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Lifestyle magazine and property portal

ISSUE 72  
NOV 2022

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**inside...**

**South  
Town**

San Pedro del Pinatar

**North  
Town**

Valencia

**Top 10**

Foods To Try In Spain

**Wine  
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by Piscinas Escribano

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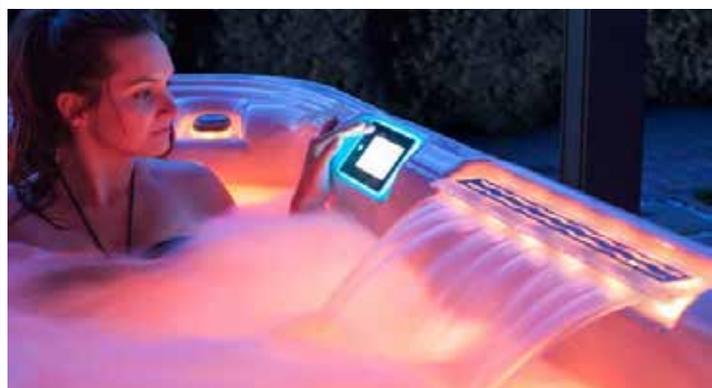
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#Edition 72 • November 2022

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# A Life in SPAIN

## Welcome to the November edition of ALIS.

Summer is definitely over now. Time to get the thermals out!!!

Christmas cheer is in the air and family and friends are planning the Christmas season visits. Get ready for the increased moaning about Ryanair on social media. :)

So what's in this edition....

This month we've gone a bit foodie. there's a great article about the 'Top 10 foods to try in Spain'. well worth a read.

Then on page 27 we have a must read article on the culinary regions of spain and its diverse food history.

Back by popular demand is 'Places To Visit in A Day'. This month we look at Mula and Bullas. Nestled in fields of vineyards, this area is well worth exploring and in my opinion needs far more than one day.

Enjoy this month's magazine

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PER MONTH

# Places To Visit In A Day

## Mula and Bullas

Only 40+ kilometers from Murcia on the very quiet RM15 lies Mula, a great little Spanish town with its imposing 16th century castle overlooking the plains below. The town is full of typical architecture and museums, one of the best of which is the extremely interesting "City of Mula Museum" where you will find everything you need to know about its art, history, culture and customs. Visitors can take a tour from pre-history to the recent history of the city. It is only closed on Tuesdays and is FREE

*A special treat would be to visit the thermal waters of Baños de Mula just outside the town. Indeed it is well sign posted and would be spotted just before Mula on the Motorway. The Parador hotel houses the baths and you can book a small pool for about 6/10 people for your exclusive use. It is a great experience even though it is only very small. You will come out feeling much refreshed. In fact, ready for a gin and tonic in the bar.*

*For traditional food you could do worse than try the Casa Paco which can seat up to 400. For a smaller more intimate experience, just walk around the town centre where you are spoilt for choice of good places to eat or simply have a drink with some tapas.*

*Mula is a great place to start exploring the area and for more information visit the Tourist Information website [www.mula.es](http://www.mula.es)*

*While you are in the area it would be a crying shame not to drive up the road to visit Bullas. A famous wine producing town full of interesting*

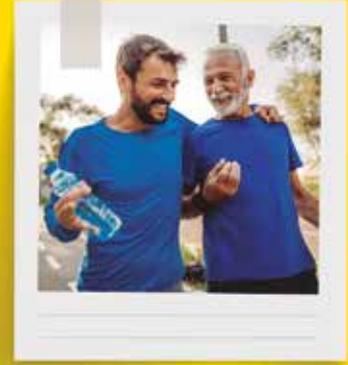
*things to do, not least exploring the varieties of wine that are produced around here. Life in this village revolves around its wine production and a visit to the Wine Museum is a must. There are tours which end in a wine tasting so check for these dates. There are many bodegas you can visit where you can sample before you buy. The predominant grape of the region (80%) is Monastrel which result in some very fine wines to suit all budgets. Some of the wine produced may only be available in local restaurants so try some of them too.*

*For much more information visit the website [www.rvbullas.es/rutadelvino/portfolio/oficina-de-turismo-de-bullas/](http://www.rvbullas.es/rutadelvino/portfolio/oficina-de-turismo-de-bullas/) or simply call in at the tourist office.*

*I hope you have a great day!!*



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**SPAIN 07**

# Let's Learn Spanish

## Shopping

### Phrases

How can I help you?	¿En qué puedo ayudarte?	Enn <b>kay</b> pw- <b>eh</b> -doheye-you- <b>dar</b> -te
How much does this cost?	¿Esto, cuánto cuesta?	<b>Ess</b> -toe, <b>kwan</b> -toek <b>wes</b> -ta
It's too expensive.	Es demasiado caro.	<b>Ess</b> day-mahs-see- <b>ah</b> -doh <b>cah</b> -ro
Do you have something cheaper?	¿Tienes algo más barato?	Tea- <b>yen</b> -aceal-gomahs bah- <b>rah</b> -toe
How much does this weigh?	¿Esto, cuánto pesa?	<b>Ess</b> -toe, <b>kwan</b> -toe <b>pes</b> -sah
Give me half a kilo.	Ponme medio kilo.	<b>Pohn</b> -me <b>mey</b> -dee-oh <b>key</b> -lo
Give me half a dozen	Ponme media docena	<b>Pohn</b> -me <b>mey</b> -dee-yadoh- <b>ther</b> -nah
Anything else?	¿Algo más?	<b>Al</b> -go mahs
No, that's all thank you.	No, eso es todo gracias.	<b>Noess</b> -so <b>estoe</b> -doe <b>grah</b> -see-ass
How much is it altogether?	¿Cuánto es en total?	<b>Kwan</b> -toe <b>es</b> en toe- <b>tal</b>

### Vocab

Fresh	Fresco / a	<b>Frey</b> -ess-ko / <b>frey</b> -ess-ka
Ripe	Maduro / a	<b>Mah</b> -dur-ro / mah- <b>dur</b> -ra
Seasonal	De la temporada	Day lahtem-pour- <b>ra</b> -dah
A discount	Un descuento	Oondes- <b>kwen</b> -toe
A bank note	Un billete	Oonbee- <b>yet</b> -tay
A coin	Una moneda	<b>Oo</b> -nah mon- <b>eh</b> -dah
The change	El cambio	Ell <b>cam</b> -bee-o
A tip	Una propina	<b>Oo</b> -nah pro- <b>pee</b> -nah
A receipt	Un recibo	Oon rey- <b>see</b> -boh
An invoice	Una factura	<b>Oo</b> -nah fak- <b>tur</b> -ra



### Now try our wordsearch:

K E N D N D F R E S H C J Y O U  
C P M T C I S G I B C L O T S E  
B I C O A S T N U U L A B I Z E  
K R H M C C V P L B S N T P N T  
W E O G B O V U I W C O T H U O  
L S N J I U P T Z E V S R B C N  
D P L C O N D E E E C A M L I K  
K A E I Q T U J N Y S E J Z X N  
X L Z Z J X M M E X S S R B K A  
I C H A N G E X B H M H U C X B

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Change  
Ripe  
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South Town...

# SAN PEDRO DEL PINATAR

**San Pedro del Pinatar is at the touristic heart of the Costa Cálida. Situated between the Mar Menor and the Mediterranean Sea, this small seaside town is famous for its fishing background, therapeutic mud baths, salt flats and vast stretches of sand.**



San Pedro Del Pinatar





Located at the northern end of the Mar Menor, it's name comes from a small church the fishermen dedicated to San Pedro in an area of pine trees. With its agricultural and fishing character, still carried on today, this is a great town where history and modern technology meet.

It has busy tourist activity in the summer especially in Lo Pagán, where its mud baths are particularly famous and good for your health. San Pedro del Pinatar continues to be a very popular Spanish holiday destination and the population increases during the summer months as people from Madrid (and other Spaniards) with second homes descend on the area. Lots of free entertainment is provided by the council.

The area is also famous for its salt lagoons where you can see rare birds and flocks of flamingoes going about their daily rituals.

It's history stretches back to the Roman era, from which remains of houses have been discovered and during which the exploitation of the salt flats of Coterillo was begun; salt flats which are still working today. These wetlands were formed with the dunes and the beach of La Llana. This is also the oldest of the Regional national parks of Murcia. It is also a refuge for over one hundred bird species, among which the flamingo is worthy of particular mention.

Besides the park, where it is possible to observe the fauna and flora as well as unique constructions such as the salt mills, it is also worth paying a visit to stately homes such as the Casa del Reloj, which was home to the death of Emilio Castelar, the Palace of Villar de Felices, the Ethnographical Archaeological Museum and the Fish Market.

  
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## Monuments and places of interest

1. Ethnographic Archaeological museum. Calle Dr. Mirón de Castro: Here you will find paleontological fossils, objects, etc. It has an exclusive room for submarine archaeology and another one for the ethnographic type dedicated to the last centuries.
2. Museum of the Sea: marine and marine article collections.
3. Conservation and research center of the Humedales "Las Salinas" (Avda. de las salinas): offering interesting exhibitions on the natural park and the work in the salt mines.
4. "Casa del reloj" or Villa of San Sebastian (Avda. Artero Guirao): an example of modernist architecture. The Spanish president, Emilio Castelar y Ripoll, died here in 1899. Since the end of the 20th century it has been reconstructed and turned into a restaurant. Unfortunately now closed
5. Church of San Pedro Apostle (Plaza de la Constitucion): this is a temple that became a Franciscan hermitage in the 17th century.
6. Palace of counts Villar de Felices or Casa of the Russian (C/ Victor Pradera s/n): building in neomudéjar style constructed in the 19th century by order of Baron de Benifalló.
7. Fish Market in Lo Pagán (Explanada of Lo Pagán): a traditional fish auction can be seen here.
8. The "Salinas y Arenales" natural park.



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# Focus On Fuente Álamo

Fuente Álamo is a town situated in the region of Murcia, it is 22km north west of Cartagena and 35km south of Murcia and lies in the basin of the Mar Menor.

The town is draped in history, founded around the 15th century when it was used for Transhumance (moving livestock) by the shepherds and goat herders from La Mancha.

In 1463 the area was referred as “La Fuente De Álamo”. The first church was built in 1543 and on the 5th of July 1700 Fuente Álamo was granted authenticity from King Charles II to exist as an independent township. On the 20th of July that same year Fuente Álamo first Mayor Gregorio Reylo Hernandez was elected.

Napoleon troops occupied the town in 1823 causing many problems for the towns people.

In 1939 just before the civil war ended, the town was used to house prisoners who were captured when the ship “Castillo de Olite” was sunk in the bay in Cartagena by republican forces. For this service General Francisco Franco awarded Fuente Álamo the title of “Muy noble y muy leal villa” ( Most noble and most loyal town)

Today the town is experiencing a rapid period of growth, both economically and demographically. There is a mixture of modern and traditional Spanish buildings making Fuente Álamo a classy and diverse town.

The Main Street has every type of business you would expect from a bustling town, everything from banks, restaurants, bars, picture framing shop, IT services, opticians, fashion boutiques, electrical shops, and



several large well known supermarkets.

The main places of interest are the Church of San Agustin built in the 16th century, The little shrine of San Roque, Aljibon de Corverica (water well) and Puente Viejo (The old Bridge).

Fuente Álamo is well worth a visit and you will not be disappointed.



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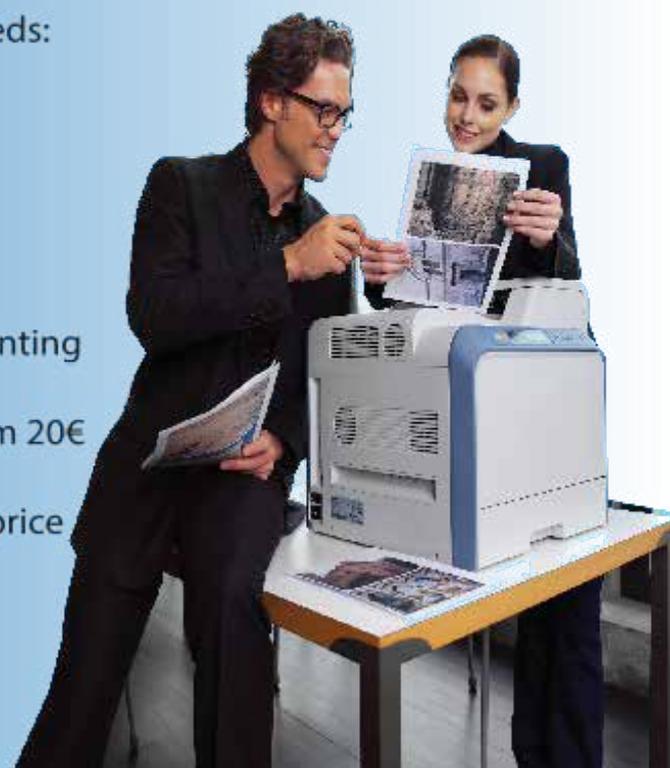
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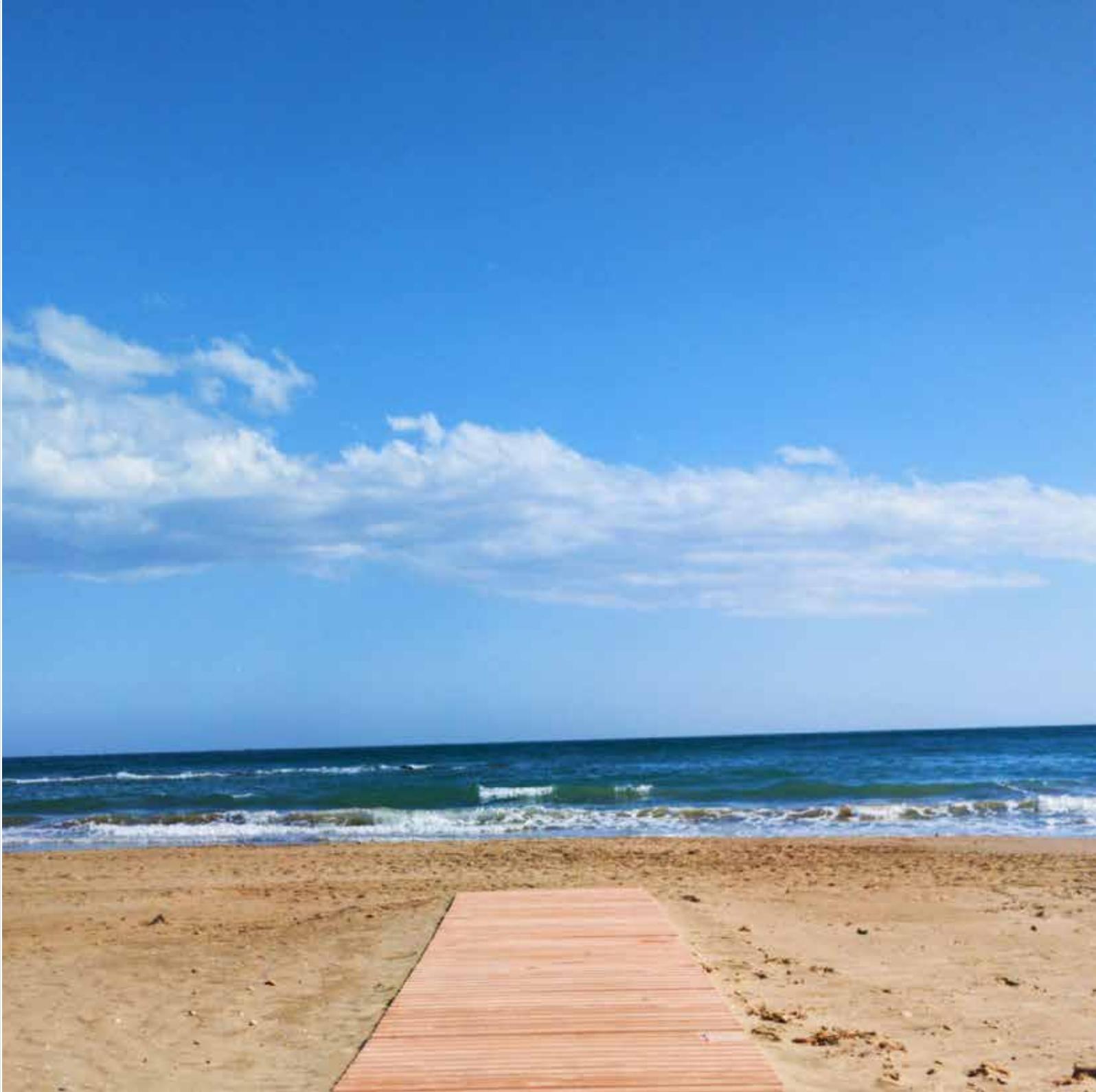
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## Gastronomic Pleasures in Puerto de Mazarrón.

If you take time to compare the menus at eateries throughout Mazarrón, you should be able to identify an emerging theme: fish and tomatoes.

*By Heidi Wardman*

## Fresh Produce

The traditional gastronomy of Mazarrón is primarily linked to its close connections with “la huerta y el mar” or the land and sea. Many agricultural zones of the Murcia Region, including Mazarrón are recognized in other parts of Europe including the UK for their plentiful tomato harvests, accounting for around 14% of the nation’s total tomato exports. It comes as no surprise then, that the juicy red fruits form a staple part of the local diet and principle ingredient in a wealth of dishes. Mazarrón tomatoes are eaten in a number of ways, either raw with salads, soaked in garlic, or as a key flavour in a range of hot dishes.

They are often combined with local catch including grouper or monkfish prepared to Mazarrón tradition; or used to create dishes such as hake fish balls ajo-tomate, featuring a dip made from garlic and tomatoes; or grilled milt with talvina and ajo-colorao sauces, made with tomatoes and paprika. Most good fish restaurants will serve their own take on the mouth watering dishes of bonito fish with noodles, peppers, garlic, sauté tomatoes and aniseed; or Mazarrón sea bass, oven baked with pepper, potatoes, tomatoes, and dressed with pine nuts.

The popular “moragas” of Mazarrón certainly deserves a mention here, an oily dish combining sardines and other fish with olive oil, vinegar and herbs. Cazuela empaná is a type of casserole, which uses Mackerel as its base ingredient, combined with Mazarrón’s prize, ripest tomatoes, onion, pepper, bay, parsley and paprika pepper. Another very popular fish dish that is traditionally eaten during Christmas and Easter celebrations is “Atasca burras”, which is prepared with desalted cod, tomatoes, black peppers and potatoes.

## Homegrown Rice

As in other parts of Spain, rice forms an important part of the staple diet in homes throughout the Murcia Region, where fields of rice paddies are known to produce some of the finest “arroses” in the country. The rice varieties which are grown in Murcia, “Calasparra” and “Bomba”, are very special and known to be the best varieties for the traditional rice dishes that have become so famous throughout the country- something you will note from the price which is typically two or three times what you would normally expect to pay.



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When cooked correctly, Bomba and Calasparra rice have the ability to absorb three times as much liquid as normal long grain rice, remaining extremely flavourful but beautifully al dente. Those living on the coast take advantage of the delicious range of seafood that they have at their fingertips, combining it in sumptuous rice dishes such as specialty rice with clawed lobster, rice with anchovies and the pride of Murcia, “arroz de caldero Murciano”. The locals will assure you that the latter is nothing like the seafood paella served in other parts of the country, although you might be forgiven for confusing the two!

### **Tapas Trail**

Whether you fancy some traditional Spanish fare, an Indian, or comforting kebab on the way home from the pub, Puerto de Mazarrón’s grand selection of eateries will never fail to deliver. The marina and port is home to a plethora of international bars, restaurants and bistros, including a retro American diner, a Chinese buffet and various British and Irish pubs serving all your favourite flavours from back home.

By contrast, the hospitality industry enjoyed in Mazarrón old town is far more traditional, dominated by quaint family run restaurants and traditional Spanish cuisine. The town is the ideal place to tuck into tapas with friends, where you will discover many venues serving a tempting selection of nibbles for a taste of real Spain. During the month of March, Mazarrón Town Hall organizes a “Ruta del Aperitivo” or Tapas Route competition, to coincide with the annual San José fiestas. The contest typically sees up to forty bars and restaurants taking part, who must each devise four signature tapas to be served with a drink for the set price of two euros.

Punters each have a scorecard and have the arduous task of visiting as many participating bars as possible and voting for their favourite tapa. The venue with the most votes is granted recognition by the Town Hall and local media, as well as a cash prize with thanks to the sponsor concerned. The contest has become extremely popular over the years with the international community showing their full support and taking advantage of the opportunity to sample some new Spanish delicacies.

### **Top Eateries**

A Life In Spain has done some gastronomic research to compile a list of some of the top bars and restaurants in Mazarrón town and marina.

Restaurante Amapola- This is a delightful Spanish

restaurant situated just along the coast from the marina on Calle Velero, in Bolnuevo. It is quite accustomed to catering for large numbers, so ideal for group reservations such as business lunches and special occasion dining. They say that if you want a reliable restaurant recommendation then you should always look to the locals first, who will gladly tell you that Restaurante Amapola delivers some of the freshest and finest Mediterranean cuisine in Mazarrón.

Kate from Bolnuevo said that “If we fancy a Spanish evening we always go to Amapola because the food is superb and always well presented. The staff are efficient and well presented, which you don’t always get unless you dine in an expensive establishment. It is not quite as cheap as some of the other basic Spanish eateries in the area but still very good value and worth paying a little bit extra for pleasant surroundings and service. They also host really entertaining music and themed nights which are always well attended and ideal for making new friends as everyone gets up singing and dancing after a few glasses of vino!”

**Fizz Gastro & Bar-** Situated on Calle Antonio Cuello Leon, this is a stylish, contemporary Spanish restaurant, with a friendly atmosphere, wheelchair access and highchairs available on request. They offer a very high quality, value for money Menu of the Day, have a good selection of wine and comprehensive menu of gin cocktails which are guaranteed to liven up your celebration, whatever the occasion. Cassie from Bolnuevo said that “Fizz is one of our favourite venues, because it has a fresh, modern appearance and the food is to die for. It is refreshingly different to find a gastro bar which serves such delicious food, and the prices are unbeatable too!”



You would expect to pay a lot more to dine in a French restaurant, within such a beautiful setting, but this is not the case here. The "Menu del Dia" changes each day and is certainly on a par with others available further away from the beach and in the town." His wife, Linda commented that "The owner is very welcoming and passionate about her business.

She really takes time to get to know her regular diners which is a very nice touch. The portion sizes are sufficient for us, although we have heard other people complaining that there is not enough to satisfy their appetite. So I guess you could say that this an ideal choice for those who enjoy quality food rather than quantity. It is a real gem and certainly worth a visit!"

**El Palenque-** Situated on Avenida Mediterraneo, Puerto de Mazarrón, this popular Argentinean Steakhouse is always a top choice for meat lovers, but also serves a wide range of Italian dishes for those who are not sold on steak. The restaurant was recently refurbished, providing diners with a choice of two stylish dining areas, indoors or out, with wheelchair access to both and highchairs available should you require.

El Palenque is a firm favourite with the Spanish locals, who pack it out every weekend making for a very animated, lively evening. There is ample free parking nearby although the afterhours custom enjoyed here might see you opting to get a taxi home at the end of the night!

Adam from the old town said that "El Palenque is a great compromise for anyone who feels that they should be eating in Spanish restaurants as they live in or are visiting Spain, but just fancies something a bit more substantial than fish or seafood! Unless you have the appetite of a bear, you will not be needing a starter or dessert here as the portions are enormous, and even someone like me who will never be picked for Slimming World's latest ad campaign struggles to finish what's on my plate!" His business partner, Dave, added that "I have never had a bad meal here and come here pretty often.

They definitely serve the best steaks on the coast, and my wife is not a meat eater, but tells me that the pastas and pizzas are always good too, so it's a win, win for us!"

**Elliot's-** Finally, if you are missing all of your favourite winter warmers from back home, Elliot's certainly has something to satisfy your craving. Situated in Bolnuevo, the restaurant offers a varied a la carte menu, serving a variety of steaks, lamb, gammon and chicken dishes. Elliot's is renowned for serving the best fish and chips in town, as well as comforting dishes like cottage pie, fisherman's pie, chicken pie, liver and onions and steak and kidney pudding.

Thomas from Bolnuevo said that "We have been coming here for our Friday night "fish and chip fix" ever since we moved to Spain, and I can honestly say that they are just as good as the ones served in the chippie back home. The food is always fresh and piping hot, and the service pleasant and efficient".

His neighbour, Terry added that "We have dined here on the lunchtime menu on several occasions, as well as a la carte during the evening, and never been disappointed with the choice and quality. The restaurant is always clean and well presented, and it is often difficult to get a table if you do not book in advance, which can only be considered a good sign!"

Teteria restaurant Alhambra - This is a great Moroccan restaurant. Full traditional Moroccan cuisine served whilst overlooking the Mazarrón coast line. The menu is not extensive, but what is served is excellent quality and full of flavour.

The lamb tagine comes highly recommended, with slow cooked shank of lamb, carrots, various fruits and caramelised onion.

If lamb tagine is not your thing then I can personally recommend the Moroccan Grill. This consists of; lamb chops, chicken served with a tasty salad and wedges. With a selection of dips on the side.

A close-up photograph of a young lioness with light brown fur and blue eyes, looking towards the left. The background is a blurred natural setting. The image is part of a promotional graphic with a green background featuring a leaf pattern.

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**The restaurant La Caverna is now under new spanish ownership.**

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There are some dates for your diary.  
WINE TASTING IN ENGLISH on the 24th November with limited availability so reserve your place now.  
Live music in the newly revamped bar area on 3rd, 10th and 17th december.

La Caverna is set to become a very good venue with quality spanish food and wine in a very unique "cave themed restaurant"

The menu is varied and can offer traditional home cooked Tapas and a good choice of meats and fish dishes to suit all tastes.

## Directions:

Heading away from Mazarron. When you reach the main roundabout with the RM2 you go straight across taking the sign for EL Palmar. After several kilometres you will find the restaurant on the right hand side in the village.

Lugar Los ventorrillos 76  
30849, Alhama de Murcia

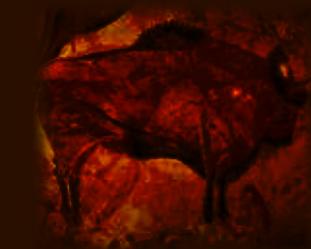


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# TOP 10 foods to try in Spain

Whether you're on a city break in Barcelona or Madrid, or you've plumped for a countryside or coastal retreat, Spanish food is full of flavour and character.

From tasty tapas to superb seafood and traditional roasts, food in Spain is all about making the most of the best local produce. We asked travel writer Annie Bennett to pick 10 of the best dishes to try on your travels.

## Don't leave Spain without trying...

### 1. Gazpacho

The reddest, ripest tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, bread, peppers and cucumber are blended until silky smooth, then chilled and poured into bowls or glasses.

So delicious, so refreshing. In Andalucía in southern Spain, people have it every day in summer and there is always a jug on the counter in tapas bars. Also try salmorejo from Córdoba, a thicker version that is often served with pieces of Ibérico ham on the top.





## 2. Paella

In the Valencia region, they claim you can eat a different rice dish every day of the year, but let's stick with the most traditional version for now.

Ingredients for paella Valenciana include chicken or rabbit, saffron, runner beans and butter beans. But the all-important element is the rice, ideally the bomba or Calasparra varieties grown on Spain's east coast, which are particularly good for absorbing all the flavours.

## 3. Tortilla Española

Eggs, potatoes, onions... that's it –and some purists even consider that adding onion is a gastronomic crime of the highest order.

The Spanish omelette is so much more than the sum of its parts. The potatoes and onions are slow fried in olive oil then mixed with the beaten eggs for the flavours to mix before cooking.

Add chorizo, ham, spinach, courgettes or whatever you have to hand to make a tasty meal out of next to nothing



## 4. Gambas al ajillo

You walk into a tapas bar, the barman is handing a customer an earthenware dish of sizzling prawns, the tantalising aroma hits your nostrils and you just have to order some too.

To recreate it at home, just fry some sliced garlic and green chilli in olive oil, throw in the prawns for a couple of minutes and add some parsley.

Couldn't be simpler, couldn't be tastier



## 5. Tostas de tomate y jamón

Black pigs roam among the holm oak trees in western Spain in search of the acorns that give marbled magenta Ibérico ham its distinctive nutty flavour.

Rub thick pieces of toast with garlic and tomato, pour on some olive oil and top with slices of jamón for a quick, delicious lunch.



## 6. Patatas bravas

Perhaps the most ubiquitous of tapas, patatas bravas vary quite a bit around the country, but all versions involve chunks of fried potato.

In Madrid, bravas sauce is made with sweet and spicy pimentón (Spanish paprika), olive oil, flour and stock –but never tomatoes.

Some people add garlic, some a dash of fino sherry, while others selfishly insist on keeping their secret ingredients to themselves.



## 7. Pollo al ajillo

Any Spaniard will tell you that the best garlic chicken ever is the one their grandmother makes. And of course they are right.

Unpeeled cloves of garlic are fried in olive oil to flavour it, then taken out before adding pieces of chicken. When that's cooked, the garlic goes back in with some rosemary, thyme and some dry sherry or white wine.

But there is no definitive recipe for this much-loved dish



## 8. Cochinillo asado

People might claim they are going to Segovia to see its astounding Roman aqueduct, fairytale castle or elegant cathedral, but really all that is just to build up an appetite for lunch.

And in Segovia that means either roast suckling pig or lamb.

The meat is cooked in huge wood-fired ovens and is so tender it is cut with the side of an earthenware plate



## 9. Pisto

The Spanish version of ratatouille turns up all over the country in different guises, but is most typical in the towns and villages across the plains of La Mancha, south of Madrid.

Onions, garlic, courgettes, peppers and tomatoes are slow fried in olive oil –this is not a dish that likes to be rushed.

It's usually served as a starter, sometimes with fried eggs or chorizo, but is great as a side dish too.

## 10. Turrón

Spaniards devour massive amounts of turrón, or almond nougat, at Christmas, although it's available all year round.

Most of it is made in the small town of Jijona in the province of Alicante, using locally-grown almonds mixed with honey and egg white.

There are two basic types –a soft, smooth version, called Jijona, and hard Alicante turrón, which contains pieces of almond.

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# Let's Talk Oolong Tea.

Oolong tea is pronounced 'Wu-Long'. Predominantly coming from Taiwan and China. Oolong tea is known to be grown at high altitudes. And is a total standalone tea. That is neither Black like Assam, nor Green like Sencha.

Oolong tea leaves are harvested from the camellia sinensis plant. Once they have been picked and dried. The oxidation process is very carefully controlled, by highly skilled tea masters.

Black teas are generally fully oxidised. Giving them there distinctive colour and tastes. Whilst green tea is barley oxidised at all.

Oolong teas will be oxidised from 8 - 85%. This results in the final taste and aroma, on which the tea master is aiming for. And with their knowhow, we finally end up with the delightful Oolongs we love.

After this process the leaves are then curled and twisted. Giving Oolong its unique appearance.

Upon infusion the leaves slowly begin to unravel. Releasing their essential oils and flavour. Amazingly you will find, that from just one teaspoon of dried tea. You'll end up with two or three teaspoons of full leaves.

Oolong flavours are so diverse. They can be simply sweet and delicate, fruity and almost floral. To full on roasted aromas. It is because of this diversity, Oolong tea is such an interesting tea to drink. A light and refreshing tea, to be enjoyed as it is. Without the addition of milk.

As with all teas, they come with different Health benefits. Oolongs are a good a compliment to sensible weight loss. As they can improve metabolism, leading to increasing calorie burning. Oolong is highly regarded for skin health and lustre. Whilst also having a natural form of fluoride.

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**SPAIN29**

A vertical photograph of a narrow street in NorthTown, Valencia, Spain. The street is lined with multi-story buildings featuring ornate wrought-iron balconies. A street lamp is visible on the right side of the street. The overall scene is a typical urban setting in a historic Spanish city.

NorthTown...

# VALENCIA

Valencia, a large city on Spain's eastern coast is well known amongst holidaymakers and expats as an under rated place. For decades, UK visitors to Spain's Costas only ever holidayed in the typical "bucket and spade" resorts up and down this wonderful region, however an increasing number of people are starting to discover Spain's cities and what they can offer too.



Valencia

Spain is a big place, far bigger than old Blighty, and it's sometimes easy to forget that there is so much to see and do in this vast and diverse country and one reason why us Brits can't get enough of the place. Valencia is but one area and is in some ways, just like any other metropolitan area in Europe, with wide (and traffic clogged roads) and the people themselves, the characters that make up the place, scurrying about on their daily business in the shadow of huge high rise blocks of apartments.

Valencia has a mix of old and new buildings, giving it a real special feel of it's own. From medieval castles and towers, to modernist and art deco architecture, and of course a glut of massive shopping centres and plenty of places to eat and drink too of course!

Visiting a city in Spain, as opposed to a resort, allows a glimpse into the real working day of the people and of real life, away from the the normal sights and sounds of a resort vacation in Spain.

A lot of people don't realise just how big the city is and what is on offer here. For example, did you know it has a tube train system like a smaller version of the London Underground?

Or do you realise that the holy grail, the cup that Jesus was supposed to have drank from at the last supper, is kept in the cathedral in central Valencia?

The city is jam packed full of culture and history, stuff you really want to stick around for, and explore the old lanes and streets as well as the wide tree-lined shopping areas of this truly awesome city!

One of the Plazas worth seeing is the Plaza del Reina, or "Queen's place" in English, located in the old town area and a magnet for more or less each and every tourist that comes here.

It's a great place to hang out, with plenty of places to eat too, however be warned that you will pay top tourist prices here. Eat where the Spanish eat, that's best, but armed with a good and detailed map so you can find these obscure places, although in this area you have to be really "in the know" to find a good paella.

One of the cities more controversial claims to fame is that it has what is supposed to be the Holy Grail, the actual cup that Jesus drank from at the last supper, although that claim is also upheld by several other places around the world too.

The cathedral is a lovely old place and well worth visiting, however the grail is one of the must-see attractions for those of a religious following. The authors David Rhead and Jose Marin looked in great detail at the story of the cup and suggested that the cup had travelled from Rome centuries ago, however when the Muslim rulers took over Spain, it was put into hiding for centuries and only returned to the city in 1427 by the gloriously named King Alfonso the magnanimous!

Whilst the prospect of wandering around a food market is not everybody's first choice of what to do whilst on holiday, the historic market in central Valencia is a bit different and is actually well worth visiting.

No chance of a White Christmas here, but hey - you can enjoy Christmas in relative warmth. Valencia gets very pretty over Christmas: lots of gorgeous illuminations and lots of energy in the streets. The main area to see the Christmas setting is of course the centre of Valencia, especially all the landmarks such as Plaza de la Reina and Plaza de Ayuntamiento. Plaza de la Reina will host the Christmas crafts market - good for souvenirs and local delicacies. Plaza de Ayuntamiento will host the main Nativity Scene - those compositions will be throughout the city over Christmas.

Christmas in Valencia is an outdoor affair. Christmas markets pop up in the city's squares, streets and market buildings to offer tourist and locals alike everything from toys and Christmas decorations to handcrafted products such as pottery and glassware.

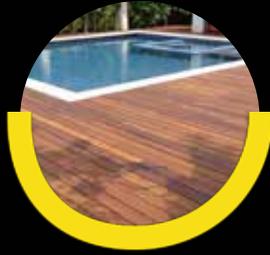
The most famous Christmas market is the one located around the Central Market, with more than 60 stalls selling an exciting range of items from 1 December to 6 January. Then there's the Mercado de Reyes (the Kings' Market), one of the biggest with close to 250 stalls, which takes up residence in the streets surrounding Cabanyal Market from 3 to 6 January.

You'll be able to find a range of hand crafted products at the ARTEVAL Craft Fair in Plaza de la Reina, next to the Cathedral, while the impressive Colón Market building will be hosting a range of Christmas stalls and activities throughout the festive season, including carol singing from 30 November to 6 January and the PROA Craft Fair from 13 December to 6 January.

The City of Arts and Sciences will also be hosting a Christmas market



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For example, if you own a second home and are concerned about being an ideal target for squatters, LIBERTY SEGUROS offers a complete legal defence guaranty, covering up to 6.100€ in legal costs for Illegal Occupation proceedings.

Owning a rental property has additional worries, such as tenant vandalism that can lead to complex and expensive legal proceedings. For this reason, LIBERTY SEGUROS offers a guaranty of up to 3.000€ to cover acts of vandalism by the tenant. Surveillance can also be provided for up to 72 hours for a home that has been left unprotected after a robbery. This allows landlords peace of mind to enjoy profitable rental incomes without added worries.

LIBERTY SEGUROS also knows how much gardens and terraces mean to homeowners. For this reason, it offers cover for garden furniture of 12.000€ to help protect treasured outdoor spaces.

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and policy holders can increase their money in cash cover at home too.

It's also worth noting that LIBERTY SEGUROS's new home appliance repair cover includes 2 services per year up to 300€ – including parts. The maintenance of air-conditioning filters is also covered to include filter cleaning twice a year. In this manner, the units can continue to work just as they should, at the same time as helping occupants to avoid the health issues associated with their usage.

And that's not all! As another example, refrigerated goods (which are not usually covered in the case of tripped fuses) are included in home policies with LIBERTY SEGUROS, offering 150€ towards lost food and medicines. This comes as standard.

LIBERTY SEGUROS really does have you covered and always has your real needs in mind!

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## Bierzo: a great new brand

It is undeniable, El Bierzo wines are fashionable. The mencias rub elbows with the most prestigious strains of Spain and the godellos break into the panorama of the whites with unusual force. Without a doubt, we are in fashion. El Bierzo and its landscape, its history, its Camino de Santiago, its monumental palatial, monacal and military heritage. All this, today is a must in tourism. There is no longer a restaurant worth its salt, a sommelier with a professional level or a sensitive consumer who does not know the sensory records of the Mencía red grape and the Godello white variety.

Another example of the success and quality of DO Bierzo wines is the article published on the website of the Peñín Guide, one of the most prestigious guides in the sector nationwide, and titled Bierzo, walking in the right direction. "Bierzo is unique not only for its mencia wines, but also for the marked Atlantic character of its red wines. Closer to the Atlantic freshness than the continental strength of other of its Castilian-Leonese neighbours," or so they say. For his part, Carlos González, director of the guide did not hesitate to ensure that "Bierzo knew how to make the leap with mastery of the most massive elaborations to the most selective and linked productions, really, to the concept plot and vineyard". The wines of El Bierzo are a great new brand. Justice has been done.

Mencia is undoubtedly a different strain, which transfers different aromatic series, structure and different sensory records to the glass. Years ago, among the wines clearly accentuated by the personality of the Mencía, strengthened by a criterion in the aging in wood that far from masking the grapes, contributes to prolonging their life and reaching a magnificent balance. Today the Mencía variety grown in the Bierzo obtains magnificent results between prescribers and specialized critics. Thus, the 100% elaborated red wines have achieved high scores. Undoubtedly, the Mencía is in fashion, but a fashion that is limited to the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula and that is its true value: differentiation. Standing out in a world of tempranillos, garnachas, monastresles and cabernets demonstrating a defined personality in the wines. But not all are the same. It depends on the age, on your ability to age and, fundamentally, on the soil,

which gives the wine its unique mineral features and nuances, as is the case with the vineyards located on well oriented slopes in the Bercianpot.

Godello, which is the white grape is queen to Bierzo wines. It is part of the genetic heritage of Spanish viticulture and in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula has its small taifa kingdoms scattered around the slopes of its valleys and mountains. But something we have very clear is that the Godello grape strains that we grow in El Bierzo develop their vegetative cycle in a special microclimate, in the environment of a gigantic pot that wine literature has called the northwest volcano. And that is where the true potential of Godello white grape is. Which has demonstrated its primary virtues by rescuing aromatic series in young wines and excellent white behavior whose fermentation and aging criteria have doubled Godello's sensory records. Today we could not understand a tasting panel without those notes of greenfruit, without those bitter and pleasant backgrounds, without that persistence of the white of the northwest. In El Bierzo we bet on the Godello, we believe in its qualities and we know its quality. Therefore, we will continue developing new vintages with the white of the Spanish north-west.



# Wine of the month

## Gotín del Risc

**Grape variety: Mencia 100%, DO Bierzo**

**Fermentation in stainless steel conical tanks with a controlled temperature for 10 days and for a total of 20 days maceration. Then aged in French oak barrels from the Burgundy region, with the close monitoring and supervision of the technical department. When the wine is at its optimum bottling, the total duration of the breeding has reached 9 months.**

Production Area: Valtuille de Arriba Average

Age: 50 Years Soil Composition: Stony presence of slates, quartzites and other minerals

Altitude: 550 meters

The sharp fruitiness character lets it show all the qualities and characteristics of the Mencia variety. Its barrel aging, complete these qualities, bringing subtlety and elegance. Its entry on the palate is silky, fruity, persistent and very friendly.

### Pairing:

Suitable to drink with starters like aperitif wine, really nice to take with some grilled vegetable, smoked salmon with fresh cheese, or cesar chicken salad. A really fresh drinkable medium body red wine.



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# Spanish Walks

Spain has some of the most diverse countryside in Europe. With spectacular mountain ranges and vast open spaces.

We have discovered some excellent walks and over the next few months we will help you to discover them as well. Good luck and enjoy.

## Barranco de Gebas

The moon landscape in Gebas is unique within the Murcia region, undulating cultivation areas and steep slopes of light chalk. The play of sunlight on the erratic forms of this area makes this walk something special.

The walk leaves at the Mirador Barranco de Gebas viewpoint and goes by a unpaved road winding through this half desert. In the end you reach the reservoir of Algeciras, where you have a fantastic view of this unique area. You go back to the starting point via the same route.

**Distance:** 9 km

**Duration:** 3h

**Grade:** Moderate

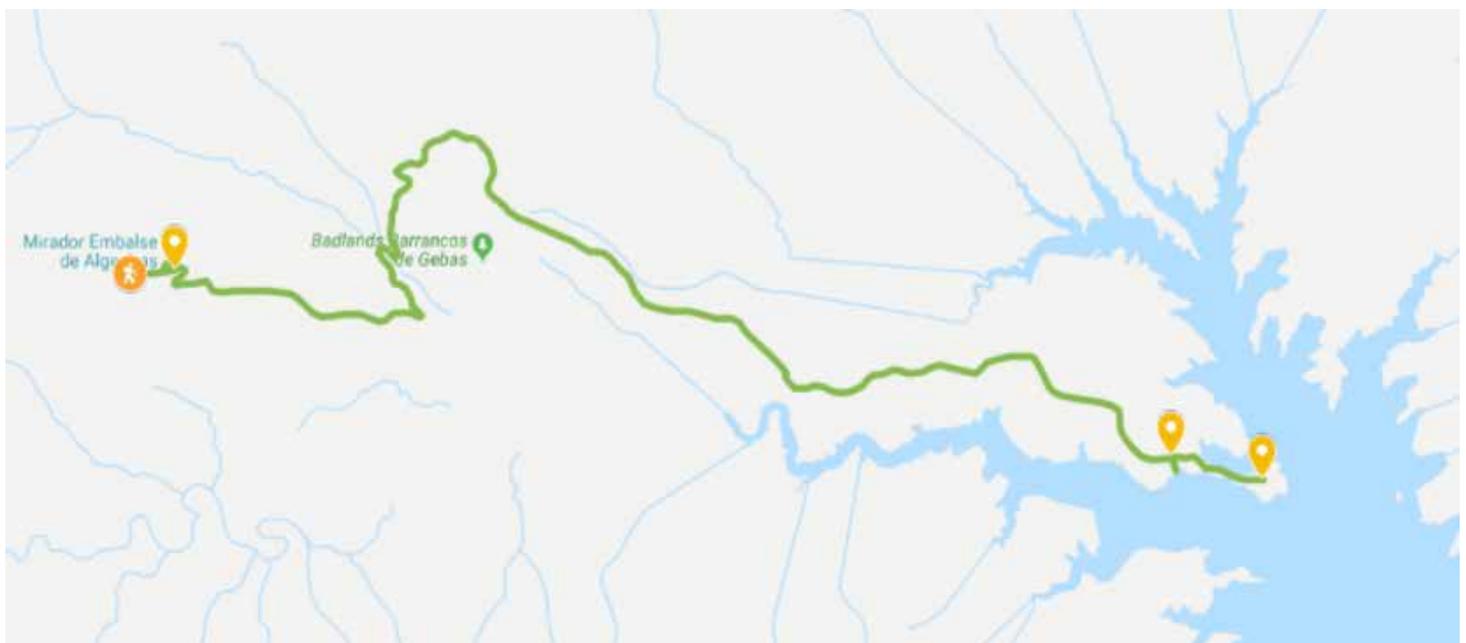
**Type:** Back and forth

**Height gain:** 371 meters

**Way mark:** None

**Wheelchair:** Not suitable

**Dog:** Allowed on a lead





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# How to select a hard floor finish in Spain

## Marble and limestone.

Marble is a limestone very hard and dense, but with a low resistance to acids, fats and abrasives products that easily may damage its surface. Their appearance varies depending on the diversity of substances and impurities that make it up. There are white, black, green, red, etc. To differentiate them, it is common for industry to highlight the colour and place of origin of the stone such as white Carrara or green Alps coatings are some of them.

Travertine and the comblachien and the very popular Crema Marfil are limestone. Its appearance is very similar to the marble, but its properties are different. The first is a compact limestone. The most common colours of travertine are dark beige and reddish brown. It is used both inside and outside buildings. Its uses and qualities are comparable to the marble, but the decorative effect that is achieved is less bright.

On the other hand, the comblachien, in grey with pink areolas, more resistant than ordinary marble but when polished, it becomes very slippery, especially when wet.

## Sandstone.

Sandstone is a sedimentary rock grey or pale beige colour which is composed mostly of silicon sand. Mostly used in indoor applications, in slab format, while the outdoor is used in large blocks of rock to mark traffic areas or walkways. It is a less slippery stones, its appearance remains almost matt although it is polished, now days wax is used to finally bring up a shiny finish.

## Slates.

Slate is one of the most traditional natural stone finishes. It has a very fine grain mostly used in north Spain; it is a bluish black, rock although there are varieties in other colours such as green and red. The majority are used for covering floors and roofs. Inside of homes, it is common to find it on the floors and walls of bathrooms and kitchens. Slate, the most common finishes are natural and polished, are very wear-resistant and has a high waterproof capacity thanks to its low porosity when it comes into contact with water and other liquids that may it cause to stain. However, its main fault is that it may be scratched easily. Slate and granite share the same characteristics, but the latter has a different range of colours. It is possible to find it in gray, pink, red or black.





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## Granites.

### Advantages:

Are made up of hard materials, they are very resistant to shock and wear, and are therefore very durable. They support very well moisture and cleaning products, so it has a low maintenance cost. In general they are homogenous and have low porosity, although some types can acquire porosity over time and require special polishing treatment. There is a wide range of prices.

### Disadvantages:

They are cold and hard to tread and needing to be polished sooner or later to recover its initial splendour.

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# Segovia, Avila, Mojacar and “Our Robbie”

By **Taquilla Tickets**

Well, Hello everyone !!

We hope that you are all well and now recovered from, what was, an amazing Summer !! So, what have we got planned for you now?

On the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of November, we are taking you to the gorgeous cities of Segovia and Avila in the autonomous community of Castile and Leon. Located North of Madrid, these two beautiful cities are a “step back in time”. The stunning Roman Aqueduct in Segovia is a “sight for sore eyes”. 167 complete arches make up this Aqueduct and were still in use up until 1973. Yet another UNESCO World Heritage site in Spain !!

Thought to have been built during the reigns of Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan in the 1st century AD, it is held together by the forces of nature and NO MORTAR !! A truly beautiful sight. You can visit the: Segovia City Walls, The magnificent Cathedral, The Museum, The Esteban Vicente Museum of Contemporary Art, The Church of La Vera Cruz, AND The Real Casa de Moneda (The Royal Mint). The Royal Mint was founded by Philip II and is the oldest example of industrial architecture in Spain.

Avila is another of Spain’s walled cities, and is also a “World Heritage City”. The walls of Avila can be seen from a long way off. 1,700 meters of the walls are open to the public. Views of the Plaza de Mercado Grande and the surrounding countryside are simply beautiful. Ávila is a tranquil city that invites you to enjoy quiet moments. For example, the sunset from the Cuatro Postes viewing point. This spot is outside the walls, and if you’re there at twilight, you’ll see the floodlit walls against the darkness.

So, come and join us and see just a little more of this beautiful country.

On the 30th of November, we are, once again, visiting the beautiful seaside town and Pueblo of Mojacar! The Pueblo, with its quirky little streets, small but lovely shops, and restaurants galore, is so loved by our guests, it is they who keep asking us to go back. While you keep saying this, we will continue to listen and react (numbers permitting). After a visit to the Pueblo, we will take you down to the “Playa” where you can walk on the sand if you want to or just sit with a drink, or maybe have some lunch in one of the

many bars and restaurants that are available. This is a “crackin day out!!”

Now ladies and gentlemen let us bring you up to date with two concerts that we are taking our guests in March 2023. The first of these is Andre Rieu. We will see him again by popular demand on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of March. We had such a fantastic time in Madrid and we are going to do it all again !! What a showman, what an orchestra, and what guests !! The last time we saw him, we took three coaches. Can we beat that for Andre ?

Our next concert is in Barcelona, and we are going to see the multi-talented, award-winning Robbie Williams on the 24th, 25th, and 26th. What can you say about “Our Robbie”? Well, we are going to give it a go here:

Robbie Peter Williams was born in February 1974 in Stoke-on-Trent. From 1990 - 1995 Robbie was a member of the fabulous “Take That”. It is reported that Robbie left “Take That” because of disagreements with the management company. However, it has been reported that he is the most successful solo artist that the UK has produced, and has sold over 77 million records worldwide, NOT BAD EH?

Robbie and his wife, Ayda, have four children: Theodora, Charlton, Colette, and Beau. His debut album, Life thru a Lens, was released in 1997, and his now signature song, “Angels”, was on the album. “Millenium” and “She’s the One” appeared on future albums. Robbie is a showman through and through, and his talent is now legendary. So, come and join us to see two world-famous artists performing here in Spain. Andre Rieu and Robbie Williams !! Just imagine them working together, now there’s a thought !!!!! Don’t forget, both Andre and Robbie are appearing in March 2023 !!!!

You can contact us on Facebook, Whatsapp, or Text Message, or why not pop into our office inside “Sparkles” on Condado de Alhama or “Cat’s Bar on Camposol A ? Easy Peasy !! We look forward to hearing from you.

**For more details call:  
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# Top 10 Destinations in Southern Spain

## 1. Granada

**This city at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains was founded as a Celtic settlement and has been inhabited for over 2500 years. Its breathtaking location near mountains is one of the loveliest in Andalusia. Granada's most famous attraction is the fortress/palace complex known as Alhambra, which was a Moorish palace for the emirs when the city was under Islamic rule. The adjacent Muslim neighborhood and many other cathedrals and castles are also worth the trip while here. Tapas and flamenco lovers will find that both are easy to find and quite excellent.**

At the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains, between the rivers Darro and Genil, lies one of the most interesting cities in eastern Andalusia. As well as its impressive Al-Andalus heritage, there are Renaissance architectural gems and the most modern facilities, fit for the 21st century.

Granada has an unmistakably Moorish flavour, as it was the last city to be reconquered by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492. The gastronomy, craftwork and urban planning are influenced by its glorious past.

Fountains, viewpoints and "Cármenes", houses surrounded by typical gardens of this city, create unforgettable corners in the city. It is no surprise that one of its historic districts, Albaicín, is a World Heritage Site, together with the Alhambra and Generalife.

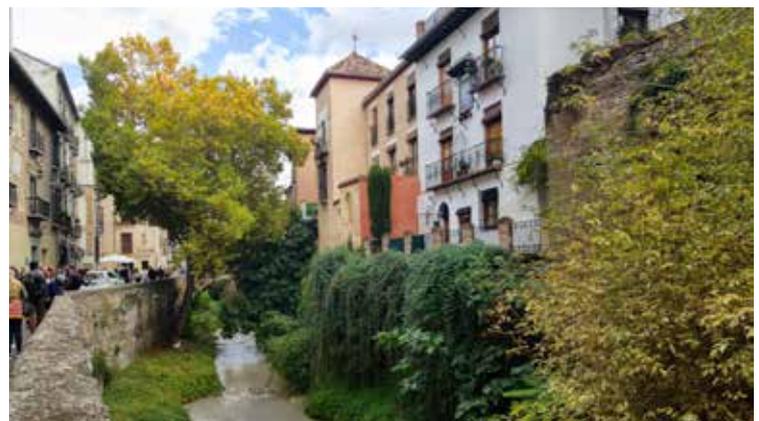
It was an important cultural centre for many centuries, under both Islamic and Christian rulers, and still boasts an admirable array of culture and leisure activities. Film, music or theatre festivals are complemented with permanent or travelling exhibitions on all fields of knowledge. Renaissance palaces are home to seminars, conferences and lectures, while the most innovative infrastructure is ready for larger-scale events.

The main attraction has to be the Alhambra Palace

The splendour of the Nasrid era, The Alhambra is a beautiful complex of buildings and gardens. Its leafy tree-lined walkways provide pleasant shade and coolness, enhanced by the abundance of water that flows in its streams.

It was the largest political and aristocratic centre of the Moslem West. The Palace premises comprise beautiful rectangular courtyards and numerous fountains, as well as the Nasrid buildings that served as living quarters for the monarchs and their servants.

The oldest building is the Alcazaba citadel. One of the most important structures is the La Vela tower, which offers one of the loveliest views of the Alhambra. The courtyard of the Lions with its fountains is one of the most beautiful in the compound.



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### What to visit

The Alhambra Museum

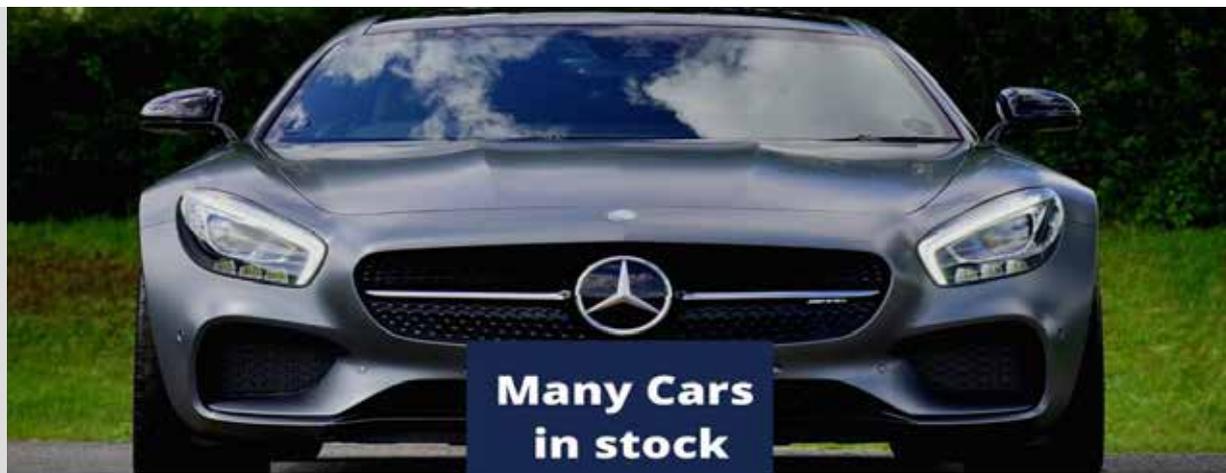
Granada Cathedral

The Alhambra

La Cartuja Monastery

Granada Science Park Museum

The Generalife



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# The Journey - Vintage Pilgrim by Carol Hughes, owner of Legs & Co.

## 6th Feb

What a day!

There is a washing machine in the kitchen I am going to try it out. OoooH! bubbles everywhere soap suds are coming from everywhere, panic! I'm starting to think it already had detergent in and possibly not the right sort, hey ho, clothes will be clean. Charlie is just stood watching I think he thinks we have lost the plot!

My charming hubby decided to help me with the washing! He followed me outside into the yard wash basket in hand and shut door behind him ..... Good..... No! the door opens from the inside! Idiot! He knew what he had done straight away his face was a picture. I just stood there open mouth; it was one of those things you know what you have done the min you have done it.

Now what keys inside, no phone, no car keys in the middle of nowhere, metal grills to the window (yes, the house is very secure) and big old wooden door. Well, after a few mins panic hubby decided he will have to break the door. So, 30 mins later with a brick in hand he has managed to break a panel and reach up inside to the door handle to open the door. The joiner is coming tomorrow to fix the door! And I have one very apologetic hubby, I will get at least a week out of this..... we definitely need a spare key.

Ok, so where do you get keys cut? They don't do them at the supermarket. Social media to the rescue. Seemingly you get them cut at a ferreteria which is a hardware store, not a shop that sells ferrets! Now just to find one. Spoke to Peter from InsureSpain. He has proved to be a god send, he has given us loads of contacts and advise, he sorted

all our insurances, Health Insurance, car insurance and home insurance. I highly recommend him you will find him at [www.insurespain.com](http://www.insurespain.com) he told us to go to BigMat, bingo there is a counter inside for cutting keys.

I am not feeling very well I have had a cough since before Christmas following a bout of flu, I really need to go to the chemist. Great they don't speak any English and my Spanish is very limited so google translate to the rescue. After a lot of misunderstandings, she has given me two lots of medication. So, I am off back to our freezing house to take them, once I work out the instructions! The instructions are all in Spanish, google translate to the rescue again every word typed into translator ..... Guess what? you can take a picture of the writing and Google translate will translate it for you, who knew? ..... no, me neither found that at weeks later! Duh.

## 7th Feb

Think we may have woodworm in the bathroom door and one of the bedroom doors, Yuck, need to get a specialist in to have a look and treat it if necessary. I have spoken with a guy on the phone and he has asked if I can take some pictures and send them to him. Sent him a pic of my husband. He rang back laughing and said "that's one handsome worm!

But can I have pictures of the door frame also." Ok so he has replied it is termites not wood worm. He is sending me some info over regarding them. Horrible little things they come up from the ground, the adults lay eggs. Then the larvae which look like little maggots set about just leisurely eating their way through your house, seemingly a lot of houses in Spain have them they are subterranean termites.

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# Arrived!!!

Pepe the Joiner has been and fixed the door, he is also giving us a quote to replace the internal doors and frames also treating new doors, so they don't get eaten by termites.

Swear my hubby is trying to kill me, he really has lost the plot. He has just made me a cup of coffee .....ahh lovely.... Not so he has used comfort instead of milk !!! how?!! How can you confuse Milk and comfort the only similarity is the colour?

## 8th Feb

I have a Money jar, ok had a money jar hubby just broke it!!!! Bet he was trying to steal it! Muppet.



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