

## WALK DESCRIPTION

● Waypoints



### GORGE OF RUIZ

Resting area

START



Further along the street "calle Orilla de La Vera" until we reach the crossing with the road "carretera de La Vera Baja" that takes us back in direction of the gorge.



The trail of "camino Finca de La Pared" (in La Fajana)



Over a stone ramp with beautiful views of Teide we reach the road, turn right and climb upward to the next crossing where we turn left onto the "Calle Real" of Icod el Alto.



We continue along the road several hundred metres more until we get to a church. Our Lady of Good Journey is worshipped here, and further on is the shopping area of Icod el Alto.



Viewpoint of El Lance



We begin with the ascent over the stone stairs on the west side of the resting area and walk up to the trail "Camino del Risco de las Pencas" that takes us to a small square, the "placita de Pedro Dominguez".



On crossing the gorge we enter into the municipality of Los Realejos and reach a relatively humid area of great botanical interest.



At the foot of a mighty chestnut tree lies a large rock, kind of like a table, that invites the hikers to rest.



Continuing our march we can see the cross of La Fajana and a small waterfall further up that carries more water in the winter months.



Leaving behind us the estate "Hacienda de La Pared" we continue along the "Calle Real". This used to be the connecting road into this area and takes us to the rural hotel "Casablanca".



We go down the stairs on the far end of the square and reach a small square "placita del Calvario" where the concrete ramp begins that takes us into the gorge of Dornajo.

## MAP



The path of "Camino de Las Vueltas" in Icod el Alto



Further along the side walk we go down to the path of "Camino Real de las Vueltas" in Icod el Alto. This path was rebuilt after the whole area was declared nature conservation area.



At the end of this descent we reach the crossing of Tigaiga Road where the cross of the sawmill stands. From here we can either continue via the street "calle Barroso" or the streets of Tigaiga.



Following this path we find the old spring and the Dornajo laundry area, and a few metres further on, at the foot of a huge barbusano the spring of the "Mother of Water".



As soon as we reach the country road TF-342 we use the side walk and head for of the viewpoint of "El Lance", from where we have a magnificent view of the Orotava Valley.



Along this stone path, leaving behind a crossing with a ruin, we find the stone of Juan Pérez.



Leaving to our left the crossing of "calle Tigotán" we walk along "calle Barroso" for a few meters and find the chapel "Cruz de Barroso", also known as "capilla de la Haya".



Further along the "calle Barroso" we arrive at the "calle Los Príncipes" which takes us on to Realejo Bajo. The historic centre was declared cultural heritage in 2005.



Following the "calle Guillermo Camacho y Pérez Goldós" we reach the church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception which houses a large number of pieces of sacred art.



**SAN AGUSTÍN**  
Plaza de San Agustín

END



Casa de La Parra



Next to the "Los Príncipes" estate is the chapel of Saint Sebastian and opposite the house "Casa de la Parra" that belongs to the town's cultural infrastructure.



At the height of the street "calle Cantillo de Abajo" we turn into the street "calle La Alhóndiga" in direction of San Agustín, where the hike ends on the square in front of the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

### FURTHER INFORMATION



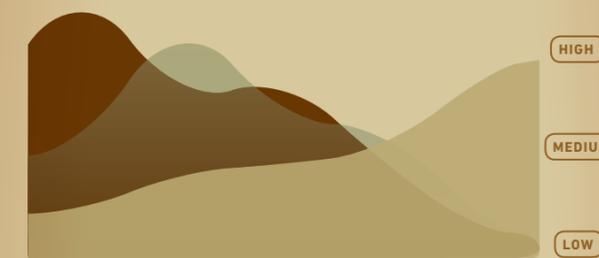
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## SITUATION



## TYPES OF LANDSCAPE

● NATURAL ● RURAL ● URBAN



## DATA SHEET

DIFFICULTY MEDIUM  
TIME 4 1/2 HOURS

DESCENDING 5.6 KM  
DISTANCE 9.8 KM  
ASCENDING 4.2 KM

MIN. ELEV. 139 METRES  
CUMULATIVE DIFFERENCE IN HEIGHT 1.130 METRES  
MAX. ELEV. 622 METRES

## LEGAL DISCLAIMER

This leaflet is meant to be informative. The information it contains can depart from reality and cannot precisely represent the actual state of trails and paths which may have suffered alterations due to weather and other factors after this information was printed. We remind you that adequate means and equipment have to be used for hiking and that you should always act with the necessary precaution that this activity demands. The town hall of Los Realejos publishes this leaflet to make the trails of the municipality known to the public and does in no manner assume responsibility for its incorrect or negligent usage.



Slope of the gorge and rock on the footpath "Camino de las Pencas"

## INTRODUCTION



The gorge "Barranco de Ruíz" comprises an area of 95.5 hectares and forms the border between the municipalities of San Juan de la Rambla and Los Realejos. In 1994 the Natural Spaces Act declared it area of scientific interest.

The scientific and ecological value of this space lies in the diversity of plants, such as the deciduous trees and the thermophile woods, as well as ecosystems adapted to the rocky terrain.

With this guide we wish to establish a connection between this emblematic natural space in Los Realejos and the rural

area of Icod el Alto, the historic nucleus of Realejo Bajo and one of the areas central to this municipality, namely San Agustín, that is the end point of this walk and where visitors can find diverse cultural and recreational activities. There is also a shopping area and a large number of cafés, bars and restaurants.

Here you will also find the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, eternal honorary Mayor of Los Realejos and patron saint of the Orotava Valley. This church is a place of regular pilgrimage and worship of the Virgin Mary.



Canary foxglove (*Isoplexis canariensis*)

## FLORA AND FAUNA



In the gorge of Ruíz, the good observer will be able to spot all of Tenerife's birds of prey, with exception of the osprey. This includes those active during the day (common buzzard, sparrowhawk, kestrel and Barbary falcon) as well as those which hunt at night (barn owl and long-eared owl).

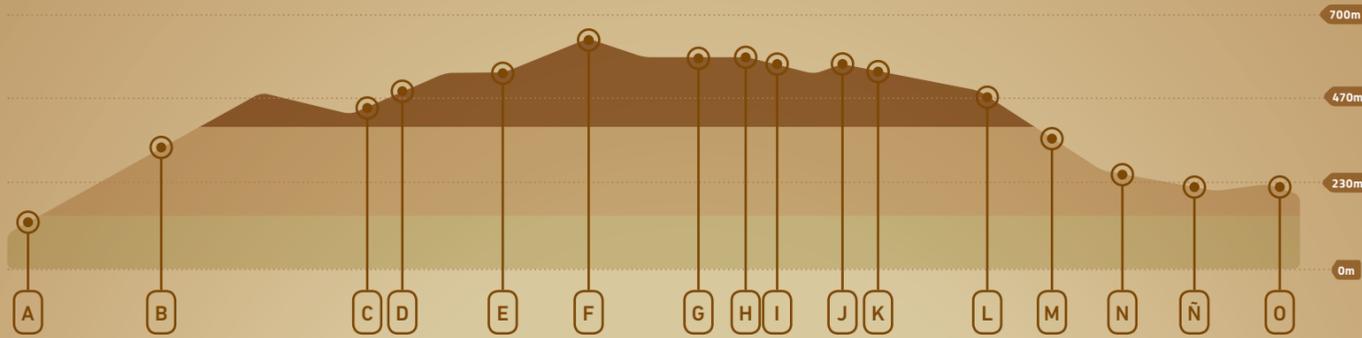
Here, vegetation from different altitudes overlaps, especially broad-leaved trees and thermophile thicket. In this natural depression it presents a shelter for various endemic species of land snails.

If we walk through the gorge during the flowering period of the Canary bellflower and the

Canary foxglove, we may have the opportunity to observe how small birds – especially willow warblers and African blue tits – visit these flowers to get at the nutritious nectar. There are two species of pigeons here, which are endemic to Tenerife, Bolle's pigeon and the laurel pigeon. If you watch carefully you will be able to observe their energetic wing stroke or see them in flight.

The wooded part contains trees such as pleiomeris canariensis and stinkwood, but also many plants normally found at different altitudes, which are remarkable because of their rareness in this area. These are, among others, the wild tea plant and tree limonium.

## PROFILE



## POINTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- A** Near the starting point is the land that María de Abarca gave to Francisco Ruíz in 1520, after whom the gorge is named.
- B** The name of "La Fajana" which can be found in other places of the municipality and in general on the Canary Islands, refers to the flat areas that lie at the foot of a slope or cliff and which was formed by the sediment of the layers of land above.
- C** In the forest itself we can find two large Canary madrones, each over a hundred years old, which are listed and called the Canary madrones of "La Fajana".
- D** The laundry area in the gorge of Castro is an interesting place where local women used to go to wash the laundry in the water that was transported there by the waterfall.
- E** The many crosses along the way were put here to mark especially difficult parts of the way. They are a sign of popular faith and the desire to give these difficult places an exalted character.
- F** The estate "La Pared" belonged to the Castro family and sits on the land that they had obtained during the conquest of the island. According to Viera y Clavijo the first potatoes of the Canary Islands were planted here in 1622.
- G** In the Centre for Mandatory Education "La Pared" is the museum "Los Alzados"; an initiative dedicated to conserving the musical and other traditions that mark the way of life in the area. For this it obtained the prize for popular culture in 2012.
- H** It is in the 16th century when the first written records of the church of Our Lady of the Good Journey appear. A humble construction with interesting sacred artwork inside.
- I** Since the 18th century Icod el Alto has been divided into districts. Up to seven such districts were counted in the 20th century, which now form the centre of population.
- J** In the hamlet of "El Lance" it was tradition to blow the conch (a species of sea snail originally used during aboriginal festivities) when it became known that a single woman had become pregnant.
- K** The large bronze statue of the aboriginal chieftain (mencey) Bentor, created in 1996 by Carmen Luis León stands at the viewpoint of "El Lance". According to legend this is the place from which he jumped off the cliff after the events of the last phases of the conquest.
- L** The road "Camino de las Vueltas" already existed in aboriginal times and was the connection from Icode to Taoro. Up until well into the 20th century it was the only connection between Icod el Alto and Los Realejos.
- M** The stone of Juan Pérez, mentioned as early as the middle of the 16th century, was a resting place for weddings and funerals on their way to Realejo Bajo.
- N** The estate "Los Príncipes" belonged to the niece of the fourth governor, Porcia Magdalena Fernández de Lugo, wife of Antonio Luis de Leyuva, third prince of Asculi and marquis of Atela. Here stood Tenerife's first sugar mill and it was declared cultural heritage monument in 2009.
- Ñ** The church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception was declared cultural heritage monument in 2003. Nearby, towards the Domínguez Afonso square, are the oldest stone stairs of the island (1570).
- O** On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its benediction and opening for mass on the 25th of July of 2015, the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was made the second Sanctuary of Tenerife, together with the Royal Sanctuary of Christ in La Laguna.



Laurel pigeon (*Columba junoniae*)



Partial view of the gorge of Ruíz



# FOOTPATH GORGE OF RUIZ - SAN AGUSTÍN

ENGLISH · 2017 Edition



Excmo. Ayuntamiento de  
**LOS REALEJOS**  
Concejalía de Turismo



Los Realejos  
con los cinco sentidos

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS



### THINK AHEAD

You should wear adequate clothes and shoes, bring solar protection cream, a hat, a jacket and a charged mobile phone.



### AVOID MAKING NOISE

You will enjoy nature better in silence.



### RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Don't pick plants and don't take animals or objects from their surroundings. Respect the local way of life.



### HIKE IN COMPANY

Inform family or friends about your route and only walk on marked paths.



### DON'T LEAVE RUBBISH

Take any rubbish with you and be especially careful with cigarette ends.



### BE CAREFUL

Hiking in nature holds risks. You hike under your own responsibility.

### BUS

**Bco. Ruíz:** Lines 107, 108, 325 y 363.  
**Plaza San Agustín:** Lines 330, 339, 353, 354, 380, 391 and 546.

### +INFO:

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