



What to do in Malaga complete guide

By Floriane

Often overshadowed by Seville and Granada on Andalusian itineraries, **Malaga** is well worth a visit? and we'll tell you why.

During our stay, we loved wandering around its **historic center**, a great meal and, in less than ten minutes, our **feet** were in the water.

If you're wondering **what to do in Malaga**, it only takes a few days to fall under its spell. Let us be your guide , and we'll give you all the details and tips you need to prepare your stay.

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Our top 10 things to do in Malaga

Summary

Top 10

- Historic center + cathedral
- The Alcazaba
- Gibralfaro Castle for the view
- Picasso Museum
- Sunset cruise
- Palmeral de las Sorpresas
- Beaches
- Hamman and Andalusian baths
- Street art in Soho and Lagunillas
- Flamenco show

Hotel

Good value for money right in the center: [Apartamentos Málaga Premium - Calle San Telmo](#)

Discovering the historic heart of Malaga: must-sees in Malaga

The best way to start a visit to Malaga is simply to lose yourself in its **historic center**. Compact and pleasant to walk around, it concentrates most of the city's

monuments.

As you stroll through the narrow streets, you'll soon come across **several churches** not to be missed.

- The **Sagrado Corazón** church, recognizable by its neo-Gothic façade, is a real eye-catcher, with a style that is unusual in Andalusia.
- A little further on, **Saint-Augustin** church, with its red facade, adds an unexpected touch of color.
- It's also impossible to miss **Malaga's cathedral**, a true symbol of the city. It's easy to spot from several points in the city center. We won't dwell on it here, as it clearly deserves a focus of its own, which we'll cover later in the article.

Continuing your tour, you'll come to one of the center's most interesting features: the **Roman theater**.

Leaning against the hill at the foot of the Alcazaba, this ancient vestige is a reminder that Malaga's roots go back much further than most people imagine.

Of course, it's not as spectacular as [the theaters at Pompeii](#) or [Delphi](#), but it's well worth a visit, if only for its location and the striking contrast between the different eras.

□ *There's a charge for the tour (around €5), but honestly, you can see the theater just as well from the street for free.*

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Malaga's Alcazaba: an air of mini Alhambra

Just above the Roman theater stands [Malaga's Alcazaba](#), one of the city's most visited monuments.

This Moorish fortress, built in the XI^e century, is often described as a **mini** Granada **Alhambra**, and the comparison is no exaggeration. It features patios, arches, gardens and typical Andalusian architecture, in a much more intimate setting.

The tour takes you gradually upwards through fortified ramparts and passageways. As you gain height, the views of the city and port multiply.

Some useful practical information :

- ☐ Allow **1h to 1h30** for the tour
- ☐ Take a guided tour to understand the history of the site.
- ☐ Bring comfortable shoes, it's uphill!

If there's only one place to visit in Malaga, this is it!

Must-see museums: including the Picasso Museum

Malaga is a true **museum-city**, with a wide variety of cultural venues.

- ☐ Of course, the most famous is the **Picasso Museum in Malaga**, the painter's birthplace, which boasts a rich collection of works by Pablo Picasso, who was born here, and provides an insight into the development of his artistic style.

☐ *Full price €13 – Buy your tickets in advance to avoid long queues, this is the city's most visited museum. Visiting time: 1h*

- Next door, the **Museo Casa Natal de Picasso** plunges you into the master's childhood.
- the **Carmen Thyssen Museum** exhibits superb 19th^e century paintings

showcasing Andalusia and its landscapes.

- the [Centre Pompidou Málaga](#) surprises with its modern architecture and contemporary art collections.
- the **Museo de Málaga**, housed in a baroque palace that combines archaeological collections with works of art, ideal for understanding the city's thousand-year-old history.

Gibralfaro Castle: Malaga's finest viewpoint

High above the Alcazaba, **Gibralfaro castle** dominates the entire town. Access is by foot for the more motivated, or by bus for greater comfort. Once at the top, the reward is immediate: one of Málaga's finest panoramas.

From the ramparts, the view extends :

- on the historic center
- on the port and Muelle Uno
- on the Mediterranean as far as the eye can see

The site is particularly pleasant at the end of the day, when the light is softer. Although the castle itself is more sober than the Alcazaba, the view is well worth the climb.

□ *Full price €7 – Free parking (so you don't have to walk uphill) – Free on Sundays from 2pm.*

Sunset catamaran trip

♥ This was the highlight of our stay. From the port of Malaga, we opted for a catamaran trip at the end of the day to discover the coast from a different angle.

Sailing takes place along the coast, just as the light becomes softer and the city gradually appears on the horizon. The excursion includes a drink, often a glass of cava, making it a great way to end the day.

□ *full price from €15 day cruise and €27 evening cruise (our recommendation)*

Malaga Cathedral, symbol of the city

Nicknamed “**La Manquita**” in reference to its unfinished tower, Malaga Cathedral is one of the city's most emblematic monuments. Built between the Renaissance and Baroque periods, it impresses with its size and the richness of its interior.

The interior tour includes :

- the finely sculpted choir stalls
- the side chapels
- the spectacular height of the nave

It's also possible to **climb up to the roof** (approx. 200 steps), an experience that offers an original view of the city center and surrounding hills.

A visit to the quarter and the outside is more than enough, especially if you've already had a view of the Alcazaba.

□ *Full price €10 to be booked in advance on the [cathedral's official website](#) – tour lasts 45 minutes*

The port of Malaga and the Palmeral de las Sorpresas

Just a few minutes' walk from the historic center, **Malaga's port** has become one of the most pleasant places to stroll. Modern, open to the sea and full of life, it contrasts with the older atmosphere of the center.

The **Palmeral de las Sorpresas** promenade perfectly links the city to the port. Lined with palm trees, it's an inviting place to take a stroll during the day or evening. You'll come across joggers, families and travelers enjoying the sea air.

At the end of the walk, don't miss Malaga's colorful Centre Pompidou.

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Street art in Malaga: another way to discover the city ☐

If you're a fan of urban art, Malaga is also full of surprises. **Street art is particularly present here**, with works of art transforming certain districts into veritable open-air galleries.

- The **Lagunillas district** (north-east of the historic center), right next to the historic center, is undoubtedly **the beating heart of this urban scene**: here, graffiti and colorful frescoes cover facades and walls, often born of a citizen's movement to breathe new life into a long-neglected neighborhood.
- A few steps away, **the Soho district** is also renowned for its large-scale murals created by local and international artists.

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Malaga's beaches, a stone's throw from the city center

One of Malaga's greatest assets is its immediate proximity to the sea. In less than **10 minutes from the city center**, you can reach the beach, much like in [Valencia](#).

La Malagueta beach is the closest and most accessible. Further afield, the beaches of **Pedregalejo** and **El Palo** offer a more local atmosphere, with their seafront chiringuitos.

Hammam Al Ándalus in Malaga

For a relaxing interlude, Hammam Al Ándalus offers an experience inspired by traditional Andalusian baths, in a neat, soothing setting.

The entrance gives access to several **hot, warm and cold water pools**, as well as a rest area, with the option of adding a relaxing massage performed by professionals.

□ [*Information and booking for the Al Andalus hammam \(booking recommended\)*](#)

Flamenco show: an exciting evening in Malaga

It doesn't get much more local than a **traditional flamenco show**.

These shows feature talented local artists and allow you to feel the passion of flamenco in all its depth.

Activities to book in Malaga

To complement classic tours, some activities are worth booking in advance. Platforms like **GetYourGuide** offer many options, with the advantage of **free cancellation** on most activities and an app that lets you find all your bookings in one place:

- **Sunset cruises**
- **Hamam Al Ándalus + massage**
- ☐ **Flamenco show**, to discover a cultural facet that can't be ignored
- ☐ **Multi-stop bus**, practical for a first discovery without getting tired
- ☐ **Guided tour of the Málaga bullring**, ideally with a French-speaking guide to better understand the history and culture of bullfighting.

☐ [Find lots of activity ideas here.](#)

How many days to Malaga?

Malaga is an ideal destination for a short stay, but the number of days depends above all on your pace and what you want to do there. The city is easily discovered on foot.

Malaga in 2 days: the essentials

Two days are enough to discover Malaga's must-sees. This format is perfect for a weekend.

In two days, you have time to :

- stroll through the historic center and discover the cathedral
- visit the Alcazaba and the Roman theater
- visit the Picasso Museum
- stroll along the port and the Muelle Uno
- enjoy the Malagueta beach
- attend an evening flamenco show

The pace is fast, but the distances are short and everything flows easily.

Malaga in 3 days: exploring the surrounding area

Three days is a more comfortable way to visit Malaga. In our opinion, it's the ideal length of time to really enjoy the city without running around.

With an extra day, you can :

- climb to Gibralfaro castle for the view
- visit a second museum (Carmen Thyssen, Centre Pompidou...)
- discover Soho or Lagunillas for street art
- explore the outskirts of Malaga, [Ronda](#), Granada, Nerja, hike the Caminito del Rey...

This format also leaves more room for terrace breaks and seaside moments.

Practical information for organizing your stay in Malaga

How to get to Malaga

Malaga-Costa del Sol airport is one of the most important in Andalusia, with many direct flights from France and Europe.

From the airport, you have several options:

- the commuter train links the airport to the city center in around 15 minutes
- regular buses serve the center
- cab or VTC for greater comfort

For those traveling by train, María Zambrano station is home to high-speed lines, especially from Madrid.

Where to sleep in Malaga?

It's important to choose the right neighborhood to get the most out of the city. For a first stay, staying in the **historic center** is often the best option: everything is within walking distance and the atmosphere is lively from morning to night.

♥ **Apartamentos Málaga Premium - Calle San Telmo** is a great option if you're looking for **central, convenient and comfortable accommodation in the heart of Málaga**.

□ Highlights

- Central location, everything within walking distance (market, cathedral, beach within easy reach)
- Apartments with kitchenette, ideal for flexible stays
- Rated 8.5/10 on Booking

□ **Average price: approx. €90 - €110 per night.** Info and booking for [**Apartamentos Málaga Premium - Calle San Telmo**](#)

What to eat in Malaga Gastronomy and good addresses

Of course, if you come to Spain it's to taste all the culinary specialties, and you'll find our best addresses on our interactive map:

- espetos of sardines, grilled over a wood fire on the beach
- fried fish, typical of the Andalusian coast
- tapas, perfect for a taste of everything
- chocolate churros

The [Atarazanas market](#) is a must. The atmosphere is very local, lively and ideal for a gourmet break between two visits.

Is it worth visiting Malaga?

As you'll have gathered, Malaga offers plenty to see and do, but the city is also an excellent **starting point for exploring the surrounding area**. White villages, hiking, spectacular cliffs, small Andalusian towns or wilder corners of the Costa del Sol – there's no shortage of ideas for excursions. Places like Ronda, Nerja or the Caminito del Rey offer a variety of atmospheres to extend your trip.

□ In fact, we've dedicated an article to the [best things to do around Malaga](#), perfect for continuing to explore the region.

Map of Malaga

Find all the above locations on our interactive map.

Video

Some **drone** images **of Malaga** to give you an idea of what to expect!

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