

Peniscola

Castellón Province · Spain

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Peñíscola is a small coastal town in the province of Castellón, on the Costa del Azahar, about 140 km north of Valencia. Its old town sits on a rocky peninsula joined to the mainland by a sandy isthmus, crowned by a 13th-century castle built by the Knights Templar.

The castle was the last residence of the antipope Benedict XIII (Papa Luna), and has been used as a film location. The town has a long sandy beach, seafood restaurants and the Serra d'Irta natural park nearby.

When to visit

Late spring and early autumn are the best times, with warm weather and fewer crowds. July and August are hot, busy and expensive. Winters are mild and quiet, and many beach businesses close.

The Fiestas Patronales in September honour the Virgen de la Ermitana, with processions, fireworks and bull runs in the streets.

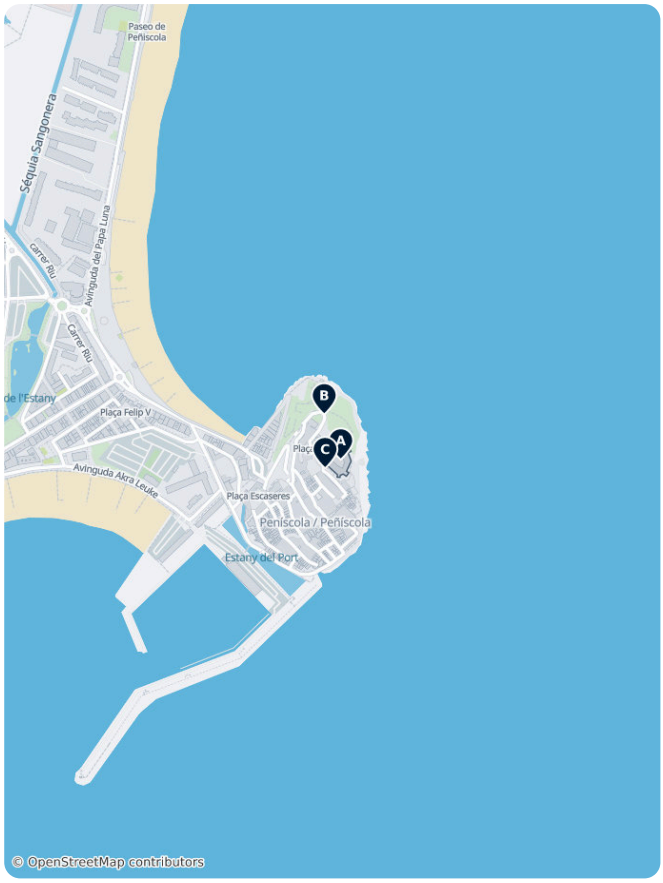
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for sightseeing	15° / 20° Feels like 11°	6° / 1°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Good Good for sightseeing	16° / 20° Feels like 12°	6° / 1°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 23° Feels like 15°	8° / 4°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 25°	10° / 6°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 28°	14° / 10°	Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for the beach	28° / 33°	18° / 14°	20 sunny days · Calm winds
July	Great Great for the beach	31° / 34°	21° / 17°	23 sunny days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
August	Great Great for the beach	31° / 35°	21° / 18°	20 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	27° / 31°	18° / 14°	Calm winds
October	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 28°	14° / 10°	Dry air · Calm winds
November	Great Great for sightseeing	18° / 23°	9° / 5°	Dry air · Calm winds
December	Good Good for sightseeing	15° / 19° Feels like 12°	6° / 2°	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 Castell de Peníscola is the Templar castle at the top of the peninsula, with a courtyard, halls and views of the sea and the coast. It was a papal residence in the 15th century.
- The old town has whitewashed streets, small squares, souvenir shops and the Porta de Santa Maria, the gate in the walls.
- B Jardins del Parc d'Artilleria are the gardens of the Parc d'Artilleria, below the castle walls.
- C Benedit XIII is a statue of Pope Benedict XIII (Papa Luna).
- The Bufador is a blowhole in the rocks, where the sea sends a spray of water through a cave on rough days.
- The Platja Nord is a long sandy beach, and the Platja Sud is a quieter beach on the other side of the peninsula.
- The Parròquia Mare de Déu del Socors is the old town's parish church.



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What to experience

- Visit the castle and walk the old town walls.
- Spend the day on the north beach, then eat rice and seafood by the sea.
- Walk or cycle in the Serra d'Irta.
- Try the artichokes of Benicarló in season.

Day trips

- **Serra d'Irta Natural Park** (about 10 km): coastal walks and unspoiled coves.
- **Benicarló** (about 7 km): a town known for its artichokes.
- **Vinaròs** (about 20 km): a port known for its prawns.
- A Castellón de la Plana (about 70 km): the provincial capital.
- B Benicàssim (about 85 km): a resort town with beaches and a villa district.
- C Valencia (about 140 km): the third-largest city of Spain.



Where to explore

Other places nearby:

- **Valencian coast**: Castellón de la Plana, Benicàssim and Valencia.
- **Catalonia**: Tarragona and Cambrils.

Getting there

- **By air**: Castellón airport is about 50 km away, and Valencia airport about 150 km. Reus airport is about 110 km north.
- **By train**: The nearest station is Benicarló-Peñíscola, about 7 km from town, with trains to Valencia and Barcelona. Book on Renfe. A bus links the station with the town.
- **By bus**: Buses run along the coast from Valencia, Castellón and Barcelona.
- **By road**: The AP-7 and N-340 pass close to town.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town is steep and cobbled but small. The promenade along the beach is flat.
- **Local bus and taxi**: For the beaches and the station.
- **Cycling**: Flat on the coast, with a path along the beach.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The old town is small but steep and cobbled, while the beach promenade is flat.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The coast is flat, with a path along the beach.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Useful for the natural park and nearby towns. The old town is closed to most traffic.
- **Parking**: Paid parking is available below the old town and on the isthmus. It fills up in summer.
- **Roads**: The AP-7 is a toll road, and the N-340 is free.

Food & drink

The food of the area is Valencian and Mediterranean. Try *arroz a banda* (rice cooked in fish stock), *caldero* (a fish and rice dish), *paella* and local seafood, especially Vinaròs prawns. Benicarló is famed for its artichokes (*alcachofas*).

The sweet pastries and the local wines can also be found.

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

Peñíscola is a safe town. The streets of the old town are steep and cobbled, so wear comfortable shoes. In summer, use sun protection. In windy weather, the Bufador and the sea walls can be slippery.

History

The peninsula was settled by Iberians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans, and the Moors held it until 1233, when King James I of Aragon took it. The Knights Templar built the castle between 1294 and 1307, and later it passed to the Order of Montesa.

In 1411 the antipope Benedict XIII, Pedro de Luna, moved to Peñíscola, where he lived until his death in 1423. The castle was later used as a fortress and in modern times as a film location, including for the 1961 film *El Cid*.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Spain at a glance:

CURRENCY

EUR €

EMERGENCY

112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES

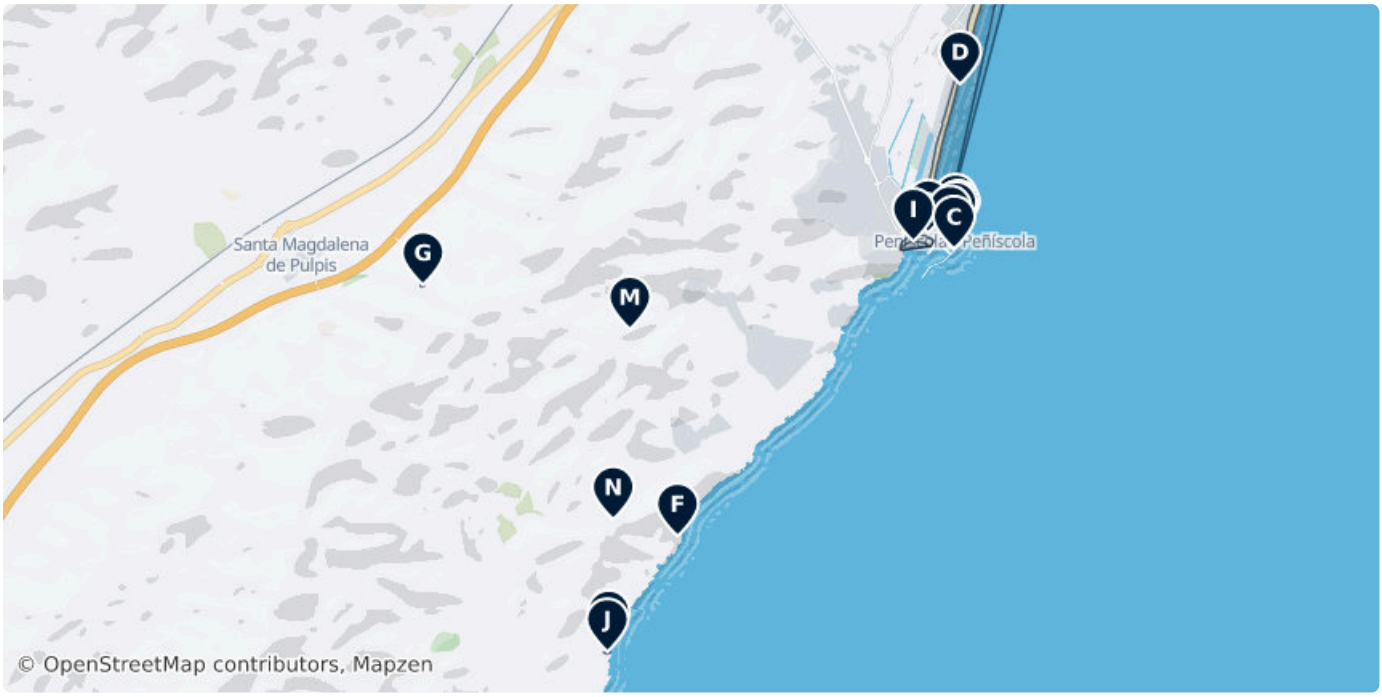
Spanish

TAP WATER

Safe to drink

Peníscola/Peñíscola's Absolute Essentials

Peníscola is defined by its 13th-century Templar castle, famously the residence of Antipope Benedict XIII. The medieval old town sits on a rocky peninsula connected to the mainland by a narrow strip of sand. Key sites include the Bufador, a natural rock tunnel where seawater sprays through, and the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, which houses the Torre Badum watchtower and secluded beaches like Platja del Russo. The coastline features the expansive Platja Nord and the historic parish church of Mare de Déu del Socors.





A Peniscola Castle

Peniscola Castle is a castle in Peniscola, Castellón, Valencian Community, Spain.

14 Calle del Castell, Peñíscola 12598, Spain
(40.35887, 0.40796)



B Antipope Benedict XIII

Pedro Martínez de Luna y Pérez de Gotor, known as el Papa Luna in Spanish and Pope Luna in English, was an Aragonese nobleman, who as...

33 Calle del Castell, Peñíscola 12598, Spain
(40.35873, 0.40760)

C Bufador

A large natural gap in the rocks below the old town walls where the Mediterranean Sea surges through, creating a loud snoring sound and spraying saltwater during rough weather.

(40.35698, 0.40731)

Mo–Su Open 24/7



D Platja Nord de Peníscola

The town's main beach stretches five kilometers toward Benicarló, featuring fine sand and views of the medieval castle. It is equipped with boardwalks, showers, and seasonal lifeguard services.

Spain (40.37706, 0.40828)



E Peñiscola Castle Gardens

Also known as Parque de Artillería, the area was turned into a botanic park and it boasts many palm and olive trees, and lavender bushes.

17 Calle Santos Mártires, Peñíscola 12598, Spain (40.35965, 0.40759)



F Torre Abadum

A 16th-century circular watchtower perched on a high cliff within the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park. It was originally built to defend the coast against pirate incursions.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.32198, 0.36309)



G Castell de Polpís

Ruined 11th-century castle of Arab origin, later belonging to the Order of the Temple and the Order of Montesa. It overlooks the eastern slopes of the Sierra d'Irta.

12597, Spain (40.35261, 0.32237)

H Castillo de Peniscola

Panoramic viewpoint located near the castle walls, offering views over the Mediterranean Sea, the marina, and the sweeping coastline of the Platja Nord.

(40.35886, 0.40804)

I Platja Sud de Peníscola

Situated next to the fishing port and the southern side of the castle rock, this beach offers calmer waters and fine sand compared to the northern coast.

Spain (40.35791, 0.40081)

J Platja del Pebret

A small, undeveloped sandy beach located within the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, notable for its protected dune system and surrounding Mediterranean scrubland.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.30791, 0.35189)

K Platja del Russo

Secluded sandy beach in the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, accessible via unpaved tracks. It is one of the few sandy coves in this otherwise rocky coastal reserve.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.30896, 0.35208)

L Parròquia Mare de Déu del Socors

A 15th-century parish church featuring a mix of Gothic and Baroque architectural elements. It houses the remains of local historical figures and religious artworks.

5D Calle de Don Juan José Fulladosa Sanz, Peñíscola 12598, Spain (40.35824, 0.40668)



M Ermita de Sant Antoni

A 16th-century whitewashed chapel and pilgrimage site located in the Sierra d'Irta. The complex includes a courtyard and offers views of the surrounding mountains and sea.

12598, Spain (40.34719, 0.35546)



N Radar SIVE

A coastal surveillance station belonging to the Integrated External Surveillance System, used by the Guardia Civil for monitoring maritime traffic and security.

12598, Spain (40.32404, 0.35280)

O Mercadillo de Peñíscola

Weekly outdoor market held on Mondays, featuring local produce, clothing, footwear, and traditional Spanish household goods.

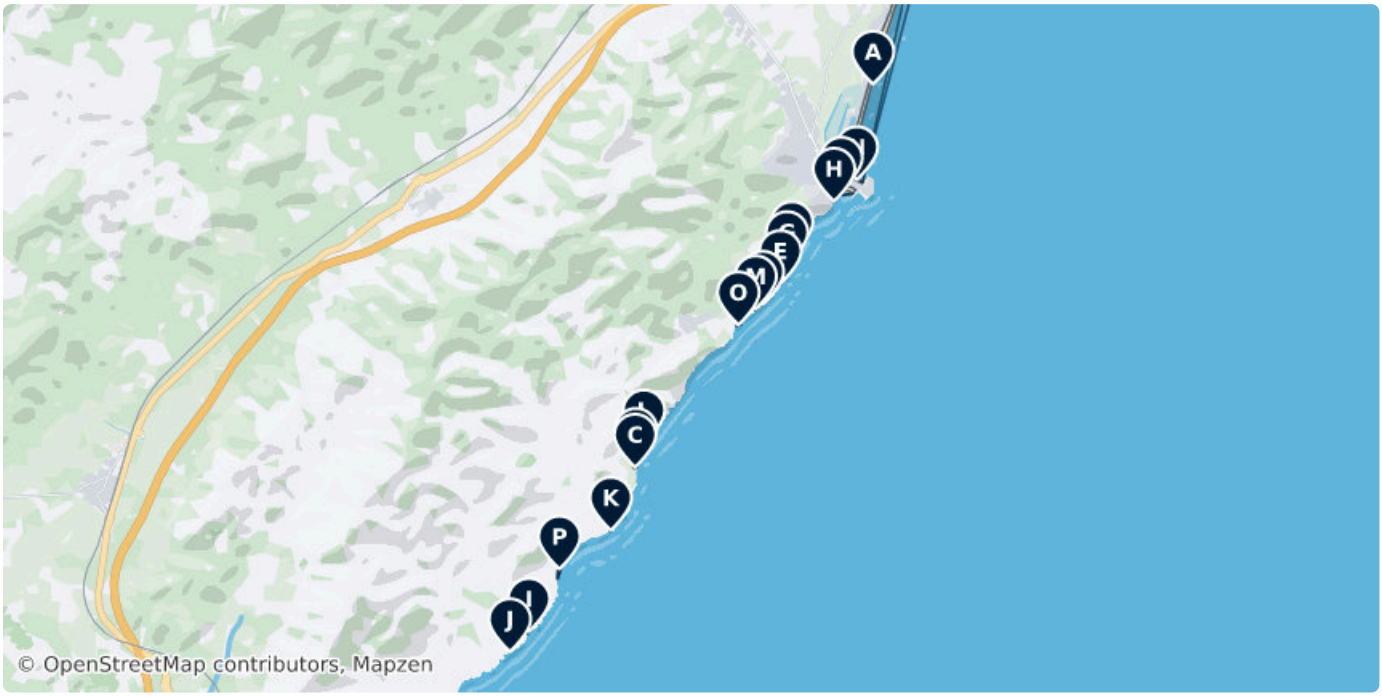
Avinguda Akra Leuke, 12598 Peñíscola (40.35896, 0.40317)

Mo	09:00–13:00

mercadillos.org/mercadillo-peniscola

Best Beaches

Peñíscola's coastline features a contrast between the five-kilometer urban stretch of Platja Nord and the rugged, protected landscapes of the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park. The northern area offers wide sandy beaches with views of the 14th-century Templar castle. To the south, the terrain transitions into a series of secluded pebble coves and fine-sand beaches like Platja del Russo and Pebret, accessible via coastal trails and offering a remote experience within one of the Mediterranean's last undeveloped coastal ranges.





A Platja Nord de Peníscola

Five-kilometer urban beach with fine sand and views of the Papa Luna castle. It features a promenade and Blue Flag status.

Spain (40.37706, 0.40828)

B Platja del Russo

Fine sand beach located within the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, accessible via unpaved roads.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.30896, 0.35208)

C Platja del Pebret

Sandy beach in the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, situated near a dune system and the Badum watchtower.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.30791, 0.35189)

D Platja Sud de Peníscola

Sheltered sandy beach located adjacent to the fishing port and the southern base of the castle rock.

Spain (40.35791, 0.40081)

E Cala Ordí

Small pebble cove located along the rocky southern coastline.

(40.34109, 0.38631)

F Platja de Santa Llúcia

Pebble and rock beach situated south of the town center.

268 Calle de Irta, Finca del Moro 12598, Spain (40.34629, 0.38907)

G Cala Puerto Azul

Small rocky cove with clear waters, located along the southern coastal cliffs.

10 Carretera Pebret, Finca del Moro 12598, Spain (40.34449, 0.38790)

H Platja de les Vídues

Semi-urban beach next to Playa Sur, featuring a mix of sand and rock formations.

(40.35595, 0.39902)

I Cala Argilaga

Secluded cove at the southern edge of the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park, accessible via coastal hiking trails.

12598, Spain (40.27825, 0.32669)

J Cala Cubanita

Small, remote cove within the protected Sierra d'Irta area.

12570, Spain (40.27457, 0.32219)

K Platja del Barranc d'Irta

Natural beach located at the mouth of a ravine in the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.29651, 0.34609)

L Platjeta d'Ull de Bou

Small sandy stretch within the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park.

(40.31230, 0.35397)

M Platja de Portonegro

Pebble beach characterized by dark stones, located south of the main urban area.

(40.33651, 0.38045)

N Platja nord de Peníscola

Extensive urban beach featuring fine sand and views of the historic fortress.

(40.35984, 0.40446)

O Cala de l'Arjub

Small rocky cove located between the town center and the Sierra d'Irta.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.33361, 0.37637)

P Platja de la Basseta

Large pebble beach situated within the Sierra d'Irta Natural Park.

(40.28951, 0.33392)

Caleta del Barranc de Sant Antoni

Small cove located at the base of the cliffs near the Sant Antoni ravine.

(40.33734, 0.38218)

Historic Fortifications and Ruins

This collection explores the strategic military history of Peñíscola and the Sierra de Irta. At its center is the 13th-century Templar castle, known for being the residence of Pope Benedict XIII. The surrounding landscape features a network of defensive structures, from the Moorish-origin ruins of Castell de Polpís to the 16th-century Torre Badum watchtower. These sites offer a timeline of coastal protection, ranging from medieval fortifications to modern maritime surveillance outposts.





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14 Calle del Castell, Peñíscola 12598, Spain (40.35887, 0.40796)



B Castell de Polpís

Ruined Moorish fortress later held by the Knights Templar and the Order of Montesa, situated on a ridge in the Sierra de Irta.

12597, Spain (40.35261, 0.32237)

C Caserna Antiga de Carrabiners de la Torre Nova

Former coastal barracks used by the Carabineros frontier guards, located near the Torre Nova.

(40.27936, 0.32842)

D Cerro del Sol

A hilltop monument and viewpoint overlooking the Peñíscola coastline.

(40.35448, 0.38744)

E lo Castellet

Historical remnants of a small fortification or outpost.

(40.38804, 0.35321)

F Antigo puesto de la gardia civil

Remains of a former Civil Guard surveillance post used for coastal monitoring.

(40.27946, 0.32846)

G ruinas

Historical ruins located along the coastal defense paths.

(40.27983, 0.32910)

H El Pou de Carmen i Goyo

Ruins of a local rural structure and well.

(40.31030, 0.33517)

I Torre

Historical defensive tower integrated into the town's ancient fortifications.

(40.35979, 0.40329)



J Torre Abadum

A 16th-century circular watchtower perched on a 97-meter-high cliff, built to detect pirate incursions.

(Unnamed Road), 12598, Spain (40.32198, 0.36309)



Radar SIVE

A modern maritime surveillance tower operated by the Civil Guard as part of the Integrated External Surveillance System.

12598, Spain (40.32404, 0.35280)

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