

# Tenerife, the diverse island

## TENERIFE, THE DIVERSE ISLAND



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Corona vacation again. In spring I booked some hotels in Germany to be on the safe side. But already by then, it was clear that this would not be my favorite option. I was hoping that with the vaccinations international travel would become an option, preferably to the USA. But we all know how that turned out.

On top of that, Freya's back is causing serious problems. A 5-day city trip through Berlin, as originally booked, is out of the question. For quite some time she was even on "go alone, I'll stay in my garden". Finally, we agreed on Tenerife, with the option that she stays at the pool while I go hiking.

### Sun., 5th Sept. - Flight and arrival

We get up as on an ordinary working day, pack the rest of our stuff and leave home close to 8 am. The drive to Munich airport is super relaxed, very little traffic. Just the opposite is the case at Lufthansa's business check-in. I can't remember many days in the pre-Corona era when it was this crowded. Thanks to my Senator status, we are able to spend the time before boarding in the lounge. Here we take the opportunity for an early lunch, as we don't expect to get much on the flight (in fact they do have a variety of meals and snacks that you can buy, but nothing for free).

The flight is nothing special, except for the fact that you just have to wear a mask all the time. The seats and service are much better than TUI or especially the Spanish airlines, so I'm glad there

was the option to fly Lufthansa.

Freya finds it funny that the flight captain announces himself with the words: "This is the flight captain speaking from the cockpit". From where else, please? Also, that the stewardess thanks him for the "standing ovation" after landing hits her sense of humor. But that was probably also due to the nice speech before. After an aborted landing attempt, she

said "two landings for the price of one, that's something".

Our luggage arrives early, but that is of no use because we have to wait for another couple to be taken with

us to Puerto de la Cruz.

An hour later we arrive at the Taoro Garden Hotel that is situated high above the city. Mid-sized, quiet with a nice pool for Freya and big trees in the garden. Next to it is a park (no, not the Taoro) where people walk their dogs or go jogging. Since I assumed that we don't feel like

walking all the way to the city center today, I already looked around for dinner options at home. We decide to go to Alberto's bar, which should have a good Sangria and pizza. Well the Sangria was really good (and strong), but forget the Pizza - one from the fridge tastes better.



sunset at Puerto de la Cruz

## Mon, 6th Sept. - First walk through Puerto de la Cruz and pick up the car

We don't have a lot on the agenda for today. After noon we can pick up the car and that's the only fix appointment of the day.

Breakfast in the hotel is ok and the variety seems to be big enough for the two weeks to come. After breakfast, we pack our things and walk down through Taoro Park towards the city center. Quite a lot of steps, but that was already clear when we booked the hotel.

The city center is quite nice, of course very touristy, but still. On this Monday morning, it is still quite sleepy, the stores and restaurants are just opening, but there are not many people out yet. We take pictures of some nice graffiti, buy some water at an astonishingly large supermarket in the city center and finally make it to the car rental station.

The paperwork is done quickly, no annoying questions about additional insurance or anything. We get an Opel Astra with, as I will find out in the course of the trip, lots of driver assistance systems. The most annoying of these, by the way,

is the automatic detection of speed limits. Not that the car doesn't recognize them properly, but when it misses new signs, it starts making some up (most likely based on what's normally allowed on that kind of road). This makes the whole feature not only useless but downright dangerous.

The car has a lot of scratches all over the place of whom I try to take pictures. We are fully insured, but I hope we can avoid discussions and paperwork on the return.

As the car is already running on reserve, the next thing to do is to look for a gas

station. In Puerto de la Cruz this is no problem, there are many here.

Afterwards we return to the hotel and relax. Freya goes to the pool and Jürgen likes it on the shady balcony.

In the evening we again walk down the stairs of Taoro Park to have dinner in the city center. We stroll around and decide on a small restaurant in the pedestrian zone where we can sit outside (La Tasquita de Berna). Freya takes the "fish of the day" and I decide

on the grilled octopus. Both are super tasty and so this becomes our favorite restaurant in Puerto de la Cruz.

Now we have to walk up the streets to reach the base of Taoro garden and then to climb more than 300 steps. But it sounds worse than it is.



in Puerto de la Cruz



in Puerto de la Cruz



in Puerto de la Cruz



## Tue, 7th Sept. - Los Organos hike from Aguamansa

Freya managed the stairs yesterday evening pretty well. We want to start with an easy hike to see what her body is able to handle. From Aguamansa there is a short trail to the base of Los Organos that we want to try. At 5.2 km and about 200 meters difference in height, it seems like a good option.

I brought along our Garmin navigation device and have already entered the address of our trailhead. Everything is going well until Bärbel, as we call our navi, asks me to turn left. This "road" is super steep and narrow - and of course not a one-way street. In the middle of the road, a car comes down. Somehow, we manage to get past each other.

First lesson of the day: Trust the official road signs rather than the navigation system. The way might be longer, but it will save you quite some nerves.

We park on the side of the road, put on our trekking shoes, and walk the road back to the trailhead. Is this steep path really the right way? The posting is clear and there are also some kind of stairs. It is not dangerous or difficult, but our idea

of "easy" is somehow different. The steps are uneven, and you have to watch where you put your feet. For me, this is not a problem, but Freya struggles with these conditions from the beginning.

Finally, we reach an asphalt road and follow it for a while. Then we turn right and follow a typical hiking trail upwards.

Again, nothing complicated, but quite steep and uneven. Freya needs to focus on where to step and cannot really enjoy the walk. In the end, we even miss a turn and follow a path that ends two me-

ters below the main road. Funnily enough, climbing over the rocks to the path was the part that Freya enjoyed the most.

We are now on an easy-to-walk forest road and decide to rather extend the hike to the caldera and from there back to Aguamansa rather than take the designated trail with narrow paths.

The way to the playing ground in the cal-



near Aguamansa



near Aguamansa

dera above the village of Aguamansa is super easy and Freya starts to relax. But then the way down from the caldera is again a path through the forest. Now Freya refuses to go any further. I ask her if I should get the car and collect her, but instead, we just follow the road down the mountain to Aguamansa.

This easy hike was obviously too much for Freya. After the stairs up to the hotel yesterday, she thought that she would be in much better shape. Interestingly, it's her knees that are causing problems rather than her back. But anyway, she's glad to be back in the car.

Connecting the Garmin to the car, we realize that it is not recharging. This is annoying because the only charging cable I have with me is the one for the cigarette lighter. Well, then we have to find our way old-school - with a map. If in doubt, we can always use Google Maps on our phones. It's just a little inconvenient sin-

ce I don't have a holder for the phone with me.

This morning I saw a big supermarket where I want to buy beer and other things quickly. After some searching, we realize that our Garmin must have taken a different highway exit on the way back. So, I bring Freya back to the hotel and try to find the way from this morning. That works out well and with some snacks and a good cold beer (Dorada Especial), I return to the hotel.

## Wed., 8th Sept. - Anaga Mountains and a ride along the coast

Freya's back and knees are still not ok. But we think that an easy walk in the Anaga Mountains should be possible.

After breakfast, we leave the hotel and drive towards Cruz del Carmen. After a while, I wonder how the car is able to



Camino viejo al Pico del Inglés



in Bajamar

show me the speed limit. Does this car have a built-in navigation system? Let's have a look. O.k. here we can change the language. Great. And here we can turn on the navigation system - bingo! Problem solved.

But the next one is coming soon. Even we

are not very late, the parking at Cruz del Carmen is completely full and new cars are arriving all the time. We drive a little further and are lucky to find a parking lot near Camino viejo al Pico del Inglés. This is a small street with high walls on both sides. We take a few photos and walk a bit along the road, but there are no trails you can walk. O.k. lesson learned: If we want to see this place, we have to start much earlier.

As an alternative, we drive to some places on the northwest coast. We start with Bajamar. With the help of the newly discovered navigation system, we drive down to the coast on back roads. By the way, this device wants to send us through narrow, steep roads just as much as our Garmin.

Bajamar is a small town where the sea rolls in huge waves. Today they are not as strong as I have seen in some pictures. But still, some people are enforcing the wave-breakers, which are already pretty massive. Unfortunately, that means the little lighthouse is blocked.

Next, we want to go all the way south to the villages of Garachico and Los Silos. The drive is kind of annoying. Lots of traffic, mostly locals, and stop and go very often. It seems that it is rush hour here at noon. Garachico is completely crowded, this time by tourists. No chance to find a parking space. Since the places I wrote down for a visit are not really must-sees now, we continue to Los Silos.

In Los Silo there is a festival in the city center and they have closed quite a few streets. We drive around a bit and since we are hungry, we park the car and look for a place to eat. Everything seems to be closed and not only because of the festival. I check TripAdvisor and all

the restaurants nearby don't open until the evening. But in the next village, there is a cafe.

So, back to the car and to Buenavista del Norte. The food is not really worth men-



in Los Silos



in Los Silos

tioning, but cheap and good.

We drive back to the place where we



parked before and walk a bit through the streets of Los Silos. A nice little town, some tourists, but mostly locals.

But now we want to get to the main reason we are here: The whale skeleton. The whale washed ashore in 2005 and is 17 meters long. It was mounted on two steel posts and placed near the shore.

The location is a bit away from the old town. Nearby are several apartment blocks, and next to where the skeleton lies is a (closed) swimming pool. In front of it is a large bird figure made of trash. Great! There is also a natural swimming pool

right next to the skeleton, but access is blocked. Seeing how hard the waves are rolling in, I'm sure it has nothing to do with Covid, but that it's just not safe to go in the water.



in Los Silos



in Los Silos

Nearby is also El Bufadero, a blowhole. Freya stays with the skeleton while I go to see if it's even interesting. The answer is no - at least not with the kind of waves we have today.

After that, we decide to call it a day. Freya is not feeling well and wants to lie down. The stairs down to the city center are also a no-go today. Let's see what tomorrow brings.

### Thur, 9th Sept. - Canada Blanca hike, drive to Costa Adeje and the lost place Sanatorio de Abona

Meanwhile, it is clear that Freya has to slow down. Either it's the back or the knee that is hurting, and neither stairs nor uneven grounds are her friends. So she'll stay at the hotel, swim, and try out the massage offerings.

In the meantime, I will drive to the Parador de Canades del Teide. Here starts one of the trails I found on [bergewandern.de](http://bergewandern.de) and that seems to be a good start.

The drive up to the Teide is relaxed. I pass Aguamansa and the number of cars parking there is no different to yesterday. Also, the other parking lots on the way to the Parador are mostly empty, except for one particular area that is totally crowded. Cars are already parked in unofficial spaces along the road. No idea what makes this place so special.

I drove by here (Sendero de Montaña Blanca) a few more times over the next few days. In the meantime, I think it's the

starting point if you want to climb the Teide without taking the cable car.

I get one of the last parking lots at the Roques de García, which was a stupid idea as I have to cross the street anyhow to start at the visitor center and the parking there is almost empty.

The trail starts a few meters behind that



Canada Blanca - Teide NP

little church and there are various trail options, but none is exactly the one I will take. There is even a sign pointing to the Canada Blanca, but the distance is so great that the trail probably leads to another part of this area. I have my printed map with me and in case I need it an app on my phone that can show me where I am. . The first few meters are through an old lava field before I come to

a dirt road that is closed except for official use. The path is pleasant to walk and even though the sky is cloudless, the temperature is nice.

The actual path starts with a climb of about 100 meters, but it is not really steep. Once you reach that level, you have to look for a path that goes to the left. The few other people who are also hiking here follow the path going straight ahead. I'm briefly checking my coordinates, but yes this is the way I want to go. The other path seems to take a parallel route and is a bit longer, but it doesn't pass the old sanatorium.

The following path is more or less flat and still goes over a dirt road. Finally, I see the old sanatorium. It's not in ruins as I thought. Just doors and windows are bricked. The buildings themselves look pretty solid. Anyway, they are a nice motif with the Teide in the background.

I spend some time here and then conti-

nue my hike. After a while the path gains altitude and it becomes more strenuous, but still not bad. I'm now approaching the TF-21 where the trail should turn left



former sanatorium – Teide NP



former sanatorium – Teide NP

and go parallel to the street back to the Parador. "Should" because the trail is closed. The closure is marked only with

this white and red caution tape, with no notice or other explanation. If I would go back to the base of this last hill there might be another access to the trail, but



former sanatorium – Teide NP



former sanatorium – Teide NP

if it's closed here, it might be closed there too.

I decide to take the other option and

walk the remaining 4 km along the road. It's not the prettiest trail, but the road is wide enough for cars to pass easily and I can see the Parador getting closer and closer.

When I return to the car, the place is totally crowded. Roques de García is one of the main tourist destinations on the island and all the tour buses stop here, as do the many tourists who just drive around. Most of them stay only a few minutes and then move on.

Since I don't want to go back to the hotel the same way, I think it's a good idea to continue the ride from yesterday. I want to follow the TF-21 and take a look at the main tourist location: The area around Playa de Las Americas.

I've seen pictures of the Magma Art & Congress Center in Costa Adeje, but the car's navigation system can't find the address I've picked

out. So I just drive there and see if I can find it anyway.



Playa de Las Americas is the area of old-style mass tourism. Not that there are no high-rises or big hotels in Puerto de la Cruz. But what I see here in the south is a whole different ballgame. Between the

beach and the highway in the interior are layers and layers of huge building blocks and on the other side of the highway are theme parks and even more high rising buildings.

I know for people who want to spend the day on the beach or are here to "have fun" that doesn't matter, but I'm glad our hotel is where it is.

I drive around Costa Adeje a bit, but can't

find the convention center. O.k., it was meant as a goodie anyway. I now take the coastal road north to look at a lost place.

As I pass the Playa de Las Americas exit on the highway, I can make out the convention center

on the highway, I can make out the convention center



Sanatorio de Abona



Sanatorio de Abona



Sanatorio de Abona

right next to the highway, but now I don't want to. Halfway north is the small town of Abades.

It doesn't seem to be a classic fishing village but consists mainly of small tou-

rist houses - kind of nice. The black beach is small, but it seems that people come here mainly for diving.

Above the beach is the abandoned Sanatorio de Abona, an old sanatorium to treat leper. As treatment

options improved it was not needed anymore. Now it's a lost place that is in remarkable

good condition. Unlike many other Lost Places, this is not a single building, but a

huge area. Of course, it is not an insider tip, the church on the hill can be seen from far away, and so "normal" tourists also stroll through the area.

I park my car at the beach and climb the hill from there. There is no official route, but the paths are obvious. I just would be careful if it has rained. It might get pretty slippery then. The track reaches the hill on the left-hand side right next to the church. This is also one of the more attractive buildings. But there are dozens of them to ex-

plore. Almost all are covered with graffiti, some really good ones, many are just



Sanatorio de Abona



Sanatorio de Abona



useless tags. I think I covered just half of the buildings, but after a while, I'm just overloaded. Let's see if I find the time and mood to come back and explore the rest on another day.

Back at the car, I now have to drive almost an hour to the hotel. That was a pretty long day. I think I'll take it a little easier in the future.

### Fri., 10th Sept. - Arenas Negras hike and stops at the Piedra de la Rosa and the observatory

Today's hike starts in El Portillo, where the TF-24 leaves the TF-21. I park the car at the local visitor center, where there



Arenas Negras - Teide NP

are only a few other cars. There are several routes that can be walked from here. Coincidentally, a Spanish couple started a few minutes early and whenever one of us stops to drink or take a photo, the other overtakes.

The trail is properly posted and goes steadily uphill for the first half and downhill on the way back. It takes me to the top of an ash hill, from where there is a beautiful view. In the spring, this is an

opportunity to see the area's flora in bloom, but it's much too late in the year for that now.

The trails are easy, only when descending the hill you have to be a bit careful, as the slope is all ash. And don't expect to find much shade here. So take enough water with you and don't forget the sunscreen.



Teide Observatory

After the hike, I have two more destinations on the agenda today: Piedra de la Rosa and the observatory.

Piedra de la Rosa is a specially shaped stone that is supposed to be right next to TF-21. I have a rough idea of where it is, but I didn't see any signposts on the way up. Well, it turns out that the lookout is marked, but with a different name. It can

be found between km 22 and 23. There is parking on both sides of the road and they even made a tunnel under the road so visitors can reach the lookout without having to cross the road. The stone is ok, but it's really only the stone that you can photograph from just this viewpoint. I ended up deleting the shots right after looking at it.

So I turn around and head back to where TF-24 leaves TF-21. It's more about driving a different way back to the hotel than anything else. I already know that the observatory is closed to the public, but they've even closed the public parking lot. So I turn the car around and continue my drive, which takes me to the outskirts of La Laguna and then back to the hotel.

## Sat., 11th Sept. - Sunrise in the Anaga Mountains and a missed sunset at Playa de Benijo

Today I want to go for a sunrise shot. As sunrise here is pretty late (around 7:30 at this time of the year), I don't have to get up very early, but I have to drive to

Cruz, but the city with all its yellowish lights is not a nice foreground for a sunrise. So I get back in my car and try to find another vantage point that offers a view further north. After driving along the mountain road for a while, I come to a small restaurant where I can park the car and which offers a nice view from the roadside down to the sea.

Since I'm already here and still have some time, I drive back to Cruz del Carmen. It's 7:45 and the parking lot is already more than half full. Most people are here to jog down the trail. I do just the opposite: With tripod and camera, I walk a few meters, take photos and pick the next spot nearby. The sun starts to shine through the trees, but it's not too bright yet. I stay only half an hour because I an-

We stay at the hotel over lunch and later drive down to Puerto de la Cruz for a walk and an early dinner. We leave the car at the large Explanada del Muelle parking lot right by the sea and walk along the coast to Lago Martiánez. This is a huge artificial pool complex built in the 70s by Canarian artist César Manrique. It looks kind of nice and if you are here with kids, this might be something for



sunrise in the Anaga mountains



sunrise in the Anaga mountains



near Cruz del Carmen

the other side of the island, so I leave the hotel at 6 am.

The plan is to drive to the Anaga Mountains, take advantage of the viewing platform at Cruz del Carmen and, if I'm there anyway, take a quick look at the forest. Unfortunately, the vista at Cruz del Carmen is not what I thought it would be. There is a nice view of Santa

I won't get a beautiful sunrise, but I have found something even more promising: The sea and the coastline are covered with low-hanging fog, while some mountain peaks shine through like small islands. As I wait and take photos, it gets a little brighter and the fog retreats to the sea. A single cloud catches a bit of pink color, but it's not worth a picture.

nounced to be back at the hotel before 9:30, so Freya and I can go for breakfast together.

When I leave at 8:15, the parking lot is completely full, and more and more cars arrive. So if we want to come here again, we have to skip breakfast and be here no later than 8:00.

you. But for us, this is nothing that we need.

For the evening, I was planning a sunset shooting at the most recommended beach, Playa de Benijo. At first, we thought that Freya can join me, but then I read that you have to climb quite some stairs to get there. So I bring her back to the hotel and start the drive. It's quite a



long way as the recommended one is via Santa Cruz, which means going from one side of the island to the other and back again.

To make a long story short, it wasn't worth the drive. Driving down the steep road to the coast, you can already see that there is a small area between the coastline and the mountains. In most places, it's just enough for the beach, a road, and parking slots alongside. Today, even an hour before sunset, it's totally crowded.

Masses of people walking around and still more cars arrive as

now also the surfers are looking for a place to park their cars. I drive up to the village of Benijo, but there I see only private parking.

The beach looks ok and the rocks in the sea are kind of nice, but they are not even in the direction of the sunset.

This place might be ok if you come when the weather is too bad for swimming and you have to share the beach with some hardcore surfers only, but on a regular day in summer, this place is significantly overrated.

So, what do I do now? I don't want to go back the same way

and decide to take the shorter but more

time-consuming route through the Anaga Mountains.

I really love this forest. You could stop every 5 meters and find something new. I take two of the very few parking opportunities to take some pictures and then drive slowly back to the hotel.

**Sun., 12th Sept. - Pasada del Fraile hike and a short visit to La Orotava**

The hike to Pasada del Fraile is another one I found on [berge-wandern.de](http://berge-wandern.de). It starts at Casa del Caminero, a bus stop at the TF-21. Right behind the building is a huge picnic area called "Area Recreativa Ramon el Caminero". They even have two barbeque areas there, but they are closed at the moment. If this is because of Covid or to prevent wildfire I don't know.



in the Anaga mountains



in the Anaga mountains



near Casa del Caminero



near Casa del Caminero

I passed this place a couple of times now and never saw a single car parking here. But today it's Sunday and the local families come together for a picnic. Right after me, 8 more cars are coming. People are opening the trunks

and carrying big coolers to the tables. I am the only one who has come here to hike. Only a German couple with mountain bikes are dropped off by their shuttle and bike the way I will walk.

Today's hike is a little lower than the previous ones. At this altitude, the Teide is covered with pine trees. The forest is not very dense and you can see many younger trees between the big ones. The way is a forest road and easy to walk. Unfortunately, it's open to cars as well and some locals with pick-ups are taking this opportunity today. Often two or three men are sitting inside with a couple of dogs in cages in the cargo area. Do they go hunting? I don't know, at least I don't hear any gunshots.



in La Orotava



Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja - La Orotava

The trail is a loop trail that goes uphill at first and then steeply down to another forest road that brings you back to the starting point. Unfortunately, I did not pay attention to the information in the description, which says that I have to leave the forest road at a certain point. So I keep walking uphill until I realize that the path no longer matches the map. Well, at least I don't have to go uphill to get back to the place where I have to leave the road. It's right on a curve and I even saw it as I was walking by. At the time, though, I thought it was just

another shortcut to the forest road below.

There is the option to continue on to a waterfall, but it's way too dry to give that a try. The way back is not worth

mentioning. All in all, a nice hike in a mostly shady forest.

On the way back I thought to make a short detour to Candelaria, but the roads the navigation system is suggesting are all super narrow and super steep. So I change my mind, postpone Candelaria until tomorrow, and make a stop in La Orotava.

La Orotava is a town next to Puerto de la Cruz and I have to pass it every time

I'm driving up to the Teide. I find a parking lot near the old town and start walking around a bit. It's kind of nice, but not as beautiful as in the descriptions I've read. Maybe it's just because it's pretty cloudy and everything looks better on a sunny day. But at least during our stay, the clouds are often stuck in this area while in Puerto de la Cruz, but also on the Teide the sun shines.

The church and the botanic gardens are closed this Sunday after-

noon, but Victoria Garden (also known as Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja) is pretty nice.

After wandering the streets for a while, I end the day and drive back to the hotel.



Auditorio de Tenerife - Santa Cruz



Auditorio de Tenerife - Santa Cruz



**Mon., 13th Sept. -  
Santa Cruz and a short visit  
to Candelaria**

Since Freya is feeling better today and

even within the city. We park the car in the Meridiano shopping center. This has a fairly large parking garage and is free.

Our first, and main, destination is the Auditorio de Tenerife. The concert hall is lo-

there, so this could be a good alternative if you only want to visit the auditorium.

We spend quite a while walking around the building and taking photos from different angles. Unfortunately, the stair-

the coastline directly below the auditorium. They are covered with pictures of various musicians - from Beethoven to Madonna.

Finally, we made it and head for the old



Auditorio de Tenerife - Santa Cruz



in Santa Cruz



Nuestra Señora de la Concepcion - Santa Cruz

we don't expect many stairs in Santa Cruz, she comes with me. We take our time and leave only around 9 am. The drive to Santa Cruz takes a little more than half an hour and at this time there are no traffic jams



Auditorio de Tenerife - Santa Cruz

cated directly on the Atlantic Ocean and is one of the architectural highlights of the Canary Islands. It only takes us about 10 minutes to get there. There is also a large parking lot



in Santa Cruz

case that allows you to climb the building is closed. Some of the restrictions by Corona are really strange. Don't miss taking a view of the wave-breakers at



in Santa Cruz

city center. Not the most pleasant and interesting way. After a while we reached the church "Nuestra Señora de la Concepción". Quite nice from the outside as well as inside, but by far

not as impressive as the ones in Andalusia for example.

We stroll a bit through the city center, photograph nice graffiti, and visit a museum store with robots "composed of objects from all corners of the galaxy", as the artist Dr. Zenon writes on his homepage. Back at the mall, we have lunch at an Asian restaurant outside on the top floor.



Candelaria

Before we're heading home, we drive a little further south. Just 17 km away is the small town of Candelaria. We park directly at the central parking area at the beach and walk to the two main attractions of the village: The church "Basilika Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria" and the statues of the chiefs of the former inhabitants. Unfortunately, they are maintaining the waterfront, blocking half of the statues.



in Candelaria

Final job of the day on our way back to the hotel is getting something for tomorrow's breakfast. We want to skip the one in the hotel and leave early enough to

get parking at the visitor center in Cruz del Carmen.

## Tue., 14th Sept. - Cruz del Carmen and the coastal hiking trail to Casa Hamilton

We get up early and leave the hotel without having breakfast. It is still dark and, as expected, very cloudy. We leave the highway at La Laguna and as we are getting higher the first raindrops of this vacation appear on the windshield. We reach the parking lot of Cruz del Carmen at 7:45 and today we are car number 3. O.k., it's

a weekday and the weather is not so nice. Indeed the rain is getting harder and

so we eat the stuff we bought yesterday inside the car.

Weather is changing fast here and when we finished eating, the clouds are gone and we can see patches of blue sky above us.



near Cruz del Carmen



near Cruz del Carmen

Right across the visitor center is the trailhead for 3 hiking trails. No. 1 is short and easy and should be doable for most handicapped people, as long as they are able to manage a few meter height difference.

No. 2 is a moderately difficult trail and No. 3 is a longer trail. But the notice at the trailhead says that this trail gets

pretty slippery when wet, so nothing for today.



The main focus today is photography and there are so many opportunities that you don't even get into a hiking mode. I brought my tripod and keep the camera mounted as I walk from one spot to the next.

Freya's knees are so-so today. Trail #1 is ok, but after a couple of meters downhill on trail #2, she decided to head back to the car. She has taken a book with her and will spend the time reading. I continue with the track I al-



near Cruz del Carmen

go downhill, the less spectacular they are.

Back to the parking lot, it's 9:30 and the little cafe is just opening. We decide this is a good time for a coffee. Here, as in Los Silos, is a junk sculpture. A crab, on the wall. By the way, the parking lot is full now and the people start to leave the cars on places that are reserved for busses or are completely restricted. I don't know if the rangers are checking, but this would

trail that starts next to the restaurant across the street. And it's the same as this morning: You walk 2 meters and another motif appears. Freya stays with me for quite a while and when the trail starts to go steeper downhill, she returns to the car. This time I don't go much further. After 3 or 4 switchbacks, I decide that's enough for today.

We've been here for 3 hours. The weather was constantly changing from light rain to cloudy to bright sun. Only

she crawled out of bed so early this morning.



near Cruz del Carmen

For the afternoon, Freya decides to stay by the pool, listening to the sounds of the many collared parrots while I take a walk along the coast to Casa Hamilton. The idea was to leave the car near Lorro Park, hoping there would be plenty of parking. But no, I have to continue until I am almost at the Maritim Hotel.

The first part of the trail from



Playa de los Roques - Puerto de la Cruz



Casa Hamilton - Los Realejos



Casa Hamilton - Los Realejos

ready walked on Sunday, but this time I don't turn around early but finish the track. Is it me or are the most interesting trees near to the trailhead? The further I

be a place where they could make a lot of money.

After the coffee, we take a look at the

the fog I had hoped for was rather rare. The woods here are definitely my favorite place on the island and Freya, even though she can't walk much, was glad

Puerto de la Cruz to Los Realejos is not really interesting because it does not follow the coastline, but is mainly there to gain altitude. The nice part starts at the

other end of Los Realejos. It makes sense to leave the car there. Finding a parking place should not be more complicated than in Puerto de la Cruz.

The walk from Los Realejos to Casa Hamilton is then a nice walk rather than a hike.

Casa Hamilton, or Las Ruinas de Gordejuela as it is also known, is a former pumping station that used the first steam engine on Tenerife to pump water from the Gordejuela springs to the banana plantations in the Orotava Valley. The steep path down to the ruins is no longer maintained and access is blocked by a barbed-wire fence.

You could continue the walk down to the next beach, but I've reached my destination and walk back to the car.

### Wed, 15th Sept. - A lazy day in the hotel and sunset in Teide NP

I didn't sleep well this night and think it's time for a relaxing day at the hotel. I spend most of the time writing this travel report.



sunset in Teide NP

After an early dinner, we want to go for a sunset at the Teide NP. As we drive up the mountain, we realize that it will not work out as planned. More and more clouds are moving in. Normally this is good for sunset photos, but here the clouds are below us and the light from the setting sun is not reflected down, but the sun would have to shine through the clouds, which normally won't happen.

We stop at one of the viewpoints and take some pictures before the sun is too low. Even we know that it's useless I continue till El Portillo, but shortly after I give up and turn around to drive back to the hotel.



near Mirador de Samara - Teide NP

### Thur, 16th Sept. - Hiking at Mirador de Samara and another visit to the south coast

Today it's raining. At least that was the weather forecast for Puerto de la Cruz. And indeed, while we're having breakfast, it starts to drizzle. After breakfast I

have to wait a few minutes before I can start, as I want to get the information on the pick-up on Sunday and the office of the local agency is still closed.

As I walk to the car, it starts to rain again. But I want to go to the Teide NP and there the sun shines anyway, right? At least it was always like that. If there are clouds, then they are on the coast or more often

at medium altitude and the Teide was above the clouds. But today it seems to be different. Clouds and fog remain as I drive through the forest and even in El Portillo it rains. Not really much, but 9 degrees Celsius and rain is not what I am prepared for.

I start to think about alternatives, but then someone took a knife and made a clean cut. From one moment to the next



I leave the clouds and the sun shines from a crystal clear blue sky. The temperature rises to 15 degrees, colder than the days before, but pleasant for a hike.

As I don't expect to make the trail around the Roques de García in the next few days, I stop at the visitor center and go to the area where all the other tourists go and take a few photos. Again today it is very crowded, a few big buses and even a jeep safari are waiting in the parking lot for their people to return.

I continue to the Mirador de Samara. The parking lot is not huge especially as hikers and people who just want to take a snapshot have to share it.

Today, for the first time, I miss the path I wanted to go, and to this day I don't know why. Instead, I follow the official and marked hiking trail 13. Unfortunately, I have no idea how long it is and if it is even a circular trail. So I walk uphill for 45 minutes and when the trail starts to descend, I follow it briefly to find out if it

turns in the direction I want. But no, not really. O.k., then I go back the way I already know.

It's my favorite trail here in the Teide NP so far. Maybe because it reminds me of the trails in Lassen Volcanic NP in the USA. Green trees, blue sky, and a black background. Very nice!

As I'm here in this area, I decide to take a look at Los Gigantes. Originally, I didn't have this place on my agenda at all. But it's only a few kilometers to drive, so why not. In the end, I don't even drive to the official viewpoint, but find a parking spot near a restaurant where I have a good view right from the street - nothing special, but still nice.

A week ago I wanted to have a look at the Magma Art & Congress Center, but I couldn't find it - or more precisely: I finally saw it when I drove by on the highway. So

this is a good opportunity to make up for that visit.

Right now, there are no events going on

there, but it is being used as a Covid 19 vaccination center. There aren't many cars parked there, so it doesn't seem busy. But I still don't want to go in. I park the car away from the entrance, grab my camera bag and walk around the base of the building. Very graphic and abstract, so the bright sun is not a problem, the shadows add extra elements to the image.

I'm not staying too long as there is nothing else to see here. The drive back to the hotel is a little bit annoying, as the traffic is heavy today. Back at the hotel, the sun is shining - and has been for most of the day.

For dinner, we drive down to town, as we want to go to our favorite restaurant, La Tasquita de Berna, and have another good fish of the day. Regrettably, we have to stick to water as I have to drive (climbing stairs is still not a good idea for Freya), but back at the hotel, we share a bottle of wine.



near Mirador de Samara - Teide NP



near Mirador de Samara - Teide NP



Magma Art and Congress Center – Adeje



Magma Art and Congress Center – Adeje

**Fri., 17th Sept. -**  
**Long time exposures at the**  
**sea and another drive**  
**through Teide NP**

The plan for this morning is to take some long exposures at the sea. The clouds are just moving away and during breakfast, it even rains a bit. So I'm hoping for some nice waves that I can soften with a few seconds of exposure. I haven't scouted a specific place to do this, so why not start on the beaches here in Puerto de la Cruz?

Freya is joining even she is not taking pictures. For her, it's more about being out of the hotel and walking along the promenade a bit.

The beaches near the Castello turn out

to be very nice for what I have in mind. They are black lava beaches with plenty of room for those who want to sunbathe. On two of the three beaches, the waves are too strong for most people to enter the water. Red flags are up on all three beaches today. Only a few surfers are in the water trying to ride the incoming waves. But even for them, this beach is not ideal. The waves don't break until they're close to shore, and more than once a surfer has just missed a rock as he lost the battle against the waves. For me, however, the rocks near the shore and the waves lapping over them are exactly the conditions I was looking for.



Playa del Castillo -  
Puerto de la Cruz

We spend all morning at various spots here before buying some food and returning to the hotel. Later in the afternoon, Freya asks about a sightseeing tour to the Teide. Even though she is not able to hike the trails, she wants to see where I spent my last few days.

The weather is like the last two days: Clouds and rain starting halfway up and disappearing shortly after El Portillo.

Our first stop is at Mirador Minas de San José Sur and the trails here are so easy that Freya can walk a bit without problems.

We continue to Roques de García. Although it is already after 6:30, the parking lot is

full, including three buses. We park across the street at the visitor center, where most of the parking spaces are empty. From there we walk to the traffic circle and a bit more on the path along the rocks. The ground is not so pleasant for Freya to walk on and so she is glad to be back in the car.

Initially, I wanted to drive back on the TF-24 to show Freya another part of the park, but the clouds are still there and there wouldn't be much of a sight. But when we were at the first Mirador I thought to see the observatory. So we will drive there and hope for the best. At Portillo Alto the clouds are back. We turn onto TF-24 and the road slowly gains altitude. And indeed, just before we reach the viewpoints at the observatory, we come out of the fog.



Explanada del Muelle - Puerto de la Cruz



Explanada del Muelle - Puerto de la Cruz



Playa del Castillo - Puerto de la Cruz



We take some photos in different directions and are glad that I made this short detour. On the way back to the hotel we stop at another viewpoint to take some pictures of the setting sun shining through a hole in the clouds cover.

### Sat, 18th Sept. - A hike to Bollullo Beach

I'm not in the mood to drive this morning. As the only hike I prepared for Puerto de la Cruz was the one I did on Tuesday, I try to find another one on the Internet. The typical sites are not really a help. The hike to Casa Hamilton in different variants is also there at the top of the list. So I take a look at Google Maps. There seems to be a way to walk to the

beaches east of Puerto de la Cruz. As the satellite view is showing some rocks at the beach, I take the tripod with me.

It's debatable whether it's really a hike, since most of the trail is paved, but since

you have to walk up and down frequently, I'd consider it one. It is not very different from the hike to Casa Hamilton, maybe even a bit more strenuous.

I walk from our hotel down the hill to the Carr. Botanico. If you're coming from the city center, you could find another way,

but you need to gain some elevation anyway, so this easy-to-find road might be a good choice even then. In the middle of a long stretched right turn, you find a tennis court, where I'm turning left and in a small park is the access to a kind of promenade. I follow this nice path that runs between some apartment buildings and the shoreline - just at 30-40 meters.

The rest of the way is hard to miss. Partly I walk on small streets, partly through

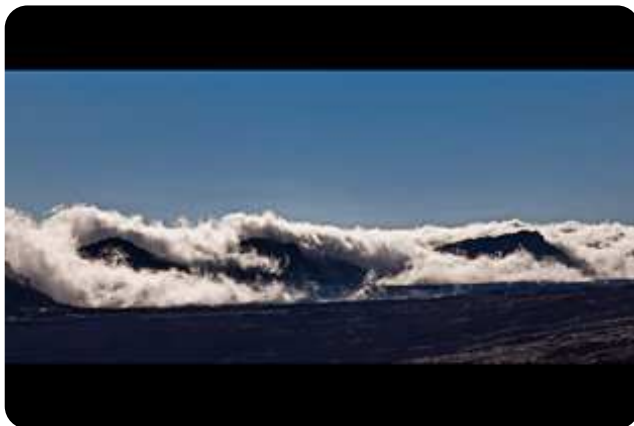
banana plantations. Then I have to go down into a barranco (the local expression for a gorge) and up again. The path is still well maintained with stairs downhill and uphill. Here you now meet the access road to the beach. You

can drive up to a restaurant with parking (3 euro fee), but the road is so narrow that you can only hope that no one is coming from the opposite direction - or at least that they are willing to drive all the way back.

Whether you come here on foot or by car, you have to walk the path from the

cliff to the beach yourself.

The beach is really nice, but we still have strong waves coming in and so the red flag is up. A lifeguard is on duty making sure no one tries to swim or gets too close to the cliff where there is danger of falling rocks. I stay here for about an hour, taking photos of various rock formations. Finally, I have enough and return to the hotel the same way.



near Roques de Garcia - Teide NP



sunset in Teide NP



Playa El Bollullo - Puerto de la Cruz

In the evening I wanted to drive down to the city center, but as we're not sure where to go we change our mind and give the restaurant at the Tigaiga hotel a second chance. The hotel is close to ours, so we can walk and have a wine with our meal. The atmosphere on the terrace is nice anyway. This time the

food tastes much better than last time and we enjoy a nice, last warm evening outside. Tomorrow we are at home - with 15 degrees less.

### Sun, 19th Sept. - Return to Germany

Our flight doesn't leave until after 5 pm, and hotel pickup is scheduled for 1:15 pm. So plenty of time to kill, but not enough for anything serious. After breakfast, Freya goes for a swim in the



Playa El Bollullo - Puerto de la Cruz

pool while I return the car. Everything goes smoothly. I have driven about 1500 kilometers in the last two weeks. Now I climb the stairs at Taoro Garden one last time, take a last shower, pack everything back into the suitcases and then the waiting begins.

We are picked up by a big bus for only 7 people. We are at the check-in 2.5 hours before departure and are surprised that it is still closed. But then we learn that

the flight is delayed by one hour. At the counter, the next unpleasant surprise follows: Lufthansa does not offer a lounge service in Tenerife at the moment. Great 😞

We go through security and find a place at a small Cafe and Tapas Bar. We grab

of the night on the final part of our journey back home.



Los Gigantes - Santiago del Teide

something to eat and drink and start waiting for the boarding in a couple of hours.

We end up taking off 45 minutes late, but since one of the reasons for the delay was strong headwinds, the captain announces that we will make up most of the delay. And indeed, we arrive only 5 minutes behind schedule.

Some small issues with the prepaid parking ticket, and then we are in the middle