



Life is beautiful in

# CALPE

*What are you waiting for?*

SEASIDE GUIDE



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## Calpe's seafaring soul

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Calpe's history is linked to the sea and fishing, the main source of income for many of its households. As you wander Calpe's streets, you'll constantly see the importance of the sea to its people as you pass buildings like the Fisherman's Association. You can also see its seafaring soul as you go for a stroll around the fishing port and visit the fish market.

The work day at sea starts very early. At five o'clock a trail of small and mid-sized boats depart from the port with small crews that consist of a captain, a mechanic, a cook, and other sailors who do various tasks like being on watch, sorting fish, raising the nets onto the deck, etc.

Once they reach the fishing ground, the place the captain has chosen to cast the nets, they begin to work by using the trawling technique. After a couple of hours they lift the nets aboard and sort the fish they've caught into boxes. Once they've hosed down the deck, they cast the net into the water again, repeating the same operation up to four times a day. After the final casting of the nets, the boats return to the port to auction off their catch.

About 1,700 metric tons of fish are caught in Calpe each year using the trawling and trammel net techniques. The most commonly caught species are: whiting, red mullet, squid, mackerel, octopus, grouper, gilt-head bream, and various shellfish like lobster, prawns, langoustine, mantis shrimp, or crab.

What about you, do you have the soul of a sailor?

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## Visit the fish market and the fish auction

Located on the fishing port, the fish market is the building where the fish auction is held. This must-see event allows you to take in the excitement of the daily auction of fresh fish caught by Calpe's fleet. It is considered to be one of the city's most important seafaring traditions.

In the past, before the port and fish market existed, the auction took place on *La Fossa*-Levante Beach, which was Calpe's first anchorage. It later moved to the dock of the fishing port at the foot of the rock outcrop known as the Peñón de Ifach. Back then, the auction was carried out by the muleteers who transported the fish. The fish were sorted by species, weighed in



arrobas (1 arroba = 13 kg), and stored in baskets with ice and palm leaves to keep it fresh while it was transported to nearby towns. Calpe's first fish market was built in 1979. It was used until 1991, when the current fish market was created in order to improve infrastructure and space.

The auction takes place Monday through Friday around 17:00 and lasts for about two hours. You'll see how the boats reach the port in an orderly fashion in accordance with the numbers they're assigned on a rotating basis by the Fisherman's Association. The first four boats are required to unload their goods before the beginning of the auction, while the rest of the fleet gradually comes into port.

From the walkway vantage point inside the fish market, you can see how once the goods are unloaded in boxes, they are placed on conveyor belts that pass in front of the buyers. Electronic displays show information on each lot, including the name of the boat of origin, its auction number, its weight, and its opening price, which automatically goes down until stopped by an interested buyer, who signals their interest by pressing a button on their remote control. The Fisherman's Association also sets a minimum price, so if a lot is not purchased, it becomes their property.

Once the fish is purchased, it is covered with ice and prepared for further transport.



## The Fisherman's Association

The Fisherman's Association of Calpe was created in 1924 by Father Colomina as a corporate association of fishermen with the clear social purpose of defending the interests of all sailors. Its headquarters is located on Av. Virgen del Carmen in the historic old town. It has around 500 members, including shipowners, sailors, and pensioners who are governed by statutes that regulate both the rights and obligations of members as well as tasks related to the management and marketing of the fish caught by the 22-boat fleet which employs around 160 people.



## Taste the Sea

Savor the delicacies of Calpe's bay in its various restaurants. They offer different dishes made with the fish and shellfish caught each day by Calpe's fleet so that you can enjoy the authentic taste of fresh fish.

The typical cuisine of Calpe is primarily based on the delicious fish of its bay (monkfish, mackerel, octopus, sardines...), cooked in different ways. You simply must try one of the city's two most typical rich seafood dishes, *llauna de Calp* and *arròs del Senyoret*.

*Llauna de Calp* is made with a base of varied fish (red bandfish, conger eel, crab and mantis shrimp) and medallions of hake, whiting, or *palaya*, a local flat fish, accompanied by potatoes and tomato, seasoned with paprika, garlic, parsley, salt, saffron, and olive oil, and cooked over low heat in a pot or paella pan.

*Arròs del senyoret* is a shellfish rice dish with monkfish, squid, mussels, shrimp, and langoustine. The name of the dish comes from the fact that the shellfish is shelled before cooking so that the *senyoret*, an old term for a rich young gentleman, would not have to get his hands dirty while eating.



## Seaside Dictionary *Types of fishing*

**INSHORE FISHING** This type of fishing is used in Calpe's bay and is characterized by fishing within 60 miles of the coast. The inshore fleet consists of boats not exceeding 100 metric tons. They have small crews of 4 to 10 people who work for no longer than a day in order to unload the catch at the ports daily, where it is then auctioned off. Using trawling and surface (seine or longline fishing) techniques, they catch bivalves, cephalopods, shrimp, prawns, langoustine, sardines, anchovies, horse mackerel, red mullet...

**OFFSHORE FISHING** is done farther away from shore in boats with higher tonnage and larger crews.

**DEEP-SEA FISHING** is done at fishing grounds that are very far from the point of origin with voyages that last up to 6 or 8 months. The boats are enormous factory vessels equipped with the latest technology which handles and preserves the fish in various ways (canning, freezing...)



## Fishing Techniques

**TRAWLING** Trawling involves the use of funnel-shaped nets that are dragged by one or two boats, which catch species found on the seabed or in the water column through the opening in the net. After trawling for a while, the net is lifted aboard and the fish are sorted. This is the principal method used by Calpe's fleet.

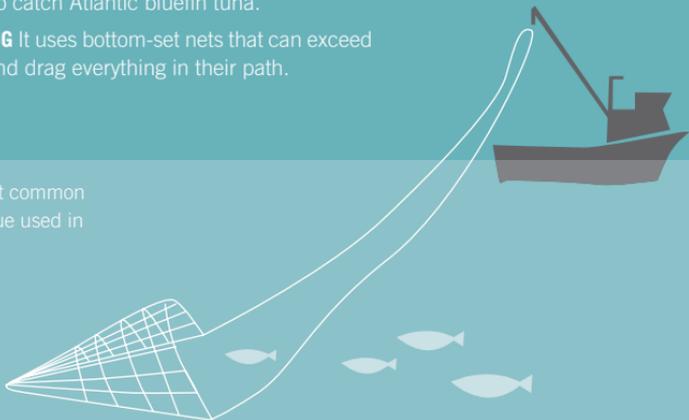
**SEINE FISHING** It uses a seine, an enormous net held by two cables, to catch surface species: the top edge is buoyed by floats and the bottom edge is held down by lead weights that allow it to reach the bottom.

**LONGLINE FISHING** A longline is a long cord with branch lines hanging from it that have baited hooks at the bottom. It is a traditional fishing method used to catch cod and tuna while offshore fishing.

**ALMADRABA** A traditional method which uses fixed nets to catch fish. It is widely used in southern Spain to catch Atlantic bluefin tuna.

**DRIFT NET FISHING** It uses bottom-set nets that can exceed 3 km in length and drag everything in their path.

Trawling is most common fishing technique used in the Calpe area



## Species fished in Calpe's bay



Poor cod



Anchovy



Conger eels



Blue mouth  
Red bream



Tuna



Forkbeards



Jhon Dory



Atlantic horse  
mackerel



Blue whiting



Mackerel



Dentés/ Denti



Flying fish



Scalloped ribbonfish



Gilthead



Amber jack



Pandora



Squid



Norway lobster



Apple Murex



Spottail Mantis  
shrimp

*Peix de Calpe*, symbol of guarantee and quality, is a nationwide distinction granted by the municipality of Calpe and the fishermen's Guild to commercial establishments and hostelry serving fresh fish directly sold at the port and fish market la Lonja of Calpe.



Sea bass



Scaldfish



Sardine



Lobster



Hake



Monkfish



White bream



Shrimp



Poor cod



Scorpionfish



Lesser-spotted dog-fish



Jumbo flying squid



Stargazer



Mullet



Cuttlefish



Octopus



Crab



White shrimp



Red crab



Red prawn

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



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