

VALENCIA CITY GUIDE - THINGS TO SEE AND DO



See inside for details about getting around, sightseeing, shopping, nightlife and more

Welcome to Valencia

Spain's third-largest city is a magnificent place, content for Madrid and Barcelona to grab the headlines while it gets on with being a wonderfully liveable city with thriving cultural, eating and nightlife scenes.

Never afraid to innovate, Valencia diverted its flood-prone river to the outskirts and converted the former riverbed into a glorious green ribbon of park winding right through the city. On it are the strikingly futuristic buildings of the Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias, designed by local boy Santiago Calatrava.

Other brilliant contemporary buildings grace the city, which also has a fistful of fabulous Modernista buildings, great museums, a long stretch of beach and a large, characterful old quarter.

Valencia, surrounded by its huerta, a fertile zone of market gardens, is famous as the home of rice dishes such as paella, but its buzzy dining scene offers plenty more besides; it's a superb spot for eating.

Getting around

Walking

If you have some time on your hands, there's no better way to get around Valencia than by walking. It will give you the opportunity to really take in your surroundings. You can take a walk around the old town or even head down the reconstructed river bed to the City of Art and Sciences and the beach. Valencia is a relatively small city, so if you have the time, make the most of your break and take a relaxing stroll



Buses

Taking buses around Valencia will offer you the opportunity to get around the city whilst seeing the sights as you travel.

It is important to remember that when you are taking the bus you will need to be reasonably independent - you will not necessarily know when you need to get off the bus so it can be more intimidating than catching the metro.



The Metro system (underground / subway system)

Valencia's underground system is one of the quickest and easiest ways to get around the city. It is a comfortable way to travel in the summer as there is air conditioning in the carriages.

There will be parts of Valencia that you cannot reach by metro. For these occasions there is generally a tram that takes its place. If you buy one of Valencia's combined ticket options that also cover buses and the metro, you will also be able to travel on the trams.



Taxi

Throughout Valencia you will see taxis that you can hail to take you quickly and conveniently around the city. This is more expensive than using public transport. However, it is a useful way to get to your destination in a city that you don't know well.

If you would like to book a taxi in advance, you can do this by calling up one of the taxi companies that are available in Valencia.



The Valencia tourist bus

If you are only staying in Valencia for a day or two, the 'hop on hop off' tourist bus can be a fun and convenient way to see the important tourist spots in the city.

You can treat it as a full tour and do the whole route in one go. Or you can use it like a normal means of transport, going to places that you would like to visit, getting off the bus, and then getting back on the next one when it comes along.

Shopping in Valencia

If you like shopping, you'll have a great time in València. You'll find the main international brands in the shops, as well as creations of young designers, artisans and the best vintage clothes.

The historic centre is the shopping area par excellence. Culture, modernity, tradition and fashion coexist in the streets of **Colón, Poeta Querol, Don Juan de Austria, Jorge Juan, Cirilo Amorós, La Paz** and others nearby.



If you are looking for something more alternative, you should take a stroll through the areas of **el Carmen** and **Ruzafa** to discover their small shops and workshops. In el Carmen we recommend the **Tapinería Market**, a creative, commercial and culinary space with temporary flea markets.

If what you want is an artisanal souvenir or typical Valencian products to take home, the ceramic and hand-made lace stands at the **Plaza Redonda** are perfect. And if it coincides with your visit, from 2nd May until Corpus Christi, there is a traditional market called **L'Escuraeta** that takes place in **Plaza de la Reina**, near the cathedral.



Shopping Centres: In Valencia city centre you will find some smaller shopping malls. The most popular and traditionally Spanish of these are **El Corte Inglés** (department stores) and FNAC (for books, CDs, DVDs and electrical goods).

Further outside of Valencia's city centre (around the old town), you will find the larger shopping centres.

Trading times in València.

Generally, shops are open from 10am until 9pm from Monday to Saturday. Although in central and touristic areas, some places open on Sundays with a shorter timetable; they normally open at around 11 or 12 o'clock in the morning.

Sales in València.

Winter season sales: from 7th January until the end of February.

Summer season sales: from 1st July until 31st August.

Buying Tax Free in València.

Now we have left the European Union you can request a tax return of the purchases made in Spain. If you spend more than €90.16 in TAX FREE establishments, remember to ask for the PLANET PAYMENT or GLOBAL BLUE cheque at the shop. **To request a refund you can go to the Tourist Information Office located on Calle de la Paz.**

Valencia Beaches

The closest beaches in Valencia are just 10-20 minutes from the centre, making it easy for visitors to stay close to the city yet get to the beach with no stress. If you're looking for a more secluded beach, the region has plenty of options, both North and South of the city. Here are a few to look out for.



The most popular beach in Valencia that attracts the most visitors is the one that is nearest to the city, **La Malvarrosa**.

The beach offers plenty of space and all the main facilities. There is a large promenade lined with palm trees and plenty of restaurants and bars, serving excellent local dishes like Paella or Fideuà.

La Malvarrosa beach is split into three main areas, which are the **Malvarrosa, Las Arenas and Patacona beaches**, all of which are clean and family-friendly.



Port Saplaya beach.

This beach is quiet but has great facilities as many Valencianos actually live here. Port Saplaya is a colourful building complex right at the beach, just seven kilometres north of Valencia city.

It emerged from an old seaport area which used to be used for the exportation of the famous chufa or tiger nuts that are grown in the area.

Today Port Saplaya is a residential area with a marina. The beachfront boasts some very nice places to have a drink, or a cold glass of Horchata, which in the UK would translate to something like 'Tiger nut milk'.



Sagunto beach.

The beach of Sagunto is a bit further out of the city. It is about 25 miles from the centre of Valencia, but is well worth a visit as Sagunto is an ancient Roman settlement and is divided into the town of Sagunto itself and the beach area, which is quite busy in the summer and stretches for about a mile and a half.

The town itself is worth a look around, especially in the main square and the Roman remains of which there are many, including the ancient Roman amphitheatre of Sagunto.

Valencia Nightlife

By night, Valencia is a vibrant city - there is a city centre full to the brim with vibrant nightlife, but if you are only in town for a few days, there is one place that you have to head to a night out - the old town.

The area that is called **El Carmen** is renowned for being a place to head for bars, clubs and restaurants. Once night falls head to the streets behind the cathedral and you will find squares and streets packed with revellers. **Plaza de la Virgen** is a good place to start - make your way down streets like **Calle Caballeros**, and you will find a wealth of places to go eating and drinking.

If you are looking for a slightly more chic night out, you could head to the **marina and beach area** in Valencia. You will find some big clubs in this area. You will also find lots of seafood restaurants and cocktail bars that look out onto the water.

Clubbing - Valencia is Spain's third-largest city, ensuring that it has a wide range of clubs on offer. Whether you want to go to a night club during the week or at the weekend, there will be something to suit your tastes

El Carmen is famous for being one of Valencia's busiest neighbourhoods in the central Old Town district. The area is full of cafés, bars and restaurants tucked away in El Carmen's little streets or small squares. It can be difficult knowing which restaurant to pick for a quick lunch or a romantic dinner when there are so many places to choose from. Here are a couple of the good ones.



Taberna El Olivo can be found in Plaza del Arbol, or 'Tree Square', tucked away behind a giant olive tree. The restaurant is painted an olive yellow though, so you can't miss it. Here you can sit out on the terrace with a glass of beer protected from the sun by the shade of the tree.

This restaurant specialises in traditional Spanish tapas such as pulpo afeita (octopus) or cazón en adobo (slices of heart mixed with spices and then deep-fried), and there are also vegetarian tapas.

The Taberna is popular with the local Valencians.



Refugio Restaurante del Carmen is an unusual restaurant located in a former air-raid shelter from the Spanish Civil War. The old white-washed brick walls are still showing as the owners did not wish to hide the building's history.

Their dishes experiment with unique combinations of cooking techniques and flavours from around the world.

Their slogan is 'cooking revolution'. Come and sample delicious dishes such as anchovies with fresh figs or white miso with Mexican jalapeños peppers.

Everybody knows that Spaniards know how to party, so here are a couple of the most popular bars in the El Carman area.



L'Ermità Café

This cozy bohemian café/bar is a favourite among Valencians. They often exhibit photos and artworks and they organise a drawing workshop called 'drink and draw' every Tuesday.

They also host an English-Spanish conversation night every Wednesday, so if you want to brush up on your language skills or meet new people, this could be the perfect occasion.

If you enjoy live music, preferably blues or swing, look up their next concert evening.



La Flama

This bar/club specialises in rock, hard-rock and metal music – a real find for anyone who loves these music genres. You can suggest songs on their website which they may later add to their playlist.

They organise cafe-theatre evenings at certain times of the year where they invite comedians, actors or magicians to perform a show.

Among other drinks, they serve the tasty hidromiel (or mead), a popular beverage which is believed to be the precursor of beer. Like many Spanish bars and nightclubs La Flama opens late, so come here after dinner to have some drinks and enjoy the music.

Marina and Beach area. You will find the odd bar or restaurant at the marina. However, for a more vibrant evening of bars and restaurants it is best to head to the promenade of the Malvarrosa and Las Arenas beaches that sit next to the marina and can be viewed from the marina. Here you will find a whole stretch of seafood restaurants, cafes and cocktail bars.



Marina Beach Club

If you feel like splashing out, treat yourself at the luxurious Marina Beach Club.

This pool bar complex has a beachfront location and exclusive vibe – and prices to match. As well as the lounge bar, there's a restaurant and infinity pool with endless views out to sea.



Akuarela Playa is a nightclub located by the Malvarrosa beach with a big roof terrace with every type of music, from salsa to house to pop music.

It is known for its blue lights that make you feel like you're underwater.

They have a great open space indoors as well for dancing and having an incredible night with friends.



Las Carabelas If you want to spend an unforgettable night with your family with Spanish food, you should pay a visit to restaurant Las Carabelas.

The staff will be delighted to be able to please you with their tasty dishes and make sure you spend an unforgettable night.

Enjoy the night in the romantic outdoor area. If it starts to get cool, you can still have fun on the heated terrace. They also have air conditioning so, whatever the weather, you are certain to be comfortable.

Nightclubs. For the best night out in Valencia a little pre-planning helps. There's no main drag full of nightclubs here; the best clubs are dotted around the city, and pre-booked tickets go a long way to making your night more enjoyable. Here are a few of the more popular places;



L'Umbracle

This open-air club in the famous City of Arts and Sciences complex must be seen to be believed.

By day, the futuristic L'Umbracle structure holds a tropical garden plus viewpoint and (sometimes) open-air art gallery. By night (in summer only) the garden space is transformed into a club with outdoor seating and a great cocktail bar, the modern architecture and palm trees illuminated with purple lights and giant candles to enchanting effect.

The music is mostly mainstream featuring house and top 40 hits, and the club is seen as one of the city's classier spots, loved by locals and students. Entrance is €15 with a drink included.



Barraca

A kind of pilgrimage for clubbers, Barraca has been open for 50 years and is still going strong. It's one of the few still remaining from the city's heyday as a clubbing mecca.

People still flock to this temple of electronic and techno music for the amazing sound system, superstar DJs and beachside location outside the city (it's very much worth the trip).

The outdoor terrace in the summer months could definitely be mistaken for Ibiza, and locals cool off after a long night of dancing by skinny dipping in the sea. Tickets start from €15.

Not to be missed in Valencia

There is so much to see and do in Valencia. Obviously you won't be able to visit every part of the city so we have put together a list of the essential places that you can not miss in València.



The City of Arts and Sciences

Is a cultural and architectural complex. It is the most important modern tourist destination in the city and one of the 12 Treasures of Spain.

It is situated at the end of the former riverbed of the river Turia, which was drained and rerouted after a catastrophic flood in 1957. The old riverbed was turned into a picturesque sunken park.

An impressive city that can be enjoyed both inside and out, whether by watching an opera or 3D IMAX film, or visiting the interactive museum or the largest aquarium in Europe.



Oceanogràfic

With over 45,000 animals of over 500 species, the Oceanogràfic is the largest aquarium in Europe. It is a true homage to our planet's seas and oceans.

One of the things you can do here is travel through the longest underwater tunnel in Europe, below the sharp teeth of sharks, and discover the only family of beluga whales in Europe.

Visiting the Oceanogràfic is a unique experience. Everything is possible in this magical place.



Central Market

Mercado Central or Mercat Central (English: Central Market) is a public market located in across from the Llotja de la Seda and the church of the Juanes in central Valencia, Spain. It is one of the main works of the Valencian Art Nouveau.

There has been a market on the same site since 1839 and it has grown into one of the largest in Europe. The beauty of the building stands out especially on account of the light that enters through the roof at various points, and through coloured window panels.

Most vendors sell food items, although souvenir shops and restaurants are located inside the market as well. It is a popular location for tourists and locals alike.

Bioparc

Bioparc is the new space for animals that the city of Valencia has situated in the park called Parque de Cabecera, to the north of the garden of the old course of the River Turia. It is a new generation zoo conceived with the zoo-immersion philosophy. When entering the park, you feel totally submerged in the wild habitats that have been recreated here.

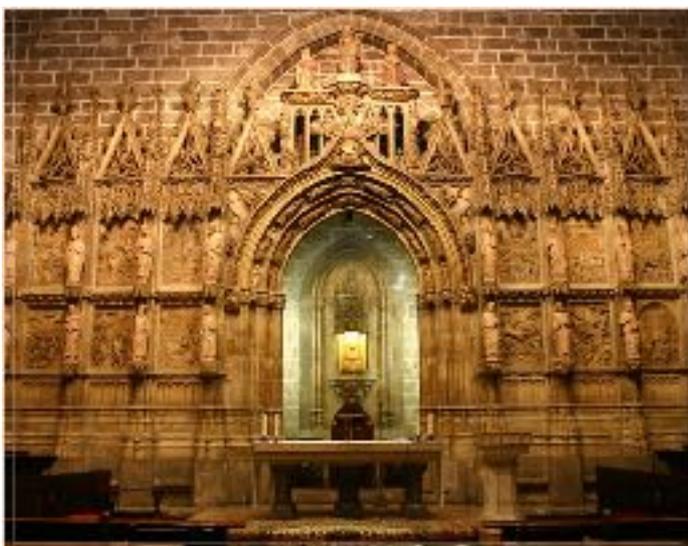


A recreation of **the savannah**: antelopes, giraffes and rhinoceroses, lions on rocky vantage points, dens of hyenas and warthogs. The density of **the equatorial forest** with gorillas, buffalos and leopards or also elephants, hippopotami, crocodiles and coloured fish,

Many of the species at the zoo are included in European conservation breeding programmes, and primary objectives of Bioparc include educating and increasing awareness of visitors regarding care of and respect for the environment.

Valencia Cathedral and The Holy Grail

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.



The cathedral is a lovely old place and is one of the top attractions in Valencia. You can actually climb to the top of the Miguelete bell tower and admire great views of the city.

Inside the cathedral, the Holy Grail is one of the must-see attractions for those of a religious following. Legend has it that the cup travelled from Rome centuries ago. However, when the Muslim rulers took over Spain, it was placed into hiding for centuries and only returned to the city in 1427 by the gloriously named King 'Alfonso the Magnanimous'.

Mestalla Stadium, the home of Valencia Fútbol Club, is the oldest stadium in Spain. The stadium opened on 20 May 1923. From the moment you begin a guided tour of the Mestalla Stadium, you will realise that this is not just another stadium.



As you tour its facilities, you will learn about its fascinating history and hear some curious legends and anecdotes from the professional guide. You will also visit the amazing press room where famous coaches such as Luis Aragonés, Rafa Benítez, and Quique Sánchez Flores have appeared.

You will see the magnificent pitch onto which star players such as David Villa, Gaizka Mendieta, and Mario Alberto Kempes have scored goals. Last but not least, you will visit the changing rooms where the Valencia first team prepares for each home match.

This one hour tour is in great demand so make sure you book in good time.

Getting There

The following airlines offer direct flights from the UK and Ireland to Valencia.

British Airways from London-Heathrow

easyJet from London-Gatwick

Ryanair from Belfast City, Bristol, Dublin, East Midlands, Edinburgh, London-Stansted and Manchester.

Vueling from London-Gatwick

Alternatively you could fly into Alicante which is around 105 miles away. The following airlines fly there from the UK and Ireland.

Aer Lingus from Dublin

British Airways from London-Gatwick and Southampton

easy Jet from Belfast, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool. London-Gatwick, London-Luton and Manchester

Jet 2 from Belfast, Birmingham, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds/Bradford, London-Stansted, Manchester and Newcastle

Ryanair from Aberdeen, Belfast-City, Belfast-International, Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cork, Dublin, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Kerry, Knock, Leeds/Bradford, Liverpool, London-Gatwick, London-Luton, London-Southend, London-Stansted, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Newquay, Prestwick, Shannon and Teeside

TUI from Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Doncaster/Sheffield, East Midlands, Glasgow, London-Gatwick, Manchester and Newcastle upon Tyne

Vueling from Cardiff and London-Gatwick

Wizz-Air from Cardiff, Doncaster-Sheffield and London-Luton

Know before you go

Voltage in Spain is 220 AC, 50 Hz. Plugs are two pin.

The offices of the Red Tourist Info are the best support for visitors to València who require any information. There are seven centres spread over key points of the city, where you can discover events and routes, obtain tourist maps and transport tickets, as well as the exclusive discounts of the Valencia Tourist Card. They are open from Monday to Sunday, but they reduce their schedules at the weekend and in the days before holidays

The official website for Valencia is: <https://www.visitvalencia.com/en>

Emergency Telephones numbers:

Ambulance - Telephone: +34 963 677 375

Local Police - Telephone: 092

Guardia Civil - Telephone: 062

Emergency Service - 112

How can I make a phone call from Spain?

If you wish to call abroad from Spain, dial 00 + country code + the phone number. You can place international calls from a public phone. Phone booths use coins or cards, which can be purchased at tobacconists' shops.

If you wish to make a phone call within Spain, just dial the number with no prefixes. The phone number always has 9 digits, whether it is a cell phone or a regular phone. If you wish to use your mobile in Spain, you should contact your service provider to make sure you will be able to use your phone in Spain (some carriers will have to activate international service for your phone). Once those steps are taken at the country of origin, use your mobile in Spain as if you were calling from a Spanish line. That is, you will need to dial 00 + country code + phone number to make international calls.

Is smoking prohibited?

In Spain, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public areas (including public transportation vehicles and buses).

It is also not permitted to smoke in health facilities (including outdoor areas that are part of its premises), any educational or training centres (except in outdoor spaces in universities and adult education centres) and playgrounds or play areas (outdoor spaces equipped for children).

Other than cash how else can I pay?

With credit cards: Payment using recognised international credit cards is also commonly available in Spanish shops. They usually have signs indicating this option at the entrance to the establishment. When you make a payment you should show your passport or ID card.

With traveller's cheques: Traveller's cheques, accompanied by a passport, are also accepted in many hotels, restaurants and shops.

Where can you change foreign currency?

You can change currencies in bureaux de change and some banks. This service is also available in many hotels and travel agencies.

Is tipping mandatory?

No; in every single establishment in Spain, service is included with the price of the meal or drink. However, tipping is a common practice at bars and restaurants, hotels, and taxis, depending on the total price for the service, and on the generosity of the client. It is usually around five to ten percent of the total price.

How can you go online and check your emails?

If you want to connect to the internet, numerous establishments in Spain offer free WiFi connections: cafes, restaurants, kiosks... You'll also find it in a number of airports, train and bus stations, and some shopping centres and hotels. You may sometimes need to ask for the password. What's more, many venues offer free WiFi in public spaces like parks or squares.

WiFi connections have a maximum speed limit, so they're mainly useful for finding specific information. You can also connect to the Internet via your mobile device. Another advantage is that in Spain you can enjoy extensive 4G mobile coverage. Remember to check your usual mobile phone operator's conditions and rates before you travel.

How can I send a letter or a postcard?

You can send a letter from anywhere in Spain. In order to do it, you need to find stamps, which you can buy at any tobacconist's shop or "Estancos". To send your letter, put it in a mailbox.

Mailboxes are yellow, and they can be found in the street, at railway and bus stations, and at the airports. It is also possible to leave your mail in the reception of your hotel, if it offers that service, for the staff to take care of the mailing for you

Public Holidays 2022

1st Jan Sat	New Year's Day	15th Aug Mon	Assumption of Mary
15th Apr Fri	Good Friday	12th Oct Wed	National Day of Spain
17th Apr Sun	Easter Sunday	1st Nov Tue	All Saints' Day
1st May Sun	Labour Day	6th Dec Tue	Constitution Day
		25th Dec Sat	Christmas Day

