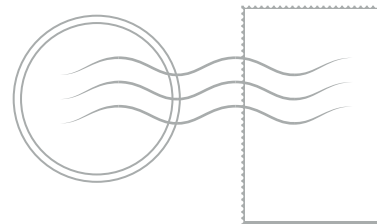


# POSTCARD

## Benidorm



An e-bike tour shows the Spanish city's less-visited natural side, finds **Robin Murray**

I must admit that admiring stunning scenery on an e-biking tour was not an activity I'd expected to be doing in Benidorm. Before I arrived in the Spanish city, the image I had in my mind was of a hedonistic enclave frequented by Brits in search of sun, sea and cheap booze. But shortly after setting off on my electric bike from rental shop Tao Bike, I quickly discover that there is much more to Benidorm than getting sloshed in the sunshine.

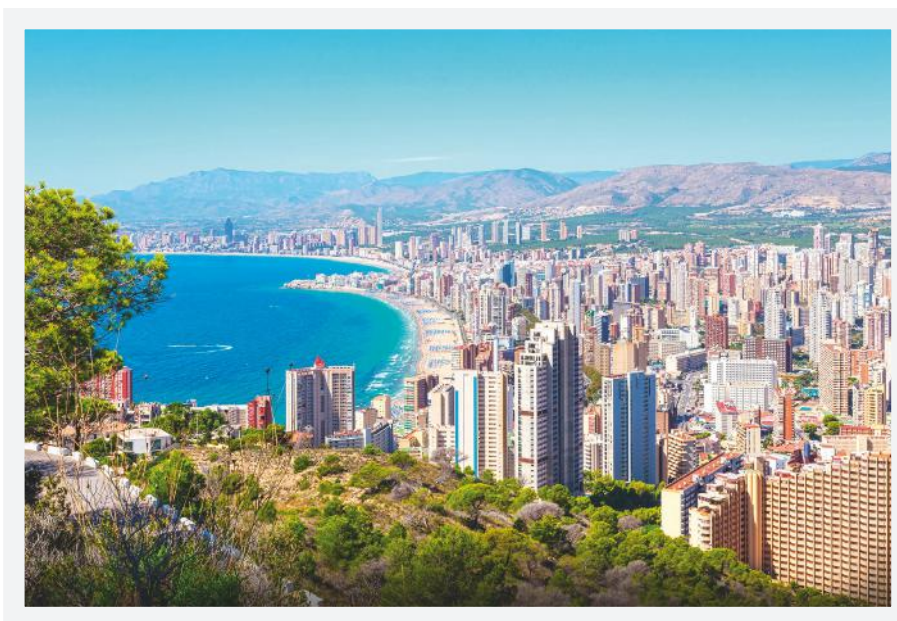
As we head along the main promenade adjacent to the sprawling Levante Beach, we dodge numerous revellers nipping from bar to bar in the afternoon sun, like slalom racers trying to evade moving obstacles. The atmosphere is lively and the weather ideal for a bike ride, with a gentle breeze breaking up the heat.

It only takes about 10 minutes of cycling before there's nobody around, as we head into the stunning Sierra Helada Natural Park – arguably the jewel in Benidorm's crown. The car-free roads are a dream to cycle along, not least because they offer breathtaking views of the Costa del Sol's rugged coastline. And pootling about on a bike that requires minimal effort to power makes the experience even more enjoyable.

Sierra Helada Natural Park is just as well suited to hiking as it is to cycling, with numerous routes for walkers of all fitness levels. Tucked away within it are several 'hidden' alcove beaches and they couldn't feel any more different to Benidorm's main beaches, which are usually packed with sunseekers – just the other side of the headland.

The first small beach we stop off at only has one person on it, making it a peaceful retreat away from the hustle and bustle of the centre of Benidorm. We take a refreshing dip in the surprisingly crystal-clear water, safe in the knowledge that we'll dry off quickly in the mid-afternoon sun.

Before visiting Benidorm I thought my lasting image would be of partying Brits, but my two-hour e-bike experience showed me that if you go off the beaten track, there's much more to Benidorm than you might expect. **TW**



### BOOK IT

Jet2holidays has seven nights' bed and breakfast at Melia Villaitana from £1,069 per person, based on two adults sharing, departing from Manchester on August 27. [jet2holidays.com](http://jet2holidays.com)

E-bike tours of Sierra Helada Natural Park with Tao Bike cost from €32 per person. [taobike.es/en](http://taobike.es/en)



FROM TOP: Panoramic view of Benidorm; Robin Murray takes in the view on his e-bike tour

PICTURE: Shutterstock/Bahdanovich Alena, Mikhail Grachikov