

EUROPE · WINTER SPORTS · MOUNTAINS · HIKING · ADVENTURE



Andorra

This 468 km² Pyrenean co-principality between France and Spain squeezes more than 200 km of pistes, Romanesque chapels and high glacial lakes into a handful of steep valleys. Winter revolves around Grandvalira's slopes; summer brings wildflower hikes between mountain refuges. Low-tax shopping in Andorra la Vella and Escaldes surprises many first-timers.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Andorra and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 10 December 2025.

 CAPITAL Andorra la Vella	 CURRENCY Euro (EUR) £1 ≈ €1.19	 LANGUAGE Catalan, Spanish French, Portuguese	 BEST TIME Dec–Mar, Jul–Aug
 DAILY BUDGET £70–£280 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h 10m direct to BCN ~£60–£230 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Andorra is a co-principality of fewer than 90,000 people in the eastern Pyrenees, headed jointly by the Bishop of Urgell and the President of France. Everything follows the Valira rivers: the main road climbs from the Spanish border at Sant Julià de Lòria through the conjoined towns of Andorra la Vella and Escaldes-Engordany, then forks north to La Massana and Ordino or east over the 2,408-metre Port d'Envalira to Pas de la Casa and France. Most visitors base themselves in one valley for a week of skiing or walking, or treat the country as a two-day detour on a Pyrenees road trip.

The season decides the trip. From December to April the Grandvalira and Pal Arinsal slopes fill with Spanish, French and British skiers, and lift passes, lessons and hotels are priced accordingly. Summer is calmer and cheaper: waymarked trails link staffed and unstaffed refuges, and glacial lakes such as Tristaina lie within an easy morning's walk of the road. Shops in the capital sell electronics, perfume, alcohol and tobacco under low indirect taxes, though bargains are less dramatic than legend suggests. Expect apartment blocks and traffic along the valley floor; the beauty starts a few hundred metres higher.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

ADVENTURE

Grandvalira

The Pyrenees' largest ski area links Pas de la Casa, Grau Roig, Soldeu, El Tarter, Canillo and Encamp across more than 200 km of pistes, with extensive snow-making, English-speaking ski schools and a lively après scene in Soldeu.
- 2

NATURE

Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley

A UNESCO-listed glacial valley with no paved road, climbed on foot from Escaldes. Shepherds' huts, dry-stone terraces and the remains of old iron forges line the path towards high lakes and the staffed Refugi de l'Illa.

3

SACRED SITE

Sant Joan de Caselles

Just outside Canillo, this Romanesque church has a slender Lombard bell tower, a painted Renaissance altarpiece from 1525 and a reconstructed stucco Christ in Majesty — the most rewarding of Andorra's many small Romanesque churches.

4

ARCHITECTURE

Caldea

Escaldes' thermal spa complex, opened in 1994 beneath a glass spire that dominates the town, with lagoons, saunas and outdoor pools fed by natural hot springs; ideal after a day on the slopes.

5

ADVENTURE

Comapedrosa Natural Park

The wild north-west corner around Coma Pedrosa, at 2,942 metres the country's highest summit. A long but non-technical day hike from Arinsal passes the Comapedrosa refuge and the dark Estany Negre lake.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Andorra la Vella

≈ 24,000 people

Europe's highest capital, at about 1,023 metres. The stone lanes of the Barri Antic and the 16th-century Casa de la Vall, the old parliament house, sit just above the shops of Avinguda Meritxell.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Escaldes-Engordany

≈ 15,000 people

Contiguous with the capital and home to Caldea spa and the Avinguda Carlemany shopping strip; also the trailhead for the Madriu valley, which makes it a practical summer base.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Encamp

≈ 12,000 people

A cheaper base on the road to the slopes, with the Funicamp gondola climbing to Grandvalira and the National Automobile Museum's collection of vintage cars and motorbikes.

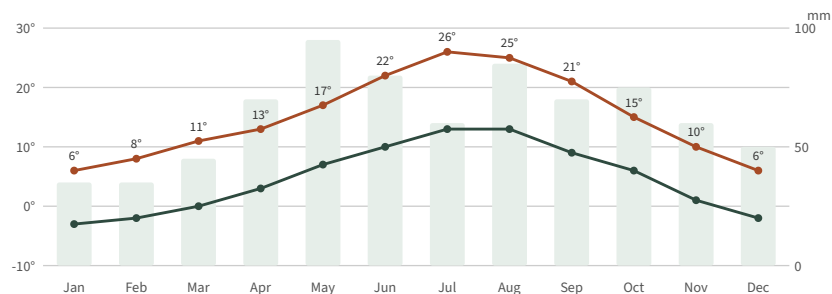
Populations are for parishes; Andorra la Vella and Escaldes-Engordany have grown into one continuous town along the Valira.

When to go to Andorra

Best time: **Dec–Mar, Jul–Aug.**

**Average climate in Andorra la Vella**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)

**Festivals & events**

Jun

Falles de Sant Joan

On midsummer's eve, 23 June, young people in Andorra la Vella and Sant Julià de Lòria whirl flaming bark torches around their heads — part of a UNESCO-listed Pyrenean fire tradition.

Aug	Festa Major d'Andorra la Vella The capital's main festival, held in early August, brings concerts, sardana dancing, fireworks and family events to the streets around the old town.
Sep	Meritxell Day Andorra's national day on 8 September honours its patron, Our Lady of Meritxell; many residents head to Ricardo Bofill's modern sanctuary near Canillo for Mass and celebrations.

How much does Andorra cost?

SHOESTRING £70 per person / day ≈ €83.33 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £140 per person / day ≈ €167 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £280 per person / day ≈ €333 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
--	---	---

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Trinxat

Mashed cabbage and potato fried into a crisp cake with garlic and strips of pork belly or bacon — hearty mountain food shared with neighbouring Cerdanya.

Escudella

A slow-cooked winter broth of meats, botifarra sausage, chickpeas and vegetables, served first as a pasta soup and then as a platter of the meat (carn d'olla).

Carn a la brasa

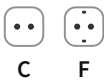
Lamb chops, botifarra and steaks grilled over wood embers in a borda, a converted stone hay barn, usually with allioli, snails and a bottle of red.

Getting around

Andorra has no airport or railway. Direct coaches run from Barcelona airport and city in roughly three to four hours, and from Toulouse in about three. Inside the country, cheap national bus lines link every parish, and ski buses serve the resorts in season. Hiring a car in Spain or France gives most freedom; carry snow chains in winter, and expect queues at the borders and the Envalira tunnel at weekends.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter

DIALLING CODE

+376

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

TIPPING

Service is generally included; rounding up or leaving 5–10% for good restaurant service is appreciated but not expected.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **116**

Fire: **118**

Police: **110**

Mountain rescue: **112**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONE

UTC+1 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the right

ETIQUETTE

Andorrans are proud of their independence and the Catalan language, so don't describe the country as Spanish or French. A 'bon dia' when entering shops goes down well, and refugees expect quiet after dark.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Josep Tarradellas Barcelona–El Prat Airport (BCN), Barcelona — across the border; Toulouse–Blagnac Airport (TLS), Toulouse — across the border

Visas & entry for Andorra

Shown for a British passport.

Check the entry requirements

Check visa requirements in France travel advice or Spain travel advice, as you'll travel through one of those countries to reach Andorra. You must meet the requirements for entry to the Schengen Area in order to enter France or Spain for onward travel to Andorra, even if you have Andorran residency.

You do not need a visa to enter Andorra.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat lyssavirus

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Andorra

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 1 Nov 2026	All Saints' Day
Tue 8 Dec 2026	Immaculate Conception
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Saint Stephen's Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day

Wed 6 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Mon 8 Feb 2027	Carnival
Sun 14 Mar 2027	Constitution Day
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Mon 17 May 2027	Pentecost Monday
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Assumption Day
Wed 8 Sep 2027	Our Lady of Meritxell

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Catalan

ENGLISH	CATALAN	SAY IT
Hello	Hola	<i>OH-lah</i>
Thank you	Gràcies	<i>GRAH-see-uhs</i>
Please	Si us plau	<i>see-oos-PLOW</i>
Excuse me	Perdoni	<i>per-DOH-nee</i>
How much is this?	Quant costa això?	<i>KWAN KOS-tuh uh-SHOH</i>

Know before you go

Your UK GHIC isn't valid in Andorra, which is outside the EU, so buy insurance that covers skiing, mountain activities and helicopter rescue; for mountain rescue, dial 112.

Andorra isn't covered by EU roaming deals, and UK networks can charge heavily for data; check your tariff before you go or buy an Andorra Telecom SIM on arrival.

Customs officers on the French and Spanish sides regularly check cars for tobacco, alcohol and electronics, and allowances are low — check the limits before stocking up.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.