

TENERIFE

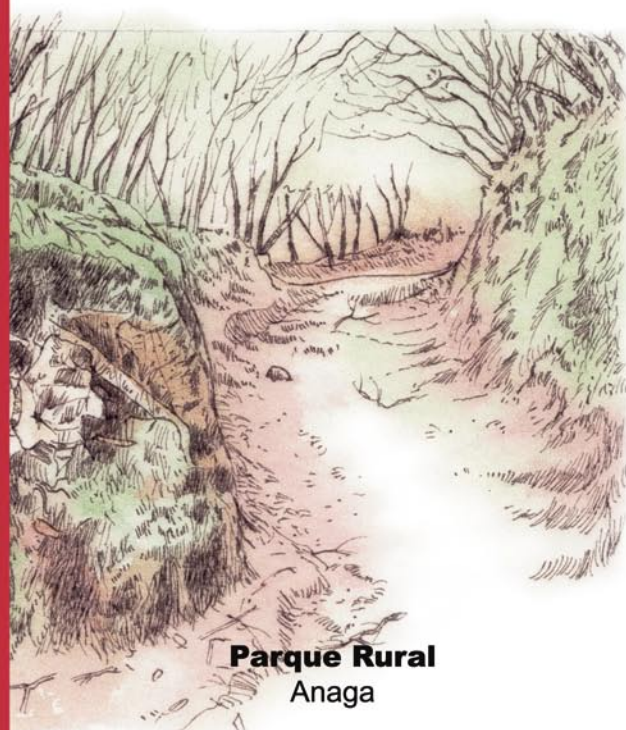


Parque Rural
Anaga

Self guided walk

Llano de los Loros

A passage
full of
tradition



Parque Rural
Anaga

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Llano *de los* Loros

SELF GUIDED

- The route starts and ends at the Cruz del Carmen and has numbered signs to identify corresponding explanations in the pamphlet.
- The total length is 1780m and can be done in sixty minutes.
- We recommend you to walk slowly and in silence, stop at every signed point and read the texts which summarise the history narrated in the mountain track.



We find ourselves at the Cruz del Carmen, an old crossroads of tracks that connect the “Los Caseríos” (Hamlets) of Anaga with La

Laguna, the old capital of the island. This place was the access to the mountain and the doorway from which products came out.

Today we invite you to learn some aspects of the old country folk life, charcoal makers and “Gangocheras” used these tracks leaving written in them a part of their history.

1 The mountain tracks were the routes through which the life of its inhabitants flowed.

This simple track was used frequently in the past and was the principal route of communication between Anaga and La Laguna. To go along these tracks was very difficult especially in winter or when they had to transport household goods or merchandise.

This overgrown and mountainous track made it very difficult to communicate by land while most of the commercial trading was done by sea. Also, for a lot of people, these tortuous and steep tracks of Anaga were the only way possible to break their isolation.

The “Gangocheras” knew the tracks of Anaga very well. (gangocha means trueque or to interchange). In the Canary Islands this old traditional work was only done by women. Through these “Gangocheo” they interchanged the farm products that grew in abundance in one place and not so in others.



A very difficult and hard work rarely beneficial. The “Gangocheras” walked these tracks bare-footed while carrying heavy loads on their heads. In the countryside they swapped fish for fruit or vegetables that were later sold in the afternoon in towns.

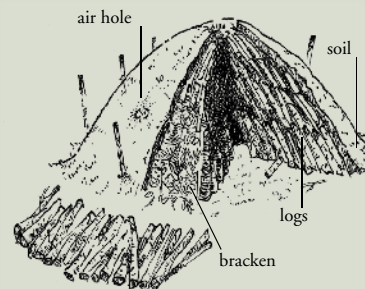


2 The mountain was truly a warehouse, which the lives of the country folk of Anaga depended on.

If you notice the “brezos” (heather) which grows all around, you will be able to observe that every main branch of each tree appears to have been cut. You are looking at the scar of ancient forestry techniques. As always the mountain complemented the base economy of the country folk.

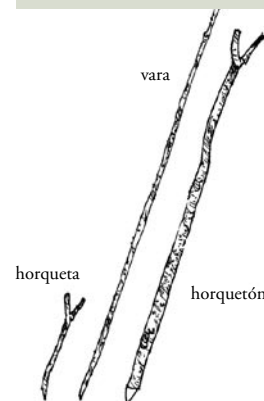
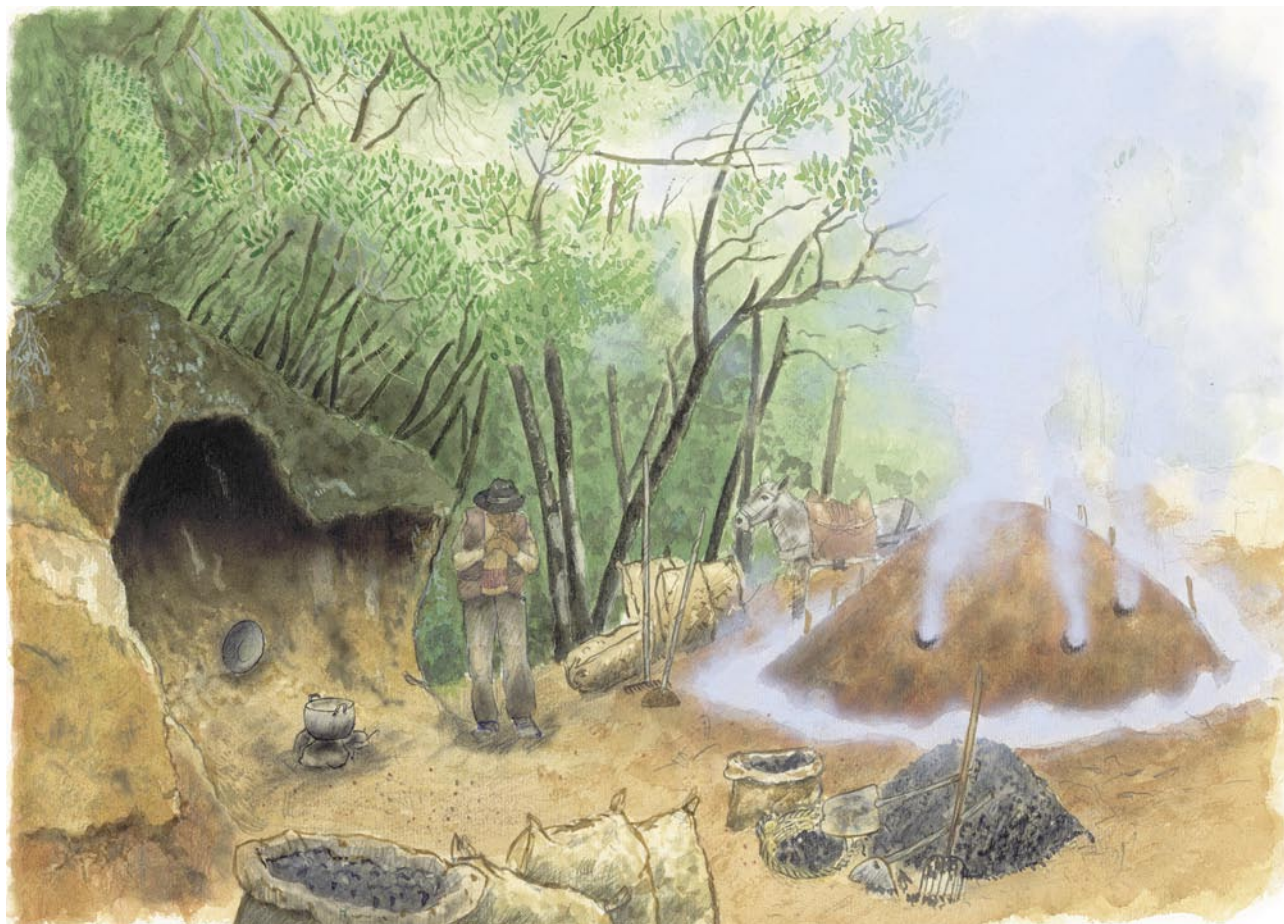
From this they obtained household goods for their homes, wood for the construction of their houses and help in cultivating; but more importantly charcoal to sell and firewood for their homes. As a result these activities produced a significant abuse of the mountain. Today, taking intensive advantage has stopped and the forests of Anaga have begun to recuperate very slowly.

The charcoal was the fuel in those days. To produce the charcoal you use logs and cover them with earth forming mounds called “carboneras”. Later you lit it, without almost no oxygen, the logs would transform very slowly into carbon.



How the mountain cultivate varas and horquetas.

Every ten or fifteen years determined sections of the mountain forest are cut, called “matarrasas” to obtain materials for agriculture. This way they obtain “varas” for tomatoes, “horquetones” for banana plants or “horquetas” for vines. Even today this continues to be the most significant use of the mountain forest.



3 Looking after the mountain tracks is left in hands of skilled craftsmen.



This small canal is cut out directly in the ground, it's a "desangradera" used as a drainage system which diverts the water to the edge of the tracks to avoid erosion.

Along the track you will be able to see other examples of other workmanship such as steps cut out in the steep parts or strengthening with stones or logs.

Thanks to this simple and efficient systems and permanent maintenance they are still walked to the present day.

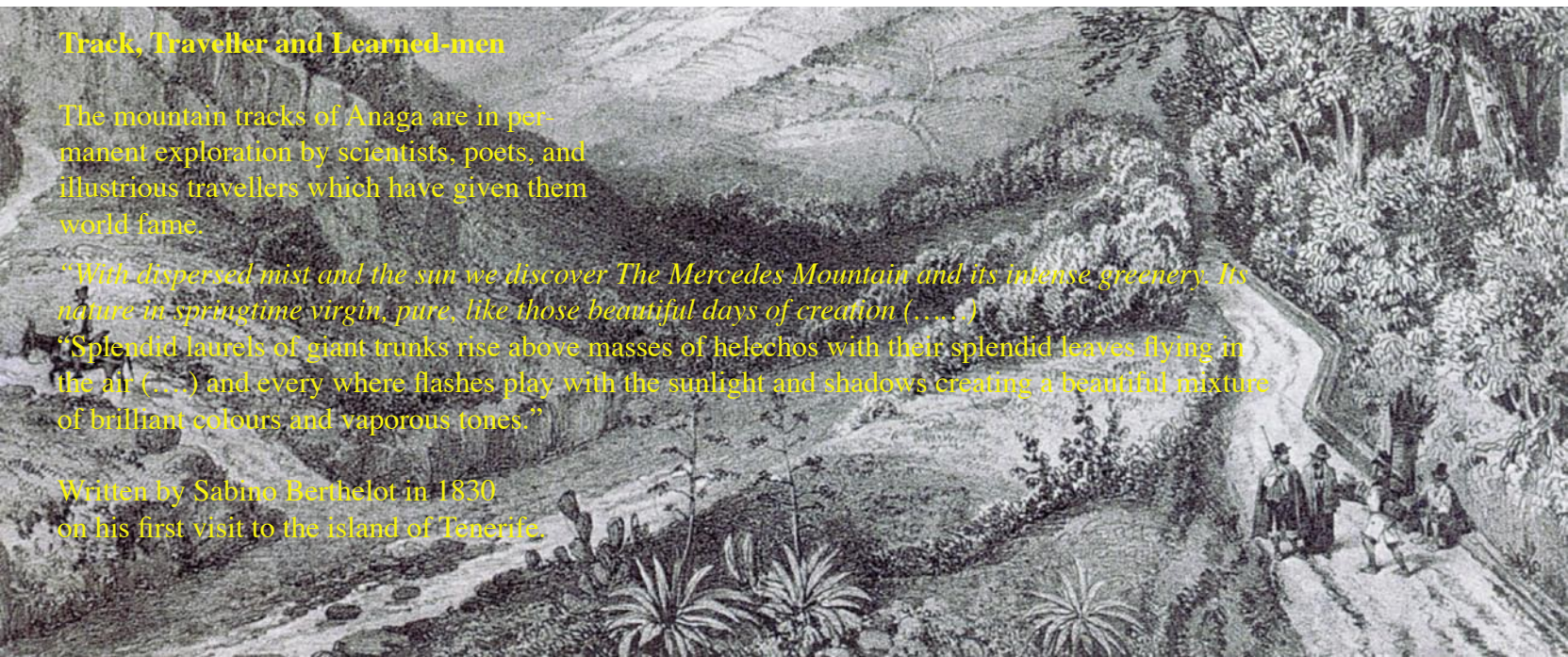
Track, Traveller and Learned-men

The mountain tracks of Anaga are in permanent exploration by scientists, poets, and illustrious travellers which have given them world fame.

"With dispersed mist and the sun we discover The Mercedes Mountain and its intense greenery. Its nature in springtime virgin, pure, like those beautiful days of creation (...)"

"Splendid laurels of giant trunks rise above masses of helechos with their splendid leaves flying in the air (...) and every where flashes play with the sunlight and shadows creating a beautiful mixture of brilliant colours and vaporous tones."

Written by Sabino Berthelot in 1830
on his first visit to the island of Tenerife.



4 Mountain, ravine, water, form the landscape of Anaga.

From this viewpoint you can see the Tahodio dam and its reservoir, which was constructed in 1914. Its water was used for watering the old banana fincas of Santa Cruz to provide water for public fountains. You can also see the mountain of

Aguirre, the Barranco of Tahodio and the barrio de La Alegría in the distance. Water was never a problem in Anaga. Its volcanic rocks, old and eroded, are relatively waterproof, so the water tends to run down the barrancos giving water to the

flora and vegetation. This disposition of water easily satisfied the needs of the population. This place is known as “Llano de los Loros” because in the past there were many laurel trees. From this point we must turn around and go back up the

same path, so we can continue talking about the past of Anaga.



Fountain of Isabel II



Fountain Los Cuatro Chorros



Washerwoman in Santa Cruz

The relationship between mountain and water has existed for many long years.

The importance of the Mountain of Aguirre as a condenser of humidity from the mists and as a protector of the ground against erosion brought the proclamation of rules for its conservation in the 16th.

Cabezo de las Llanadas

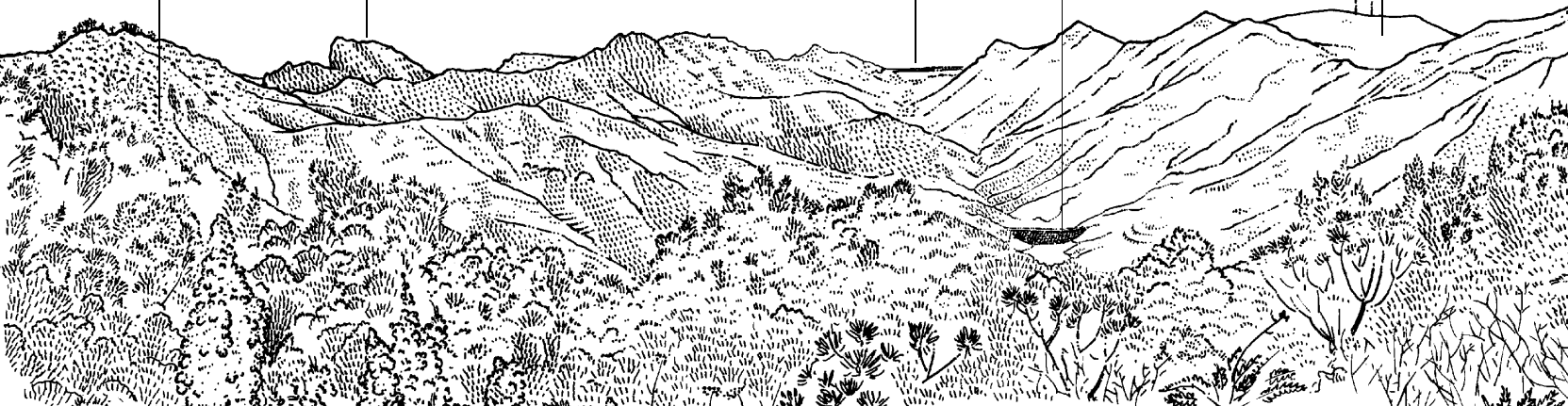
Monte de Aguirre

La Fortaleza

Charca Tahodio

Santa Cruz

Parque las Mesas



5 The mountain soil was rich and very good, for growing the crops.

Observe the accumulation of roots and leaves that are produced at the foot of the geological fault. They are an essential component for the mountain to function. This decomposition gives the necessary nutrients for the growth of both trees and plants.

In the past this blanket or “cisco” was used as a natural fertilizer for their farm products. Mixing it together with fine roots and animal excrements (manure) which was the only fertilizer available on the island for centuries.

“Monte picado”: A product resulting of chopped leaves and fine roots of the trees, later used as bedding for the farm animals.

“Cama del ganado” (Bedding for farm animals): An expression used for the mixture of “monte picado” and “cisco” used to cover the stable floor. Once enriched with animal excrements, it was stored and used as fertilizer.



6 The history of Anaga is permanently written in its landscape.



Once again you find yourselves returning to the Cruz del Carmen at the end of the route. Along the route you were able to see an example of human adaptation to the geography, and its inherited culture and landscaping.

Anaga is principally a landscape whose conservation depends on maintaining the way of life and traditions of its people. Only in this way we will be able to continue to read the history written in every corner of the track.

We hope you enjoyed your visit and we were able to help you to know a little more of the Rural Park of Anaga.