



SolmarEstates.com



Solmar Estates Area Guide: Mar Menor



www.solmarestates.com
+(34) 966 116 650

Mar Menor

The Mar Menor is a perfect place for sailing, windsurfing, diving or swimming in the warm crystal clear waters. A region of Costa Calida, to the south east of Murcia, the Mar Menor is a coastal salt water lake, the largest in Europe, covering a surface area of 170m², separated from the Mediterranean by the La Manga peninsula. This region enjoys around 315 days of sunshine annually and an average temperature of 18 - 20 degrees.

Mar Menor means small sea its just seven metres at its deepest and during the summer months can rise to 5 Deg.C higher than the sea - its shallow, calm waters makes it perfect for family activities.

The narrow La Manga del Mar peninsula houses a strip of fine hotels, homes and apartments. The famous La Manga Club overlooks the water. Nestled amongst the lemon groves, the club has three superb golf courses and one of Europe's finest tennis centres. Its also home to a football training centre often used by international teams.

The main airport is Murcia San Javier with Alicante airport also within reach further north. A new airport is being constructed at Corvera and is due to be completed in 2009/10. The region has excellent road networks.

The following pages contain details of main towns, areas and urbanizacions of Mar Menor

Towns, Areas and Urbanizacions of Mar Menor

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

Cartagena

Cartagena is the capital of the region with a population of 168,000, Cartagena was founded, as its name suggests, by the Carthaginians in 227 BC and it became Hannibal's capital city on the Iberian Peninsula.

Today it is a modern, industrial city although relics of its past are still highly visible. The narrow streets of the old town were built around the ruined 13th century cathedral. There are several sites of historical interest including the remains of the Roman road, an old Roman theatre and the Lítorna (an ancient lighthouse of Moorish origins). Cartagena's ancient seaport and naval dockyard is where the first submarine was built in 1900 and where submarines are still built today. The port consists of a deep bay with a natural harbour, hence the town's historical importance.

Cartagena has a large shopping centre, plenty of supermarkets and other amenities you would expect to find in a large town including a hospital, schools and sports facilities. The town is the major service centre for the Costa Calida urbanizations that continue to develop around it. Cartagena is 30 minutes drive from Murcia. San Javier airport is 15km from Cartagena. The excellent golf courses at La Manga, which has 3 18-hole courses of international standard, are 20km away.

La Manga Club

La Manga is a strip of land that enfolds the shallow waters of the Mar Menor teeming with all types of fish and shellfish. This is a privileged spot with a healthy climate and many small typical Spanish villages.

Because it is between two seas, the Mar Menor and the Mediterranean, La Manga is ideal for every type of nautical sport in its marinas, swimming, sailing and wind surfing, with classes given to beginners and advanced levels.

If you are looking to buy a property in Spain and love golf then La Manga is the place for you. There is a first class championship golf course which is the haunt of many famous celebrities. Here there is a green haven where it is possible to play tennis or bowls or even go horse-riding, in fact there is an opportunity to develop your skills in many sports. Many international entertainers have performed in the five-star hotel or in the casino.

La Manga Del Mar Menor

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La Union

Los Belones

Los Nietos (los Nietos)

Los Urrutias

Mar De Cristal

Playa Honda

Mar Menor

The Mar Menor, apart from being the biggest open air health spa in the world is also considered to be among the best areas for regatta and certain water sports which can be practiced all year round. There are numerous sports centres which have facilities to allow competitive sports enthusiasts the opportunity to prepare for their tournaments and competitions, in a fantastic environment where the waters are calm. There are several diving, sailing and canoe training schools where education on sports techniques can be acquired and where the opportunity to practice newly-acquired skills can be accessed.

Los Alcazares

The golden sandy blue flag beaches of Los Alcazares are located on the Mar Menor which is a salt-water lagoon separated from the Mediterranean Sea by a 17km long strip of land called La Manga. The Los Alcazares beach is 7km in length with an attractive promenade walk to the town centre and beyond.

This beautiful part of Spain is quite unknown to many people and probably Spain's Best Kept Secret with the beautiful Mar Menor (little sea) a saltwater lagoon divided from the Mediterranean by the Manga strip, a natural breakwater which has progressively enclosed it. Almond trees, palms and windmills add to the beauty of the landscape of this area.

There are wonderful sailing and water skiing facilities on the lagoon, without any waves and very shallow waters. This makes the ideal beach holiday or permanent living area, especially for families with children due to it being so safe. The bay is famous for visitors with rheumatic, arthritic and skin problems. A natural mud bath can be found in one area of the beach which offers therapeutic results in comparison to the Black Sea.

Los Alcazares offers seven kilometres of coast line with the town centre practically situated on the shores of the Mar Manor. The coastline is divided into the following beaches from north to south, and some of these with the blue flag awarded by EU: Las Salinas, Los Narejos, Las Palmeras, Espejo, Manzanares, Carrion and La Concha. All these beaches are connected by means of a magnificent promenade and are fully equipped with showers,

fountains, accessways and paths for the handicapped and also cater for games and sports.

Santiago de la Ribera

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San Javier

At the northern end of the Mar Menor, San Javier is a lovely Spanish town, which like many places along this stretch of coastline was once a sleepy fishing village. Now San Javier is a friendly, relaxed centre with a whole range of shops, bars and great places to eat. Here you are extremely well positioned for the Mar Menor, all of the facilities of the town and the beaches and sailing club at Santiago de la Ribera.

Although you do not automatically associate La Manga Club as the destination for a 'beach holiday', the resort has its own small cove and man-made beach at La Cala. Additionally, the surrounding region has a large number of beaches offering the perfect retreat for those who like to feel sand beneath their feet or frolic in the surf.

The Mar Menor and the Mediterranean are nearby and have a number of good bathing beaches; whilst slightly further afield is an even larger selection from which to choose. A number of the beaches locally have been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag status. This is only awarded to those beaches which meet exacting standards of cleanliness, stringent environmental criteria and safe bathing. The closest to La Manga Club are Playa Blanco del Tabal and Playa el Pedrucho on La Manga Strip.

San Pedro Del Pinatar

Traditionally a seafaring and agricultural centre, San Pedro del Pinatar has become one of the principal tourist towns & main tourists attractions on Murcia's Costa Calida. The main attractions of San Pedro are concentrated around the beach and shore. Here you will find Lo Pagan, a lively tourist centre which has all kinds of holiday facilities such as hotels, bars, restaurants and shops. Next to the long promenade facing the Mar Menor are extensive beaches such as La Puntica or Villananitos. This watery setting, combined with the facilities at its marina means you can take part in many sports such as sailing, scuba diving or windsurfing.

Around the Mar Menor, the beaches of Villananitos and La Curva (formerly known as La Puntica), offer shallow waters, an incentive to bathe or practise any kind of water sport. La Puntica is a beach where water sports are possible, such as sailing, windsurfing, canoeing. There are even floating pitches on the water. It has a wide variety of services such as open-air bars, showers and restaurants. The beaches bathed by the Mediterranean are El Mojon and La Llana with 400 and 2,500 meters long respectively. El Mojon is a typical Spanish village near the Mar Menor, (the famous saltwater lagoon) and the San Pedro Nature Reserve (where you observe many species of flora and fauna). It has clean safe beaches and a lovely promenade with walks leading to the marina near the salt lakes.

Lo Pagan

Mud glorious mud, surely we can't be talking about Spain? Indeed we are, and the place to find all this lovely mud is called Lo Pagan. Mention the Mar Menor to most people and they think of La Manga (The Sleeve) the well known sports resort and over-developed strip of land which forms the Mar Menor (Lesser Sea), investigate a little more closely and you will find some excellent resorts dotted along the Mar Menor's coastline. One of these splendid resorts is the small village of Lo Pagan, located just south of the San Pedro del Pinatar salt flats.

Lo Pagan could easily be missed, but missing it would be a mistake as it is a lovely little village with a wonderful sandy beach and shallow, clear, warm water. The temperature of the water in the Mar Menor is typically around 5 degrees warmer than the surrounding Mediterranean and although it has an area of about 170 km² and is the largest inland sea of its kind in Europe, it is only around 7 metres at its deepest point making it ideal for water sports. On arriving at Lo Pagan you may just want to head for the beach and enjoy the sun and the warm shallow water, however you might easily be confronted by a strange and unusual sight, what exactly are those black objects drying in the sun? People is the answer, people covered in black, smelly mud, and grown people at that, not children. Is this some quaint ritual, or do they know something that we don't? Indeed they do know something and that is the special healing effects of this foul smelling mud, the knowledge of which draws people from all over the world to the village of Lo Pagan. The beneficial effects of certain muds and clays have been known from man's early history and the Chinese in particular used mud for making poultices to heal wounds and inflammations. The mud at Lo Pagan is confined to a part of the salt lake known as 'La Puntica', and it has formed due to the climatic conditions of the area, long hours of sunlight and an extremely high salt content in the water. The sediment that has formed contains high levels of important minerals such as potassium, magnesium, calcium, fluorine, sulphur and chlorine and it has been discovered that applying it to the skin and allowing it to dry in the sun results in beneficial effects for many ailments. The mud is recommended for many types of skin complaint such as acne, ulcers, abscesses and inflammations, it is also recommended for arthritis, rheumatism and gout. Due to a small amount of grit in the mud it also has an exfoliating effect on the skin, similar to that used in beauty treatments, mud face packs etc. It leaves the skin feeling silky smooth and fresh (if you can get rid of the smell!). Over the past couple of years a number of wooden platforms have been constructed leading out to the best areas of mud and there are steps leading down to the water to make the experience easier to enjoy. You will find the mud to be about six inches deep and very warm, you simply apply the mud to affected areas (or as most people



Solmar Estates Costa Blanca C.B.

C.C. Playa Flamenca, Unit 129

Calle Niagra 62

Playa Flamenca

Orihuela Costa, 03189

Alicante, Spain

t: +(34) 966 116 650

e: info@solmarestates.com

w: <http://www.solmarestates.com>

Area Details and Information

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do all over!) and allow it to dry in the sun. When the mud is dry you can then wash it off in the same lake, it is not allowed to wash it off on the main beach as this spoils the prime bathing areas. There are also areas (rather like moats) of excessively salty water where people bathe to relieve the effects of arthritis, tendonitis and rheumatism, the warm salty water reputedly increases blood circulation and eliminates toxins giving relief to stiff and painful joints.

Close to Lo Pagan are the salt flats of San Pedro del Pinatar, declared a Nature Reserve and Regional Park in 1985, it is the most important area of marshland in the region of Murcia and is an important area for bird life. The saltworks here have a documented history going back to the 14th Century and two windmills which still exist today were used to pump the salty water of the Mar Menor into the salt lagoons. The windmills are no longer working and have been replaced by electric pumps. Lo Pagan can be easily reached via the N332 coast road, signposted from San Pedro del Pinatar, and is also well signposted from the AP-7 motorway (Junction 777).