Margarita Island is part of the State of Nueva Esparta in Venezuela. It is a 35 minute plane journey from the capital, Caracas. The island can be reached with some charter airlines from Europe, such as Condor, or with one of several airlines that fly to Caracas. There are more than 20 flights per day to Porlamar from Caracas. The airport in Caracas is some distance from the capital.

Margarita Island is a favorite destination for Venezuelans, especially in December, at Easter, and during the summer vacation (from July until August). These are the peak seasons for visitors. The high season for international tourism runs from October until March each year.

Margarita is a duty-free port, which means that it also gets tourists from nearby islands in the Caribbean Sea who come to shop at very low prices.

In September, the island receives a number of visitors who come for the festivities of the Virgen del Valle (the Virgin of the Valley), the patron saint of eastern Venezuelan, the navy, and fishermen.

The weather on the Island is tropical and sunny for most of the year. You will be able to go to the beach every day. Even during the rainy season a day at the beach is guaranteed as it rains mainly at night or in the early morning. Eighty two different beaches await you, many of them unknown to most visitors. Margarita Island is not in the path of hurricanes.
The roads are quite good and, if you have a rental car, you can reach any point on Margarita, including the shoreline.

The capital of the Island is La Asuncion. It is a small city in the middle of the Island with beautiful colonial style architecture. La Asuncion is home to the majority of regional government bodies. Many people think that Porlamar is the state capital, but it is only the main, and most populated, city. The center of Porlamar is quite busy and crowded, just like most capital city centers in Venezuela.

Over the years, Porlamar has been extended towards Pampatar, which is one of the most exclusive and expensive areas, and is the main area for shopping centers such as Sambil Mall.

The most beautiful beaches are quite a distance from the city. The most popular ones are: Playa El Agua, Playa Parguito, Playa El Yaque, Playa Caribe, Playa Manzanillo and Playa Punta Arenas on the Peninsula de Macanao.

For those who are not interested in beaches, there are many other options for trips and excursions. For example, you can visit Laguna de La Restinga, el Museo Marino, La Asuncion, or take a walk around the San Juan mountains, Conejeros Market and Pampatar.

On this website, we would like to offer you some useful information about Margarita Island in order to make it easier to plan your vacation, enabling you to make the most of your time here on our island.

Have a nice journey, and welcome to Margarita Island, the Pearl of the Caribbean!

Sabina Loffler

Spanish courses in Venezuela
Spanischkurse in Südamerika

AT A GLANCE

- Money and economy
- Visa
- Communication
- Vaccination and Health Recommendation
- A little bit of History
- General travel information world
- Book and DVD about Venezuela
- Margarita Island from the sky
Location: Margarita Island is located in the Caribbean Sea to the northeast of mainland Venezuela, and it is the largest island of the insular state of Nueva Esparta along with Coche and Cubagua Islands.

Climate: The weather is mainly tropical with dry and rainy seasons. The rainy season coincides approximately with winter in Europe, while the drier and hotter season coincides with summer. The rainy season falls between November and March. Nevertheless, precipitation can occur between July and September caused by the tail ends of hurricanes and tropical storms that form in the Caribbean Sea. On the other hand, it mainly rains at night or early in the morning. There is always a chance of getting to the beach and enjoying some sun. Temperatures vary from 24 C to 37 C.

Official Language: Spanish

Population: around 422,000 inhabitants

Electricity voltage: 110 volts

Time Zone: GMT - 4.30

Area: 1071 square kilometers

Holidays: January 1 (New Year's Day), Carnival Monday (February), March 26 (Founding of Porlamar), April 19 (Beginning of the Independence Movement), May 1 (Labor Day), July 24 (birth of Simon Bolivar), July 31 (Battle of Matasiete), August 8 (Battle of Juan Griego), September 8 (Virgen del Valle Day), October 12 (Day of Indigenous Resistance), December 25 (Christmas Eve).

Religion: mostly Roman Catholic

Spanish courses in Venezuela
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MONEY AND ECONOMY

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Official Exchange Rate: 1 US$ = 4.30 bolivares

There are strict exchange controls in Venezuela at the moment.

You can use your debit or credit card at any ATM or in any shop. We advise you to bring US$ in cash for your holiday expenses.

Banks:

Most of banks have branches in the most important shopping centers such as Rattan Plaza and Sambil
Margarita.

The five major banks in Venezuela are: Banesco, Banco Mercantil, Banco Provincial, and Banco Venezuela.

You must be very careful when using ATMs. Do not allow strangers to help you, and do not use the cash point if you suspect that something suspicious is going on. Credit cards can sometimes be cloned. Check your bank statements every now and then, and call your bank immediately if you notice any irregularities. It is also sensible to bring other methods of payment such as traveler’s checks or other credit cards.

**Everyday expenses:**

Food can sometimes be a little expensive on Margarita Island. As Margarita is an island, it relies on the mainland for supplies of many products, which explains the high price of some items.

Only some agricultural products are grown in these kinds of temperatures. Fish and beef, on the other hand, are relatively low-priced.

Margarita Island is a duty-free port. There is no tax on liquor, cigarettes, cheese and other imported items. You can get everything on the island, from different kinds of cheese such as Italian Parmesan cheese, to Swiss chocolate.

Venezuela has the cheapest gasoline in the world. You can fill the tank of your rental car for just US$ 1 :-) and go for a ride around the island...

**VISA**

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Tourists from most European countries, Canada and the United States do not need a visa to enter Venezuela. You only need a passport with at least six months of validity. On the plane, you will receive an immigration form that needs to be filled out with all the necessary information. When you arrive, you will then have to present it to immigration officers at the airport. After that, you will be given a copy of the form which you will have to keep safe until you leave the country. You will be able to stay in the country for 90 days.

In case you wish to visit a nearby country and then return to Venezuela, you will be granted an extra 90 days in the country.

You can also request the renewal of your Visa at ONIDEX in Caracas.

For further information, you can contact the Venezuelan Embassy in your own country.

**Venezuelan Embassy in the USA**
A specific kind of visa is required to work in Venezuela. This should be requested at the Venezuelan Embassy in your own country.

**COMMUNICATION**

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**Venezuela's dialing code:** ++58  
**State of Nueva Esparta Area Code:** 0295 (when calling from abroad you must omit the 0)

**Mobile Phones:** For GSM cell phones, you can buy a SIM card at Digitel (one of the major mobile companies). The SIM card costs around US$ 10 and includes debit balances. You must show your passport in order to get one.

**Internet:** Most of hotels and public places have wireless Internet access. There are also plenty of Internet cafes around the island.

**Calling:** You can get an UNICE phone card at CANTV (the national phone company). With this card, you will be able to make calls from any phone. There are also Centros de Comunicaciones (Calling Centers), at many shopping malls. These are equipped with special phone booths where you can make a call and then pay at the till once you have finished.

**Mail:** The Post Office in Pampatar is on Calle Joaquin Maneiro, and on Calle Maneiro in Porlamar. It is open from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. and from 1.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

You can purchase postcards and stamps at bookshops and souvenir shops. The price of sending a postcard is around Bs 2.

Do not allow anyone to send you items from abroad by regular mail. Packages recovered by IPOSTEL are sometimes delivered to the addressee covered in adhesive tape or with contents missing. If you need to have something sent to Venezuela, please use DHL or FedEx.

**Couriers:** couriers are located on Calle Aeropuerto Viejo de Porlamar (Calle del Hambre). DHL, FedEx, Domesa and MRW have offices right next to each other.

**VACCINATION AND HEALTH RECOMMENDATION**
No specific vaccines are necessary for your trip to Margarita Island. There are no cases of malaria on the Island. We do advise you to get Hepatitis A and B vaccines in case you have not yet had them.

Diarrhea and stomach disorders are very frequent on trips. We advise you to not take any kind of medicine and to consult a specialist if the symptoms last for several days. The symptoms are sometimes the result of a bacterial infection or virus, and may require a specific kind of treatment.

During certain periods of the year, and especially in the rainy season, there are mosquitoes on the island. The best insect repellents are those sold in supermarkets and drugstores, in particular those that are manufactured in Venezuela: e.g. Off, Osi, Avispa etc. Foreign repellents appear to be less effective against local mosquitoes.

Use bottled water to brush your teeth, and never drink water from the tap. The ice in drinks can safely be consumed as it is made using mineral water.

The sun in the Caribbean is very strong. Therefore, avoid being in the sun between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Apply sun block with an adequate SPF factor, and re-apply it regularly. Do not forget to use something to protect your scalp as well.

The temperature can be fresh in the evening, so please bring a light jacket.

It is also advisable to take out health insurance in your country. You can receive treatment in private hospitals in Venezuela and the bill will be covered by your insurance company.

**Venezuela health ministry**

**Phone numbers and useful addresses**

Private and public hospitals:

**Clinica La Fe:** (private hospital, one of the best on the island with a 24-hour emergency service) Avenida Jovito Villalba, Via Pampatar. Telephone number: (0295) 262 27 11

Clinica Juan Griego: (private hospital located to the north of the island): Sector Laguna Honda 2da Transversal, Juan Griego. Telephone number: (0295) 253 62 37

Hospital Luis Ortega: (public hospital in Porlamar with free medical service): Avenida 4 de mayo Porlamar. Telephone number: (0295) 261 15 78

Dentists:

Centro de Especialidades Odontologicas AB: Centro Comercial AB on Avenida Bolivar. Telephone number (0295) 261 15 78
Drugstores:
There is a drugstore in Sigo Supermarket in Sambil Mall. It is open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

24-hour drugstores:
Farmatodo and Proveded in Playa El Angel on Avenida Bolivar

Fire Department:
To reach the Fire Department just call 171 or (0295) 264 14 45

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

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In 1498, Christopher Columbus disembarked at the Peninsula de Paria in mainland Venezuela, and the Spaniards saw how the natives of the region adorned themselves with pearls. A year later, pearl-producing oyster banks were discovered in what is known today as Nueva Esparta State, and at the end of 1500 the first Spanish city in South America was founded on Cubagua Island: Nueva Cadiz.

Today, Cubagua is uninhabited. There is only one small rural town and some fishermen's hovels. The stones from the ruins of the city are sometimes used by fishermen to decorate their houses.

In the past, the natives had to dive in order to search for pearls. The abuse and greed of the Spaniards killed off the entire native population of the area. In 1528, pearl was also discovered on Coche Island and so, as the production of pearl was decreasing on Cubagua, its inhabitants moved to Cumana and Margarita.

In December 1541, a seaque completely destroyed the city of Nueva Cadiz and it has remained uninhabited since 1548.
You can see the archeological remains of the city in the Museo Nueva Cadiz near Plaza de la Asuncion, and the Museo Marino in Macanao has an entire room dedicated to the production of pearls, and to Cubagua Island.

There are two different stories about the origin of the name of Margarita Island. The first one claims that the name comes from the Greek word for pearl, while the second says that the island was named after Princess Margaret of Austria.

Margarita, just like any other Caribbean Island, has been the target of many attacks by pirates throughout its history. It was stormed by pirates fourteen times in total, hence the existence of several fortresses around the island. Nowadays, you can visit several of these fortresses: Fortín de La Galera in Juand Griego, Castillo de Santa Rosa in La Asuncion, and Castillo de San Carlos Borromeo in Pampatar.

Nueva Esparta played a crucial role during the Venezuelan War of Independence against the Spanish crown, and the state was named in honor of their heroism, which was compared to that of the brave warriors and soldiers of Sparta (Sparta) in Ancient Greece. In 1815, Juan Bautista Arismendi commanded a revolt against the Spaniards. In retaliation they captured his wife, Luisa Caceres de Arismendi, aged 16, and she was imprisoned in several fortresses around the island. She gave birth to a child who died through being in captivity. Subsequently, Luis Caceres de Arismendi was sent to Spain. Years later, she returned to Venezuela, and died an old woman.

After the War of Independence, Margarita continued as a quiet and peaceful fishing island until it was declared a duty-free port in the 1970s.

*Taken from: Bauman and Young; Guía de Venezuela, Armitano Editores 1986 Caracas Venezuela*

**GETTING AROUND**

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima
In this section, we will offer you information about some of the ways you can get around on the island.

Your final destination is Santiago Marino International Airport on Isla de Margarita (Porlamar). The airport is about a 31-minute drive from the city.

Porlamar's Airport

There are many different charter flights from Europe to the island. Some of the companies that can provide you information about these flights are: Condor, Airtransat (from Canada) and Gol (from Brazil). These airlines fly direct to Porlamar. The other option is to take a regular flight to Caracas, and then a connecting flight to Margarita with a local airline.

Caracas' Airport is located in Maiquetia, about 35 minutes away from the capital. The airport has two terminals: national, and international. Both terminals are joined by a hall at Gate 11. The flight from Caracas to Porlamar lasts 35 minutes. The last flight to the island during the low season leaves at 7.30 pm. During the high season flights are sometimes available until very late at night.

Maiquetia Airport can sometimes be chaotic and stressful. It is possible that someone may approach you to offer you some kind of service or deal. Just say "No, gracias" politely, and carry on towards the National Terminal.

Tickets form Caracas to Porlamar can be bought at the airport, at a travel agency, or on the airline websites: Laser, Aserca, La Venezolana, Avior, Aeropostal, Conviasa, Rutaca.

Unfortunately, departures to Margarita are sometimes delayed, especially during the high season, and at weekends. There are very few flights on Saturday; We recommend that you plan at least a 3 hour gap between your arrival in Maiquetia and your connecting flight to the island.

In case you have to stay overnight, we recommend that you stay close to the airport in Hotel Catimar, as they also provide transport to the airport.

Information about buses, ferries, boats, taxis and car rental can be found on the taskbar on the right side of this window.

You can book hotels on Margarita Island through trivago http://www.trivago.co.uk

Spanish courses in Venezuela
Spanischkurse in Südamerika
INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima

There are many international flights from Porlamar to other cities throughout the world and vice versa. The most constant flights all year round are offered by Venezuelan airlines, as most of the international carriers only offer charter flights during the high season.

From Europe, the airline Condor flies to Margarita all year round with flights departing from most major European cities, including Frankfurt.

International Airport in Porlamar, Isla Margarita

Condor currently flies on Mondays and Fridays from almost each European city to Porlamar/Isla Margarita, bookings and information:

Condor

http://www.condor.de

During the high season, there is a direct flight from Toronto to Porlamar with Air Canada.

Air Canada

http://www.aircanada.com

Venezuelan airlines with international routes:
Conviasa: http://www.conviasa.aero

Conviasa offers a wide variety of international routes from Porlamar:

Porlamar - Dominica (Tuesdays)
Porlamar - Puerto España (every day except Tuesday and Saturdays)
Porlamar - Grenada (Fridays and Sundays)
Porlamar - Saint Vincent (Tuesday)

Routes and Destinations from Caracas:

La Venezolana http://ravsa.com.ve

Caracas - Aruba every day except Fridays and Sundays

Santa Barbara Airlines http://www.sbairlines.com

Flights to Funchal, Madrid, Panamá, Tenerife and Quito, from Caracas

Aserca Airlines http://www.asercaairlines.com

Flights to Aruba, Punta Cana and Curacao

This information relates to the 2010 Summer Season. We recommend that you check the airline websites in order to find out updated routes and destinations.

The numbers of Porlamar International Airport are: 0058 295 400 50 58 and 0058 295 400 50 57

FERRIES AND BOATS

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima

Conferry:

Conferry covers the route Punta de Piedras (Margarita) - Puerto La Cruz - Punta de Piedras and Punta de Piedras - Coche - Punta de Piedras.

The timetable for the 2010 summer season is:

Punta de Piedras - Puerto La Cruz

Express Ferry: daily at 07.00, 12.00 - 16.00 and 19.30
Cost: Adults Bs.62, children and seniors (over 65) Bs.32, cars Bs.111
Traditional Ferry: daily at 01.00, 08.00, 13.00 and 20.00  
Cost: Adults Bs. 29, children and seniors (over 65) Bs. 15

Puerto La Cruz - Punta de Piedras

Express Ferry: daily at 08.00, 12.00, 16.20  
Traditional Ferry: daily at 02.00, 07.00, 14.00 and 19.00

Punta de Piedras - Coche:

For this route, there is only one ferry: the "Maria Libre". The crossing lasts around 1 hour. It departs from Thursday to Sunday at 8.00 and 18.00, and from Monday to Wednesday at 8.00 only.

Coche - Punta de Piedras:

It departs from Thursday to Sundays at 6.30 and 16.00, and from Monday to Wednesday at 6.30 only.  
Cost: Adults Bs. 19, children Bs 11, and senior citizen over 65 Bs. 10. You can also take your car on the ferry.

In order to buy your ticket at any carrier, you will need:

A photocopy of your ID or passport  
A photocopy of your vehicle documentation, and your driving licence (in case you want to travel with your car).

The Conferry offices are open Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., and on Sundays from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

There are two Conferry offices in Porlamar:

Avenida Terranova Tel: (0295) 263 99 85 / 263 98 78
Modern Con ferry office in Avenida Terranova

Centro Comercial Provemed on Avenida Bolivar Lokal L 10 Urbanización Playa El Angel Tel. (0295) 262 05 92 and (0295) 262 36 97

The old Conferry offices at Rattan Plaza, and on Calle Marcano in Porlamar are not longer in operation. It is possible to book tickets at the ferry terminal in Punta de Piedras. Tel: (0295) 239 82 61

Conferry homepage for updated information is http://www.conferry.com

Naviarca Ferry and Gran Cacique Express:

The company Naviarca offers the following routes:

Punta de Piedras - Cumaná - Punta de Piedras

Punta de Piedras - Puerto La Cruz - Punta de Piedras

These ferries do not carry vehicles, and they leave from the Naviarca Terminal in Punta de Piedras.

The Naviarca Terminal in Punta de Piedras
Route Cumaná - Punta de Piedras

Departure time: 07.00, 13.00, and 18.00 The length of the journey is about 90 minutes

Route Punta de Piedras - Cumaná

Departure time: 10.30, 15.30, and 20.30

The price of a ticket is Bs. 80 per adult and Bs. 40 per child.

Route Punta de Piedras - Puerto La Cruz

Departure times: 11.00 and 19.00 on Tuesday and Wednesday
Departure times: 10.00, 16.00 and 21.30 from Thursday to Monday

Puerto La Cruz - Punta de Piedras

Departure time: 07.00 and 16.00 on Tuesday and Wednesday
07.00, 13.00 and 19.00 from Thursday to Monday
The price of a ticket is Bs 85 per adult and Bs 44 per child

**New:** Naviarca offers a new ferry that also transports cars from Puerto La Cruz on the mainland to Punta de Piedras on Margarita Island. Prices and timetable can be found on [http://www.grancacique.com.ve](http://www.grancacique.com.ve)

The Naviarca office is located on the ground floor of the Edificio Blue Sky building on Avenida Santiago Marino in Porlamar.

Tel: (0295) 264 29 45 / 264 11 60

You can also book online at: [http://www.grancacique.com.ve](http://www.grancacique.com.ve)

We remind you that the timetable and prices refer to the 2010 summer season. For additional updated information, please contact the office of the relevant carrier.

*Finally, there is a boat service that departs from Faro de Porlamar, ("Porlamar’s Lighthouse", close to Puerto de La Mar,) to Chacopata in the State of Sucre. We do not recommend that you use this service, basic safety measures for travelling at sea are sometimes not enforced.*

**TAXIS AND BUSES**
• International Flights
• Ferries and boats
• Taxis and Buses
• Car rental
• Transportation to Coche Island
• Los Roques and Canaima

Taxis:

It is sometimes cheaper and more convenient to get around the island by taxi, rather than renting a car.

The official carriers have white cars with a yellow plate, and they can be easily recognized. There are taxi companies in every shopping center on the island such as Sambil and Rattan Plaza.

Manuel Maqueda from Taxi Luxor (0414)790 50 23

Every taxi company has a fixed fare which can be found on the table stuck to the rear window. If you do not see the table, please ask the driver: Cual es la tarifa a...(place)?

Current fares can be found on the Cexpreca website: http://www.cexpreca.com

Taxis of Cexpreca in Sambil

It is also possible to contact the following taxi companies free of charge:

Luxor Tel: (0295) 263 79 79
Costa Azul Tel: 0416 401 14 98
Cexpre Tel: (0295) 262 45 45
Union Latina Tel: (0295) 263 71 13
In order to make a call from a mobile to a landline it is always necessary to dial 0295 first.

Ask for the fare before getting in the taxi: Cuanto cuesta a ......?

The minimum fare is Bs. 25. The fare is increased by 20% on Sundays, holidays, and after 9.00 p.m. You can also hire a taxi for Bs. 45 per hour for at least 3 hours.

We advise you to take a taxi once the sun has gone down as it is not advisable to walk around at night, and it may even be dangerous.

and buses.....

We have gradually been able to put the taxi network on the island in order, but unfortunately, the same we cannot be said about the buses. If you wish to take a bus in Porlamar, you require three things: a little knowledge of Spanish, change (coins), and a lot of patience.

Despite belonging to the public transport system, buses are private property. This is the reason why they are so personalized and painted different colors. A bus ride costs between Bs. 1,50 and 3 depending on the route.

In order to know where the bus is heading, you need to read what is written in white lettering on the windows of the bus, as you can see in the following picture.

There are bus stops everywhere, but the drivers stop almost every time someone shouts "en la parada por favor" or "por aqui". Therefore, it is perfectly possible that the ride from Porlamar to Playa El Agua might last two hours instead of the 20 minutes it takes by car. You can also stop the bus and get on it by raising your hand from the street. Remember to pay the driver with the exact amount of money.

Most buses leave from Plaza Bolivar in the center of Porlamar and head towards Playa El Agua, the airport, Punta de Piedras, and Juan Griego. You always need to ask where the stops are, as the locations often change.
CAR RENTAL

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima

The car rental offices are located close to the parking lot, and in front of the main exit gate of Santiago Marino International Airport.

Some of the car rental agencies are:

Aco [http://www.aco.com.ve](http://www.aco.com.ve) Tel: 0295 269 12 70 0-800-7368226
Excellency Tel: 0295 262 29 55
Hertz Tel: 0295 267 16 59
Losan [http://www.losanrentacar.com](http://www.losanrentacar.com) Tel: 0295 263 94 20
Margarita Rentals Tel: 0295 269 12 85

In order to rent a car, you need to be at least 18 years old, have a valid driving license, passport or valid ID, and a credit card. Every car is insured, and you will have to leave a deposit that will be reimbursed once you return the car.

It is possible that you may find Venezuelans’ style of driving somewhat particular to begin with, but you will get used to after few hours of driving. It is always important to practice defensive driving.
TRANSPORTATION TO COCHE ISLAND

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima

There are several options for getting to Coche Island:

1. **Motorboat from La Isleta:** Motorboats with a high passenger capacity leave for Coche from La Isleta. These motorboats leave every hour starting at 8.30 am. through until about 4 pm. every day. You can get to the port and buy your ticket for the next motorboat ready to sail. There is also a phone number: 0424 803 78 74 and the contact is Senor Salazar. The cost of the ticket is Bs.15 (Updated July 2010).
2. **Maria Libre**: this ferry is run by *Conferry*. It departs from Punta de Piedras at 8.00 a.m. for Coche, and it returns at 4.00 p.m. to Punta de Piedras. Tickets can be purchased directly at the port, or at the *Conferry office* building in Playa El Angel, or Porlamar. You can take your car with you on the ferry if you wish.

3. **Full day on a catamaran**: there are different companies that offer all inclusive one-day-tours to Coche: for example, the Moondancer, and some other catamarans. Most of them depart from Marina del
Concorde in Porlamar, or from La Isleta. Reservations can be made at any travel agency, or at these companies' tourist stands at Sambil Shopping Center. The price of these tours is approximately US$ 80.

Moondancer arriving in Coche

Catamaran to Coche

4. Full day at one of Coche's hotels: most hotels on Coche (Punta Blanca, Coche Paradise, and Brisas del Mar Hotel) offer an all inclusive full day at the hotel (drinks, meals, and transport from Playa El Yaque on Margarita). You can book these all inclusive packages at any travel agency, or directly at the hotel. The prices vary according to the services, and the season. Nevertheless, the cost is usually about US$ 80 per person.
LOS ROQUES AND CANAIMA

- International Flights
- Ferries and boats
- Taxis and Buses
- Car rental
- Transportation to Coche Island
- Los Roques and Canaima

Charter Flights and Aerotuy Excursions

Aerotuy can arrange charter flights to Los Roques and Canaima from Porlamar.

The Aerotuy offices are located at the end of Avenida Santiago Marino in the Vista Bella building in Porlamar.

Tel: (0295) 415 57 78 and (0295) 415 57 84 to 88

It is also possible to book your tickets for Porlamar - Los Roques on http://www.tuy.com

Aerotuy also offers the following tours:

Los Roques Tour
Canaima Tour
Arekuna Camp (you can fly over Angel's Falls)
Orinoco Delta
Trip on a sailboat to La Tortuga
BEACHES

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola

Margarita Island has a wide variety of outstanding beaches to suit all tastes. The most famous beach is definitely Playa El Agua where most of the hotel, and resorts are located. Nevertheless, there are even more beautiful beaches. We would like to show you a small sample of the most popular beaches among visitors.

Renting a car or hiring a cab is the best way to travel around the whole island. There is information about fees in the section entitled Transport> Taxis and Busses.

Here we will present the beaches clockwise from the airport. There are a lot of little known beaches, such as El Tunal and La Pared on the Peninsula de Macanao.

Most beaches, have chairs and sunshades for rent, along with restaurants and typical food stands. You can also get very close to the shore with your vehicle.

The climate on the island is always sunny and pleasant even during the rainy season. It usually rains in the morning but is sunny again by the afternoon. Completely rainy days on the island are rare at any time of the year.

Avoid the sun between 11.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. as the sun is really strong during that period. Wear sunscreen with a high SPF.

Spanish courses in Venezuela
Spanischkurse in Südamerika

PLAYA EL YAQUE

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
Playa El Yaque is the closest beach to the airport. It is always windy in Playa El Yaque. This makes it one of the world's three best beaches for windsurfing and kitesurfing.

There are many hotels, inns, and some great restaurants on Playa El Yaque. There are also many European tourists, except at weekends when many locals visit the beach, especially those with small children as the water is not very deep.

On Playa El Yaque, you can find several surfing schools that also offer accommodation at hotels. The only disadvantage of staying at El Yaque is that you would be very far from the rest of the island.

If you would like to explore more of Margarita, you will have to take a taxi or rent a car.

**PLAYA PARAIISO**

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola
Playa Paraiso is the beach located near the container port of Puerto el Guamache, which is where the cruise ships also dock. Drive towards the ferry port in Punta de Piedras and then turn off at the sign for El Guamache, then continue driving straight ahead.

As this is a waterfront area, you need to try to get to the beach as early as possible due to the limited number of parking spaces. When the car park is full, no more visitors are admitted. The beach consists of 4 small bays with clear blue waters that are warm and shallow.

The last of the bays has a kind of sand bank where two currents meet, creating a kind of natural Jacuzzi. There is very little shade so it is worth bringing a parasol and chairs, along with some food and drink. This is the ideal location for a beach picnic.
PUNTA ARENAS (MACANAO)

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola

Playa Punta Arenas is perhaps the farthest beach on Margarita Island. It is located on the other side of the island on the Peninsula de Macanao. It takes about 50 minutes to get there from Porlamar. The beach is very long, and it is divided into two sections.

The first section is located near the entrance of the town where you can find several restaurants. The beach has very little swell.

You can get to the second section by turning right at a small path at the end of the side of the beach.

Both sections of the beach are linked, and it is possible to walk from one section to the other along the shore. On the second section of Playa Punta Arenas the waves are quite strong and there are only two restaurants. It is advisable to bring something to eat with you. On public holidays there are a lot of people around as Playa Punta Arenas has become one of the most popular beaches in recent times.

La Peninsula de Macanao is a very nice place to go on an excursion. The climate and the nature there are very different from the rest of the island. The earth is red, and there are a lot of cacti.
Playa de La Restinga is located just behind the lagoon of the same name. After a 30 minute boat ride, you will get to Playa La Restinga. This beach has about 20 kilometers of coastline, and it connects the Peninsula de Macanao with the rest of Margarita Island.

Most visitors go there to enjoy a lobster, or some oysters, and to have a walk around and bring back some shells. The beach is very beautiful to explore, and is perfect for collecting some sea shells. As the beach is close to Laguna de La Restinga National Park, you must leave before 4.30 p.m. On the beach, you can buy souvenirs such as shell necklaces, and strings of pearls for very reasonable prices.

PLAYA CARIBE

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola
Playa Caribe is located just past the city of Juan Griego. It is well signposted so it should not be difficult to find. Playa Caribe is one of the most beautiful beaches on Margarita Island. It is famous for its heavy swells, and its 1200 meter extension.

During the high season, the beach receives many visitors, especially from other parts of the country.

There are several restaurants on the left side of the beach that rent awnings and chairs. The sunset at Playa Caribe is simply breathtaking. You can observe it between 6.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. depending on the season. The best way to get there is by car.

PLAYA ZARAGOZA
Playa Zaragoza is also known as "la playa de Pedro Gonzalez", (Playa Gonzalez beach) and is located in the town of the same name on the road from Juan Griego to Manzanillo, or from Puerto Cruz if you are coming from Manzanillo towards Juan Griego.

The beach is quite beautiful, and it is one of the beaches on the island with a promenade. Some of the houses there date from the colonial times, and the architecture is stunning.

There are several restaurants and food stalls, and it is possible to rent awnings and chairs. The most famous product at Playa Zaragoza is the Pina Colada. Pina Coladas are made with fresh pineapples while you wait. Do not miss out on a chance to taste one. The water is very still, but a little cold. It is very refreshing, especially on hot summer days.

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PLAYA PUERTO CRUZ

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola
Playa Puerto Cruz is the beach near by the Hotel Dunes. It is a very long beach that can be reached if you come from Juan Griego to Manzanillo, or vice-versa. It is the beach next to Playa Zaragoza.

This beach is quiet during the low season, and there are few restaurants and food stalls.

It is advisable to bring food, drinks, awnings and chairs if you are planning to spend the day on this beach. This is a great spot for having a barbecue or a picnic.

The swell is quite heavy, and the water is very cold.

PLAYA GUAYACAN

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola
Playa Guayacan is a small fishing town that is found on the road from Manzanillo to Juan Griego. The exit to the beach is signposted. You have to turn right, and continue on the path down to the beach.

Guayacán is a very secluded and relatively unknown beach for a lot of tourists. There is only one restaurant there, which is closed for most of the times during the low season.

The beach is about 1 kilometer in length, with a mild swell and cold water.

Guayacan is perfect for people who love quiet and solitude.

**PLAYA MANZANILLO**

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola

Manzanillo is the most popular beach on the island amongst visitors. Playa Manzanillo is about 25 minutes by car from Porlamar, which is not far away. There are also buses that depart from the center of Porlamar.
Manzanillo is a quiet and peaceful fishing town. There are several restaurants including the famous Rosenda's restaurant. Rosenda is a very nice, kind lady who used to sell fresh fish on the road to Playa El Agua many years ago. Fish is always fresh at Manzanillo, and the prices are quite affordable. The service may be a bit slow; so, we recommend that you place your order as soon as you arrive at the beach, and let them know at what time you would like to eat.

Manzanillo's specialty is mussels.

On the beach, the water is quite cold, and some days there are no waves at all. At Manzanillo, you can hire transport to get to Playa Constanza which can only be reached by boat.

PLAYA EL AGUA

- Playa El Yaque
- Playa Paraiso
- Punta Arenas (Macanao)
- Playa La Restinga
- Playa Caribe
- Playa Zaragoza
- Playa Puerto Cruz
- Playa Guayacan
- Playa Manzanillo
- Playa El Agua
- Playa Parguito
- Playa Guacuco
- Playa La Caracola

Playa el Agua is the best known beach on the Island. Here you will find most of the hotels, resorts, spas, and inns on the island. The beach is approximately 3 kilometers long, and it is possible to rent awnings and chairs.

The swell is quite heavy and the sea can sometimes be dangerous due to the currents. On Playa El Agua there are several agencies, money exchange shops, mini markets, corner shops, and car rental offices.

There is always a lot do at El Agua throughout the year. The crime rate has recently gone up and so it is not advisable to walk around late at night. Discos and clubs are not as safe as they used to be. The island is constantly changing and there are other beaches and places that are quieter and safer, for example Playa Parguito.

As taxis are not very expensive, and it is also possible to rent a car, you can also visit other beaches even if you are staying at Playa El Agua.
Playa Parguito is 1 kilometer long, and it has a heavy swell. This beach is the favorite among local residents of the island, the young, and other tourists from all over the country.

There are many different kinds of restaurants here. This beach is very active all year round. On one side of the beach, there is a small hill where you can take beautiful pictures of the landscape of Playa el Tirano, and Playa El Agua.

The beach is ideal for surfing and surf boards can be rented at the beach. Sea turtles come here to lay their eggs a couple of times per year.

Sunset starts at around 4.00 pm and you can see the sun setting behind the palm trees making the evening pleasurable and fresh.

Playa Guacuco
Playa Guacuco is located at the end of the town of Guacuco, past Porlamar. You need to take the Luisa Caceres de Arismendi Highway (next to Sambil) towards Playa Manzanillo, and turn right at the exit signposted Guacuco. Pass the town until you arrive at the beach.

Guacuco is a very popular beach among local families as the swell is not very heavy, and the waves are not dangerous. The sand is orange.

There is a small palm tree forest, and you can have a barbecue on the beach. There are also several restaurants that offer awnings and beach chairs.

The beach is about 2 kilometers long.

PLAYA LA CARACOLA
Playa La Caracola is not the best place to bathe or swim, but people use it mainly for exercising, skating, and playing beach sports. It is close to Porlamar, and there is a shopping center with a large supermarket (Central Madeirense) nearby.

The street closest to the shore is closed from 6.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m., and from 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. No cars are allowed between those hours as it is used for walking, jogging, biking, skating, etc. The beach is 2 kilometers long.

AMUSEMENT

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

Margarita Island offers a wide variety of activities for all ages.

There are several theme parks such as Parque El Agua (water park with water chutes at Playa El Tirano), El Laberinto Tropical (a huge garden with the shape of a labyrinth where you can admire the nature of
the island as well as some tropical animals), Diverland (theme park with mechanical rides in Porlamar), Musipan (theme park on the road to Playa el Yaque) created by the Venezuelan comedian El Conde del Guacharo, and Pueblos de Margarita (a kind of museum located in Juan Griego, where you can learn about the traditions and customs of Margarita).

There are also some museums, such as the **Museo Marino in Boca de Río**. It is a small marine museum with a lot of information about aquatic life. Here you can find thousands of different types of shells, along with ancient fossils. El Museo de Nueva Cadiz in **La Asuncion** has gathered information about Cubagua Island, formerly known as Nueva Cadiz, one of the first cities on the American Continent. El Museo Diocesano del Valle is the best place to learn about local peoples faith in **La Virgen del Valle** (the Virgin of the Valley). And finally, El Museo Casa del General Santiago Mariño shows some of the most common historical aspects of the island during colonial times.

Those who enjoy the benefits of the sea can arrange snorkeling, or scuba diving excursion on **Los Frailes** (a group of islands north of Margarita), or visit the islands of **Coche** and Cubagua.

Nature lovers can take a tour in the mountains, arrange a horse ride at **Cabatucan** in Macanao, or visit **La Restinga National Park**, where it is possible to take a boat ride to admire the beautiful nature of the mangrove swamps.

People interested in olden times can take a look at Venezuela's history at El Fortin de la Galera in Juan Griego, El Castillo de San Carlos de Borromeo in **Pampatar**, or El Castillo de Santa Rosa in La Asuncion.

Those who decide to taste different flavors can visit **Conejeros Market** (on the road from Porlamar to the airport) where you can try delicious arepas, empanadas, and a wide variety of typical local food.

If you enjoy shopping, you can go to several places like Avenida 4 de Mayo, and Avenida Santiago Mariño in Porlamar, Sambil Mall in Pampatar, and Rattan Plaza in Playa El Angel.

If you like exercising and practicing sports, you will find in **Playa El Yaque** an interesting spot for windsurfing and kitesurfing, or may be you could take a walk around **Playa La Caracola** in the mornings or afternoons to keep yourself fit, or go to **Playa Parguito** for some proper surfing.

On the right side of this page, you will find a list containing comprehensive information about the main tourist attractions on Margarita Island.

**Spanish courses in Venezuela**  
**Spanischkurse in Südamerika**
Los Frailes  
Conejeros Market  
shopping in Porlamar

To get to Laguna de La Restinga National Park, you need to drive west towards Macanao. The park is well signposted and should be easy to find.

At the entrance of the park, there are several stalls where you can buy souvenirs and local jewelry at very reasonable prices. There are also many empanada stands, and a little to the right at the end, there is a corner shop that sells drinks, and postcards. The public toilets are very neat and clean.

You can choose between a 30-minute boat ride, including a stop on Playa La Restinga beach. This is a very interesting spot as it is 20 kilometers in length and connects Margarita Island and the Peninsula de Macanao. Or, you can hire the boat for 1 hour to get the full ride around the swamp.

The prices are fixed. However, it is advisable to ask for information at La Restinga as prices frequently go up depending on the season. In the swamp, the tunnels have been named after romantic expressions like Plaza de Mis Amores (My Lovers' Square), Canal del Beso (Kissing Tunnel), etc. The captain of the boat will show you starfish, seahorses, and lots of shellfish that can be enjoyed for low prices when you get back to the beach.

Once you have arrived at Playa La Restinga, inform the captain of the boat of the time at which you would like to return. The park closes at 4.30 pm, and the return journey only takes 10 minutes.

HORSE RIDING IN MACANAO

- La Restinga National Park
For anyone who enjoys horse riding, or feels confident enough to ride a horse, we recommend an excursion to Rancho Cabatucan, on the Peninsula de Macanao.

The excursion can be booked at any travel agency, or directly at Rancho Cabatucan. The ride lasts 2 hours, and it can be taken in the morning or in the afternoon. The weather during the afternoon is fresher.

There is transport to the ranch from the hotel, but, if you wish to get there by your own means you need to drive or go by taxi. To find Rancho Cabatucan, take the road from Boca de Rio to Robledal on the Peninsula de Macanao. After a few kilometers you will see signs indicating the entrance to the ranch. You can find the exact address on Rancho Cabatucan’s website.

The facilities at Rancho Cabatucan are very pleasant. The ride could be a little uncomfortable for people with little experience of horse riding. The first hour of the ride is at a slow pace around Macanao’s
mountains. The sand is red, and the cacti are reminiscent of the Wild West. You will take a ride on the beach during the second hour of the excursion accompanied by a guide from the ranch.

**MUSEO MARINO**

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

El Museo Marino is a Project of the UDO (Universidad de Oriente), where marine biology is one of the most important courses of study. The museum is located in Boca de Rio, the largest populated area on the Peninsula de Macanao.

The museum holds a very interesting collection of shells and coral along with samples of many other species. At the entrance you will find the skeleton of a whale.

There is a room containing several aquariums, and a small pool with starfish.

In the outdoor section, there is a pool containing sea turtles and different species of sharks. On the second floor of the building, there is a very interesting exhibition about Isla Cubagua, and the excavation of the ruins of the city of Nueva Cadiz. This city was built by the Spaniards for the exploitation of pearls, and it was one of the first cities on the continent.
On the second floor there is an exhibition about net fishing. The museum is open from 9.00 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. The visit to the museum can be perfectly combined with an excursion to Laguna de la Restinga.

Visit the official museum website: Fundacion Museo Marino.

HIKING IN THE MOUNTAINS

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

For those wanting an alternative to beaches, it is possible to go hiking in the mountains in the town of San Juan.

The starting point is the town of Fuentidueño by the bank of the river just past San Juan. It is not easy to find the road as there are almost no signs. However, taxi drivers can take you to the natural pools of San Juan (las pozas de San Juan), which is the other name for this place.
There are several guides you can hire to accompany you on your hike up the mountain. We recommend that you hire Senor Antonio as he lives in the area and knows the flora and fauna very well. He also speaks a little bit of different languages like such as English and German.

Up on the mountain, there is a fascinating river in which you can bathe during the rainy season. The water is very clean and fresh. The excursion lasts about three hours. At the end of the long walk, Senor Antonio will invite hikers to his home to enjoy a nice meal consisting of chicken arepas and local homemade desserts like Dulce de Lechosa (Papaya).

You can contact Senor Antonio on 0058 414 829 79 87
The State of Nueva Esparta in Venezuela is composed of three islands: Margarita, Coche, and Cubagua. It is very easy to get to Coche from Margarita. We urge you to read the information on transport that we have included in this section [http://www.insel-margarita-venezuela.de/margarita-island/transportation-to-coche-island.html](http://www.insel-margarita-venezuela.de/margarita-island/transportation-to-coche-island.html)

You can go to Coche Island on a one day all inclusive tour by catamaran, or you can stay there in one of the island's magnificent hotels:

The best hotels on the island are:

- **Punta Blanca Ocean Club**
- **Coche Speed Paradise**
- La **Posada Oasis** is a small, friendly, and pleasant inn.
Before the construction of the hotels, the inhabitants of Coche worked mainly in the fishing industry. There is an old salt mine on Coche, as well as a shell cemetery left by a factory that used to run the pearl business on the island. There are several drivers who can offer you a tour around the island at very low rates. If you want to take the tour, you can book it at the hotel reception, or at the beach. The excursion lasts about two hours and is really worthwhile.

**TROPICAL LABYRINTH**

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

A visit to the tropical labyrinth is an excellent option for spending a nice day with the family. The garden is on the road to Los Robles if you are coming from La Asuncion in the neighborhood of Palo Sano, close to La Conga Restaurant.

It is well signposted so you will not get lost. At the entrance of the park there is a ticket office where you can purchase your entry tickets. The garden is quite beautiful, and has been designed in the shape of labyrinth.
There are also animals such as apes, snakes, peacocks, toucans, parrots, macaws, and pelicans. Most animals in the park have been rescued from the illegal trade in exotic animals.

The trip around the labyrinth lasts about one hour. It is closed on Mondays.

**LA ASUNCION**

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

La Asuncion is the capital of Margarita island. It is a small cozy city located in the centre of the island. It was founded in 1565 by Pedro Cervantes de Albornoz.

One of the main landmarks in La Asuncion is El Castillo de Santa Rosa. It is a fort located on a hill from
where you can see the city, and the sea on the horizon. The main function of the fort was to protect the city from pirates and other enemies at the time. The fort is now open to the public as a museum from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and entry is free.

One of the oldest cathedrals in Venezuela is located in La Asuncion. It was built in 1570, and it has been used as the architectural model for other cathedrals around the country. It is open every day for mass at around 5.00 p.m.

In front of the cathedral is the Museo Nueva Cadiz which houses a permanent exhibition on the history of the city of Nueva Cadiz (currently Isla Cubagua). Nueva Cadiz was the first Spanish city ever built in the New World (1528). The museum is open from 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Down the road from the cathedral, heading towards the House of the Governor, is Señor Pacheco’s photo studio. He is one of the best photographers in La Asuncion. At his shop, you will find an exhibition of beautiful and breathtaking pictures of Margarita Island and Venezuela, from a bygone era.

The Panaderia San Juan Bosco is another very famous attraction in La Asuncion. Here you can enjoy sweets made in an old-fashioned way such as Pan Aliñado (seasoned bread), Rosquillas (ring-shaped pastry), and Cocadas (a macaroon made with milk and coconut).

Close to the cathedral and Plaza Bolivar there is a beautiful souvenir shop where you can sit, relax and enjoy a nice cup of coffee.

**EL VALLE**

- La Restinga National Park
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Museo Marino  
Hiking in the mountains  
Coche Island  
Tropical Labyrinth  
La Asuncion  
El Valle  
Pampatar  
Juan Griego  
Los Frailes  
Conejeros Market  
shopping in Porlamar

The town of El Valle is known for its church, and for La Virgen del Valle (the Virgin of the Valley).

La Virgen del Valle is the patron saint of eastern Venezuela and the Navy. On September 8th, we celebrate her holiday with a massive procession in her honor.

Many people from all over the country come to the island just for this day.

The current church was finished in 1940.

The parishioners come throughout the year to visit the Virgin in her sanctuary.

The Diocesan Museum is located next to the church. Here you can admire all the offerings from the parishioners, the dresses of the Virgin, objects belonging to the church and paintings containing numerous depictions of the Virgin Mary and some of her miracles.

The museum is open from 9.00 a.m. to 12 pm, and from 2.00 p.m. until 5.00 p.m.

Tel: 0295 287 07 10
Also in El Valle, you can find La Casa del General Santiago Mariño, the home of General Santiago Mariño who was a hero of the Venezuelan War of Independence. It is a beautiful colonial house that contains a variety of colonial furniture, paintings of the time, and classic objects from this period in Venezuelan history. The museum is only open in the morning.

You can easily get to El Valle from La Asuncion if you take the road through the mountains. It is a beautiful route that gives you an outstanding view of the city of Porlamar.

**PAMPATAR**

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

Pampatar is an old fishing town that every day is constantly expanding closer and closer to Porlamar.

Today, Pampatar’s colonial houses have become businesses, restaurants, clubs, and bars. Nowadays, it is the fashionable place for clubbing or enjoying a nice drink.

The main landmark in Pampatar is the Castillo de San Carlos de Borromeo fort which was constructed in 1684 after the previous fort was destroyed by the Dutch. It was completely restored in 1968. It is one of the better preserved forts in the country. You can visit the fort from 8.00 am. to 12.00 pm., and from 2.00 pm. to 6.00 pm.
La Iglesia del Cristo del Buen Viaje church stands behind the fort. The cross above the altar is worshipped by the fishermen of Pampatar.

La Casa de la Aduana is located next to the church. Casa de la Aduana was the former Palace of Government.

You are always guaranteed a nice view of Pampatar Bay. At the end of the town, in La Caranta, there is a small beach called Playa Juventud, where you can spend a pleasant afternoon.

The Cinematheque (Film Library) was built in Pampatar last year. Here you can watch nice art house films, or documentaries from all over the world.

**JUAN GRIEGO**

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

Juan Griego is a small city in the north of the island that, like Porlamar, is also dependent on commerce to support its economy.

There are many shops with very attractive prices in Juan Griego. It is said that the city was named after a shipwrecked Greek man who managed to swim to the coast. The view of the bay is simply just amazing, and very romantic.

Watching the sunset at the Fortin de La Galera fort is one of the highlights of a holiday on Margarita
Island. We all have pictures of ourselves sitting on one of its cannons.

At El Fortin de La Galera, children from Juan Griego will offer to tell you the story behind El Fortin for a small tip. The narration is quite fast but very interesting to hear.

Many tourists enjoy eating at one of the restaurants located on the bay so that they can enjoy the last of the sunset. The quality of the meals has declined lately, but you can always have a cold beer or a nice cocktail.

**LO S F R A I L E S**

- La Restinga National Park
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Los Frailes is a group of seven islands located just off Playa El Agua.

There is almost no population on Los Frailes. Nevertheless, some companies offer one-day excursions to the islands for snorkeling and scuba diving.

The boats leave from Playa El Tirano in the morning and they return very early in the evening. Lunch, beverages, and all equipment are included. It is also possible to rent a sail boat for this excursion.
The one-day tour can be booked at any travel agency on Margarita. Our students have been booking the excursion for many years with Fany Jaimes from Rosalia Tours. She is a very nice, kind and responsible lady. Tel 0416 695 86 76.

CONEJEROS MARKET

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar

Conejeros Market (Mercado de Conejeros) is located on Avenida Juan Bautista Arismendi. At weekends it is frequented by a large number of tourists and locals.

The market opens very early in the morning, and closes at 2.00 p.m.

The market comprises of three wings. In the first one you can buy groceries such as fruit, vegetables and fresh fish. The second wing houses typical food stands. Here you can enjoy the famous arepas and empanadas. There are also restaurants that serve typical food from the
island. And, you can buy clothing, shoes, accessories, and souvenirs in the third wing of the market.

The fruits and vegetables sold at Conejeros Market are very fresh.

SHOPPING IN PORLAMAR

- La Restinga National Park
- Horse Riding in Macanao
- Museo Marino
- Hiking in the mountains
- Coche Island
- Tropical Labyrinth
- La Asuncion
- El Valle
- Pampatar
- Juan Griego
- Los Frailes
- Conejeros Market
- shopping in Porlamar
actually the capital.

The city has approx. 350,000 inhabitants and was originally established in 1536 as Pueblo de la Mar. It emerged as a commercial center when foreign traders began buying pearls here in the 19th century.

The island was declared a free trade zone in the seventies, which is why Porlamar has the most importers.

The city centre is chaotic, dirty, loud and rather run-down.

In recent years, trade has relocated to the lovely shopping malls located towards Pampatar.

Nowadays tourists do their shopping in the Sambil Shopping mall. Additional large shopping malls are planned for the coming years, all located outside Porlamar.

The best streets in Porlamar, 4 de Mayo and Santiago Marino, do still provide a good range of textiles and brand-name products at low prices.

It is advisable to always keep a careful eye on your valuables and bags in Porlamar.

**LEISURE**

- Shopping
- culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

There are many different ways of spending your free time on Margarita Island. Special events are always listed in the local press, such as the El Sol de Margarita.

Many tourists and locals spend their leisure time at shopping centers such as Sambil. Sambil is a massive mall where you can find movie theaters, travel agencies, famous brand shops, a food court, bars, and even a bingo hall.

The new and even bigger La Vela mall has recently been built near the Hilton Hotel.

There is also a wide range of cultural activities. At the Pampatar Cinematheque (film library), you can watch a different Latin American film every day. Films are also shown on Mondays at 7:00 pm at Libreria Kuaimere on Avenida Aldonza Manrique in the Playa El Angel area.

Porlamar’s Casa de la Cultura, offers several concerts, plays, films and exhibitions. [http://www.fccvasquezbrito.com/](http://www.fccvasquezbrito.com/)
There are several bars and discotheques in Costa Azul, and there is live music in many bars and clubs at the weekend.

There are several gyms and fitness centers on the island as well, tennis clubs, yoga lessons, bowling, and windsurfing and kitesurfing lessons.

Many artists and painters live on Margarita Island. You can always drop by their studios to take a look at the exhibitions that they often arranged.

On this website we will provide you some suggestions and tips on how to spend your leisure time while you are on Margarita Island

**Spanish courses in Venezuela**
**Spanischkurse in Südamerika**

**SHOPPING**

- Shopping
- culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

**Shopping:**

There are several supermarkets on the island where you can purchase almost everything you need. Many supermarket products are imported.

**Hypermarkets:**

Central Madeirense: on Avenida Bolivar close to Playa Caracola. It is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Sigo La Proveeduria and Sigo Home Market: on Avenida Juan Bautista Arismendi just past Mercado de Conejeros (approx. 1 km away). It is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Makro: on the road to El Valle. It is a wholesale supermarket and is open Monday to Sunday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Supermarkets:**

Sigo: in Sambil Mall, and sells all the products you might need. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Central Madeirense: in the Centro Comercial Jorge Coll shopping mall, Avenida Antonio José de Sucre, Jorge Coll.
Rattan Plaza: Urbanización Playa el Ángel, Centro Comercial Rattan Plaza, Avenida Aldonza Manrique. It is open Monday to Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Unicasa: in the Centro Comercial AB on Avenida Bolívar opposite Provemed. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Rattan 4 de mayo: it is on Avenida 4 de mayo in Porlamar. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Central Guacuco: it is located at the Guacuco crossroads (Cruce de Guacuco) on Avenida 31 de Julio. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It is a small supermarket, but you can find almost anything there.

Supermercado del Campo: it is on Avenida 31 de julio in El Tirano. It is a supermarket close to the beach and sells almost everything. It is open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Bodegón Jhonny: it is on Avenida 31 de Julio past the Hesperia Hotel. It is small but very well stocked.

There are many bakeries on the island that open every day. There are also liquor stores that are open in the evening, and until late night at the weekend. They sell food, drinks, and ice.

Farmatodo: it is on Avenida Aldonza Manrique in Playa el Angel. It is a 24-24- hour pharmacy and drugstore.

**Shopping Centers:**

There are several malls, and shopping centers on the island. Some of the most popular are:

Sambil Mall in Pampatar: this mall is home to very famous brand stores and shops as well as many well-known restaurants. There are banks, call centers, supermarkets (Sigo Supermarket), amongst others. It is open from 12:00 pm. to 9:30 pm.
La Vela Mall: it is on Avenida Bolivar. It opened in December 2009. Contains many well-known shops and stores, restaurants, banks, cafe, and clubs.

Rattan Plaza: it is the smallest shopping center in the Playa El Angel area. Rattan Supermarket is located here as well as Ekipa. The shopping center also has banks, travel agencies, a gym, restaurants, and clubs.

Centro Comercial La Redoma: it is located in Los Robles. As well as shops, there are also fast food restaurants, a gym and banks.

Centro Comercial AB: it is on Avenida Bolivar. Here you can find the Unicasa supermarket, Tecnibooks bookshop, a notary’s office, several doctor’s surgeries, a bakery, etc.

Centro Comercial Provemed: it is on Avenida Bolivar. Here you will find a Provemed drugstore, a bakery, travel agencies, and the Conferry office.

There are several different small shopping centers in every neighborhood with a small supermarket, bakery and pharmacy.

In Porlamar, there are many very reasonable priced stores on the Avenida 4 de Mayo, and Avenida Santiago Mariño boulevards.

In Mercado de Conejeros, you can find different fresh foods, beach goods, and you can also sample the local food in the restaurants next to the market.

**CULTURE**

- Shopping
- culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

Culture:

Isla de Margarita offers a wide variety of cultural options. For up to date information, we recommend that you consult *El Sol de Margarita* (local newspaper) on Friday as this is when the cultural schedule is published. Some local cultural organizations with monthly timetable of events are:

**Casa de la Cultura RVB**: it is located on the way to the former airport in Porlamar.

**Cinemateca de Pampatar**: it screens arthouse films in the evenings, and at weekends.

Casa de la Cultura de la Asunción: it is opposite Plaza Bolivar in la Asuncion. Cultural events are sometimes held here.

Librería Kuaimare: it is on Avenida Aldonza Manrique in the Playa El Angel residential area. They have all kinds of books, and new publications are sometimes, launched here.
Librería Tecnibooks: it is located in Centro Comercial AB. It is a bookshop with trendy books, and new publications are sometimes launched here.

NIGHTLIFE

- Shopping
- Culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

The island's nightlife is constantly changing. Venues open and close all the time so the nightlife is always different. Most bars and clubs open from Thursday to Saturday, and the party starts late at around 10:30 p.m. or 11:00 p.m.

During high season (Christmas, Easter, July and August) the island gets very crowded and busy.

There are casinos in Macanao Hotel (formerly the Hilton Hotel) in Costa Azul and in Alhambra Hotel on Avenida Santiago Mariño. Even if you are not very interested in gambling, the bar is quite pleasant and there are sometimes live shows.

Bingo is also another popular activity among the local people. There are many bingo halls on Avenida 4 de Mayo in Porlamar, and there is one bingo hall in Sambil Mall.

Movie Theaters: there are several movie theaters in Sambil Mall.

Clubs and Discos: (we will name just a few)

Santo Coyote: it is a new venue in La Vela Mall on Avenida Bolivar.

British Bulldog: an English pub right here on the island. It is a great place for listening to live rock music played by local bands. It is the best place to go on Saturdays. It is located in the Centro Comercial Costa Azul on Avenida Bolivar.
Opah: it is a place to remember the 1980's in the Centro Comercial Costa Azul on Avenida Bolivar.

Auyama Café: it is a small bar/restaurant with a great vibe at weekend. It is located in the Centro Comercial Bayside, Costa Azul.

LiBar: it is a place with a V.I.P. environment. They have live music at weekends. It is in Centro Comercial Costa Azul on Avenida Bolivar.

Stigma: it is a disco mostly frequented by young people on Avenida Joaquín Maneiro in Pampatar.

Beach Bar: a bar right on the beach opposite Flamingo Hotel in the La Caranta area in Pampatar. There are also other nice places at the same location like Latitud, Guayoyo cafe and Mikonos

SPORTS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Shopping
- culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

Sports and Outdoor Activities

Windsurfing and Kitesurfing: you can practice these two water sports at Playa El Yaque, and on Coche Island.
Tennis: Tennis Club in Jorge Coll. There are tennis courts in the Macanao Hotel (former Hilton Hotel), and in Lagunamar Hotel in Pampatar.

Yoga: Ricardo Iglesias teaches yoga in the afternoons in the Hippocampus Hotel in Pampatar. Tel 0412 3595136

Jogging and walking: Playa Caracola is closed vehicles every day from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. and from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. so that people can jog and exercise. The beach is 2 km long.

Gyms: there are several well equipped gyms in the following places: Centro Comercial Bayside in Costa Azul, Rattan Plaza in Playa El Angel, and in La Redoma in Los Robles.

Surfing: you can take surfing lessons on Playa Parguito.

Swimming: there is a sports center with swimming pools in Guatamare, and there is an Olympic-size swimming pool in the Lagunamar Hotel in Pampatar.

HANDICRAFTS

- Shopping
- Culture
- Nightlife
- Sports and outdoor activities
- Handicrafts
- Museums

There are many craftspeople on Margarita Island, especially ceramicists, and painters. Some of the places where you can find crafts are:

Veneguay: it is located on Avenida 31 de Julio close to Centro Comercial Paraguachí. They make and sell beautiful original pieces of craftwork.
Arte Senges: William Senges is a famous local artist who sells pieces of craftwork, and paintings in El Salado on Avenida 31 de Julio. Along the main roads, there are stalls where you can buy hammocks.

El Cercado: it is a small town on the way to Juan Griego. In El Cercado, it is possible to find pottery made in the same way as in colonial times. There is a shop in the town.

Santa Ana: in the town of Santa Ana, there is a whole industry centered on hammock production. They are sold around the island. There are several shops on the road. The hammocks might look a little bit expensive, but you have to take into account that they are handmade and it takes several days to make just one.

La Casa de las Muñecas (The House of Dolls): this is the place to find a typical Venezuelan doll. It is located on Avenida 31 de Julio, past Cocheima gas station.

MUSEUMS

- Shopping
- culture
- Nightlife
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- Museums

Museums

The main appeal of the island is its beautiful nature and beaches. There are also some interesting little museums that you can visit on a sunny day. Most of them are open in the morning.

Museo del Mar: it is in Boca de Río in Península de Macanao. It is worth visiting when you visit La Restinga or if you have planned a trip to Punta Arenas. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It holds a small collection of mollusks and crustaceans and some very interesting pictures.
Museo Nueva Cádiz: it is located in La Asunción close to the cathedral. It has pictures and information about Cubagua Island (formerly known as Nueva Cádiz), the first Spanish city in South America, which was then destroyed by a seaquake. It is open in the mornings.

Museo Santiago Mariño: it is in El Valle opposite the church. The wall that protects the museum was destroyed by flooding last year. It is a colonial style house with lost of interesting antiques. It is only open in the mornings.

Museo Diocesano: it houses the offerings that people from all over Venezuela have made to Virgen del Valle (the Virgin of the Valley) It is open only in the mornings.

Pueblos de Margarita: it is located in Taguantar close to Juan Griego. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Contains a lot of information about the customs and traditions of the island.

**GASTRONOMY**

- Caney de Felo
- Restaurant list
- Hallacas
- Pastel del chucho
- Bakery San Juan Bosco
- Cheese
- Casa de Ruben
- Arepas and empanadas

The main local food produced on the island is different kinds of fish, shellfish, tomatoes (Margarita tomato), and Creole chili peppers. As Margarita's climate is quite warm and dry, agriculture is not an easy task. Most of the fruit and vegetables come from mainland, which of course leads to a cost increase due to transportation.

There are some farmers on the island who produce herbs, lettuce and soy, amongst other things, using hydroponic methods. There is also a farm where goat's cheese is produced.

There is a wide variety of imported products in the supermarkets as Margarita is a duty free port.

In Porlamar there are several delicatessen stores such as Byblos where you can get Lebanese and Greek products, and the el Bodegon Italiano shop where you can buy authentic Italian products. Both of these shops are located on Avenida 4 de Mayo in Porlamar.

In Pampatar, next to Trimar Restaurant, there are two large fish shops that always have fresh fish for a reasonable price. The best time to buy fish is on a week day morning. They will clean your fish if you offer a small tip.

Venezuelan's love beef. Venezuelan parrilla (barbecue) is every bit as good as the Argentinean parrilla. There several good places on the island where you can enjoy a delicious parrilla.

On almost every corner, you can find fruit vans, and kiosks where you can enjoy a nice natural tropical fruit juice.

Venezuelan rum is a top-quality product, and also not very expensive. The best rum brands are Cacique,
Santa Teresa, Pampero, and Diplomatico.

Typical Venezuelan food consists of dishes made with corn flour (Harina P.A.N) such as empanadas with different fillings, arepas and hallacas (typical Christmas meal made with yellow corn flour filled with beef stew, and wrapped in banana leaves).

Cachapas are also made with corn. Cachapas are a type of large crepe served with local white cheese. On Avenida 31 de Julio, the road that goes to Playa El Agua, there are several restaurants that specialize in cachapas and cocadas (coconut-based drink).

In terms of plantains you will find tostones, which are made with green plantains, and tajadas made from ripe plantains. Venezuelan view salads as a necessary evil, do not get your hopes up as these side orders will not be anything special in most small restaurants.

On most beaches, there are restaurants serving great fish and shellfish menus. It is advisable to ask for the menu in advance in order to compare the prices of the different restaurants.

There are gourmet restaurants in the island's five-star hotels, in the Sambil shopping mall, and in the town of Pampatar.

There are also some very reasonable prices fancy restaurants in Porlamar that serve a wide variety of meals. However, you must be very careful at night, and always take a cab to travel around the city.

**Spanish courses in Venezuela**

**Spanischkurse in Südamerika**

**CANEY DE FELO**

- Caney de Felo
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In Venezuela, a"caney" is a kind of hut that people use for parties and social gatherings, and usually found in their gardens. At El Caney de Felo you can enjoy a delicious Venezuelan barbecue at a very low price.

We especially recommend the mixed grill that consists of a plate filled with beef, chicken and "morcillas" (blood sausage) with a side order of "yuca" (cassava, manioc), "hallaquitas" (corn buns) and queso de mano (typical white cheese).
You can also ask for a little bit of everything: fried yuca, hallaquitas, queso de mano, nata (cream), morcilla carupanera and of course meat. They also sell barbecue chicken to eat in or to take away.

El Caney de Felo is open every day at noon and in the evening. It is located on the road that runs from Los Robles to La Asuncion.

Guasacaca (typical Venezuelan barbecue sauce recipe)

- 1 small ripe avocado chopped thinly
- 2 small tomatoes chopped in small cubes
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 small pepper chopped in small cubes
- Chopped coriander
- 2 cloves of garlic chopped
- Salt and pepper
- Oil, vinegar, and 1 aji dulce (Venezuelan chili) for those who like spicy food.

Mix together all the ingredient, and then let the mixture sit in the fridge for a few hours.

RESTAURANT LIST

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Restaurants:

There are numerous restaurants on Margarita. Here you can find a selection of what we consider to be the best places to enjoy a meal.
Sushihana: Sushi restaurant in Sambil Mall.

Casa Caranta: a fusion restaurant on Avenida Joaquín Maneiro next to La Galera furniture shop in Pampatar.


La Gondola Pizzería: Italian restaurant on Avenida Joaquín Maneiro in Pampatar.

Dolphin Restaurant: Italian and international cuisine on Avenida Aldonza Manrique in the Playa El Angel residential area in Pampatar. It is closed on Sundays.

La Casa de la Langosta (Lobster House): their specialty is lobster. It is on Avenida 4 de Mayo in Porlamar.

Byblos: a Lebanese restaurant that serves homemade food at noon from Monday to Saturday. It is located on Avenida 4 de Mayo in Porlamar.

**El Caney de Felo**: a family restaurant specializing in barbecue. It is on the road to La Asuncion in Los Robles. The food is great, and the prices are reasonable.

Pizzería La Romana: a pizza place in Centro Comercial Costa Azul on Avenida Bolivar.

La Melansana (vegetarian Restaurant): home made vegetarian food in Jorge Coll. It opens at noon.

**La Casa de Ruben**: Ruben Santiago is a well-known chef on the island. His restaurant is on Avenida Santiago Mariño in Porlamar.

La Popular Rosenda: a seafood restaurant on Playa Manzanillo. It opens at noon and serves home cooking. Prices are low.

El Rocoto: it is a Peruvian restaurant in the Centro Comercial Caribbean Mall next to La Vela Mall on Avenida Bolivar.

**HALLACAS**

- Caney de Felo
- Restaurant list
Hallaca is the typical Christmas Venezuelan dish. Just like arepas and empanadas. Hallacas are made with the same dough (from cornmeal).

Hallacas represent the mixed races that gave rise to the Venezuelan people. The native ingredients are corn, and annatto; the African ingredient is plantain leaves (used for wrapping the hallaca), and the European ingredients are the ones used in the preparation of the stew, and in the decoration: olives, capers, and bell peppers. Unfortunately, we only make hallacas from November to January.

Its preparation requires the participation of the whole family since it is a process that involves a lot of hard work.

On this website, we offer one of the hundreds of recipes for making Hallacas:

Ingredients for the stew (30 hallacas)

2 kg chopped beef  
1 kg cooked and shredded chicken (keep the broth)  
6 chopped onions  
4 chopped leeks  
100 g brown sugar  
4 chopped bell peppers  
1 can of tomato purée  
500 ml sweet red wine  
Corn oil, sugar, salt, and pepper

Making

The stew should be made one day in advance as it needs to be completely cool and settled. Heat a little bit of oil in a pot; add the onions, leek, bell pepper and sugar. When it caramelizes, add the beef. Once the beef has changed color add the wine and the tomato purée. Pour in some of the chicken broth, salt and pepper, and cook for an hour and a half. Add the chicken, and let it stand in the fridge until the following day.

Ingredients for making the dough:

2 kg Corn flour (Harina P.A.N.)  
5 lt of liquids (broth and water)  
Salt  
Annatto (dissolved in hot oil and strained)

Making:

Salt the liquid, then add the annatto and the cornmeal. Knead it well until the dough is smooth. Let it stand for 5 minutes.

For the decoration:
500 g raisins
4 sliced onions
500 g green stuffed olives
4 sliced red bell peppers
200 g capers
200 g almonds

Plantain leaves for wrapping, and thread for tying.

Place a ball of dough on one of the oiled plantain leaves, flatten it, and then add a tablespoon of the stew, complete with decoration, and wrap it up as if it was a gift. Wrap it again with another bigger leaf, and tie it with the thread.

Boil for 30 minutes, take it out, and leave it to drain. It can be served immediately or stored in the fridge. They last for two weeks.

PASTEL DEL CHUCHO

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Pastel de Chucho is one of the typical foods of Margarita and Coche islands. It is a Caribbean dish that delicately combines sweet and salty flavors. It is a sort of lasagna made up of fried plantains (tajadas), and fish stew with chili pepper (aji dulce) and annatto (onoto).

Next, we will introduce to you a variation of the original recipe that incorporates bechamel sauce, cheese, and potatoes.

But first, we must prepare the fish stew using ray or school shark as they are fish with firm, greasy white meat:

Ray or school shark stew

You will need:
- 1 kilogram of ray or school shark, cooked and flaked
- Chicken or fish broth
- 2 chopped onions
- 6 chopped chili peppers (aji dulce)
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- Annatto (onoto), salt, and pepper.

First of all, lightly fry the garlic, onions and chili pepper lightly. Combine the onoto, the fish, and the broth in a pot, and then cook until the liquid has been reduced. Finally, add salt and pepper.

Now to make our Pastel de Chucho:

You will need:
- Ray or school shark stew
- 4 ripe sliced and fried plantains
- 3 cooked and sliced potatoes
- Bechamel sauce (butter, flour, salt, pepper, and milk)
- American cheese slices

First, grease an oven tray (e.g. Pyrex dish). Add one layer of plantain, one of cheese, fish, bechamel sauce, and then another layer of plantain, bechamel sauce, and cheese.

Bake for 30 minutes at 180 °C. Serve when it is still hot.

This is one of the recipes that we make in our **Venezuelan cookery course** in CELA on Margarita Island.

**BAKERY SAN JUAN BOSCO**

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- Arepas and empanadas

Panadería San Juan Bosco is located in La Asunción just a few meters away from Plaza Bolívar. It is one of the oldest bakeries on the island.
It was established in 1946. Here it is still possible to enjoy typical sweets from yesteryear such as cocada (coconut macaroon), rosquillas (a sort of donut), golfeados, alfajores, turrones de coco (nougat like candy), suspiros etc.

Pan de Leche, Pan Aliñado and Pan Salado are this bakery's specialties. They have opened a branch on Avenida Santiago Mariño in Porlamar.

Golfeados

Turrones de coco

CHEESE

- Caney de Felo
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- Casa de Ruben
- Arepas and empanadas
On Margarita Island, as in the rest of the country, you will have the chance to try delicious fresh cheese (queso blanco) that is creamy, soft, and mild. It is a non aged white cheese that is made by pressing the whey from cottage cheese.

You can find the freshest quesos blancos on the island at Central Madeirense Supermarket on Avenida Bolivar. The street vendor is there every day from 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.

A few of the best quesos blancos are:

**Queso de Mano**: (picture) it is a small round cheese (similar to mozzarella). It is quite firm with a little saltiness and sourness. It must be eaten almost immediately after buying it because the flavour will change if it is refrigerated.

**Queso de Telita**: it is very similar to queso de mano but this one is softer and a little more sour. It is delicious with arepas, cachapas, or sweet corn buns.

**Queso Palmita**: it is a low-salt white cheese. It is brick shaped, and quite firm. You must keep it refrigerated so that it will last for several days.

**Queso Palmizulia**: it is just like queso palmita but harder and saltier. You must keep it refrigerated so that it will last for several days.

**Queso Blanco Duro**: it is salty and hard. It can last for a long time and is grated to complement other dishes.

**Queso Paisa**: it is a mass produced white cheese, low in fat and salt, which can be found sliced at any supermarket.

**Queso Guayanés**: Guayanes cheese is quite sour. It can be refrigerated for several days.

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**CASA DE RUBEN**

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La Casa de Ruben is one of the best restaurants on Margarita Island. It is located at the end of Santiago Mariño Avenue in Porlamar and is only open for lunch. Opening hours are from 11:30 a.m. until approx. 4:00 p.m. The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

The dishes are created by renowned chef Ruben Santiago and are all prepared using the finest produce from the island. The stuffed Calamares, the Pastel de Chucho and the Ensalada de Catalana are all highly recommended. The prices are very affordable.
AREPAS AND EMPANADAS

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Arepas and Empanadas

Arepa is Venezuelan bread. It is made with cornmeal (Harina P.A.N.), water, and salt. The secret is in the kneading of the dough to give the right consistency for making the perfect arepa.

Arepas can be fried or grilled in a budare which is a kind of round griddle.

The best stuffed arepas on the island are undoubtedly those made by Familia Moya. The Moya’s arepa bakeries are open only in the mornings, and they also own three restaurants. One arepera is in Mercado
de Conejeros, another one beneath the stairwell in the Centro Comercial La Redoma in Los Robles, and the third on Avenida 31 de Julio in El Salado.

Empanadas are made with the same dough, but they have a half-moon shape. They are fried in oil. They can be bought on any street corner, or on any beach.

It is typical Venezuelan fast food.

ACCOMMODATION

- House with pool in Guacuco

There are a wide variety of hotels, inns, and apartments on the island that you can rent for your holidays.

Normally, if you are visiting from Europe, or North America, you can get a full tourist package that includes plane tickets as well as all inclusive accommodation for a good price.

There are a large number of inns and small family run hotels on Margarita Island that are very cozy and warm. As there is a considerable difference in the quality of the service at different hotels, we advise you to find the correct information and ask for references before you make and pay for a reservation.

The number of apartments for rent is also quite large. The prices do not vary much depending on the area, and the standards are very different. We also recommend that you ask the owners everything you need to know about the property.
The high season on Margarita is in December, at Easter, and between July and August. Make your reservation in advance.

You can book [hotels on Margarita Island](http://www.trivago.co.uk) through trivago:

**Spanish courses in Venezuela**

**Spanischkurse in Südamerika**

**SPANISH COURSES**

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
- Levels and content of the Spanish course
- Spanish course registration

[Cela Spanish Language School](http://www.cela.com) has been providing intensive and comprehensive Spanish courses on Margarita Island since 1997. The [Spanish School](http://www.spanishschool.com) is a small and familiar place, and it is located in the Playa El Angel area, one of the most beautiful and peaceful areas on the island.

At CELA we offer 6 different levels from Beginners to Advanced. The school is also an official examination center for the [DIE (International Spanish Diploma)](http://www.die.com). The [Spanish lessons](http://www.spanishlessons.com) take place in small groups with a maximum of seven students, but private lessons can also be arranged.

The lessons are taught from Monday to Friday between 8.30 a.m. and 1.00 p.m.

We also offer Spanish courses for specific purposes such as medicine, law, business and tourism.

In addition, the school organizes free trips three days per week for all students to the most beautiful beaches and locations on Margarita Island. Salsa and [cookery lessons](http://www.cookerylessons.com) are also offered.
Additionally accommodation can be arranged with a local host family close to the school, in studio apartments or in holiday homes.

The school is open all year round.

For further information about the school and the Spanish courses, check out the CELA home page http://cela-ve.com

And to view pictures of the school and the excursions, please go to http://celaspanishschool.myphotoalbum.com

Cela Spanish School
Calle Corocoro Qta. Cela
Urbanizacion Playa El Angel
Pampatar
Tel 0058 295 262 81 98
Cell phone 0058 412 3533124

Spanish courses in Venezuela
Spanischkurse in Südamerika

SPANISH COURSES

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CELA (Centro de Lingüística Aplicada) offers Spanish courses in six different levels from A1 to C2 Level in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR).

Spanish courses are arranged in small groups of students with a maximum of seven students per level. All courses can also be taught in private Spanish lessons if the learner requires it. Spanish classes take place from Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Alongside the Spanish course, the school also offers Spanish courses for specific purposes in the following fields: medicine, commerce, law, and tourism. We can also arrange an internship in a local company.

CELA Spanish School also provides teacher training courses for Spanish teachers several times per year. The courses focus mainly on didactic aspects, and on the methodology of teaching Spanish as a
foreign language.

Once the students have completed the Spanish course, they can take the DIE examination (Diploma Internacional de Español). This examination is recognized by the department for Spanish language and regional studies of the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca in Spain.

Additionally, the school offers extra curricular activities and organizes accommodation for students with local host families.

A Spanish course at CELA is a good opportunity to combine learning the Spanish language with a vacation in the Caribbean.

For further information, please contact us: http://cela-ve.com

Or call us: 0058 295 262 81 98/ 0058 412 353 31 24

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
- Levels and content of the Spanish course
- Spanish course registration

CELASpanish School on Isla Margarita offers its students an interesting and wide program of excursions and activities, all of which are included with the Spanish course. There are afternoon trips to the most beautiful beaches, and landmarks on the island three times per week after Spanish lessons are finished for the day.

Some of the places that we visit are:

Parque Nacional Laguna de La Restinga
Laberinto Tropical
Playa Parquito
Playa el Agua
Playa Zaragoza
Playa Manzanillo
La Asunción
Playa el Yaque
Playa Caribe
Conejeros Market
Hiking
The newest member of the school staff: Violeta the Van

On Saturdays, CELA offers a Venezuelan cookery class for all students

http://cela-ve.com/espanol/curso_de_cocina.html

There are free Salsa lessons for any level of ability on Friday afternoons

Trips and activities available for a surcharge:

Isla de Coche
Excursion to Los Frailes
Horseriding in Macanao

For more information, please visit http://cela-ve.com

To view pictures of the school and the excursions, please go to
http://celaspanishschool.myphotoalbum.com
SPANISH SCHOOL, TEACHERS AND COURSES

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
- Levels and content of the Spanish course
- Spanish course registration

Spanish school, teachers, and courses

CELA (Centro de Lingüística Aplicada) on Margarita Island was established in 1997 by Sabine Loffler (1965). Loffler is the daughter of German immigrants, an arts graduate, a Doctor in Hispanic Philology certified by UNED. She also holds a Master’s in distance learning, and she is currently doing a specialization in adult learning.

Before opening the school, Loffler worked as a Spanish teacher at different universities in Germany.

The Spanish school is small and very informal, with a cordial and friendly environment. CELA is situated in a beautiful house in the Playa El Angel residential area, one of the quietest locations on Isla Margarita.

There are five classrooms, two of them with air conditioning, and three open classrooms with fans. There is a kitchen with coffee, tea and drinking water for all our students.

Our students aged between 18 to 70+ and come from all countries of the world.

It is very rewarding to see people who would never have met if they had not to come to CELA, becoming friends in spite of the cultural, regional, and even age differences.
Our teachers are between 25 and 45 years old. They are all graduates, and have completed pedagogical studies. The lessons are entirely in Spanish except for the beginners' level where the students' mother tongue is used for the first days of the course.

The content of the Spanish course is oriented towards the students' needs and interests, taking into consideration different kinds of learning processes. The main approach we use in our lessons is the communicative approach, although we also make use of grammar as a key tool. Both the content and the progression of the course are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and the curriculum of the Instituto Cervantes.

Although we take Venezuelan cultural and social aspects into account, we do emphasize the learning of Spanish as an international language.

Once a month, all teachers get together at school to do a workshop and discuss aspects of the methodology of the Spanish as a Foreign Language teaching. This keeps us up to date with new trends in teaching.

We work through different everyday situations in the classroom once the students have attained an appropriate level of Spanish that enables them to relate to Latin-American culture.

For more information about the courses, and starting dates: http://cela-ve.com

CELA also offers some online Spanish lessons and tests on http://cela-ve.com/moodle

SPANISH COURSE ACCOMMODATION

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
- Levels and content of the Spanish course
- Spanish course registration

Spanish Course Accommodation
CELA Spanish School arranges accommodation for its students with a local host family close to the school. The host families have been with us since the school opened for the first time, and some new families have joined us over the years.

Venezuelan people are incredibly welcoming and tolerant of other cultures and nationalities. They love to chat and exchange opinions and points of view. Host families offer a room with a private bathroom, air conditioning, and two meals: breakfast, and dinner.

This form of accommodation is the best way to complement your Spanish lessons in the morning, as it gives you the opportunity to practice speaking the language. They are all middle class families, and they only speak Spanish.

It is the best opportunity to get to know Venezuela, its people and its customs.

**LEVELS AND CONTENT OF THE SPANISH COURSE**

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
- Levels and content of the Spanish course
- Spanish course registration

**Levels and Content of the Spanish Course**

After receiving your registration form, the school will send you a short placement test in order to know which level of teaching is best suited to your needs.
Level A1 (Beginners):

This course is intended for students with no previous knowledge of the Spanish language. It is quite comprehensive as it deals with the basis of Spanish grammatical structures. The content is: pronunciation, gender and number, verbs “ser” and “estar”, regular and irregular verbs of the present tense, the present participle (Gerundio), the future with “ir a”, and some of the basic verbs in the past tense. Everyday vocabulary is also taught on this course. Once the learner has completed the course, they will be able to: give and receive basic information, speak about their daily routine in Present Tense, buy and order in a restaurant, speak about themselves, book a trip, etc.

Level A2 (Intermediate A):

This course is designed for students with a basic understanding of the language and essential vocabulary who are not familiar with the past tense. The content is: the past tenses (indefinido, imperfecto) and their usages, the future, the conditional, the imperative with pronouns and prepositions and its application in everyday life. Once the learner has completed the course, they will be able to: speak about past actions and activities, give and receive orders, ask for permission, speak about future plans, give pieces of advice, make conjecture, etc. They will also be able to explain simple situations, as well as read and write straightforward texts in Spanish while making mistakes typical for this level.

Level B1 (Intermediate B):

This course is aimed at students with a wider knowledge of most of the Spanish tenses but who require revision and depth to their studies. The students will review the most important tenses, and they will work on the widening of their vocabulary. Intermediate texts will be discussed, and the subjunctive mood will be introduced. Once the students have completed the course, they will be able to: manage themselves properly in common life situations, express opinions about politics, society, culture, and leisure time.

Level B2 (Advanced)

Students at this point know and have a good command of Spanish grammar and they wish to improve their fluency and command of the language. Common mistakes and errors are worked on in this level through small projects that emulate everyday situations such as planning a trip, writing a letter of complaint, going to a job interview, planning a party, making an oral presentation about their country, and so on. Once the students have completed the course, they will have improved Spanish fluency and knowledge of Hispanic culture.

Level C1 and C2 (Superior):

At this level, students have a great command of the Spanish language; the content of the course is agreed upon with the students according to their needs, interests, skills, and cognitive styles. The lessons will deal more with writing texts, reading and understanding opinion, and literary texts.

All skills are practiced in all levels: listening, writing, reading, and speaking. In Level A1, acquisition and function of the language is paramount in order to allow a better and more creative oral performance in the future. This usually happens after the first week of the course.

In order to make things easier, before and after the Spanish course, CELA offers online lessons to all those interested in working on the language at http://cela-ve.com/moodle

It is also possible to take Spanish for specific purposes courses in medicine, law, commerce, and tourism with the option of undertaking an internship in a local company.
Courses for non-native Spanish teachers are offered at CELA several times per year [http://cela-ve.com/espanol/seminario_para_profesores_de_espaol_como_lengua_etranjera.html](http://cela-ve.com/espanol/seminario_para_profesores_de_espaol_como_lengua_etranjera.html).

On the cultural side there are Venezuelan cookery and Salsa lessons.

**SPANISH COURSE REGISTRATION**

- Spanish courses
- Leisure activities
- Spanish school, teachers and courses
- Spanish course accommodation
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- Spanish course registration

**Spanish Courses, Registration, and Information**

Please, send any questions to CELA: info@cela-ve.com
Or visit [http://cela-ve.com](http://cela-ve.com)

All those interested in the Spanish course who already speak the language can start on any Monday of the year. Those who are beginners will have to do it on the dates scheduled. Please check [http://cela-ve.com/espanol/fechas_de_inicio.html](http://cela-ve.com/espanol/fechas_de_inicio.html)

If you wish to start on a different date, please check with the school. Changes can be made depending on the season.

The registration form can be found on [http://cela-ve.com/espanol/inscripcion.html](http://cela-ve.com/espanol/inscripcion.html)

Once we have received your registration form, we will send you a confirmation e-mail with and invoice attached, and a placement test in case you have previous knowledge of the Spanish language.

If you like us to pick you up at the airport, please check the relevant box in the registration form. The school can also help you to book domestic flights.