

FREE GUIDE

# Your Essential City Guide to Castellón de la Plana

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*Your guide to Castellón de la Plana, a charming coastal city  
where Mediterranean beauty meets family-friendly living.*



MOVING  
WHERE



# Hello & Welcome, Mamas

Moving to a new city with kids can be exciting—but also overwhelming. That's why we created this comprehensive guide to help you settle in with ease! Whether you're looking for the best schools, trusted healthcare providers, family-friendly activities, or expert legal advice, we've gathered everything you need to make your transition smoother.

This guide is designed by expat moms, for expat moms—because we know firsthand the challenges of raising children in a new country. At MovingWhere, our mission is to connect mothers to the resources and support they need to thrive. We hope this guide helps you feel more at home, no matter where life takes you.

Welcome to your new adventure! You've got this,  
and we've got you.

*Your fellow mamas*

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# Welcome to Castellón de la Plana



*Photo accredited to [www.comunitatvalenciana.com](http://www.comunitatvalenciana.com)*

Welcome to Castellón de la Plana, a charming coastal city where Mediterranean beauty meets family-friendly living, nestled between the sea and the mountains for the perfect blend of urban convenience and nature. With sandy beaches to the east and scenic hiking trails to the west, Castellón offers an ideal balance between family time and personal well-being. The city boasts excellent

schools, accessible healthcare, and plenty of kid-friendly activities, along with stroller-friendly streets, lush parks, and a mild year-round climate—making everyday life easier and more enjoyable for moms on the move. Whether you're settling in or just exploring, this guide provides everything you need to navigate your new home with ease and make your transition smooth and exciting!



# Your First Steps to Settling in Castellón

## *Welcome to the Adventure!*

The Mama's Arrival Kit is here to help you hit the ground running as you embark on your journey to Spain. Moving to a new country is exciting but can also feel overwhelming—especially with little ones in tow. This guide is designed to give you the practical information you need to navigate the initial steps of settling in.

From sorting out your visas to finding a temporary place to stay and everything in between, we've got you covered. Whether you're looking for info on residency applications, where to stay during your first weeks, or how to make sure your paperwork is in order, this section is all about helping you take those important first steps confidently.

## *What's included*

- **Visas & Residency:** Understand which visa you'll need and how to apply.
- **Neighborhood Guide:** Choose the right area for your family's lifestyle.
- **Hotels & Short-Term Stays:** Find temporary accommodation while you settle in.





## Mama's Arrival Kit

# Visas & Residency Info

With following practical advice, you'll be set to navigate the visa process and move to Spain with more confidence. It may take a bit of patience, but it's all worth it for that sunny Spanish lifestyle!

### Entrepreneur Visa

Planning to start a business? This one's for you. You'll need a solid business plan that shows how your venture benefits Spain.

### Student Visa

Ideal if you or your children will be studying. Bonus: If you're moving with kids, this could cover them too.

### Family Reunification Visa

If you're joining a family member who already has Spanish residency or citizenship, this is your path.

### Tourist Visa (Schengen Visa)

Great for short stays—up to 90 days in a 180-day period. This is perfect for checking out potential places to live and getting a feel for the lifestyle before making the leap.

### Non-Lucrative Visa

A popular option for families not planning to work in Spain. It allows you to live there long-term as long as you have the financial means to support yourself. Applicants must provide proof of financial resources, obtain private health insurance, and meet other criteria.

### Work Visa

If you or your partner have a job offer from a Spanish company, this is your go-to. It'll let you live and work in Spain legally.



## Mama's Arrival Kit

# Visas & Residency Info

## How to Apply—Step-by-Step

01

### Check Your Eligibility

Head to the Spanish consulate or embassy website in your country/territory and double-check the specific requirements for your chosen visa.

02

### Get Your Docs Ready

The must-haves: A valid passport, proof of financial stability, private health insurance, a criminal background check, and a medical certificate.

*\*Extras: Depending on the visa, you might need a job offer letter (work visa) or proof of investment (Golden Visa).*

03

### Submit Your Application

Most applications are done at the Spanish consulate or embassy back home. Make sure you book your appointment online and fill out all necessary forms.

04

### Pay the Fee

Don't forget to check the fee specific to your visa type and have it ready when you apply.

## How Long Does It Take?

Tourist Visa



Quickest of the bunch—usually within 15 days.

Non-Lucrative  
& Work Visas



Expect around 1–3 months, depending on your consulate and how thorough your paperwork is.

Student Visa



Usually sorted within 1–2 months.

Entrepreneur Visa



Processing times vary, especially if your business plan needs extra reviews.

Family  
Reunification Visa



These can take anywhere from 2 to 6 months, so plan ahead.





## Mama's Arrival Kit

# Practical Tips for Mamas

Relocating with your family can feel overwhelming, but a little preparation goes a long way! Stay organized, plan ahead, and set yourself up for a stress-free transition—because when Mama is prepared, the whole family thrives!



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### Start Early

Don't wait until the last minute. Ideally, start 3–6 months before your planned move.

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### Documents in Spanish

Be ready to have your key documents translated by a certified translator—it's often a requirement.

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### Health Insurance

Make sure your policy meets Spanish standards and covers everyone in the family.

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### Show You're Financially Set

Have bank statements, proof of income, or any other documents that show you can support your family.

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### Family Applications

If you're applying for visas for your spouse and kids, make sure everyone's papers are organized and complete.



## Mama's Arrival Kit

# Neighborhood Guide

Finding the right neighborhood is key to settling in smoothly,  
and our Neighborhoods Guide is here to help.

### City Center (Centro)

This area is ideal for urban living, offering easy access to shops, restaurants, and cultural landmarks. The neighborhood is lively with a good mix of amenities, but prices tend to be higher than in suburban areas.

### Grao of Castellon

The Grao is the city's maritime area, featuring a lively port, beaches, seafood restaurants, and a vibrant cultural scene.

### Pau Lledo

Pau Lledó is a sought-after residential area in Castellón de la Plana, known for its spacious, modern homes and villas, many of which feature luxurious amenities like private pools, terraces, and multiple floors. The neighborhood offers a calm, family-friendly environment, well-connected to the city center and equipped with nearby services, schools, parks, and shopping options. It is popular among those seeking upscale living and has properties that emphasize a blend of indoor comfort with outdoor spaces, including gardens and patios.

### Pau Sensal

A modern residential area with green spaces and a family-friendly atmosphere. Sensal is popular among families and professionals due to its proximity to schools, shopping centers, and hospitals. It provides a balanced mix of peaceful residential life and urban convenience.

### Rafalafena

Rafalafena is a quiet residential neighborhood in Castellón, known for its wide avenues, green spaces, and proximity to schools and shops.

### Zona UJI (Universitat Jaume I Area)

Popular with students and academics, this area is close to the university and offers a youthful atmosphere with accessible restaurants, cafes, and affordable housing options.

# Neighborhood Guide

A Little Further Afield



Benicàssim. Photo accredited to [www.turismo.benicassim.es](http://www.turismo.benicassim.es)

## Benicàssim

Known for its beaches and summer festivals, Benicàssim is ideal if you're looking for a more relaxed, coastal lifestyle. This area is about a 15-minute drive from Castellón de la Plana, making it convenient while offering a more resort-like environment. However, it can get busy during the summer due to its popularity among tourists.

## Burriana

Located slightly further from Castellón, Burriana offers a quieter, suburban atmosphere. It's a good option for families due to the quality of schools and local services. This area combines proximity to the sea with affordable housing options, making it attractive for those seeking a slower pace without sacrificing access to basic amenities.





## Mama's Arrival Kit

# Hotels & Short-Term Stays

Whether you're landing in Castellón for the first time or need a temporary home while you get settled, we've got you covered. This section lists mama-approved hotels, short-term rentals, and family-friendly stays to help ease your transition. Perfect for your scouting trip, your first few weeks in Spain, or when family comes to visit!

- **Hotel Luz Castellón - Cuatro Estrellas Superior**

Carrer del Pintor Oliet, 3, 12006  
Castelló de la Plana, Castellón  
T: 964 20 10 10  
[www.hotelluz.com](http://www.hotelluz.com)

**Pros:** Central location, gym access, family-friendly.

**Cons:** Urban setting, not near the beach.

- **EuroHotel Castellón Estació**

Carrer del Pintor Oliet, 9, 12006  
Castellón de la Plana, Castellón  
T: 964 34 25 59  
[www.eurohotelcastello.com](http://www.eurohotelcastello.com)

**Pros:** Modern amenities at a competitive rate, including a fitness center and access to hiking trails. Ideal for travelers looking for active options close to the city center.

**Cons:** Some reviews state that the hotel is in need of some renovations.

- **Hotel Castellon Center Affiliated by Meliá**

Rda. del Millars, 86, 12002  
Castellón de la Plana, Castellón  
T: 964 34 27 77  
[www.melia.com/es/hoteles/espana/castellon](http://www.melia.com/es/hoteles/espana/castellon)

**Pros:** Known for its high value, the hotel has amenities like a fitness center, spa, and pet-friendly rooms. Families appreciate the kid-friendly options, while the spa and hot tub add relaxation for adults.

**Cons:** Limited parking and high demand mean it can fill up quickly.

# Hotels & Short-Term Stays

- **Intelier Rosa**

Carrer d'Herrero, 20, 12002  
Castelló de la Plana, Castellón  
T: 964 22 50 00

[www.intelier.com/hotel-intelier-rosa-castellon/](http://www.intelier.com/hotel-intelier-rosa-castellon/)

**Pros:** Centrally located, this hotel offers a mix of comfort with amenities like an outdoor pool, gym, and a restaurant. It's popular among families and couples for its accessible location and value.

**Cons:** Occasional noise from the street; pool is seasonal.

- **RH Silene Hotel & Spa**

Av. del Golf, 2, Bajo, 12100 Grao de Castellón, Castellón  
T: 964 28 01 80

[www.hotelrhsilene.com/](http://www.hotelrhsilene.com/)

**Pros:** Modern facilities, beach proximity, well-rated spa.

**Cons:** Limited on-site dining options compared to some others.

- **NH Castellon Mindoro**

Carrer de Moyano, 4, 12002  
Castelló de la Plana, Castelló  
T: 964 22 23 00

[www.nh-hotels.com/en/hotel/nh-castellon-mindoro](http://www.nh-hotels.com/en/hotel/nh-castellon-mindoro)

**Pros:** Centrally located with high guest ratings. Offers room service, fitness facilities, child care services, and pet-friendly policies.

**Cons:** Not as many luxury amenities as higher-end hotels; limited breakfast variety.

# What Every Mama Needs to Know

Moving to a new country comes with a long to-do list—and we're here to help you check off the essentials. From understanding local laws and navigating the tax system to finding your way around town and knowing where to go in an emergency, this section covers the practical info that helps you feel safe, informed, and confident from day one. It may not be glamorous, but it's absolutely empowering.

## *What's included*

- **Public Transportation:** Get to know Castellón's bus and train systems, how to buy tickets, and why a transportation card might become your new best friend..
- **Important Laws & Regulations:** Learn Spain's key laws and regulations.
- **Tax Info:** Find a quick breakdown of Tax info that you will need to know about.





# Public Transportation

Whether you're commuting daily or exploring the city, getting from A to B in Castellón de la Plana is easy and convenient. From reliable public transport to bike-friendly streets and family-friendly options, we've got all the tips to help you navigate the city with ease!

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## Bus (Autobús)



- Operator: TUCS ([www.tucs.es](http://www.tucs.es))
  - Tickets & Fare: Tickets can be purchased by cash directly from the driver, or you can use a rechargeable travel card (called a "Tarjeta Transporte" in Spanish). It's recommended to have a bus card for frequent users as it offers discounts.
  - Accessibility: Most buses are equipped with wheelchair access, making them suitable for people with reduced mobility.
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## Tram (Tranvía)



- Castellón has a light rail tram system which connects the city with some of its neighboring towns and coastal areas, including the popular beach area El Grao and the port of Castellón.
- Operator: TRAM Castellón ([www.tramcastellon.com](http://www.tramcastellon.com))
  - Routes & Frequency: The tram runs frequently during the day, with regular service to the main residential and tourist areas.
  - Tickets & Fare: Similar to buses, tram tickets can be purchased via a travel card or single tickets, depending on the user's needs.
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## Train (Renfe)



- The city has a Renfe train station that connects Castellón to other major cities in Spain, including Valencia and Madrid.
- For travel within the region, the Cercanías (commuter train) system operates between Castellón and nearby towns, even till Valencia city.
- Operator: Renfe ([www.renfe.com](http://www.renfe.com))
  - Routes & Frequency: Trains are regular, and there are both high-speed (AVANT) and regional trains. The Cercanías line offers easy access to surrounding areas.
  - Tickets & Fare: Tickets can be purchased online, at the station, or through the Renfe app. The fare varies depending on the distance and the type of train chosen.

# Public Transportation

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## Taxi



Taxis in Castellón can be hailed on the street or ordered by phone. There are official taxi ranks near major public areas such as train stations, shopping districts, and the airport.

- Fare: Taxis are metered, with the fare determined by the time and distance traveled.
  - Availability: Taxis are available 24/7 in Castellón, although late-night availability may be limited in some areas.
  - Order a taxi:
    - Radio Taxi Castellón: +34 964 23 74 74, [www.radiotaxicastellon.com](http://www.radiotaxicastellon.com)
    - Teletaxi Castellón: +34 964 25 46 46 (Available 24/7)
  - Taxi apps: like Free Now, Cabify, Uber, Bolt, and Pide Taxi offer convenient, on-demand ride-hailing services in Castellón.
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## Bicycles (Bicicas)



The city is bicycle-friendly, and there are designated bike lanes in the city center and along major roads. Castellón has a public bike-sharing system known as Bicicas which offers an affordable and eco-friendly transportation option for short trips.

- Operator: Bicicas Castellón ([www.bicicas.es](http://www.bicicas.es))
  - Availability: Bicycles can be rented from various stations around the city, especially in high-traffic areas like Plaza Mayor, Grao, and near the beach. You can also use the Bicicas app or the website to locate available bikes and nearby stations.
  - Fare: Bicycle rental prices are affordable, with options for daily or monthly passes.
  - Using the Bikes: Unlock bikes via the app, and after using return bikes to any nearby available station.
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## Car Rentals



For those who prefer more flexibility or plan to travel beyond Castellón, renting a car is another option. There are multiple car rental agencies at the airport and within the city center. Websites for rental companies include:

- Hertz [www.hertz.es/rentacar/reservation](http://www.hertz.es/rentacar/reservation)
- Europcar [www.europcar.es/es-es](http://www.europcar.es/es-es)
- Avis [www.avis.es](http://www.avis.es)
- Malco [www.malcorentacar.com](http://www.malcorentacar.com)
- Record Go [www.recordrentacar.com](http://www.recordrentacar.com)

# Public Transportation

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## \* Public Transport Card (Tarjeta Transporte / Bus Pass)

In Castellón, the transport card is a convenient way to travel on buses and trams. Here's where you can buy, change or top up the card:

### Offline Offices

- **Tenencia de Alacaldía Este**  
Avda. Hermanos Bou, 27 bajo  
T: +34 964 26 12 67
- **Tenencia de Alacaldía Norte**  
Plaza del Primer Molí, s/n  
T: +34 964 22 33 50
- **Tenencia de Alacaldía Grao**  
Paseo Buenavista, 28  
T: +34 964 28 38 40
- **Tenencia de Alacaldía Oeste**  
Plaza Lagunas de Ruidera, s/n –  
Mas Blau  
T: +34 964 24 47 65
- **Tenencia de Alacaldía Sur**  
C/ Ricardo Catalá Abad, esq.  
C/ Joaquín Marqués – 12006  
T: +34 964 25 27 36

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### Online Application

Some providers allow you to purchase or top up the card online through their websites, though this may vary based on specific promotions or services.

[www.tucs.es](http://www.tucs.es)

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### Top Up

You can top up your bus card at any Tobacco or Estanco shop displaying the green bus sign. Be sure to check the store's opening hours in advance.

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### Discount Policies

For example, young people under 31 years old can get discounted tickets, and children under 7 years old travel in the city for free. These special bus cards require a separate application. For more details on discount policies, please refer to the official website [www.tucs.es](http://www.tucs.es)

# Important Laws & Regulations

Here are some key laws and regulations in Spain that may be particularly useful for mothers and families moving to the country.

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## 1

### **Residency & Immigration Laws**

- **EU/EEA Citizens:** EU and EEA nationals can live and work in Spain without a visa but need to register for residency if they stay longer than 90 days.
  - **Non-EU Citizens:** Non-EU citizens must apply for the appropriate visa or residency permit before arriving. For families, Spain offers family reunification options, allowing a spouse and children to join a family member with legal residency.
- 

## 2

### **Healthcare System & Access**

- **Public Healthcare:** Spain has a universal healthcare system, and all residents have access to public healthcare services. Non-EU citizens typically need private insurance unless covered by a public system or EU health insurance.
  - **Children's Healthcare:** Pediatric care, vaccinations, and routine checkups are provided through the public healthcare system. Mothers should register with the local health center (centro de salud) to ensure children receive necessary immunizations.
- 

## 3

### **Maternity & Paternity Leave**

- **Maternity Leave:** Mothers in Spain are entitled to 16 weeks of paid maternity leave, starting before or after the birth. Leave can be extended for premature or multiple births.
  - **Paternity Leave:** Fathers are also eligible for 16 weeks of paternity leave, designed to promote gender equality and provide support for new parents.
- 

## 4

### **Education Laws & Schooling Options**

- **Mandatory Education:** Education is compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 16. Public schooling is free, though private and international schools are available.
- **Enrollment:** Children must be registered in the local municipality (empadronamiento) to enroll in schools. Additionally, many public schools offer special support for children who speak foreign languages.



# Important Laws & Regulations

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**5**

## Parental Rights & Child Custody

- **Custody Laws:** In cases of separation or divorce, Spanish courts prioritize joint custody arrangements. Decisions on custody are based on the child's best interests, often resulting in shared custody or visitation rights.
  - **Parental Authority:** Both parents have equal parental rights and responsibilities regarding their children's upbringing, regardless of marital status.
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**6**

## Labor Laws for Working Mothers

- **Flexible Working Hours:** Employees with children under 12 are legally allowed to request flexible working hours. Spanish law also supports shorter working hours for new mothers, commonly referred to as "reduction de jornada," which is partially compensated by social security.
  - **Workplace Protection:** Discrimination against pregnant women or those returning from maternity leave is prohibited. If terminated, mothers have grounds for legal protection and compensation.
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**7**

## Child & Family Benefits

- **Financial Support:** Families with children under 18 can receive modest financial support, depending on income. For large families or those with disabled children, additional benefits may apply.
  - **Childcare Subsidies:** For parents with low incomes, Spain provides subsidies to help cover the cost of daycare and early childhood education.
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## Vaccination Requirements for School Enrollment

**Vaccination Records:** While not legally mandatory, vaccinations are recommended and required by some schools, especially public ones, as part of the enrollment process. Parents should keep updated vaccination records for children.

# Important Laws & Regulations

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## 9

### **Driving & Car Seat Laws**

- **Car Seats:** Children under 135 cm in height must use a suitable car seat. This regulation is strictly enforced, and fines can be issued for non-compliance.
- **Driver's License:** EU licenses are valid in Spain, but non-EU nationals may need to exchange their licenses or pass a driving test after six months of residence.

## 10

### **Housing & Rental Laws**

- **Tenant Protections:** Spain's rental laws protect tenants, including families with children. Lease agreements typically last for five years, with automatic renewals, providing stability for long-term renters.
- **Community Living:** Many buildings and communities have quiet hours, usually from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m., which are enforced by local noise ordinances.

# Tax Info

## Tax Info

If you live in Spain for more than 183 days in a calendar year, you are considered a tax resident and are required to pay Spanish taxes on your worldwide income. For the 2024 tax year, you must file a tax return if your income exceeds €22,000 annually, or in specific circumstances, such as earning over €1,000 from rental income, having capital gains of more than €1,600, or being self-employed.

**The Spanish income tax system is progressive, with the following updated rates for 2024:**

- Up to €12,450: 19%
- €12,450–€20,200: 24%
- €20,200–€35,200: 30%
- €35,200–€60,000: 37%
- €60,000–€300,000: 45%
- Over €300,000: 47%

If you are employed, your employer handles most of your social security contributions, with a smaller portion deducted from your salary. For self-employed individuals, a reduced social security payment of around €80 per month applies in the first year, increasing to €150 in the second year and to the full rate (approximately €280) by the third year. Self-employed workers also need to file VAT and income tax estimates quarterly, adjusting for any differences at the end of the year.

If you are American, you still must file your taxes in the US.

# Where Work & Fun Come Together

Being a mama doesn't mean pressing pause on your social life—or your professional dreams. This section is all about balance: where to wine and dine when you finally get that night off, and where to plug in your laptop for focused work (or a strong coffee!). Whether you're chasing deadlines or dancing shoes, we've got you covered with the best coworking spaces, cozy cafés, vibrant restaurants, and spots to let loose after hours. Because yes—you can do both.

## *What's included*

- **CoWorking Space:** Coworking spaces offer a flexible, inspiring place for mamas to work, connect, and stay productive outside the home.
- **Nightlife & Restaurants:** Castellón offers a lively mix of restaurants and nightlife—from casual tapas bars to stylish spots perfect for a mama's night out.







Work & Play the Mama Way

# CoWorking Spaces

Knowing where to go and how to contact these services is essential for quick response during medical emergencies.



## Cow CoWorking

Calle Trinidad, 92  
12002 Castellón  
T. Jaime: 637 13 76 91  
T. María: 607 56 27 40  
[www.workingatcow.com](http://www.workingatcow.com)



## EspacioBase

Ronda Mijares, 11  
12001 Castellón  
T: 663 26 29 31  
[www.espaciobase.com](http://www.espaciobase.com)



## Office

Passeig de la Universitat, 13,  
12006 Castellón  
T: 622 54 87 60  
[www.cowworkingoffice.es](http://www.cowworkingoffice.es)



## Castellon Trade Center

Dean Martí, 46 Entlo.,  
12004 Castellón  
T: 964 09 01 22  
T: 624 67 95 38  
[www.vntradecenter.es](http://www.vntradecenter.es)



## Centro de Negocios

AV Pérez Galdóz 12  
Castellón  
T: 633 20 77 14  
[www.centrodenegocioscastellon.es](http://www.centrodenegocioscastellon.es)

# Nightlife & Restaurants

## Nightlife

In Castellon off the Plaza Santa Clara, you will find a small street which is the heart of “**Las Tascas**”. “Las Tascas is the place where there are a few bars and large crowds descend upon this tiny street (with the overflow spilling out into the plaza) Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays starting around 7pm. You will see groups of friends, parents with children running around, strollers and young people enjoying the atmosphere. Typically people have a few drinks and some tapas and then go to have dinner afterwards.

**Tardeo:** This is a concept of having lunch and drinking after lunch instead of starting later on.

There are various “discos” throughout the city as well as pubs and bars that play live music.

- **Blue Note Disco Pub 80**
- **Discoteca Yambú**
- **ELEGANT**
- **Four Seasons**
- **Le Club Music**
- **OH MY GOD Castellón**
- **Pub Terra**
- **Raspa Bar**
- **Santô's Club**



# Nightlife & Restaurants

## Restaurants

### Spanish

- Cal Paradis (Vall D'Alba)
- Casa Aljaro
- El Pairal
- El Pixavi
- El Roble
- El Rustico
- Pou de Beca (Countryside)
- Taperia Cal Vicent

### Burgers

-   • Fitzgerald
- Goiko
- RBTS
- Roberts Smashburgers

### Chinese

- Restaurante Asiático MAO-FU
- Restaurante Chino City
- Restaurante China

### Indian

- Little India
- Samrat

### Italian

- Il Tona Pizzeria
- L'etrusco
-  • Le Otto
-  • Mamma Mia
- Pizzeria de Filippo
- Pizzeria Peppone Castellón
- Pizzeria San Luis Centro
- Restaurante La Dolce Vita
- Restaurante La Tagliatella
- Ristorante Pizzeria La Fontana
- Tasca la Caseta Dell Italiano
-  • Trattoria Mone Amuní

### Japanese

- Asoko
- Food House Ramen
-  • Izakaya
- Ramen Kitsune
-  • Roku
- Ryukishin

### Japanese- Sushi

- Izumi Sushi
- Miss Sushi
- Nakama
- SHUN Restaurante fusión
- Shokai I
- Shokai II
- Sushi Lovers



MovingWhere Recommended



Kid-Friendly

# Nightlife & Restaurants

## Restaurants

### Mexican

- Peltre Cuina Mexicana
- ★ • Los Chamacos

### Pubs

- Dublin House
- Temple Bar

### Seafood

- El Mediterraneo in Grao
- ★ • Terra Milles in Grao
- Restaurante Galicia

### MovingWhere Recommended

- ★ • Alessandro Maino
- El Plan B
- Ginos
- Instinto Carnivoro
- Malabar
- Restaurante Galicia



# Stay Healthy & Supported

Because a healthy mama is a happy mama! From navigating Spain's top-ranked healthcare system to knowing where to go for hospitals, clinics, or pharmacies, this section is your go-to guide for keeping your family healthy and supported in Castellón—whether you're using public care, exploring private options, or handling an emergency.

## *What's included*

- **Healthcare Information:** Spain's healthcare system is among the best in the world—here's what you need to know to access care for you and your family in Castellón.
- **Emergency Medical Services:** Know what number to dial in an emergency, where to find the nearest hospital, and how to access care fast.
- **Hospitals:** Castellón offers top-quality public and private hospitals, providing comprehensive care for all your medical needs.



# Healthcare Information

Understanding Spain's healthcare system is essential for navigating life in Castellón—this guide breaks down everything from public access and private care to pharmacies, dental services, and fertility options.

## Healthcare in Spain

Spain boasts one of the highest life expectancies in Europe, thanks in part to its excellent healthcare system. Recognized by the World Health Organization as one of the best globally, Spanish hospitals are well-equipped with modern technology and provide a high standard of care. Many hospitals have English-speaking staff or offer translation services for non-Spanish speakers.

## Overview of Spain's Healthcare System

The Spanish government allocates a significant portion of its GDP to healthcare, ensuring a high number of qualified medical professionals who must pass rigorous examinations. Each of Spain's 17 Autonomous Communities is responsible for managing its own healthcare services. Residents, including both working and retired foreigners with a social security number, can access free or subsidized medical care through the national system (Sistema Nacional de Salud). Depending on the treatment, 75% to 100% of the costs may be covered.

## How to Access Public Healthcare in Spain

To receive state healthcare, individuals must obtain a social security number by applying at their local **Tesorería General de la Seguridad Social** office. Required documents typically include a passport, NIE (foreigner identification number), proof of residence, and registration with the local municipal office (**padrón**). Once registered at a public health center (**centro de salud** or CAP), patients receive a SIP (Sistema de Información Poblacional) health card, which grants them access to state-funded medical services.

For non-urgent medical concerns, the assigned general practitioner (**médico de cabecera**) should be the first point of contact. Referrals to specialists within the public healthcare system are arranged through these doctors. EU citizens can use a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to receive medical treatment in Spain for up to 90 days, after which they must apply for residency.

# Healthcare Information

## Public Healthcare for Foreign Residents

Foreigners residing in Spain may qualify for free public healthcare if they meet any of the following conditions:

- They are employed or self-employed and contribute to social security.
- They receive certain Spanish government benefits.
- They are divorced or separated from someone registered with social security.
- They are a child or a pregnant resident.
- They are under 26 and studying in Spain.
- They are retired and receiving a state pension.

Those who do not meet these criteria can opt into the **convenio especial**, a public healthcare scheme requiring a monthly payment of approximately €60 for individuals under 65 and €157 for those over 65. Applicants must have been registered on a **padrón** (municipal census) for at least a year. Otherwise, private health insurance is necessary, and in some cases, proof of insurance is required for visa applications.

## Private Healthcare in Spain

Many Spaniards and expatriates choose private healthcare for shorter waiting times and a wider range of treatment options. Some international companies in Spain provide private health insurance as part of employee benefits. When selecting a provider, many expats turn to established companies such as:

- **Sanitas** (a subsidiary of the global Bupa Group)
- **Adeslas**
- **Mapfre**
- **Cigna Salud**
- **ASSSA**



# Healthcare Information

## Fertility Treatments & Surrogacy Laws

Spain is a leading destination for fertility treatments, offering services comparable in quality to those in other advanced countries. Certain fertility treatments may even be covered by the state healthcare system for eligible residents. Spanish laws are among the most inclusive, allowing single women and LGBTQ+ couples to access these services.

However, surrogacy is illegal in Spain. Individuals seeking surrogacy must look to international agencies in countries where the practice is permitted, such as the United States. These agencies handle the legal procedures to ensure a smooth transition when bringing the child back to Spain.

## Pharmacies & Access to Medication

In Spain, prescriptions (**receta médica**) can be obtained at a **farmacia** (pharmacy). Some medications, including antibiotics, may be available without a doctor's prescription. Hospitals generally do not issue prescriptions directly; instead, patients receive a medical note, which they must take to a general practitioner or pharmacy.

For those covered by the state healthcare system, prescription costs are partially subsidized, with the percentage varying based on income and age. Most pharmacies operate from **9:30 AM to 2:00 PM** and **5:00 PM to 9:30 PM** on weekdays, with limited hours on Saturdays and closures on Sundays. Emergency **24-hour pharmacies (farmacias de guardia)** are available, with locations posted online or displayed on pharmacy doors.

## Dental Care in Spain

Most dental services in Spain are private. While children and emergency dental procedures for adults are covered by the public healthcare system, routine and specialized treatments typically require private insurance or out-of-pocket payment.



# Emergency & Medical Services

Knowing where to go and how to contact these services is essential for quick response during medical emergencies.

## ● Emergency Hotline

- Number: **Dial 112** for immediate assistance for any emergency (medical, fire, or police). This number connects you to multilingual operators and is free to call.
- Medical emergencies: **061**.

## ● Hospitals & Major Healthcare Facilities

- **Hospital General Universitario de Castellón:** The main public hospital equipped with an emergency department that operates 24/7.  
Av. de Benicàssim, s/n, 12004 Castellón de la Plana.  
T: +34 964 72 50 00
- **Hospital Vithas Castellón:** A private hospital providing emergency medical care.  
Carrer María Rosa Molas, 25, 12004 Castellón de la Plana.  
T: +34 964 72 60 00

## ● Urgent Care Centers (Centros de Salud)

- These are smaller health centers providing urgent care services outside of hospital emergency rooms. They may have limited hours and are suitable for non-life-threatening issues.
- **Centro de Salud Rafalafena:** Provides primary and urgent care.
- **Centro de Salud Palleter:** Offers outpatient emergency services.

## ● Pharmacies

- **24-Hour Pharmacies:** Certain pharmacies in Castellón operate 24/7 or provide after-hours services. Look for signs saying "Farmacia de Guardia" to find an open pharmacy during off-hours.



## Wellness & Support Hub

# Emergency & Medical Services

- **Emergency Medical Transport**

- **Ambulance Service:** For medical transport in emergencies, calling 112 ensures that an ambulance is dispatched as needed.
- **Private Ambulance Providers:** Some companies offer non-emergency medical transportation for a fee, which can be arranged through private healthcare providers.

- **Specialized Services**

- **Pediatric Emergency Care:** Available at major hospitals for children needing immediate medical attention.



## Wellness & Support Hub

# Hospitals

Castellón and nearby Vila-real offer both public and private hospitals with quality care, modern facilities, and family-friendly services.

## Public Hospitals

### Hospital General Universitario de Castellón

- The main public hospital in Castellón, offering a wide range of specialized services.

### Hospital de la Plana (Vila-real)

- Located in Vila-real, close to Castellón, this public hospital also provides general medical and specialized services. They have a natural birthing Center

## Private Hospitals

### Hospital Vithas

- A private hospital in Castellón offering various specialties, known for surgical services, maternity care, and modern facilities.

# Family Life, Schools & Play in Castellón

Raising kids in a new country comes with questions—from where to send them to school to how to fill weekends with fun and fresh air. In this section, you'll find everything from school options and language tips to the best local parks, indoor play spaces, and family-friendly day trips from Castellón. Whether your little ones are just starting school or you're looking for weekend adventures, we've gathered all the essentials to help you settle in and enjoy life as a family here.

## *What's included*

- **Schools:** Castellón offers a variety of schooling options to suit every family's needs—from public and semi-private to international programs.
- **Parks & Play Spaces:** Castellón is full of green spaces, playgrounds, and indoor play areas where kids can run, climb, and explore all year round.
- **Excursions:** Looking for family-friendly adventures outside the city? These nearby getaways offer nature, culture, and plenty of fun for all ages.





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Family & Kids' Life

# Schools

Castellón offers a wide range of schooling options—from public to private and international—so you can find the best fit for your child's education and language needs.

## Public Schools

Funded by the government and free of charge, public schools in Castellón follow the national curriculum and are accessible to all students.

## Private Schools

Privately funded, these schools often offer bilingual or international programs, with some providing additional languages and specialized courses.

## Concertado Schools (Semi-Private)

These are partially government-funded and require lower fees than private schools. Concertado schools combine aspects of public and private education, often with smaller class sizes and specialized facilities.

In the Valencian Community, which includes Castellón, students in public and "concertado" (semi-private) schools typically receive instruction in both Spanish and Valencian (also known as Catalan in this region). Valencian is a co-official language here and is part of the curriculum, especially in primary and secondary schools. However, the degree of emphasis on Valencian versus Spanish may vary by school and even by municipality. In some cases, classes may be fully or partially conducted in Valencian, particularly in areas with a strong cultural emphasis on the language.

While knowledge of Valencian isn't strictly required for families moving to Castellón, understanding and participating in the local culture can be easier with some familiarity. If you're considering public schooling, expect that children will learn Valencian as part of their regular studies. This bilingual education aims to ensure students are proficient in both languages, but Spanish remains the dominant language, particularly in urban areas and with foreign residents in mind.

## Private Schools

In Castellón, private schools offer a range of advantages and disadvantages depending on individual educational needs, budget, and language preferences.

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1



### Agora Lledó International School

Known for its high academic standards, it incorporates the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum and multilingual education, including English, Spanish, Catalan, and other languages. The school also has extensive extracurricular programs in sports, music, and STEAM activities, which foster holistic development. However, its high standards and additional services, such as extended hours and health services, result in relatively high fees, ranging between €300 and €700 per month.

---

2

### British School of Vila-real

This British school focuses on active learning methodologies and uses English as the main language, while incorporating classes in Spanish and Valencian. It offers services such as extended hours, a dining hall, and extracurriculars, which makes it suitable for families seeking a structured yet flexible environment. Its location in Vila-real, outside Castellón, might be a disadvantage for some, and transportation could be an additional cost.

---

3



### International English School of Castellón

As an English-medium school, it caters to families looking for immersion in English. The school uses innovative teaching methods and provides services such as morning and afternoon care and a variety of activities, making it ideal for international students. However, its limited use of other languages might not appeal to families seeking trilingual education.



**MovingWhere Recommended**



4

### **Colegio La Magdalena**

This bilingual school (Spanish and Valencian) offers a more affordable private education option, with a general curriculum that emphasizes inclusivity and mixed-gender education. It includes support services like counseling and extracurricular programs. However, it may lack the international focus or advanced curriculum seen in other private options.

---

5

### **Colegio San Cristóbal**

With a broad range of educational stages, this school offers a bilingual curriculum in Spanish with extended hours, healthcare services, and innovative methods. While it provides a wide variety of support services, it may be less internationally focused than other schools in the region.

---

6

### **Quatre Camins**

A private, accredited school offering education for children ages 3–12 in small, multigrade groups (with capacity for around 75 students). The school follows an active, respectful pedagogy, nurturing each child's emotional, cognitive, artistic and linguistic development in a multilingual and multicultural environment.

---

7

### **Colegio Liceo (Concertado)**

Liceo is another private school option, located in the Castellón area and serving levels from preschool to secondary education. It has a balanced focus on academics and co-curricular activities, including sports, arts, and various clubs, aimed at encouraging students' personal and social growth. It offers services like transportation and a school dining hall, making it convenient for families. Its educational philosophy is often described as modern and inclusive, with particular attention to the needs of each student.

---

8

### **Colegio Mater Dei (Concertado)**

Mater Dei is a private Catholic institution located near Castellón de la Plana. Known for its emphasis on holistic development, Mater Dei integrates a strong academic program with religious education, moral values, and extracurricular activities aimed at fostering well-rounded growth.

# Parks & Play Spaces

Whether you're looking for a relaxing stroll, a place for the kids to run wild, or some weekend fun, Castellón's parks and indoor play spaces have you covered—nature, playgrounds, and plenty of room to roam!

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## Parks

- **Parque de los Juegos Tradicionales**

Play structures & a small pond.

- **Parc Rafalafena**

Has a cafe and has a small structure for kids to play.

- **Parque Ribalta**

Largest in Castellon. It has a few structures for kids to play in the center of the park and a cafe near the duck pond.

- **Parc del Pont de Ferro**

It has a skateboard area, soccer/football area & play structures.

- **Parque del Meridiano**

This park is more modern, featuring open lawns, pathways, and recreational areas suitable for various outdoor activities, including jogging and dog walking. It's especially popular for family activities and has amenities for children and sports enthusiasts.

- **Pinar del Grau**

Located near the beach, Pinar del Grau combines forested areas with playgrounds, sports fields, and picnic spots. Its proximity to the coastline also makes it a favorite for those looking to enjoy both greenery and sea views in one visit.

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## Play Spaces

- **Ilusiona Castellon in La Salera**

- **Kidom in Estepark**

- **El Pelotero**

- **Vertigo Park**

- **V Jump Castellón**

- **The Jumper**

# Excursions

Castellón de la Plana offers easy access to beautiful excursions, from mountain hikes to beach towns. Here are some top local excursions:

---

1

## Albufera Natural Park (Valencia)

**Distance:** 1 hour by car

**Highlights:** A massive freshwater lagoon surrounded by rice fields and home to migratory birds, just south of Valencia. You can enjoy the biodiversity and peaceful boat rides on the lagoon.

**Activity Tip:** Try an authentic paella Valenciana in one of the traditional restaurants nearby, as the area is considered the birthplace of paella.

---



2

## Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias (Valencia)

**Distance:** 1 hour by car

**Highlights:** This stunning complex in Valencia is home to the **Museo de las Ciencias Príncipe Felipe**, an interactive science museum packed with hands-on exhibits covering space, physics, biology, and more—perfect for curious kids of all ages. Right next door is **L'Oceanogràfic**, Europe's largest aquarium, where families can explore marine habitats from the Arctic to the tropics, complete with dolphins, sharks, and sea turtles.

**Activity Tip:** Make a full day of it by visiting both—the combination of science and sea life makes for an unforgettable family experience.

---

3

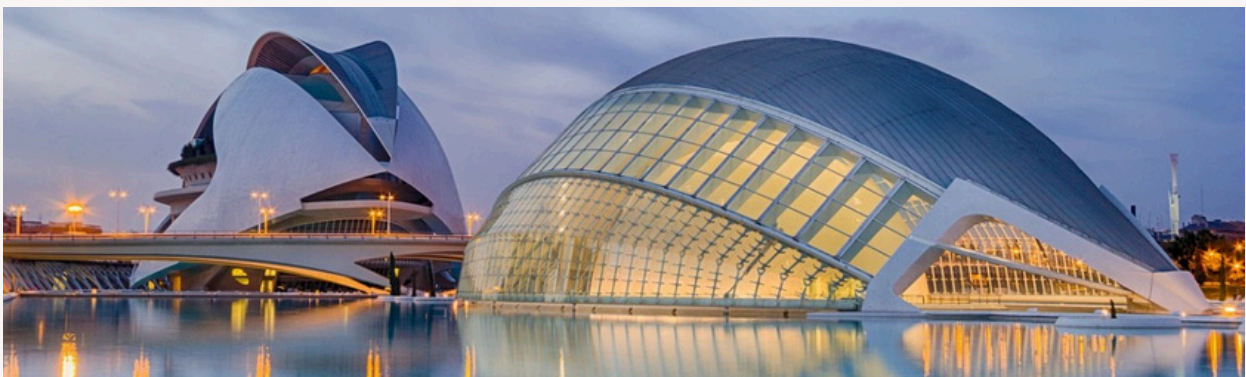
## Caves of San José (Coves de Sant Josep)

**Distance:** 30 minutes by car (in La Vall d'Uixó)

**Highlights:** These are the longest navigable underground river caves in Europe. You can take a boat ride through the caves and see impressive stalactites and rock formations.

**Activity Tip:** Book a tour to enjoy the guided underground boat ride and learn about the geological history of the area.

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Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias (Valencia). Photo accredited to [www.idealista.com](http://www.idealista.com)

# Excursions

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4

## Desert de les Palmes Natural Park

**Distance:** 20 minutes by car

**Highlights:** Known for its red clay mountains, beautiful Mediterranean vegetation, and the ruins of the old Carmelite Monastery. There are scenic trails for hiking and viewpoints offering panoramas of the coast and city.

**Activity Tip:** Hike up to the Ermita de la Magdalena for panoramic views over Castellón and the coast.

---

5

## Islas Columbretes (Columbretes Islands)

**Distance:** A 1-2 hour boat ride from the port of Castellón

**Highlights:** A volcanic archipelago and natural reserve with diverse marine life, clear waters, and great diving or snorkeling spots. Boat tours are available from the Castellón port.

**Activity Tip:** Book a snorkeling or scuba diving excursion to explore the marine biodiversity in this protected area.

---

6

## Montanejos & Horseback Riding

**Distance:** 1 hour by car

**Activities:** Montanejos is a beautiful natural area where you can find horseback riding tours suitable for families, taking you through scenic landscapes. Some riding centers cater to beginners, including young children.

**Activity Tip:** After riding, visit the hot springs nearby, where kids can safely wade in warm water pools.



Islas Columbretes. Photo accredited to [www.apartamentos3000.com](http://www.apartamentos3000.com)

# Excursions

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7

## Morella

**Distance:** 1.5 hours by car

**Highlights:** This medieval hilltop town is surrounded by ancient walls and crowned by a castle. It's one of Spain's official "most beautiful villages" and known for its stone buildings, charming streets, and views.

**Activity Tip:** Visit the Morella Castle, then explore the Santa María la Mayor Church, famous for its elaborate Baroque interior.

---



8

## Peñíscola

**Distance:** 45 minutes by car

**Highlights:** A picturesque coastal town with a medieval fortress (Castillo del Papa Luna) overlooking the sea. It's known for its narrow, cobbled streets, beaches, and historic old town.

**Activity Tip:** Take a guided tour of the castle, which has been a filming location for movies and TV series. Relax on the beach afterward!

---

9

## Sierra de Espadán Natural Park

**Distance:** About 1 hour by car

**Highlights:** This mountain range offers well-marked trails through lush pine forests, red sandstone rock formations, and traditional villages like Alcudia de Veo and Aín.

**Activity Tip:** Take a hike to explore the local flora, including the rare cork oak trees, or enjoy a scenic drive through quaint towns and viewpoints.



Morella. Photo accredited to [www.alamy.com](http://www.alamy.com)



# Fiestas, Siestas & Culture Surprises

From festive traditions to the little surprises of settling into a new country, this section gives you a glimpse into the rhythm of life in Castellón. Here you'll find helpful insights on local holidays and cultural differences—what to expect, how to prepare, and how to feel more at home in your new surroundings.

## *What's included*

- **Local Holidays:** Get to know the local rhythm through Castellón's vibrant festivals, traditions, and must-know public holidays.
- **Culture Shocks:** Moving to a new country comes with a few surprises—here's what might feel different (and how to roll with it) in Castellón.







## Everyday Life & Local Culture

# Local Holidays

From lively parades to firework-filled nights, Castellón's local holidays bring the city to life—here's a glimpse of what to expect year-round.

- **Festes de Sant Antoni (Saint Anthony's Day)**

**When:** Mid-January

**Description:** This festival honors Saint Anthony, the protector of animals. People bring their pets and livestock to be blessed, and bonfires and traditional dancing are central to the festivities. Many towns around Castellón also hold their own versions of this celebration.

- **La Magdalena (Festas de la Magdalena)**

**When:** Held for nine days in March.

**Description:** This is Castellón's major festival, celebrating the founding of the city. It features parades, fireworks, music, traditional dances, and "mascletàs" (loud firecracker displays). Key events include the "Romería de las Cañas," a pilgrimage to the site of Castellón's original settlement, and "Pregó," the main parade.

- **Semana Santa (Holy Week)**

**When:** The week leading up to Easter

**Description:** In Castellón, Semana Santa features processions and religious ceremonies, with streets filled with people honoring different saints. Each day focuses on a different figure from the Passion story, ending with Easter celebrations.

- **Corpus Christi**

**When:** Usually in June

**Description:** A religious celebration with deep roots in Spain. In Castellón, you'll find traditional dances, floral displays, and the famous "Caballers de la Conquesta" parades, where participants dress in medieval costumes.

# Local Holidays



Sant Pere. Photo accredited to [www.comunitatvalenciana.com](http://www.comunitatvalenciana.com)

- **San Juan (Saint John's Eve)**

**When:** Evening of June 23

**Description:** Celebrated along Castellón's beaches, this holiday marks the summer solstice with bonfires and symbolic rituals. People jump over fires or into the sea at midnight, believed to bring good luck.

- **Sant Pere (Saint Peter's Festival)**

**When:** End of June

**Description:** Celebrated in the maritime district of Grau, this holiday honors Saint Peter, the patron saint of fishermen. Events include processions, concerts, and traditional fish and seafood dishes, along with firework displays over the sea.



## Everyday Life & Local Culture

# Culture Shocks

Moving to a new country always comes with surprises—some charming, others a bit confusing. From mealtime schedules to siesta culture and communication styles, here are a few cultural quirks you might encounter in Castellón (and how to roll with them).

---

1

### Be Prepared for Late Mealtimes

In Spain, lunch usually happens around 2–3 PM and dinner at 9–10 PM. If your kids are used to earlier meals, this can be a tough adjustment. Consider a small snack or “merienda” in the late afternoon to help bridge the gap.

---

2

### Embrace the 5 Meals a Day Culture

Spain has a rhythm of five daily meals: desayuno (breakfast), almuerzo (mid-morning snack), comida (lunch), merienda (afternoon snack), and cena (dinner). It’s different from the typical three meals a day, so plan your kids’ food schedule accordingly. You’ll find that snacks are almost as important as the main meals!

---

3

### Enjoy the Social Lifestyle

Spaniards love social gatherings, and kids are always included. You’ll see families out enjoying life until late in the evening. If you’re not used to your little ones being up late, you might need to ease into this lifestyle gradually.

---

4

### Adjust to the Siesta and Business Hours

Don’t be surprised when shops close in the afternoon for a siesta, especially in smaller towns. They’ll reopen in the evening. Plan errands early or later in the day to avoid frustration.

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5

### Relish the Child-Friendly Attitude

Spanish society loves kids. Don’t be surprised if strangers chat with your little ones or if restaurants warmly welcome families. It can be comforting knowing your children are always accepted.



## Everyday Life & Local Culture

# Culture Shocks

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6

### Overcome the Language Barrier

Not speaking Spanish or the local dialect (e.g., Catalan or Galician) can make things challenging. Consider language classes or practice apps for both you and your kids—it's a great way to learn together.

---

7

### Navigate the School System

Spanish schools may have different structures and expectations for parents. Lunch is often served at school, but it can be long, so check if your school has an afternoon break. School holidays might be longer than you're used to, so plan activities or childcare options early.

---

8

### Brace Yourself for the Paperwork

Spain is known for its slow and sometimes complicated bureaucracy. You'll need patience when registering for schools, healthcare, or any official processes. Bring snacks and activities for your kids when going to government offices!

---

9

### Get Ready for Public Holidays & Festivals

Spain loves its festivals, which often involve loud, late-night celebrations. These can disrupt bedtime but also provide a wonderful cultural experience for your family. Participate when you can—it's worth the memories!

---

10

### Adapt to the Pace of Life

Life in Spain moves at a slower, more relaxed pace, and punctuality isn't as rigid as in some other cultures. For moms used to tightly scheduled routines, this might mean learning to slow down and be flexible.



## Thank You, Mamas

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this guide — we hope it's helped you feel a little more grounded and excited about life in Castellón. Whether you're brand new here or have been around for a while, there's always something more to discover, and there's nothing like navigating it all with a supportive community by your side. If you'd like to keep the connection going, swap tips, ask questions, or just meet other incredible mamas in the area, come join us! Tap the link below to become a MovingWhere Mama — we'd love to welcome you into our WhatsApp group and community.

Join Now

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