



THE FIESTA DE LOS REMEDIOS IN YAIZA



On 9th May, 1731, the town of Yaiza was confronted with the most dangerous day in its history. Volcanic eruptions had already completely destroyed large parts of the surrounding landscape and some houses in the south of the Island. On this day, new eruptions were shattering the earth and three new lava flows started on their destructive way. Unstoppable, they came closer to the town of Yaiza, leaving behind nothing but fire and ashes. The population of the town was expecting the worst as the lava flow came closer and closer at an enormous speed. In his desperation the priest of the town church decided to celebrate a mass to ask the local saint, the Virgin de Los Remedios, for help in this frightening situation. Suddenly as if by magic the lava flow stopped and the all destructive fire too. Since then every year in September, Yaiza celebrates with a fiesta to the Virgin to show their gratitude for the 'miracle' that occurred that day in Yaiza.

Today, 275 years later, the fiesta de los Remedios is a good example of demonstrating how the old traditions are still alive. Instead of fear, which was felt back in 1731, happiness and hospitality abound. Every year in autumn, for a whole week, the town of Yaiza becomes the centre of attention on the Island, and residents and guests celebrate and pray together to honour the Virgin. The main attraction of the fiesta is the Romería, which is a pilgrimage through the town to the church where the Virgin receives donations. Dressed in traditional costume, either with donkey pulled carts or on the backs of camels, the pilgrims progress through the town. Folklore groups playing typical tunes of the Island and dancing as they go. Food and drink are generously given to everybody, sweet white wine from La Geria, the traditional gofio, papas arrugadas with mojo or different types of biscuits are tasted.

The Romería is a perfect opportunity to get to know the traditions of this unique Island and to enjoy the hospitality and friendliness of the locals. During the pilgrimage everyone becomes part of the celebratory crowd, and until you arrive at the church you have the chance to meet some new people and make new friendships. Later on, the celebration goes on around the church inviting all to spend the evening and night together with the new friends in Yaiza.