



arts and crafts



In order to understand an island like Lanzarote better, you really have to leave the tourist areas and go into the countryside where you will find some lovely villages that are so inviting you will want to stop and walk around, you will find typical restaurants where you can try local food, eating with the islanders. You will find artisan workshops following ancient methods of production but creating new artefacts.

One such typical handicraft workshop is owned by Mara and Toni in Uga. For 25 years the couple, originally from Gran Canaria, have lived and worked in an old traditional Lanzarote house where the door is always open to visitors. They started selling their pottery on a stall in local markets and found that they did very well, they managed to build a secure base doing good business, and raised six children. Today you can find pottery from Uga in all the official tourist centres and in all the important markets on the island. Their workshop is really worth a visit, here you get an insight into the method of production and you will be swept up by their enthusiasm, also you will get a lot of information on the background and history of pottery in Lanzarote.

Mara and Toni offer three different lines of clay products covering a large range. Historical island pottery, very popular with both residents and locals, is extremely decorative, there is also a special creative line and typical island souvenirs. It is interesting that over time each island developed its own very individual designs.

“Here on this island a whole range of traditional pottery was used by the original inhabitants. A lady called Doña Dorotea later produced a very popular style which greatly influenced the basis for much of the pottery here in Lanzarote. It is always nice for us to be able to tell visitors the story of each of the different objects because in them you find a reflection of the history of the island” tells Toni.

The first time they came to Lanzarote, Mara and Toni fell in love with the village of Uga and they still find a quality of life that is important to them. “When I go to the supermarket in the morning I can greet everybody I meet by name and chat to them. That kind of quality of life is difficult to find in big cities. In the last 25 years Uga has grown and changed but you still find a special quietness and typical village life here. Our neighbours cultivate their vegetables, they still have their animals and they are always friendly and very hospitable”.

If you spend some time in Uga you can learn a lot about this island from Mara and Toni. Their workshop is situated in the centre of the village near the street that goes to La Geria, if you look on the left hand side you can't miss a sign on the wall of their workshop, that says 'Cerámica' in big green letters ■