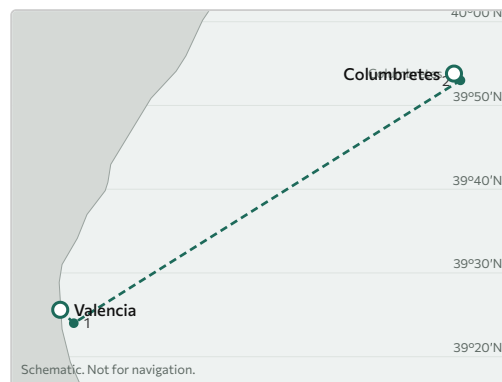


Valencia to Columbretes

About 58 nautical miles offshore to the Columbretes, a ring of volcanic islets 30 nm off the coast of Castellón, a marine reserve and nature reserve, to lie on a buoy inside the crater of Illa Grossa.

DATE	Tuesday 18 May 2027
DISTANCE	58.0 nm, 3 legs
TIME	10 h 07 min
DEPART	08:00 CEST from Valencia. 1 hour 15 minutes after sunrise (06:45 CEST).
ARRIVE	About 18:07 CEST at Columbretes. In the late afternoon, with about 3 hours of daylight in hand (sunset 21:08 CEST).
TIDES	Range about 0.1 m: no practical effect
WIND	Light to moderate in early June; a Levante or a north-easterly would make the island buoys untenable
BOAT	35 to 38 ft sailing yacht, 1.9 m draught, 6 kn under sail, 5.5 kn under engine
CREW	Skipper and 3 crew, 2 watches of 2. The night at the Columbretes needs written authorisation: see Hazards



Track and waypoints 1 to 2.

Go or no-go

Decide the evening before and confirm at 07:00 CEST. Go only if all of these hold:

- ☐ Written authorisation to use the reserve's buoys in hand, including for the night.

- ☐ Settled forecast for 36 hours: no wind above force 4 from north-east round to south, which makes the crater bay untenable, and no Mistral or Tramontana forecast reaching the area.
- ☐ Visibility 3 nm or more: ships cross between Valencia, Castellón and Barcelona.

Without authorisation or a settled forecast, go instead to Castellón or Burriana for the night (about 35 nm) and sail on to L'Ametlla de Mar the next day without the stop.

Route and waypoints

Waypoints are planning positions in open water, checked against a 1:10m coastline to be at least 1 nm off land except at the harbour ends. Distances and courses are calculated from them. Plot every one on the current chart before use. Courses are true.

#	WAYPOINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	COURSE	LEG NM	TOTAL NM	ETA	NOTES
0	Real Club Náutico de Valencia	39°25.6'N	000°19.6'W				08:00 CEST	Depart.
1	Valencia approach	39°24.0'N	000°17.5'W	135°T	2.3	2.3	08:34 CEST	South of the port. Cross the commercial port area.
2	Columbretes approach	39°53.0'N	000°42.5'E	058°T	54.6	56.9	17:40 CEST	South-east of Illa Grossa 12 nm restricted zone. Reserve on VHF 9. CHECK ON THE CHART
3	Puerto Tofiño, Illa Grossa	39°53.8'N	000°41.5'E	316°T	1.1	58.0	18:07 CEST	The buoys inside the cove. Position approximate. CHECK ON THE CHART

Tides and time

VALENCIA · TUE 18 MAY · CEST (UTC+2)

LW	02:27	0.2 m
HW	06:12	0.2 m
LW	11:43	0.1 m
HW	19:52	0.2 m

COLUMBRETES · TUE 18 MAY · CEST (UTC+2)

LW	02:33	0.2 m
HW	06:23	0.2 m
LW	12:01	0.1 m
HW	19:59	0.2 m

From the Sagunto station.

Tuesday 18 May 2027. **Tides.** The range here is 0.1 to 0.3 m: tides make no practical difference. Wind and air pressure move the sea level more than the tide does.

The Columbretes use the Sagunto station, 45 nm west.

Tide times are predictions made for this plan from the TICON-4 harmonic constants (DGFI-TUM) with the Neaps tide predictor, because the official 2027 tables were not yet published when it was written. Tested against the official APDL table for Leixões on 23 July 2026, the predicted times were within 8 minutes and the heights 0.1 to 0.2 m lower. Heights are above lowest astronomical tide. Check every time against the official 2027 table before sailing.

Daylight. Sunrise at Valencia 06:45 CEST. Sunset at Columbretes 21:08 CEST.

Weather

- **Offshore.** 30 nm from land, with no shelter but the crater bay, which is open to the east and south-east.
- **Early June.** Mostly light winds and sea breezes near the coast. North-westerlies from the Ebro valley (the mestral) can reach the islands.

FORECASTS TO CHECK

- AEMET coastal bulletins, aemet.es, predicción marítima: “Costa de Valencia y Murcia” (Aguas costeras de Valencia, de Castellón) and “Costa de Cataluña” (Aguas costeras de Tarragona, de Barcelona, de Girona). High-seas areas Baleares and León.
- NAVTEX Cabo de la Nao: 518 kHz, station X, in English. Further north, La Garde (France) on 490 kHz, station S, in French. Check the times against the Admiralty List of Radio Signals.

[CHECK THE PILOT BOOK](#)

Hazards

- **Columbretes marine reserve.** Navigation is free throughout the reserve, but speed must be under 3 kn in the integral and restricted-use zones. Illa Grossa (Columbrete Grande) is a restricted-use zone 0.5 nm in radius. The Murall del Cementeri and the Carallot islet are integral reserves, for authorised science only. Anchoring is prohibited everywhere in the reserve except in an emergency.

- **Buoys and the night.** The reserve's mooring buoys may be used only with authorisation, applied for to the Spanish fisheries directorate (Dirección General de Recursos Pesqueros y Acuicultura), and following the reserve service's instructions. Official, scientific, fishing, organised and dive boats have priority over other boats. Overnight stays are prohibited on the buoys at La Ferrera and La Foradada. Whether a yacht may stay the night on the Illa Grossa buoys is not stated in the order.
- **Reporting.** Report entry to and exit from the reserve to the reserve service on VHF 9 (08:00 to 22:00), or on VHF 16, giving the boat's details.
- **Landing.** Visits ashore are allowed only on Illa Grossa, under the nature reserve's rules, which could not be checked. [CHECK ON THE CHART](#)
- **Fishing.** Only surface trolling, with an authorisation applied for at least 10 working days ahead. Diving needs authorisation; night and shore dives are banned.

Ports of refuge

PORT	FROM THE ROUTE	USE IT WHEN	NOTES
Valencia	Start	Within the first 2 hours	Real Club Náutico de Valencia.
Castellón	About 30 nm west of the islands	No authorisation, or weather turns	Commercial port with yacht berths. CHECK THE PILOT BOOK
Columbretes	Destination	Settled weather only	A buoy in Puerto Tofiño, with authorisation. No shelter from the east.

Pilotage

LEAVING VALENCIA

1. Leave the club and head south of the port, keeping clear of ships.
2. Turn north-east for the islands and make sail.

ARRIVING AT THE COLUMBRETES

1. Raise the reserve service on VHF 9 before entering the reserve.
2. Approach Illa Grossa from the south-east. Inside 0.5 nm of the island, under 3 kn.
3. Pick up the buoy you are given in Puerto Tofiño. Do not anchor.

LIGHTS ON THE WAY

Valencia outer breakwater	Fl 10s, 35 m
Cabo Canet	Fl(2) 10s, 33 m

Communications

Columbretes marine reserve service	VHF 9 (08:00 to 22:00) or VHF 16
Real Club Náutico de Valencia	+34 963 679 011
Emergency	VHF 16, DSC 70 · 112
Salvamento Marítimo, emergencies	+34 900 202 202
Salvamento Marítimo, Tarragona centre	+34 977 216 203 or +34 977 216 215 (2018 figures: check)

Contingencies

- **Wind rises from the east at night.** Leave the buoy before it becomes dangerous and run for L'Ametlla de Mar or Castellón. Plan the escape course in daylight.
- **No buoy free.** Do not anchor. Go on to Castellón.
- **Fog.** Fog routine; radar and AIS watch.
- **Person overboard.** Shout, point, throw the danger buoy, press MOB, DSC distress alert, Mayday on 16.

Before leaving

- ☐ Forecasts read and logged before the go or no-go time
- ☐ Spanish notices to mariners (Avisos a los Navegantes) checked for the route
- ☐ Waypoints entered and checked against the chart
- ☐ Ship's log started in UTC
- ☐ Crew briefing: route, watches, safety gear, MOB, fog
- ☐ Columbretes authorisation printed and aboard
- ☐ Food and water for a night away from shore

- ☐ Fuel for 10 hours under engine, plus a reserve
- ☐ Water, food and hot drinks for 24 hours
- ☐ Lifejackets with crotch straps, jackstays rigged, harnesses
- ☐ Liferaft, grab bag, flares in date, handheld VHF
- ☐ Radar, AIS and navigation lights tested

☐ Passports, boat papers and insurance aboard

Sources

- Columbretes marine reserve: Orden ARM/3841/2008, amended by Orden AAA/1493/2014 (boe.es).
- Nature reserve: Spanish Wikipedia, “Reserva natural de las Islas Columbretes” (secondary source).
- Valencia: rcnv.es.
- Catalan ports: ports.gencat.cat port pages and their internal maritime plans (Pla interior marítim).
- Lights: The Lighthouse Directory, Spain (ibiblio.org/lighthouse/esvc.htm and esct.htm).
- NAVTEX: NGA Pub 117, chapter 3. AEMET zones: aemet.es, predicción marítima.
- Tides: predictions from TICON-4 harmonic constants (Hart-Davis, Dettmering and Seitz, DGFI-TUM, 2025, doi 10.17882/109129) with Neaps (openwaters.io). Check against the Instituto Hidrográfico 2027 tables.
- Sunrise and sunset: calculated (NOAA method).
- Lights: The Lighthouse Directory (Rowlett), ibiblio.org/lighthouse, Portugal pages revised August 2024. Cross-check with the IH List of Lights, volume I.
- Pilot: RCC Pilotage Foundation, Atlantic Spain and Portugal, 9th edition (2025).

A planning exercise to RYA Yachtmaster standard. Not for navigation: use current official charts, the pilot book and the forecasts on the day.