

# Cueva Pintada Museum, Gáldar

**Cueva Pintada** (painted cave) museum, is a small cave with geometric paintings from the Ancient Guanches, which is unique on the island of Gran Canaria. The **Cueva Pintada** museum is located in Gáldar. Being the ancient settlement of the Gran Canarian Guanche kings, the area was considered to be of great importance by the Spanish.

When the Spanish arrived, they built a new town over Gáldar and the **Cueva Pintada** remained lost until recent history (1862). The **Cueva Pintada** museum, has several rooms which were once used as cave houses by the Guanche people of Gran Canaria. Several walls were built inside the **Cueva Pintada** museum, from basalt or tufa without mortar.

The ancient cave dwelling Guanches didn't have furniture, because they didn't make furniture as we know it today. They had a tradition of carving their furniture into the structure of the rock. The rooms included beds, tables and seats. When the caves at **Cueva Pintada** museum were excavated, people found Guanche mummies, tools, pottery and wall paintings and these give origin to the name, **Cueva Pintada** or "Painted Cave" in English. The wall paintings inside the **Cueva Pintada** museum, are red, black and white and of various different shapes which were probably symbolic. The designs and shapes painted on the walls inside the **Cueva Pintada** museum were probably used to represent female fertility or simply decoration, perhaps they were a form of religious belief or perhaps ceremonial. The caves at **Cueva Pintada** museum were closed for some time because it was discovered that light was bleaching the paintings, there was humidity coming from water seeping through the rock and from body heat and all this slowly destroyed these historically valuable paintings.

After the modernization of the **Cueva Pintada** museum, you can now see that the paintings are covered with a layer of glass to protect them. Inside the **Cueva Pintada** museum, you can take a virtual tour of the caves and with the clever use of display cabinets you can see many of the Guanche objects that were discovered during the excavations of the **Cueva Pintada**.



