

Nerja

Andalusia · Spain

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Nerja is a whitewashed coastal town on the eastern end of the Costa del Sol, about 55 km east of Málaga, between the sea and the Sierras de Almijara. It is known for the Balcón de Europa, a clifftop promenade, a huge cave with prehistoric paintings, and small beaches in coves below the cliffs.

It is quieter and more traditional than many Costa del Sol resorts. It is a good base for a few days, with the white villages of Frigiliana and Maro, and hiking in the mountains, close by.

When to visit

The weather is mild for most of the year. Spring and autumn are the best seasons for walking and sightseeing. Summer is hot and crowded, and August is the busiest month. Winters are mild, and the town stays open.

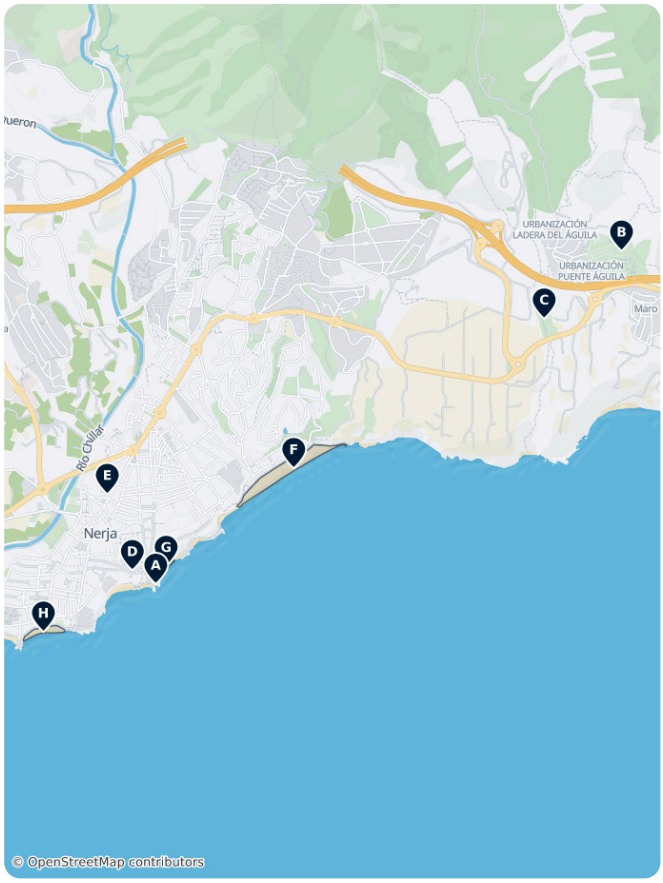
The Festival of the Cave of Nerja in July is a music and dance event held in the cave.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for hiking	16° / 20°	10° / 7°	Dry air
February	Great Great for hiking	17° / 21°	11° / 7°	Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	18° / 23°	12° / 8°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 24°	14° / 11°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 28°	17° / 13°	23 sunny days · Calm winds
June	Great Great for the beach	27° / 32°	21° / 17°	26 sunny days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for the beach	31° / 34°	24° / 21°	28 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for the beach	31° / 34°	24° / 21°	27 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
September	Great Great for the beach	27° / 31°	21° / 18°	21 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
October	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 28°	18° / 14°	Calm winds
November	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 24°	14° / 9°	Dry air · Calm winds
December	Good Good for sightseeing	17° / 20°	11° / 7°	Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: April, May, June, July, September, October, November

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Balcon de Europa is a promenade on a headland above the sea, with palm trees, a statue of King Alfonso XII and views along the coast.
- B Cueva de Nerja is a large cave system, about 4 km east of town, with enormous halls, stalactites and prehistoric paintings.
- C Acueducto del Águila is a 19th-century brick aqueduct with several tiers of arches, near the village of Maro.
- D Iglesia El Salvador is the town's main church, near the Balcón de Europa.
- E Ermita de Ntra. Sra. de las Angustias is a small chapel with a view in the old town.
- The Museo de Nerja tells the story of the area, from the cave finds to the present day.
- F Playa Burriana is the main town beach with chiringuitos (beach bars), and G Playa Calahonda and H Playa La Torrecilla are small beaches near the Balcón de Europa.
- The Río Chillar walk follows a river through a narrow gorge.

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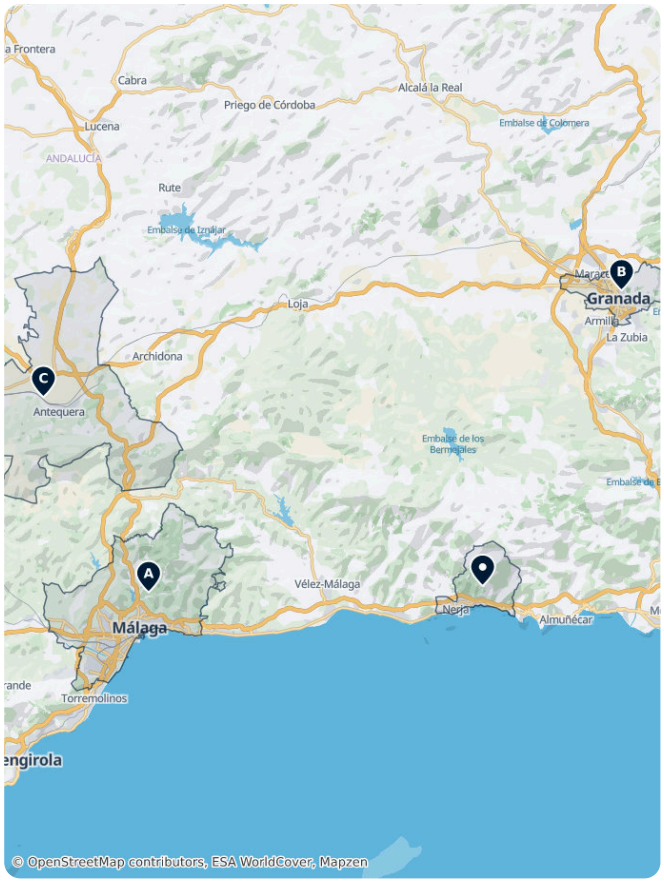
What to experience

- Walk on the Balcón de Europa at sunset.
- Visit the Cave of Nerja and its large halls.
- Have a paella at a beach bar at Burriana.
- Walk along the cliffs of Maro and Cerro Gordo to reach quiet coves.
- Spend a day in Frigiliana.

Day trips

- **Frigiliana** (about 6 km): a pretty white village in the hills, with narrow lanes and Moorish heritage.
- Ⓐ Málaga (about 55 km): the main city of the Costa del Sol.
- Ⓑ Granada (about 115 km): the Alhambra and old city.
- Ⓒ Antequera (about 100 km): dolmens and churches.
- **Sierra Nevada and the Alpujarras**: **Capileira** and **Bubión** are mountain villages.



Where to explore

Other places nearby:

- **Costa del Sol**: Málaga, Marbella and Mijas.
- **Andalusia**: Granada, Antequera and Almería.

Getting there

- **By air**: Málaga airport is about 55 km away. A direct bus runs to Nerja, or you can take a transfer or rental car.
- **By bus**: Buses run from Málaga's bus station in about an hour to an hour and a quarter, and from Granada in about 2 hours.
- **By car**: The A-7 motorway runs along the coast.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The center and the Balcón de Europa are walkable, with some steep streets. The cave is a short bus or taxi ride out.
- **Bus**: Local buses run to the cave, Maro and Frigiliana.
- **Taxi**: Available in the center.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The center is walkable, but some streets are steep and the cave is a few kilometres out.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

The hills and busy coast roads make cycling less comfortable.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Useful for Frigiliana, the cave and the cliffs, though buses also reach them.
- **Parking**: Paid car parks are in the center and fill up in summer.
- **Roads**: The A-7 is busy at weekends in summer, and the old coast road is narrow and winding.

Food & drink

Nerja serves Andalusian food with a coastal focus. Try *ajoblanco* (a cold almond and garlic soup), fried fish, *espetos* (grilled sardines on skewers) and paella at the beach bars. Frigiliana is known for *miel de caña* (sugar-cane honey).

The mountains produce sweet Moscatel wines.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Churros · Churros con Chocolate
Fried dough sticks served with a thick, dark hot chocolate for dipping — a classic Spanish breakfast or late-night snack.

LUNCH

Paella Valenciana
A saffron-scented rice dish cooked in a wide, shallow pan. The traditional Valencian version uses chicken, rabbit, and green beans — best eaten at midday.

Gazpacho
A cold, blended soup of raw tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, garlic, olive oil, and vinegar, originally from Andalusia. Served as a drink or a starter, especially in summer.

DINNER

Pulpo a la Gallega
Boiled octopus sliced onto a wooden board and dressed with olive oil, coarse salt, and smoked paprika — a signature dish of Galicia.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Jamón Ibérico
Dry-cured ham from acorn-fed Iberian pigs, sliced paper-thin and eaten on its own or with bread. The finest grade, jamón ibérico de bellota, is one of Spain's most prized products.

Tortilla Española
A thick potato and egg omelette, served warm or at room temperature, found in virtually every bar in Spain. Often eaten as a tapa or a quick meal.

Patatas Bravas
Fried potato chunks served with a spicy tomato sauce or aioli — one of the most common tapas across the country.

Pintxos
Small snacks anchored to slices of bread with a toothpick, the Basque Country's answer to tapas. Found in bar counters across San Sebastián and Bilbao, often with elaborate toppings.

Croquetas
Crispy breaded cylinders with a creamy béchamel filling, typically made with jamón, bacalà (salt cod), or mushrooms.

DRINKS

Rioja Wine · Vino de Rioja

Spain's best-known wine region produces full-bodied reds from Tempranillo grapes, aged in oak. The crianza, reserva, and gran reserva labels indicate increasing age and complexity.

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Safety & health

Nerja is a safe town. In summer, the sun is strong, so use sun protection and drink water. The cliff paths can be steep, and some beaches have currents, so check the swimming flags. Inside the cave, the floor is damp and the path has steps.

History

The area has been inhabited since prehistoric times, and the Cave of Nerja was used by humans for tens of thousands of years. The Moors ruled the coast for centuries, and the town was captured by the Catholic Monarchs in 1487.

In 1885 an earthquake damaged the town, and King Alfonso XII visited and gave the Balcón de Europa its name. The cave was rediscovered in 1959 by local boys. Tourism developed from the 1960s.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Spain at a glance:

CURRENCY

EUR €

EMERGENCY

112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES

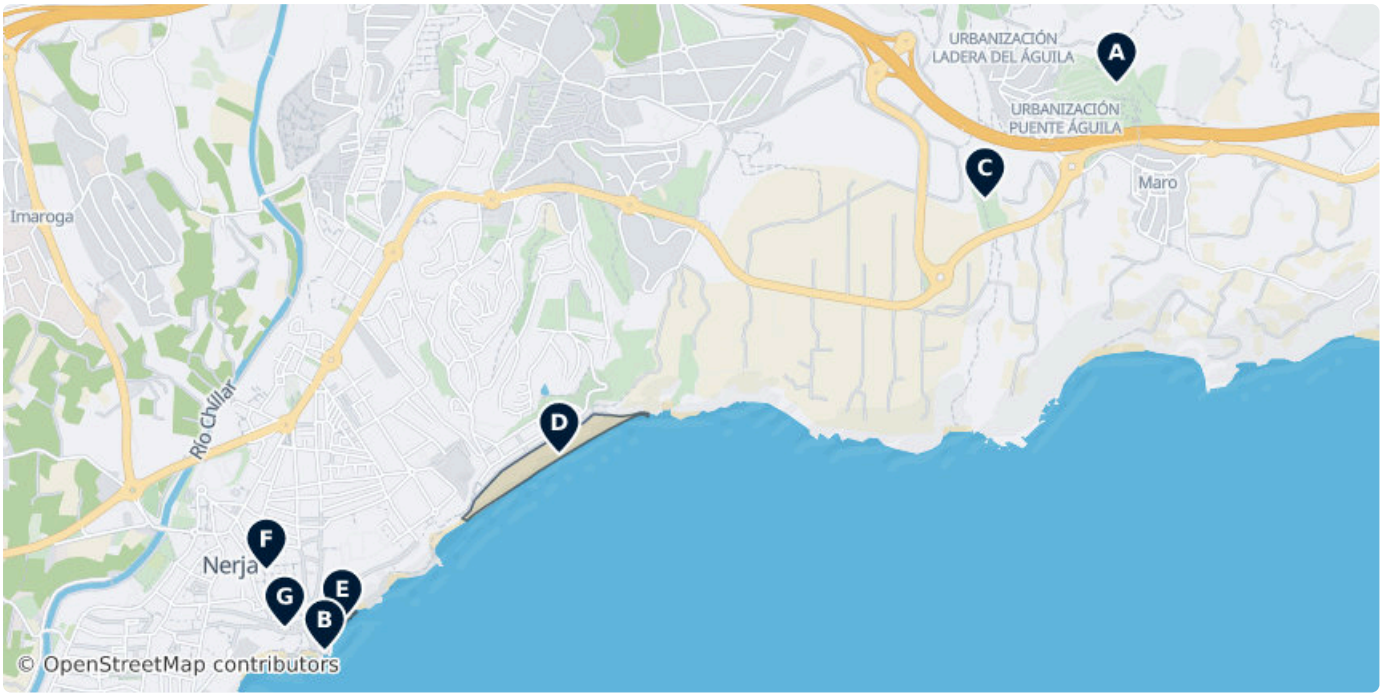
Spanish

TAP WATER

Safe to drink

Nerja's Absolute Essentials

Located on the Costa del Sol, Nerja features the prehistoric Nerja Caves, home to massive stalactites and archaeological remains. The Balcony of Europe, built on a former 15th-century fortress, offers panoramic coastal views. Historical landmarks include the 19th-century Eagle Aqueduct and the 17th-century El Salvador Church. The town's coastline ranges from the wide, Blue Flag Burriana Beach to the smaller Calahonda Beach, where traditional fishermen's cottages are built directly into the surrounding cliffs.



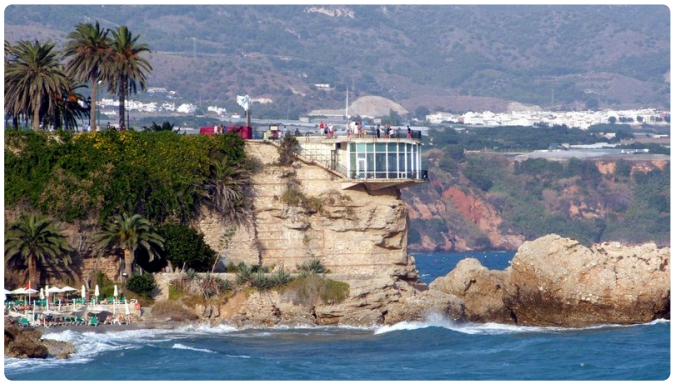


A Nerja Caves

The Caves of Nerja are a series of caverns close to the town of Nerja in the Province of Málaga, Spain.

Carretera de Maro s/n, Nerja, Spain (36.76175, -3.84484)

cuevadenerja.es, +34 952 52 95 20



B Balcony of Europe

A landscape landmark. Former 15th-century castle has been heavily damaged in an earthquake and transformed into a scenic lookout area.

Plaza del Balcón de Europa, 29780 Nerja, Spain (36.74422, -3.87539)



C Aqueduct of El Aguila

This 19th century engineering masterpiece is still in operation, irrigating its surroundings. Stop by and admire its monumentality.

29780, Spain (36.75818, -3.84992)



D Burriana Beach

The largest and most popular beach in the area. Clear, Blue Flag-awarded beach with a fine sand is lined with busy promenade.

29780, Spain (36.75031, -3.86634)

esnerja.com/playas/playa-de-burriana/



E Calahonda Beach

Relatively small beach where you can still see the local fishermen working - and even their tiny houses built by the rocks!

Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74516, -3.87471)

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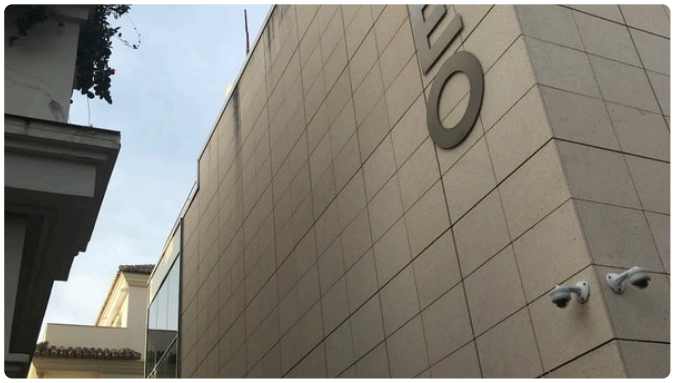


F Museo de Nerja

This museum details the history of Nerja and its caves from the Paleolithic era to the 1960s. It displays archaeological artifacts found in the Cueva de Nerja alongside interactive exhibits on the town's evolution and local traditions.

22 Calle Ánimas, Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74672, -3.87764)

+34 952527224



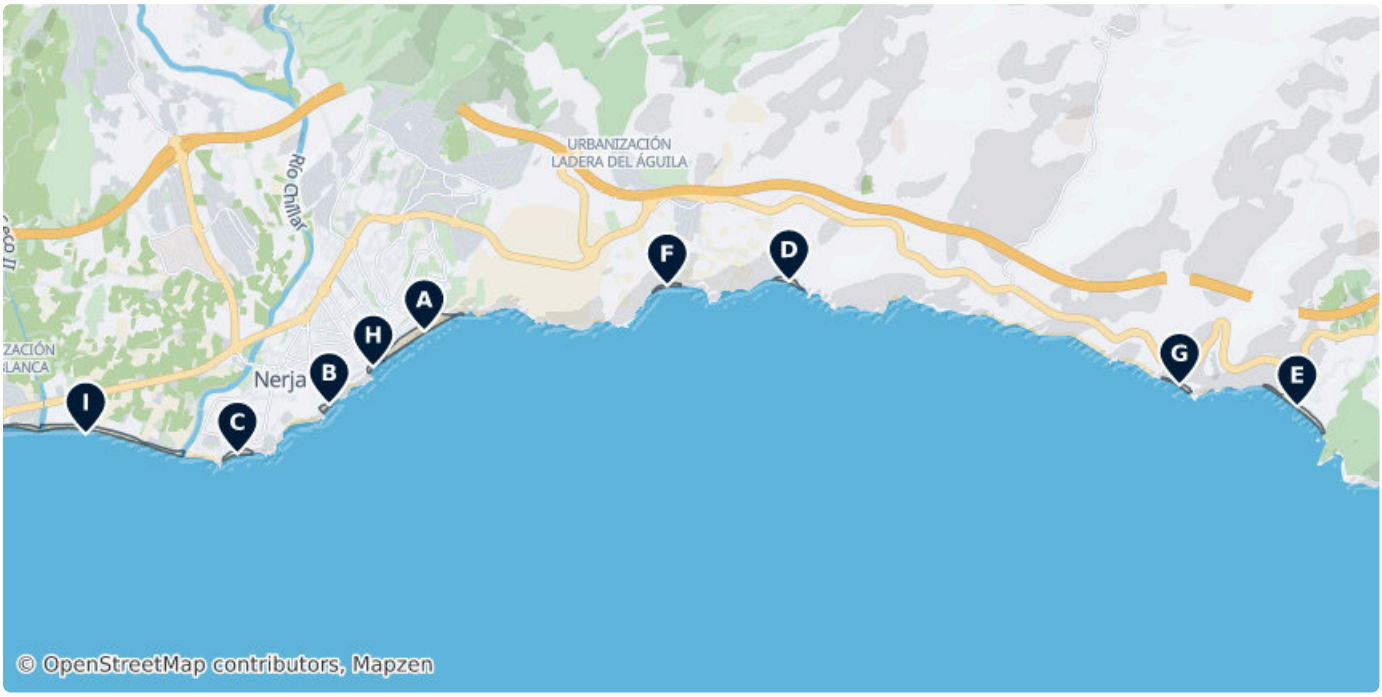
El Salvador Church

This beautiful 17th century church is a popular wedding location even for foreign visitors. No wonder - the setting is just perfect.

2 Calle Carmen, Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74494, -3.87692)

Best Beaches

Nerja's coastline features a diverse range of coastal environments, from the Blue Flag-awarded Burriana Beach with its busy promenade to the secluded coves of the Acantilados de Maro-Cerro Gordo Natural Park. The selection includes urban beaches with full amenities like Torrecilla and Calahonda, where traditional fishermen's cottages still stand. Further east, beaches like Maro and El Cañuelo provide crystal-clear waters for snorkeling and kayaking among natural cliffs and waterfalls, while El Playazo offers an expansive, natural landscape.





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Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74516, -3.87471)

youtu.be/EPlGgBfesfU



C Torrecilla Beach

Awarded with the Blue Flag, this beach is easily accessible and the facilities are aplenty, restaurants included. Nothing is missing here.

(Unnamed Road), Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74170, -3.88276)

esnerja.com/playas/playa-torrecilla/



D Playa de Maro

Situated within the Acantilados de Maro-Cerro Gordo Natural Park, this beach features clear waters ideal for snorkeling and kayaking to nearby coastal waterfalls.

Spain (36.75383, -3.83430)

esnerja.com/playas/playa-de-maro/



E Playa del Cañuelo

A secluded cove located within a protected natural park. Accessible via a shuttle bus during summer months, it is known for its rocky seabed and diverse marine life.

(Unnamed Road), 29780, Spain (36.74500, -3.78964)

esnerja.com/playas/playa-del-canuelo/

F Playa de La Caleta

Also known as Caleta de Maro, this wild cove sits below the cliffs of Maro. It offers a rugged environment with fewer facilities and crowds than the neighboring beaches.

29780, Spain (36.75353, -3.84500)

G Cala del Pino

Two small, sandy coves separated by rocks, accessible via a steep 200-meter path. Located within a natural park, the area remains largely undeveloped and preserved.

29780, Spain (36.74654, -3.79998)

H Carabeillo Beach

This beach is difficult to access because of a steep stairway - therefore it belongs to the less crowded and more peaceful ones in Nerja.

105 Calle Hernando de Carabeo, Nerja 29780, Spain (36.74781, -3.87084)

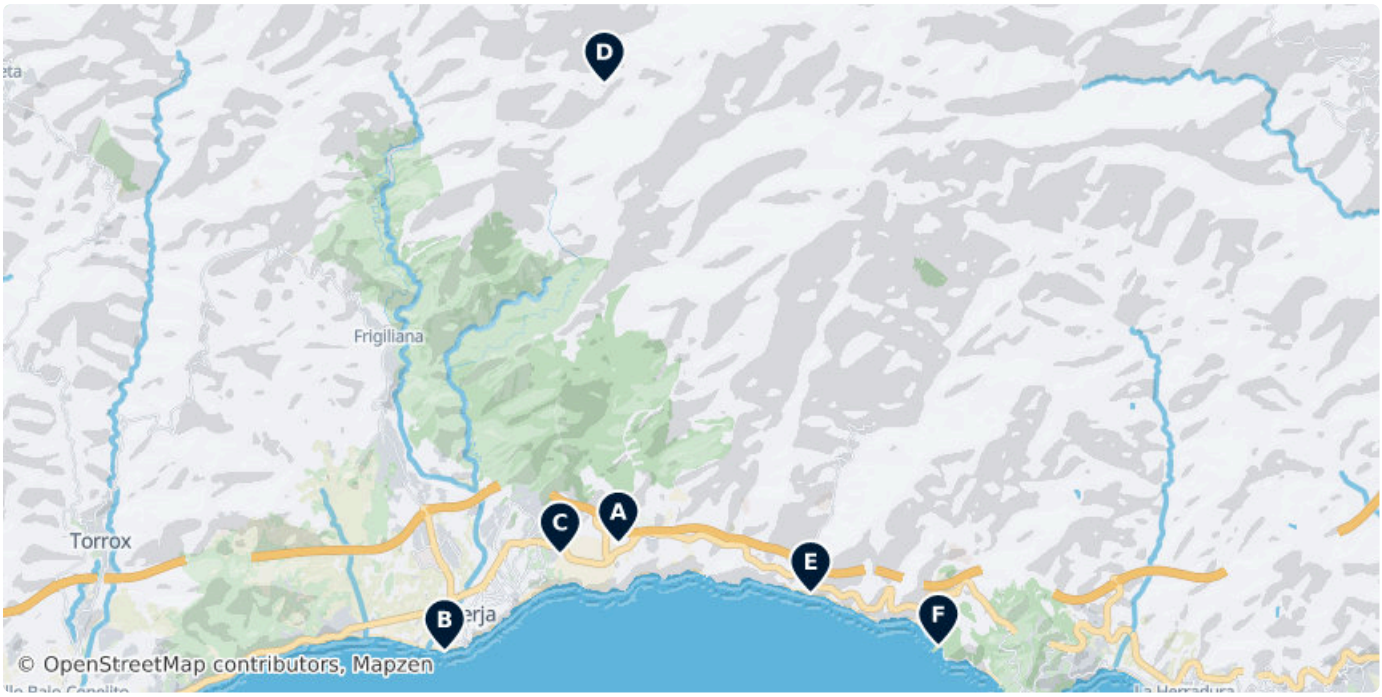
El Playazo

Nerja's largest beach has plenty to offer: vast open space, wildness and peace. Natural beach with amazing atmosphere.

(Unnamed Road), 29780, Spain (36.74309, -3.89609)

Fascinating Ruins

Nerja's historical landscape is defined by its diverse ruins and engineering feats. This collection features the 19th-century Aqueduct of El Aguila, a four-story structure still used for irrigation, alongside several coastal defense sites. Discover the remnants of 16th-century watchtowers and traditional rural architecture like the Cortijo de Iman. These structures highlight the region's agricultural history and its strategic maritime importance, ranging from industrial water systems to defensive sentry posts overlooking the Mediterranean.





A Aqueduct of El Aguila

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29780, Spain (36.75818, -3.84992)

B La Torrecilla

Remains of a coastal watchtower located on the beach. Originally part of the region's maritime defense system, the structure was destroyed during the Peninsular War in 1812.

(36.74108, -3.88429)

C Acueducto del Tablazo

Historical water transport structure that formed part of the irrigation network for the local sugar industry, specifically serving the San Joaquín sugar mill.

42 Calle de Casablanca, 29780, Spain (36.75647, -3.86146)

D Cortijo de Iman

Ruins of a traditional mountain farmhouse located within the Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara y Alhama Natural Park, reflecting the region's past rural and agricultural life.

29788, Spain (36.83096, -3.85268)

E Old defensive tower

A 16th-century coastal watchtower located on the cliffs of Maro. It was built to defend the coastline against pirate incursions and provides views across the Alboran Sea.

(36.75025, -3.81186)

F Ruinas de Garitas de Vigilancia.

Remnants of historical sentry boxes located along the rugged coastline, formerly used by guards to monitor the shore and prevent smuggling or unauthorized landings.

(36.74191, -3.78661)

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