

THE FISH MARKET AND THE FISH AUCTION

Located on the fishing port, the fish market is the building where the fish auction is held. This must-see event allows you to take in the excitement of the daily auction of fresh fish caught by Calpe's fleet. It is considered to be one of the city's most important seafaring traditions.

In the past, before the port and fish market existed, the auction took place on La Fossa-Levante Beach, which was Calpe's first anchorage. It later moved to the dock of the fishing port at the foot of the rock outcrop known as the "Peñón de Ifach". Back then, the auction was carried out by the muleteers who transported the fish. The fish were sorted by species, weighed in arrobas (1 arroba = 13 kg), and stored in baskets with ice and palm leaves to keep it fresh while it was transported to nearby towns. Calpe's first fish market was built in 1979. It was used until 1991, when the current fish market was created in order to improve infrastructure and space.

The auction takes place Monday through Friday around 17:00 and lasts for about two hours.

You'll see how the boats reach the port in an orderly fashion in accordance with the numbers they're assigned on a rotating basis by the Fisherman's Association. The first four boats are required to unload their goods before the beginning of the auction, while the rest of the fleet gradually comes into port.

From the walkway vantage point inside the fish market, you can see how once the goods are unloaded in boxes, they are placed on conveyor belts that pass in front of the buyers. Electronic displays show information on each lot, including the name of the boat of origin, its auction number, its weight, and its opening price, which automatically goes down until stopped by an interested buyer, who signals their interest by pressing a button on their remote control.

The Fisherman's Association also sets a minimum price, so if a lot is not purchased, it becomes their property. Once the fish is purchased, it is covered with ice and prepared for further transport.