

# THE ISLAND OF LANCELOT

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*Lanzarote, Canary*

*Islands.* How, you may ask, did the most famous knight of King Arthur's Round Table, Sir Lancelot du Lac, end up in the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Morocco? Well, he didn't. It was an Italian explorer named after him, Lancelotto Malocello, who became the first European to reach this island in 1336, where he lived for 20 years.

Lancelotto called himself Lanzarote (*lan-zah-roh-tay*), and map-makers used it. The island along with the rest of the Canaries was colonized by Spain throughout the 1400s, and prospered with its volcanic soil. Until, that is, massive volcanic eruptions in the 1730s with over 30 major new volcanoes and over 100 small cinder cones flooded hundreds of square kilometers with lava.

The island became a mostly useless wasteland until a Lanzarotean artistic genius named Cesar Manrique (1919-1992) transformed the lava fields into a surrealistic wonderland. The photo above is one of his many creations, the home Cesar designed and built on a lava cliff for actor Omar Sharif.

Today, visitors flock to Lanzarote to marvel at Manrique's masterpieces scattered over the island, gape at the volcanic moonscape of Timanfaya, and to wine, dine, and luxuriate at gorgeous beach resorts. Come to the Island of Lancelot for an experience like nowhere else, one you'll never forget. (*Glimpses of Our Breathtaking World #284 photo ©Jack Wheeler*)

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