

Costa de la Luz



Huelva's Costa de la Luz stretches from the mouth of the River Guadiana, on the border between Spain and Portugal, to the mouth of the River Guadalquivir, which separates the provinces of Huelva and Cádiz. In between are a series of expansive beaches with white sands, a landscape of water, dunes and pine forests. The coast of Huelva, which is home to a number of pleasure harbours, provides ideal conditions for all manner of sail sports thanks to a benevolent climate that means that water-based pursuits can be enjoyed all year round.

It was from Huelva, of course, that Columbus set sail, and in this Andalusian province, America somehow seems that bit closer.



Doñana National Park

In the south east of the province of Huelva, next to the mouth of the River Guadalquivir, Doñana National Park, which enjoys official Biosphere Reserve and Humanity's Patrimony status, is a must for all visitors to the area. Doñana is the largest national park in Spain and one of the most unusual in Europe. Its importance lies in the wealth of flora and fauna and the peculiar ecosystems, particularly marshes, to which it is home. It is an obligatory port of call for birds flying migratory routes between Europe and Africa, and the protected species living here include the imperial eagle and the tawny vulture, in addition to mammals such as the Iberian Lynx, the deer and fallow deer, the wild boar and the otter.

Paraje natural de las marismas del Odiel

Las Marismas, declared a Biosphere Reserve, is actually home to two separate reserves: the marshes of Las Marismas del Burro and La Isla de En Medio, both of which are notable for the high level of conservation of their ecosystems and for the presence of significant colonies of herons, spoonbills and flamingos. The marshes can be toured in canoes and other small vessels, providing an unforgettable experience.

El Rocío

The marsh village of El Rocío de Almonte is the venue of the famous pilgrimage festival of the same name. Its architecture is a curious blend of one and two-floor whitewashed houses and reticular, dirt-track streets, with the famous white Chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rocío, popularly known as the "Blanca Paloma" or dove standing on the very edge of the marshes themselves. Each year, thousands of pilgrims journey along old, dusty trails in complete contact with nature, arriving in the village in carts or on horseback in traditional Rocío costume in order to pay homage to the Virgen del Rocío.



Huelva

The coastal city of Huelva stands between the River Tinto and River Odiel. This sea port was once a city of discoverers and is still the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean today. Places of interest here include the churches of San Pedro and La Concepción, Nuestra Señora de la Merced Cathedral, La Soledad Hermitage, the Reina Victoria workers' district with its English-style architecture, the Columbus House and Monument and the Mineral Dock.



The Discovery route



La Rábida Monastery is a XV-century Franciscan building of Mudéjar-Gothic design situated near the mouth of the River Tinto, which is also home to the Monument to the Faith of Discovery. Inside the monastery itself, a visit to the church is well worth while, offering the visitor the chance to admire the carvings of the Virgen de los Milagros and Christ on the Cross, which date back to the XIV and XV centuries respectively. The monastery is surrounded by beautiful gardens, which are also home to the Column of the Discoverers, erected to mark the fourth centenary of the Discovery of America. Las Carabelas Dock features replicas of the boats that were used on Columbus' voyage, the Pinta, the Niña and the Santa María, painstakingly recreated in a mediaeval style that will transport us back to this glorious age. Palos de la Frontera is considered the cradle of the Discovery of America. Almost exclusively devoted to marine activity, this town has prospered since the Age of Discovery thanks to its agriculture, whose best-known product is the famous Palos strawberry. Considered the second home of the Pinzón brothers, it was from the port of Palos that the three caravels commanded by Christopher Columbus set sail in August 1492 on the voyage that would culminate in the Discovery of America. Almost all of Palos de la Frontera's monuments are related to the Discovery, one highlight being the Pinzón Brothers House-Museum. Moguer is a delightful village of exquisite gothic and baroque-style houses built around gleaming white squares bedecked with flowers.



Also closely linked to the Discovery, it is home to the most important Mudéjar-Gothic monument in the province of Huelva, Santa Clara Convent, a fine example of the architecture of Columbus' day. here are other monuments, including San Francisco Convent, the Town Hall, Nuestra Señora de la Granada Church, with its huge tower reminiscent of Seville's Giralda, and the Juan Ramón Jiménez Hosue-Museum. The Discovery Route ends in the pretty little village of Lucena del Puerto. Places of note here are the parish church and, nearby, the La Luz Convent, a XVI-century building that houses a wealth of sacred ornaments.



Ayamonte

Ayamonte, on the border between Spain and Portugal, stretches along the banks of the River Guadiana near its mouth. Home to an important fishing port, this lively commercial town is a hive of activity. It can also claim to be the most monumental of the coastal towns, its most noteworthy building being the churches of El Salvador and Nuestra Señora. de las Angustias and the temples of La Merced and San Francisco, the latter enjoying National Monument of Historical and Artistic Interest status.

The beaches of the coast route



Huelva's Costa de la Luz boasts incomparable beaches where a combination of climate, geographical features and tourist facilities create an ideal location in which to enjoy oneself all year round.

Isla Canela

A district of Ayamonte, home to beaches of fine sand, navigable canals, reeds and large open spaces, in short, a natural paradise. The tourist development of Isla Canela has combined a series of concepts which include active leisure pursuits, sport, relaxation, group activities, nature, cuisine and golf.



Punta del Moral

Also part of Ayamonte, just a few short years have turned an untouched beach into a major resort while at the same time maintaining a careful balance between economic progress and conservationism. It boasts a new pleasure harbour, a wide promenade and apartment complexes with sports facilities, swimming pools, gardens, etc.



Isla Cristina

A fishing town with a large beach and pleasure harbour ideal for enjoying the splendid climate. Water sports are well catered for, including angling in the ria at Carreras, on the beach or on the open sea.

La Antilla

A district of Lepe, La Antilla is a huge beach equipped with excellent tourist infrastructure catering for a variety of activities. The nearby fishing port of El Terrón will satisfy even the most demanding palate with its excellent fish and seafood.

El Rompido

A typical fishing village belonging to Cartaya with an excellent quiet beach and pleasure harbour ideal for all manner of water sports.



Punta Umbría

This fishing village is located at the centre of the Huelva coast. Its long beaches stand alongside pine and juniper forests and are well-suited to aquatic and nautical activity of all kinds. Punta Umbría also boasts its own pleasure harbour.

Mazagón

A village of clean, attractive beaches covered with golden sands and surrounded by expanses of pine forest. It also has its own pleasure harbour.

Matalascañas

Situated between the Atlantic Ocean and Doñana National Park, which practically surrounds the town. The main tourist resort on Huelva's Costa de la Luz, it is equipped with hotels and a full range of tourist infrastructure and services. An ideal location for those in search of rest and relaxation and the more active tourist alike, it caters for both inland and aquatic activities. Matalascañas is home to the Doñana Coastal Interpretation Centre, located in the watchtower, the Marine Museum and the Dune Park.

Costa de la Luz

Active tourism



Though most of the activities catered for on Huelva's Costa de la Luz are based on water sports, it also offers hiking and horse riding routes and shipping, visits to Doñana National Park, monumental routes, bird watching, cycling-tourism, etc.

Cuisine

Cuisine on the Huelva Costa de la Luz is characterised by its rich variety, ranging from fresh fish such as ray in paprika, many varieties of tuna, fried fish, dried roe or salted tuna to seafood, large oysters, sea snails, prawns, white prawns and cuttlefish, not to mention meat, served grilled or in hotpots such as caldereta de vaca mostrenca, and local stews such as habas enzapatás and cocido de Almonte, all followed by a dessert of strawberries and washed down with excellent local wine.

