

### Ciutat Vella – that’s the Valencian word for *Old Town*.

It’s the heart and center of the town. Of course there are a lot of tourists there, but once you start discovering the smaller streets near the central attractions like Plaza de la Virgen, you will find quiet and pleasant little spots like restaurants, orange trees, bars, and cool graffiti’s.

To get to know the area it is recommended to take a walk to the many plazas of the city: Go from **Plaza del Ayuntamiento** 20 to **Plaza de la Reina** 14, where you can lie down in the grass in front of the cathedral. Then go to **Plaza de la Virgen** 13 where you shouldn’t miss enjoying the most famous landmarks of the city: The cathedral **Santa María** and the **Basilica de la Virgen**. Afterwards, visit **Plaza del Carmen** 7, a much quieter place than the always crowded **Plaza de la Virgen**, with nice little restaurants and bars near. Last but not least you should see the real heart of the city center: **Plaza del Tossal** 3, which doesn’t look very spectacular but when you sit there a little while, you’ll slowly get an idea of the Spanish lifestyle.

- shops
  - eating & drinking
  - nightlife
  - sightseeing
- What you need to know about Valencian lifestyle
- What you need to know about Valencian neighbourhoods (called *barrios* in Spanish)

**Eating** First, the famous *tapas*: Those may be the first thing you might want to try from the Spanish kitchen. There are a lot of different ones and don’t think of them as a dish on its own, it’s more of a snack – just like Japanese sushi. Here’s our list of favourite tapas: *patatas bravas* (fried potatoes), *gambas al ajillo* (shrimps with oil and garlic), *calamares* (calamari), *pulpo gallego* (octopus), *torquilla de patatas o verduras* (potato or vegetable omelette), *croquetas de espinaca* (spinach croquettes), *ensaladilla rusa* (salad with egg and a lot of mayonnaise), *papas arrugás* (potatoes with hot sauce). Then, there is the Valencia-based *paella*! Important: eat it at noon, not at dinner-time! Take the time to look for a good restaurant (avoid restaurants at tourist attractions). For a quick snack, I recommend the *bocadillo*: a sandwich, filled with *tortilla* (omelette) and/or ham.

**Valenciano** It’s not essential to know Valenciano (which is basically Catalan with some modest differences) but it will help you when you’re looking for a specific street, for example: Everything’s bilingual round here, so every street sign will tell you that a *calle* (street) is also a *carrer*. And of course it’s always good to show some interest in the cultural background of the area you’re visiting. The elder sales people in the *Mercado Central* will be delighted if you talk to them in Valenciano: *Bon dia* (“Good day”) *Adéu* (“Goodbye”) *Com et dius?* (“What’s your name?”) *Em dic ...* (“My name is ...”) *Gràcies* (“Thank you”) *D’on ets?* (“Where are you from?”)

**Siesta** Shopping between 14.00–17.00? Bad idea. Get used to it. The Valencianos have a lot of fiestas, too (besides from *Las Fallas*) and I feel like the word *puente* is the term used most often.

**1 La Lluna**  
*Calle San Ramón 23*  
Cosy space that serves good and creative vegetarian food.

**2 Solar Corona**  
*Calle Corona*  
Cultural open-air space in *El Carmen* that organizes cultural events like lectures, film screenings and markets for handicrafting.

**3 Plaza del Tossal**  
For me, *Plaza del Tossal* is what holds the many *barrios* of *Ciutat Vella* together, like the real center of the Old Town. The restaurants at the *Plaza* are very expensive but you can find the best kebab of Valencia nearby (*Calle Bolsería*), also check out the many *fruterías* for vegetables and fruit (*Calle Pintor Zariñena*).

**4 Arroceria Jordana**  
*Calle Salvador Giner 4*  
*Arroceria* (arroz = rice) where you can eat traditional food (*paella*) and vegetarian dishes.

**5 Café Museu**  
*Calle Museo 7*  
Wonderful space with a big window which makes you feel like a fish in an aquarium.

**6 Kokura Automatic Sushi**  
*Calle Pere Borrego 10*  
Where I ate the best (and cheap!) sushi of my life while watching fish swimming in a rebuilt television.

**7 Centro del Carmen**  
*Calle Museo 2*  
*Winter: Tue–Sun 11.00–19.00, Summer: Tue–Sun 11.00–14.00 & 17.00–20.00 ♦ Free*  
It rains about three times a year in Valencia – but then, it lasts a week. Best way to save a rainy day is this spot. You’ll find temporary exhibitions – you never know what to expect: Local artists or Flemish art? Free entry.

**8 Laboratorio**  
*Plaza Cors de la Mare de Deu 3*  
Nice little bar that also holds exhibitions and a lot of specials for foreigners and exchange students (e.g. language exchanges).

**9 Torres de Serranos**  
*Winter: Tue–Sat 10.00–18.00, Sun: 10.00–15.00, Summer: Tue–Sat 10.00–19.00, Sun: 10.00–15.00 ♦ 2 €*  
*La Puerta de Serranos* is one of twelve medieval city gates. Go there on Sundays or on a public holiday for free entry. You’ll get a great city view from above.

**10 Yuso**  
*Calle de la Cruz 4*  
If you’re thinking of checking out the traditional Valencian *paella*, do it here. They have a good selection (from vegetarian to *fideuà*, a special Valencian variation).

**11 A Vintage Jazze**  
*Calle Baja 30*  
Look through selected, high-class vintage clothes and accessories while listening to jazz records.

**12 Best Breakfast Bar**  
*Calle del Palau 10*  
This little bar has no name, is about two metres wide and has the cheapest and best breakfast in *El Carmen*. The bartender is friendly and helpful.

**13 Plaza de la Virgen**  
Valencia at night-time is a magical place. Go to *Plaza de la Virgen*, which, in summer, is the most crowded place at day-time, but at night, it changes completely. The young people of the city come here to skate, chill out and chat, that’s when you feel the real beauty of the city.

**14 100 Montaditos**  
*Plaza de la Reina 10*  
Do we really have to include this? If you’re new to Spain, yes: This is the Spanish way of fast food: change burgers for *montaditos* (tiny baguettes) and cola for *Tinto de Verano*. Cheap food, cheap drinks. You will find the chain all over the city.

**Street art** Valencia is full of graffiti – you won’t have a problem in finding them. My favourite Valencian street artist is called *escif* – find their falling cars at the *Plaza del Tossal* 3 or take a stroll in the *barrio Extramurs*.

**Learning Spanish** Things you will hear very often: *¡Hola, guapa!* (“Hi, beautiful.”) *¡Hostia!* (Hard to explain, but means something like “Oh my god!”) *¡Oye, tío!* (“Hey, dude!”) *¡Vamos, chicos!* (“Let’s go!”) *Pobrecito/a* (“Poor little thing”) *No pasa nada*. (Literally “Nothing is happening”, meaning “It doesn’t matter”) *No te preocupes*. (“Don’t worry.”)

**Drinks** When you’re in Spain, you shouldn’t miss *Tinto de Verano*, wine mixed with lemonade – this is not to be mistaken with *sangría* (wine with fruit and juice)! Also, try *la clara* (my favourite), which is *Fanta Limón* and beer.

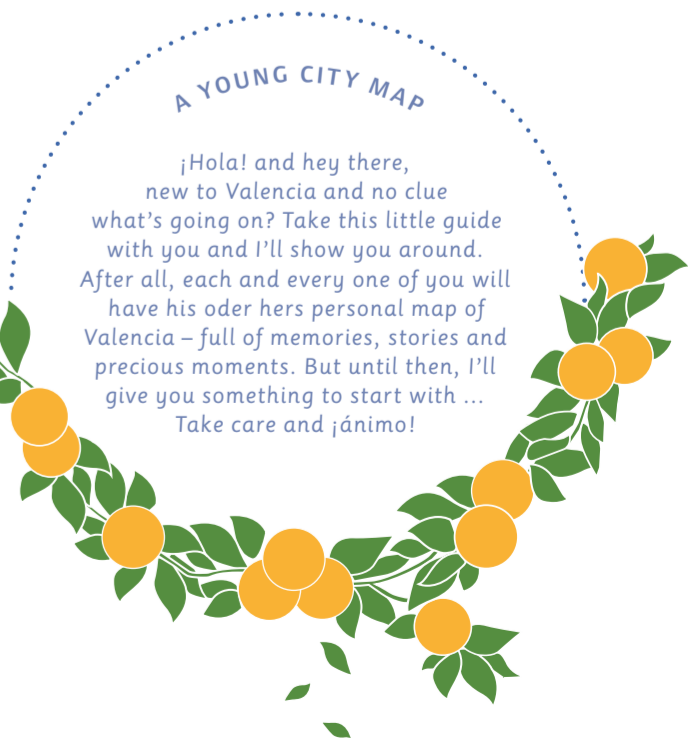
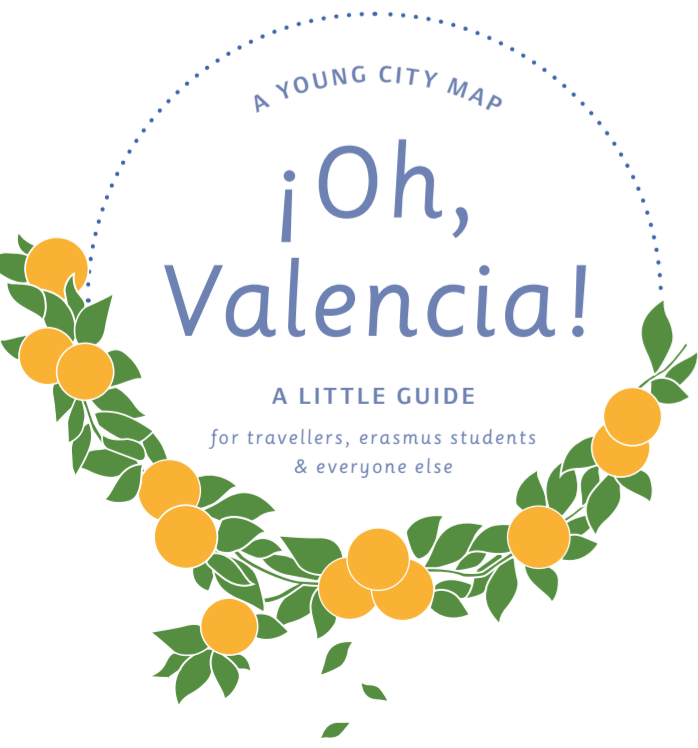
**Chinos** These are Chinese supermarkets in which you can buy everything – from hair pins to pillows and tupperware to yarn and hardware. We all know this can’t be good for Spanish economy. But if you want to have a look: The biggest is called *Suerte*, across from the *Mercado Central* 23.

**15 La Lonja de la Seda**  
*Calle Lonja 2*  
*Tue–Sat 10.00–14.00 & 16.30–20.30, Sun 10.00–15.00 ♦ 2 € / 1 €*  
The old silk exchange is one of the most beautiful Gothic buildings in Europe. It is fun to discover from the outside (take a look at the little statues), and beautiful from the inside. It also holds a little orange garden.

**17 Bugalu**  
*Calle de la Lonja 6*  
Long-established clothes shop which was founded in 1990. Young fashion, also by (rather unknown) Spanish labels.

**16 Librería Asociativa Sahiri**  
*Calle Danzas 5*  
If you’re lucky, they’re opened (don’t trust their opening hours – they’re very flexible). You’ll be rewarded with very good vegan and priceworthy tapas and wine and a nice bookshop.

**18 Museo Nacional de Cerámica**  
*Rinconada de Federico García Sanchiz 6*  
*Tue–Sat 10.00–14.00 & 16.00–20.00, Sun 10.00–14.00 ♦ 3 € / 1,50 €*  
This little baroque building (including rooms that look like a little copy of Versailles) holds lots and lots of plates, vases, statues. It’s more interesting than you think – after all, ceramics represent an important part of Spanish culture.



**23 Mercado Central**  
*Avenida Barón Cárcer*  
Valencia is best known for its local oranges. Also they have the best avocados and mandarines. One thing that you should do before leaving: Go to *mercado central*, smell and taste everything that looks appealing to you. By the way: The best seasons for strawberries and oranges are winter and spring.

**24 MuVIM**  
*Calle Guillem de Castro 8*  
*Tue–Sat: 10.00–14.00 & 16.00–20.00, Sun 10.00–20.00 ♦ Free*  
Everything from illustration, photography, design to typography. Temporary (but well curated) exhibitions. Don’t forget to check out the bookshop (it may be the best in Valencia).

**22 Rivendel RestoBar**  
*Calle Hospital 18*  
This is the perfect spot for every creative person. Their speciality is making excellent chocolate cake, they have a selection of interesting magazines and a really good evening program, including free-style illustrator battles, ping-pong games and open air film screenings. They also have a terrace, and when the sun goes down you can hear the birds singing a lullaby from the nearby park.

500 m ♦ 5 minutes walk

**Valencia, oh Valencia** – from orange trees to mediterranean flair and a beach, this Spanish city has everything you dream of. It might be the little sister of Madrid and Barcelona but nevertheless has a lot to offer – so don't trust your first impression! This old Roman city has seen a lot of things: from the Moors to the Golden Ages of the 15th century, shaping the colourful, medieval center. Apart from that, you'll find futuristic high-rise buildings and leftovers from the old fishing villages that surrounded the town. I've included the favourite spots of my friends and I so you won't get lost but a lot you'll just experience for yourself, like the warm breeze coming from the Atlantic beach and the taste of fresh seafood or a traditional *paella* ... have fun!

500 m ♦ 5 minutes walk

**25 Turia River**  
The old Turia River kept overflowing the historical center of Valencia, so the Valencianos turned it into a park. Now it is the best spot to lie down in the grass, meet up for a pick-nick with friends, go cycling or walking or just to get to know the city by foot. It is warmly recommended to spend a whole day there.

**26 Dulzumat**  
Av. de Menéndez Pidal, 8  
I haven't found many Spanish pastry shops that I liked but already the sweet scent of it is amazing.

**27 El Chico Ostra**  
Calle Música Belando 15  
It's a bookshop, a 2nd-hand store, a bar and a café. They invented the coolest event: *The Secret Show* (you pay one Euro and don't know what you're going to get).

**Benimaclet** It's not very pretty but very cool. Not central but everyone who lived there loves it. The reason for it: It's a very young, cultural *barrio* with lots of alternative bars and cultural centers. Look out for the *Benimaclet Entra*, a monthly flyer that will tell you about everything that's going on there: From jewellery workshops to sexology talks.

**28 Mestalla**  
Football is one of the most important parts of Spanish culture and it is highly recommended to watch a football game of the local *Valencia C. F.* at the Mestalla stadium. The atmosphere is incredible. For everyone who is not interested in football: Every Sunday there is a flea market near the stadium, which is also one of the biggest in Valencia.

**29 Plaza Honduras**  
There is an amazing number of bars in this housing block. Just go and discover them all yourself.

**30 Plaza Cedro en Blasco Ibañez**  
Where you go when all the bars are closing down. Bring an instrument, meet new people, drink a beer. Perfect.

**Horchata at Alboraya** Horchata is the traditional ground almond milk, typical for the Valencia area. You will find the best Horchata bars in *La Alboraya*, a village near to Benimaclet – take the metro or the bus to get there. The most famous café is called *Daniel*, but I personally like the *Panach* (*Avenida de la Horchata*) better.

**Getting around Metro:** not too useful in Valencia. Most students prefer the bus or bike – it will be much faster. Rent a *Valenbisi* (you'll need a credit card and a lot of patience) or buy a bicycle on a Sunday morning at the *Mestalla* 🚲.

**Cerveza Guys** Will try to sell you *cerveza* in the streets (after all supermarkets are closed). Most of them have interesting stories to tell. We used to chat with them at *Plaza de la Virgen* 🍺.

**Avenida Blasco Ibañez** Named after the city's son *Vicente Blasco Ibañez*, a politician and writer, is the biggest street of Valencia with a troubled history: The government tries to prolong the street to the beach for years, but the inhabitants of the once fishermen's village *El Cabañal* try to fight against this. The *Blasco Ibañez* is mainly a student area, with the university campus on it, and therefore: with lots of cafés, bars and discos.

**El Cabañal** Every tourist guide will tell you that it's dangerous to be there alone at night-time but I've got to know many students who lived there happily. It's an old fishermen's village near the beach, with small and colourful houses. It's a *barrio* that is changing, and gets more vivid each time you get there.

**Bars** It shouldn't be a problem to find your favourite bar, café or club. Bar culture in Spain is huge and the cultural life mainly takes place inside of them: You're looking for a concert? An exhibition? A poetry slam or impro theatre? A record store? A place to eat a delicious and greasy breakfast or just a place to drink beer and chat to strangers? You'll find everything in one of Valencia's bars. Only problem is that there are too many of them. Visitors of the *Ciutat Vella* should go searching for their favourite spot near *Plaza del Tossal* 📍 to *Plaza del Carmen* 📍 (look for *Calle Baja*). Students living in the northern part of Turia should go to *Plaza Honduras* 📍. Erasmus' students favourite. Also, don't be afraid to enter so-called *bares de los abuelos!* (You know, these old bars that mostly consist of Spanish old men drinking *cerveza* at 10 a.m. ...) If you're looking for huge portions of food and traditional Spanish dishes (mostly consisting of a lot of meat), good *hamburgesas* and *patatas fritas* – you will find them here. This is traditional Spain, and it's fun to get to know it.



**45 Modernism at Train Station**  
Sightseeing for free: Together with the Post Office 📮 and the Mercado Central 📍 this train station is one of the most beautiful examples for *art nouveau* in Valencia.

**46 Pikos Bar**  
Calle de Quart 69  
This is a bar de los abuelos (literally a bar for grandfathers) that serves good tapas.

**47 Jardín Botánico**  
Calle Quart 80  
Winter: 10.00–18.00, Summer: 10.00–20.00 ♦ 2 €/1€  
Whether you're looking for a quiet place to hide from the tourists or just to chill out: Go to the Botanical Garden in *Extramurs*. My favourite spot was the cactus garden and the *Umbracle*, an old green house.

**Leaving the city** There are many ways to leave the city for your next journey: The airport (check out the flights to Portugal and Marocco). Travelling by train is expensive but very fast. Going by bus is a cheaper way to reach most cities in Spain, and via online sites like *Blablacar* you will get to know new people while traveling very inexpensive.

**Special places** These are a little further away but nevertheless worth a visit ... *Albufera* A national park in the south of the city. *Cementerio General de Valencia* (*Plaza de Santo Domingo de Guzmán* 27) This may sound morbid, but the Valencian cemetery is really fun to discover. It is huge and holds a lot of old (and impressive) monuments and artworks.

**44 Nylon**  
Gran Via Germanias 31  
I really don't know why we went here almost every weekend. The music is okay-ish, the place is small, and it was probably just because we all lived very close. But it's one of the cheapest clubs you can find in Valencia (paying 15 Euro for an entry is not so unusual in VLC – but not here!) plus we always had the best nights there.

**Ruzafa** Watch out! Almost everything in this *barrio* is changing to a young and artistic appearance. Pretty old buildings, lots of cafés, restaurants and little shops. Here's what to do: Go to *Calle Denia* to eat *bocadillos* en *5 Cafe Bar* 📍 (look for no. 5) and *Slaughterhouse* 📍, which is a bookshop and a bar. In the same street (no. 25) *Tactel Gallery* 📍 is located. Go to *Calle Literato Azorín 10* for *El Rojo de Miguel* 📍, a pub with gratis *tapas* and *UBIK* café (no. 13) 📍, which is known for their concerts on Sundays. *Kauf Vintage* 📍 (*Calle Cádiz* 38) offers second-hand clothing and a little café.

**38 Fallas Museo**  
Plaza Monteolivete 4  
Summer: Tue–Sat 10.00–19.00, Sun: 10.00–15.00, Winter: Tue–Sat 10.00–18.00, Sun: 10.00–15.00 ♦ 2 €/1€  
Every town in Spain has its *fiesta*, and Valencia has the *Fallas*. It's a five-day-marathon of partying and throwing fireworks. The finale consists of lighting gigantic, hand-made statues (called *fallas*) and watching them burn (sounds as crazy as it is). If you're not around here in March to see it live, you can check out the museum which shows the artworks that survived the fire.

**37 Ciudad de las Artes y de las Ciencias**  
Most Valencianos see the most famous landmark of Valencia as a symbol of financial mismanagement. It's pretty from the outside but the admission price (even for students) is too high for what you'll get (a visit to the IMAX, a museum of science and an aquarium), so better stay outside and just take a look at the buildings.

**Fruterías** Little shops that hold a million of different fruits and vegetables. I recommend you to find your local *frutería* and try everything you haven't tasted before.

**31 Beach**  
Take a Valenbisi or the metro from *Pont de Fusta* (4 or 5) to get to the beach.

**32 La 3 ("La Tres")**  
Calle Padre Porta 2  
Valencians most famous club is located in the bay area (*Calle Padre Porta* 4). Offers good concerts, but entry is always very expensive (paying 15 Euro to get in is not unusual)

**33 No hay nada mejor que 27 amigos (Bar de Alemanes)**  
Calle de la Reina 186  
A both original and cosy space and with lots of musical action on the weekends.

**34 La Peseta**  
Calle Cristo del Grao 16  
Good place to visit after a long walk through *El Cabañal*. Nicely decorated *bodega* (look closer, there's a lot to discover) that serves *tapas*.

**35 La Paca**  
Calle del Rosario 30  
With a flea market style interior, this is authentic *bodega* with lots of musical action on the weekends. Try a Spanish classic: a beer and a *tapa* for 1€.

**36 Black Note Club**  
Calle Polo y Peyrolon 15  
If you're bored from the typical mainstream disco music, you should go here. They offer Rock & Roll, Swing, Soul, Funk and World Music concerts and occasionally evenings to dance to Swing music.

**Botellon** For many of you, this will be the first Spanish word you're going to learn. It's the spanish way of drinking in public (which is illegal), and running away from the police (if necessary). We loved to do it on the beach in the summertime (a classic) and the tunnel near *Ruzafa/Plaza del Torres* in wintertime.

**Clubs** There are probably a million clubs in Valencia and the scene is ever-changing. But there is one rule, which is: The bad clubs will have a lot of annoying people in the streets who'll invite you for free drinks. On the other hand, most of the good ones aren't located in the city center and always have long queues. Set yourself on the guest list (search for them in your preferred social media platform) and better be on time, so you don't have to pay high prices to get in.