

Proposal of urban geotourism in La Orotava (Tenerife, Spain)

William Hernández¹, Monika Przeor¹, Javier Dóniz-Páez^{2,1}, Pedro A. Hernández^{1,3,4}, Nemesio M. Pérez^{1,3,4}

¹Instituto Volcanológico de Canarias (INVOLCAN), La Laguna, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. William.hernandez.beca@iter.es, monika.przeor.beca@iter.es

²GeoTurVol-Departamento de Geografía e Historia. Universidad de La Laguna, La Laguna, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. jdoniz@ull.es

³Instituto Tecnológico de Energías Renovables (ITER). phdez@iter.es

⁴Agencia Insular de la Energía de Tenerife (AIET). nperez@iter.es

Urban geotourism appears as an innovative form of tourism consisting in exploiting the relief in the urban areas. The heritage existing in the cities and in the old towns, are present in natural outcrops or in a tangible cultural heritage (urban plane, streets, churches, cemeteries, castles, buildings, etc.).

The aim of this work is to identify the geo-cultural sites associated to La Orotava Village and propose the urban volcanic geo-routes. The study area is located in La Orotava giant gravitational landslide valley, at the northern part of Tenerife Island, Canary Islands, Spain. This Village is spotted over the basaltic aa and pahoehoe lava flows associated to the Llano de Los Infantes cinder cone of Pedro Gil volcanic rift, as well as various ravines.

From the historical point of view, La Orotava Village was part of the Menceyato of Taoro, which was one of the nine aboriginal kingdoms in which the island was divided before the Castilian conquest (1492) the island. After that, the construction of La Orotava Village started in XVI century and lasted until XIX century, when main and most edifices were built. Due to the antiquity and a rich history linked to the down town of La Orotava, the Village was declared a protected cultural area (Bien de Interés Cultural, BIC, [22 de febrero de 2005](#)). Nowadays this town is an important cultural tourist destination in Tenerife.

The methodology used in this work consisted on cataloguing, classifying and assessing volcanic geo-heritage sites present in the La Orotava Village. All geo-cultural sites show the relation between volcanic processes and the society roles in this urban space. We selected eleven geo-cultural sites: which include churches, gardens, convents, streets, squares and houses along all the Village of La Orotava. Each of the selected sites was classified by its main cultural and natural interest. The cultural elements were divided in two groups: religious cultural elements and civil cultural elements.

According to the natural and cultural resources catalogued and the possibilities offered by this new form of tourist leisure, the geo-route that we propose attends to geographical thematic, including natural, social and cultural characteristics. The itinerary is adapted to every type of tourist requirements and the length of the route is approximately 5,2 km.

Keywords: Urban geotourism, volcanic heritage, cultural heritage, La Orotava city, Spain

