

Santa Pola

Santa Pola is situated just off the N332, only 18 km south of Alicante City and 14 km away from the inland city of Elche. It is a large town with a busy fishing port, stunning marina and beaches, a rich history, some 13 kms of coastline and the impressive salt lakes which produce the iconic salt mountains and provide a refuge for the eye catching flamingos. Santa Pola can basically be divided into four zones: the southern area with the rural beaches and salt works, the central area with the marina, port, castle, palm park and market, the northern zone with the coves that join onto the beaches of Gran Alacant and the Island of Tabarca.



The southern zone has the rural beaches of Gola, Pinet and Tamarit with a walking trail that includes the decaying remains of a salt barge and a civil war shelter. These beaches are all unmanaged and back onto the two working salt farms of Bonmati and the larger one of Bras del Port. Both of these farm the lagunas, or salt lakes, that lie either side of the N332. Sea water enters the system of pools and is evaporated by the sun leaving the salt to be harvested and sold for use on icy roads and in products such as dishwasher salt as well as table salt. Lots more information about the industry and the lagunas which are specially protected areas for birds is provided at the free Salt Museum. Beside the lagunas is a pull in viewing area for the lagunas where the Tamarit watch tower is situated. This has been restored and now looks just as it did during the 16th century, when it formed part of a network of towers which were used to warn the locals of an impending attack by pirates. Playa Lissa, also spelt Lisa, is a managed beach and a firm favourite with kite surfers who make the best of the coastal breezes which normally pick up during siesta time at 14:00.



The central zone includes the 1060m long Gran Playa to the south, the marina and port in the middle and the 460m long Playa de Levante to the north. Both of the beaches are wide with fine sand and are backed by part of the 7 km long promenade. The fishing port is one of the busiest in the Mediterranean and you can buy the fresh fish every week day at the little market from 17:30 onwards. The marina is right beside the port and several large and small boats offer daily trips to Tabarca Island from here. The helpful tourist office is located in the town hall, near the port, the Esteban González fishing boat museum and the municipal aquarium. The main streets of the town radiate inland from here, towards the 16th century fortress which houses the fishing and the sea museum and the palm park which contains the bandstand and the remains of a Roman villa. The smaller Monday and larger Saturday morning markets, almost opposite the palm park, are always popular and the Pola Park with its fair ground rides is open everyday during the summer.



The northern zone has the 920m long Calas de Santiago Bernabeu, where the sand is kept in check by the wooden groynes and then the 475m long Playa Varadero. The 7km long promenade continues directly behind these and is a pleasure to amble along. After this the scenic drive north to Gran Alacant begins. The road hugs the rocky shore line, passing the CIMAR marine research facility and during the summer a number of chill out bars, finishing at the little hermitage.



The tiny island of Tabarca at just 1750m long and 300m wide, is one of the top tourist destinations within the Costa Blanca. A visit here is just like stepping back in time, although it can feel quite crowded during the height of summer as over 4,000 people visit it daily! It is about a 30 minute boat journey and several companies operate from the marina. Some boats have glass bottoms, so you can admire the creatures of the deep, whilst others work as a taxi for parties as small as 6 people. Once on the Island you can explore!! There is the central village square, the old fort of which the walls and three of the gates houses still survive, the impressive church, the lighthouse which sits on the uninhabited tip and a museum for information about the history of the island and its roll as a marine reserve. There are also several beaches and coves, some are completely covered in seaweed, others are pebbled and few of the larger ones have sunbeds and sun umbrellas for hire. The island offers great snorkelling, so remember your snorkel & flippers! There are some bars, cafes and restaurants, they are slightly more expensive than usual so you might want to bring your own picnic.



Parking

There are two pay car parks beside the marina and over 2 kms of free spaces along the road which runs parallel to the beach.

Pay Car Park 1 [38.190105, -0.560788](tel:+3496638190105)

Pay Car Park 2 [38.191000, -0.558900](tel:+3496638191000)

Free Car Parking Market [38.195669, -0.563886](tel:+3496638195669)

The market place can be used to park in, except on Market days from 05:00 to 18:00

Town Hall & Tourist Office [38.189839, -0.555861](tel:+3496638189839)

Situated between the fishing port and the central beach, it has maps and information about the Castle, Fishing Museum, Sea Museum, Aquarium, Boat Museum, Salt Museum and Palm Park.

Fortress & Musuems [38.192264, -0.555076](tel:+3496638192264)

Palm Park [38.195088, -0.559338](tel:+3496638195088)

Salt Museum [38.197817, -0.570800](tel:+3496638197817)

Tamarit Watch Tower [38.184550, -0.613467](tel:+3496638184550)

Market Large [38.195669, -0.563886](tel:+3496638195669)

There is a market on both Saturday and Monday mornings, although it is much larger on Saturday.

Marina with Boat Trips to Tabarca [38.190105, -0.560788](tel:+3496638190105)

The prices and timetables for the big boats are displayed on the boards or there are several independent 'taxi' boats which hold 6-10 people.

Fishing Port & Fish Market

[38.189976, -0.556542](#)

Buy the locally caught fresh fish from the Peix de Santa Pola Market located beside the port from Monday to Friday from 17:30 onward.

Funfair Pola Park

[38.195983, -0.575167](#)

It is free to enter the Pola Park which has over 25 rides and activities and a selection of places to eat. You can pay per ride or buy a bracelet which allows access to all of the rides and activities for a whole day.



Beach & Promenade South

[38.189917, -0.590033](#)

Face the sea and turn right for the rural beaches and walking route or turn left for the 7 km promenade to the central and north beaches, where the promenade stops use either the road behind or the beach.

Beach & Promenade Central

[38.189807, -0.552060](#)

Beach & Promenade North

[38.189317, -0.538317](#)

Scenic Drive

These are the coordinates for the northern point in Gran Alacant and the southern point in Santa Pola of the scenic coastal road which runs beside the sea underneath the cliffs. It can get extremely busy especially during high season, so is sometimes best avoided in the summer.

Southern Point

[38.196350, -0.515467](#)

Northern Point

[38.224933, -0.513067](#)

Bars, Restaurants and Shops

There is a large selection of bars, restaurants and shops along the sea front and between the Palm Park and the Fortress in the centre of Santa Pola.

Annual Fiestas and Events

Moors & Christians Virgen de Loreto 8th September

Patron Saint Fiesta Virgen del Carmen 16th July

Patron Saint Fiesta Virgin of Loreto 10th December

Romeria Virgen del Rosario 24th June

Easter daily parades between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday

Three Kings 5th January

May Crosses 1st-3rd May

Gastronomy various tapas routes and gastronomy weeks