

A STROLL ROUND **BENIDORM**



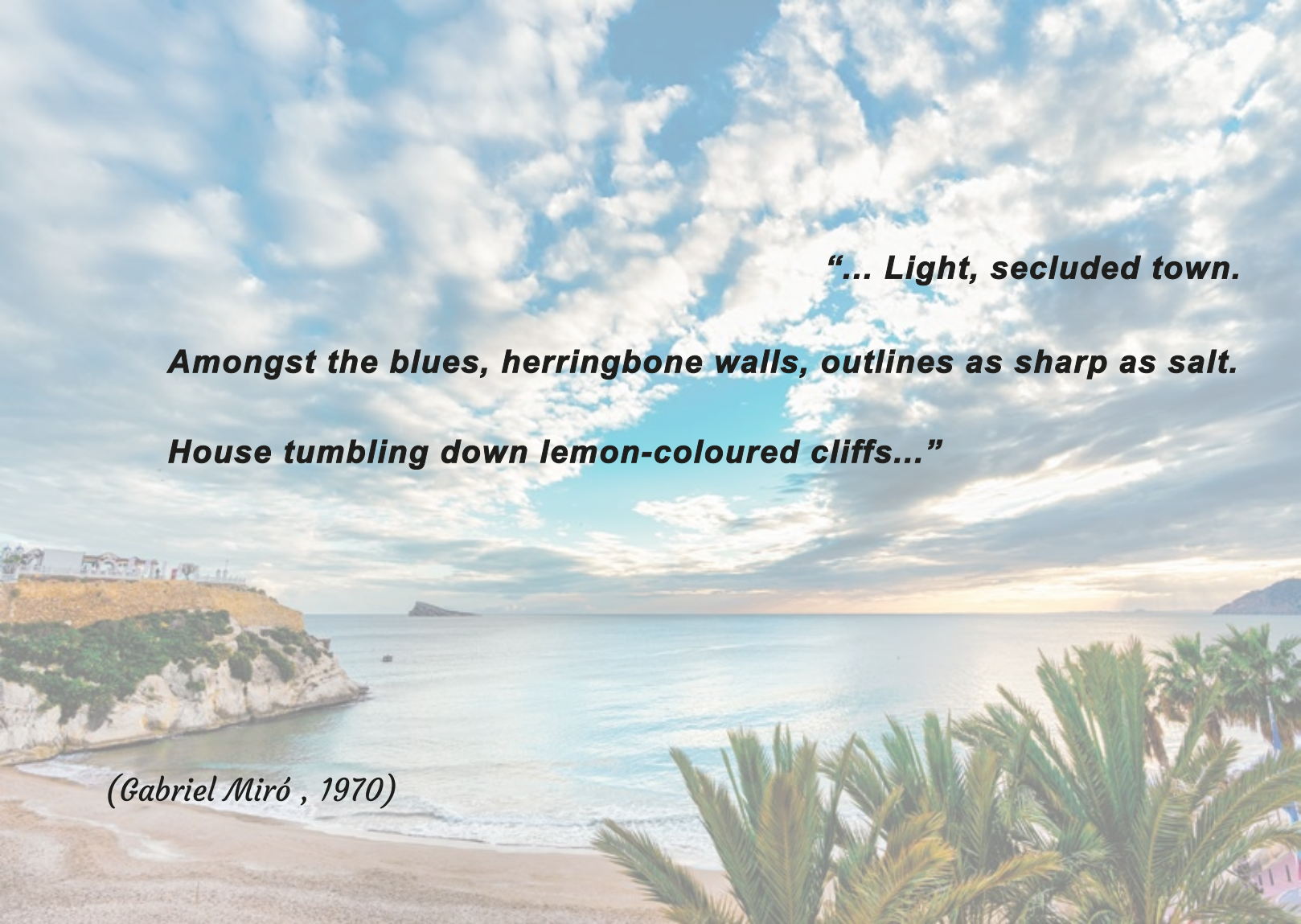
Main Street and Alameda Street



Punta Canfali



Castle Square



***“... Light, secluded town.
Amongst the blues, herringbone walls, outlines as sharp as salt.
House tumbling down lemon-coloured cliffs...”***

(Gabriel Miró , 1970)

Benidorm, a seaside town in the province of Alicante, enjoys well-deserved international fame with beaches protected from storms by the bay and the surrounding mountains. Its exceptional climate makes it one of the most important and well-known tourist destinations on the Mediterranean coast.

But there's much more to Benidorm: it's full of history and tradition, with areas worth exploring and fascinating corners to discover. This is a hospitable, cosmopolitan place where Punics, Iberians, Romans and Arabs left a legacy that helped shape who we are today. The town was founded in the fourteenth century, when Admiral Bernat de Sarriá granted its Municipal Charter (known as the Carta Pobra), laying the foundations of what in subsequent centuries would become a magnificent town.

The only traces of late 19th century Benidorm can be seen in its layout, but it's worth wandering through its narrow streets. Come for a stroll and learn about the origins of this ancient fishing village and its renowned mariners, its old town, its alleys, its viewpoints... places where traditions and memories remain and tell their own story.

BENIDORM IS HISTORY TOO!



- 1. The Castle Viewpoint**
- 2. Church of San Jaime and Santa Ana**
- 3. Benidorm Town Hall**
- 4. L' Aigüera Park**
- 5. L'Hort de Colon House**
- 6. Boca del Calvari Museum**
- 7. Séquia Mare and Séquia Mare Park**
- 8. Elche Park**
- 9. Poniente Seafront Promenade**
- 10. Pilgrim's route to Santiago**
- 11. Archaeological Site "Tossal de la Cala"**
- 12. Viewpoint of the Cross**
- 13. Cavall Point**
- 14. Morales Tower**





1 THE CASTLE VIEWPOINT

This viewpoint is set on top of the large rock called "Punta Canfali", which divides Benidorm's two beaches. It's the site of the fortress or castle that served as defence against the raids by Algerian and Berber pirates in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. The castle, built in 1325, was attacked by pirates and partially demolished in the 15th century. It was repaired some time later, but in the 19th century, during the War of Independence, it was completely destroyed. There was originally a walled perimeter area, which we know about from historic documentation written in that period, however, this fell into disuse over the years. Nowadays, only some remains of the walls can be seen on the rocks of the Mirador, which is also known as "Balcón del Mediterráneo" (the Mediterranean balcony).

The viewpoint is divided into two parts: the upper accessible area, with benches and rest areas, and another area closer to the sea, which you can get to by going down a few quite steep steps. The viewpoint's characteristic balustrade is unique and was designed both in and for the town, becoming one of Benidorm's most iconic sights.



② CHURCH OF SAN JAIME AND SANTA ANA

You'll find the Church of San Jaime and Santa Ana at the highest point of the old town, in Plaza de San Jaime, and you can get to it via CARRERÓ DEL GATS, one of the most popular streets in the old town and decorated with cobblestones.

Built in the 18th century in neoclassical style, the church has a Latin cross layout with a central nave and small side chapels. The semicircular dome over the transept has no tambour and rests directly on the pendentives.

Inside on the left is the chapel of the Virgin of Suffrage, where you can see the small carving that was found in a boat adrift on the sea on 15 March 1740. The Virgin of Suffrage is the patron saint of Benidorm together with St. James. In the choir there's a large pipe organ built in 2012. The outside of the church is painted simply in white with ochre cornices and mouldings. The domes on the transept and the chapel are covered with blue glazed tiles.



3 BENIDORM TOWN HALL

This building was officially opened in 2003. Lying horizontally and raised above the ground, it breaks with the image of verticality in this town of skyscrapers that groups together some of the tallest buildings in Spain. It gives the square where it stands the prominence that corresponds to its function as the seat of municipal government. Popularly known as the “groundscraper”, its great façade is covered with thick glass slats bearing the names and surnames of the 60,000 people registered as living in Benidorm in the year when building work was completed. It serves as gateway to the green area of L'Aigüera Park.



4 L'AIGÜERA PARK



Designed by architect Ricardo Bofill in the late 90s, this green area is an example of the neoclassical style, consisting of a long park that separates the old part of town from a newer area.

Inside this park there are two outdoor auditoriums where numerous activities and cultural exhibitions take place throughout the year: the Auditorio Óscar Esplá, closest to the City Hall, and the Auditorio Julio Iglesias, which is bigger and named after one of the winners of the Benidorm International Song Festival, an event that brought a huge amount of fame to the town in the 1960s and 70s. The Bullring is at the far end of the park.

5 L'HORT DE COLON

This 19th-century stately building, now converted into a museum and municipal exhibition hall, is named after the Spanish Navy's largest ship, Colón, which was captained by the owner of the house, Don Vicente Zaragoza y Ortuño (Benidorm, 1838-1899). A shipowner based in the town, he also owned the La Trasatlántica Company. In his youth he sailed on several brigantines and two frigates, the "Primera de Alicante" and the "Barcelona".

This house-museum is an early 20th century house now owned by Don Vicente Zaragoza's descendants. It's a two-storey building, with a porch and an orchard, now converted into a garden where various cultural events are held. Admission is free of charge.



6 BOCA DEL CALVARI MUSEUM



The Boca del Calvari is a museum for temporary exhibitions. It's on Paseo de la Carretera and was built on the site of Benidorm's old town hall in the busiest part of town for tourists and shops.

Officially reopened in 2014, it's a modern building with fully accessible facilities. The museum hosts a number of exhibitions throughout the year, mainly related to Benidorm's history. Admission is free of charge.

7 SÉQUIA MARE AND SÉQUIA MARE PARK

At the closest point to the Avenida de la Comunidad Valenciana are the last vestiges of the Rec Major de l 'Alfas or Séquia Mare, a historic irrigation system and part of the town's water and archaeological heritage dating back to 1659.

This irrigation channel carried water from the Polop ravine to Benidorm, allowing the towns it crossed to develop and flourish. It was 18 km and 780 m in length. The channel fell into disuse in 1960, when the first drinking water supply network was built.

The park was created with the aim of recovering and rehabilitating this irrigation channel, making it part of a green, natural space. The park design attempted to respect the original layout and existing trees, with biking and running trails, skate park, crossfit circuit, climbing wall, children's playground, petanque, etc.



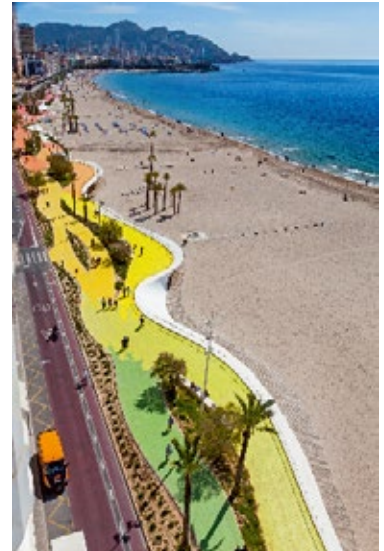
⑧ ELCHE PARK

⑨ PONIENTE SEAFRONT PROMENADE

Elche Park is an urban park running alongside Poniente Beach, near the harbour area. Inside, it's full of palm trees, there's also an esplanade and Benidorm's first ornamental fountain, built in 1960 to celebrate the building of the town's first household drinking water supply network. It meant the end of the use of the Séquia Mare for drinking water in the town centre.

One of Benidorm's main attractions is this modern promenade, which extends from Elche Park and borders Poniente Beach, a masterpiece by architects Carlos Ferrater and Xavier Martí.

The ceramic pavement was designed taking two considerations into account: the first was to acknowledge the widespread cultural heritage of Arab ceramics in the Levante region. The second was colour. The design of this promenade, which was inaugurated in 2009, has earned it several awards, including from the Chicago Museum of Architecture and Design, the ASCER Ceramic Tile of Spain Award and the 2010 FAD Award.



10 MOPILGRIM'S ROUTE TO SANTIAGO



The Central Branch of the Way of St. James starts in Benidorm and connects with the South-East Way (used since the Middle Ages) and the Wool Route. The Way sets off from the church of San Jaime, where you can obtain the credential. As shown on the commemorative plaque on the church façade, it's 1140 kilometres from here to Santiago de Compostela. Next to the plaque is the first tile showing the direction of the Way. In addition, the entire route through the town is waymarked, including a natural stone monolith standing at the end of Poniente promenade that shows a distance of 1138 kilometres to Santiago de Compostela.

11 YARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE “TOSSAL DE LA CALA”

At the far end of Poniente Beach is El Tossal de la Cala, the site of one of the first human settlements in the area. This archaeological site was listed as an Asset of Cultural Interest (BIC) in September 1984. El Tossal de la Cala was a fort or “castellum” commissioned by the Roman General Sertorius as part of a fortification plan for the northern Alicante coastline, probably around 77 B.C. It was a link in a chain of Roman coastal military enclaves, all set on top of cliffs and coves that were difficult to access. These defences played an essential role in controlling the movements of friendly and unfriendly shipping during naval hostilities. This was where the famous VENUS BÁQUICA, now held in the Archaeological Museum in Alicante, was found.



12 VIEWPOINT OF THE CROSS



This viewpoint, set in the Serra Gelada Natural Park and dominated by the famous Benidorm Cross, gives some amazing views over the town.

The cross was originally made of wood and was placed here by Franciscan monks in 1961 with assistance from the people of Benidorm, in an attempt to offset the town's frivolous image. It was blown down during a storm in 1975 and a newer, more durable cross was put in its place. Floodlighting was installed at a later date. It can be accessed on foot.

13 CAVALL POINT

14 MORALES TOWER

These two watchtowers are listed as Assets of Cultural Interest (BIC). They're part of a series of towers positioned along the coastline and their purpose was to defend the town from pirate attacks in the 16th century. All the towers were within sight of each other so they could send signals to warn of enemy ships.

Torre Punta del Cavall (also known as Torre de Les Caletes) is in the Serra Gelada Natural Park. It was built with irregular blocks of masonry and lime mortar. Torre Morales is in the Cala de Benidorm area, on Avenida de Villajoyosa.

It's one of the so-called 'field towers' that were visually connected with the towers on the coast. It's square-shaped and built using blocks of masonry with rough ashlar on the corners. There was originally a house adjoining the tower.





Alley of the cats



Levante Beach



Elche Park



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2024-2026



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