



● **The hotel is celebrating**

50

YEARS OF THEIR EXTENDED FAMILY OF STAFF & CLIENTS



discussed. Hotel Teide, Talg, Tenerife, Turístico, but in the end they decided on Hotel Tigaiga, a name from Guanche legends which had the ring and musicality they were looking for. It is also the name of an area in Los Realejos and, typically of the family, they forged links with their namesake neighbours which continue to this day.

The first guests had to go to the Hotel Martínez for their

meals as the kitchens were not yet finished but as improvement followed improvement the hotel took shape. Sadly Enrique Senior didn't live to see it completed, he died of a heart attack in 1962. His son continued working on the hotel, this impulse for constant improvement is what has kept the establishment at the forefront of the accommodation stakes in Tenerife for the last 50 years and will no doubt continue to do so.

In 1963, an extension for 48 double rooms, eight single rooms and a dining room was built (they now have 76 double rooms and seven junior suites). The following year the mammoth task of building the swimming pool got underway. It sits on the edge of the land and sunbathers sit in front of clear windbreaks looking from the pool to the sea and mountains. It was to make history as Puerto's first heated pool. The sauna in the mini spa, built under the pool also has wonderful views over the town to the sea.

Enrique Talg Wyss married Gisela Reineke from the German town of Paderborn in 1964 and in the fullness of time they had three children Ursula, Irene and Enrique. Since the death of

his father the gardens had gone into decline a little, but Doctor Gisela had an abiding interest in plant life, she had originally planned to study pharmacy. Her green fingers soon became evident and she took over the landscape gardening. By the 1970s the fame of the gardens had spread worldwide and attracted plant loving guests to the hotel. There are more palm trees than there are hotel beds and now there is a leaflet available from reception for residents and non-residents to help them find their way around and enjoy the floral opulence and beauty without special guidance.

On Gisela's death she handed over the task to her daughter Ursula who used her photography skills to produce a popular garden catalogue.

Top Hotels specialist magazine featured the gardens in an international photography competition called The Most Beautiful Hotel Gardens in 1999, where they won 10th place in the world. The surroundings now also benefit from the remodelled Parque de La Sortija in front of the hotel which was finished in 2006 and the 3,300 square metre plot of land belonging to the Hotel Taoro which they look after under an agreement with the island council, Jardines Carolina. It is planted with species native to the islands and there is a special experience offered in the, "tickle walk" (paseo de cosquillas) a reflexology route to provide stimulus to various points on their feet, where visitors are encouraged to walk barefoot over grass, volcanic stones,

wood, pebbles etc.

The family were hotel pioneers from the beginning. They were the first hotel in the Canaries to install a telex machine in 1968 and the first to use solar energy in 1982. A particular joy for Enrique Talg Wyss was to put on a rucksack and march over the trails of the Orotava valley showing his guests the hiking tracks. One of his achievements was in having the 345 bus route extended to the Caldera to facilitate access to the hiking trails and park there. He had a great love for and respect of the Islands and thought of himself as tinerfeño. He was the first hotelier to realise the attraction of the hiking trails for prospective visitors and always strived for them to be kept in good condition and extended. He served as a local councillor, was a member of the Lions, Rotary and Tourist initiative centre and was simply a charming man who took great pleasure in listening to others and to making worthwhile things happen. On his 80th birthday he handed over ownership and management of the hotel to his three children.

**Part II the story of Ursula, Irene and Enrique in the next edition.*

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