

# Mallorca Bulletin

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## PORT CHANGES IN PALMA RAISE BIG CONCERNS FOR MALLORCA YACHTING BUSINESSES

*Palma.*—Palma’s position as one of the Mediterranean’s leading yachting hubs is facing a quiet but noticeable shift this season, as recent major changes to port infrastructure and access begin to ripple through the local industry.

Traditionally, the island has relied on a steady flow of yachts coming here in the winter for maintenance and refit work, supporting a wide network of small businesses, freelancers and specialist contractors. This year, however, many in the sector report a downturn in visiting yachts, with some opting instead for mainland bases such as Vilanova or Tarragona, where access to marinas and shipyards is often simpler and more practical.

One of the most commonly cited challenges is the redevelopment along the Paseo

Marítimo. The major reduction in available parking has made it increasingly difficult for contractors to reach vessels efficiently. For tradespeople carrying tools and equipment, proximity is not a luxury but a necessity.

Without it, jobs become slower, more expensive, or simply unworkable.

As a result, some contractors are declining work in Palma altogether. And if the yachts can’t get the trades they need here, simply put, they’ll stop coming.

Some contractors are considering relocating to the mainland, following the yachts and the opportunities that come with them. For smaller, independent operators, the margins are already tight, and added logistical barriers can be enough to tip the balance.

There is also growing pressure within STP,

which remains consistently full. While this reflects strong demand, access is not always straightforward. Insurance requirements, particularly for larger policies, can be prohibitive for self-employed contractors, further limiting who can work on site.

A recurring concern among those affected is a perceived lack of consultation. Many feel that key decisions were made without fully engaging the businesses that keep the local yachting economy running.

With contractors reconsidering their base, and yachts already exploring alternatives, the concern is no longer hypothetical. If access continues to be this challenging, Palma risks not just a slow season, but a steady shift of business elsewhere – one that may be hard to win back. **Erica Lay Reports.**