

Canarias Travel Guide

Created by Phoebe Thompson (Canarias Mentor 2019–2020)

Hello, fellow travelers! In this guide you will find the best advice I can give on how to book affordable and efficient travel to the Canary Islands. Some of it may seem like common sense, but if you're less experienced with traveling internationally as I was, it really helps to have someone break it down. It is based on my experience during the 2018–2019 school year, during which I completed 3 round trips between the US and Canarias, as well as numerous trips between islands and to the peninsula. In the States, I live in rural Ohio, and in Canarias, I live on a minor island--so I've run the gamut!

After your first trip or two, you'll be an expert, but the initial task can be quite daunting and finding current/consistent/quality information online could make anyone's head spin. Below you will see each of your options (specifically for inter-island travel) laid out together. It should be noted that this guide will be inherently more useful for grantees living on "minor" islands, while those living on **Tenerife** and **Gran Canaria** have simpler routes. If you have any questions not answered by this guide, [please feel free to email your mentor at fulbrightcanariasmentor@gmail.com](mailto:fulbrightcanariasmentor@gmail.com). Best of luck and safe travels!



I. Booking long-haul flights

Booking your "long-haul"/Trans-Atlantic flights will likely be the most difficult part of planning your travel to Canarias, as you'll have the most options to sort through. Because everyone is coming from somewhere very different, below I've just listed my general advice for booking.

- The most cost effective way I've found to travel to the islands is to book ~3 separate legs:

1. US home » Major US hub (i.e. JFK or LAX)
 2. Major US hub » Large island (**Tenerife** or **Gran Canaria**)
 3. Large island » Small island (if applicable)
- Step 2 will typically route you through somewhere in Western Europe (often the Iberian Peninsula) with a layover of varying length before the trip south to the islands. I have found that it's easier and cheaper to search flights between JFK and **Tenerife** (if going directly to the islands) rather than breaking things up further and searching JFK » Barcelona, Barcelona » **Tenerife**, for example.
 - There are international flights arriving to every island *except* **La Gomera** and **El Hierro**, so it is certainly possible to book everything in one fell swoop even if you live on **La Palma**, **Fuerteventura**, or **Lanzarote**--just know that this will likely not be the cheapest option.
 - If you're placed on a smaller island (especially **La Gomera** or **El Hierro**) and/or live far away from a major US hub, do not search for flights between your beginning and endpoint! For example, if I ask Expedia to find me a trip between Columbus, Ohio and **La Gomera**, it spits out the fantastic deal of \$3,249. One way.
 - My tickets to Canarias instead look like this:
 1. Columbus, OH » JFK (Delta)
 2. JFK » Madrid » **Tenerife** (Norwegian)
 3. **Tenerife** » **La Gomera** (ferry or plane)
 and come closer to \$600-700 one way.
 - If you plan to fly directly to Madrid for Orientation, you will likely need to split up your trip regardless of placement as many airlines do not offer multi-day layovers. See below for a list of major airlines that service Canarias.
- Utilize multiple platforms to find the most affordable flights. Many people recommend using **Google Flights on incognito/private mode** (to avoid prices being jacked up when you return to look at them). There are also apps like **Hopper** that will show you the best dates to travel and give estimates of whether or not you should wait to book if there's a possibility of prices dropping. Other sites like Kayak, **Skyscanner**, and **Expedia** can lead you to great deals as well!



- As a general rule of thumb, traffic to the western islands (**Tenerife**, **La Gomera**, **La Palma**, and **El Hierro**) in the province of Santa Cruz de **Tenerife** will route through **Tenerife**, while traffic to eastern islands (**Gran Canaria**, **Fuerteventura**, and **Lanzarote**) in the province of Las Palmas will route through **Gran Canaria**. There are exceptions, though, so it's not a bad thing to look at both!
- If you're placed on **Tenerife** or will route through **Tenerife**, it's important to know that this island has **two airports**: **Tenerife** North (TFN) and **Tenerife** South (TFS). You can check deals to both when researching flights, and some websites allow you to input airport code TFI, which will give results for both airports.
 - Choose wisely and double check your decision! **Tenerife** is a BIG island and the two airports are roughly 50 miles away. You certainly don't want to fly into **Tenerife** South if your connection leaves from the North.
 - If you're placed on a western island (**La Palma**, **La Gomera**, **El Hierro**) and are planning on taking a ferry to your final destination (see below), it will be easier/quicker to fly into TFS as all boats to these islands leave from the southern port of Los Cristianos. However, ferry tickets do include free buses from Santa Cruz in the north to the port in the south, so if you find a good deal to TFN, don't fret! It'll just take a few more steps.
- In general, be careful as Canarias apparently ran out of inspiration for names:
 - Santa Cruz de **Tenerife** (western province)
 - Santa Cruz, **Tenerife** (city in northern **Tenerife**)
 - **La Palma** (island)
 - Santa Cruz de **La Palma** (city on **La Palma**)
 - Las Palmas de **Gran Canaria** (eastern province)
 - Las Palmas, **Gran Canaria** (city on **Gran Canaria**)

II. Inter-island (interinsular) travel

When traveling between islands, you can go by air or by sea. Below, you will find a rundown of all options, as well as pros and cons for each company. Please be aware that the insanely cheap prices advertised on websites (i.e. 7€ for a flight) are for Canarias residents receiving the 75% travel discount, which is only available to citizens of the European Union (this restriction began in May 2018). Past grantees have had mixed success obtaining and using the *certificado de viajes*, but as of right now there is no solid solution.

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Airports Serviced:

El Hierro - VDE

Fuerteventura - FUE

Gran Canaria - LPA

La Gomera - GMZ

La Palma - SPC

Lanzarote - ACE

Tenerife Norte - TFN

Tenerife Sur - TFS

+Services all airports/islands +Offers youth discount +More daily options +1 free checked bag <23 kg	-Typically a bit more expensive	»Price for excess baggage varies per route--check website »Services many other destinations (including Boston) & is rapidly growing
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Airports Serviced:

El Hierro - VDE

Fuerteventura - FUE

Gran Canaria - LPA

La Palma - SPC

Lanzarote - ACE

Tenerife Norte - TFN

+Usually cheapest flight option +1 free checked bag <23 kg	-Fewer daily flights -No youth discount -Does not service all airports/islands	»Price for excess baggage varies per route--check website
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Other airlines with extensive inter-island service (i.e. beyond just **Tenerife** - **Gran Canaria**):



Airports with international flights:

Fuerteventura - FUE

Gran Canaria - LPA

La Palma - SPC

Lanzarote - ACE

Tenerife Norte - TFN

Tenerife Sur - TFS

★ Flights from **La Gomera** only arrive from, and depart to, **Tenerife Norte** (TFN)

★ Flights from **El Hierro** only arrive from, and depart to, **Tenerife Norte** (TFN) and **Gran Canaria** (LPA)

Major airlines flying to Canarias:

Aer Lingus 

IBERIA 

norwegian 

 **RYANAIR**

vueling AIRLINES

BRITISH AIRWAYS 

TAP AIR PORTUGAL

 **AirEuropa**

IBERIA
EXPRESS 



Islands/ports serviced:

El Hierro - Valverde

Fuerteventura - Corralejo, Morro Jable, Puerto del Rosario

Gran Canaria - Las Palmas

La Gomera - San Sebastián, Valle Gran Rey

La Graciosa - Caleta del Sebo

Lanzarote - Arrecife, Orzola, Playa Blanca

La Palma - Santa Cruz

Tenerife - Los Cristianos, Santa Cruz

+Free transfer bus with ticket on some islands +Only boat servicing El Hierro +Car transport available	-A bit more expensive -No youth discount -A bit slower -Some routes very subject to change	»No luggage limit »Always arrive early to board
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FRED. OLSEN *Express*

Islands/ports serviced:

Fuerteventura – Corralejo, Morro Jable

Gran Canaria – Las Palmas, Agaete

La Gomera – San Sebastián, Playa de Santiago, Valle Gran Rey

Lanzarote – Arrecife, Playa Blanca

La Palma – Santa Cruz

Tenerife – Los Cristianos, Santa Cruz

+Free transfer bus with ticket on some islands +A bit faster +Offers youth discount +Routes less subject to change	-Does not service El Hierro -Not all routes offer car transport	»No luggage limit »Slightly more relaxed boarding time
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Other ferry companies offering limited service:

Líneas Romero (Fuerteventura/Lanzarote/La Graciosa)

Biosfera Express (Lanzarote/La Graciosa)

III. On-the-ground guidance/tips

- Be aware that 24-hour service is very rare in Canarias and the last options of the day for transit may be much earlier than one would expect. Before booking anything, be certain that it lines up with the next step. You may need to spend the night somewhere if traveling directly to Canarias.
 - As an example, the last flight of the day to [La Gomera](#) leaves at 5:30 pm and the last boat leaves at 7:00 pm... so if I miss those, I'm spending the night on [Tenerife](#)!
 - On a related note, what you see is what you get in terms of inter-island transport. There are really no private companies that could shuttle you to another island in a pinch. Just as the islands are bigger than we imagine, so are the distances between them (~40-70 miles)
- Always give yourself ample time to figure things out and navigate on the ground, but especially for your first trip.
- Taxis are very common in Canarias, and generally quite cheap, but ride sharing apps like Uber or Lyft are non-existent.
- Beware of incorrect bus times on Google Maps--you're far better off finding the schedules on the official websites for each island:
 - [El Hierro](#)
 - [Fuerteventura](#)
 - [Gran Canaria](#)
 - [La Gomera](#)
 - [La Palma](#)
 - [Lanzarote](#)
 - [Tenerife](#)
- **Remember that Canarias is one hour behind the peninsula! Change your clocks accordingly during transit!!**
- **Locals will always help you if you ask--do not be afraid!**



¡Buena suerte y buen viaje!

