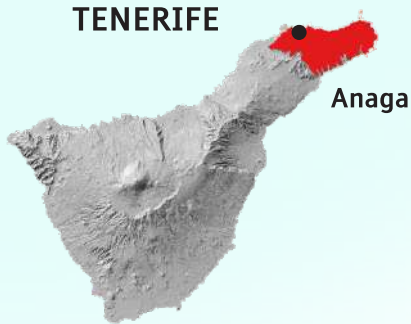


TENERIFE



Anaga





Chinamada

a village carved
into the mountain

Self-guided trail



**Parque Rural
Anaga**

Utility telephones

Visitors Centre
922 633 576

Bus service
922 531 300

Youth Hostel "Montes de Anaga"
922 690 234

Anaga Shop in Cruz del Carmen
922 264 212

Park's Office
922 239 072

If you wish to have more
information, inform of incidents or
give suggestions

901 501 901

e-mail: 901501901@tenerife.es
www.tenerife.es



Emergency

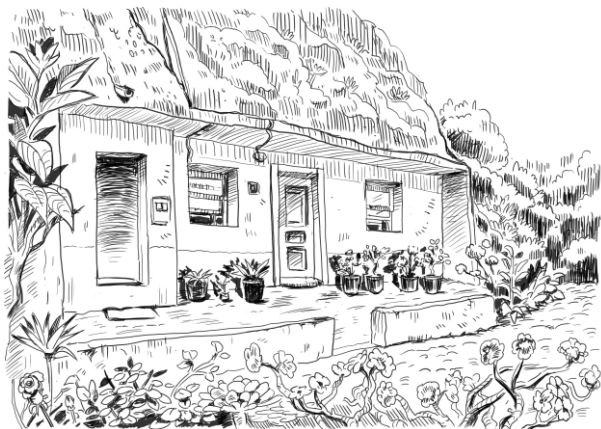
Chinamada

Chinamada is one of the oldest towns in Anaga and the only one in which the majority of the houses have been carved into the sides of the mountains.

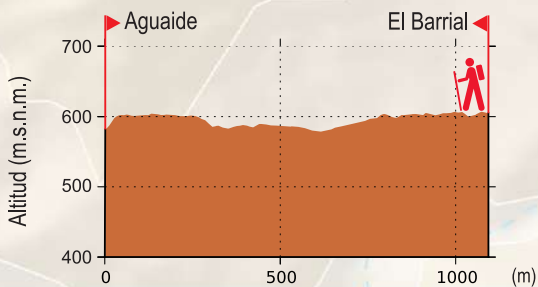
This self-guided trail recounts its origins and the history of the people who settled in this small plateau, enclosed between two ravines, Barranco de la Angostura and Barranco del Río, in the north-western part of the Anaga mountain range.

This is an easy trail that can be completed in less than two hours. It passes through the village and then continues to the Aguaide viewpoint.

> At some points it passes next to the “patios” and rooftops of private residences and visitors should respect their privacy and appreciate the generosity of the locals who are sharing this vista with us.



Chinamada se



Self-guided path



Start



Path



Stop



Restaurant



Church



Viewpoint



Road



PR-TF 10



PR-TF 10.1



The settlement began on the other side of the ravine

We arrive at one of the first cave-houses on the trail and with luck we will meet its owner, who lives here year-round. The first references to Chimamada date back to 1507 when Adelantado (governor) Alonso Fernández de Lugo distributed *datas* (land) to the Gomeran, Francisco Hara.



However, the first homes of the village were not built on its current location, but rather just in front of it, on the other side of Barranco de la Angostura, on a knoll called Lomo de Chinamada or Chalacina.

The land was distributed to repay favours or contributions that were made during the conquest, starting with the lieutenants, soldiers and merchants who financed the Adelantado. However, Lomo Chalacina was not distributed and it was there that the people who only came to work settled.

> By observing closely, the walls of the old pajales (huts) can still be made out; this is where goat herders and their families lived, as well as servants or the sharecroppers who worked these absentee properties.





The *pajales*

There were 11 dwellings on Lomo de Chalacina, all of them *pajales*, with the exception of a cave, the only one in the area.

The *pajales* were built with stone walls and roofs made from wheat or rye straw, tied with wicker in very thick bundles to maintain the temperature inside of them. Such roofs had to be replaced periodically, leading to the creation of a trade specializing in roof maintenance, known as a *maestro tapador*.

Fires were frequent because wood was burned inside these dwellings to cook and provide heat, so extremely windy areas such as Chinamada were eventually abandoned.





The first caves were transformed into complete houses

At first, few caves in Chinamada were used as dwellings. They were mostly employed to shelter livestock and store harvested grain. But when were they transformed into houses?

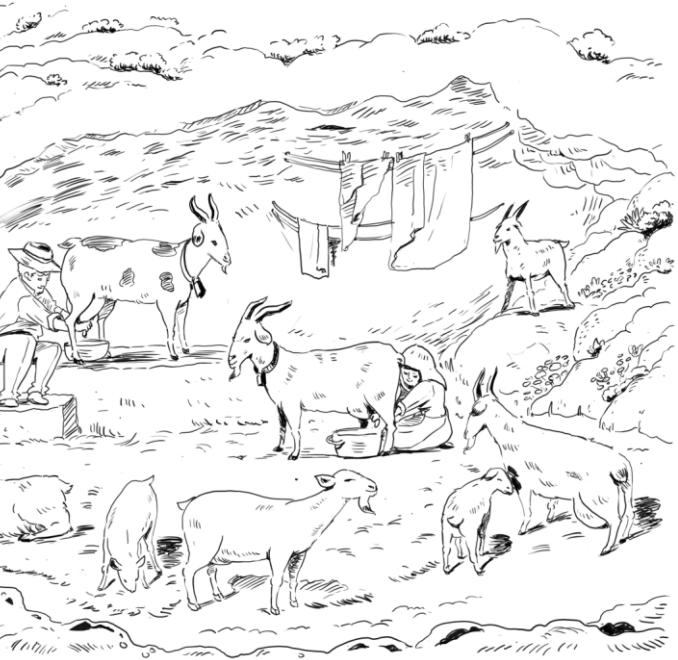
Former sharecropper families purchasing plots of land from the large Chinamada properties and the arrival of experts in building underground galleries, known as *cabuqueros*, were the key factors in this process.

Galleries used to store provisions for the capital and water to irrigate crops proliferated in Anaga and in La Orotava Valley in the 19th Century.



The *cabuqueros*

The skills of the *cabuqueros* were also needed to build cave-houses, which became popular at the start of the 20th Century.



> ¿Can you imagine how much time was spent in the difficult task of building cave-houses?

Now consider the amount of effort it would have taken to transport all the necessary materials when there were no roads.

This was only possible due to the determination of the inhabitants of Chinamada, with the help of nearby villages. .



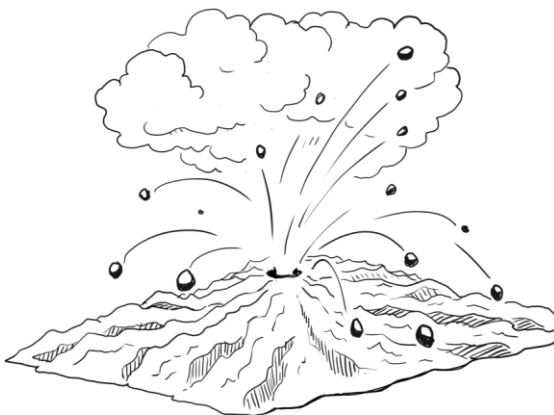
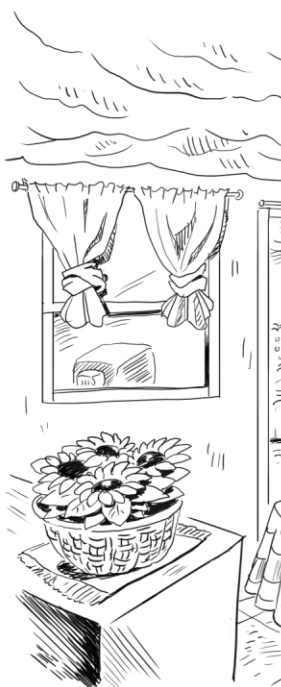
Tosca rock allowed families to improve their living conditions, sheltered by the mountain

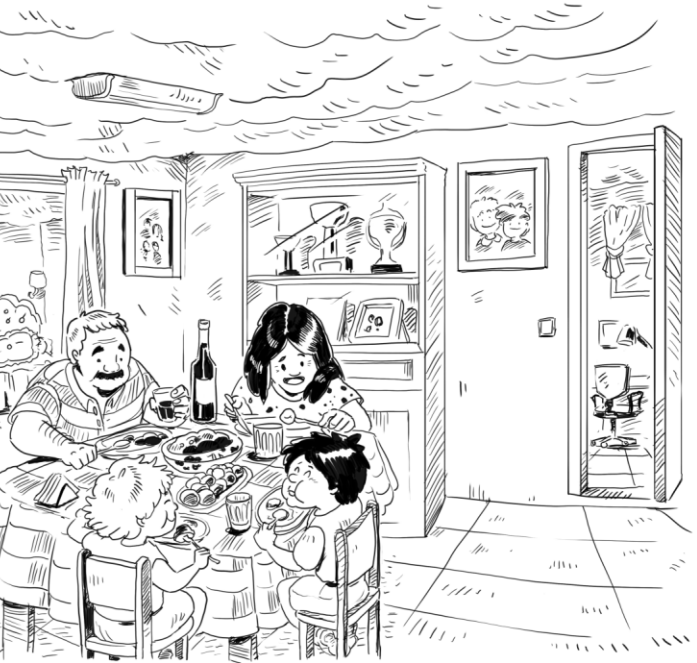
In 1992 a dirt road from Las Carboneras was opened that was not covered with asphalt until 1998.

This street is even more recent and thanks to the construction work to build it, we can observe a stratigraphic cross-section that reveals the geological characteristics of Chinamada.

These rocks were formed by a strombolian eruption that occurred more than 3 million years ago. This type of volcanic activity is characterized by episodic explosive eruptions separated by periods of calm.

Each explosion is caused by the build-up of high gas pressure that is liberated by the magma and emits a large quantity of pyroclastic material, which covers the area near the point of emission.





> The creation of the road transformed life in the village of Chinamada.

It halted the decline in its population and allowed the inhabitants to improve their homes more easily, as up until that point they had to carry all the materials they needed on their backs from Las Carboneras or La Cruz del Carmen like beasts of burden.

4 The entire village gets together in August to celebrate their fiestas

The chapel, Ermita de San Ramón Nonato, and the Asociación Aguaide establishment are among the few buildings in Chinamada that are not cave-homes. But what do you think was in this place before they were built?

It was a shared space holding two large grain threshing floors. It was where the village met to process their harvest and celebrate their local fiestas.

Every third Sunday of August, Chinamada celebrates its fiestas in honour of San Ramón Nonato and since 1995 it has held a *romería lustral*, a religious pilgrimage held every five years in memory of the arrival of the saint to the chapel.





Asociación Aguaide

The neighbourhood association was created in 1987 and a year later it obtained the permits to build the first chapel, transporting the necessary materials themselves.

It was an arduous task that took two years, but they achieved something that the population had been planning since 1954.

> The people of Chinamada and Las Carboneras carry the icon to the parish of Las Mercedes and then the procession returns through La Cruz del Carmen and Las Carboneras.





The largest number of cave-houses are on the slope of La Quebrada

From this point, or if we go down the PR-TF 10 trail a bit toward Punta del Hidalgo, we can observe the slope of La Quebrada, where the largest number of cave-houses remain in Chinamada.

The houses evolved to cover the needs of the families. After they were carved out, partitions were added to create rooms, using the blocks or rocks that were left over from the widening of the cave, and a wall or façade at the entrance. More recently other exterior additions were made, mainly dedicated to bathrooms and kitchens.

With the arrival of the road, the cave-houses were reinforced and new materials such aluminium were introduced. Other improvements also became possible, such as running water and electricity.

These homes are highly valued, particularly for their comfortable climates, as they provide warmth in the winter and remain cool in summer. Many of the caves that in the past were only used to shelter livestock have been transformed comfortable homes.





> Doors and windows were installed in the front of the homes, which were modernized over the years to maintain their function: allowing light and air to enter the home.

The interior was coated with lime and the limited supply of cement was used to reinforce the partitions. These materials were transported great distances, at least from La Cruz del Carmen.





The plain is the largest agricultural area of Chinamada

When this territory was colonized in the 16th Century a continuous struggle with nature began to obtain harvests and products that would provide a livelihood for the families and cover the rent due to the absentee owners of the lands.

The construction of agricultural terraces allowed soil to be retained and took advantage of the water that flowed to the ravines. Directly in front of us is El Llano, one of the best agricultural terrains, along with Tesegre, another nearby plateau on the slope of Barranco de la Angostura.

From here we can imagine the people of Chinamada in other eras tilling the land with teams of yoked cows or hauling farm products with donkeys.





Cereal and livestock

The first crops were wheat and rye, later grapes were added, as well as potatoes, after they were brought back from America.

However, livestock provided the best results for the survival of the villagers, who took advantage of pastures on the slopes and crags, which were nearly inaccessible, except for goats.

> Today the main crop is still the potato, which is planted twice a year, in winter and summer.

The borralla potato is well regarded for its texture and flavour, highly recommended to make papas arrugadas (wrinkly potatoes) a typical Canarian dish of potatoes boiled with salted water or seawater.





The natural caves of Roque de los Pinos were lived in by the Guanches of Anaga

If you observe Roque de los Pinos closely, you can spot numerous natural caves on its slopes. Some are big enough to have been lived in by the Guanches.

They also inhabited other caves on the slopes of Barranco del Río, in its trajectory toward Punta del Hidalgo.

Other less-accessible ones were used to entomb the deceased, who were embalmed and wrapped in animal skins along with some of their tools and adornments.





The Guanche Economy

The main activity of the Guanches was stockbreeding. From this enclave they would have taken advantage of the pastures on the slopes and also the presence of continuous flow of water like that in Barranco del Río.

They were also near the coast, where they could fish in the tide pools and gather shellfish to complement their diet.

> Perhaps some of the Chinamada caves were also used for this purpose?



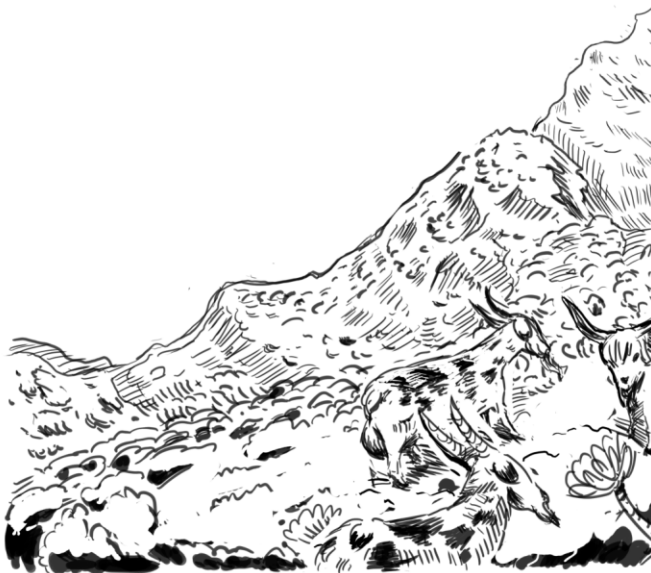


An inhospitable landscape colonized through human will

We arrive at the Aguaide viewpoint, the last stop on our trail on the edge of a 500 metre tall cliff. The spectacular vistas reveal the stark contrast between the plains of Punta del Hidalgo and the mountains of the Anaga mountain range.

In the past this spot was only known to the people who lived in Chinamada and habitually visited these places. It was normally passed through by goat herders and hunters. It was also used to slaughter beasts of burden that could no longer be used in that capacity.

A bit further down is Roque de los Dos Hermanos, which is easy to spot due to its tip that appears to be split in two.





> Legend has it that a brother and sister who were secretly in love threw themselves from the summit of the roque to kill themselves. They were in love with each other, but their relationship was not permitted in Guanche society.

In grief, the roque split in two, leaving behind a permanent reminder of their love story.



The spectacular Anaga landscape is full of surprises, but most surprising is the capacity of the men and women who with their hard work adapted this inhospitable landscape, taking advantage of its resources for their sustenance.

The inhabitants of Chinamada maintain their cave-homes in the best condition and many that were abandoned were recovered after the road was built.

They are even mistrustful of selling them to people who are not from the village, and they have been passed down to descendants or other relatives.





> Even those who do not live their permanently return to their village to enjoy this landscape, work their gardens and look for the shelter of the mountain, warm in winter, cool in summer.

A paradise to live in!

