

Columbretes to L'Ametlla de Mar

Back to the mainland and north round the Ebro Delta, a natural park of rice fields, lagoons and sandbanks pushing 10 nm into the sea, to the fishing harbour of L'Ametlla de Mar.

DATE	Wednesday 19 May 2027
DISTANCE	64.6 nm, 5 legs
TIME	11 h 14 min
DEPART	07:30 CEST from Columbretes. 50 minutes after sunrise (06:39 CEST).
ARRIVE	About 18:44 CEST at L'Ametlla de Mar. In the early evening, with about 2 hours 25 minutes of daylight in hand (sunset 21:11 CEST).
TIDES	Range about 0.2 m: no practical effect
WIND	Light to moderate; a mestral (north-west) out of the Ebro valley is the wind to watch
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



Track and waypoints 1 to 4, with ports of refuge as squares.

Go or no-go

Decide at 06:45 CEST. Go only if all of these hold:

- ☐ No mestral (north-westerly) above force 5 forecast: it blows out of the Ebro valley straight across this route.
- ☐ Visibility 3 nm or more: the delta is low and hard to see.
- ☐ L'Ametlla de Mar berth confirmed.

If the weather turns overnight at the islands, leave early for whichever port gives the best angle: L'Ametlla de Mar, Castellón or Sant Carles de la Ràpita.

Route and waypoints

Waypoints are planning positions in open water, checked against a 1:10m coastline to be at least 2 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	Puerto Tofiño, Illa Grossa	39°53.8'N	000°41.5'E				07:30 CEST	Slip the buoy. Report on VHF 9.
1	Columbretes approach	39°53.0'N	000°42.5'E	136°T	1.1	1.1	07:57 CEST	Out of the restricted zone
2	East of Cap de Tortosa	40°42.0'N	000°58.0'E	013°T	50.4	51.5	16:21 CEST	Well off the delta's sandbanks CHECK ON THE CHART
3	Off Punta del Fangar	40°48.0'N	000°54.0'E	333°T	6.7	58.3	17:28 CEST	Clear of the Fangar spit CHECK ON THE CHART
4	L'Ametlla de Mar approach	40°52.0'N	000°48.8'E	316°T	5.6	63.9	18:30 CEST	South-east of the harbour CHECK ON THE CHART
5	L'Ametlla de Mar harbour	40°52.4'N	000°48.0'E	303°T	0.7	64.6	18:44 CEST	Position approximate CHECK ON THE CHART

Tides and time

COLUMBRETES · WED 19 MAY · CEST (UTC+2)

LW	04:29	0.2 m
LW	12:03	0.1 m
HW	20:41	0.2 m

From the Sagunto station.

L'AMETLLA DE MAR · WED 19 MAY · CEST (UTC+2)

LW	03:22	0.2 m
HW	07:33	0.2 m
LW	14:05	0.1 m
HW	20:36	0.3 m

From the Tarragona station.

Wednesday 19 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.

L'Ametlla de Mar uses the Tarragona station.

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 Columbretes 06:39 CEST. Sunset at L'Ametlla de Mar 21:11 CEST.

Weather

- **The mestral.** A north-westerly funnelled down the Ebro valley, sometimes strong, raising a short sea off the delta.
- **The delta.** Very low land, hard to see until close. Rely on the GPS and the lights, not the eye.

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

- **The Ebro Delta.** Sandbanks extend well off the delta, and the Cap de Tortosa light stands about 5 km offshore on them. Shoals run off Punta del Fangar to the north and Punta de la Banya to the south. Their extent could not be checked for this plan: keep at least 3 nm off and use the chart. [CHECK ON THE CHART](#)
- **Shellfish farms.** Mussel and oyster rafts in the Fangar and Alfacs bays. [CHECK ON THE CHART](#)
- **Leaving the Columbretes.** Under 3 kn within 0.5 nm of Illa Grossa. Report leaving on VHF 9.

Ports of refuge

PORT	FROM THE ROUTE	USE IT WHEN	NOTES
Sant Carles de la Ràpita	In the Alfacs bay, south of the delta	Weather turns before the delta	Large sheltered bay. Sant Carles Marina, VHF 9, +34 977 745 153; entrance 7 m, pontoons 3 to 4 m.
L'Ametlla de Mar	Destination	First choice	Entrance 6 m, yacht quay 3 to 5 m. Port office +34 977 456 180.

Pilotage

LEAVING THE COLUMBRETES

1. Slip the buoy and leave the crater bay to the south-east, under 3 kn.
2. Report leaving to the reserve service, then head north-north-east for the delta.

ENTERING L'AMETLLA DE MAR

1. From Punta del Fangar, head north-west along the coast.
2. Approach from the south-east and enter the harbour.
3. Call the Club Nàutic l'Ametlla (+34 977 457 240) or the port office (+34 977 456 180). VHF:

CHECK THE PILOT BOOK

LIGHTS ON THE WAY

Islas Columbretes	Fl(3+1) 22s, 85 m
La Banya	Fl(2) WR 5s, 27 m
Cap Tortosa	Fl 6s, 18 m
Río Ebro (El Garxal)	Fl(2) 15s, 13 m
El Fangar	Fl(2) WR 24s, 20 m

Communications

Columbretes reserve service	VHF 9
Club Nàutic l'Ametlla de Mar	+34 977 457 240
L'Ametlla de Mar port office	+34 977 456 180
Sant Carles Marina	VHF 9 · +34 977 745 153
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

- **Mestral rising.** Bear away for Sant Carles de la Ràpita in the shelter of the Alfacs bay.
- **Fog.** Keep well off the delta; 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
 - ☐ L'Ametlla de Mar berth booked
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- ☐ Fuel for 12 hours under engine, plus a reserve
 - ☐ Water, food and hot drinks for 12 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 (boe.es).
- Sant Carles de la Ràpita and L'Ametlla de Mar: ports.gencat.cat; mdlmarinas.co.uk (Sant Carles Marina).
- 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, predicció 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.