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BEST



NEW SPAIN FLIGHTS

An array of new routes will connect the UK with sunny Spain this year, writes **Jo Fernández**

From sun-drenched beaches to culture-rich cities, Spain has long been a favourite for British tourists. Since the birth of affordable package holidays to the Costas in the 1950s, the UK has consistently been Spain's biggest source market. Figures just released by the Spanish Tourist Office show a record-breaking 19.1 million Brits visited last year – up 4.4% on 2024.

So it is perhaps little surprise even more flights to Spain are planned this year. Some offer extra capacity and competition on routes to popular hotspots such as the Balearic Islands, while others make it easier to visit sherry bodegas in Jerez or the sleeper isles of the Canaries.



BRISTOL → REUS

In the Year of Gaudí – marking 100 years since the modernist artist's death – where better to trace his story than in his birthplace, Reus? The Catalan city will gain an easyJet service from Bristol this summer. Reus is filled with modernist buildings featuring ornate balconies and stately squares surrounded by atmospheric bars that are ideal for sipping local vermouth. The Gaudí Museum is a fantastic introduction to the city's artistic pedigree, but for a deeper dive into its architecture, clients can explore the self-guided Ruta del Modernisme. Reus is also a gateway to Tarragona, a seafront city with a Roman amphitheatre (pictured), and the beaches of the Costa Dorada. It is also only a 90-minute drive from Barcelona.

Book it: Flights depart on Thursdays and Sundays from June 25, with one-way fares from £34.99. [easyjet.com](https://www.easyjet.com)



GLASGOW → SAN SEBASTIÁN

BA CityFlyer already serves several Spanish destinations, including Madrid, Barcelona, Malaga, Palma de Mallorca and Ibiza. This summer, it is adding San Sebastián, with direct flights from Glasgow. Clients will be able to sample some of Spain's best seafood in the bars and restaurants that line San Sebastián's narrow streets. Pintxo-hopping – jumping from bar to bar in search of small morsels served on skewers – is a fun and sociable ritual. For a little seaside appeal, Playa de la Concha is a golden crescent of sand bookended by green mountains and perfect for swimming. The Basque coast is also known as one of Europe's top surfing spots; nearby Playa de Zurriola has several places to rent boards or book a lesson.

Book it: BA CityFlyer will fly to San Sebastián on Tuesdays and Saturdays from July 18 to September 8, with one-way fares from £113. [britishairways.com](https://www.britishairways.com)

PICTURES: Shutterstock/margouillat photo, Jon Chica, Todamo, Rudy Mareel, Emily Marie Wilson, Alexandre ROSA

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MANCHESTER → LA PALMA

First-timers to the Canaries often head to Tenerife or Gran Canaria. However, La Palma is a sleeper side of the volcanic archipelago – and Jet2.com will soon be serving it year-round from Manchester, with Jet2holidays adding a small range of hotels. Celebrated for its dramatic landscapes and dark-sand beaches, the entire island is a Unesco Biosphere Reserve. Almost 600 miles of hiking routes afford the chance to wander past waterfalls or through laurel forests, or take on a challenging hike through the cliffs of the caldera. Coastal Santa Cruz de la Palma, the compact, colourful capital, is also blessed with pretty 16th-century mansions. **Book it:** Flights depart on Mondays and Fridays from April 3, with one-way fares from £48. jet2.com



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EDINBURGH → BILBAO

Vueling takes off from Edinburgh to Bilbao next month. This industrial port city – the largest city in the Basque Country – was put firmly on the tourist map in 1997 when the shimmering Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Guggenheim Museum (*pictured*) opened. The river Nervión runs through the heart of the city and can be crossed via walkways and footbridges, while the compact but atmospheric Old Town is lined with buzzy bars and restaurants for sampling pintxos. For finer food, Bilbao is home to 12 Michelin-starred restaurants.

Book it: Vueling will fly from Edinburgh to Bilbao on Wednesdays and Fridays from March 28, with one-way fares leading in at £47. vueling.com

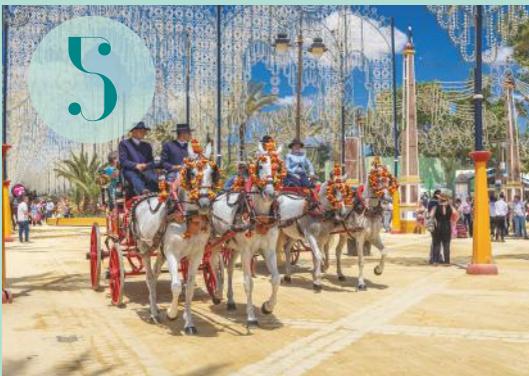


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STANSTED → JEREZ

Jet2.com will launch flights from Stansted to the Andalusian city of Jerez on May 1. The exclusive seasonal route to the birthplace of sherry departs on Tuesdays and Fridays – ideal for a long weekend. Clients can flit between historic bodegas or combine a tour and tasting with a tapas trawl through the medieval quarter. Alternatively, they can see elegant stallions dance at the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art or visit the horse fair in the first week of May. Jet2holidays also uses Jerez as a gateway for stays in Seville (an hour's drive away) and resorts on the Costa de la Luz.

Book it: One-way fares start at £60. jet2.com



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SOUTHEND → IBIZA

Fans of the White Isle will dance for joy with the spring launch of an easyJet route from Southend to Ibiza. From blissful Balearic beaches to superclubs that host the world's best DJs, there's no better place for watching sunsets or sipping cocktails. Beyond the beaches, there's the cobblestoned old town – a Unesco World Heritage Site since 1999 – with 16th-century ramparts topped by a hilltop cathedral. The pine-scented hills and white villages in the north are worth visiting, as are the island's revamped rural farmhouses, many of which host wellness retreats and offer delicious local food and wine.

Book it: Flights from Southend will depart on Wednesdays and Saturdays from April 29, with fares starting at £35.99. easyjet.com

