



Experiences of an Island resident

THE WHOLE ISLAND IS LIKE A GARDEN



I made my home here in Lanzarote five years ago, and have not regretted for one moment my decision to leave Germany. I remember those days of pouring rain, the mornings when I had to scrape the ice off my car, the grey days - all over. The summertime when it was so oppressively hot that you were unable to sleep at night - those days have gone for good. The peace and quiet of this Island, plus the good climate have made me change my points of view, my whole way of living.

Before, after work in the evening, I used to stay at home either watching television or meeting friends indoors, now my whole life takes place outside. Each day the weather beckons you to enjoy your natural surroundings, sit on your terrace, go to the beaches. Whilst you are amazed at the changes in the beginning, you soon realise that the whole island is like a big garden.

What do you think the perfect garden should look like? There are many different answers - it can be a place to relax with beautiful plants, a place where you can sunbathe or swim with enough space to enjoy nature or sports. Then you suddenly realise that you have it all right on your doorstep, only minutes away - 845 square

kilometres of Biosphere Reserve, which you can enjoy either on your own or with other people. The constant spring-like weather gives you a temperate climate all the year round. There is nothing better after having had a day on the beach than having an evening stroll in the cool evening air. The windows which you left open earlier have allowed the breeze to make a perfect temperature in your bedroom, enabling you to sleep without air-conditioning or a fan.

The first few years of living here and exploring the Island was a real adventure. It is only a small island, but there are so many things to see and do. Firstly I rented a car (cheaper here than anywhere else in Europe) I was amazed how easy driving was, there are good roads without too much traffic.

I wandered about, stopped to swim and sunbathe, visited volcanic caves or craters, tourist centres, tapas bars - the list of places to explore is endless. There are some beautiful picnic spots, if you open your eyes you will see so many varieties of plants, butterflies, birds and animals, things you didn't have time to notice before, how could you have missed them? As soon as my Spanish got better I started

to delve more deeply into Island life. There are endless sports and leisure programmes, often very inexpensive. Because it is a small island, all water sports are close at hand. You can easily learn windsurfing, sailing, kite boarding. If you tire of water sports, you can play golf, go horse riding, jogging, bowling, play tennis - the list is endless. Lanzarote is also a very popular place for high profile sports, and not without reason, for example the famous international Ironman competition is held here every year. The fiestas in the villages, cultural activities and exhibitions always tempt you to go out in the evenings, to enjoy and explore your own area.

You will quickly find that the healthy climate motivates you, you feel 20 years younger, you get re-energised, realise how good it feels to be close to nature, you nearly forget the old, cold place that you called home before. When you lie on the beach with a good book or have a glass of wine in the wonderful area of La Gería, you are filled with the feeling that 'this is the place, an island for life'

Enjoy this Island, maybe you too will make a life changing decision. In one of our next issues we could possibly publish your own experiences as a new Island resident.