

- **ELCHE**

Thanks to the wide variety of services available and its good climate practically all year round, this town in Alicante is a great destination for a business trip. It is also one of the world's most important shoe manufacturers in Spain.

The Alicante international airport (situated in Elche) provides connections with other major cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, Bilbao and Seville. Amongst its facilities, it has the modern "Ciutat d'Elx" Conference Centre, a key place for meetings in the south of the province of Alicante, situated right in the historic centre.

Elche is also very culturally attractive thanks to its palm grove, which has been awarded the World Heritage designation by the UNESCO, or its festivities such as the Mystery of Elche, which is also a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. Other attractive features are its proximity to the Costa Blanca beaches and its delicious gastronomy.

- **PLACES TO VISIT**

The city boasts an extremely rich cultural heritage that can be seen in its different museums and galleries. Visitors can learn about Elche's history and its archaeological heritage, visit an interesting collection of contemporary art, get to know more of the world of the Elche Mystery Play or take a closer look at the city's culture and traditions.

**Huerto del Cura Garden**

The historic Elche Palm Grove has the UNESCO World Heritage designation and is Europe's only palm forest. It contains nearly 200,000 date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera*), some of which have grown spontaneously, although most were planted by man over the course of centuries. The unusual way in which they were laid out gave rise to many orchards (*hortos*), nearly a hundred of which still exist. One of these is the Huerto del Cura orchard, with nearly 500 palm trees, including a specimen that is truly a botanical rarity: the one known as the "Imperial Palm".

Location

Porta de la Morera 49  
03203 Elche-Elx (Alicante-Alacant)  
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**The Palm Grove of Elche**

The Palmeral de Elche is the largest palm grove in Europe. Although its presence dates from prehistoric times, it was in the Arab period when it reached its greatest splendour, as the Muslims laid out the palm trees in the form of orchards and vastly improved their cultivation. The site that can be seen today around the historic quarter of the town has over 200,000 palm trees and is known as the Historic Palm Grove. It was declared a World Heritage site by the UNESCO for its role as a testament to its role in the transmission of culture from East to West, and for the survival of an exceptional watering system inherited from the culture of Al-Andalus. Spaces open to visitors today include the Municipal Park (with some singular buildings and fountains with neo-Arabic inspiration), the Huerto del Cura garden (declared a National Artistic Garden), the El Palmeral Museum (located in the Huerto de San Plácido garden), and the Route of El Palmeral (which goes through traditional palm groves, and the Filet de Fora palm park).

Location

Porta de la Morera 49  
03203 Elche-Elx (Alicante-Alacant)  
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**Santa María Basilic**

The performance of the Misterio de Elche mystery play, which takes place every year in this basilica, has been declared a festivity of International Tourist Interest.

It is built on the foundations of an ancient mosque. Once Jaime I has conquered the city, he consecrated the mosque for Christian ceremonies, dedicating it to Saint Mary (María). It underwent remodelling because of its deteriorated condition, being rebuilt in Gothic-Renaissance style, but the present building is Baroque, from the 17th century, when it was last refurbished. The main entrance, in Baroque style, is abundantly decorated and exceptionally beautiful. The San Agatángelo doorway takes its name from the Nicolás Bussi sculpture of this saint standing over it. The Communion Chapel is in neoclassical style.

#### Location

Plaza del Congreso Eucarístico s/n  
03202 Elche-Elx (Alicante-Alacant)  
<http://www.diocesisoa.org>  
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- **BEACHES**

#### **La marina beach**

This easy access beach has: an open-air drinks stall, public toilet, restaurant, bar and some surrounding houses.

#### Type of beach

Composition: White Sand  
Conditions: Moderate waves

#### Location

Marina, La, Elche (Alicante - Alacant)

#### **El altet beach**

This beach lies behind a set of grassy dunes. Windsurfing is possible on the beach and there are also many other facilities that include, parking, showers, volleyball nets and a children's playground.

#### Type of beach

Composition: Golden Sand  
Conditions: Moderate waves

#### Location

Altet, El, Elche (Alicante - Alacant)

#### **Arenales del sol beach**

A large and peaceful beach.

#### Type of beach

Composition: Golden Sand  
Conditions: Moderate waves

#### Location

Elche (Alicante - Alacant)

- **GASTRONOMY**

As well as its rich cultural heritage, Elx also offers a wide range of local dishes using the area's great variety of produce. Its fertile market gardens and proximity to the coast has historically influenced the local cuisine. Elche's most widely known dish is "Arroz con Costra", literally rice with a burnt base, and visitors should also try the delicious "Arroz con Conejo y Caracoles", Rice with Rabbit and Snails, the traditional "Puchero con Pelotas", a type of stew with meatballs wrapped in cabbage leaves, "Mujol del Hondo" or mullet from El Hondo with garlic mayonnaise, and local seafood.

For dessert, we can enjoy locally grown fruit (dates, figs, pomegranates etc.) as well as the "Tortada de Elche", a delicious local sweetmeat, and "Pan de Higo", a cake of compressed figs with slivers of almond. Traditional drinks include the distilled flowers of Arabian lavender, distilled aniseed (the popular "Nugoleto") and date liquor.

When choosing where to try Elche's culinary delights, the city offers a wide range of possibilities, both in the city centre and in the surrounding countryside, in the Camp d'Elx. The numerous restaurants offer everything, from the area's traditional Mediterranean cuisine and international cuisine to the most modern creative cuisine. If what you want to do is go out for tapas, or snacks, there are many interesting places to savour the most exquisite of dishes.