

Why is Spain an attractive tourist destination?

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The Canary Islands are not crowded.

The Canary Islands impress with their rustic, unspoiled beauty – the smaller islands have a few small towns with country hotels dotted around. Hikers will love the beautiful La Gomera, with walks through the laurel forests of the Garajonay National Park and along spectacular terraced hillsides overlooking the Atlantic.

Headwaters offers a great walking break, traversing the island and exploring gorges, valleys, palm groves and coastal villages. For independent travellers, the new Bancal Hotel (doubles from £161, bancalhotel.com) in San Sebastián de La Gomera is built into the hillside with ocean views. It is partly solar powered and grows its own produce (there are vegan options in the restaurant).

Horses and sherry in Jerez

To see the elegant city of Jerez at its most glorious, come during the horse fair (May 17-24, turismojerez.com). Women in their finest flamenco dresses and men in Cordovan hats parade in horse-drawn carriages around González Hontoria Park, where the wide streets are decorated with floral awnings and paper lanterns, and packed with partying jerezanos.

You don't need an invitation to enter a tent, unlike a feria in Seville. Plan ahead to visit a few wine shops, sherry bars or tabancos in the town centre, where you'll be clapping and tapping along to flamenco performers before you know it.



Food Walk in Catalonia

Anyone who has been to Barcelona knows how good the food is, but there are specialities to discover across Catalonia, which has been named the World Gastronomy Region of the Year 2025. A new holiday with Intravel, A Stroll in the Pyrenees, combines walking with traditional Catalan cuisine. Stay at a rural but smart hotel with a pool and spa near Ribes de Freser for a week, hike the mountain trails at your own pace and take the funicular up to Vall de Núria.

A new parador near Madrid

Toledo, Segovia, El Escorial... there's no shortage of monument-filled places to visit in a day from Madrid. The problem is that this means other areas, despite their charms, get overlooked. This is certainly true of the province of Guadalajara, northeast of the capital, which is popular with Madrileños for weekend getaways. That could change when a parador opens in May in the small town of Molina de Aragón, home to the second-largest castle in Spain. The parador is a new building designed to blend into the landscape, with glass walls that give visitors panoramic views of the 12th-century fortress.



Hiking in Ibiza

Experience a quieter side of Ibiza in spring and autumn by following seven new hiking routes in the north of the island. The walks follow beautiful coastlines and pass through countryside, with the sound of gentle birdsong rather than loud bass. The Benirrás hike runs from Port de Sant Miquel to Can Marçà bay and along a road to Benirrás beach, before looping back to the starting point, a distance of 8 miles (13km). All routes are under 13 miles (21km). Some can be done by bike, with many stopping at villages and beach bars.

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