

El Hierro

Canary Islands · Spain

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

El Hierro is the westernmost and southernmost of the Canary Islands. It is a quiet volcanic island with steep cliffs, pine and laurel forests, and black lava coasts. Only about 11,700 people live here. It is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and a UNESCO Global Geopark.

The island suits walkers, divers and travelers who want calm. There are no big resorts. Days are spent on trails, in natural sea pools and in the clear water near La Restinga. You need three or more nights to see the island at a relaxed pace.

When to visit

El Hierro is mild all year. Summer is dry and sunny. Most rain falls from November to March, and the central highlands are often in cloud. The trade winds are strong on the high western plateau.

The biggest event is the Bajada de la Virgen de los Reyes. It is held every four years, starting on the first Saturday of July, and the next one is in 2029. The statue of the Virgin is carried across the island to Valverde. Book flights and rooms far ahead if you plan to come.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for hiking	19° / 21° Feels like 15°	17° / 15°	Dry air
February	Great Great for hiking	18° / 21° Feels like 14°	17° / 14°	20 sunny days · Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	19° / 21° Feels like 15°	17° / 15°	25 sunny days · Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	20° / 22° Feels like 15°	17° / 16°	25 sunny days · Dry air · UV 9 (Very high)
May	Great Great for hiking	21° / 22° Feels like 17°	18° / 17°	27 sunny days · UV 10 (Very high)
June	Great Great for hiking	22° / 24° Feels like 19°	20° / 19°	27 sunny days · Humid air · UV 10 (Very high)
July	Great Great for hiking	23° / 25° Feels like 19°	21° / 20°	28 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Windy · UV 10 (Very high)
August	Great Great for hiking	24° / 25°	22° / 21°	27 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Windy · UV 10 (Very high)
September	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 26°	22° / 21°	24 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · UV 8 (Very high)
October	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 25°	21° / 19°	23 sunny days · Humid air
November	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 24°	20° / 17°	
December	Great Great for hiking	20° / 22° Feels like 16°	18° / 16°	

Best months: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Garoé is the home of the island's sacred tree. The Bimbache, the first islanders, collected water from the tree and from pools around it. Today a replanted tree stands here with an interpretation centre.
- B Mirador de la Peña is a viewpoint on the north side of the island.
- C El Sabinar is a juniper forest in La Dehesa. The wind has bent the trees almost flat. Some of the best trees are fenced off to protect them.
- D Santuario Insular de Nuestra Señora de los Reyes is the chapel of the island's patron, the Virgen de los Reyes. It is where the Bajada festival procession begins.
- E Faro de Orchilla is a lighthouse on the far western tip, built in the early 20th century.
- F Monumento al Meridiano Cero marks the old Ferro meridian near the lighthouse. Until 1884 maps used this island as the zero line of longitude.
- Charco Azul is a natural sea pool in the El Golfo area.
- G Piscinas Naturales de La Maceta has several natural pools.

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What to experience

- **Dive in the marine reserve at La Restinga.** The Mar de las Calmas reserve has several dive points, including El Bajón and Punta Restinga. The seabed changed after the 2011 submarine eruption. Dive schools in La Restinga teach beginners.
- **Swim in the natural pools.** Lava pools such as Charco Azul and Piscinas Naturales de La Maceta fill with sea water. Cala de Tacorón, near La Restinga, has calm water.
- **Walk the Ruta del Agua.** This circular trail starts near Garoé. It goes through laurel forest and past old pools and viewpoints.
- **Hike the Camino de Jinama.** The trail starts at the church in Frontera. It is hard, and cliff paths can have landslides, especially in wind and rain.
- **Walk the El Sabinar loop.** This circular route starts at the chapel of the Virgen de los Reyes.
- **Join the Bajada.** Every four years the island celebrates the Virgin of the Kings for about a month. Other fiestas include San Juan in La Restinga (around 23 June) and San Lorenzo in El Golfo (August).

Where to explore

Other Canary Islands are reached by ferry or plane, usually through Tenerife or Gran Canaria.

- La Gomera and La Palma are the nearest islands.
- Hubs for connections: Tenerife and Gran Canaria.

Getting there

El Hierro has no direct flights or ferries from mainland Spain or Europe. You connect through Tenerife or Gran Canaria.

- **By air**: El Hierro Airport (VDE) is in the north-east, about 9 km from Valverde. Binter Canarias flies from Tenerife North and Gran Canaria. CanaryFly also flies from Tenerife North. The short runway takes only turboprop planes.
- **Airport to Valverde**: A taxi is the simplest way to reach town.
- **By ferry**: Fred. Olsen Express sails from Los Cristianos on Tenerife to the port of La Estaca, near Valverde. The crossing takes about 2 hours 20 minutes. The port is under 15 minutes by road from Valverde, and a bus stop connects to town. Fred. Olsen Valverde terminal
- **Boarding**: foot passengers must board 20 minutes before departure, and cars 40 minutes before.

Getting around

The island is about 40 km long and very hilly. A car is the easiest way to see it.

- **Bus**: TransHierro runs the island buses. Coverage is limited, so check the timetable first. TransHierro
- **Taxi**: Taxi ranks are in Valverde, Tigaday and La Restinga.
- **Hiking**: Trails are the best way to see the forests and cliffs, but villages are far apart.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Low

Villages are small and far apart. Most sights need a car or a long hike.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Steep hills and long distances make cycling hard for most visitors.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Yes, for most visits. The west and the mountains have no bus service. Car rental is available at the airport, so book ahead.
- **Ferry**: Cars can be taken on the Fred. Olsen ferry from Tenerife. Vehicles must board 40 minutes before departure.

Food & drink

Cheese is part of almost every local dish. Try *quesadilla herreña*, a sweet cheese and aniseed pastry, and the cheese soup (*caldo de queso*).

Fish is the main dish on the coast. La Restinga is known for fresh fish and limpets. El Hierro has its own wine denomination, mostly full-bodied white wines.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Churros · Churros con Chocolate
Fried dough sticks served with a thick, dark hot chocolate for dipping — a classic Spanish breakfast or late-night snack.

LUNCH

Paella Valenciana
A saffron-scented rice dish cooked in a wide, shallow pan. The traditional Valencian version uses chicken, rabbit, and green beans — best eaten at midday.

Gazpacho
A cold, blended soup of raw tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, garlic, olive oil, and vinegar, originally from Andalusia. Served as a drink or a starter, especially in summer.

DINNER

Pulpo a la Gallega
Boiled octopus sliced onto a wooden board and dressed with olive oil, coarse salt, and smoked paprika — a signature dish of Galicia.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Jamón Ibérico
Dry-cured ham from acorn-fed Iberian pigs, sliced paper-thin and eaten on its own or with bread. The finest grade, jamón ibérico de bellota, is one of Spain's most prized products.

Tortilla Española
A thick potato and egg omelette, served warm or at room temperature, found in virtually every bar in Spain. Often eaten as a tapa or a quick meal.

Patatas Bravas
Fried potato chunks served with a spicy tomato sauce or aioli — one of the most common tapas across the country.

Pintxos
Small snacks anchored to slices of bread with a toothpick, the Basque Country's answer to tapas. Found in bar counters across San Sebastián and Bilbao, often with elaborate toppings.

Croquetas
Crispy breaded cylinders with a creamy béchamel filling, typically made with jamón, bacalà (salt cod), or mushrooms.

DRINKS

Rioja Wine · Vino de Rioja

Spain's best-known wine region produces full-bodied reds from Tempranillo grapes, aged in oak. The crianza, reserva, and gran reserva labels indicate increasing age and complexity.

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Safety & health

El Hierro is a safe, quiet island. Petty crime is rare.

- **Sea**: Natural pools are usually not supervised. Swell can change quickly, so check the sea before you swim.
- **Trails**: Cliff trails such as the Camino de Jinama carry a landslide risk, higher in wind and rain. Weather can change fast in the highlands.
- **Emergencies**: call 112.

History

The Bimbache were the first people on the island. They drew water from the Garoé tree. A hurricane felled the tree in 1610, and a new tree was planted near Garoé later.

For centuries El Hierro was seen as the western edge of the known world. Its meridian, the Ferro meridian, was a map reference until Greenwich was adopted in 1884. See it at Monumento al Meridiano Cero.

The Bajada festival began with a vow made in the 18th century to the Virgen de los Reyes, honoured at Santuario Insular de Nuestra Señora de los Reyes. In October 2011 a submarine eruption started about 7 km south of La Restinga and some residents were evacuated for a time.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Spain at a glance:

CURRENCY

EUR €

EMERGENCY

112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES

Spanish

TAP WATER

Safe to drink

El Hierro Essentials

El Hierro, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, features a landscape shaped by volcanic activity and ancient traditions. This selection includes the historic Faro de Orchilla, once considered the world's prime meridian, and the sacred Garoé tree, vital to the indigenous Bimbache people for water collection. Natural attractions range from the sea-carved cave of Charco Azul to the red sands of Playa del Verodal. Cultural highlights include the Bimbache petroglyphs at El Julan and the César Manrique-designed Mirador de la Peña overlooking the massive El Golfo valley.





A Faro de Orchilla

The Punta Orchilla Lighthouse is an active lighthouse on the Canary island of El Hierro in the municipality of El Pinar.

Carretera de la Montaña, 38914, Spain
(27.70669, -18.14753)



B Charco Azul

A natural turquoise tide pool situated within a volcanic sea cave. It is accessible via a stone staircase and offers protection from the open ocean.

38911, Spain (27.76196, -18.03973)



C Mirador de La Peña

Designed by Canarian architect César Manrique, this viewpoint and restaurant features stone and wood architecture integrated into the cliffside. It offers panoramic views of the El Golfo valley.

HI-10, 38916 Valverde, Spain (27.80695, -17.98089)

Mo–Su 09:00–22:30

+34 922 55 03 00;+34 608 64 64 90



D Garoé

Ocotea foetens, commonly called til or stinkwood is a species of tree in the family Lauraceae. It is evergreen and grows up to 40 m tall.

38900, Spain (27.79591, -17.94190)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00



E Roque de La Bonanza

A 200-meter-high volcanic rock formation rising from the sea in the Bay of Las Playas. Its distinctive shape is a result of coastal erosion.

Spain (27.72930, -17.94134)



F La Restinga Fishing Village

Actually the southernmost tip of Spain, this fishing village seems like at the end of the world. Very laid-back and charming.

14 Avenida Marítima, La Restinga 38914, Spain (27.64030, -17.98125)

G Mirador de Las Playas

Located at an altitude of 1,000 meters, this viewpoint provides a vertical look down at the semi-circular bay of Las Playas and the Roque de la Bonanza.

(27.73182, -17.97172)

H El Julan

Set out for the unknown and explore these amazing petroglyphs, the only traces of settlement in this inhospitable area.

(Unnamed Road), 38914, Spain (27.71689, -18.06677)



I Valle de El Golfo

A 14-kilometer-wide amphitheater formed by a prehistoric massive landslide. The valley is the island's main agricultural hub, known for pineapple and banana plantations.

Calle de los Llanillos, 38911, Spain (27.75411, -18.03469)



J Charco Manso

A natural swimming area characterized by basalt arches and underwater caves. The site includes stone-carved paths and basic picnic facilities.

(Unnamed Road), 38900, Spain (27.84816, -17.92328)

K Zona Arqueológica Poblado de Guinea

An eco-museum featuring 20 restored traditional stone houses and the El Hierro Giant Lizard Recovery Center, dedicated to preserving an endemic species.

(27.77296, -17.99761)

L Playa del Verodal

A remote beach notable for its reddish volcanic sand and high vertical cliffs. Strong currents usually make it unsuitable for swimming.

38911, Spain (27.74741, -18.15157)

Volcanic Landscapes of El Hierro

El Hierro is the youngest of the Canary Islands, shaped by intense volcanic activity and massive prehistoric landslides. This collection features the island's geological highlights, including the 1,501-meter Pico de Malpaso and the Tanganasoga cinder cone which dominates the El Golfo valley. The landscape includes sheer coastal cliffs like the iconic Roque de La Bonanza and numerous dormant craters that illustrate the island's shield volcano origins and more recent submarine eruptions near La Restinga.

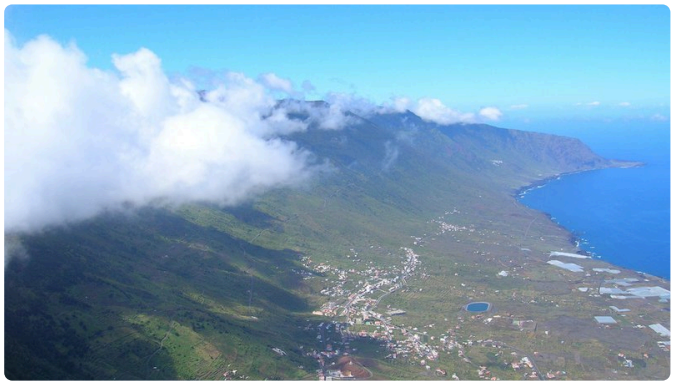




A Roque de La Bonanza

A 200-meter-high natural rock formation in Las Playas bay, sculpted by erosion and coastal collapse.

Spain (27.72930, -17.94134)



B Tanganasoga

Tanganasoga is the main volcano of El Hierro's El Golfo area in the Canary Islands, consisting of a cinder cone.

38911, Spain (27.73012, -18.05933)

C Restinga

Volcanic area at the southern tip of the island, notable for the 2011 submarine eruption in the nearby Mar de las Calmas.

38914, Spain (27.64689, -17.98391)

D Pico de Malpaso

Pico de Malpaso is the highest point on the island of El Hierro in the Canary Islands, Spain.

(Unnamed Road), 38911, Spain (27.72930, -18.04046)

E San Juan

Volcanic cone located in the northeastern highlands near Valverde.

(27.80332, -17.90742)

F Montaña del Tesoro

Extinct volcanic cone situated in the northern coastal region of the island.

38900, Spain (27.82423, -17.90806)

G Montaña Colorada

Reddish volcanic cone characteristic of the arid landscape in the southern part of the island.

(27.65260, -17.99968)

H Montaña de Tejeguate

Dormant volcanic cone positioned on the northern slopes overlooking the El Golfo depression.

(27.76493, -18.03027)

I Montaña de las Chamuscadas

Dormant volcano located along the central-eastern volcanic ridge.

38900, Spain (27.77633, -17.95053)

J Montaña del Jablito

Dormant volcanic peak situated in the central mountainous spine of the island.

38900, Spain (27.77432, -17.95225)

K Peña de Tejeguate

A prominent cliff formation situated on the rugged escarpment of the El Golfo valley.

(27.76538, -18.03296)

Historic Churches & Chapels

This collection explores El Hierro's ecclesiastical heritage, ranging from the 18th-century Baroque Parroquia Matriz in Valverde to the remote sanctuary of the Virgin of the Kings in La Dehesa. These sites showcase traditional Canarian architecture and house significant religious icons. Notable features include the separate bell tower of the Candelaria chapel perched on a volcanic cone and the historical centers of religious devotion in El Pinar and the Golfo valley.





A Nuestra Señora de la Concepción

An 18th-century Baroque parish church in Valverde. As the island's mother church, it features a distinctive bell tower and a neoclassical interior housing the historic image of the Virgin of the Conception.

1 Calle de Pérez Galdós, Valverde 38900, Spain
(27.80753, -17.91443)

B Iglesia Nuestra Señora de la Consolación

Roman Catholic church located in the southern village of El Pinar, representing traditional local religious architecture.

46 Calle de la Iglesia, Sabinosa 38912, Spain
(27.74788, -18.09915)



C Santuario Insular de Nuestra Señora de los Reyes

Sanctuary housing the island's patron saint, the Virgin of the Kings. Located in La Dehesa, it is the focal point of the quadrennial Bajada procession.

(Unnamed Road), 38911, Spain (27.73012, -18.12060)

Tu–Su 10:00–17:00

D Ermita de la Virgen de la Peña

Small chapel dedicated to the Virgin of the Rock, located in the vicinity of Guarazoca.

(Unnamed Road), 38911, Spain (27.80140, -17.97977)

E Iglesia de San Antonio Abad

Catholic church in El Pinar featuring traditional Canarian ecclesiastical design and serving the community of Taibique.

1008 Calle del Telar, El Pinar 38914, Spain (27.70226, -17.97907)



F Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria

Historic chapel in Frontera, notable for its separate white bell tower built atop the Joapira volcanic cone, overlooking the El Golfo valley.

6 Plaza Candelaria, Frontera 38911, Spain (27.75537, -18.00161)

DATA SOURCES

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