



Where's Marbella?

Marbella is located west of the Costa del Sol, between Fuengirola and Estepona. The resort is south facing towards the Mediterranean Sea, while behind it the impressive Sierra Blanca mountains, the highest peak of which is at 1200m.

Information about Marbella

Marbella is the most famous seaside resort on the Costa del Sol and has a reputation as one of the most glamorous holiday destinations in southern Europe. Discovered by the world's jet set in the 1960s, Marbella stands for luxury and quality experiences - it's not for nothing that some of Europe's finest real estate can be found here, as well as first-class golf courses and some of the world's best beach clubs.

Marbella stretches along the coast over 27km and includes the following areas:

Marbella East

The east side of Marbella is home to popular developments such as Cabopino (an attractive marina), Las Chapas, Elviria, El Rosario, Los Monteros and Río Real. All are located with easy access to the centre of Marbella and good amenities such as shops and banks, and a wide choice of restaurants. Several excellent private schools such as the English International College and Colegio Alborán are located on this side of Marbella, where you'll also find miles of family-friendly sandy beaches. The world-famous Beach Club Nikki Beach is located here, as well as the 5-star Hotel Don Carlos and Hotel Los Monteros. It is also home to some of Marbella's best golf courses, including Marbella Golf and Country Club, and Santa Clara Golf.

Marbella Centre

In the centre of Marbella, you will find the historic old part with a Moorish castle, a maze of narrow streets and alleys, and several beautiful churches. The central Alameda park, lined with many Dali sculptures, connects the old town with the beach promenade via the Avenida del Mar. The seaside promenade - one of the most popular spots in Marbella - runs from the Bajadilla marina in the east all the way to San Pedro in the west, a distance of about 15km in total.

The west of Marbella consists of boulevards with rows of trees flanked by some of the best apartments in the centre of Marbella. There are excellent facilities here with a wide range of shops, sports facilities, health centres, banks and restaurants.

Marbella West/ Golden Mile

West of the Piruli Tower and the Corte Inglés shop lies the most exclusive area of Marbella, known as the Golden Mile because of its series of mansions and palatial homes. Two of the most famous hotels in Marbella - Marbella Club and Puente Romano, both 5-star GL and part of the Leading Hotels of the

World - are also located here. Michelin star chef Dani García has two restaurants on the Golden Mile -Restaurant Dani García and BIBO.

West of Marbella center are the exclusive developments of Sierra Blanca, known for the beautiful Mediterranean Sea and mountain views, La Virginia, home to some of the finest home developments in Marbella and the Buchinger fasting clinic.

Several celebrities and royal members have houses in this area, including the Saudi royal family (whose design has inspired the White House), Baroness Thyssen, Simon Cowell and Lord Alan Sugar, as well as several famous soccer players.

Puerto Banús

Puerto Banús needs no introduction as it is one of the most popular places in Marbella to visit. It is home to an attractive marina where some of the world's largest private yachts and boats are moored.

You'll also find a long list of luxury boutiques - the main designers and haute couture names have shops in Puerto Banús - as well as many restaurants and bars overlooking the marina. This is really a place to see and be seen. In high season, celebrity spotting is a habit because many celebrities drink wine and dine in Puerto Banús.

This is also one of the best places of nightclubs in Marbella. Some of the best Beach clubs on the Costa del Sol are located in Puerto Banús, including Ocean Club, Funky Buddha and La Sala by the Sea. All offer night parties as well as daytime activities. At a short distance from the beach you will also find a number of good discotheques and pubs.

Nueva Andalucia

Nueva Andalucía is located west of Marbella and north of Puerto Banús. This popular development has an excellent selection of villas and townhouses, some of which overlook golf courses. Many houses offer unparalleled views of the mountains and/or the sea.

Nueva Andalucía has excellent facilities such as a small shopping centre in Centro Plaza (next to the bullfighting arena), hosting one of the Costa del Sol's most popular Saturday markets. Aloha College, one of the largest international schools in Marbella, is located here.

Sports facilities are excellent - Golf Valley has five golf courses in and around Nueva Andalucía and some of them, such as La Quinta and Las Brisas, are among the best on the Costa del Sol. The famous Manolo Santana Tennis Academy can also be found here.

San Pedro de Alcántara

This is a small-town west of Marbella, better known as simply San Pedro. The city has plenty of amenities with a wide range of shops and restaurants, good sports facilities, health centers and various schools, including the Laude San Pedro International College.

San Pedro has an attractive promenade and two popular parks. The Boulevard, located in the city centre, has a children's playground and a small theatre, while the Parque de los Tres Jardines (north) has botanical gardens with subtropical, Mediterranean and Arabic gardens.

There are several popular developments in San Pedro. For example, the high-quality Guadalmina and Linda Vista, both west of the resort.

How big is it?

Marbella is one of the largest resorts on the Costa del Sol, both in terms of population and surface area.

What is the population of Marbella?

According to official counts, approximately 140,000 people live in Marbella, although the actual number is much higher.

How many people of foreign origin live in Marbella?

Almost 34,000 foreigners have made Marbella their home. Most of them are British, followed by Germans and Russians.

What is the weather like in Marbella?

Like the rest of the Costa del Sol, the weather in Marbella consists of a combination of sunny days with warm temperatures. Expect a minimum of 320 days of sunshine per year, pleasant winter temperatures and moderate heat in summer.

How can I reach Marbella?

Marbella is very easy to reach. Two motorways (the A-7 and the AP-7 toll road) connect the resort to Malaga in the east and Estepona in the west. There is a good bus service between Malaga airport and Marbella (travel time 35 minutes) and frequent buses to Estepona and Fuengirola.

How far is it from Marbella to Malaga airport?

The distance between Malaga airport and Marbella is 48km. It is 30 minutes by car.

Puerto Banus and San Pedro are a little further away (58km and 61km respectively) and it takes about 45 minutes to get there by car from the airport.

How far is it from Marbella to Gibraltar airport?

Gibraltar airport is a good alternative to flights from the Costa del Sol to the United Kingdom. It is 77km away and it takes just under an hour to get there by car but take into account extra time to cross the border between Spain and Gibraltar.

How far is it from Marbella to Malaga?

Malaga is 60km away - 45 minutes by car or 1 hour by bus.

What are the main attractions of Marbella?

There are many places of interest in Marbella. At the top of the list are the beaches (see below), followed by the cultural and gastronomic scene of the resort. Marbella has several noteworthy museums, as well as some interesting monuments. Not to mention the long list of outdoor activities, both in the water and outside. Marbella is also within easy reach of other attractions on the Costa del Sol such as Selwo Aventura safari park in nearby Estepona, and Fuengirola Zoo.

How are the beaches in Marbella?

There is a total of 23 beaches in Marbella, stretching along the 27km coastline from San Pedro in the west to Cabopino in the east. By 2016, the resort had six beaches with Blue Flag status. Almost all beaches have good facilities, parking and rescue services from Easter to the end of September.

Perhaps the choice you have is best on the beaches in Marbella. There is really something for everyone along the coast. Choose from the family-friendly beach in Elviria with shallow waters and lots of beach bars and restaurants; beach activities on Funny Beach (just outside Marbella towards the east) or on the beach of Puente Romano in the Golden Mile; parties in Ocean Club in Puerto Banús and Nikki Beach; resting on the beaches of Marbella located between Puente Romano and Puerto Banús; and the chic Beach clubs located at hotels in Marbella, including Puente Romano, Marbella Club and Los Monteros. Cabopino has a nudist beach, for those who love pure nature.

And if the 23 beaches are not enough for you: there are plenty of other options within easy reach. Estepona has some of the quietest beaches on the Costa del Sol, and a little further west (in Tarifa) there are some of Europe's best kitesurfing beaches.

What is there to do in Marbella?

Besides the beach, Marbella has many other things to offer. The museums of the resort - the Museum of Engraving, the Bonsai Museum and the Museum Ralli - are all worth a visit, as are the Roman ruins. This includes the Roman Villa in Puerto Banús with its beautiful mosaics, and the Roman Basilica in San Pedro.

A must-see is the old part of Marbella, where you can still see the traditional Andalusian architecture in the beautiful squares and narrow streets that have hardly changed in all those centuries. Highlights in the old city are the Orange Square square with the beautiful town hall, and the walls of the Moorish castle. There are many bars and restaurants in the old part of Marbella, as well as a wide choice of boutiques and specialist shops. Also visit the traditional toy shops and the olive oil shop (where you can taste before you buy anything). In addition to a visit to the old town, there are many more things to do in Marbella. For example, the Dali sculptures in Avenida del Mar, where you'll find the typical Catalan surrealist style.

Year-round sunshine combined with breathtaking landscapes make Marbella a fantastic location for outdoor activities. Some of the Costa del Sol's best golf courses are within easy reach - choose from the 15 courses in the immediate vicinity, with many other golf courses just a short distance away. There are good tennis and paddle (racket sports similar to tennis) facilities. Water sports fans can indulge themselves with the following activities: sailing, kayaking, rowing and fishing. For water sports with an adrenaline rush you can flyboard or waterski by the Mediterranean or in the natural lake of Las Medranas.

There are also great hiking and trekking routes in Marbella. The Sierra Blanca Mountains, located just behind the resorts, offer numerous hiking trails for all ages and abilities. You can also climb and abseil here. Several companies organize horseback riding and mountain biking in the mountains of Marbella.

What cultural activities are there in Marbella?

Marbella has a year-round cultural agenda that combines the best of Spanish culture with international events organized by the foreign population. In summer, the Starlite Festival is one of the biggest events in Marbella. A month in which concerts of the world's greatest names in music take place. Marbella theatre also has many performances throughout the year. In August, Marbella

organizes its annual Art Fair, where art galleries from all over the world exhibit work by international top artists.

Marbella is also known for its fairs and festivities. The most important celebrations take place in June, namely for San Bernabé (the patron saint of Marbella). There are week-long festivities, including a pilgrimage, fireworks, concerts and a fair. In October, the San Pedro fair takes place. Another event in Marbella is Christmas with lights, music, and the annual Epiphany parade through the city centre.

Eating out in Marbella

You have plenty of choice - the many restaurant options in Marbella offer plenty of choice in terms of gastronomy and cost. If you like tapas, you'll have plenty of options, especially in the old part. Keep an eye out for the Tapas Trail, which is held every autumn and offers a variety of creative snacks.

The resort has one of the highest concentrations of Michelin stars in Europe - a total of four restaurants in Marbella offer this culinary tribute: Restaurante Dani García, Skina, El Lago and Messina. There are also several other excellent restaurants, as well as numerous good beach restaurants serving fresh fish, seafood and grilled sardines.

If you're looking for a dinner with an international touch, there's a huge choice of international bistro-style restaurants such as Alinda and The Orange Tree. There are also kitchen-specific options like Thai, Indian, Argentinean and Italian restaurants.

What is a typical dish from the region?

One of the most typical dishes in Marbella is grilled sardines (espeto de Sardiñas). The sardines are grilled on an open fire at the beach restaurants, perfectly cooked and eaten with roasted paprika salad.

Shopping in Marbella

Marbella is probably the best resort on the Costa del Sol when it comes to shopping. In the center of the city you will find well-known brands and many small specialized shops and boutiques. There is also a food market. Shopping mall La Cañada is one of the largest in southern Spain and has a wide range of shops including FNAC, Apple, Guess, Habitat and Marks & Spencer. You'll also find the Alcampo hypermarket and the Leroy Merlin DIY store.

If you're looking for luxury items, Puerto Banús is the place to be. Here you'll find high-end designer boutiques like Carolina Herrera, Louis Vuitton and Versace, as well as the big department store Corte Inglés.