

INTRODUCTION

FACTFILE

Full Country Name :

Spain

Area : 504.030 sq km
(195.364 sq mi)

Population : 46.6 million

Capital City : Madrid

Language : Spanish

Religion : Catholics

Government : Democracy and
Monarchy

GDP : US\$ 1,395 trillion

GDP per head : US\$ 30.588

Annual growth : -4 % (Due to
Recession)

Inflation : 0,3 %

VISAS & CUSTOMS

If you are travelling from one of the following countries (Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, the USA, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, San Marino, the Vatican, Singapore, Uruguay or Venezuela): you must present a valid passport, which will allow you to remain in Spain for a maximum period of 90 days.

If you come from another country, you should apply for a visa from the Spanish Consulate in your place of residence, subject to criteria established by the EU. You will also require a valid passport. You may be required to specify the reason for your application for entrance to Spain.

Furthermore, if considered opportune, the Spanish authorities may require a document showing the establishment of accommodation in Spain, confirmation of booking on an organized tour, a return ticket or ticket for a tourist itinerary, or an invitation by a third party. In addition, they may also require you to show that you are in possession of sufficient funds for maintenance during your stay in Spain. It is advisable to take out travel insurance for your trip.

Given that conditions may vary, we suggest that you contact the Spanish Embassy or Consulate to verify these requirements before you start your trip.

DOCUMENTS

Please make sure that you have all the necessary travel documents ready before you leave your country.

PASSPORT

In many countries you'll be required to have a passport valid for 6 months starting from the entry date. If you are

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It's vital to take a photocopy of the important pages of your passport (pages of personal data, passport number, visas etc) and keep these copies separate from your passport.

holding a passport with less than 6 month's validity or a few pages remaining, we suggest you to apply for a new one before you depart.

VISA

Check your visa when it's issued to ensure that it contains the correct figures. Please bear in mind that a visa does not guarantee you enter a country as the final decision will be given by the authorities at the immigration.

TOUR VOUCHER

When you book a trip, you'll be provided with a tour voucher showing the details of your tour. You'll need to hand over this voucher to your tour leader to join the tour. The tour leader reserves the right to refuse serving any passenger failing to provide the tour voucher. If you have booked extra services like pre- and post tour accommodation and transfer, please make sure that these services are also shown on your tour voucher.

FLIGHT TICKET / CONFIRMATION

Do not forget to check your name, surname, flight details and other necessary information placed on your flight ticket/confirmation voucher at least 3 days before you leave your country.

BEFORE YOU GO

While it's your own choice and responsibility regarding what type of clothing, belongings, luggage, bags and other items to take with you, we try to share our experiences with you to help you have a comfortable journey in Spain.

ESSENTIALS

Before you leave your country, we recommend you to make sure you have the followings with you :

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Airline or transportation ticket
- ✓ Tour voucher
- ✓ Insurance policy
- ✓ Visas (if necessary)
- ✓ Label on your travel bag
- ✓ Pre-departure information
- ✓ Money (cash and/or travellers cheques)
- ✓ Credit card

PACKING

Please remember that the airline baggage allowance is 20 kilos and you should not pack more than you can comfortably carry.

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When packing, the golden rule is : decide how many clothes you want to take, halve the amount and that's how much you'll need.

We also recommend you to bring a frame backpack or a suitcase. In addition to your main bag, you'll need to have a smaller day pack and a money belt.

What about the souvenirs ? Make sure that you leave some space for souvenirs in your luggage. There are a wide range of fantastic things to buy in the Middle East and in Mediterranean countries, not only for your mates, but also for yourself !

We have also compiled a list of things that you might need on the tour:

Useful equipment : Water bottle with strap, torch and batteries, international adapter, travel alarm, playing cards, walkman or mp3 player, discs, laundry detergent

Toiletries : Towels, soap, toothbrushes, talcum powder, razors, deodorant, tampons, sunscreens, contact lenses (bring enough extra pairs and solution), glasses (and a copy of your prescription in case you need emergency replacements), sunglasses, sun cream, a roll of toilet paper, hygienic wet wipes.

First-aid kit : Bandages, pain reliever, antibiotic cream, a thermometer, moleskin, decongestant, insect repellent, burn ointment, personal medicine.

Others : Converters and adapters, camera, films, flash, batteries, money belt and additional belongings that you think will be useful during your journey.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Please also note that you can call the following numbers in case of **emergency** : 0090 544 522 54 74
0090 542 779 04 34 or (Head office).

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If you're taking a taxi to your hotel or around the city, close your ears to the common claims of taxi drivers telling newly arrived travellers that their hotel has closed down, full or poor and that they know a better hotel etc... Just insist on being taken to your hotel and once you arrive, go to the reception desk if you need further assistance.

ARRIVAL HOSTEL IN VALENCIA

Please find below the address details of your arrival hotel in :

Hostal Residencia Penalty ,

Avenida de Suecia , No:27 ,
46010 , Valencia / SPAIN

Tel:0034 963 936 261

www.hostalpenalty.com

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GUIDE MEETING

Please note that your guide will meet and brief you about the next days of your tour at the arrival at 06:30 pm

LEFT OR LOST LUGGAGE

If you discover upon arrival that your luggage is missing, or has arrived incomplete, you should report this immediately to the information desk in the baggage hall. The staff will be able to tell you what the procedures are for reclaiming your luggage and advise you on any forms that may need to be filled in and stamped. The airport staff should also be able to explain what will happen next and when you should expect your luggage.

If you experience any problems in dealing with airport officials, your tour leader will be happy to assist you.

Please remember that lost luggage is a matter between you and the airline /airport authority and the recovery of your luggage is your own responsibility and at your own expense.

ABOUT THE TOUR

Please remember that the tour price covers specific services offered during your trip, not your entire travel cost. Your expenses will vary depending on your interests and budget and your tour leader will be always ready to inform you of the local prices and possible travel costs.

SERVICES INCLUDED

- Accommodation in quality hostel
- Breakfasts
- Return transfer from Valencia to Bunol(air conditioned non smoking coaches).
- Orientation walk in Valencia
- Walking day tour in Valencia
- La Tomatina t-shirt

SERVICES NOT INCLUDED

The tour price does not cover the following;

- Any flights,
- Insurance,
- Any meals not stated in the itinerary,
- Drinks,
- Items of a personal nature tips,
- Visa fee,
- Entrance fees to the sights and museums,
- Other services not stated in the service included section,
- Optional activities and excursions.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Optional tour to Valencia beach.

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It is advisable to carry some Imodium with you in case you get an upset stomach from the difference in cuisine. The different spices and foods may be a little upsetting to your stomach and it is best to be prepared... just in case.

Another appealing feature of the city is its numerous convention centers, like the Valencia Fair (Feria de Valencia), the Conference Palace (Palau de Congressos) and several 5 star hotels. The first America's Cup competitions took place in June and July 2005 and were key attractions during the summer of 2005. According to official data from the organizing committee, as many as 150,000 visitors flocked to Valencia's port each day during the two-week events

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is recommended to all passengers travelling on Travel Talk tours to have personal insurance to cover all medical and repatriation costs. Please take your insurance policy with you.

Bottled water is readily available throughout your tour and we recommend that you purchase this rather than drink the local tap water. While the local water is usually heavily chlorinated and safe many people find they get upset stomachs after drinking these supplies.

It is often difficult to find the precise medication that is available in one's home country and for this reason we recommend that you carry all current medication with you.

Toilet paper is rarely provided so it is a good idea to carry a spare roll in your bag. It should be placed in the basket beside the toilet, not flushed away, as you might block the pipes.

City of Valencia

Valencia is the capital and most populous city of the Autonomous Community of Valencia and the third largest city in Spain, with a population of 810,064 in 2008.

It forms part of an industrial area on the Costa del Azahar. Its main festival, the Falles, has a reputation throughout Spain, while the world famous Spanish dish paella originated around Valencia. The city contains a dense monumental heritage (including the Llotja de la Seda (World Heritage Site since 1996), but its landmark is undoubtedly the City of Arts and Sciences, an avant-garde and futuristic museum complex.

Tourism

Formerly an industrial city, Valencia saw rapid development that started in the mid-1990s, expanding its cultural and touristic possibilities, which turned it into a vibrant city, restoring old landmarks like the old Towers of the medieval city (Serrano Towers and Quart Towers), monasteries like the San Miguel de los Reyes monastery, which now holds a specialized library, the whole Malvarrosa beach, with the construction of a 4 km (2 mi) long paseo or complete quarters, like the old Carmen Quarter, which has seen extensive renovation.

Nightlife

Valencia is famous for its vibrant nightlife. In the 1980s and 1990s the town was famous for the so called ruta del bakalao. Today, the more alternative/bohemian bars and nightclubs are concentrated in the Carmen, while the student nightlife is found around Blasco Ibáñez and Benimaclet, the more mainstream weekend nightlife has its clusters in the areas of Cánovas and Joan Llorens. In the summer, there is also nightlife on the beach and at the Port. Agua de Valencia is the city's unofficial cocktail.

Food

Valencia is famous for its wonderful gastronomic culture. Paella - a simmered rice dish that includes seafood or meat (chicken and rabbit), horchata, fartons, buñuelos, Spanish omelette, rosquilletas and squid (calamares) are some examples of typical Valencian foods.

■ Transportation

Public transport is provided by the Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat Valenciana (FGV) which operates the Valencia Metro and other rail and bus services. The Valencia Airport is situated 9 km (5.6 mi) west of downtown Valencia.

■ Climate

Valencia experiences a hot-summer Mediterranean climate (Koppen climate classification Csa), with Semi-arid climate (BSh) influences. Its average annual temperature is 17.8 °C (64.0 °F): 22.3 °C (72.1 °F) during the day and 13.3 °C (55.9 °F) at night. In the coldest month - January, the average sea temperature is 13-14 °C (55-57 °F). In the warmest month - August, the typically temperature during the day ranges from 28-34 °C (82-93 °F), above 23 °C (73 °F) at night, the average sea temperature is 28 °C (82 °F).

Average number of days above 21 °C (70 °F) is 200, average number of days above 32 °C (90 °F) is 11 (1 in June, 4 in July, 4 in August and 2 in September). Average morning relative humidity: 82%, evening relative humidity: 55%. Sunshine hours are till 2,594 per year, from 150 in November (5 hours of sunshine every day) to 310 in August (10 hours of sunshine every day).

June	July	August	September
C F	C F	C F	C F
26 79	29 84	30 85	28 82

■ HISTORY

The festival is in honor of the town's patron saints, St. Louis Bertrand (San Luis Bertràn) and the Mare de Déu dels Desemparats (Mother of God of the Defenseless), a title of the Virgin Mary.

The tomato fight has been a strong tradition in Buñol since 1944 or 1945. No one is completely certain how this event originated. Possible theories on how the Tomatina began include a local food fight among friends, a juvenile class war, a volley of tomatoes from bystanders at a carnival parade, a practical joke on a bad musician, and the chaotic aftermath of an accidental lorry spillage. One of the most popular theories is that disgruntled townspeople attacked city councilmen with tomatoes during a town celebration. Whatever happened to begin the tradition, it was enjoyed so much that it was repeated the next year, and the year after that, and so on. The holiday was banned during the Spanish State period under Francisco Franco for having no religious significance, but returned in the 1970s after his demise.

La Tomatina is a food fight festival held on the last Wednesday of August each year in the town of Buñol in the Valencia region of Spain. Tens of thousands of participants come from all over the world to fight in a brutal battle where more than one hundred metric tons of over-ripe tomatoes are thrown in the streets.

The week-long festival features music, parades, dancing, and fireworks. On the night before the tomato fight, participants of the festival compete in a paella cooking contest. It is tradition for the women to wear all white and the men to wear no shirts. This festival started in a casual way in 1945, but wasn't officially recognized until 1952.

Approximately 20,000– 50,000 tourists come to find out more about the tomato fight, multiply by several times Buñol's normal population of slightly over 9,000. There is limited accommodation for people who come to La Tomatina, and thus many participants stay in Valencia and travel by bus or train to Buñol, about 38 km (23,6 Mile) outside the city. In preparation for the dirty mess that will ensue, shopkeepers use huge plastic covers on their storefronts in order to protect them. They also use about 150,000 tomatoes, just about 90,000 pounds.

■ DISTANCES

Valencia - Madrid :356 kms

Valencia-Barcelona:351 kms

VLC Valencia Airport - Valencia City Center : 10 kms

GENERAL INFO FOR LA TOMATINA

La Tomatina festival in Spain gives new meaning to the expression 'playing with your food'. For most of the year Bunol is a hum industrial town, 40 km (25mi) from Valencia, quietly going about its own business. But come the last Wednesday of August, the town's streets turns into a salsa riot, with over 20,000 revelers pelting each other with large, red, squishy tomatoes. There are lots of theories on how the festival started; one is that it began in 1945 with anti-Franco protests, although any link between Franco and tomatoes remains ambiguous. Another theory is that it started when two friends had a stand-up knock-down argument while sharing a meal. The argument quickly reached food-throwing proportions, infected acquaintances and nearby diners, moved out into the street, spread through the suburbs, progressed to neighboring towns and eventually wound up as an annual event that attracted 'mata throwers from all corners of the the world. The standard uniform is an old T-shirt, old shorts and eye goggles. T-shirts with bulls eyes printed on them are not recommended. Nearly 140 tons of tomatoes are trucked in from around the countryside and the argy-bargy begins with the firing of a rocket. An hour later the end of the festival is announced with the firing of another rocket and the clean up of the tomato-slimed streets begin.

What is La Tomatina?
The Tomatina is only one of the celebrations of a week long festival with musical bands, fireworks, food, and over all fun. This is a war were there are expected to be no winners, but where all have fun.

Where is it?
La Tomatina takes place in Buñol, a small town 25 km (about 15,5 miles) west of Valencia and well connected by train and bus.

When does it take place?

On the last Wednesday of August, at the peak of tomato season, between 10 am and 1 pm. everybody enjoys and the streets turn into rivers of tomato juice.

Description

At around 10 am, the first event of the Tomatina begins. The first feat is for the crowd to figure out how to get people to climb up a greased pole with a ham at the top. While this is happening, the group works up a frenzy singing and dancing while being showered from hoses. Once someone is able to release the ham from the pole, several trucks haul the bounty of tomatoes into the center of the town, Plaza del Pueblo. The tomatoes come from Extremadura, where they are less expensive and are used only for the festival as they taste too poor for general consumption. The signal for the beginning of the fight is firing of water cannons, and the chaos begins.

Those who partake in this event are strongly encouraged to wear protective safety goggles and gloves. In addition, they must squish the tomatoes before throwing for safety precautions. After exactly one hour, the fighting ends when the water cannons are fired once more to signal the end. At this point, no more tomatoes can be thrown. The cleaning process involves the use of fire trucks to spray down the streets, with water provided from a Roman aqueduct.

ELECTRICITY

All appliances require a double round pin type plug for 220 volts AC,50 hertz.

ACCOMMODATION

If you are travelling on your own, you will be allocated a twin or triple with other group members of the same gender.

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TOUR LEADER

Your Tour Leader's role is to ensure that all aspects of the trip run smoothly. He/she will share their local knowledge, advise you on how to fill your free time and coordinate the day to day running of the tour. If you have any problems on the tour, please let your Tour Leader know so that steps can be taken out put it right.

Rules of La Tomatina

The following rules have been set down by the Bunyol Town Council:

- It is illegal to bring any kind of bottles or other objects that could cause an accident.
- You must not tear t-shirts.
- Tomatoes must be crushed before throwing so that they don't hurt anybody.
- You must be careful to avoid the Lorries which carry the tomatoes.

As soon as you hear the 2nd banger you must stop throwing tomatoes.

Try to enjoy yourself as much as possible but respect these rules and the people. In the "Tomatina" festival there has never been a mishap and we would like it to stay that way so everybody around the world can have a good time.

What to Bring:

The best attire for the day:

- An old t-shirt (bulls eye print strictly optional) and shorts. Make sure these are durable because it gets pretty crazy in there.
- Preferably have a waist tie on your shorts to keep them from coming off.
- Speedos/Bathers. In case your shorts do find themselves coming off!
- Closed in shoes. An old pair of runners will do the job, not thongs!
- Goggles. A common tactic used by many to prevent the dreaded tomato juice in the eye. Prone to failure, but worth the try!
- Snorkel. Optional add on.

At the end of the day you will literally be peeling your clothes off you and throwing them away, so keep that in mind when packing.

A fresh pair of clothes to change into can be left on the shuttle bus. This bus will be securely locked during the tomato throwing, so it's advised that you leave your valuables onboard too.

Digital cameras should NOT be brought on the day. Buy a disposable camera and bring that, although we must warn you that locals consider anyone with a camera a prime target!

Cleaning Up:

The aftermath of La Tomatina puts any blood-riddled, horror film set to shame! Don't expect to recognize your mates, or they recognize you!

Once the cannon is fired to signal the end, and no more tomatoes can be thrown, out come the fire trucks and blast everything with water! Yes, the local fire brigade, help out by spraying-down the streets, and if you're in the way you will get drenched!

Everyone then shakes hands with their former targets, and fellow warriors, and heads down to the local Buñol River in a vain attempt to get the saucy mess out of their hair.

Local storekeepers who, in preparation for the ensuing mess covered their shop fronts with plastic sheets, can now remove them and return to their normal 'tomato-less' business.

Language

Hello/Hi	Hóla!
Good day	Buenos días
Good evening	Buenos tardes
Good night	Buenosnoches
Good bye	Adiós
See you soon	Hasta luego

ETIQUETTE

Please	Por favor
Thank you(verymuch) (Muchas) Gracias	
Excuse me	Perdone!
I'm sorry, but...	Lo siento,pero
That's a shame	Es una lástima
May I...?	Puedo...?

GENERAL RESPONSES

Yes	Sí
No	No
That depends	Depende
I don't know	No lo sé
I don't think so	Creo que no
I think so	Creo que sí
It doesn't matter	No importa
I don't mind	Nome molesta
Of course!	Claro
True	Es verdad
With pleasure	Con gusto

QUESTION WORDS

Where?	Dónde?
When?	Cuándo?
Why?	Por qué?
What?	Qué?
Who?	Quién?
How?	Cómo?
How much/many?	Cuántos/cuánto?
Is/are there?	Hay?

SELF TRANSPORTATION FROM VALENCIA AIRPORT TO HOSTAL

At the airport head to northwest,turn right toward Ctra del Aeropuerto.Continue straight onto Ctra del Aeropuerto.At the roundabout,take the 2nd exit and stay on Ctra del Aeropuerto. Take the subway (M3) to "Facultats" stop(journey is approx 30 mins) ,get off at facultats stop and walk to Avenida Suecia

The arrival hostel is just a couple of minutes walk from facultats subway station.

