SENIOR

REGION **OF MURCIA** NEW SENIOR LIFE







REGION OF MURCIA Experiential tourism for

tourism for experienced tourists

A REGION JUST FOR YOU

If you're over fifty-five, it's time for you to enjoy, pamper yourself, relax... And there's no better place to do that than the Region of Murcia, where you'll find an incomparable offer of different leisure, health and relaxation activities. Remember... It's your time now!

Would you like to go to a special place in Spain with two seas, crystal-clear water beaches, mountains and valleys, great orchards...? With Roman, Carthaginian, medieval, art nouveau and contemporary cities, festivities and festivals, and a vibrant atmosphere? This place does exist and its name is Region of Murcia.



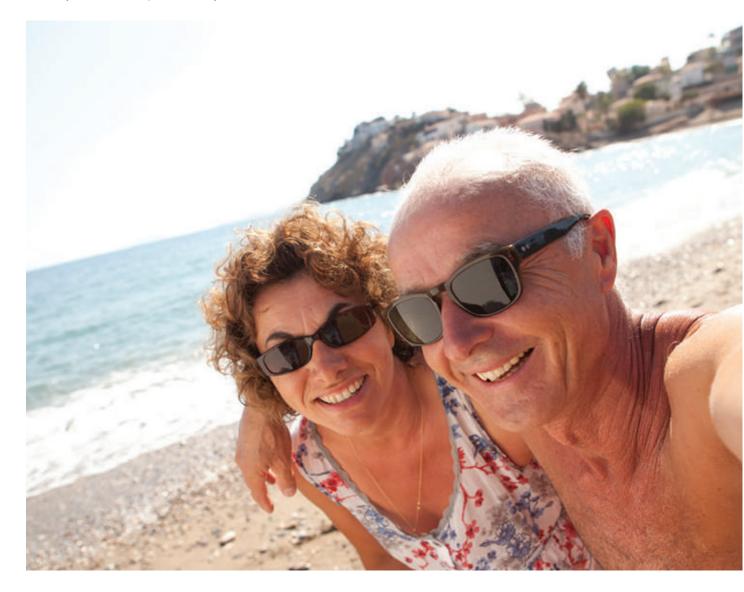


COSTA CÁLIDA

Enjoy the great weather!

3,000 hours of sun a year and two warm seas by the coastline of Murcia. No wonder this coastal area is called Costa Cálida -warm coast-, with huge beaches and small coves where you can enjoy a wide range of leisure activities, many different sports and, above all, feel good. Along the coastline of Costa Cálida there are excellent hotels and holiday apartments of all classes, fully equipped to meet all your needs for a perfect holiday.





LA MANGA & MAR MENOR





One of the most appealing areas is the strip of land called La Manga del Mar Menor: the perfect destination to relax by the sea and join different activities at the Estación Náutica -nautical centre-. There are also big, white sand beaches such as San Pedro del Pinatar, unspoilt coves such as the ones in Cartagena, rocks with strange shapes caused by erosion such as those in Mazarrón, and fishing villages such as La Azohía. The region is also known for its great offer regarding health and beauty. Many of its beaches are regarded as outdoor spas due to the high saline concentration and the healing muds of the Mar Menor sea.

The name of La Manga del Mar Menor refers to a whim of nature which has become one of the Murcian coastline's most famous tourist destination symbols: a 24 km strip of land surrounding a natural salt lake called Mar Menor. The Mar Menor is a big coastal lagoon, which was created by nature from an open bay, with warm, salt water and a surface of 170 km².

This huge, salt water lagoon offers a magnificent climate: the sun shines 315 days a year and the average temperature is 19° C.

The Mar Menor represents a residential prototype based on relaxation and tranquillity. Its beaches are the perfect choice for every tourist due to the Mar Menor's calm, shallow waters. Moreover, its high salinity -the highest in Europe- is suitable and beneficial for the elderly's health. Have a swim in its waters and you'll feel great.

The Mar Menor seaside has plenty of charming villages. San Pedro del Pinatar stands out for its famous mud baths and also for the Las Salinas y Arenales Regional Park. A natural paradise and a migratory bird reserve with dream beaches.



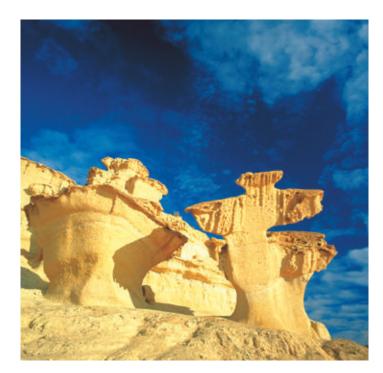
GOLF THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

You can golf throughout the year at the numerous golf courses of the Region of Murcia, many of which are by the seaside, considered to be among the best in Europe. Costa Cálida offers 17 high standard golf courses and about 300 holes of all levels in a 50 km radius.

MAZARRÓN

Mazarrón lies by a wide bay open to the Mediterranean Sea. With a 35 km coastline, you can choose between a walk through its history and monuments and a swim at one of its hidden coves. Facing Bolnuevo beach, you'll find one of the region's most special landscapes: Bolnuevo Erosions, where wind erosion and water have created very particular shapes on the white sandstone. Is there a better offer?







ÁGUILAS





This locality, at the region's southernmost point, has a 28 km coaștline and is under the beautiful San a 28 km coastline and is under the beautiful San Juan de las Águilas castle. It is one of the coastal municipalities of Costa Cálida that still preserve different wild coves and unspoilt settings. Besides its archaeological and monument riches, Águilas has a seaside including some must-sees: 35 coves, rocky points by the sea and fine sand beaches; two protected natural areas called Cabo Cope Regional Park and Cuatro Calas Protected Landscape. A luxury available to everyone.









EXCURSION TO MURCIA

Murcia is a city of Arab origin, located on a plain which is surrounded by a mountain range. Its relationship with the fertile meadow of the river Segura is very close. The city of Murcia was founded in the year 831 by Abd ar-Rahman II, who was then the emir of Córdoba. He ordered the construction of a fortified town by the river Segura and made it the capital city of the Caliphate province.

The Arab Mursiya was developed until it was included in the Kingdom of Castile in the 13th century. Still nowadays, many traces of its Arab past can be found in the city. The Spring Festivities, taking place every year at Easter, are a deeply-rooted Murcian tradition.

The region's cuisine and folklore, parades, regional costumes and typical products stand out. The old town, next to the river Segura, includes some narrow streets bearing the names of the guilds that used to be registered there, such as the shopping streets Platería, Trapería and Vidrieros.









SANTA MARÍA CATHEDRAL

Two of the main architectural treasures from Murcia can be found at Plaza Belluga square: the Bishop's Palace (18th century), with a rococo facade, and the Santa María Cathedral (14th century), with an amply decorated baroque facade next to an impressive 92 m tower. In the inside, the Capilla de los Vélez chapel stands out, being a great example of late Gothic. The baroque style can be appreciated in many Murcian ecclesiastical buildings, such as Santa Ana Conventual Church, Santo Domingo Church and San Nicolás Church.



LA FUENSANTA SANCTUARY

This sanctuary is 5 and a half km away from the city of Murcia and it is visited by a great number of pilgrims. Nuestra Señora de la Fuensanta, Murcia's patron saint, is descended from the mountains to the city twice a year in a religious pilgrimage with plenty of believers: in spring, for the coronation anniversary worships; in September, for the patron saint's festivities, which coincide with Murcia's Fair. From the sanctuary, you will enjoy wonderful views of the city and its surroundings.

REAL CASINO DE MURCIA

A private social club with a neoclassical facade and a beautiful courtyard of Arabic influence. It has been declared to be a National Historic and Artistic Monument and considered as a Cultural Asset. Must-sees are the Arabic Courtyard, the Ballroom, the Ladies' Cloakroom... Near the Real Casino, there are some other relevant 19th century buildings which are very interesting too, such as the Town Hall, the Romea Theatre, the picturesque Plaza de las Flores square, and the beautiful Paseo del Malecón, which is the entrance to the neighbouring huerta.







GO OUT FOR TAPAS

Murcia's cuisine is known worldwide thanks to its vegetables. Besides tasting traditional dishes, available at most of the city's restaurants, you can go out for tapas and enjoy them at any of its lively squares all year round, due to Murcia's wonderful weather. Try the broad bean omelette, michirones, pastel de carne, marineras, pisto or zarangollo at Plaza de San Juan and Plaza de las Flores. Mouth-watering!

CARTAGENA



The Port of Cartagena is one of the main ports of the Mediterranean coast. Due to its strategic seaside position, different cultures settled down in this place, leaving an important heritage. A walk through Cartagena and a visit to its museums will enable visitors to understand how important the history of this coastal city is. Both Carthaginians and Romans were interested in this sea port, the Latin name of which, Cartago Nova, is the origin of the contemporary name: Cartagena.

Cartagena's wealthy historic and artistic heritage can be mostly found around the Port: the city wall, built by Charles III in the 18th century; the submarine prototype by Isaac Peral, the inventor from Cartagena;

the town hall, an art nouveau architectural treasure from the beginning of the 20th century; or the old Cathedral (Cartagena's oldest church, dating from the 13th century), the remains of which can be found in the Roman Theatre.

Regarding culture, the city of Cartagena has a lot to offer too. For instance, it celebrates every year the La Mar de Músicas international festival. Equally important is the historic festivity of the Carthaginians and Romans, which takes place on the second half of September and celebrates the foundation of the town by the Phoenicians, as well as the Roman reconquest.





ROMAN THEATRE

It is the main symbol of the Roman Cartagena. It was built in the 1st century BC and is among the most important ones in Spain, together with Mérida's Theatre. The items that were found in its interior are shown at the Roman Theatre Museum. Also showing the splendour of Roman times: El Molinete archaeological ensemble, the site of which can be visited as the main part of the tourist visit, and different spots in the city where there are Roman baths.

INNER HARBOUR CATAMARAN TRIP



From the sea, the city of Cartagena offers a different view. On a modern boat, visitors will have the amazing opportunity of discovering the secrets of the city's natural harbour and contemplating the whole defence system of the bay: castles, forts and coast batteries.







A WALK THROUGH THE CITY

If you wish to familiarise with Cartagena's art nouveau architecture, you should start at the Plaza del Ayuntamiento -town hall square- and go for a walk along the Calle Mayor street and its side-streets. You'll have the opportunity to appreciate the Casa Cervantes and the Casa Llagostera houses by Victor Beltri, an important architect from Cartagena. Their most characteristic elements are turrets, wrought iron bars and bronze reliefs of allegorical representations. Other relevant buildings in the same style are the Casino, the Gran Hotel and the Station. They are elegant bourgeoisie monuments which show the economic development of Cartagena at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, due to the growth of the area's mining industry.





EATING CALDERO

One of the most typical dishes in Cartagena and the Mar Menor area is caldero. Its main ingredient is rice, very often with a guarantee of origin from Calasparra, cooked in a broth made with local fresh fish. Usually served with a garlic sauce. The icing on the cake would be the asiático coffee from Cartagena, prepared with condensed milk, brandy, cinnamon, lemon rind, some coffee beans and some drops of Licor 43, one of the most international premium liquors, which is made here.



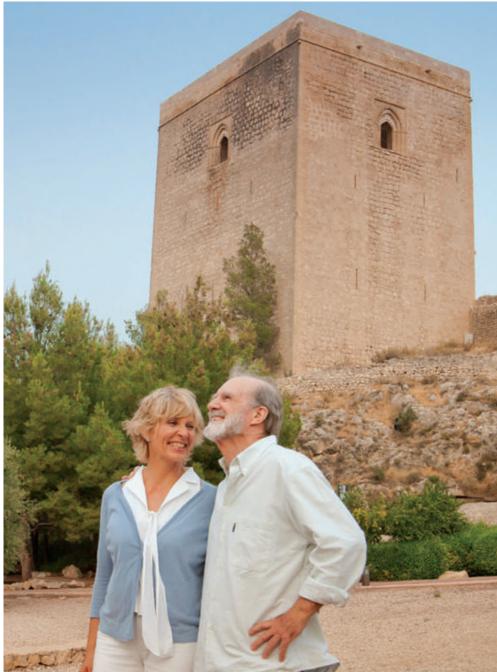
LORCA

Lorca's city centre was declared to be a historic and artistic ensemble in 1964. The city is known as 'the baroque city' due to the important baroque heritage of its historic district, which is among the best known within the region, and to the historic events which have defined the city of Lorca as it is nowadays.

Plenty of cultures have converged in Lorca from the paleolithic to the Roman times. The city has numerous archaeological sites, churches and convents of different periods and styles, and also baroque palaces and manor houses such as the Guevara Palace and the house of the Mula family.

In addition, the city has been shortlisted within the European Commission's EDEN programme (European Destinations of Excellence) for its sustainable tourism and cultural recovery proposal.







THE FORTRESS OF THE SUN AND LORCA WORKSHOP OF TIME

A unique tourist proposal which has turned Lorca Castle (a castle which derived from a medieval citadel) into a stage where visitors can have an intense cultural experience; a journey through time where you are the main character. The city's Parador de Turismo is within the castle's area and offers wonderful premises and spectacular panoramic views. Lorca Workshop of Time is an open space for you to enjoy history in a unique way. A trip to the past through exhibitions, museums, itineraries and activities to have fun and learn at the same time.

SYNAGOGUE

The 15th century synagogue is the most representative and best preserved building of Lorca's Jewish quarter. It is the only synagogue which can be visited in Spain at present thanks to its good state of preservation. Furthermore, it keeps some parts which didn't appear in other synagogues.





PASO BLANCO AND PASO AZUL EMBROIDERY MUSEUMS

Lorca is one of the places where the Holy Week is most celebrated, with a religious procession taking place every year since the 19th century, very characteristic of the region. This celebration is also known as Blancos y Azules -white and blue-. These are the two main brotherhoods in Lorca and there is a great deal of rivalry between them. The big parade takes place at La Carrera. During the procession, you will see participants dressed as some Roman emperors, Egyptian troops, Roman gods on huge floats, chariots, horsemen, sculptures of virgins with wealthy embroidered cloaks, sumptuous standards... The wealthy 'Agony in the Garden' standard (white), also known as the flower cloth, stands out.



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COLD CUTS OF CHATO MURCIANO

A very remarkable part of Lorca's cuisine is the chato murciano: a type of Iberian pork which appeared in the Region of Murcia in the 19th century as a result of crossbreeding different local breeds and some swine specimens from the UK.

CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ & CALASPARRA



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA ESPERANZA SANCTUARY IN CALASPARRA

Few kilometres away from Caravaca de la Cruz is the Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza, patron saint of Calasparra. It was built and sculpted inside a cave and belongs to a unique ensemble in a natural setting of impressive beauty, next to the river Segura.





Caravaca de la Cruz is a special and astounding place. Iberians, Romans and Muslims settled down here. The Castle of Caravaca is in the centre of the locality, where it was built by the Templar Knights in the 15th century.

Caravaca is mainly the Holy Town, the Town of the Cross, bearing its name. According to the legend, the Moorish king Abu Zeid converted to Christianity in 1232. Around this legend, in 1617, the most important monument of this Region of Murcia's northwestern town started to be built in the area of the fortress: the True Cross Sanctuary. The most impressive element of the building is its sumptuous, red marble facade, made with marble from Cehegín, showing the great importance of the Holy Cross.

From the centre of the town, visitors can go to the castle on a funny little train from which they will be able to appreciate the beauty of this charming northwestern locality.

It is important to remember that, in 1998, the Pope awarded the town of Caravaca de la Cruz the Permanent Jubilee Year. Since then, it belongs to the group of the only five places in the world which have the privilege of celebrating the Perpetual Jubilee (together with Santiago de Compostela, Santo Toribio de Liébana, Rome and Jerusalem). Caravaca celebrates it at the True Cross Sanctuary every 7 years, the next one being 2017.



ETHNIC MUSIC MUSEUM IN BARRANDA

This museum is 17 km away from Caravaca. It is considered to be one of the most important music museums in the world for its exotic pieces and authentic instruments, coming from 145 countries from the 5 continents.

FIESTA MUSEUM

This museum allows visitors to know about the spectacular Fiestas de la Santísima y Vera Cruz de Caravaca and the Caballos del Vino -Wine Horses-, a typically Spanish festivity, with horses decorated with embroidered cloaks. The Moors and Christians parades are very remarkable too.

EL PEREGRINO CRAFT MARKET

It takes place from October to June, on the 3rd Sunday of the month. The traditional products sold at this street market are turrones and sweets, bread, cheese, cold meat, honey, wooden crafts, esparto grass, costume jewellery, decoration... It is completed with typical product tastings, entertainment activities and craftwork exhibitions.





CUISINE

If you enjoy traditional sweets, you should try Caravaca's yemas, a delicacy made of caramel and egg yolk. Rice is here a real attraction: due to the good quality of its varieties, Calasparra's rice is known worldwide; and it is Spain's first rice with a guarantee of origin. You shouldn't miss the different typical rice dishes, such as rice with chicken, with vegetables, with rabbit and snails or with alubiones.







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VALLE DE RICOTE

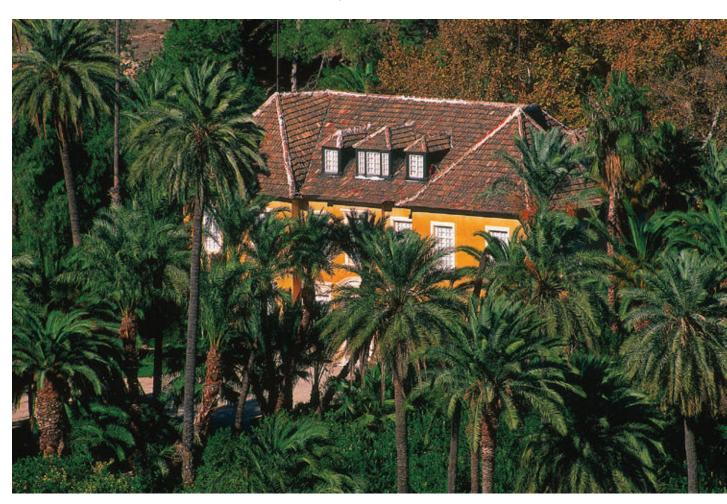
If there is a place where the Arabic influence can still be observed, that place is definitely Valle de Ricote. The municipalities Abarán, Archena, Blanca, Cieza, Ojós, Ricote, Ulea and Villanueva del Segura are within the cultivation area twisting by the river Segura, and they take us to an idyllic world.

The Arabs left their heritage in this fertile spot. Their influence can still be observed in many traces of their culture and mostly in the irrigation system. The calm river takes visitors through winding sections with black poplars, willows and bush, behind which there are endless fields with vegetables and fruit trees.

In Archena, within Valle de Ricote, is the Balneario de Archena -Archena's thermal spring spa-, known since Roman times. The healing waters spring from the ground at a temperature of 50° C.









BLANCA



The town of Blanca -meaning white- was, due to the colour of the surrounding rocks, known by our ancestors as La Negra -meaning black-. Its important buildings are, most of all, the San Juan Evangelista Church from the 16th century, the Casa del Conde (a sign of the neoclassicism of the 19th century) which has become the Hospedería Conde de la Vallesa, and the Victoria Theatre. The Light and Water Interpretation Centre is very interesting too.



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OJÓS

Between the grey mountainside and the vegetable fields by the river Segura is the town of Ojós. Its name is derived from the Arabic word hosos, meaning orchard. It has a small number of inhabitants, but it definitely keeps many of its traditions: the Moorish narrow streets, the hustle and bustle of people outdoors, the wood-burning stove... Its history, as well as the whole Valle de Ricote's history, is associated to the expulsion of the Moors in 1618, which implied an important population crisis.

ESPARTO GRASS MUSEUM

A must-see in Archena is the Esparto Grass and Antiques Museum, where you will admire plenty of craftwork pieces made of esparto grass and tillage tools. A very special item shown in this museum is an esparto grass replica of San Juan Bautista Church.

WATERWHEEL ROUTE

Abarán is mainly characterised by its waterwheels. It is, in fact, the Spanish municipality with the biggest number of working waterwheels and also the one with the biggest working waterwheel in Europe. This excursion will take visitors to discover four of the many waterwheels in the locality. Their function is rising water from the river, in order to irrigate distant areas. Some of them continue to be used nowadays.





CUISINE

The Moorish sensibility of Valle de Ricote is also present in its cuisine. When you come back home, you will for sure take with you some of the delicacies of the area. Some souvenirs which will make you think of your stay in the region and taste it when you're back home are: borrachos from Ojós, picardías from Abarán, cordiales with almond, homemade honey... But maybe the area's best-kept secret is the wine from Ricote, which has a special bouquet and a unique taste.

LA UNIÓN MINING PARK







La Unión offers visitors the possibility of discovering an open air mine. The area of Cartagena's mountain range and La Unión has an important mining heritage.

The mining area of Cartagena and La Unión will allow you to understand how underground mining used to be, from extraction to mineral washing and mining foundry. At the mining park, you will see the excavations, the ovens, the chimneys, etc. of such an important sector in the 19th century.

The mining train turns the exploration of this characteristic place into a really comfortable experience.









The Old Public Market in La Unión is known as the flamenco cathedral, since it hosts the Cante de las Minas International Festival every year in August. This is one of the world's most important flamenco festivals. At the art nouveau building of the Old Public Market and at the Agrupa Vicenta Mine, you'll enjoy performances by the most acclaimed flamenco artists and also by the new flamenco figures taking part in the contest in order to win the Lámpara Minera award. This is a must for you if you enjoy flamenco singing and dancing.



AGRUPA VICENTA MINE

One of the main attractions is the visit to the Agrupa Vicenta underground mine, with more than 4,000 m² visited. Amazing halls and a reddish water underground lake, coloured by pyrite, are waiting for you 80 m under the ground. Moreover, you can enjoy a flamenco show in the inside, which guarantees unique acoustics.





LICOR 43 FACTORY

After visiting La Unión, not far from there and near Cartagena, you can visit the factory of the well-known Licor 43, the Spanish liquor which is an international bestseller. It was created in 1924 and it is said that it derives from a 2,000 year old recipe. Its name has to do with the 43 ingredients used in its secret preparation.



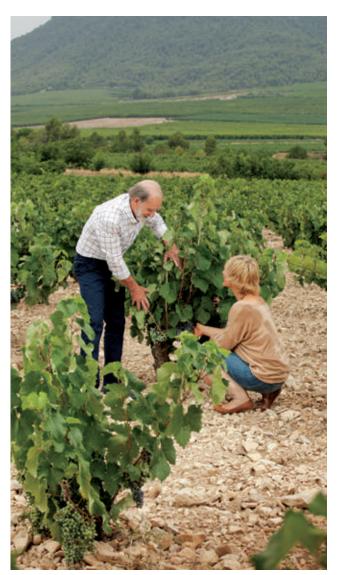
WINE ROUTE

JUMILLA, BULLAS OR YECLA

Wine is much more than a liquid obtained from the grapevine. It is a way of understanding life. If you enjoy everything related to its culture, the Region of Murcia's wine routes are the perfect excursion for you. Discover a land which, since the times of Iberians and Romans, has been devoted to vineyards and to creating great quality wines.

Try its wide offer of red, rosé and white wines for every taste. Discover the wine routes by going through vineyards and wineries, tasting the old bouquet of tradition. Break out of the routine. The three guarantees of origin of the Region of Murcia, Bullas, Jumilla and Yecla, spreading over more than 35,000 hectares of vineyards, offer different wines which are becoming more and more prestigious worldwide. Wineries combining tradition and new wine technologies as well as restaurants and accommodation within beautiful landscapes are waiting for you.

Monastrell is the most popular wine grape variety. It is a red variety of small, tight bunches perfectly adapted to these fields' environmental conditions. It provides wines with noticeable colour and body in a great quality range. Garnacha Tintorera, Cencibel, Cabernet-Sauvignon, Garnacha, Merlot, Syrah and Petit Verdot for red and rosé wines. Completing the types of selected grapes are Macabeo, Airén, Pedro Ximénez, Malvasía, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Moscatel.



WINE ROUTES

The Region of Murcia has three Wine Routes: Jumilla, Bullas and Yecla. All of them have been certified by ACEVIN -Spanish Association of Wine Cities-. One of the best possible ways of enjoying the wine culture is following one of these wine routes, including visits to wineries, wine tastings and wine tourism courses. These activities are linked to the opportunity of enjoying wine bars, restaurants, traditional street markets and specialised wine shops scattered everywhere in different villages. A real luxury.







Due to the particular weather conditions of the Mar Menor, with a great number of hours of sun a year and high salinity levels, some muds suitable for therapeutical treatments have been stocked for centuries at the northern end of the lagoon.

The latest studies by Universidad de Murcia in 1995 show that these sediments have a high percentage of cations, calcium, magnesium, potassium and fluoride, as well as anions, chloride and sulphate in levels which are well over the expected ones, even for waters of this salinity level.

If you suffer from bone and joint pains, you should definitely go to the muds of Las Salinas in Lo Pagán and try the well-known 'Mar Menor muds'. Due to sedimentation, on the sand and at the bottom of this small sea there are some muds with a great power of absorption, mineralising action and healing effect. They are very

appropriate for skin treatments and in cases of rheumatism, arthritis, gout and rehabilitation after bone fracture. They are also used as an anti-inflammatory. Different thalassotherapy centres at Mar Menor use these muds in their therapeutical and beauty treatments.



DIRECTIONS

Muds have an important therapeutical effect thanks to their great power of absorption, mineralising action, capacity to neutralise acidity and healing properties. That is why they are very suitable for many types of skin disease, such as abscess, ulcer, sores, acne or boil.

A mud layer on your skin absorbs all toxins of the peripheral system of your connective tissue and eliminates toxins from your dermis, acting as a real blotter for your skin.

APPLICATION

The mud baths can be applied with a spatula or with your own hand. You should start with the application of a small amount for one hour to the maximum.

If there are no side effects, you can progressively widen time and layer thickness. It is better to enjoy mud baths in the sunshine and in warm weather, so that the clay layer can dry quickly. Between treatments, the part of your body which is being treated should be washed with salt water.



HEALTH AND MEDICAL TOURISM

Murcia has been a health region for centuries. The Roman, Arab and Jewish civilisations settled down here due to our healing waters and benefitted from them. You won't find a better place to relax for mind and body. In the Region of Murcia, you will be able to enjoy the best health and beauty treatments, from inland thermal spring spas to seaside hotels and spas. Trust us.

The mild weather and the great number of hours of sun of the Mar Menor, together with its high salinity and mineral concentration levels, turn this destination into the perfect one to recover from exhaustion.

Several thalassotherapy centres, balnearios and spas offer the latest medical, beauty and wellness treatments which are special for breathing and bone problems. Moreover, you can enjoy the famous Mar Menor muds, very popular for their therapeutical and dermatological properties.

While you benefit from your treatment, you will enjoy an unforgettable stay at a world of wellness and pampering in the different Balnearios, Thalassotherapy Centres and Spas of the Region of Murcia, where you'll feel at home during your recovery.











THALASSOTHERAPY CENTRES

Thalassotherapy includes sea water treatments in a natural setting and with solar radiation. Through these treatments, fatigue, stress, exhaustion and physical discomfort will go away and you will discover a feeling of freshness and well-being. Enjoy health by the sea.

The most important Thalassotherapy Centres are at Mar Menor, in the coastal municipality of San Pedro del Pinatar, and they offer medical services informing and advicing about treatments.



BALNEARIOS

The Balnearios -thermal spring spas- of Archena and Fortuna have modern facilities, still preserving their 19th century charm. They will allow you to relax and have a rest in the middle of nature, surrounded by peace and silence.

A paradise with healing, medicinal mineral waters, specially suitable for bone, muscles, breathing and dermatological problems, as well as for rehabilitation processes. Recover your health and make up for lost time.

HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CENTRES

At the Region of Murcia, professionalism, innovation and quality are combined to offer clients and patients health hotel establishments and hospitals meeting all health tourism needs.

Costa Cálida Cares offers a complete choice for every taste at unique settings of the Region of Murcia. In our medical centres, we offer treatments such as: Medical check ups Specific check ups (gynaecology, urology, cardiovascular) General surgery Maxillofacial surgery Ophthalmology Otolaryngology Trauma surgery Plastic and reconstructive surgery, orthopaedic surgery.







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