



LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA

No tourism phobia

Much is reported about cities in which inhabitants are annoyed at the concentration of tourism and subsequent restrictions on quality of life, but Las Palmas de Gran Canaria apparently enjoys high levels of approval of visitors' numbers.

Recent examples of lamenters include Lisbon, Rome and Barcelona, where it is said that cheap apartments to rent can no longer be found, streets and pedestrian zones are ram-packed full, and it's almost impossible to get a seat at a corner café.

Hence, the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Tourism Office, led by Pedro Quevedo, commissioned a representative survey to understand how tourism was affecting the local population. During February, the TSA Tecnicos en Socioanálisis institute asked 1,200 inhabitants in the five different districts of the city for their opinion, with the final results being recently presented.

"It is an up-to-date snapshot that serves to understand our current status as a tourist city, and an important moment to analyse our strengths and weaknesses and to develop future strategy. We don't want to make the same mistakes that were made elsewhere," explained Quevedo. However, he was amazed at the posi-



↑ Pedro Quevedo presented the positive result of the survey

tive mood of the survey results, which exceeded even optimistic expectations. According to the summary, 'tourism phobia' does not exist in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

The five main themes of the survey were acceptance of tourism activity; economic and social impact on the public; degree of dependence on tourism; interaction with tourists; and opinions on holiday rentals.

Citizens have their say

Regarding the general image of the city, 79 per cent of inhabitants questioned think that Las Palmas de Gran Canaria has a good or very good image, and over 77 per cent believe that the city's tourist areas have been improved in the last five years. Also, the number

of tourists visiting the city doesn't bother the majority of residents. A total of 66.4 per cent find the number of visitors appropriate, while over 16 per cent even think there are still too few. The rest are more in favour of fewer visitors or have no opinion. But the inhabitants of the capital agree on one point: Nine out of ten respondents are sure that tourism is important for the economic development of the city, above all because it creates jobs, but also as it enhances the cityscape, boosts economic dynamism and improves leisure and cultural facilities. The majority also believe that the quality of tourists has improved in recent years. Only just under five per cent feel disturbed by the behaviour of holiday-makers. More than half are

clearly in favour of tourism and attach great importance to being good hosts. They only criticise the fact that the quality of jobs in tourism is often poor and that in many cases the profits go to foreign companies. However, a need for action with regard to holiday rentals was highlighted. Almost 62 per cent of respondents are in favour of better regulation and see holiday rentals as the main reason for the rise in cost of long-term rents and the general shortage of housing. Nearly 16 per cent would welcome a ban on holiday rentals in residential buildings. It is not only that housing is becoming scarce and expensive, but also the general cost of living, according to the public, has risen as a result of tourism.

"We will take the results of the study seriously and also wait for those from a second survey, which is currently still in progress. We want our city to be an example of quality tourism in the 21st century and we need to set the course so that everyone benefits," Quevedo said. When developing future marketing strategy, it has been acknowledged that care should be taken to ensure that tourism does not have a negative, but rather a positive, impact on the way people live together in a region.

MICHAEL'S LEGACY

Homage to the 'King of Pop'

The Michael's Legacy tribute show, chosen by the Spanish Michael Jackson fan club as the best extravaganza paying homage to the legendary King of Pop, will be visiting Tenerife on May 3 and 4.

The show closely follows the productions of Michael Jackson, who loved to surprise his audience with a spectacular mix of music and stage performance.

The tribute, in which eleven performers bring the King of Pop's songs and dances back to life, was created by the Jackson Dance Company and has evidently already won audiences over throughout Spain.

The main actor, Ximo MJ, looks astonishingly similar to Jackson and reproduces his movements and gestures almost identically. Performances will take place on May 3 at 9pm and on May 4 at 7.30pm and 10pm at the Teatro Leal in La Laguna and the show is suitable for all ages.

Tickets costing €23 are available at the box office or via www.entrees.es

