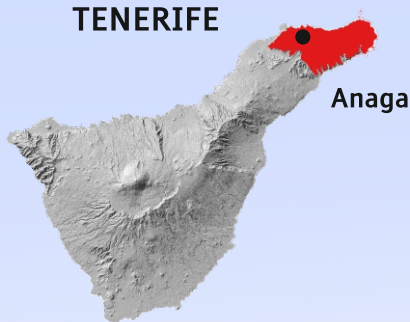


# TENERIFE



Anaga





# Las Carboneras

A village's  
struggle  
with nature

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](mailto:901501901@tenerife.es)  
[www.tenerife.es](http://www.tenerife.es)**



**Emergency**

# Las Carboneras

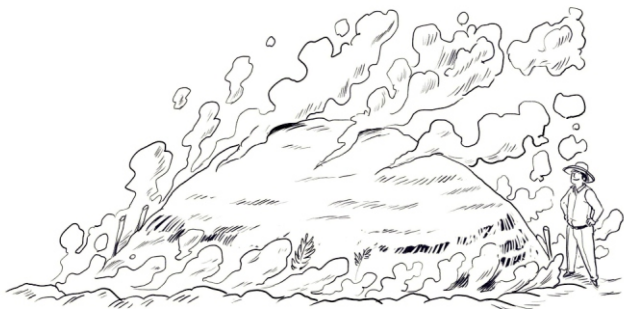
The first people who lived in Las Carboneras moved there to take advantage of the leafy forest that populated the valley.

The village was named for the *hornas* or *carboneras* (kilns) used to make plant charcoal and this tradition lives on in the memory of its inhabitants.

This route takes approximately 2 hours to complete and will take you through an old trail once used by the men and women of Las Carboneras in their daily tasks.

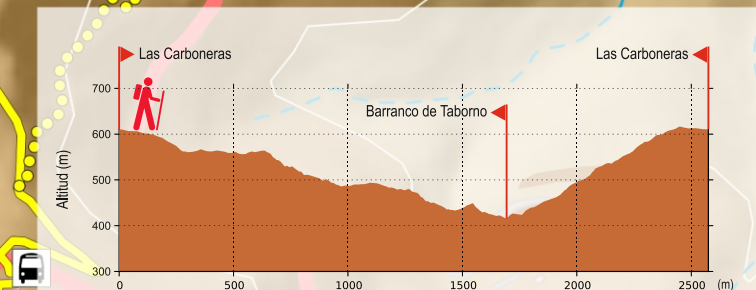
The Camino de los Cabocos takes visitors into the mysteries of the monteverde forest. You will return using a different path that crosses the river bed of Barranco de Taborno and climbs a steep path carved into the rock, which leads directly to the village through its lesser known face.

The final section of the trail is shaded by vegetation, making it more comfortable.





# Las Carboneras s



# self-guided path





## The Monteverde reclaims its space

After the conquest of Tenerife, the mountain was intensively exploited for wood, firewood, or to create charcoal, which was easier to transport.

The *rozas* or clearing of the forest gave rise to new terrain that could be used to cultivate grain and grapevines. Other crops were added later, such as potato from America, which today is the main produce of Las Carboneras.

The monteverde in Anaga is recovering vigorously due to the abandonment of agricultural activity in that area. The vegetation is advancing over some of the former fields located in areas that are difficult to access and maintain.

*> Look closely and you will see the footprint of intense human activity and the result of this battle for the most fertile terrain.*





## The laurisilva

The laurisilva is a type of sub-tropical forest formed by tree species from the Lauraceae family (laurel) that, along with faya (*Myrica faya*) and tree heath (*Erica arborea*), make up the monteverde.

It is found at altitudes of between 600 and 1500 m on the windward (north) side of the mountain, which is often covered by Trade Wind mists.

This forest flourished over a broad swath of the Mediterranean Basin during the Tertiary Period, more than 20 million years ago.

Glaciations and the posterior expansion of the deserts in northern Africa diminished them and now they are limited to areas that acted as borders between the temperate and inter-tropical zones, such as Macaronesia (Canaries, Madeira, Azores and Cape Verde).



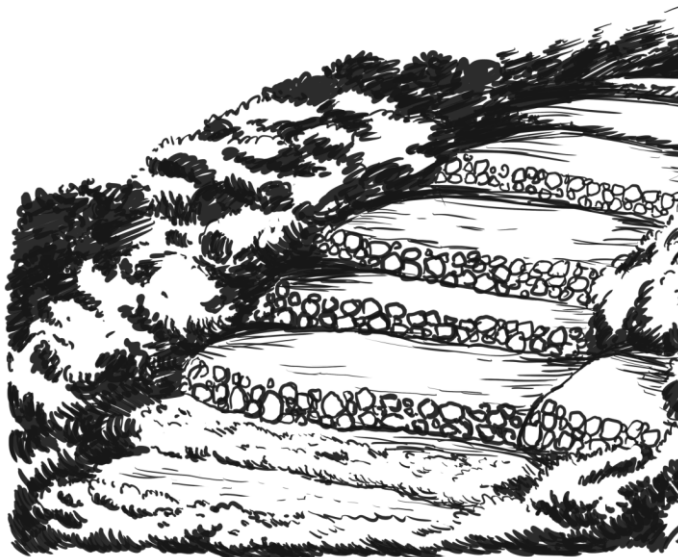


## The old trails take us to seemingly inaccessible places

If you look toward the village you can see how it is surrounded by a large number of agricultural terraces or *cadenas* that are still used to grow crops today. Las Carboneras is located on a rocky meseta where the houses are clustered to leave the more fertile land on the slopes free for crops.

A multitude of drovers' roads connected the main trails with the most isolated fields.

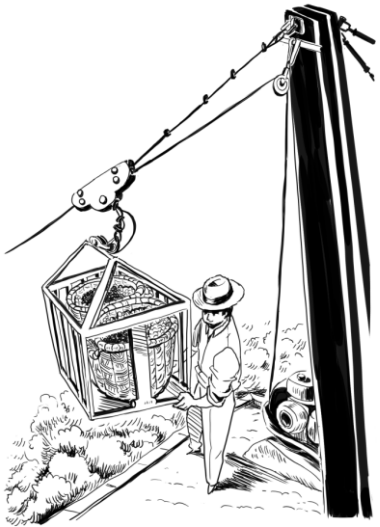
Many of them have been lost to the advance of the vegetation. The main reason they have not been maintained is the great effort it took to transport harvests from such far off areas to the village.





*> If you look toward the road you might be able to make out a "wincher" with its steel cable, built to help move the harvest from difficult to access areas such as this one.*

*This is a relatively recent innovation that accompanied other improvements in the quality of life such as the arrival of the road in the 1970s.*



## The "cadenas"

Cutting down trees left the fertile soil bare and exposed to erosion. The construction of agricultural terraces was a method used to retain the soil and create a level surface.

Stone from the surrounding area was used to build a containment wall parallel to the slope and then the space between the two was filled with earth. Terrain with the steepest slopes required many narrow terraces, but this titanic effort made them useful for cultivation.





## The inhabitants of the laurisilva observe us from the trees

Although we are on El Lomillio de los Cabrereros (goatherders hill) there are no longer any goats or herders here. They still make excellent cheese in Las Carboneras, but the livestock is no longer allowed to roam freely.

The monte verde has reclaimed this enclave and complete stone terraces can be found within it.

Goat herding continued to be important to the economy of Guanche society after the conquest.

It was carried out on the steepest terrain that was least useful for agriculture, taking advantage of the goats' ability to move about on slopes and cliffs in search of food.







**> Today the inhabitants of the laurisilva are returning to these forests.**

**This includes Laurel and Bolle's pigeons, which are endemic to the Canary Islands, or the silent Eurasian sparrow hawk, which hunts small rodents and birds on the mountain.**

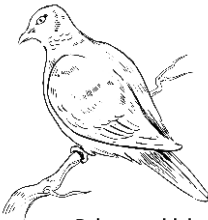
**Other raptors, such as little hawks, nest on the rocky cliffs and can be seen slicing through the sky in majestic flight.**



**Aquililla**  
(*Buteo buteo*)



**Paloma rabiche**  
(*Columba junoniae*)



**Paloma rabiche**  
(*Columba junoniae*)

**Gavilán**  
(*Accipiter nisus*)



## Livestock

**Up to half of the village was involved in goat herding, keeping them occupied most of the day.**

**When the goats were done grazing, the herd was taken to be milked and the women made cheese.**

**Later they tended the fields. There were also cows and donkeys, whose main function was to serve as beasts of burden and to pull ploughs.**

**Today large domestic animals are practically non-existent. There are no longer cows, donkeys or mules in Las Carboneras.**

## **4** Cabocos (hollows) in the barrancos retained the water that the village drank

After crossing the barranco and starting the climb toward Taborno, you will find a deviation in the path that leads back down to Las Carboneras, taking you once again to the riverbed of Barranco de Taborno.

The men, women and children of Las Carboneras used this trail to the barranco often to wash clothes and collect water for their homes.

They used the tosca rock like washing basins and hung clothes on the edges of the barranco to dry and whiten in the sun. Ashes from burning fig trees and other species were used in the wash to whiten clothes.





**> It was not necessary to irrigate the cropland around Las Carboneras due the abundant water and the moisture brought by the Trade Winds.**

**However, the availability of potable water was limited to natural springs and the barranco itself.**

**Villagers had to collect this essential resource for their daily tasks several times a week.**



## The cabocos

Cabocos are large hollows in the bedrock of the barranco, produced by waterfalls.

After flowing through the barranco, water was conserved in them for months.



**5**

## The return is much more difficult when carrying loads

According to the inhabitants of Las Carboneras, it took about twenty minutes to go down to the barranco to wash clothes.

If it had rained a great deal they took advantage of spots closer to the village where pools had formed.

But the return was always much harder, carrying pots filled with water and washed clothes, still damp due to their hurry or because of bad weather.

Sacks of charcoal were also carried up this path. They sometimes made small sacks of charcoal to carry it up to the cargadero, the spot near the summit where the road first arrived and where distributors, known as gangocheros, came to pick up products.





**> The path to Las Carboneras takes advantage of a rocky dyke in which steps were carved and stones were dug up to form a trail.**

**It is a good idea to rest during the steep climb. But what would this hike be like with a basket of grapes on your shoulder or a bundle of clothes balanced on your head?**

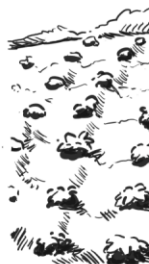


## Grape vines and potatoes form a well-matched partnership

Cows were taken down through here to fields located at the foot of Las Carboneras, under El Corral and Los Morritos. The fields stretched practically to the barranco and were very fertile and productive.

Grain was no longer grown, but the vineyards that remain in the area still produce a large amount of grapes and a very nice wine. They also planted a large number of fruit trees, many of which have disappeared, although some still survive.

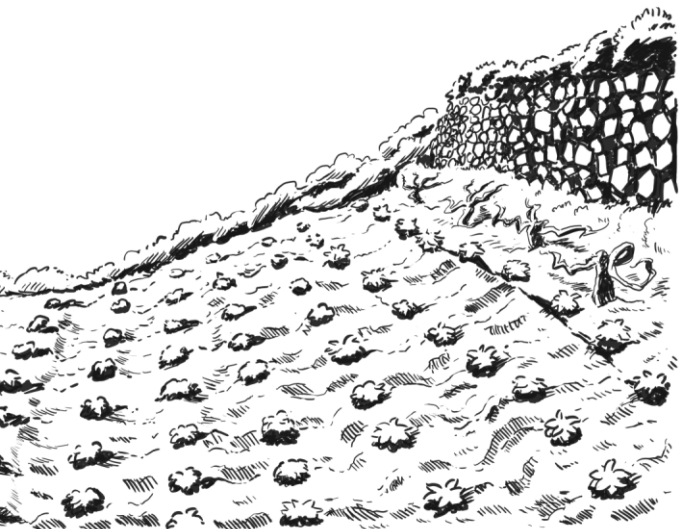
The potatoes that arrived from America had the most success. The climate and soil were perfect for growing them, perhaps because they were similar to the land they came from. In Las Carboneras the *papa melonera* or *boralla* is a highly valued type of potato, and considered one of the culinary jewels of Tenerife. Its high volume of dry matter, of up to 30%, is enjoyed in dishes with salsa or *mojo*.





*> Potatoes and grapevines are still grown in some nearby fields. The grapevines are planted along walls and then extend over the field supported by wooden forks that separate them from the ground.*

*After the grapes are harvested, potato becomes the main crop, planted among the vineyards, which benefit from the organic compost and the perforations in the ground which improves infiltration.*







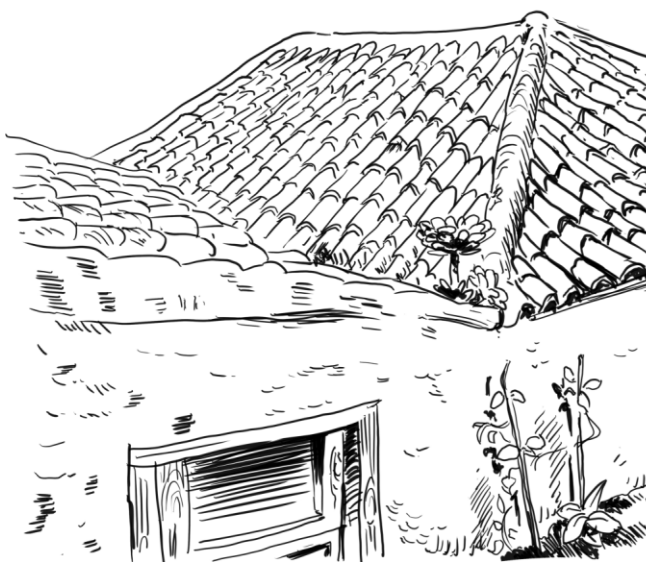
## Tiled and flat roofs welcome us to the village

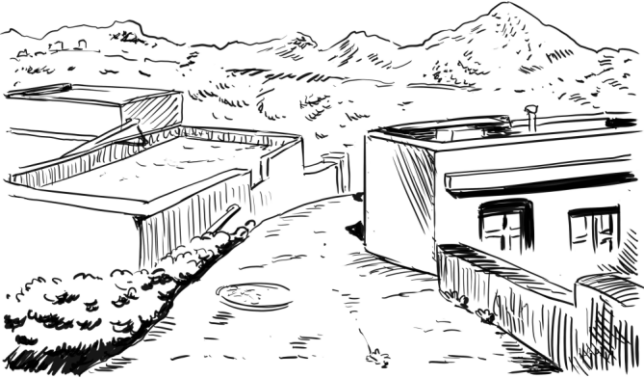
The earliest houses built in Las Carboneras must have been *pajales*, dwellings made with stone walls and rye-straw roofs. However, unlike other villages in Anaga, no remains of this kind of house can be seen.

If we observe the roofs, the curved artisanal tiles indicate the oldest homes. Large blocks of red tosca from local quarries stand out in their walls of stone and clay.

The wood used for the tiles and doors and window frames come from the nearby mountains or was brought from La Cruz del Carmen.

The riga or tea-wood and other materials needed, such as tiles, lime and, more recently, cement, was carried through the trails on shoulders, with the help of neighbours.





## The azoteas

Since the middle of the 20th century, flat roof tops began to replace the curved roof tiles thanks to improved roads, which allowed building material to be transported more easily.

The majority of these homes have been renovated and the oldest ones are used as bodegas or as storerooms for equipment, potatoes or wine.



*> The names of some streets harken back to the history of the village, such as Calle Los Rojas, a common surname in the village, or Calle La Bodega, where one of the village's bodegas with a wine press was located.*



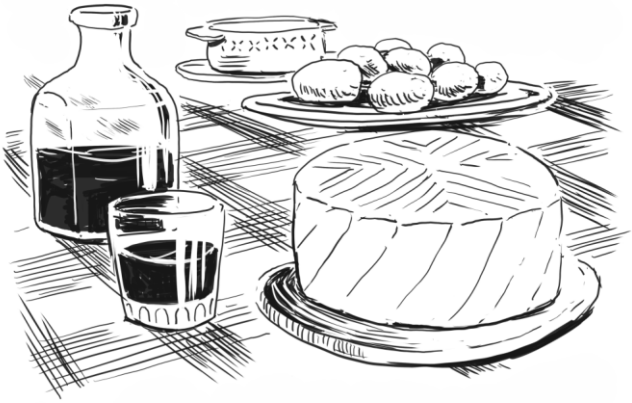
## La plaza de San Isidro Labrador, a place for celebrations

This square is named for the village's patron saint and is surrounded by what used to be four communal threshing floors, and another private one, which were used to thresh grain until the 1970s. Each threshing floor was named for the family that owned the land on which it was built: 'Ravelo', 'Rojas', 'Marrero' and 'Martín'.

The church was built in the 1930s and is dedicated to La Virgen de Los Reyes, which shares the altar with the village's patron saints, San Isidro Labrador (Isidore the farmer) and Santa María de La Cabeza (Maria Torribia). This communal space also holds the school and the neighbourhood association.

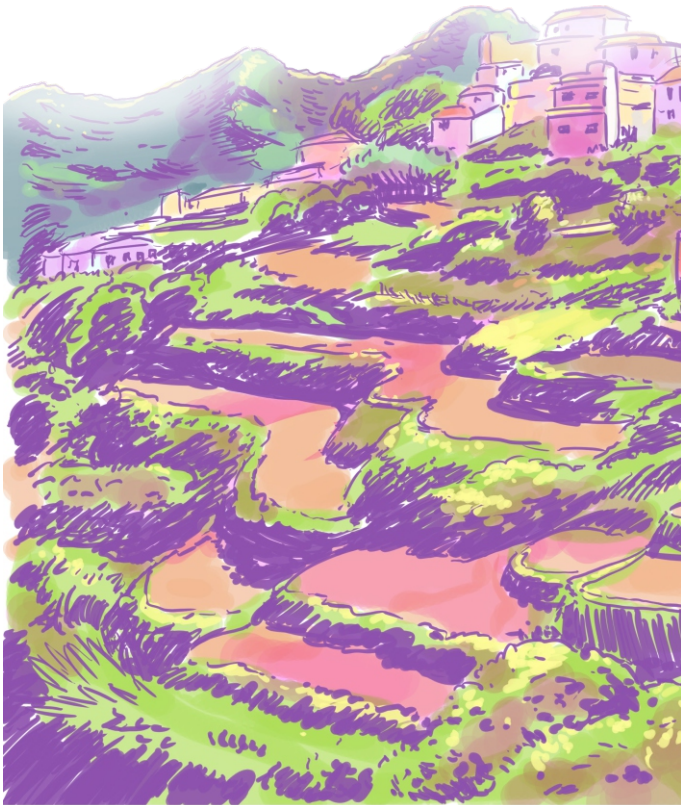
The fiestas in Las Carboneras have been celebrated since 1939, when the hermitage was inaugurated. Every year a religious celebration known as a *romería* is held on the last Sunday of June, preceded the day before by a mass, procession and a night-time *verbena* (open-air dance).





**> Grains are no longer grown or threshed in the square, but during these celebrations you can enjoy the happiness and friendliness of the village of Las Carboneras.**







**> The struggle between Las Carboneras and the monteverde continues.**

**As long as the locals continue to work the land and care for livestock, cheese, potatoes and other produce we can enjoy them in the bars and local stores year round.**

**Don't miss out!**

