VLC
2027

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EUROPEAN SERIES
MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER

Greetings from VALENCIA

48 hours, solo, at your own pace

POCKET EDITION · 2027

48-HOUR GUIDE · SAFETY GUIDE · PLANNING CALENDAR

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Welcome to Valencia

Valencia is the Mediterranean city that has everything and hides it well: a historic center, a beach, a futuristic arts complex, and one of the longest urban parks in Europe, all on flat ground and in reach of a bike. It is warm, unhurried, and good value.

Traveling alone here works because the city lives outdoors. Plazas fill with people at lunch, the park runs through the middle of town, and eating at a bar counter is normal. You can be as social or as quiet as you like.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read through once before you go. Day One covers the old town, the market, and the cathedral. Day Two covers the Turia Gardens, the City of Arts and Sciences, and the beach. Section 03 is the new-for-2027 guide to authentic paella. Lunch is the main meal and happens around 2 p.m., so plan your day around it.

ESSENTIAL QUICK FACTS

CURRENCY
Euro (€) · cards accepted nearly everywhere

TRANSIT
Metro, bus, and tram · Móbilis card or contactless

TIPPING
Optional · round up or leave a few euros

EMERGENCY
112

MEAL TIMES
Lunch around 2 p.m. · dinner after 9 p.m.

LANGUAGE
Spanish and Valencian · English in tourist areas

01 Day One

The Old Town · The Market · The Cathedral

The first day stays in the historic center, with a market, a Gothic silk exchange, and the cathedral's tower.

MORNING · 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

Mercado Central

A modernist iron-and-glass market from the 1920s, full of fish, fruit, and cured meats. Go early, when the stalls are at their liveliest.

Stop for a coffee at a counter inside.

10:30 AM

La Lonja de la Seda

The 15th-century Silk Exchange, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with a spiral-columned hall. Check opening hours.

Allow 45 minutes.

12:00 PM

Valencia Cathedral & El Miguelete

The cathedral claims to hold the Holy Grail. The bell tower, El Miguelete, can be climbed for a view over the rooftops.

The climb has around 200 steps.

AFTERNOON · 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

2:00 PM

Lunch — menú del día

Many restaurants serve a fixed-price lunch with several courses and a drink. It is the best value of the day.

Ask for "el menú" and see what is on the board.

4:30 PM

Plaza de la Virgen & Plaza Redonda

Two old town squares, one grand and one round, with cafés and shaded benches.

Time for a horchata or a coffee.

EVENING · 8:30 PM

8:30 PM

Tapas in El Carmen

The old Carmen quarter has narrow lanes full of bars, murals, and small plates. Order a few things and move on.

Dinner starts late; most places fill after 9.

In Valencia, lunch is the main meal. Eat late and long.

02 Day Two

The Turia Gardens · The City of Arts and Sciences · The Beach

The second day follows the old riverbed park to the futuristic arts complex and then to the sea.

MORNING · 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

9:30 AM

Turia Gardens

A river was diverted after a flood in 1957, and its dry bed became a nine-kilometer park. Walk or rent a bike.

Early morning is the coolest time.

11:00 AM

City of Arts and Sciences

Santiago Calatrava's white complex of a science museum, an opera house, and an aquarium. Walk around the pools for free.

You can see the buildings from the outside without a ticket.

1:00 PM

Lunch near the beach

Cross to the Malvarrosa or Las Arenas promenade for a lunch of rice dishes and seafood.

Rice is served at lunch, rarely at dinner.

AFTERNOON · 3:00 PM – 6:30 PM

3:00 PM

Playa de la Malvarrosa

A wide, flat city beach with a promenade. Swim, read, or walk.

Summer sun is strong, so use sunscreen.

5:30 PM

El Cabanyal

A fishermen's quarter of tiled houses, close to the beach. Walk its streets and stop at a bar.

The neighborhood is lively on weekends.

EVENING · 9:00 PM

9:00 PM

Dinner in Ruzafa

The city's most creative neighborhood, full of small restaurants, cafés, and bars.

Reserve on weekends.

03 *Paella*

Paella, Done Properly

NEW FOR 2027

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that real Valencian paella does not have seafood in it?

Traditional paella valenciana is cooked with chicken, rabbit, flat green beans, a white bean called garrofó, tomato, saffron, and rosemary, over an open fire. Seafood versions exist, but they are a different dish. The rice, grown near Albufera lake, is the star.

HOW IT WORKS

Paella is a lunch dish, cooked to order in a wide, shallow pan. The best part is the socarrat, the crisp, toasted layer of rice at the bottom.

HOW TO DO IT RIGHT

Order it at lunch, and expect to wait about 30 minutes. Skip the places with photo menus on the sidewalk. Ask for paella valenciana.

BEST TIME TO GO

Lunchtime, between 2 and 3:30 p.m. Many places serve it only for two or more, so ask whether they can serve one.

04 *Where to Eat*

Valencia's table — rice, horchata and tapas

Valencia is the home of paella, and it eats late. Rice is for lunch, tapas for the evening, and bars welcome solo diners.

€ under €15 · €€ €15–40 · €€€ over €40 — per person, excluding drinks

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Mercado Central bars €

OLD TOWN

Coffee, sandwiches, and tapas inside the market.

Menú del día restaurants €€

CITY CENTER

A fixed-price lunch of several courses.

Albufera paella restaurants €€

ALBUFERA

Rice dishes near the lake where the rice grows.

Horchata cafés €

OLD TOWN

Try horchata with fartons, a sweet pastry.

DINNER & LATE

Tapas in El Carmen €€

EL CARMEN

Small plates in the old quarter.

Ruzafa restaurants €€

RUZAFA

Creative cooking in a lively neighborhood.

Cabanyal bars

€

EL CABANYAL

Casual spots near the sea.

Late-night bocadillo bars

€

VARIOUS

A quick sandwich after midnight.

05 Getting Around

Getting around Valencia

The center is flat and walkable, and bike lanes cover much of the city. Metro and tram cover the beach and the airport.

Metro & tram	about €1.50	Single trips; pay with a Móbilis card or contactless. Check current fares.
Valencia Airport	Metro · 20 min	Metro lines 3 and 5 run from the airport to the center.
Bikes	by the day	Rental bikes are widely available; the Turia Gardens are a car-free path.
Joaquín Sorolla Station	Train hub	High-speed AVE trains to Madrid and Barcelona.
Walking	free	The old town is compact.

Walk the old town, bike the Turia, and use the tram to reach the beach.

06 *Backup Plans*

Valencia in the rain

Valencia is among the sunniest cities in Europe, but when it rains, the museums and markets are ready.

Mercado Central
OLD TOWN
A covered market for lunch and browsing.

La Lonja de la Seda
OLD TOWN
A Gothic hall with a famous ceiling.

Oceanogràfic
ARTS & SCIENCES
One of Europe's largest aquariums.

Museu de les Ciències
ARTS & SCIENCES
A hands-on science museum.

National Ceramics Museum
OLD TOWN
A palace full of tiles and pottery.

Cafés
OLD TOWN
A long coffee or a hot chocolate with churros.

07 *Neighborhoods*

Know your neighborhoods

Ciutat Vella
HISTORIC
The old town with its market and cathedral.

El Carmen
ARTSY
Murals, small bars, and narrow lanes.

Ruzafa
CREATIVE
Restaurants, boutiques, and cafés.

El Cabanyal
SEASIDE
Fishermen's houses by the beach.

Turia Gardens
GREEN
A park through the center of the city.

Arts and Sciences
FUTURISTIC
White Calatrava buildings and pools.

08 Good to Know

What nobody tells you

- Lunch is the main meal, around 2 p.m. Dinner starts after 9 p.m.
- Rice dishes like paella are for lunch, not dinner. Many restaurants serve them only for two or more.
- Shops often close from 2 to 5 p.m. for the siesta, and on Sundays.
- Summer is hot and humid. Plan for mornings and evenings outside.
- Cards are accepted nearly everywhere, but carry a few euros for markets.
- Tipping is optional. Round up or leave a few euros for good service.

WHEN TO GO

Best overall — **Apr–Jun**
Warm days, flowers, and the Fallas festival in March.

Peak season — **Jul–Aug**
Hot, humid, and beach-focused.

Second best — **Sep–Oct**
Warm sea and comfortable days.

Off-season — **Nov–Feb**
Mild and quiet, with sunny days.

09 Solo Traveler Safety

Is Valencia safe?

Safe, with standard big-city awareness. Valencia is calmer than Barcelona or Madrid. The main risk is pickpocketing in busy tourist areas and on public transport.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Old town (daytime)	◆◆◆◆◆
Turia Gardens	◆◆◆◆◆
Ruzafa	◆◆◆◆◇
Arts and Sciences	◆◆◆◆◆
Cabanyal at night	◆◆◆◇◇
Crowded markets and buses	◆◆◆◇◇

COMMON SCAMS

Be wary of anyone who offers a friendship bracelet or sprig of rosemary, then asks for money. Keep your bag zipped and in front of you.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

For emergencies call 112. Pharmacies (farmacia) show a green cross and can advise on minor problems. Carry travel insurance, and an EHIC card if you are from the EU.

SOLO TRAVELERS

Share your plans with someone back home and keep your phone charged. Dinner is late, so streets stay busy well past midnight.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Emergency	112
Local police	092
National police	091
US Embassy (Madrid)	+34 91 587 2200

10 Planning Calendar

Valencia, month by month

A year-round look at the events that shape the city. Exact dates shift annually.

JAN–FEB *Winter*

- Mild, quiet, and good for walking.

MAR *Las Fallas*

- Mid-March brings giant sculptures, fireworks, and a night of fire.

APR–MAY *Spring*

- Warm days and terraces.

JUN–AUG *Summer*

- Beach season and long evenings.

SEP–OCT *Autumn*

- Warm sea and fewer crowds.

DEC *Holidays*

- Lights in the old town and Christmas markets.

Every Stop, Mapped

Scan the code to open the free interactive Valencia map — every stop in this guide, filterable by day, food, and transport.

goingsolo.life/maps/valencia

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