

BIKES

Costa Blanca

The Evolution of Costa Blanca: From "Sun and Beach" to a High- Value Global Sports Hub

The Costa Blanca, located in the Spanish province of Alicante, has undergone a significant structural shift in its tourism economy, transitioning from a traditional mass-market "sun and beach" destination to a specialized, high-value hub for sports tourism. This transformation is driven largely by the region's unique geography and an elite infrastructure that caters to both professional athletes and discerning amateur enthusiasts.

Unrivalled Climate and Topography

The region is blessed with an average of 300 to 325 days of sunshine per year, making it one of the sunniest places in Europe. This "phenomenal" climate allows for year-round cycling in pleasant temperatures, which rarely fall below 15°C even in winter. Its topography offers a vivid contrast between the blue Mediterranean Sea and rugged mountain ranges exceeding 1,400 meters, providing diverse terrain for road cycling, mountain biking (MTB), and gravel riding.

The "Winter Mecca" of Professional Cycling

Costa Blanca is widely recognized as the "winter mecca" for professional road cycling. During the off-season (December to February), the region hosts the majority of the 18 UCI World Tour teams, such as UAE Team Emirates and Team Visma | Lease a Bike, for their pre-season training camps. This professional presence provides a vital economic lifeline for high-capacity hotels during traditional tourism lulls, ensuring year-round employment.

Economic Worth and High-Spending Demographics

The economic impact of this specialized sector is substantial:

- **Superior Spending Power:** Cycle tourists consistently spend more than general tourists.

While a general tourist in Alicante spends approximately €140–€145 per day, specialized

cycle tourists can spend upwards of €150 per day, driven by high-end rentals, specialized coaching, and premium accommodation.



- **Market Growth:** The Spanish cycle tourism market is projected to reach a revenue of US\$ 7,526.8 million by 2030, with "Groups/Friends" identified as the largest and most lucrative segment.
- **Media Value:** High-profile events like La Vuelta a España generate approximately €3 million in direct economic impact and an additional €10 million in "advertising effect", showcasing the region to millions of potential tourists in 190 countries.

A Specialized Infrastructure Ecosystem

The region's value is further enhanced by a robust "Cycling Friendly" ecosystem. This includes certified hotels—such as Hotel Cap Negret and AR Diamante Beach—that offer secure bike storage, mechanical workshops, and specialized dietary services. Additionally, the region features world-class climbs like the Coll de Rates and the Alto de Aitana, as well as developing networks like EuroVelo 8 and scenic greenways (Vías Verdes) that connect coastal hubs to authentic inland villages.

Conclusion

Beyond its sporting appeal, Costa Blanca offers "authentic Spain," blending idyllic villages, traditional cuisine—such as paella and Denia red prawns—and historic Roman heritage.

