

Orihuela Costa



Campoamor port. Photo by Trini Alcaina and M^o José Quiles

By Karen Marco

Orihuela Costa is a gorgeous succession of 11 sandy beaches and coves stretching along the Spanish Mediterranean coast, between Torrevieja and Pilar de la Horadada, in the south of Alicante Province. As the name implies, it's the coastal area of Orihuela, a fascinating historical city packed with medieval monuments some 20 km inland.

In the 1980's this part of the Costa Blanca became very popular and many Brits bought reasonably priced holiday homes here in the new urbanisations; some of them stayed and made their homes in Spain, others have since retired here.

More than 16 kilometres of coastline are mainly interconnected by promenades, coastal

paths and cycle tracks, so apart from enjoying lazy days on the beach, Orihuela Costa is ideal for walking and cycling. With an average of 320 days of annual sunshine and a mild winter climate, it's a popular place throughout the year.

Two leisure harbours, golf courses, a huge shopping centre at La Zenia, and an amazing variety of restaurants just add to the area's natural attractions and means there's something for everyone to do.

Orihuela Costa from north to south

PLAYA DE PUNTA PRIMA

Just to the south of Torrevieja, Punta Prima beach is backed by a stone seawall with steps (and a lift) up to the pretty seafront promenade lined with



La Glea beach, Campoamor. Photo by Trini Alcaina and Maria José Quiles

palm trees. It carries the European 'Blue Flag' quality standard along with the majority of Orihuela beaches.

PLAYA FLAMENCA

Cala Mosca is a deep, sheltered sandy cove. From here you can walk along Playa Flamenca seafront (which features a huge sundial) to neighbouring **Cala Estanca**, another lovely cove with golden sands. It's a popular beach with all the amenities such as restaurants and beach bar; kiddies play areas, sports zones and also facilities for the disabled. The seafront promenade leads south as far as **Cala Capitán**.

LA ZENIA

A popular area with plenty of restaurants and cafés nearby. **Cala Cerrada** is a fine sandy cove backed by cliffs which afford panoramic views over the Orihuela coastline. Around the headland you'll find **Cala Bosque**, a popular sandy beach suitable for all the family, with special facilities for the disabled.

CABO ROIG

Sheltered by Cabo Roig headland, **Cala Caleta** is ideal for paddling and swimming as the sea is habitually calm. This cove is just south of **Cabo Roig** marina, where you can see the landmark XVI century watchtower which was used to warn of the pirate attacks which frequently took place along the Costa Blanca centuries ago. Restaurants and water sport facilities are just some of the nearby attractions. **Cala Capitán** is a wide sandy cove with a small islet jutting into the sea. Amenities include children's play parks, beach sports, facilities for invalids, and a 'chiringuito' beach bar café in summer. **Calas de Aguamarina** is the stretch of coastline between **Cabo Roig** and **Campoamor**; quiet little coves with areas of fossilized sand, reached down steps from the promenade.

CAMPOAMOR

This is traditional classy resort with a marvellous leisure harbour. Enjoy walking or cyc-

ling along the paths through the nearby pine woods which have shady picnic areas. La Glea beach is located to the left of Campoamor leisure harbour. Attractions include an area of protected sand dunes, a choice of hotel accommodations and restaurants as well as the chance to practice a variety of water sports. This is possibly one of the most attractive beaches on Orihuela Costa. On the right-hand side of the harbour, Playa Barranco Rubio is Orihuela's longest beach (655m). The contrast of reddish cliffs, golden sands and turquoise sea is quite distinctive.

PLAYA MIL PALMERAS

A beautiful open stretch of fine white sands below reddish cliffs situated beside the canelined Cañada de Matamoras river. A summer beach bar and children's play areas are some of the attractions.

Read more about the Costa Blanca on my personal travel blog: www.kalitravel.net



Cabo Roig Tower and Leisure port. Photo by Paco Pertegal