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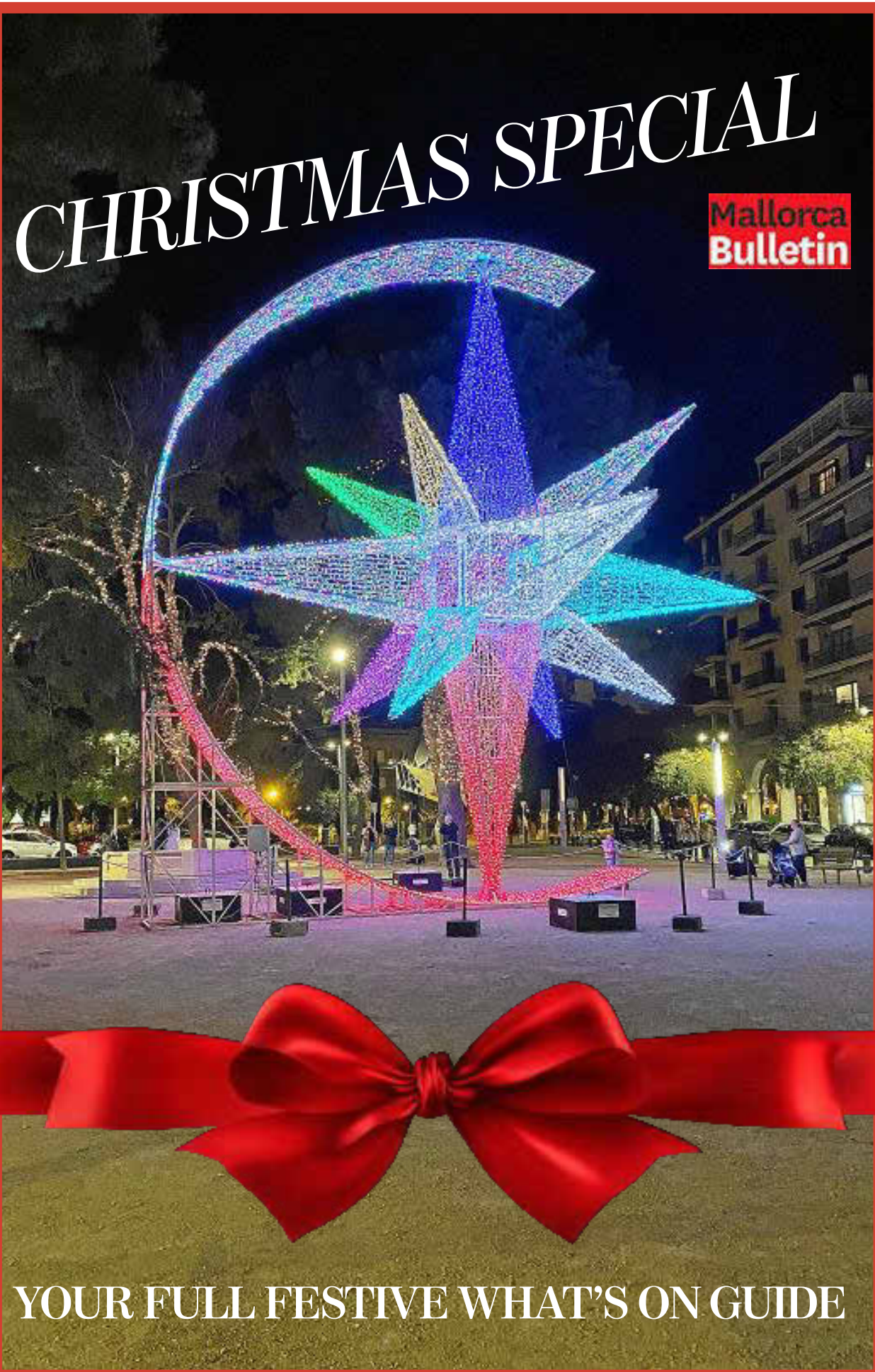
*Inspired by British tradition, this refined experience features a selection of savoury bites, handcrafted sweets, premium teas, and options of champagne or sparkling tea. Available every Saturday and Sunday, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM.*

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# CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Mallorca  
Bulletin

YOUR FULL FESTIVE WHAT'S ON GUIDE



# SOULFUL CHRISTMAS MARKET

Come & gather for 2 days full of gifts, local artisans & experiences

12th  
DEC

13th  
DEC

FOOD & DRINKS  
GIFTS & DECOR  
ARTS & CRAFTS

MORE INFO AT [www.soulosofie.com](http://www.soulosofie.com)







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Merry  
Christmas

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# Christmas Wonderland at Son Amar

**T**he House of Son Amar welcomed visitors this weekend, transforming into a festive wonderland. Guests strolled through the grounds with a warm drink in hand, exploring the artisanal Christmas Market, which offers a variety of unique gifts perfect for the holiday season.

Father Christmas also made a special appearance, giving families the chance to hand over

their wish-lists and take a festive photo. For those seeking a touch of winter excitement, an ice-skating rink adds a fun-filled element to the day.

With festive lights, seasonal treats, and a cheerful atmosphere, the venue promises a memorable experience for friends and families alike.

## Opening hours and visitor information

- This festive season, visitors can enjoy extended opening hours on

select dates, offering plenty of time to explore, experience, and celebrate. On December 5, December 12, and December 19, the venue will be open from 4pm to 9pm. On December 6–8, December 13–14, and December 20–21, doors will open an hour earlier, welcoming guests from 3pm to 9pm. Admission is set at an affordable €6 for adults, while children under 3 years old can enter free of charge, making it an accessible experience for families. To secure your visit, res-

tions can be made online at [www.sonamar.com](http://www.sonamar.com). Booking in advance is recommended to ensure availability during these popular holiday dates. Come and enjoy a magical seasonal outing filled with warmth, excitement, and memorable moments for all ages!

*This weekend the venue is open on Friday from 4pm to 9pm and Saturday to Monday from 3pm to 9pm*





# CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND

LET THE MAGIC BEGIN · NOV 28<sup>TH</sup> TO DEC 21<sup>ST</sup> 2025

BOOK NOW · [WWW.CHRISTMAS.SONAMAR.COM](http://WWW.CHRISTMAS.SONAMAR.COM)







### ICE SKATING IN PALM

Enjoy the real and largest ICE RINK in Palma and experience an unforgettable adventure. Open now to 11 January 2026, Monday to Sunday from 10am to 10pm, it is located in Parc de Ses Estacions. Admission is 8€ for 25-minute sessions. Gloves are mandatory, or can be purchased for 2€.

### PALMA CHRISTMAS CIRCUS

The Circo Algeria will be back this Christmas season with "El Circo de la Luz", bringing together international artists in a show that blends tradition and innovation. Top acrobats, luminous biomechanical animals, immersive technological effects, and laser choreographies will transform the big top into a sensory universe never before seen in Europe. The show that lights up the world and revolutionizes the circus—when dreams shine, excitement sparkles. From December 5 until January 4: Friday 5/12 at 7pm; Saturday 6/12 at 5pm and 7.30pm; Sunday 7/12 at 12pm and 5pm; Monday 8/12 at 5pm; Friday 12/12 at 7pm; Saturday 13/12 at 5pm and 7.30pm; Sunday 14/12 at 12pm and 5pm; Friday 19/12 at 7pm;

Saturday 20/12 at 5pm and 7.30pm; Sunday 21/12 at 12pm and 5pm; Monday 22/12 at 5pm; Tuesday 23/12 at 5pm; Wednesday 24/12 at 5pm; Thursday 25/12 at 6pm; Friday 26/12 at 12pm and 6pm; Saturday 27/12 at 5pm and 7.30pm; Sunday 28/12 at 12pm and 5pm; Monday 29/12 at 5pm; Tuesday 30/12 at 5pm; Wednesday 31/12 at 5pm; Thursday 1/1 at 6pm; Friday 2/1 at 7pm; Saturday 3/1 at 5pm and 7.30pm; Sunday 4/1 at 12pm and 5pm.

### CHRISTMAS IN CALVIA VILLAGE

The magic of Christmas reaches every corner of our town. 7 December — Christmas Market (Santa Ponsa Sports Centre) Start the festive season strolling among stalls filled with lights, crafts, and local products. 20 December — Calvià Municipal Band Christmas Concert (Sa Societat, 6 pm) Enjoy the most heart-warming concert of the year, featuring carols and classic seasonal melodies. Bookings: cultura@calvia.com 20 December — New Year's Eve Warm-Up (Es Generator, 7pm to 1am). Calvià's young people say farewell to the

### SANTA LUCIA EVENTS BY THE SWEDISH SCHOOL IN PALMA

#### Today

» Final rehearsal at **Palma Cathedral** from 1.20pm to 3pm.

#### Sunday, 7 December

» At the **Parish of San Francisco de Paula**, c/ General Riera, 75, from approximately 1pm to 1.30pm (Mass begins at 12 noon). A number of pupils and soloists will sing at the end of the service.

#### Thursday, 11 December

» At Plaza Gomila, **Brutus Restaurant**, at 7pm. Year 8 pupils (3° ESO) will perform *Santa Lucia* on the restaurant terrace, in an event organised by Gomila Activa.

#### Friday, 12 December

» At **Palma Bread** at 11am. at Plaza Progrés 14

» At **Rialto Living** at 2pm. Year 5 pupils (6° EP) and the soloists will perform at Rialto Living, Carrer de Sant Feliu 3.

» At **Palma Cathedral** at 8pm (doors open at 7.15pm). All 140 pupils of the Swedish School will perform Christmas carols.

year. 21 December — Family Musical "Christmas Arrives on the Polar Express"

in Santa Claus outfits at 6pm at the Passeig del Born in Palma.

### CAROLS IN ES CAPDELLA

Annual event at Sa Vinya where music is centre stage. Takes place on Friday, December 19 at 6.30pm.

### CHRISTMAS CHURCH SERVICES FOR THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN PALMA

Saturday 6th December — 3.30pm to 5.30pm

Carols & cake

Sunday, 7 December — 11am Advent 2 Eucharist service. Bring and share lunch afterwards

Sunday, 14 December — 11am Advent 3 Eucharist Service

Friday, 19 December — 7.30pm CantArte Concert

Sunday, 21 December — 11am Advent 4 Carol Service

Thursday, 25 December — 11am Christmas Day Eucharist Service

Sunday, 28 December — 11am Christmas 2

Eucharist Service

St Philip and St James

Anglican Church, Nunez de Balboa

(Peguera Auditorium, 6pm). A magical show for the whole family. Tickets: notikumi.com. 27–30 December — Christmas Park (Galatzó Sports Hall) Endless fun for children with workshops, games, and family activities. 27 Dec: 4pm to 8pm - 28–30 Dec: 10am to 2pm and 4pm to 9pm. 31 December — Hidrobal San Silvestre Run (Magalluf Athletics Track, 5pm). See out the year running with family or friends. Dress up and take part in the last race of the year! 31 December — New Year's Eve Party (Galatzó Sports Hall, 12:30am to 6am). Dance and toast to 2026 at Calvià's great end-of-year celebration. 5 January — Three Kings Parade (Palmanova, 6 pm). The Three Wise Men arrive in Calvià! And don't forget to post your letter in the royal mailboxes placed throughout the town!

### CHRISTMAS SANTAS GET TOGETHER

On Sunday, 14 December the Balearic Line Dancers (BIM) will have their annual line dancing

6, Son Armadans, Palma

### PORT ADRIANO CHRISTMAS PARK

Port Adriano is once again hosting its Grand Christmas Park from 22 December to 7 January in the central square, offering a magical experience for the whole family. Visitors can enjoy Mallorca's largest eco-friendly ice rink with 300m<sup>2</sup> of skating fun, or take on the giant 3-metre-high slide with three lanes for children and adults alike. Entry, skate hire, and slide access are all free. Santa Claus will be visiting the park on 22 and 23 December from 5pm to 8pm, and on 24 December from 12noon to 3pm. King Melchior will make his appearances on 2, 3, and 4 January from 5pm to 8pm. The park also features three food and drink stalls with a seating area for snacks and meals. Opening hours are 12noon–8pm daily, except on 24 and 31 December when it closes at 4pm.



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Linz eyes sugar hearts fruit bread poppy seed stollen crescent cookies



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♦ **GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET, SANTA PONSÀ.** At El Moll fairgrounds, open until 14 December. Hours: Mon–Fri 5pm–10pm; weekends/holidays 10am–10pm. Christmas stalls, shows, food and children's activities.

♦ **SON ARMADAMS CHRISTMAS MARKET.** In the park at Son Armadams, 4–8 December. Thu–Sat 5pm–10pm, Sun 5pm–9pm, Mon 4pm–9pm. Seasonal stalls, food, entertainment and family activities.

♦ **PUEBLO ESPAÑOL CHRISTMAS MARKET.** Weekends between 5 December and 4 January, 12:30pm–11pm. Market with food, music, Santa, Three Kings and artificial snowfall.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, SA POBLA.** Plaça Mayor, Friday 5 December, 3pm–10pm. Local Christmas stalls and festive atmosphere.

♦ **SANTA MARIA DEL CAMÍ CHRISTMAS MARKET.** Held on 5, 6, 20 and 7 December in Santa Maria town centre. Hours vary; festive stalls and decorations.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, CAMPOS.** On Friday 5

# Christmas markets

## ACROSS THE ISLAND

December, 5pm–10pm in central Campos. Seasonal stalls and festive goods.

♦ **ANGELICAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAIR, POLLENSA.** St Andrew's Church, Puerto Pollensa, Saturday 6 December, 11am–2pm. Cakes, tombola, mulled wine and seasonal fundraising.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, ALARO.** Plaça de la Vila, 6–7 December. Saturday 10:30am–10:30pm; Sunday until 5pm. Crafts, food and festive activities.

At Soulosofie Interiors Mallorca (Carrer Poima 33 A, Ponent Palma) features local artisans, gifts, and festive experiences with free admission.

### FRIDAY DECEMBER 12

**11am:** Market opens hot festive drink and free ticket for Xmas raffle

**12 noon – 12.45:** Natural Hand Dyeing workshop\*

**1pm – 1.20pm:** Xmas cookie decoration workshop\*

**3pm – 3.45pm:** Xmas festive table-caping demonstration\*

**1pm – 5pm:** Open shopping & food break with Tommy's Pizza & Bossa Bossa Cooking

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 13

**10am:** Market opens with coffee, cookies and Christmas treats

**11am – 11.45am:** Natural Hand Dyeing workshop

**12 noon – 12.45:** Xmas wreath or ornament workshop\*

**1pm – 1.20pm:** Xmas cookie decoration workshop\*

**1pm – 3pm:** Open shopping & food break with Bossa Bossa Cooking

**2.30pm – 3pm:** Raffle announcement  
\*Need to sign up. Some stalls are cash only



Santa's Grotto is now open at both branches of El Corte Ingles in Palma. On the Avenidas it is open on Saturday (December 6) and December 13, 20, 21 and 23 from 11a.m. to 2p.m. and then from 5p.m. to 8p.m. In Jaime III on December 7, 8, 13, 14, 20 and 21 from 11a.m. to 2p.m. and from 5p.m. to 8p.m. On December 19, 22 y 23, from 11a.m. to 2p.m.

## A corner of Palma that's 'finger-licking good'

**Churreria Gabri's will serve its delicious churros with chocolate until the early hours of the morning on 25 and 26 December and 1 January.**

Raluca Purcelea is the owner of this charming churros café located in Plaza Madrid in Palma. Her passion for churros and her ease in interacting with people gave her the idea to create **Churreria Gabri's**, named after her daughter Gabriela Silvia Purcelea.

The hard work of this couple has meant that today, a year after opening, they have a loyal clientele who "have breakfast and lunch here every day", says the owner, who gratefully adds that "we didn't expect such a warm welcome so quickly; word of mouth works very well". Their goal is for **Churreria Gabri's** to be a go-to spot for the surrounding neighbourhoods and for tourists visiting the area.

When asked about the secret of her churros and porras, Raluca is clear: "love, enthusiasm and hard work". The establishment also offers delicious breakfasts, sandwiches for lunch or afternoon tea, as well as set meals and a dish of the day with a drink, all at reasonable prices. The cuisine is a blend of traditional dishes from her homeland, Romania, and Mallorca. Pa amb oli with sobrasada and goat's cheese with caramelised onions "is the star of our menu", she assures us.

An initiative that is very popular with customers: every Sunday, they hold a prize draw in which customers can participate by submitting their receipts. The winners, who are announced on Facebook every week, receive a basket filled with various products.



**Open every public holiday  
Open Tuesday to Saturday  
8am to 3.30pm & 6 to 10pm  
Sunday 8am to 1pm  
Closed Monday**

advertising feature

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, S'ARRACÓ.** Town centre, Saturday 6 December, from 10am. Small local Christmas market.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, ALCUDIA.** Saturday 6 December, 11am–2pm and 4pm–10pm. Christmas stalls around the centre.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, MURO.** Plaça dels Abeuradors, 6–7 December. Saturday includes 6:30pm lights switch-on. Sunday 10am–1pm. Market, music and kids' area.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, SANTA MARGALIDA.** Plaça de la Vila, 6–7 December, 11am–10:30pm. Artisan stalls and festive activities.

♦ **CHARITY CHRISTMAS MARKET, LLUCMAJOR.** Finca Alegria, 6–7 December, 1pm–8pm. Fundraiser with Christmas stalls; proceeds to Aspanob.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, CAMPANET.** Plaça Major, 7 December from 10:30am. Festive stalls, kids' workshops and 6pm lights switch-on.

♦ **CREATIVISSIM CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND, INCA.** Plaza Mallorca, 11–14 December. Admission €2; children free. Seasonal stalls and Christmas workshops.

♦ **PUERTO PORTALS CHRISTMAS MARKET.** Puerto Portals, 12 December–6 January. Over 40 stalls, food, ice rink and festive entertainment daily.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, SELVA.** Plaça Major, Friday 12 December, 5pm–10pm. Local festive stalls.

♦ **CHRISTMAS FAIR, CALA MILLOR.** Friday 12 December, 5pm–10pm around central Cala Millor.

♦ **CHRISTMAS FAIR, CAN PICAFORT.** Plaça Major, Friday 12 and Saturday 13 De-

cember. Hours vary; festive stalls and food.

♦ **MORE MALLORCA CHRISTMAS MARKET, SON MIR.** Finca Son Mir, 13–14 December, 11am–9pm. Pop-up market with food, crafts and family activities.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, PUERTO AL-CUDIA.** Saturday 13 December, 11am–2pm and 4pm–10pm. Seasonal stalls.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, PUERTO ANDRATX.** Saturday 13 December, central Puerto Andratx. Hours TBA.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, CONSELL.** Plaça Mayor, Saturday 13 December from 4pm. Artisan market with activities and food.

♦ **CHRISTMAS FAIR, SON SERVERA.** Saturday 13 December, 5pm–10pm. Local stalls and festive food.

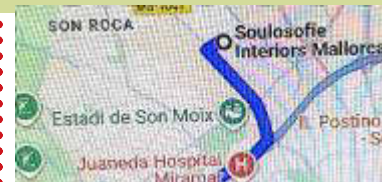
♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, SENCELLES.** Saturday 13 December, 9am–2pm. Traditional village Christmas market.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, CALA FIGUERA (SANTANYI).** Carrer Daniel Camargo, Saturday 13 December, 4pm–10pm.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, BINISALEM.** 13–14 December in central Binissalem. Hours TBA.

♦ **CHRISTMAS MARKET, INCA.** 18 December–5 January in central Inca. Details TBA.

## THE SOULFUL CHRISTMAS MARKET IN PALMA



## Mallorca nativity scenes

**Cort Nativity Scene** – Palma Town Hall, Plaça de Cort, Palma: until 5 Jan, Mon–Fri 9am – 8.30pm, weekends & public holidays 10am – 8pm

**El Corte Inglés** – Av. Alexandre Rosselló 12–16 (4th fl), Palma: until 6 Jan, 9.30am – 9.30pm

**Santa Catalina Market** – Plaça Navegació, Palma: until 6 Jan, market hours

**San Pablo Bookshop**, Palma: until 6 Jan, 10am – 7.30pm

**Convent of Santa Clara**, Palma: 25 Nov–6 Jan, Mon–Fri 10am – 6pm, Sat 10am – 12 noon & 1.30pm – 6pm

**Sant Antoniet Church**, Palma: 30 Nov–6 Jan, 10am – 2pm & 5pm – 8pm

**Sant Antoniet (BBVA)**, Carrer de Sant Miquel 30, Palma: 1 Dec–7 Jan, 10am – 1.30pm & 5pm – 8.30pm

**Fundació Barceló**, Carrer de Sant Jaume 4, Palma: 2 Dec–4 Jan, Mon–Sat 11am – 1.30pm & 5pm – 8pm

**C&A**, Carrer de Sant Jaume 2, Palma: 5 Dec–20 Jan, 10am – 1pm & 4pm – 9pm

**Portol** (Parroquial), Marratxí: 7 Dec–6 Jan, Tue/Thu 5pm – 7pm; Sat/Sun/hol 10.30am – 1pm & 5.30pm – 7pm

**Centre de Cultura La Misericòrdia**, Palma: 7 Dec–6 Jan, 10am – 9pm

**Church of Sant Antoni Abad**, Son Ferriol: 8 Dec–20 Jan, during Mass times

**Consell de Mallorca** – Palau del Consell, Palma: 9 Dec–6 Jan, 10am – 8pm

**Church of Puríssima Concepció**, La Vileta: 8 Dec–20 Jan, daily 6.30pm–8.30pm (Sun also 8.30am – 10.30am)

**Palma Military History Centre**, Carrer de Sant Miquel 69, Palma: 10 Dec–4 Jan, 10.30 – 1.30pm & 6pm – 8pm

**Church of Sant Roc**, Son Roca: 13 Dec–20 Jan, Sun 10.30am – 12.30pm, Tue 5pm – 7pm

**Parish of Santa Catalina Thomàs**: 24 Dec–20 Jan, during Mass times





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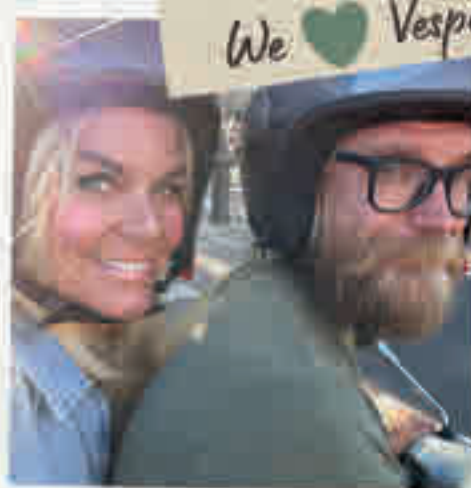
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# MY PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT



by *Laura Stadler*

Given a choice of my perfect Christmas gift, it would unhesitatingly be a time machine. To be able to sit around my old table, its extensions groaning under the weight of fabulous food and family fun. The work done, I would sit back and just soak in the moment. I would look around me, Hubby one end, myself the other, and a wonderful warm wave of gratitude would flood through me. There would be my father holding court, while my mother good-naturedly rolled her eyes and giggled. Our young son, as ever sitting adoring beside his grandfather, our daughter happily tucked between my mother and I discussing presents. My brother would be telling jokes, while my mother's eldest sister would

raise an eyebrow before surprising us all by adding a few risqué comments. No mobiles, all focused on each other and living in the present.

But back to reality, and recently the most memorable Christmas present I have received was an M&S Beauty Advent Calendar. Honestly from December 1st this gift just kept on giving. I became a child again, squealing with delight each morning as I opened my little numbered box. I created a ritual of deliciously prolonging the excitement of the daily reveal, waiting until after breakfast. It was as if it read my mind. I loved everything. Full size quality products and travel tubes. In fact I have to admit, I found myself somewhat bereft on Boxing Day.



Maybe it's an age thing but these days I look forward much more to giving than receiving gifts at Christmas. I have just about everything I need, and I don't like to think of family members, especially the younger ones, spending too much of their precious funds on me.

Of course, there are perfect gifts that to my mind are more valuable than the most expensive baubles, jewellery and luxury items. What are they? They are presents that have been hand crafted with love and time, surely the most precious gifts of all. I was once given a beautiful patchwork baby quilt made by a good friend when our son was tiny. I still have it, and treasure it to this day. Then there was the crazy multi-coloured woollen scarf

knitted by a relative: I've kept that too! My Mallorcan friend Tofu, a sculptor, brought me a beautiful metal book sculpture with metal quill and ink pot. How can that not be something to treasure and cherish, especially as an author?

What I love about Mallorca is that neighbours share gifts of this kind – eggs, home cured jamon, jams, wines, pickles, cakes and herbes liqueur. I like to make Christmas muffins and give my local shopkeepers and the mechanics chocolates, cava and other edible items that can be shared with family and friends. So, I suppose my idea of

by *Anna Nicholas*



the perfect Christmas gift is something that can be shared or cherished because of its innate lack of material value. The greatest joy for me at Christmas now is seeing others smile and exclaim with happiness when they open a gift, perhaps something that they have coveted for a while. I try to think about what family and close friends would really like and need and that perhaps they'd never buy for themselves. My perfect Christmas gift is therefore the one that brings smiles and happiness to others. You can't get better than that.



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Women's gloves from 29.00€



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Fragranced candle 24€, diffuser 30€



Small plate 15€ and carafe 45€



Plush toys, 25.00€/each



Small Christmas mice, 19.00€



Large felt Christmas mice, 29.00€



Striped bag, 125€



Handmade papier-mache Christmas balls, 12.00€



Socks from 25.00€



Notebooks with a message, 29.00€/each



Cashmere scarf, 379€



Mohair throws, 259€



Set of metal boxes, 39€



Ceramic mug, 27.00€/each



Christmas puzzle, 47€

# GIFT IDEAS



Angel chime, 35€



# MY PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT



by  
**Shirley  
Roberts**

The world of presents is fraught, and Christmas gifts are the top of the list. So many tears shed about disappointing offerings over the years. Awful how our memory box focuses on the gifts that didn't cut it, rather than those which were just lovely. The present always involves the mind of the giver, and what the subliminal message is interpreted as.

'Is that all he thinks I'm worth?'  
'She doesn't know me at all if she thinks I would ever like that'  
'No presents this year – giving all the cash to charity'  
'No time to sort presents – I'll just buy vouchers on Christmas Eve'  
'I'm scared of the debt I will be in after Christmas is over'.  
So, what with all the angst in-

involved, how does anyone ever get it right? We all have choice about what we remember. Many focus on their Christmas disappointments and the rush to the divorce lawyers after Christmas bears testament to this. Some just grin and bear Christmas family dynamics. Most live through the festive times enjoying all that family gatherings bring.

Lego and board games of Christmas past to mobile this and that today. Presents evolve together with Christmas TV. Morecombe and Wise to Gavin and Stacy occupy our family screens. Taste and expectations change with the generations. A coffee machine is an acceptable gift, but a vacuum cleaner isn't. An electric blanket or throw is much appreciated but don't buy me a set of towels or a toaster.

The experience has become the gift in 2025 Young people opening envelopes containing concert tickets in Barcelona or Madrid



for their favourite bands. Tickets for the Abba Experience in London when all the family go to enjoy it together. The gift which makes an essential difference to life is now all about the 'moment' not the 'thing'.

Abu Simbel, on a journey down Lake Nassar, gliding on one of the few tourist boats of the time, was a special gift I remember one Christmas. I remember others where there was no money for anything other than making sure the children had something to open. The circle of life runs its course, as do the Christmas presents of the time.

Time is of course the most precious of gifts. In a busy world, to take time out to return home to spend Christmas with family, is amongst the best of all. 'The old and new traditions of a Soller based experience. The 2025 sophistication, the toasted marshmallows round a garden fire pit. The telling of old stories and reminiscing on a lifetime of Soller Christmases for my grandchildren. We have a huge mem-

ory bank of the last 25 Christmases in Soller to draw on.

Living in Mallorca gives us gifts galore. Christmas walks, sunshine and fresh air plus the occasional cava gathering on the beach, makes it unique. A winter picnic in the barbecue areas of the mountains always unites. We love Sa Bassa for this very reason. Then there are the wild swimmers amongst us, for whom it wouldn't be Christmas Day without that sea swim at the Repic Beach of the Port of Soller.

The most poignant of gifts are my ones to remember. An excited little girl rushing home with a handmade Christmas decoration from school. 'I made this for you Mum', love you'. This is the Christmas gift and memory I will always treasure.

The memories of past and present, including those we miss, is an important gift to us all. The constantly expanding circle of love is another gift we are blessed with. Gifts and blessings are all around us. Happy Christmas...

There is a quiet moment every festive season that I have come to treasure. It is the strange in-between period after Christmas Day and before New Year, a limbo that the internet fondly calls Twitxmas. The rush has passed, the expectations have softened, and life moves at a slower pace. Shops stay open, but no one is really shopping. Emails arrive, but no one expects a reply. The pressure melts away and the world takes a breath.

It is in this rare pocket of time that I find myself thinking about what the perfect Christmas gift actually looks like. We spend so much of December searching for objects. We scroll, we compare, we queue, we wrap, and we double check that everyone has the same number of parcels under the tree. Yet when the paper has been torn and the recycling bin is overflowing, I always come back to the same truth. The best gift I could ever receive is time.

Time is the one thing that cannot be bought. It cannot be ordered online or found in a shop window. When it is gone, it is gone forever. This realisation grows stronger every year, especially as life gets busier and the days seem to speed up. Work expands to fill every gap. Plans stack on top of each other. My phone reminds me of things I have already forgotten. By November, it feels as if I am sprinting towards the finish line of the year.

Then Twitxmas arrives. Everything slows

down



down and the noise stops. There is no performance required. No lists, no deadlines, no pressure to keep up. I can hear myself think. I can be present. I can simply be with the people I love without rushing them, or myself, on to the next task.

For me, experiences will always matter more than things. I remember the years through moments, not objects. I remember the Christmas Eve walks in Palma, visiting the Belens and getting a drink somewhere. I remember the day spent cooking together, each person taking charge of one tiny part of the meal. I remember watching films that we have all seen a hundred times, yet somehow they feel funnier when we are watching them together. I remember the long, gentle mornings when no one is in a hurry and life feels soft around the edges.

These memories stay. They do not fade or break or end up in a cupboard. They grow in value as time moves on.

So my perfect Christmas gift is simple. It is a few unhurried hours with my family. It is the space to talk without rushing, to laugh until our sides hurt, to sit together doing absolutely nothing. It is the gift of presence, not presents.

Twitxmas reminds me every year that time is the most precious thing I have. The world carries on, but at a quieter pace, and for once it feels as if life is handing me the very thing I spend the rest of the year chasing. A moment to breathe. A moment to notice. A moment to appreciate the people who make everything worthwhile.

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by  
**Vicki  
McLeod**

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# MY PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT



by  
**Richie  
Prior**

**T**he date Friday, December 30th, 2005, was probably our perfect Christmas gift. I say that because I have to share my perfect Christmas gift with my wife, Rachael. Slightly after Christmas, I know, but in reality we really weren't expecting this gift to be delivered until the end of January, which wouldn't have been a Christmas gift at all.

I am, of course, talking about the birth of our first son, Jacob Ben Prior.

My wife, Rachael, and I got married

on the 28th of May 2005. We had just moved into our new home, and the wedding day was beautifully spent with family and friends. We had found out a couple of months before that Rachael was pregnant, and I was desperate to tell everyone at the wedding. However, as we hadn't passed the 12-week mark before you should announce a pregnancy, we felt it prudent not to say anything.

The pregnancy went fine throughout the summer, into the autumn and winter. We asked our paediatrician if we could fly back to the UK for a few days over Christmas. At the time Rachael was 32 weeks, and he said that, to be honest, it would be safer flying than driving in a car, and he gave us his blessing.

We enjoyed a relaxing Christmas with our families, flying back to Mallorca on December 29th, and that night we went out for a meal with some friends. On returning home, Rachael said she felt a little uncomfortable and thought it would be good to visit the hospital.

We rushed to the hospital in my car and, as soon as

we got there, Rachael was seen by the doctors. It was diagnosed as something called placenta previa, which meant that Jacob needed to be delivered immediately. Now, in the rush to leave the house, I had forgotten the all-important bag that you're supposed to pack and leave by the door. Schoolboy error! So, as I wasn't allowed into the birth, I went back to the house to get it.

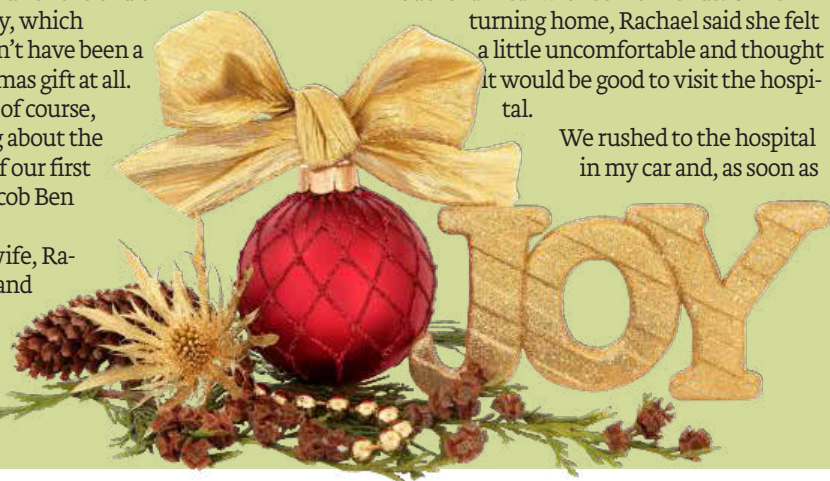
At 02:05 on Friday, December 30th, Jacob Ben Prior was born. Both mother and baby were fine, but because of the early birth we had to stay at the hospital for five days.

Names for children are one of the most difficult things to choose. Our choice of the

name Jacob was because it is linked to Christmas in two distinct ways: through its biblical relevance as a traditional name and through the well-known character Jacob Marley in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Having your own children is, in my opinion, the best thing that can happen in your life. I have written here before about how proud we are of both Jacob and our other son, Jude, and the men they are now turning into.

Not the Christmas or New Year we had planned, but without doubt it was our perfect Christmas gift.



**I**'ve been thinking about the perfect Christmas gift for this article for a few weeks now... Not the kind you can find online with next-day delivery, but the kind that makes your heart sing! And the truth is this: aside from the impossible - like still having my father around, or my mother and my closest friends, scattered around the world, at the same table at the same time - there's very little I actually want or need.

Maybe that's what happens with age, or perhaps it's living on this little rock where every day feels like a present anyway!? Or maybe it's because I spend half my life writing about the best meals of my year, the chefs who feed my soul, and the cocktails that occasionally do the same. Whatever the reason, the older I get, the less interested I am in "things".

Couple of weeks ago, for my birthday, my friend Georgia created a gift that I will remember for as long as I live! She got a template red cardboard box from Muller and filled it up with layer upon layer of memories, photos of our time on the island, my favourite chefs, friends, places... I was left speechless, while happy tears streamed down my face... I truly prefer moments like these to any expensive bag or piece of clothing.

So, if anyone is still debating what to put under the tree for me this Christmas, here's a thought: make it edible, drinkable, or simply thoughtful. For example, I'd happily accept another brunch at the magnificent Gran Meliá Victoria. Earlier this week I went there to try Camí, this season's offering, in collaboration with local pastisser



Lluís Perez that. The experience took us back to our childhood, while we ate from silver plates. Or Afternoon tea at

by  
**Mia  
Naprtá**



Merchants in Palma! I don't know what it is about tiny treats that makes my heart flutter, but there's something deeply decadent about slowing down at 3pm to sip tea (or let's be honest, a glass of cava), all while admiring the elegance of a British tradition interpreted in a Mallorcan palace.

And, of course, dinner at Bazaar, where I celebrated my last birthday. A gift wrapped in flavour, laughter and the familiar comfort of a favourite place with the friendly service. In my books, good food in good company always beats another item for the wardrobe. Especially as, in my case, the said wardrobe is already bursting with unworn things I'd better sell on Vinted one of these days.

That said, I wouldn't completely reject physical gifts. You'd have to try quite hard to disappoint me with the quirky-packaged Mallorca-inspired treat from La Palmesana. Marga's jewellery manages to be both understated and quietly powerful, a little like a very good sentence. I'm always drawn to pieces that feel like they could tell their own story, created by someone who understands that beauty doesn't need to shout.

Or a spa day at La Residencia in Deyá! Imagine being pampered in one of the most idyllic corners of the island, where olive trees watch over you and the Tramuntana calms away all your storms. This November I got treated there for the first time and it was definitely an experience I would like to repeat as soon as they reopen in March.

Finally, as I took painting classes this year, and deepened my appreciation of Mallorca based artists and their work, I would not mind if a painting by one or two of my favourites - Lina Redford, Jennifer Nicholson, Melisa Vlaun and more - found its way to underneath of my Christmas tree.

So, if Santa is reading this, all I'm asking for this year is something beautiful, a table somewhere lovely, with people who make me laugh, preferably within walking distance of a well-made cocktail. And if you manage the impossible - to gather all those I love around that table - even just once - I promise I won't ask for anything any time soon!

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**Spoiler:** it involves sweat, swearing, and a level of improvisation that deserves an Olympic medal.

## Behind the Scenes: How Superyacht Crew Pull Off a Luxury Christmas at Sea

by Erica Lay



### CREW FOCUS in Mallorca

**M**ost people think a Christmas on a superyacht is all champagne, fairy lights, and casually lounging around a tree that costs more than a car. And yes, the end result does look ridiculously magical. But getting there? Oh my gosh. It's chaos with tinsel.

Let's take a peek behind the curtain. Just know the crew are probably still behind that

curtain right now, untangling lights and quietly rethinking their life choices.

#### Step One: Decorations... without storage, stability, or sanity

The moment a charter guest says, "We want the yacht to feel Christmassy," the chief steward dies a little inside. Because yachts don't have

storage. At all. So unless you're on a 100m floating palace, decorations are bought, used, crammed into mysterious cupboards, or sacrificed to the sea gods (aka charity shops in the next port).

Crew often spend the days before Christmas wrestling with:

- ▷ Tinsel that tangles just by being looked at
- ▷ Fairy lights that stop working as soon as they're plugged in
- ▷ Glass ornaments rolling around because the yacht is moving
- ▷ A Christmas tree that 100% refuses to stand upright

A classic scene: three deckies cable-tying a tree to a table leg while pretending this is "all part of the plan". It's not. But they're committed.

#### The great Caribbean turkey hunt

Ask any yacht chef: trying to find a turkey in the Caribbean the week before Christmas is like trying to find a unicorn wearing a Rolex. It isn't happening.

Chefs will spend days calling suppliers who say things like:

"Yes, we have a turkey," followed by, "Oh, sorry, we actually don't."

So chefs adapt. They work miracles. They create menus that are festive, elegant, and only mildly affected by the fact that the only available bird was a small chicken with an apparent eating disorder.

Meanwhile, provisioning agents are on WhatsApp sending messages like:

"No turkey, but I can get you a goose. Actually it may be a large duck."

Christmas magic, ladies and gentlemen.

#### Deck Crew vs Fairy Lights: A Tragic Love Story

Deck crew are built for lifting anchors, polishing stainless, making cushions fit back into covers that have shrunk in the drier, and tying knots that could secure a small elephant.

Deck crew are not built for:

- ▷ Untangling fairy lights
  - ▷ Hanging them artistically
  - ▷ Maintaining a positive attitude about it
- Every December, you'll find a deckhand

clinging to the mast like a festive koala, as the wind whips the lights into a knot that defies physics.

And yet - by sunset - the yacht will be glowing like a Christmas card. Because somehow, despite everything, they get it done.

#### Interior Crew: Making Christmas happen with hot glue and sheer willpower

If elves existed, they'd look at stewards and say, "You know what, that's too much work for me."

Stewards are the monarchs of festive creativity. Give them a piece of ribbon, a glue gun, and five sprigs of whatever they found on the dock, and they will transform the interior into a five-star winter paradise.

But behind the scenes it's:

- ▷ Glitter everywhere
  - ▷ Burnt fingertips
  - ▷ One steward crying in the laundry because the centrepiece collapsed
  - ▷ Another muttering "It's fine. It's FINE"
- They deserve medals. And naps. And haribo.

#### The Chef: Conducting culinary war in a moving kitchen

The Christmas galley is a battlefield. It's hot. It's cramped. And three guests just changed their minds about lunch.

Yacht chefs juggle:

- ▷ Multiple dietary quirks
- ▷ Twelve timing schedules
- ▷ The constant threat of rogue swell
- ▷ A turkey that may or may not still exist

Meanwhile, they're plating intricate dishes that somehow look like works of art instead of the result of stress, sweat, and mild trauma.

#### The Engineer: Christmas' unsung, slightly grumpy hero

If Christmas on a yacht has a backbone, it's the engineer.

They keep the lights on - literally - while everyone else argues over centrepieces.

A typical engineer's Christmas includes:

- ▷ Fixing the oven five minutes before the turkey goes in
- ▷ Being summoned because the snow machine stopped snowing
- ▷ Being asked if they can make the Jacuzzi look more "bubbly and festive"

▷ Investigating why the Christmas playlist disappeared from the AV system (clue: someone pressed ALL the buttons)

They're in the engine room, Christmas hat askew, dealing with a level of noise and heat that could roast the turkey faster than the oven.

#### And Yet... It Works. Perfectly.

Somehow, through absolute madness, the end result is beautiful. Guests walk into a glowing salon, see the tree, taste the food, hear the music, and feel like Christmas has arrived in the most magical way.

They never see the chaos.

They never hear the swearing.

They never know the tree is velcroed to the staircase.

They never realise Santa's beard was held on with double-sided tape.

And that's the real magic of yacht crew.

They make the impossible look effortless.

So this Christmas, spare a thought for the crew turning luxury fantasy into festive reality - one cable tie, one glitter explosion, and one tiny Caribbean chicken at a time.



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