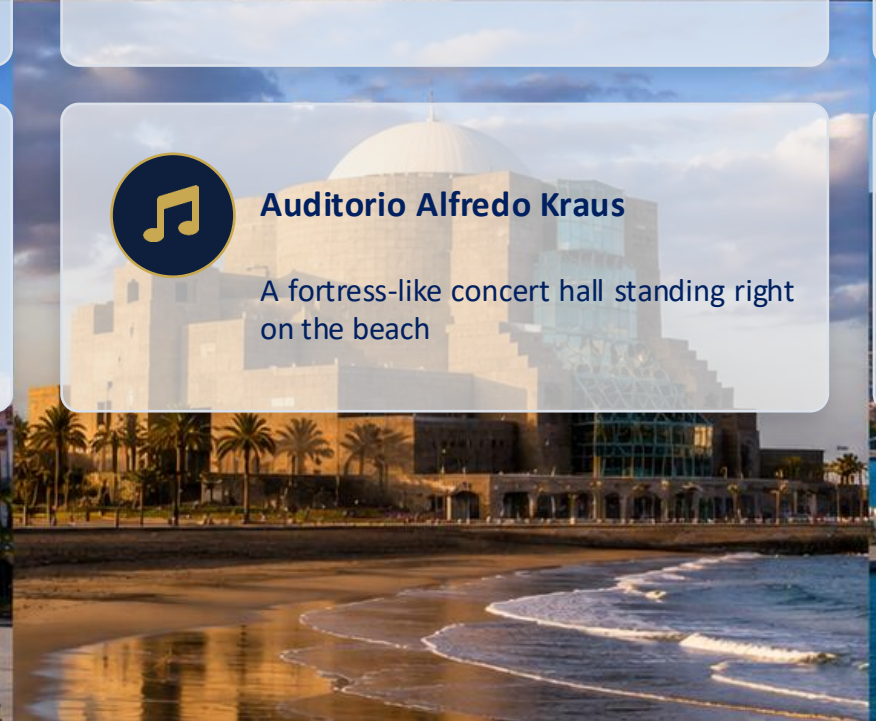
The Casa de Colon

The governor's house where Columbus stayed on his way to the New World



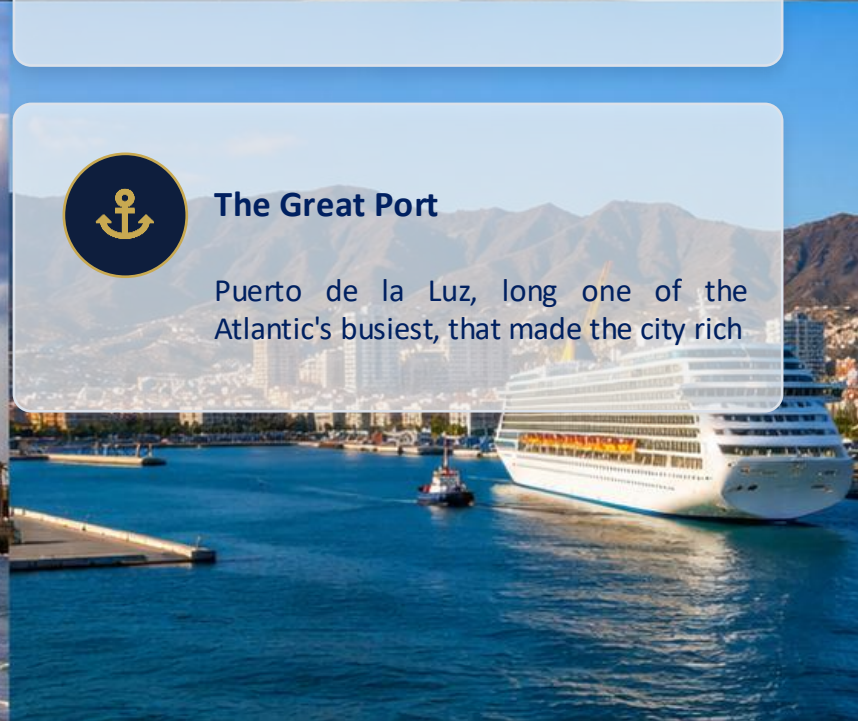
Santa Ana Cathedral

The great church of the Canaries, over five centuries in the making



Auditorio Alfredo Kraus

A fortress-like concert hall standing right on the beach



The Great Port

Puerto de la Luz, long one of the Atlantic's busiest, that made the city rich

A Famous Son of the City





Alfredo Kraus

Born 1927

Born in Las Palmas in 1927 - in the very house where Columbus once stayed - Alfredo Kraus became one of the greatest lyric tenors of the 20th century, famed for his flawless bel canto and sung on every great stage in the world

A Master of Bel Canto

Celebrated for an elegant, effortless high register and an impeccable technique that lasted into his seventies

Born in the Casa de Colon

The governor's house where Columbus stayed in 1492 is also his birthplace - a plaque marks it

The Auditorio in His Name

His monument stands on Las Canteras, the Atlantic waves crashing behind the concert stage

Three Things They Will Not Tell You

1

The City Is Two Halves

The beach and port are by the ship, but the old town of Vegueta is 6 km south - hop bus 1 or 12 for 1.40 euros from Santa Catalina, or a taxi for about 6

2

Columbus and Kraus, One House

The Casa de Colon is both where Columbus stayed in 1492 and where the tenor Kraus was born - two stories under one roof, and free to enter on Sundays

3

You Can Actually Swim

The reef called La Barra tames the Atlantic, making Las Canteras that rare thing - a city-centre beach with calm, safe water; bring your swimmers

Don't Mention... the old rivalry with Tenerife - the two cities share the Canaries' capital as a hard-won compromise, and each quietly thinks itself the real one

Money - What It Buys

The Euro

The Canaries are part of Spain - the same euros, and famously good value

£1 buys about **€1.16**

£1 buys about **$1.32**

Look for a menu del dia - three courses and a drink, often under 12 euros

Low-tax islands - tobacco, perfume, spirits and electronics are cheaper than the mainland or the ship

Indicative mid-market rates, October 2026

What You Might Reasonably Pay

Coffee	Beer or Wine	Ron Miel	Cathedral Tower
€1.50	€2.50	€3.00	€4.00
about £1.30	about £2.15	about £2.60	about £3.45

Top Tips to Save

- Las Canteras beach and its long paseo cost nothing at all
- Vegueta's streets and Plaza de Santa Ana are free to wander
- The Casa de Colon is free to enter every Sunday
- The Perez Galdos house museum is free, guided tour included

Why Here? The Founding





1478

The Real de Las Palmas

On 24 June 1478 Juan Rejon and a Castilian army landed and founded the Real de Las Palmas among a grove of palms - the first European city in the Canaries. The aboriginal Canarii fought hard for their island, but were subdued by 1483

Juan Rejon, 1478

The Castilian captain who founded the city and began the conquest of the island

The Canarii's Stand

The aboriginal islanders resisted for five hard years before surrender in 1483

A Grove of Palms

The palmas of the name were the date palms that grew where the city rose

Columbus Pauses Here, 1492

The Last Stop Before a New World

In the summer of 1492 Christopher Columbus put in at Las Palmas to mend the Pinta's broken rudder and take on supplies before the long Atlantic crossing. He lodged in the governor's house - now the Casa de Colon - and the Canaries became the springboard for Spain's voyages to the Americas, and the model for the colonies that followed



Step into the Casa de Colon in Vegueta to stand where he stayed - and where, in 1927, Alfredo Kraus was born

Two Hundred Years Ago



1820s

A Town Awaiting Its Harbour

Two centuries ago, Las Palmas was still a modest colonial town, overshadowed by its rival Santa Cruz. Its fortunes would soar only later in the century, when the great Puerto de la Luz harbour was built and the world's ships began to call

A quiet capital	A compact town of churches and merchants' houses gathered around Vegueta
Rivals for primacy	Las Palmas and Santa Cruz vied to lead the Canaries - a contest still felt today
Awaiting the boom	The great change would come with Puerto de la Luz, built from 1883

A Century to Now

1883

Puerto de la Luz

A great new harbour rose, turning Las Palmas into a major Atlantic port

1900s

The British Decades

Coal, bananas and British firms made the city cosmopolitan and prosperous

1960s

Sun and Sand

Mass tourism arrived, and Las Canteras became a beloved city beach

Today

Capital by the Sea

The Canaries' largest city, a warm cruise hub around a golden bay

Where You Berth - Central



Central, but Spread Out

We usually berth at Muelle Santa Catalina, right by the city - no tender. From the smaller Leon y Castillo berth, P&O has run a paid shuttle into town

Beach North, Town South

Las Canteras and the park are a short walk north; the old town of Vegueta is a 6 km bus or taxi ride south - plan for both



Landfall · Las Palmas de Gran Canaria - Ship Alongside Cruise Terminal

Ashore



The Best View - and the Walk

The Best View

The Cathedral Tower

In Vegueta, a lift carries you up the Santa Ana cathedral tower for a fine view over the old town's rooftops and out to the great harbour - about 4 euros, and worth the ride south

- **Cathedral Tower** - a lift up for Vegueta's rooftops and the port (about 4 euros)
- **Las Canteras Paseo** - the 3 km beach promenade, the city at play by the Atlantic
- **Roque Nublo** - the island's great rock monolith, high in the green interior (excursion)

Two Walks, North and South

The Las Canteras paseo

3 km / 1.9 mi · flat · beachfront, cafes

Santa Catalina to the market

0.9 km / 0.6 mi · north · park, port market

Vegueta's old streets

by bus / taxi · 6 km south · cobbled, colonial

Plaza de Santa Ana

the historic core · cathedral · Columbus house near

A good plan - the beach and market on foot in the morning, then bus 1 or 12 down to Vegueta for the afternoon

Two Sides of the City



The Beach and North

A Short Walk From the Ship

- Las Canteras, the golden city beach
- The paseo, alive with cafes and life
- The Auditorio Alfredo Kraus, on the sand
- The port market and Santa Catalina park

Vegueta and the South

A Bus or Taxi Ride Away

- The Casa de Colon, Columbus's lodging
- Santa Ana Cathedral and its old square
- The Museo Canario and its mummies
- Cobbled colonial streets and tapas bars



Las Palmas on a Budget

Las Canteras Beach

The golden bay and its long seafront paseo cost nothing at all

Vegueta's Streets

Plaza de Santa Ana and the colonial lanes are free to wander

The Casa de Colon

Columbus's house is free to enter every Sunday

Perez Galdos House

The great novelist's birthplace, free with a guided tour

The Port Market

Mercado del Puerto is free to browse and cheap to graze

A Sea Swim

The reef-calmed water at Las Canteras is the best free thing in town

For the Cultured

The Casa de Colon

Columbus, his voyages and the Atlantic world, in a lovely old palace (about 4 euros)

The Museo Canario

The aboriginal Canarii, with a striking hall of mummies and skulls (about 4 euros)

Santa Ana Cathedral

The great church of the Canaries and its tower-top view (about 4 euros)

Casa-Museo Perez Galdos

The birthplace of Spain's great 19th-century novelist (free, guided)

Auditorio Alfredo Kraus

The tenor's monument on Las Canteras, waves behind the stage

CAAM

The Atlantic Centre of Modern Art, tucked into old Vegueta (free)

If You Do One Thing

Walk, and Swim, Las Canteras



Give the city's own beach its due. Las Canteras is a 3 km golden crescent beside the port, its Atlantic swell tamed by a natural reef called La Barra - so you can stroll the palm-lined paseo, watch the surfers at the far end, and take a warm, calm swim in the middle of a capital city

Bring your swimmers and a towel - showers and cafes line the promenade, and the water is safe on a green-flag day

One Drink, and One Dish





If You Have One Drink

Ron Miel

Ron miel (rron mee-EL) is Canarian honey rum - dark rum blended with island honey, smooth, sweet and warming, served chilled in a little glass. The local pour is Arehucas, distilled up the coast at Arucas since 1884

If You Eat One Thing

Ropa Vieja

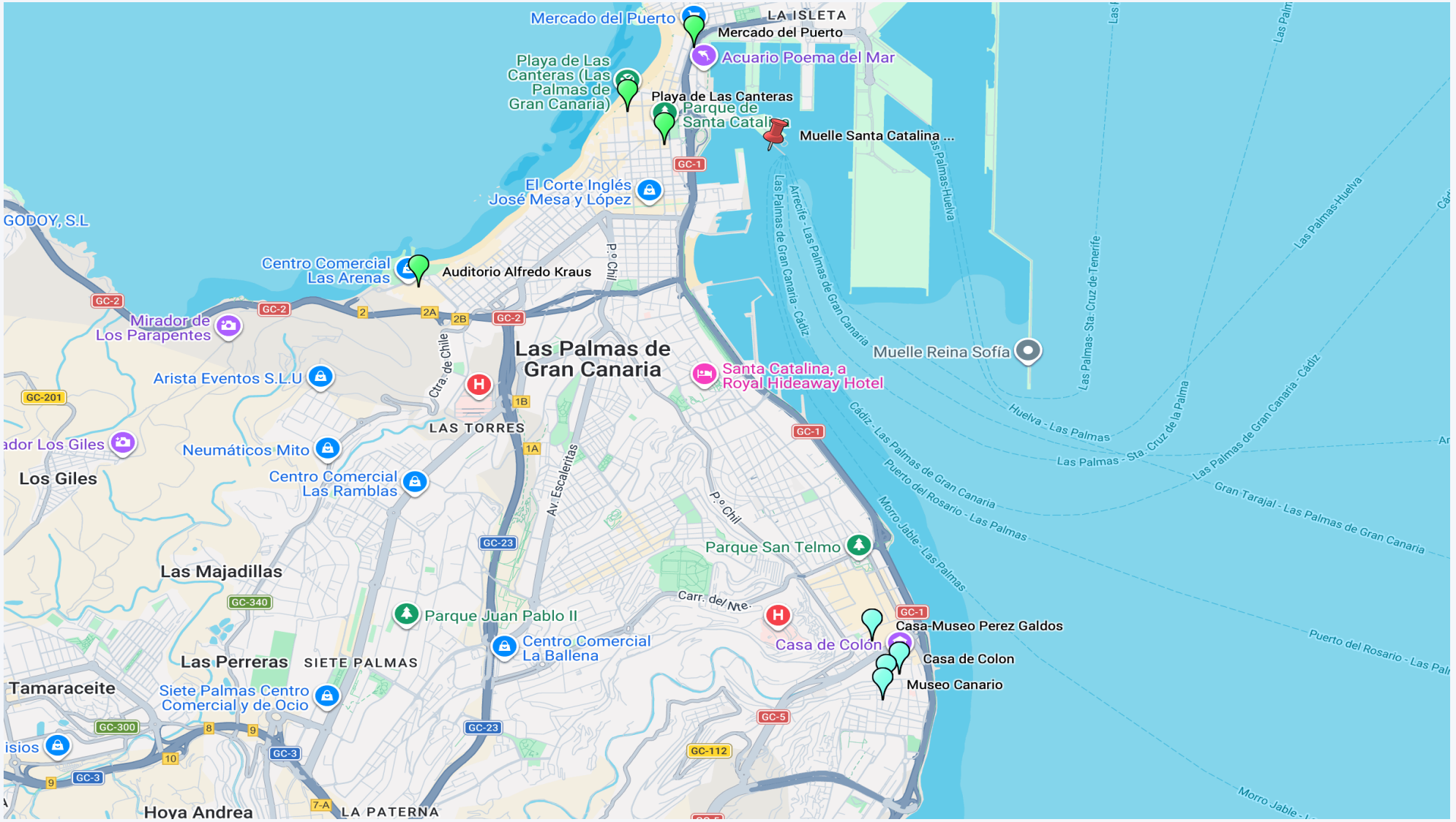
Ropa vieja (ROH-pah vee-EH-hah), or old clothes, is a hearty Canarian stew of shredded meat and chickpeas slow-cooked with peppers and potato. Homely and filling - have it with gofio, the toasted grain of the ancient islanders

Las Palmas in Motion



Before You Go's Guide to Las Palmas

The Lie of the Land



The Lie of the Land



Apps Worth a Download

A few apps to smooth and enrich your day ashore - grab them on the ship's wi-fi before you step off

Google Maps

Pin the beach, the market and Vegueta - and save Las Palmas to use offline

Guaguas Municipales

The yellow city buses - a ride is about 1.40 euros, and bus 1 or 12 runs to Vegueta

Google Translate

Handy Spanish, though English is widely spoken in the tourist heart

Your Cruise App

The all-aboard time in your pocket - and today it may well be a late one