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Solmar Estates Area Guide: Costa Blanca North



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Costa Blanca North

The Costa Blanca has a reputation for being a Mediterranean paradise and is a prime location boasting a superb climate with very mild winter temperatures and the supply of plentiful days of sunshine each year. This climate draws thousands of tourists and encourages participation in a wide range of sporting activities.

In the Northern Costa Blanca, the coast is peppered with a lovely mix the deeply indented rocky coves and relaxing bays. This privileged corner of Spain offers everything that has made this country so highly favoured amongst property purchasers.

For those of you interested in a broader variety of activities, the Costa Blanca has a lot to offer with a wide range of health spas, leisure facilities, numerous excellent golf courses to a championship standard and the crystal clear waters which allow you to enjoy every water sport imaginable.

The clear blue waters and stunning underwater scenery make it a diver's paradise. You can also watch the setting of the sun whilst having a dip in the cool blue waters which is an experience not easily forgotten. Covered with Mediterranean flora scrub and coastal pine, this is an area whose romantic lighthouses and ancient ruins encapsulate the history and soul of the Mediterranean. The coast boasts excellent transport links via motorways, railways, ferry ports and three international airports. The Costa Blanca is one of the most stunning and unspoilt areas in Europe. With excellent average temperatures the climate is rated by the World Health Organisation as one of the healthiest in the world.

The following pages contain details of main towns, areas and urbanizaciones of Costa Blanca North

Towns, Areas and Urbanizacions of Costa Blanca North

Main towns are indicated with a green bar and smaller towns/areas and urbanizacions are indicated with a red bar:

Alcoy

For most tourists the city of Alcoy in the interior of the Costa Blanca will be little known. With its crossing of five different rivers (most of them with little water), Alcoy has a special charm. With the rivers Serpis, Uxola, Molinar, Bnisaído and Riquer, all crossing Alcoy, it is full of impressive bridges and viaducts. Around the old town city centre there are many small bars and cafes offering a variety of local dishes and refreshments. The Plaza de Espana with its city hall (from 1861) and the church of Santa Maria. The archeological museum of Alcoy has various findings from the roman and iberian time.

Alcoy is best known for its famous fiesta of the Moors and Christians. It takes place around St George's Day at the 23rd of April. The celebrations take several days and are the most famous around the entire Costa Blanca. It is an absolute must see for every tourist and local. The museum de fiestas has Lots of lovely decorated historic costumes and pictures of past fiestas will give you a little impression, why everybody around the Costa Blanca talks about Alcoy when it comes to the biggest celebration of moros y christianos.

Benidorm

The overwhelming popularity of Benidorm is largely due to the fact that there is something for everyone. Sports lovers, sun seekers, enjoying a holiday or making the permanent move, the lively atmosphere of Benidorm is an attraction unto itself. Like much of the south coast of Spain, the first settlers were the Moors. Benidorm was a small fishing village with a modest number of inhabitants. Today the city is one of the most popular areas of Spain. The nearby beaches, mountain ranges and location to main motorways are ideal for owning property in this area. Benidorm is situated north of the White Coast, surrounded by the mountains of Sierra Helada to the east, Aitana to the north and Tossal de la Cala to the west, which shield the area from surrounding winds and maintain the pleasant year-round climate.

Here is a small selection of the popular daytime attractions in Benidorm :- Terra Mitica, one of the largest and newest theme parks in the Mediterranean. Terra Natura, a superb wild animal theme park. There are also 2 safari parks close by with a range of wild animals & Cactuslandia which boasts a display of over 1000 species of succulents & cactus. Mundomar (Seaworld) with dolphins, sea lions, penguins etc. Aqualandia water park with waterfalls, swimming pools, waterslides, waves etc.

For those seeking real Spain the old town has it all, a maze of cobbled streets, the Iglesia de San Jaime a

200 year old parish church and even a boat trip across the bay to Benidorm Island. The triangular shaped Island is also known as Peacock Island as it is primarily occupied by birds (mainly peacocks); a must for bird lovers. There are several museums in Benidorm which are worth seeking out inc. a wax works museum.

The area is jam packed full of hotels & apartments to rent. The Levante beach side of the town (north) is the very busy touristy side of town with the majority of bars, restaurants, night clubs etc. inc. the famous Benidorm Palace. Also on offer is a large range of watersports, jet skis, scuba diving, water skiing, windsurfing, paragliding etc. etc. The Poniente beach side of town (south) is much quieter & more Spanish. There is also old Town Benidorm. In all parts of Benidorm you will find many tourist centres with information of everything that happens in & around Benidorm.

Altea

Altea is located in the Spanish region of Alicante on the Costa Blanca. This is without doubt one of the most charming towns to be found on Spain's 'White Coast'. If you want all night clubs and the bright city lights on your holiday, give Altea a miss. This town is a holiday haven for the more discerning tourist who will be captivated by its medieval cobbled streets, its picture book old quarter and the delights of its palm-fringed seafront esplanade. The town is just 11 kilometres north of Benidorm but these two resorts are worlds apart. Altea is a restful resort where there's plenty to see and do without being bothered by the mayhem which typifies some of the busier coastal towns in high season. You'll find it 62 kilometres north of Alicante's El Altet international airport. Flying time from London is two and a half hours and the drive to Altea takes about 45 minutes on the toll-paying motorway. You'll pass by the skyscraper city of Benidorm and looming majestically in the distance you'll see one of the Costa Blanca's most distinctive landmarks - the church of Altea with its magnificent dome of blue and white glazed ceramic tiles. Make a trip up to the church, through the narrow streets of the old quarter, one of your first priorities. Wind your way up through the cobbled lanes (many are stepped and inaccessible to traffic) until you come to the plaza at the top of the hill where you'll find the church and the most magnificent views of the mountains and Altea bay.

It's easy to understand why Altea became a Bohemian centre for musicians, artists and writers from all over Europe when they first discovered its delights back in the early 60s. The town is now geared to the demands of the modern day tourist but still retains that Bohemian air. You'll find a fascinating array of tiny shops offering exquisite local crafts, paintings and gifts. There are top class restaurants where you can enjoy the local seafood and rice dishes as well as some excellent international cuisine. The impressive new arts centre and concert hall - the Palau Altea Centre d'Arts - provides a wealth of entertainment and cultural activities for the benefit of residents and holidaymakers alike. Down at the seafront you'll find a series of pebble and shingle beaches where all water sports are available during the summer months. The seafront promenade is also the venue for the huge Tuesday market, one of the biggest of its kind on the Costa Blanca. It's the place to pick up some great bargains (Moroccan rugs, cheap clothing, ceramics etc) along with some highly suspect 'designer' watches, T-shirts and sunglasses.

Zona Altea Hills

Calpe

Calpe is located in the Spanish region of Alicante on the Costa Blanca. The town is steeped in history and offers a wealth of culture - yet this ancient fishing port has comfortably married its centuries old

past with the demands of modern day tourism. Calpe is a mixture of high rise beachside buildings geared to the needs of the 21st century tourist and charming, narrow medieval streets bearing the hallmarks of a bygone age. With its ideal location, near perfect climate and many attractions, Calpe has proved a magnet for foreign tourists and homeowners alike. Thousands of British and German visitors have come here for a short visit and never returned to their native land! For holidaymakers, Calpe offers the full range of accommodation - big, modern hotels, small 'hostals', self catering apartments and villas with pools.

There are quality sandy beaches, excellent local shopping facilities and a wealth of bars and restaurants offering all kinds of local and international cuisine. People travel from all over the Costa Blanca to dine here - whether you want Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Lebanese, German or English food, you'll find it all in Calpe. The town's most famous and distinguishing feature is its mighty Penon de Ifach - the huge rock which rises 332 metres out of the Mediterranean, reminiscent of the rock of Gibraltar. The Penon was declared a nature reserve in 1987 and now provides a safe haven for a variety of birds and unusual flora and fauna. For the energetic, a hike to the top of the Penon de Ifach is a memorable experience - but definitely not one to be contemplated by the elderly, disabled or those prone to vertigo!

Take a trip to the old town and you'll find ample evidence of Calpe's rich history in murals, monuments and museums which keep alive the town's links with its chequered past. Remains of Iberian tribes, dating back to several hundreds of years BC, have been found around the Penon de Ifach. There are reminders of the times when Moors and Christians co-existed relatively peacefully in this town for centuries & evidence of the measures taken to protect Calpe from the scourge of the Barbary pirates who plagued this stretch of the coast between the 14th and 17th centuries.

Denia

The town of Denia is located in the Spanish region of Alicante on the Costa Blanca. This is a delightful cosmopolitan town, rich in history and culture and its streets are a fascinating showcase of architecture through the ages. Its buildings are a permanent monument to the civilisations which have made their mark here - Iberian, Carthaginian, Roman, Arab and Christian. These days tourism blends comfortably with the hustle and bustle of a working town. The town is midway between the two international airports of Valencia (to the north) and Alicante (to the south). Both airports are within an hour's drive using the toll paying A7 motorway. Denia is just a 15 minute hop from Exit 62. This is much more than a holiday resort and you'll find it a busier place than its coastal neighbours, Oliva and Javea. As well as being a magnet for tourists, mainly British and German, Denia is also a thriving commercial centre. It boasts modern supermarkets, an extraordinary number of banks, some top quality shops, tax consultants, lawyers, doctors, dentists, the area's biggest hospitals and the courts of justice. But Denia's initial growth was as a seafaring town and it's still a working port. The old fishermen's quarter preserves its delightful cobbled streets and whitewashed buildings but nearby you'll find a modern yacht marina and the ferry terminal serving the Balearic Islands of Ibiza, Menorca, Mallorca and Formentera. Denia's focal point is its impressive 16th century castle which dominates the town from a height of 58 metres.

You can park on the outskirts of the town and walk through a tunnel under the castle into the main shopping centre. Head for the main central street, Calle Marques de Campo, named after the Marquis of Denia who used to reside in the castle. This is a wonderful place to sit and people watch - a Parisian-style tree lined avenue peppered with street cafes on both sides. Shopping in Denia is a sheer delight. Besides offering all the high street essentials, there are some top of the range clothes shops with designer wear for both men and women and beautiful gift shops specialising in the unusual and exquisite (we're not talking sticks of rock and giant sombreros here!) A myriad of restaurants offers some of the best regional and international cuisine on the Costa Blanca. There are some great tapas bars, seafood restaurants with a mouth watering selection of produce fresh from local waters, Indonesian, Mexican, Italian and Greek restaurants. As for the beaches, they stretch for 20 kilometres either side of Denia and consistently win the European Blue Flag for safety and cleanliness.

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Javea

The town of Javea is located in the Spanish region of Alicante on the Costa Blanca. This popular resort is often referred to as the jewel in the crown of the Costa Blanca and it's easy to see why. The World Health Organisation once named it as having one of the healthiest climates in the world, enjoying more recorded hours of sunshine per year than any other place in Spain. Thousands of British people have come on holiday to Javea, fallen in love with it and decided to make it their permanent home. It's certainly not one of Spain's biggest tourist centres - but Javea offers a high quality holiday for visitors of all ages.

Situated midway between Valencia and Alicante airports (about an hour's drive from each if you use the toll paying motorway) Javea is easily accessible but has never been inundated by package holidaymakers. There are only a few hotels so the bulk of the tourist industry relies on the wealth of self-catering apartments and villas available here. Look at a map of Spain and you'll see a distinctive triangular landmass jutting out into the Mediterranean halfway down the east coast. Javea is at the tip of that triangle. That's why it's known locally as 'Amanecer de Espana' or Dawn of Spain - because as the sun rises in the east among the first places to catch its rays are the three headlands of Javea. A wonderful sight, if you're up early enough! Javea's most distinctive feature is the mountain known locally as 'the Montgo'. This provides a dramatic backdrop for the resort and those who live in Javea swear blind it's an elephant, turned to stone, with its trunk dipping into the sea for a drink. It's a strange phenomenon but you can even see the elephant's eye close as the sun goes down (especially if you've had too much sangria!).

Javea is divided into three distinct sections, all quite different to one another. There's the old town - the original Javea, set slightly back from the coast and the place to visit if you're interested in Spanish

history and culture. Here you'll find charming, narrow streets, shopkeepers speaking the local language 'Valenciano' and a truly Spanish feel to the place. Thursday's a good day to visit when there's a big market in the Plaza de la Constitucion. Then there's the port area - still a working fishing port and a delightful place to visit with its mixture of fishing vessels, luxury yachts and seafront bars and cafes. But it's the Arenal Beach which attracts the vast majority of holidaymakers - a beautiful crescent shaped sandy beach with a promenade lined with bars, cafes, restaurants, gift shops and ice-cream parlours. Javea is relatively quiet for most of the year - until the months of July and August when the Arenal area turns into a 24-hour playground. It can be noisy at night during those two months but most of the villa accommodation is at a 'safe' distance where families where can relax in peace and quiet.

Moraira

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Onil

Onil is Located 697 metres above sea level just beyond Castalla in the foothills after which it is named. The town is typically Spanish with many key historical features. The town has all modern day services and easy access to the Valencian Community's new network of roadways and motorways.

Onil is in the heart of the wine trail. Many regional dishes, using produce from Onil, can be enjoyed at the many excellent restaurants. It is a favourite area for cyclists, hikers and nature lovers yet is just 30 minutes from either the coast or the international airport at Alicante.

The town is a major producer of toys, mainly dolls. It also has a rich historical heritage. It was the birthplace of the famous artist Eusebio Sempere. A bust of this artist can be seen at the fortress palace in the centre of the historic district. The fortress palace now serves as the Town Hall. The parish church is alongside. Outside the town centre are the Hermitage of St Ana and the Hermitage of Our Lady of Good Health (patron saint of Onil).

Polop

Polop, is a municipality in the comarca of Marina Baixa, Alicante, Valencian Community, Spain