

DEPARTURES JILL CRAWSHAW

■ JAPAN ■ GRAN CANARIA
■ BUENOS AIRES ■ COSTA RICA

Back to the cave

Gran Canaria may be better known for its beaches, but its interior is still waiting to be explored. Upland Escapes, the walking specialist, organises stays in mountain villages, eating regional specialities, learning about the flora and fauna and sampling local bars. HQ is in Artenara, the highest village on the island, where most people still live as their ancestors did 5,000 years ago, in caves, now converted for 21st-century living. The former mayor has restored two of them for holidaymakers. A choice of walks include forest trails, crossing volcanic craters and following the *Caminos Reales*, the pilgrim paths used by the ancient Canarians.

Three-night B&B stays, with escorted walks, car hire and daily picnics, but not flights, cost £330pp for two people sharing; a seven-day trip costs £630pp a week for two sharing; for groups of four the prices range from £310pp for a three-day stay to £565pp for a seven-night trip.

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