

shelter of Puerto de San Sebastián in these conditions, the option of lying in the shelter of the cliffs on the north coast of La Gomera should still be considered, particularly if the marina is already over-full. In northerly winds this coast should be approached with caution.

At the northern tip of the island (28°13'.4N 17°15'.6W) are Los Organos – the Organ Pipes – a towering cliff face of basalt pipes which can only be seen from seaward. They are worth inspecting in calm conditions, but be wary of strong down-draughts from the cliffs.

Playa del Vallehermoso

28°12'.5N 17°14'.9W

General

A rather uninspiring bay but useful in a strong southerly. There is a ruin at the base of the cliff on the west side of the bay, and a stony beach at the foot of a steep-sided valley leading up to the town of Vallehermoso about 3km inland.

Playa de Hermigua

28°10'.9N 17°10'.8W

General

Open to the northeast, but pleasant in calm weather and providing good shelter in a southerly, this anchorage is easy to find with a group of long white buildings near the shore and a valley running up to the village of Hermigua a mile or so inland. Best anchorage, with good holding in 8m, is on the west side of the bay under a steep hillside with terraced houses. On the eastern side is the remains of a jetty.

Playa de Abalo

28°06'.4N 17°06'.1W

General

A pretty bay 1.5M north of San Sebastián, facing east and therefore unlikely to be usable in winter. Watch out for Roca Bermeja (marked on Admiralty chart 1869) off the headland at the north end of the bay. Anchor in 5m over sand about 100m off a rocky beach with palm trees and a few houses.



San Sebastian de la Gomera

28°05'.1N 17°06'.5W

Tides

Standard port for the Canary Islands is Casablanca, with San Sebastian a secondary port. MLWS is about 0.3m above datum and time difference on Casablanca: -0106. San Sebastian is among those ports for which tidal data is available via *EasyTide* - see page 9.

Mean spring range 2.0m

Mean neap range 0.7m

Plans

Admiralty 1858 (1:10,000)

Spanish 5170 (1:3,500)

Imray-Lolaire E2 (1:7,680)

Lights

2842 Punta San Cristóbal 28°05'.7N 17°06'.W

Fl(2)10s83m21 M

Round white tower with red band 15m

Note A red and white banded radio mast, lit by two pairs of F.R lights, is situated about 600m north of the above

2844-7 Breakwater 28°05'.N 17°06'.5W

Fl.G.5s15m6M Green tower on circular green base 7m

2844-75 Breakwater inner head 28°05'.N 17°06'.6W

Fl(2)G.7s6m3M Green post 3m (synchronized with 2844.7)

buoy Port hand No 1 28°05'.N 17°06'.7W

Fl.R.5s3M Red pillar buoy

buoy Port hand No 2 28°05'.2N 17°06'.6W

Fl(2)R.7s3M Large red can buoy

2844-6 Marina west mole 28°05'.2N 17°06'.5W

Fl(3)R.9s6m1M Slim red pyramid 3m

2844-6 Marina east mole 28°05'.2N 17°06'.5W

Fl(3)G.9s6m1M Slim green pyramid 3m

Harbour communications

Marina 922 141769, Fax 922 871362,

email mlg@marinaalagomera.com, VHF Ch 09 (24 hours,

English spoken during office hours, 0900-1300 and

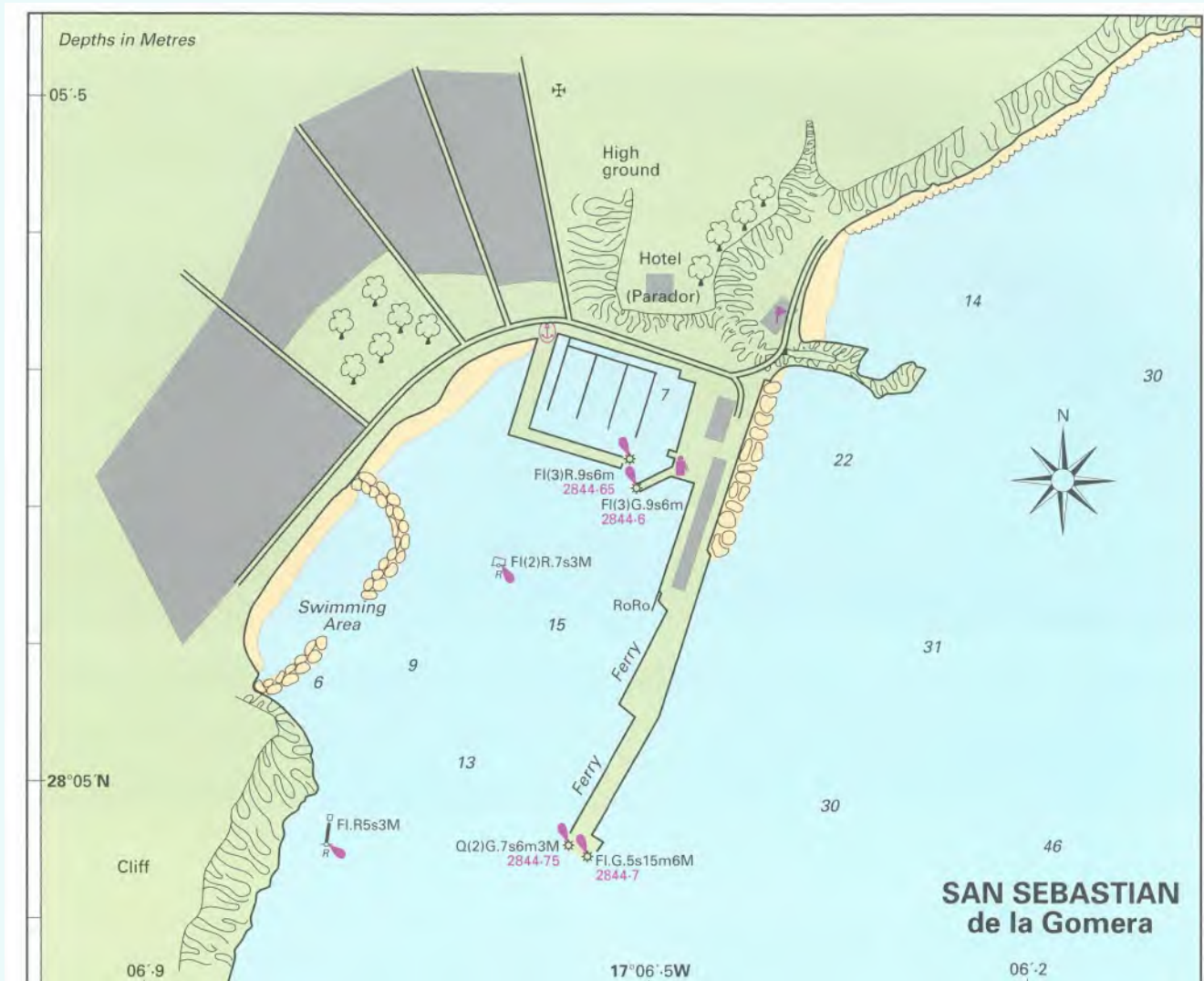
1600-1900 weekdays, 0900-1300 weekends)

General

San Sebastián is the main harbour of La Gomera, with ferries running to Tenerife and El Hierro. Open to the southeast, it is easy to enter by day or night and provides a good base from which to explore the island. The town has strong links with Columbus, whose reputed house is now a museum and art gallery. The town hall (*Ayuntamiento*) was once the home of Columbus' friend (and possibly mistress) Beatriz de Bobadilla, and the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption where Columbus and his crew said Mass before their departure is on the main street, though rebuilt several times since the 15th century.

The marina has earned continuing praise since it opened in 1995-96. 'Absolutely enchanting', 'quite the most pleasant marina in the Canaries' and 'without doubt the most helpful, well-run marina that I have come across in five years of cruising' are among the unsolicited comments received since the previous edition of this book was published. It is also almost unique in the Canaries in being adjacent to a medium-sized town in which local people go about their daily lives – neither a bustling city such as Las Palmas or Santa Cruz, nor a purpose-built

San Sebastian in the evening light, seen from near the large statue of Christ on the hills to the southwest. The outline of El Teide on Tenerife is clearly visible above the marina.



development such as Puerto Calero or Puerto de Mogán. Excellent maps of the town and of the island in general are available from the marina office.

Inevitably it is often full between September and December, October/November being the busiest months, but the marina manager has yet to turn a boat away (even though rafts on the east wall may grow to five or more), and longer term berths can be reserved in advance. One of his problems is the number of crews who check in for a couple of days and end up staying a fortnight!

Approach and entrance

From the northeast the radio mast makes a fine landmark – the lighthouse is less conspicuous and the breakwater and town are concealed by the headland. There are no outlying dangers, though a considerable tide rip can build up around Punta San Cristóbal. From the south or east the town on the north side of the valley can be seen and the breakwater will be raised on close approach. Again there are no outlying dangers and a course can be set to clear the breakwater end. Keep a lookout for the hydrofoil and car ferry and remain well clear if either is entering or leaving. The dog-leg marina

entrance is close west of the breakwater root and well marked by day and night.

The angled entrance to the marina at San Sebastian de la Gomera, with headland and town behind. The white building atop the former is the elegant *Parador Nacional*.





The well-run marina at San Sebastian de la Gomera – an enduring favourite with cruising yachtsmen – seen from the headland to the north.

Berthing

There is normally a member of staff on duty at all times (though English may not be spoken outside office hours) and it is helpful to make contact by VHF or mobile phone before arrival. The reception berth is on the inside of the marina's east mole, rafting up if necessary.

Although listed as containing 260 berths, only 180 or so – most of them reserved for visitors – can take yachts of more than 10m. All the visitors' berths, which are in the western part of the marina, are alongside finger pontoons.

Anchorage

Anchoring in the harbour is not permitted at any time, in case turning ferries are impeded. If waiting for a berth in the marina and unwilling to raft up, good anchorage over sand can be found in most conditions in Playa de la Guancha or beyond – see Anchorages on the Southeast Coast of La Gomera, opposite.

Formalities

Visit the office at the northwest corner of the marina, open 0900-1300 and 1600-1900 weekdays, 0900-1300 weekends, taking the usual ship's papers and passports, *email* mlg@marinaalagomera.com, www.marinalagomera.com, tel 922 141769, *Fax*

922 871362. In November 2003 the marina manager, who had been in the post for several years, was notably helpful and spoke good English.

If leaving the Canaries on departure it is particularly important to get an exit stamp as this will be required on arrival in the next country. Give 24 hours' notice if possible, as the documentation must be taken to the immigration office on the breakwater for stamping (a service carried out by the marina).

Prices are relatively high at around €19 per night including tax for a yacht of 13m LOA, with discounts available for longer stays.

Facilities

Boatyard/travel-lift None as yet, though both are at the planning stage. Meanwhile, Puerto de Santiago (see page 242) is the nearest available. Various individuals advertise their services for painting and general maintenance – consult the marina office.

Engineers Several small workshops around the town, but not a place for major work. Again, consult the marina office.

Electronics Juan Castilla, 922 871751, *Fax* 922 871568, *email* elemacasl@telefonica.net, has been recommended as helpful with general electrical (including computer) problems.

Chandlery Elyman SA on Avenida de Colon, tel/Fax 922 141502, *email* lagomera@elyman.com, stocks a small amount of chandlery in addition to fishing equipment and general hardware. Two other hardware stores on either side of Calle Real stock tools and, surprisingly, marine paints including anti-fouling.

The nearest large chandlery is those in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, and if really desperate the quickest solution might well be to take the express ferry to Los Cristianos and catch the connecting bus to Santa Cruz, a journey of little more than two hours each way.

Water Good drinking water on the pontoons, with hoses provided.

Showers Exceptionally well-kept showers next to the marina office.

Laundry Washing left at the marina office before 0900 will be returned clean, dry and folded in the evening, all for a very reasonable charge.

Electricity On the pontoons.

Fuel Diesel and petrol available at the inner end of the reception berth, open 0830-1300 and 1600-1800 (not very visible, but definitely there).

Bottled gas Camping Gaz exchanges are readily available in the town, including at Elyman SA. Other cylinders can be left at the marina office and will be refilled the same day (other than at weekends when the plant is closed).

Club náutico The *Club Náutico de la Gomera* has premises on the Playa la Cueva close to the root of the main breakwater. Its bar and restaurant are open to visitors, but use of other facilities (including the swimming pool) requires temporary membership.

Weather forecast Posted daily at the harbour office.

Banks Several in the town, apparently all with cash dispensers.

Shops/provisioning Several supermarkets and bakeries. The large HiperTrebor supermarket at the western end of Avenida de Colon carries everything one might need when stocking up for a transatlantic passage, though prices are slightly higher than in Tenerife due to transport costs. It may be possible to get larger orders delivered.

Produce market Combined produce/fish market outside the HiperTrebor supermarket, plus an open air market in the main square on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

Cafes, restaurants & hotels Good selection, including the four-star *Parador Nacional* on the hill above the town.

Medical services Hospital in the town.

Communications

Post office Beyond the church on Calle Real. *Mailing address* Marina la Gomera, 38800 San

Sebastian de la Gomera, Islas Canarias, Spain.

Telephones In the square opposite the marina and elsewhere.

Fax service At the marina office, *Fax* 922 871362.

Email At the Cafe Internet El @mbigù, on the east side of the main square beyond the town hall, and elsewhere.

Car hire/taxis In the ferry terminal on the breakwater, as well as in the town.

Buses Throughout the island.

Ferries Ro-Ro ferries and large hydrofoils from Los Cristianos, sometimes continuing to El Hierro. In addition the smaller *Garajonay Expres* hydrofoil which carries foot passengers from Los Cristianos to Puerto de Santiago and Puerto de Vuelas visits six times daily (see page 151 for contact details).

Air services Interisland flights from the airport near Puerto de Santiago.

Anchorage on the southeast coast of La Gomera

General

There are at least six possible fair-weather anchorages between San Sebastian and Puerto de Santiago – Playa de la Guancha, Playa de El Cabrito, Playa de Oroja, Playa de Suarez, Playa de Chinguarime and Playa del Medio (see plan). All offer some protection from the northeast with good holding in 8m or more over firm sand. However none has much ashore other than dramatic cliffs and dry brown hillsides, though the first two can be reached by road and Playa de El Cabrito (literally 'goat beach') boasts a small landing stage and a few red-roofed houses a short distance inland.

