

## COOPERATION WAS ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL IN DIFFICULT TIMES

### ROUTE 1 AROUND THE HOUSES OF LOS PEDREGALES

Domingo Romero was born in these houses about 80 years ago. He worked on Los Pedregales farm estate as a *mediano* - a tenant farmer - until the 1970s.

Although the farm was devoted to growing crops, fruit and vegetables, livestock was also essential. The mare and the cows offered their labour and good manure for the fields; the goats provided milk for the house and the pigs were

able to convert any leftovers in protein. Life was very hard, and people had to work from sunrise to sunset, but for the farm to produce, two things were necessary. First, to have a variety of crops, it was essential to rotate the fields where they were planted each year. And, even more important was being able to count on a chain of favours among all the inhabitants of the valley, who would help each other whenever necessary. However, in just over 50 years, the way of life here has changed radically. Today, much of

the island's farming areas are abandoned and the economy has moved to the coast.

Follow Domingo on a small route around the houses on Los Pedregales estate so that you can discover the anecdotes and experiences of his youth. From him, you will find out what life was like here until not so long ago, and how cooperation helped people to survive in difficult times.



1 These houses bring back so many memories for me! In that room in the front, I was born, in the bedroom that the whole family shared. On the right, there was the mare's stable and the kitchen. In the rooms on the left, the family of tenant farmers who worked the other half of the estate lived.

In this courtyard, we carried on with our lives, the children played and the hens ran around. Some pigs would sneak in, and everywhere was filled with the smell of my mother's wood-burning stove.



5 This stone circle is an 'era' or threshing ground. In summer, after reaping, the ears of wheat were brought here. The mares or the cows circled the era, pulling the trellis, a board with interlaid stones, to crush the ears. Thus, the grain was separated from the chaff. Then, it was thrown into the air so that the wind could take away the straw leaving the clean wheat to be collected.

The summer was a busy time because we would help all the neighbours of the valley with their harvesting and threshing, and they would also come to give us a hand with ours.



2 We ended up having about nine animals, between cows and calves, on the farm. The cows were the power for pulling the ploughs; they had to be tough but tame. The amount of milk they could produce was less important, which is why they were cows called 'bastas', not dairy ones. Outside, we made a lot of manure that smelled terrible, but it was part of our wealth that ensured good crops. We mixed it with ferns, and when it was ready, we spread it on the fields as fertilizer.

EL CARDÓN  
EXHIBITION ROOM

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE OF  
TENÓ RURAL PARK

AUDIOVISUAL ROOM



6 Who could have imagined that in the house where I was born there would be the Administration Office of Tenó Rural Park? Life has changed so much! Things may be easier now. When I was young, we were able to get ahead because we helped each other. And that is a lesson that should not be forgotten. Let us drink to that!

Thank you for accompanying me on this tour around the houses of Los Pedregales farm. One last thing, if you can, do try some Tenó products: they are still as good today as they always were.

3 Here my father had his carpentry workshop. Almost all the ploughs of the town were made by him. I helped him when I grew up. Sometimes we would get up at night, and, by the light of a wick in a can with oil, we would repair a plough that had been broken by some neighbour who needed it the next day to continue ploughing. These jobs were not paid; they were favours that would be returned when we needed help on the farm.



4 From this point, you can see the entire farm, which occupied a long strip up the hillside to the top of the hill. Below were the best fields and above the smallest, but everything was planted, especially wheat and potatoes, but also pulses and vegetables.

When the time came to harvest, many neighbours came to help us and while the work lasted, we gave them 'gofio' (toasted cereals) with figs in the morning, a lunch with potatoes and fish and for dinner 'frangollo', a sweet dessert, to replenish their strength.

ERA (THRESHING GROUND)



#### WALK SUMMARY:

Approximate length: 250 metres  
Elevation gain: 8 metres ascending, 8 descending  
Estimated time with stops: 30 minutes  
Characteristics: Uneven surface and some steps