

What's It Like Living In Malaga?

Hello Sunny Days and Low-Cost Lifestyle in Málaga, Spain

Spain's Malaga are deservedly popular as a chic and unashamedly cosmopolitan destination for expats and holidaymakers alike. Many expats and their families are choosing to settle in Malaga, lured by its fabulous year-round weather, its economical lifestyle, divine fresh cuisine and vibrant Andalusian culture.

Moreover, living and vacationing in Malaga remains more affordable than in comparable parts of Northern Europe thanks to its comparatively low property prices and the equally low cost of living in Spain's sunny southern city.

Malaga Today

Málaga is about halfway along the Costa del Sol. Six decades ago, this idyllic stretch of beautiful Mediterranean coastline was home to quaint little fishing villages.

Today it's one of Europe's most popular and thriving beach destinations where luxury beach resorts offer a sophisticated and indulgent lifestyle.

Málaga itself is home to just under 600,000 residents with a broader metropolitan catchment of around one million.

Naturally, it comes complete with all the trappings you would expect from a vibrant metropolis, great healthcare, reliable public transport, a major international airport and sublime restaurants and bars, complemented by a host of shopping and cultural options.

Only in Malaga can you stay in a visionary statement boutique hotel squeezed in between a Roman amphitheatre and a Moorish fortress. How's that for surfing the flow of history?

After all, this is the city that bequeathed Picasso to the world and has transformed itself spectacularly recently, with a flood of brilliant art galleries, a radically re-imagined port district and an emerging art district called Soho.

Farther west is the enticing Puerto Banús with its massive marina, surrounded by shopping malls, fine restaurants and magnetic Marbella, long the playground for the glamorous jet-set pack. Here you will encounter the famed 'The Golden Mile', home to a swath of luxury residences and swank resorts.

Marbella combines lovely museums, a thriving live performances scene, and a quaint historic centre.

Throughout its history, Malaga has demonstrated its formidable ability to effortlessly reinvent itself without jettisoning its laid-back vibe and remains stubbornly affordable.

9 Reasons For Living In Malaga, Spain

Here are just a few of the compelling reasons to make the move to sunny Malaga and live life in Spain to the full:

1. **Mediterranean Climate & Magnificent Coastline:** Indisputably, the best in Europe with over 320 days of sunshine, Malaga has a mild climate that extends all around the Mediterranean area creating a microclimate in Malaga that makes its winters even milder with summer temperatures in the high 30°Cs. Moreover, its 160 kilometres of coastline and crystal clear water provides an abundance of sandy beaches and secluded coves to explore and make the perfect base for a wide range of water sports
2. **Mediterranean Diet:** Recognised around the world for its healthy qualities. Based on olive oil, fish, fruit and vegetables, Malaga's cuisine gastronomy ranges from Andalucian tapas comprising traditional jamon, garlic prawns, spicy potatas bravas, meatballs or a host of fish dishes through to fresh fish and shellfish often caught locally that day. Other popular regional dishes include: platos de los montes, gazpacho cold soup a joblanco cold soup served with almonds and garlic, different types of fried seafood, healthy stefado's and meatballs in piquant sauces
3. **Natural Beauty:** Malaga and Andalusia offer dreamy landscapes, lush valley views and ancient cobbled-stone villages. Embrace the region's opportunities for trekking, hiking and camping in craggy mountains, lakes and natural parks, ski the imposing Sierra Nevadas only 2 and a half hours away and explore its many rich archaeological sites
4. **Malaga Lifestyle:** If you are in search of a relaxed lifestyle, look no further. Malaga's good weather makes it the perfect location for enjoying a beach and water sport-led daily rhythms, complemented by golf, hiking and trekking in the mountains if all that beach, swimming kayaking and working on your tan still isn't enough
5. **People And Local Culture:** Malaga's residents and the Andalusians, in general, are renowned for their friendly and chilled-out approach to life. Malaga can trace its origins back to the Romans, who passed the torch of civilization to the conquering Arabs who dominated the local culture for 800 years. These cultural roots still dominate Malaga and Andalusia today, making it a special place, culturally as its fabulous old architecture or a visit to one of the magnificent art galleries and museums will testify. Perhaps Malaga's most famous son is represented by the Pablo Picasso museum, which provides an insight into the local Malaga born artist's creative genius. Other culturally entrancing places of interest include the cathedral,

- the bullring, the Alcazaba Citadel and eleventh century architectural masterpiece and the Arabian baths
6. Andalusia's Festivals: Seemingly, across Andalusia, there is a fiesta staged every month and all of them feature Spain's best parties! No visitor to Malaga should miss the vibrant week-long carnival marking the start of Lent. Similarly, holy week's nightly religious processions and beach bonfires during the San Juan festival make for truly memorable experiences. Malaga also plays host to the annual Malaga film festival with Hollywood star Antonio Banderas a local Malaga born boy as its honorary president. Indisputably the biggest festival in Andalusia is the Malaga fair held annually each August. The nine-day non-stop festival celebrates Andalusian culture and heritage and showcases traditional dress, Flamenco shows, lots of live music, sumptuous food and fairground attractions
 7. Sporting Nirvana: Superb weather and geographical diversity combine to make Malaga the ideal spot to lift your active sporting lifestyle. Be it on land, in the mountains, on or in the water. Here you can enjoy your sport the year round particularly if golf is your passion as over 50 golf courses dot the Costa del Sol. The picturesque Sierra Nevada is surely Europe's most sun-drenched ski resort, while Andalusia is home to Malaga FC, Seville and Granada who all play in Spain's La Liga
 8. Family Fun: Many families discover a move to Malaga opens up a world of healthy activities and entertainment for the kids. The beach, your pool or your local sports complex soon becomes the centre of gravity for your children. Moreover, the region enjoys some of Spain's most brilliant theme parks. Schedule a visit to the Sea Life Aquarium home to over 2,000 fish species, the Selwo Marina with its resident dolphins and penguins and tropical birds and the amazing Tivoli World. A quick coastal sprint brings visitors to Torremolinos Spain's very first water park. In Estepona you will discover Selwo Aventura, a drive-through safari park, while Fuengirola boasts a fine zoo. All these attractions are just a sample of the family leisure options in the Malaga area
 9. Gateway To The Costa del Sol And Beyond: Malaga has extremely efficient transport links enabling you to explore other coastal areas and Spain as well as hopping on an international flight on one of the many low cost carriers operating out of Malaga airport. Similarly, the magnificent A7 motorway runs all the way down the Costa del Sol and connects to a road network spanning Sevilla, Cordoba, Valencia and Madrid. Complementing this outstanding road infrastructure is a high speed rail network.

Malaga Weather

Malaga enjoys a well-earned reputation for its idyllic, warm Mediterranean climate. Sunny skies and few rainy days have helped to make Malaga a favourite holiday destination.

Its climate features fabulously long, hot, dry summers complemented by very mild rainy winters. The city receives almost 3,000 hours of sunshine a year or about 300 days of sunny weather each year.

Spring Weather

Spring in Malaga is truly wonderful. From March through to May temperatures steadily increase to an average high of 20°C in March, 21°C in April and 24°C in May. The sun emerges for around seven hours a day in March and nine hours in May.

Summer Weather

Summer in Malaga lasts from June through to September. Temperatures average in the high 20°Cs, reaching an average of 28°C in June, and spiking to 31°C in July and August. Temperatures can prove stifling when the sirocco wind blows in from Africa.

Around 11 hours of sunshine each day is the average from June until August, while sunny hours drop to 8 in September. Rain is rare in June, July and August, but rises to around 20mm in September.

Autumn Weather

Autumn, in October and November, remains warm but is also quite wet. The average high temperature in October is still 24°C to 15°C and 20°C to 11°C in November. The sea remains warm enough for swimming until the end of the season in November, which is the wettest month of the year.

Winter Weather

Winter in Malaga is wet but also quite warm with one of Europe's warmest winters. From December through to February rainfall is approximately 80mm per month with an average of eight rainy days.

Daytime winter temperatures frequently reach into the 20°Cs when the sun comes out. January is the coldest month with an average high of 17°C and an average low of 7°C. At night temperatures can drop to freezing and fog can linger for days.

Malaga Food

One of the highlights of Malaga is its seductive cuisine. Malaga is proud of its unique regional cuisine.

Malaga's Spanish gastronomy embraces a range of fresh local products ranging from olives and olive oil, almonds, grapes and raisins, to sweet wine, fish, and seasonal vegetables through to fruits and delicious baked goods.

Here are 10 regional dishes representing Malagan food that are sure to win your heart:

1. Gazpachuelo Malagueño: Originally a poor fisherman's soup called El Palo. Combining fish, potatoes, water, salt, mayonnaise, and wine vinegar, it evolved with the inclusion of shrimp, prawns or clams. A winter soup it is typically served with a hard-boiled egg and toast.
2. Plato de Los Montes de Malaga: This "Dish of the Malaga Mountains" features fried potatoes, a fried egg, chorizo, black sausage, fried green peppers and pork mixed with paprika and assorted spices. A weighty dish, it's perfect for warming up on a wintery Sunday.
3. Porra Antequerana: A cold soup close to gazpacho with its cold tomato base, which takes its name from the local town of Antequera. Bread is blended in to thicken the mix. Typically it is garnished with tuna, ham and a chopped hard-boiled egg.
4. Fritura Malagueña: Nothing in Malaga is better than making a beeline to the beach to try the local fried fish. In Malaga, they fry with extra virgin olive oil and fresh flour when frying a range of local fish including squid, red mullet and anchovies. This local delicacy is best enjoyed standing on the beach, people watching!
5. Ajobacalao (Vélez-Málaga): The recipe for garlic-cod is reportedly two and a half centuries old. It contains garlic and cod, together with paprika, chilli, olive oil and a cottage-style loaf, preferably several days old. You beat everything together in an earthenware bowl creating an orange to reddish pâté-like texture, boasting a very original flavour. It is served on toast, with everything imaginable from peppers to cheese.
6. Espeto: If there is a local home-grown dish synonymous with Malaga, it's espeto or sardines roasted on skewers over a charcoal barbecue pit. Head for a local beach for this mouth-watering treat.
7. Purple Carrots (Cuevas Bajas): The Arabs introduced these bright versions of the familiar orange vegetable more than a thousand years ago. Similar in shade to beetroot, it easily reaches 30cm and one kilo of weight thanks to the areas high humidity. Slightly bitterer than its orange cousin it is a treat finely sliced and grilled, accompanied by salt and oil in a salad or fried.
8. Tarta Malagueña: This local cake is created using almonds, Malaga sweet wine and apricot jam. It is a seriously sweet treat! Decorated with raisins and finely sliced almonds, a slice of Tarta Malagueña is the perfect accompaniment to a steaming cup of coffee, so, make it your afternoon bite of choice for when you are desperately in need of a major sugar hit!

9. Tortas De Algarrobo (Algarrobo): Actually more a cake rather than a cookie, it is a combination of olive oil almonds and aniseed. These are delightful as a morning snack with coffee or with hot chocolate in the afternoon.

10. Mollete (Antequera): The Malaga equivalent to the French baguette, the mollete is a slightly cooked, soft bread. The traditional version has a little garlic rubbed on the bread, with chopped tomatoes, salt and a glug of extra virgin olive oil. It can be toasted and paired with everything from loin lard to tomatoes with tuna, dipped in oil and salt or the classic butter and jam.

Expats In Spain

Expats in Spain rave about their stress-free, sun-drenched lifestyle. However, if you are considering a move to sunny Spain there is always the challenge of how to fit in seamlessly with the local community. If you find yourself confused, simply follow these five basic tips to feel more at home in Malaga.

1. Learn To Love Bureaucracy

When you go to finalize what seems to be a never-ending stream of paperwork to get through, always remember to bring many, many copies of pretty much everything. Consider it a step on the path to developing patience and forbearing

2. Thou Shalt Not Surrender To Frustration

Never assume a meeting-free morning is a perfect time to pop into your bank, schedule a doctor appointment or visit a museum. Everything takes more time than it needs and everything takes forever, particularly the preliminary exchanges of information about aches and pains, marital disharmony, and ungrateful relatives. Whenever you visit anywhere official, there is always another unanticipated bill or charge you hadn't anticipated.

3. Thou Shalt Never Schedule Anything In August

Never attempt to get anything at all done in August. Spain is closed, Malaga shuts up shop for the season and goes on holidays. If you do need anyone, you can probably track them down at the beach.

4. Brace Yourself For Impact

Forget being polite. "Please" and "Thank You" counts for nothing. Try shouting louder, harder, stronger. This may require extensive practice, sorry.

5. Thou Shalt Remain Self-Satisfied

Embrace your new laid-back sun-drenched lifestyle. Say goodbye to stress and anxiety. Cultivate a fatalistic approach until something bad actually happens, rather than anticipating it beforehand. Nurture a fanatical passion for football and

local fiestas, welcome your neighbour's generous gifts of fruit, vegetables and preferably wine and you'll soon find your feet in your new home in Malaga.

Final Point

Malaga is understandably popular as a chic and cosmopolitan destination amongst tourists and expats alike. Increasing numbers of families and couples are opting to settle in Malaga seduced by its wonderful year-round weather, the charming, laid-back lifestyle, abundant and cheap fresh local cuisine, and an authentically vibrant Andalucian culture. Living in Malaga remains more economical than Northern Europe as property and a low cost of living combine to offer a compelling case for the move to the sunny south of Spain.