

## Valencia

### Overview

Not many cities are capable of so harmoniously combining a fine array of sights from the distant past with innovative, avant-garde constructions. Valencia, whose founding dates back to 138 BC, is one of these fortunate few.

Taking a stroll round Valencia allows one to sense the power of many centuries of history. Stone towers and sturdy buildings speak to us from the past. From the remains of the Roman forum founded by Junius Brutus located in today's Plaza de la Virgen - part of the Roman city of Valentia - to the emblematic City of the Arts and Sciences, this town has transformed its physiognomy over the years while preserving its monuments from the past.

Valencia conserves many of its ancient customs, traditions and centuries-old festivities, which local inhabitants have integrated into present-day pageantry. The renowned Water Court, held outside the Cathedral every Thursday at noon for the last ten centuries, and the famous Fallas festivities in March are just two examples of a city that keeps its origins alive and well.

Valencia has become a leading congress and conference venue in Europe and a rendezvous for business people and companies interested in exhibiting at the city's trade events. This has contributed to Valencia's cosmopolitan outlook, with a complete range of infrastructures and services, plus a full line up of cultural pursuits and entertainment. The new Congress Centre consolidates this line up, making the city an ideal site for commercial and cultural activities.

Seeing the sights in Valencia is a question of strolling the streets and discovering its many attractions, some of which are unexpectedly hidden away. Its rich architecture is complemented by the many treasures on display in museums, practically all of which are located in interesting buildings themselves. The art line up includes works of art from past epochs all the way through to contemporary art, historical remains and archaeological exhibits, not to mention special interest museums for bullfighting, toys, silk fabrics and, of course, the Fallas.

Almost all museums stage temporary exhibits in addition to showing their permanent holdings. Visitors can also enjoy art in local art galleries throughout the city. Tourist information offices can provide details on opening times and prices. Monday is usually a closing day for museums and exhibits.