

PLACES TO VISIT IN COSTA CALIDA

MURCIA

Murcia with its approx 300,000 inhabitants lies about 75 km south of Alicante and about 30 km west of Torrevieja. Murcia was founded on the Segura River in the 9th century by the Moors. The city of Murcia soon became an important trading centre, its wealth largely based on the fertility of the outlying huerta (market gardens). By the 1300's it was the regional capital and continued to prosper, its 18th century wealth funding the majority of its finest building. Today, its agricultural and commercial centres make up this delightful and truly Spanish city, which makes few concessions to tourism.

It is well worth a trip to the historic centre, a largely pedestrianised maze of narrow streets and squares, with its elegant buildings and churches. You will also find a 19th century **Casino** in central Murcia, which was built between 1847 and 1901. This memorable structure is still in use today, and was once the town's main social meeting place, offering members a library, meeting rooms, billiard room and ballroom. An eclectic stylistic mixture of Moorish features, marble and metalwork, French inspired grandeur, painted ceilings and English craftsmanship, the Casino is a high on a must-see list.

Amongst the clutch of superb churches, is the magnificent Murcia **Cathedral Santa Maria**, situated in the Plaza Del Cardinal Belluga, a truly awesome building. The opulent interior typical of Spanish cathedrals and churches. The fantastic exterior is full of exquisite craftsmanship, and the whole building took no less than 400 years to complete!!

The Cathedral's south side retains its Gothic façade, but the main west front was rebuilt after a flood in 1735. Designed by James Bort, this feat of curves and intricate detail, only lightly restrained by its soaring Corinthian columns, is liberally dotted with statues of gesticulating saints, their robes tossed by some celestial wind.

The interior retains signs of its Gothic origin – with its lovely screen and rich vaulting this must be one of Spain's finest examples of Hispano-Gothic architecture. A stairway leads up to the 18th century tower, which has great views.

The superb architecture of the city is combined with the individuality of the mass of shops, which offer a wide range of quality clothes shops, shoe shops and gift shops. Visit both "Corte de Angles" stores, while away an afternoon, where you can make any purchase – all at reasonable prices.

No better time to put your feet up and experience the Spanish cuisine, in one of the numerous restaurants and coffee bars.

CARTAGENA

Explore the places where Hannibal trod and Siphon the African fought.

Come and explore Punic, Roman, Military, and Modernist Cartagena. Enjoy the Easter Week, the Carthagian and Roman Festivals and the museums, the gastronomy – the history

Cartagena, built around a superb natural harbour and one of the most important ports in Spain. It was founded by Hannibal as his Iberian capital and named after North African Carthage. The port services foreign trade customers all over the world and brings much wealth and employment into the city. The bay of Cartagena has approximately 50 docks of both private and public use, with millions of tonnes of varied cargo being transported around the globe.

A Roman port and administrative centre, its strategic importance continued for centuries as the numerous surrounding castles and the vast Arsenal testify. Its wealth came from mining, which paid for churches such as Santa Maria de Gracia and La Caridad, as well as the large number of modern buildings around the city.

Cartagena offers other historical attractions besides the Port, with beautiful old buildings and fine gardens overlooked by the Muralla de Carlos III. The wall of Carlos III, construction of the wall started back in 1770 by the military. This huge enclosure had three monumental doors, the Wharf, one to Madrid and the other to San Jose. The old location of the Doors of San Jose was the main zone from access to the historical city; the door itself was demolished in 1916 along with much of the wall. Now it is being restored and conserved

The Regatta Club will offer many choices, sports hall, swimming pool, dining area and a shopping mall. The National Museum of Underwater Archaeology is a wonderful place to visit, the museum walks you through exhibitions halls, showing the wealth of the sea, marine history and many treasures found in local waters. These objects of the past were excavated mainly by the National Centre of Submarine Archaeological Investigations. You will find on display pieces of naval architecture, models and documents dating back hundreds of years.

If you are very lucky, during your visit you will get to see some of the great Spanish festivals. Two of the best being the Easter Festival of La Semana Santa with its wonderful procession, and also Cartagineses Y Romanos, a great reconstruction of the battle between Cartagians and Romans.

Shopping – always an abundance of shops!!

SANTIAGO DE LA RIBERA

Is a town, which sprung up in the late 19th century around a hermitage built here in 1888 in honour of the apostle James. Standing on the banks of the Mar Menor it has grown with the local tourist industry. The town has a lovely promenade by the sea, and is very popular with families. Don't miss two other quaint and interesting towns of San Pedro Del Pinatar and Los Narejos.

SAN JAVIER

San Javier itself also owes its origins to a chapel built here in this case in the early 17th century. One century later, due to constant pirate attacks, a small township grew up around its church. There are many places of architectural interest and San Javier has now become firmly established as a favourite summer holiday resort with visitors to the Costa Calida. It is also very handy for the local Murcia airport, which is on the outskirts of the town.

LA MANGA

To the far south east of the province of Murcia there is an enormous mirror of water reflecting the clouds and silhouette of white gulls flying over the Mediterranean coasts. It is one of the most major coastal pools or lagoons in the Iberian Peninsula. An immense lake of warm, tranquil and very salt water the Mar Menor extends, covering a surface area of almost 180 km², from the Punta del Mojon in the north down to the rocky promontory of the Cabo de Palos in the south. This great, almost entirely enclosed bay, has an average depth of 1.7 metres and is separated from the Mediterranean Sea by a strip of land 21 kms long "La Manga", no wider than 1,500 metres at any one point. The inland coast of the Mar Menor is lowland gauged by several watercourses with wide dried-up riverbeds. It is here that the shepherds graze their sheep and a great variety of market garden vegetables are grown. Further inland there are palm plantations, lemon orchards and winter pastures.

Originally the Mar Menor was simply a large bay, like the many other along the coasts of the Mare Mostrum. It was during the Helvetian period when silt from the seabed began collecting on the top of a long underwater ridge, a process helped over thousands of years by sea winds and currents.

The sandy strip of La Manga was born, gradually enclosing the bay until it took on its present appearance a few thousand years ago.

La Manga Del Mar Menor is a strip of land with white sand beaches, 21 km in length and average width of 300 m. The strip separates the Mediterranean Sea from the Mar Menor (the Minor Sea), which is a lagoon that has a surface area of 170 km², and a maximum depth of 8 m, and is considered to be the World's largest swimming pool, due to its calm and warm waters which are rich in salts and iodine, and maintain a temperature that is never lower than 18 degree C.

This natural environment, unique in Europe, also enjoys an excellent climate throughout the year, with more than 300 days of sunshine per annum and an average winter temperature of 17 degree C and summer 26 degree C. These conditions make the weather almost always seem like spring.

Thanks to geographic conditions and the climate, La Manga del Mar Menor is probably the best place in the world for the nautical sports.

Two distinct seas, soft breezes, sunny days and a significant sporting infrastructure make La Manga a sailor's paradise. Various ports such as the Puerto Tomas Maetre, or the Port of Cabo de Palos, numerous sailing schools and diving clubs for the lovers of underwater activities can be found in La Manga.

Leisure

In La Manga you can rest, practice sport, and also get to know the local history. Join in theatrical or musical productions or participate in the traditional fiestas of the area. Should you prefer to enjoy something more sporty, you can relax with a day of Golf, or take a horse ride or cycle through the beautiful countryside. You can also make a boat trip to the Mar Menor's islands along the nearby Mediterranean coastline.

Gastronomy

A world of flavours is offered to the visitors of La Manga. Fresh fish and seafood are prepared on hotplates, or as ingredients in the locally famous Caldero.

Fresh fruit and vegetables from Cartagena are abundant. Also with nightfall, fun is guaranteed, restaurants, bars, discotheques and a casino offering the prospect of prolonging a day full of varied experiences.

TORREVIEJA

A decade ago, Torrevieja was mainly renowned for being one of the most important fishing towns on the Spanish Mediterranean coast, as well as boasting the largest commercially productive salt lakes in Europe. While the town's economy is still dependent on both fishing and marine salt industries, it has grown spectacularly in latter years and has now become established as the tourist centre of South Costa Blanca.

It is a lively, bustling town all year round, offering a wide range of shops, restaurants, services and leisure activities, but nevertheless it has also maintained its local traditions and customs, which the inhabitants enjoy sharing with their new neighbours from more northerly parts of Europe. This is a cosmopolitan town yet with a very Spanish atmosphere.

SPANISH PLACES TO VISIT!!

Distance from Los Alcazares (approx)

LA MANGA	27 km	20 minutes
CARTAGENA	24 km	15 minutes
MURCIA	50 km	30 minutes
ALICANTE	83 km	1 hour
MADRID	445 km	3 hours
BARCELONA	620 km	4 hours

USEFUL SPANISH VOCABULARY Survival Guide!!

MEETING, GREETING AND SAYING GOODBYE

Hola!	<i>Hello</i>
Buenos dias	<i>good morning</i>
Buenas tardes	<i>good afternoon / evening</i>
Buenas noches	<i>good evening / goodnight</i>
Adios	<i>goodbye</i>
Que tal (estas)?	<i>How are you? (informal)</i>
Como esta?	<i>How are you? (formal)</i>
Bin, <i>gracias</i>	<i>fine, thank you</i>
Y tu?	<i>And you? (informal)</i>
Y usted?	<i>And you? (formal)</i>

BEING POLITE AND COMMUNICATING

Si / no	<i>yes / no</i>
Gracias – de nada	<i>thank you – you're welcome</i>
Por favor	<i>please</i>
Por favor /oiga	<i>excuse me!</i>
Perdone / lo siento	<i>sorry!</i>
Perdon?	<i>Pardon?</i>
Habla espanol? – un poco	<i>do you speak Spanish? – a little bit</i>
No entiendo / no comprendo	<i>I don't understand</i>
Hable mas despacia, por favor	<i>can you speak more lowly please</i>
Puede repetir?	<i>Could you repeat that?</i>
Como te llamas / se llama?	<i>What's your name? (informal / formal)</i>
Me llamo	<i>My name is</i>

DIRECTIONS

<i>Donde esta?</i>	<i>Where is?</i>
<i>En que calle esta . . . ?</i>	<i>which street is . . . on?</i>
<i>Cerca de aqui</i>	<i>near here</i>
<i>No lejos de aqui</i>	<i>not far from here</i>
<i>Lojos de aqui</i>	<i>a long way from here</i>
<i>A la derecha</i>	<i>on the right hand side</i>
<i>A la izquierda</i>	<i>on the left hand side</i>
<i>La derecha / la izquierda</i>	<i>the right / the left</i>
<i>Todo recto</i>	<i>straight ahead</i>
<i>Enfrente de</i>	<i>opposite</i>
<i>El samaforo</i>	<i>traffic lights</i>
<i>La esquina</i>	<i>the corner</i>

WHERE

<i>Al lado de</i>	<i>next to</i>
<i>En</i>	<i>at</i>
<i>Encima de</i>	<i>on (top of)</i>
<i>Detras de</i>	<i>behind</i>
<i>Delante de</i>	<i>in front of</i>
<i>Sobre</i>	<i>above</i>

EMERGENCIAS

<i>Llame una abmulancia por favor</i>	<i>call an ambulance please</i>
<i>Llame a la policia por favour</i>	<i>call the police please</i>
<i>Me puede ayudar?</i>	<i>Can you help me?</i>
<i>Necesito un medico</i>	<i>I need a doctor</i>
<i>Necesito un dentista</i>	<i>I need a dentist</i>
<i>Busco una farmacia</i>	<i>I'm looking for a pharmacy</i>

IN SHOPS, RESTAURANTS AND CAFES

<i>Quiero</i>	<i>I would like / I want</i>
<i>Lleo esto</i>	<i>I'll have / I'll take this one</i>
<i>Cuanto es?</i>	<i>How much is it?</i>
<i>Algo mas?</i>	<i>Anything else?</i>
<i>Eso es todo / nada mas</i>	<i>That'll be all</i>
<i>La carta, por favor</i>	<i>The menu please</i>
<i>El menu del dia, por favor</i>	<i>The menu of the day please</i>
<i>Que quiere</i>	<i>What would you like to order?</i>
<i>Puede traerme un vaso?</i>	<i>Could you bring me a glass?</i>
<i>Puede traer mas agua?</i>	<i>Could you bring more water?</i>
<i>La cuenta, por favor</i>	<i>The bill, please</i>
<i>Juntos / separado</i>	<i>Together / separately</i>
<i>Pagar</i>	<i>To pay</i>
<i>Que aproveche</i>	<i>Enjoy your meal</i>
<i>Estaba la comida / el plato a su</i>	<i>Enjoy your meal</i>
<i>Estaba la comida / el plato a su</i>	<i>Did you enjoy the meal / the dish?</i>
<i>Gusto?</i>	
<i>(Estaba) muy bueno</i>	<i>(it was) very good</i>
<i>Salud</i>	<i>Cheers</i>
<i>Soy vegetariano /a</i>	<i>I'm vegetarian</i>
<i>No como carne</i>	<i>I don't eat meat</i>
<i>Tengo alergia a</i>	<i>I'm allergic to ...</i>
<i>La cuenta esta equivocada</i>	<i>The bill is wrong</i>

DRINKS AND SNACKS

Un aqua mineral	A mineral water
Con gas / sin gas	Sparkling / still
Una gaseosa	A fizzy sweetened water
Un zumo de naranja / mazana	An orange / apple juice
Un refresco	A soft drink
El vino tinto / blanco	Red / white wine
La cerveza	Beer
El café	Coffee
El te	Tea
Con / Sin leche	with / without milk
Con limon	With lemon
El azucar	Sugar
Un bocadillo de jamon York / serrano	A ham / cured ham sandwich
Un bocadillo de queso	A cheese sandwich
Un perrito caliente	A hot dog
Una tapa	A snack
Un paquete de patatas fritas	A packet of crisps

CHANGING MONEY

Donde puedo cambiar dinero?	Where can I change money?
Puede cambiar dinero en el Banco / la estacion	Bank / at the station
Cual es el tipo de cambio?	What's the exchange rate?
Quiero cambiar cien dolares / libres	I'd like to change \$100 / £100
Esterlinas en euros	Into euro
Hay comision?	Do you charge commission?
Aceptan cheque de viaje?	Do you take traveller's cheques?

NUMBERS

1	uno	2	dos	3	tres	4	cuatro
5	cinco	6	seis	7	siete	8	ocho
9	nueve	10	diez	11	once	12	doce
13	trece	14	catorce	15	quince	16	dieciseis
17	dieciete	18	dieciocho	19	diecinueve	20	veinte
21	veintiuno	22	veintidos	23	veintitres	24	veinticuatro
25	veinticinco	26	veintiseis	27	veintisiete	28	veintiocho
29	veintinueve	30	treinta	40	cuarenta	50	cincuenta
60	sesenta	70	setenta	80	ochenta	90	noventa
100	cien						
101	ciento uno / a			200	doscientos / as		
250	dosciento cincuenta			300	trescientos / as		
500	quinientos / as						

Quick conversion tables

Length

Inches	0.39	3.9	7.8	11.7	15.6	19.7	39
Cm	1	10	20	30	40	50	
100							

Distance

Miles	0.62	6.2	12.4	18.6	24.9	31	
62							
Km	1	10	20	30	40	50	
100							

Weight

Pounds	2.2	22	44	66	88	110	
229							
Kg	1	10	20	30	40	50	
100							

Capacity

Gallons	0.22	2.2	4.4	6.6	8.8	11	
22							
Litres	1	10	20	30	40	50	
100							

Temperature

C	0	5	10	20	30	37	38	40	100
F	32	41	50	68	86	98	100	104	
212									

Senorio De Roda

Women's clothing sizes

UK	8	10	12	14	16	18
US	6	8	10	12	14	16
Spain	36	38	40	42	44	46

Women's shoes

UK	4	5	6	7	7.5	8
US	6.5	7.5	8.5	9.5	10.5	11.5
Spain	37	38	39	40	41	42

Men's clothing sizes

UK / US	36	38	40	42	44	46
Spain	46	48	50	52	54	56

Men's shoes

UK	6	7	8	9	10	11
US	9.5	10.5	11.5	12.5	13.5	14.5
Spain	40	41	42	43	44	45