



COSTA TEGUISE LANZAROTE

The perfect
playground

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LANZAROTE IS ONE OF THE WINDIEST ISLANDS OF THE CANARIAN ARCHIPELAGO. SITUATED NORTH EAST OF FUERTEVENTURA THE TRADE WINDS HIT LANZA FIRST, RESULTING IN GREAT WIND STATS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. Their proximity to Africa gives a very temperate climate all year round. The town of Costa Teguisse is only 20 minutes from Arrecife Airport and has been used in the past by the PWA and is currently a stopover for the European Freestyle Pro Tour (EFPT).

With bars, restaurants, shops and facilities in abundance, Costa Teguisse is friendly, vibrant and lively yet more low-key and chilled than a lot of other resorts I could think of and it even has a large aquapark. This makes it perfect for a group or family trip. Local delicacies include Papas Arrugadas (Canarian potatoes), Mojo Sauce, freshly caught seafood and dry white wine from grapes grown locally in shallow volcanic craters.

The main white sand beach, Las Cucharas, is the launching beach for windsurfing. It differs from a lot of Canary Island beaches in that it is flat with no dunes and offers protected, lighter-wind launching. This also means that time on the beach is relaxing for non-windsurfers and those taking a break from the water, without any of the usual exposure.





Windsurfing Club Las Cucharas

A windsurfing hub for an international community, Windsurfing Club Las Cucharas has been operating in Costa Tegui for over 25 years. With a substantial range of top-notch equipment on offer from Fanatic, Duotone and Point 7, it is the go-to place for kit rental, lessons, local advice, safety cover and a very warm welcome. It is run by the hard-working team of Eric and Laurent (founders, owners and instructors), Russell (instructor and local expert), Charly (instructor), Marie (reception) and Claudio (community manager). It has a pleasant bar/restaurant next door (Poco Loco) serving delicious coffee, beer and tapas all day. Other activities include stand up paddleboarding and mountain biking.

The perfect location for all?

The first time I visited Costa Tegui was in late September 2018. It was a recce to look at the suitability of the spot for a new freeride clinic. My research suggested that the spot offered suitable conditions for all levels: from beginner to improver to advanced including freeride, freestyle, foiling, wave and slalom. What I wanted to know is how it could actually deliver all this. Taking a group overseas and introducing them to a new location they might not have otherwise gone to is superbly enjoyable yet a great responsibility. Everything has to be right including the travel arrangements, transfers, accommodation, access to the right amount of good kit with great service from the host centre and, most importantly, the suitability of the location for specific levels of ability and typical wind stats/water state.



The perfect playground for adventurous intermediates as well as advanced windsurfers

The forecast did not look promising yet I sailed every afternoon (the mornings were light) in gentle rolling swell conditions on either 5.3 or 6.0 on my Kode 103 and also enjoyed a spot of foiling. Whilst I was out a steady stream of beginners were being taken through their first steps in the bay by Eric and Laurent, a few were foiling and the locals came every day at the right time to enjoy wave riding and big jumping conditions upwind and away from the main sailing area. All were launching from that same beach yet getting such contrasting experiences. I was there for 4 days where I saw first hand what a wonderful and diverse location this was.

I returned in March this year with 10 people who were keen to work on their intermediate and advanced skills and we had solid planing conditions on days 1-6 and a 8-10 knot day on day seven. Once again I used either 5.3 or 6.0 every day with some of the clients going as small as 4.2/4.7 or as big as to 7.0/7.5. So far so good!

Launching and sailing in the bay

Light winds on the inside make leaving kit on the beach easy with no dunes discharging sand into the back of your eyes. Beachstarting can be simple into flat water or more challenging at certain times of tide or groundswell. Being able to time your launching around little waves wrapping-in is an essential skill for a windsurfer to have in their repertoire and is awesome fun. Launching is to the right of a large, upwind breakwater (smaller at high tide) which shelters the

launching spot yet makes the wind a little fluky for the first few moments. Again, learning how to wobble out a little from the beach by keeping weight low and body compact is a fundamental skill.

Once you have cleared the breakwater the wind becomes cleaner and it's a case of tacking upwind a few times to get close to the top of the bay. Sailing in the flat-water bay is easy in non-planing conditions yet, due to the large hotel at the top of the bay, it can be quite gusty for developing planing skills. This is not an issue as there is a platform upwind near the edge of the bay where you can aim for, rest upon and use as a base for heading out of the bay and back in again.

Out in the open

Outside the bay is where the magic happens and the conditions here are enough to bring exhilaration to all who head out. The NE trade winds are normally side shore from the left and can strengthen in the afternoon. Once out the wind clicks to perfect, boards pop onto the plane easily and the fun really starts. If you love adventurous freeride conditions then you must come here to play. Blasting around going up and down the swell is just fabulous (not a word I use freely or often!) All levels can improve and build confidence by making short or long runs out of the bay and back to the platform. Planing and control skills can be improved and developed into full carving or riding and even getting some airtime.

The reef that sits between the bay and the outside can push up anything from a few small bumps (which are easy to get over) to bigger waves. Yet even though some of the photos here might look big to someone who has only sailed on flat

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water, the lumps on the reef and on the outside are softer, more forgiving and just so much easier to play with than those that you would find in a true wave location. When the water is smooth and flat yet tilted downwards then guess what? It is easier to get going and way more fun. (As mentioned, waves can be found here yet, usually, you have to head upwind and inshore at certain states of tide to search for them.)

At times, of course, the waves will be too much for some yet this is more common in the summer for example when the EFPT comes to town and when Lanzarote, Tenerife, Fuerteventura and Grand Canaria are getting pummelled by heavy thermal winds and the groundswell is strong.

Once you have enjoyed one or more runs out in the swell you simply sail over the reef again and you are back into the refuge of the bay. With the speed and momentum gained from planing in, carve gybes or variants are easy in the super-flat water just inside the bay. From the platform (where you can rest, share experiences with others, get coaching tips, feedback and have photos/videos taken) it's just one short broad reach to return to the beach.

Pre-dinner après-surf is with a chilled glass of something delicious from the rooftop terrace looking out towards the sea where tales of great valour abound as the sun comes down over 'the island of 1000 volcanoes'.

The combination of all of the conditions described make Costa Teguisé the perfect playground for adventurous intermediates as well as advanced windsurfers. Come along in March for a memorable holiday and skills boost in this fantastic location. It will be hot during the day and cooler at



night and only a summer wetsuit is needed. The clinic covers location guidance, kit tuning, getting up to speed, blasting control, tacks, gybes, jumping, waterstarts, riding on the swells, general confidence-boosting, photos, video feedback and use of GoPros with various mounts. **Places are limited and bookings are open now for 16-23 March 2020 though Sportif: www.sportif.travel - 01273 844919.**

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