

**Mallorca
Bulletin**

Mallorca

the film set

Your favourite holiday spot is where your favourite series are filmed



**world
travel
market**
London



The World Travel Market fair in London

The World Travel Market (WTM) London draws 46,500 total visitors and attendees, along with nearly 5,000 exhibiting companies and over 5,000 pre-qualified buyers.

Attendance Breakdown
Total Visitors/Attendees: ~46,500 people (recorded at the most recent World Travel Market London event).
Exhibitors: Nearly 5,000

companies showcasing destinations, travel tech, and services.
International Media: Around 3,000 journalists, bloggers, and media professionals.



Balearic President at reception at the Lord Mayor's Parlour, Westminster

LARGE NUMBER OF VIP GUESTS WILL BE ATTENDING

London.—The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Karen Scarborough, and Balearic President Marga Prohens will preside over a reception at the Lord Mayor's Parlour on Monday, November 2, from 6p.m.

They will be joined by a large number of British and Mallorcans VIPs. The theme of the reception is the Atlàntida Mallorca Film Fest.

Guests at the event include the Earl of Chichester, who has a holiday home in Sol-

NOVEMBER 2
AT 6PM

ler, and Keith Vaz, former minister for Europe. Also attending will be representatives of the major local authorities.

The Atlàntida Mallorca Film Fest (AMFF) is the world's leading hybrid film festival.

It bridges physical screenings in Palma with a wide online distribution platform. Organised as a major cultural cornerstone of Europe's summer season, the festival pairs independent cinema with live music, masterclasses, and open-air screenings against historical backdrops like Ses Voltes.

The most recent 16th edition successfully wrapped up from July 24 to August 2, 2026.

An estimated 80 people will be attending the London event.

The joys of Mallorca in winter...in London

London.—The Council of Mallorca will be underlining the joys of Mallorca in winter with their event on Wednesday at the Charterhouse. Details are being kept secret but it will give an insight into the island during the low season. Special guest is Elizabeth Rizzini, who presents the weather on BBC1 TV.

The Charterhouse is an extraordinary, 700-year-old historic estate and functioning almshouse located in Clerkenwell, London. It was originally founded in 1371 as a Carthusian monastery.

NOVEMBER 4
AT 7PM

Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII, it was transformed into a grand Tudor mansion where Queen Elizabeth I stayed just before her coronation. In 1611, the wealthy businessman Thomas Sutton purchased the estate to establish a charitable foundation comprising a school for the young.



● The Balearics has a large stand at the World Travel Market within the Spanish section of the fair. From next week a large number of meetings will be taking place there attended by the leading local authorities and members of the British travel industry.



Mallorca Bulletin

Majorca Daily Bulletin
MEDIA GROUP



Editorial, advertising, administration and distribution departments at Palau de la Prensa, Passeig Mallorca 9A 07011 Palma de Mallorca, Spain.

Published by Ediciones Jemma SL
Printed at our Group print press (Palma, Mallorca)
D.L.PM2319-1962

Founded by **Pedro A. Serra Bauzá MBE** in Palma in 1962

President:
Carmen Serra
Managing director:
Pedro Rullan
Administration & Advertising:
Cathy Caliz Morales

Managing Editor:
Jason Moore
Deputy Editor:
Humphrey Carter
Office manager:
Christina Buchet

Switchboard (Telephone) [34] 971 78 84 00

News Desk [34] 971 78 84 10
What's On [34] 971 78 84 11
Office Fax [34] 971 45 73 28
Editorial: editorial@majorcadailybulletin.es
Advertising: publicidad@majorcadailybulletin.es
Subscription: suscripciones@majorcadailybulletin.es
Website: www.majorcadailybulletin.com

Editorial [34] 971 78 84 11
Advertising [34] 971 78 84 05
Distribution [34] 971 78 84 03



Illes Balears

Where culture comes alive

Cortesía de Es Fum

Excellence in every bite,
products of our land and sea,
tradition and avant-garde that thrill.

Here culture is not merely seen. It is lived.
Four islands, **one heartbeat.**

illesbalears.travel



EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY
BALEARIC ISLANDS CANDIDATE 2030



Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones own S'Estaca, a historic 19th-century estate located on the coast of Valldemossa in the Serra de Tramuntana mountains of Mallorca.

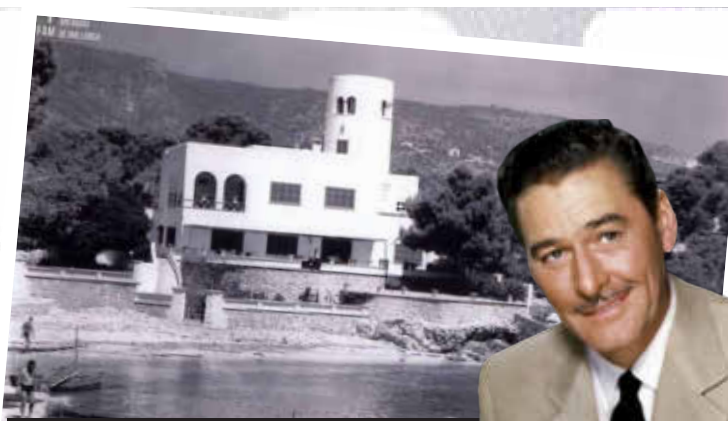
► **History & Size:** Built in 1867 by Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Austria, the property spans approximately 77 hectares of Mediterranean nature and direct sea views.

► **Layout & Amenities:** The compound features seven buildings, including the main house, five guest apartments, two country houses, a li-

brary, a screening/home theatre room, an olive press, a vineyard, a wine cellar with a Trackman video golf simulator, and a heated swimming pool.

► **Ownership:** Michael Douglas originally purchased the estate in 1990 (with his former wife Diandra Luker), and he and Catherine Zeta-Jones gained full ownership of the property in 2021.

► **Usage:** The couple uses S'Estaca as a peaceful sanctuary and second home, spending their summers there with their children, Dylan and Carys.

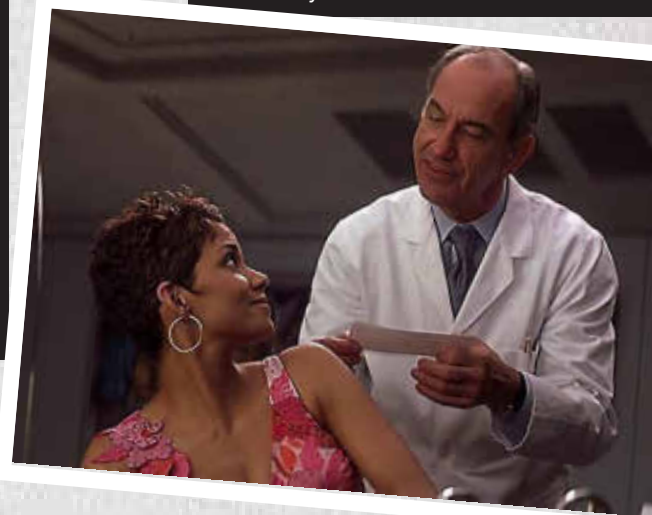


Errol Flynn's home in Mallorca was a seaside villa named Es Moli (or El Moli), located in Illetas (Illetes) just southwest of Palma.

► **The Home:** Named Es Moli ("The Mill"), the white villa was built near an old windmill site by the sea. Today, part of the legacy remains in the area known as the Plaza de la Gárgola.

► **Timeline:** Flynn first discovered Mallorca around 1950 during his honeymoon with third wife Patrice Wymore aboard his 69-foot yacht, the Zaca. After staying at local spots like the Hotel Maricel and Hotel Bon Sol, he and his family settled into Es Moli in the mid-1950s.

► **Floating Home:** In addition to the villa, his yacht the Zaca served as his floating base and the site of famous, raucous parties with Hollywood friends like Orson Welles



Simón Andreu is a Mallorcan actor with nearly 200 film and television credits, known for his early Spanish horror films and later roles in international productions.

► **His credits include** *Die Another Day* (2002), as Dr Alvarez, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (2004), *Goya's Ghosts* (2006), *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* (2008), *The Way* (2010) and *The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard* (2021).

Other credits include *The Cold Light of Day* (2012) and *The Infiltrator* (2016). He also guest-starred in the BBC series *The Mallorca Files*, playing a vineyard owner.



MALLORCA THE FILM SET

Who has a home on the island and who had a home on the island.

The home of the late film director Guy Hamilton in Mallorca was located on a mountain top facing the sea in Port d'Andratx.

► **Location:** Built on top of a mountain overlooking the Mediterranean Sea in Port d'Andratx, in the southwestern part of Mallorca.

► **History:** Hamilton fell in love with the island while filming the Agatha Christie adaptation *Evil Under the Sun* (1982). He later retired there with his wife (actress Kerima) and son, living in the home until his passing on April 20, 2016, at age 93.

► **Other Local Connection:** He also famously used the historic Finca de Raixa in Bunyola as a filming location for *Evil Under the Sun*.



British actor Joseph Fiennes and his Spanish wife, María Dolores Diéguez, live on the island of Mallorca.

► **Location:** They built a luxury home on the outskirts of Palma, after previously living in the northern part of the island.

► **Family:** He shares the home with his wife, María Dolores Diéguez, and their two daughters.

► **Lifestyle:** Fiennes has lived in Spain for over a decade, often splitting time between Mallorca and his filming projects (such as *The Handmaid's Tale*), while actively participating in local cultural events in Palma.



A RARE CORNER OF MALLORCA

Set between the dramatic peaks of the Tramuntana mountains and the endless blue of the Mediterranean, Son Bunyola Hotel & Villas offers a rare sense of place. Surrounded by 330 hectares of unspoilt landscape, with sweeping sea views towards the iconic Sa Foradada, this historic estate invites you to experience Mallorca at its most extraordinary.

A world apart, where nature sets the pace, tranquillity comes naturally and every view tells a story. Discover a more secluded side of the island at Son Bunyola - a place to slow down, reconnect and experience the true beauty of Mallorca.

SON BUNYOLA

SIR RICHARD BRANSON'S MALLORCAN HOTEL & VILLAS



LIMITED
EDITION

www.sonbunyola.virgin.com



Mallorca on big and little screen

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CONFIDENTIAL DIGITAL.



starring **ERICA LAY**

ACTION!



A WRAP!

MobLand: Series 2

Puerto Pollensa

January 2026

James Bond has gone bad. Very bad. And this time he's brought Helen Mirren and Tom Hardy along for the ride. Mallorca welcomed another helping of Hollywood royalty in January when the second series of *MobLand*, the hit Paramount+ crime drama, descended on La Fortalesa near Puerto Pollensa for a week of filming.

Brosnan has swapped his licence to kill for something considerably less official, playing Conrad Harrigan, the ruthless head of a London-based Irish crime family. Mirren plays his equally formidable wife Maeve, while Tom Hardy stars as Harry Da Souza, the unfortunate fixer tasked with sorting out the family's increasingly spectacular messes. It's a world of organised crime, betrayal, family feuds and people who really ought to consider a less stressful line of work. Accountancy, perhaps.

The production chose La Fortalesa, the spectacular fortified estate overlooking the Bay of Pollensa, as one of its filming locations. And frankly, with its enormous walls, secluded setting and magnificent Mediterranean views, it's difficult to imagine a better place for a fictional criminal empire to conduct its business. The fortress has quite a Holly-

wood history of its own, but we've given that a whole article elsewhere in this edition, complete with pirates, celebrity weddings and enough famous faces to fill an Oscars afterparty. Do have a read.

Meanwhile, Brosnan and Mirren managed to squeeze in some sightseeing between filming commitments, visiting Palma Cathedral and the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró. Brosnan, himself a painter, was particularly taken with Miró's studio, later describing the visit as a highlight of his stay.

He also called Mallorca a gorgeous part of the world, which is rather nice coming from a man who's spent decades travelling to glamorous locations in his illustrious career. From international espionage to organised crime, Mallorca certainly knows how to attract an interesting crowd. Al-

though perhaps we should stop giving fictional criminals ideas about where to retire.

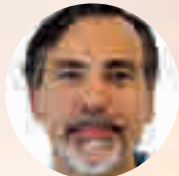
Mallorca based MobLand actor, Alex Fine, talks about his role in the series.

"Two years ago, one of the episode directors called me to offer me a character because he had photographed me before. They introduced me as a kind of hitman's hitman, and my job was to hunt down Tom Hardy's character. In the second season, I am reintroduced as a more deceptive character, almost like a seductive trap. I think people will enjoy this season."

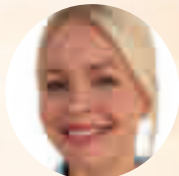




Dr. J. Misina
Deputy Medical Director
Internal Medicine



Dr. D. Schulz
Orthopaedics and
Trauma Surgery



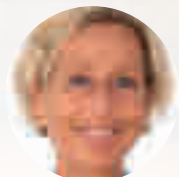
Dr. J. F. Hagström
Orthopaedics and
Trauma Surgery



Dr. P. Lang
Orthopaedics and
Trauma Surgery



Dr. W. Czichon
Orthopaedics and
Chiropractic



Dr. S. Normann
Paediatrics and
Adolescent Medicine



Dr. M. Artigues
Ophthalmology



Dr. S. Brötzmann
Neurology,
Emergency Medicine



Dr. A. Leonhard
Medical Director / Internal
Medicine, Sports Medicine and
Naturopathic Medicine



Dr. C. Lunau
Deputy Medical Director
Internal Medicine and Longevity



Dr. L. Jährig
General Medicine



Dr. C. Keller
Obstetrics and
Gynaecology



Dr. S. Grothey
Obstetrics and
Gynaecology



Dr. T. Waller
Ear, Nose and
Throat Medicine



Dr. U. Frankenger
Internal Medicine and
Gastroenterology



Prof. Dr. O. Reich
Urology and
Andrology

New in Palma.



Your healthcare partners in Mallorca since 1988.

Internal Medicine
Sports Medicine
Orthopaedics and Trauma Surgery
Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Paediatrics
Urology and Andrology
Gastroenterology
Ophthalmology
Physiotherapy

Book your date now:
+34 971 68 5333
medicum-mallorca.com



Companies belonging to the group:





The 1982 film adaptation of Agatha Christie's mystery *Evil Under the Sun* was heavily filmed on location across Mallorca. Key Mallorca filming locations featured in the movie include:



- **The Hotel / Cove:** Filmed at Caló d'en Monjo (near Cala Fornells in Calvia, on the west coast). The hotel built for the film has since been demolished, and the cove is now a designated nudist beach.
- **The Hotel Gardens:** Filmed at the historic Raixa Estate in Bunyola, located in the foothills of the Tramuntana mountains north of Palma. The estate is publicly owned, features Italian-style gardens designed by Giovanni Lazzarini, and is free to visit.
- **Gull Cove:** Filmed at Platja Cala en Feliu (Cala Feliu) near Formentor and Pollensa in the far north of the island.



Mallorca served as the primary filming location for Season 1 of the BBC thriller series *The Night Manager*, starring Tom Hiddleston, Hugh Laurie, and Olivia Colman. **Key Filming Locations in Mallorca**



insula property that served as the luxurious home of billionaire arms dealer Richard Roper (Hugh Laurie).
• **Ca's Patró March (Cala Deya):** A cliff-side seafood restaurant overlooking a rocky cove where the dramatic kidnapping scene of Roper's son took place.



Netflix filmed major sequences of *The Crown* (Seasons 5 and 6) in Mallorca, Spain, using the island's coastal scenery to stand in for the French Riviera.

Key Filming Locations in Mallorca

- **Andratx & Puerto Andratx:** Used extensively for villa and yacht scenes, including portraying the residence and summer settings of Princess Diana (played by Elizabeth Debicki) and Dodi Al-Fayed (played by Khalid Abdalla).
- **San Telmo (Sant Elm):** Featured speed-boat and coastal sequences on the western coast of the island.
- **Sa Calobra & Sierra de Tramuntana:** The dramatic mountain roads and rocky coves doubled for Mediterranean coastal drives.



MALLORCA: THE FILM SET

Palma.—Over the years it has masqueraded as Saint-Tropez, Monaco, Mustique, Mauritius, Barbados, Sardinia, the Adriatic and, rather cheekily, Ibiza. Occasionally someone does let it play itself though.

Hollywood, Netflix, the BBC, Bollywood and German television have all come calling, and lately they're calling rather a lot. Mallorca's film career is booming, with increasingly ambitious international productions discovering that one relatively small Mediterranean island can impersonate an awful lot of the planet. And it all looks annoyingly good on camera.

Poirot came first

Well, not literally. Films were being made here long before 1982, but *Evil Un-*

der the Sun remains one of Mallorca's great starring roles.

Peter Ustinov arrived as Hercule Poirot, accompanied by Maggie Smith, Diana Rigg and Jane Birkin, for a glamorous holiday involving cocktails, questionable swimwear and, inevitably, murder.

Agatha Christie actually set her novel in Devon. The filmmakers took one look at that idea and relocated the whole thing to a fictional Adriatic island instead.

Enter Mallorca.

Formentor and the Raixa estate near Bunyola appear, while Sa Dragonera, Cala d'en Monjo and Cala Deya all got their moment. Director Guy Hamilton liked Mallorca so much he bought a house here. Poirot solved the case, by the way.

Continued on the next page

The Paramount+ spy thriller series *Special Ops: Lioness* (created by Taylor Sheridan) filmed major scenes across the island of Mallorca. **Key Filming Locations in Mallorca**

- **La Fortaleza (Puerto Pollensa):** The famous clifftop fortress served as the setting for the high-stakes wedding sequence.
- **Palma:** Scenes were shot in Palma's old town, the Palma Yacht Club (Club Náutico), Hotel Glòria, and locations like Pueblo Español, Parc Bit, and Son Bonet aerodrome.
- **Pollensa & Surrounds:** Filming took place throughout the streets of Pollensa, as well as Valldemossa.

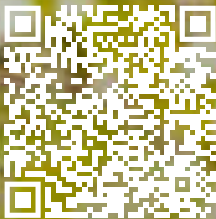


LIVING BLUE

MALLORCA

Authentic Mallorca Homes

REAL ESTATE BOUTIQUE
livingblue-mallorca.com



The *Mallorca Files* is a light-hearted British police procedural television drama set on Mallorca. Created by Dan Sefton, the series centers on an "odd couple" pairing of two international detectives working alongside the local Spanish police force. The show relies on the classic, contrasting dynamic of its two lead characters:

► **DC Miranda Blake (played by Elen Rhys):** A high-strung, by-the-book British detective who takes her work very seriously.

► **Max Winter (played by Julian Looman):** A relaxed, instinct-driven German detective who prefers a laid-back approach to life and work.

The two clash over their opposite methods but share an underlying chemistry while solving homicides, thefts, and kidnappings within Mallorca's wealthy international community. They report to their formidable Spanish police chief, Inés Villegas (played by María Fernández Ache).



Then Mallorca discovered it could be anywhere



Continued

And this is where things get silly. When *The Crown* needed Saint-Tropez for Diana's final summer in 1997, it used Puerto Andratx. When it needed Monaco, it used Palma. Elsewhere, Mallorca was put to work impersonating Mustique, Sardinia and Barbados.

Five destinations. One island. That's one way to keep costs down.

Then there's *Me Before You*. Remember Emilia Clarke and Sam Claflin's romantic trip to Mauritius? Pollensa and Formentor.

For *The Hustle*, Anne Hathaway and Rebel Wilson were supposedly conning their way around the French Riviera. Much of that was actually Mallorca, with Puerto Portals, Manacor, Cala Ratjada and Palma joining the deception. And apparently Formentor hadn't finished pretending to be some-

where else. *The Last Letter from Your Lover*, starring Shailene Woodley and Felicity Jones, returned for its 1960s French Riviera romance.

Netflix's *White Lines*, meanwhile, was supposedly taking us into the drug-fuelled, DJ-filled underbelly of Ibiza. Except much of the series was filmed in Mallorca, with Camp de Mar, Portocolom, Cala d'Or and locations around Valldemossa standing in for our neighbour. Even the iconic frontage of Tito's was cast as an Ibiza club. Stealing Ibiza's film work seems particularly cheeky when it's just over the road. We won't tell them if you don't.

Sometimes Mallorca gets to be Mallorca

The BBC's *The Mallorca Files* finally allowed the island to stop pretending, sending detectives Miranda Blake and Max Winter charging around Palma,

Arta, Soller and beyond, solving an improbable number of murders.

The body count should probably concern the tourism authorities, but everyone is beautifully tanned

and the scenery looks fabulous, so we'll let it go.

And in movie *Off the Rails*, Mallorca was the actual destination. Kelly Preston, Jenny Seagrove and Sally Phillips headed for



Above: Nicole Kidman in *Lioness*. Emilia Clarke in *Me Before You* during filming. Below: Tom Hanks in *Cloud Atlas*. Anne Hathaway and Rebel Wilson in *The Hustle*.



Palma's magnificent cathedral in a comedy-drama that became Preston's final film. Even the famous light phenomenon at La Seu got a starring role.

The Night Manager gave Mallorca a rather more sinister resident. La Fortalesa became the home of Hugh Laurie's billionaire arms dealer Richard Roper, while Tom Hiddleston brooded attractively around Palma, Puerto Soller, Cala Deya and Formentor. The fortress has since hosted *Lioness*, *The Last Sunrise* and *MobLand*, but we'll leave its pirates, parties and celebrity weddings to its own feature elsewhere in this edition. It deserves one.

And now everybody's coming

This isn't simply a greatest-hits album from Mallorca's film past. The interesting bit is what's happening now.

Taylor Sheridan's CIA thriller *Lioness* brought Zoe Saldana and Nicole Kidman to the island.

MobLand followed with Tom Hardy, Pierce Brosnan and Helen Mirren. German television has *Der König von Palma*, based around Playa de Palma and Can Picafort. And then Bollywood got in on the action. Blockbuster *Pathaan*, starring Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone, shot scenes here too. Adam Sandler came calling as well.

His Netflix basketball drama *Hustle* brought a production involving more than 1,500 extras to Palma, where his character discovers a future basketball star. Apparently even Hollywood's talent scouts are recruiting in Mallorca.

The back catalogue isn't exactly shabby either. For example, *Cloud Atlas*, starring Tom Hanks and Halle Berry, used the Serra de Tramuntana to create worlds far beyond the Mediterranean. Bryan Cranston's *The Infiltrator* opens in Cala Deya.

Mallorca has been appearing on screen for decades. What's changed is the sheer variety of its roles: spy thrillers, crime dramas, Hollywood movies, Bollywood blockbusters and international streaming series. The island isn't just getting cameos anymore.

So why does everybody want a piece of it?

First, Mallorca is basically

a location scout's cheat code.

Palma offers Gothic, Baroque and Modernist architecture, grand mansions, narrow old-town streets and one fairly difficult-to-miss cathedral. Drive out and you have ancient villages, vineyards, forests, mountains, wetlands, enormous fincas, secluded coves and perfectly blue water within literal minutes.

Need a billionaire's Mediterranean hideaway? Done. A Caribbean beach? Apparently. Monaco? Sure. Mauritius? Why not. Greek island? OK. A remote mountain road on which something terrible is clearly about to happen? Go ahead. Then there's the light.

Mallorca's Mediterranean glow makes almost everything look expensive, including Peter Ustinov's deeply unfortunate Poirot bathing costume, which he reportedly designed himself.

Somebody, please, solve that crime.

Additionally, Mallorca has experienced production companies and crews, accommodation and excellent air connections. Film crews may want magic on screen, but they also need an alarming amount of equipment and somewhere to put everybody.

Mallorca can do all of that.

The set you can actually visit

When filming finishes, Mallorca doesn't disappear into a warehouse. The beach, hotel, mountain road and village square are still sitting there waiting for viewers who saw them on screen and thought: *Where's that?*

Sometimes the answer is Saint-Tropez. Except it's Mallorca. Or Mauritius. Also Mallorca. Mustique? You get the idea.

Mallorca can spend months pretending to be somewhere else and still advertise itself beautifully in the process.

So next time you find yourself diverted around a Palma street because somebody has parked three production trucks across it, don't complain. Somewhere behind those barriers, Mallorca may be pretending to be Monaco, the Caribbean or a billionaire's heavily fortified lair.

Give it a week.

It'll be somewhere else.

Hollywood's favourite Mediterranean escape

Palma.—Mallorca has become one of Hollywood's favourite summer hideaways, attracting A-list stars who swap red carpets for secluded coves, luxury yachts and quiet mountain villages. While neighbouring Ibiza is

known for celebrity parties, Mallorca has built a reputation for privacy – and that is exactly what keeps the world's biggest names coming back year after year.

No celebrity is more closely linked to the island than Mi-

chael Douglas, who has spent more than three decades at his famous S'Estaca estate near Valldemossa with Catherine Zeta-Jones. Douglas has repeatedly described Mallorca as his "second home", and the couple are regularly spotted enjoying Palma, Port

de Valldemossa and the Tramuntana coast away from the spotlight.

Recent summers have brought an extraordinary parade of American stars. Oprah Winfrey and Kris Jenner have become regular visitors aboard music mogul David Geffen's superyacht *Rising Sun*, spending their days exploring Sa Calobra, Deya, Valldemossa and Puerto Sol-

ler. The island has also become a floating Hollywood set for Matthew

McConaughey, who has holidayed around Mallorca with his wife Camila Alves, while Pedro Pascal has been photographed enjoying the coast with friends including Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox and Jason Bateman.

Even filmmaking royalty has fallen for the island's charm. Steven Spielberg arrived aboard his spectacular *Seven Seas* yacht before visiting friends Daniel Day-Lewis and Rebecca Miller in Puerto Andratx, where the Oscar-winning pair enjoyed relaxed days cruising the

coastline.

They are far from alone. Jennifer Aniston, Richard Gere, Magic Johnson, Venus and Serena Williams, Justin Bieber, Eva Longoria and countless others have all chosen Mallorca as their Mediterranean retreat. Whether dining in Puerto Portals, wandering Deya's stone streets or anchoring off hidden coves, these stars keep proving that Mallorca's greatest luxury is not just its scenery – it is the rare chance to disappear from the spotlight.



by **MARCOS CABOTÁ**

Film Director. Member of the Spanish Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences

I've had the privilege of shooting in Madrid, London, New York and Los Angeles. Each city has its own character, its own challenges and its own cinematic possibilities. But if you ask me which place has given me the most as a filmmaker, my answer is simple: Mallorca.

People often think of the island as a beautiful holiday destination, and of course it is. But for those of us working in film, Mallorca offers something far more valuable than beautiful scenery: the ability to bring almost any creative vision to life.

We have spectacular coastlines, mountains, traditional villages, modern cities, historic buildings and extraordinary natural landscapes. Few places offer such variety so close together. One day you can be filming in a centuries-old village and the next on a beach that looks as though it belongs in the Caribbean.

Yet Mallorca's greatest asset isn't just what you see through the camera lens. It's what happens behind it.

The island has developed a professional audiovisual industry with facilities, equipment and technical expertise

that can compete with those found anywhere in the world. Companies such as MN Studios and Palma Pictures provide the resources that major productions need, from cameras, lighting and studio facilities to production logistics and experienced crews.

We also have an increasingly strong culture of film education and training. Mallorca produces talented professionals who work on local projects and frequently take their skills abroad. The island doesn't simply attract productions; it exports talent, too. And that talent is highly valued beyond our shores.

Perhaps what I appreciate most is that we can do much more than shoot here. Development, pre-production, editing, music, visual effects and other post-production services can all be part of the process. In other words, a director can arrive in Mallorca with a script and a vision and find the people, infrastructure and expertise to make it happen. Spielberg could land here with his hands in his pockets and an idea in his head. We would

know how to get to work.

Of course, there is still room for improvement. The Mallorca Film Commission has an important role to play in strengthening the island's international position. After years when its presence felt limited, there is an opportunity to regain ground lost to destinations such as the Canary Islands and Navarre, whose distinct tax arrangements can make them particularly attractive to producers. Mallorca has other strengths, but we need to communicate them better, support our industry and make it easier

for productions to choose us.

I'm about to shoot my tenth feature film, entirely in Mallorca, using local talent and equipment. I've done this many times before, and I've never felt that I needed to look elsewhere for something essential.

For me, that says everything. Mallorca isn't just somewhere to capture a beautiful image. It's somewhere to make a film.

There is only one real problem with coming here to shoot: once you've done it, you may never want to shoot anywhere else.

More Than a Beautiful Backdrop





Pirates. Painters. Parties. Rafa Nadal. Hugh Laurie. Tom Hiddleston. Idris Elba. Eva Longoria. And now Tom Hardy, Helen Mirren and a former James Bond with a questionable Irish accent. Sa Fortalesa has quite the CV.

by **ERICA LAY**

Perched on its own peninsula at the mouth of the Bay of Pollensa, surrounded by sea and protected by enormous stone walls, it has become one of Mallorca's most exclusive film and event locations. Which is slightly ironic, because the whole thing was originally built with the intention of keeping people out.

Back in 1628, the unwanted guests were corsairs rather than papa-

razzi. The first fortification at Punta de l'Avançada was built to help protect Pollensa from attack. It wasn't quite up to the job, so between 1682 and 1692 they

built another one. A bigger, hexagonal one. Much better. Fast-forward to 1919, and due to a lack of action as pirates had upskilled and moved away from being scallywags, the fortress was beginning to crumble. Fear not, however, as Argentinian painter Roberto Ramaugé decided he quite fancied a fixer-upper, and reportedly bought the whole peninsula for 45,000 pesetas. That's around €270 using the official conversion rate. Before you put your shoes on and rush to Pollensa with three hundred euros, I should point out that the property value has since gone up a bit. We'll get to that.



Eva Longoria in a scene from her latest film, *The Last Sunrise*, filmed in Mallorca.

Ramaugé transformed the place, adding elaborate gardens, staircases to the sea, sculptures, guest houses and an extraordinarily over-the-top colonnaded swimming pool. Artists and musicians including Hermen Anglada-Camarasa and guitarist Andrés Segovia came to stay. And then they partied. Hard.

Accounts from the 1920s describe glamorous gatherings with guests arriving in evening dress while local fishermen watched the goings-on from Port de

Pollensa. A century later, remarkably little has changed, although the guests probably arrive to the island now by private jet and have Oscars.

Enter the arms dealer

If you watched *The Night Manager*, you'll know Sa Fortalesa even if you don't

know you know it. It was the spectacular Mallorcan home of Richard Roper, Hugh Laurie's billionaire arms dealer with impeccable manners and the sort of smile you wouldn't trust around your nanna.

Tom Hiddleston's Jonathan Pine spent much of the series trying to infiltrate Roper's inner circle, while viewers spent much of it wondering where on earth that incredible hexagonal house was. Mallorca, obviously.

And frankly, the location scouts barely had to try. Sa Fortalesa already has terraces, pools, gardens, private coves, a helipad, huge stone walls and the Mediterranean sparkling menacingly in the background. It's a Bond villain's lair waiting to happen. All it's missing is a shark tank.

Then, because apparently Hugh Laurie wasn't enough, Idris Elba turned up. Netflix's *Turn Up Charlie* filmed its final party at the fortress in 2018. Next came *Lioness*, Taylor Sheridan's CIA thriller, which brought Zoe Saldana, Nicole Kidman and Morgan Freeman to Mallorca, with Sa Fortalesa providing the spectacular-

Rafael Nadal married Mery Perelló at Sa Fortalesa in October 2019, joining a list of high-profile couples who chose the Pollensa estate for their weddings, including Mallorcan footballer Marco Asensio and model Sandra Garal. PHOTO: PARAMOUNT





A scene from *MobLand*, filmed in Mallorca, featuring Pierce Brosnan and Helen Mirren.

lar setting for the season one's climactic wedding. In *The Last Sunrise*, the fortress changed jobs again, becoming the fictional luxury hotel Marès & Mar, where Eva Longoria's character arrives to oversee an expansion project. The trailer doesn't exactly hide the location either, opening with a huge bird's-eye sweep over the estate.

And then Mallorca really started showing off. In 2026 *MobLand* arrived with Tom Hardy, Helen Mirren and Pierce Brosnan. Yes, James Bond himself finally made it through the gates. Unfortunately, he was playing a gangster rather than 007, so the shark tank sadly remains unrealised. For now. Someone get Amazon MGM on the phone, please.

Meanwhile, Rafa got married

Sa Fortalesa doesn't restrict itself to screen royalty. In October 2019, Mallorca's favourite home grown treasure Rafa Nadal married Mery Perelló there after 14 years together. Privacy was, unsurprisingly, taken rather seriously, with guests reportedly required to surrender their phones before entering. Which is one way to prevent Auntie María livestreaming the first dance to Facebook.

Nadal wasn't even the first sporting superstar to discover the place. Spanish

basketball player Rudy Fernández married model Helen Lindes there in 2015, while Gareth Bale and Emma Rhys-Jones followed in 2019 with a wedding so secretive that remarkably little emerged until afterwards.

That's really the point of Sa Fortalesa. You cannot see in. The estate covers around 87,000 square metres, has its own coves and is surrounded by enough stone, sea and security to discourage even the most determined celebrity spotter. You don't so much peer over the fence as give up and look at the sea.

Remember the €270?

About that. Norwegian property investor Ivar Tollefsen bought Sa Fortalesa in a deal reported in 2022 at 650 million Norwegian kroner, approximately €61.8 million.

Which represents a fairly healthy increase on those 45,000 pesetas. Admittedly, there have been a few improvements.

And perhaps that's what makes Sa Fortalesa such an extraordinary

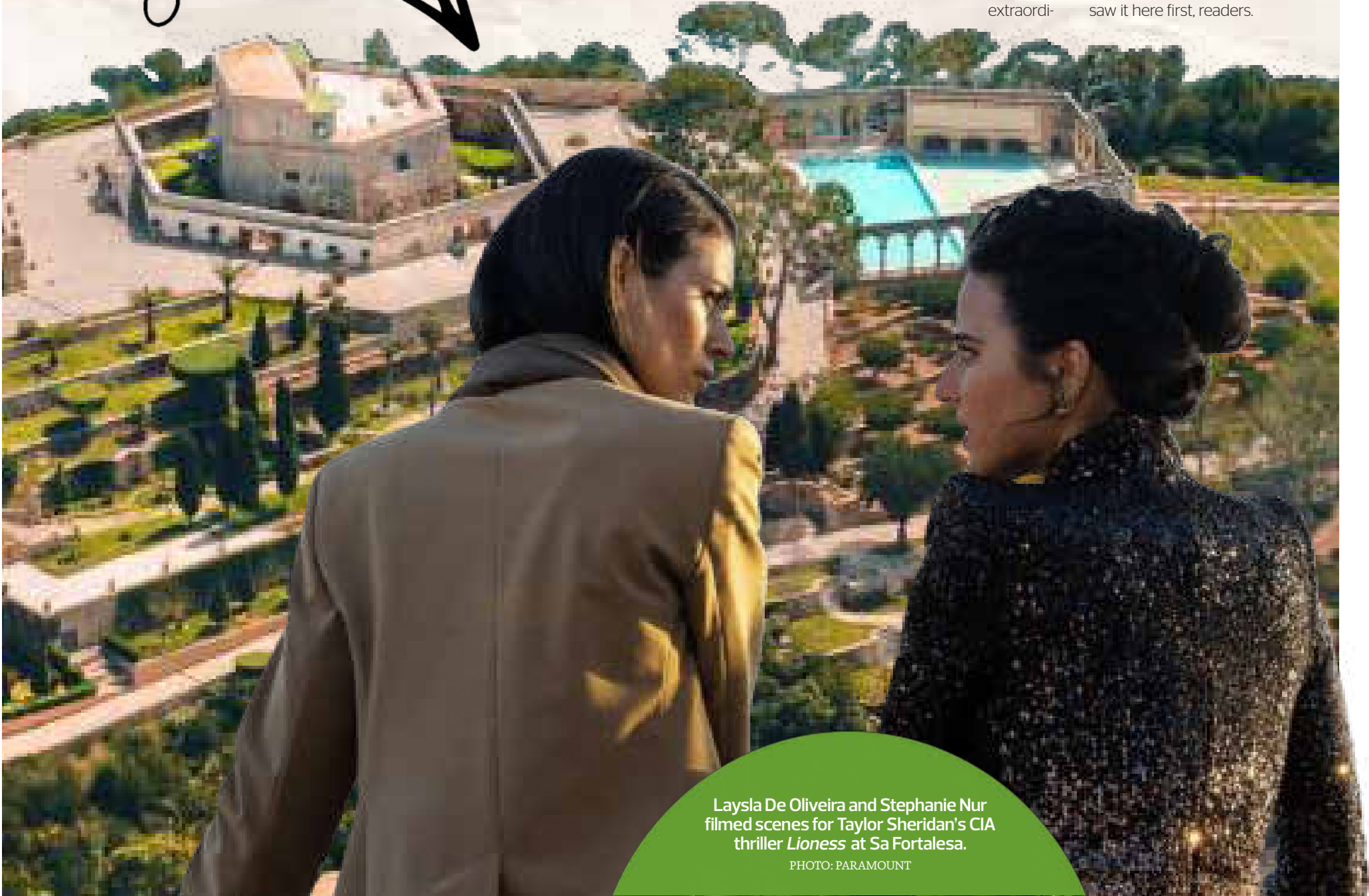


place. In four centuries it has gone from defending Mallorca against pirates to hosting painters, parties, international film crews, gangsters of the fictional variety, sporting royalty and some of Hollywood's biggest names.

Most of us will never make it through the gates. We'll see it from a boat, across the Bay of Pollensa or on a screen, pretending to belong to somebody richer, more glamorous or considerably more dangerous.

For more of Mallorca's adventures on screen, see Mallorca: The Film Set elsewhere in this edition.

And if the next production finally installs that shark tank? You saw it here first, readers.



Laysla De Oliveira and Stephanie Nur filmed scenes for Taylor Sheridan's CIA thriller *Lioness* at Sa Fortalesa.

PHOTO: PARAMOUNT

MALLORCA AND BRITAIN

A special relationship
built on tourism,
friendship and
shared experiences

by **SIR ALEX
ELLIS**
Ambassador to Spain

When people first think of Mallorca, it can be easy to fall back on stereotypes of sunshine and beaches. It has those in abundance, but after many visits during my time as British Ambassador to Spain I have come to know a welcoming island with picture-postcard scenery, wonderful food and exceptional hospitality. I visited it with my family when we lived in Spain 20 years ago and it was a pleasure to return earlier this year; a favourite place to visit for me and others in my family – my mother visited 60 years ago, and it was the first place my wife visited outside her native Portugal, aged 4!

And I, and they, are not alone. In 2025, over two million visitors travelled to Mallorca from the UK, spending €2.8 billion between them. Those numbers are important for the local economy, but behind them are thousands of individual stories and connections.

Countless British visitors have returned home over the years with memories of Mallorca that will stay with them for a lifetime. Others, including Angela McGrath, Nick Entwistle and Kate Mentink, have chosen to make the island their home and play a role in their communities, whether through brilliant organisations such as Cala Nova Cancer Care Charity Shop and Yachting Gives Back, or through their work with local authorities. I have enjoyed reading their stories in the Mallorca Daily Bulletin, a valued partner of the Embassy in helping us reach the British community on the island.

All three will soon receive well-deserved honours in recognition

of their work, as will local business leaders Gabriel Escarrer of Melià Hotels International and José Luis Benítez of Palladium Hotel Group, both of whom have been great supporters of safer tourism and the British Embassy's *Stick With Your Mates* campaign.

Tourism matters. It enriches our lives, encourages cultural exchange, and strengthens the wonderful relationship between our people. For all these reasons, it is a pleasure to welcome Balearic business leaders and authorities to World Travel Market in London, celebrating the journeys, friendships and shared experiences that continue to bring Britain and the Balearic Islands closer together.



Left: local business leaders Gabriel Escarrer of Melià Hotels International and José Luis Benítez of Palladium Hotel Group.

“Tourism matters. It enriches our lives, encourages cultural exchange, and strengthens the wonderful relationship between our people.”



Kate Mentink.



Nick Entwistle from Yachting Gives Back.



Angela McGrath, President of the Cala Nova Cancer Care Charity Shop.

LIEVITO MADRE SAURTEIG MASA FERMENTADA SOURDOUGH SAUERTEIG SURDEG ZUURDESEM



PAN ITALIANO



PAN DE OLIVAS



PAN REMOLACHA



PAN SALVADO

Thomas' BAKESHOP

Calle Anibal 24 - Santa Catalina - Palma de Mallorca
<http://www.thomasbakeshop.com> - +34 678 646699



BAGUETTE ESPELTA



NEW YORK STYLE
SOURDOUGH BAGEL



PAN CURCUMA



PAN CENTENO



BAGUETTE

FOR THE LOVE
OF BREAD



PAN ESPELTA



SAFTKORNBROT



PAN SARRACENO

Mallorca is home to numerous superyachts and their crews, are we the home to the real *Below Deck*?

IS THE LIFE OF A YACHTIE REALLY LIKE BELOW DECK?



by **ERICA LAY**



“If you think that working on a superyacht is like *Below Deck*, you may need to give your head a wobble.”

I wrote that in my book *SUPERYACHT LIFE*, and after nearly 20 years recruiting crew for some of the world's largest yachts, I stand by it. Mostly. Because here's the awkward bit: some of it absolutely is. Crew fall out. Guests make extraordinary requests. Chefs have meltdowns. People get fired. Toilets block. Tips may happen. Crew go ashore, drink too much and occasionally make spectacularly poor decisions. Yachting really doesn't require television producers to invent drama. But, the trick is finding enough of it to fill an episode every week.

When I asked yacht crew how accurately *Below Deck* portrays their profession, one response summed it up beautifully.

“*Below Deck* is a whole career in yachting crammed into one season,” said Chief Stew Helene du Plessis. “Those ridiculous things usually happen over years, so of course it looks crazy when you cram them all in one after another.”

Bingo.

Captain Romke Loopik describes real yacht life as “like *Below Deck* but without the hysterics and dramas”, while Captain Andrija Fustin reckons there can be “one *Below Deck* day in the whole season. If it's more than one, congrats. You're live on Bravo TV.”

Not everybody was quite so diplomatic. One yacht chef who has worked in the industry for 32 years gave me a response containing the words “ridiculous”, “offensive”, “stupid” and several others which probably shouldn't appear in a family publication.

He declined the opportunity to appear on the programme. Very firmly. Something about removing a rather important part of his anatomy was involved. I didn't push the subject.

But here's where it gets interesting. Engineer Byron Hissey actually did appear on *Below Deck*. “I did one season on the show, it was actually a lot of fun,” he told me. “No, it's not scripted. No, it didn't ruin my career.”

So much for an industry consensus. Perhaps the smartest observation came from Captain Joseph Jackson. *Below Deck*, he pointed out, is “crew-centric. Real yachting is guest-centric.”

And that's a pretty fundamental difference.

On a professionally run charter yacht, nobody particularly cares whether Deckhand Dave has unresolved feelings for Stew Sarah who has unresolved feelings for



CREW VIEW

“*Below Deck* is a whole career in yachting crammed into one season,” said **Chief Stew Helene du Plessis**. “Those ridiculous things usually happen over years, so of course it looks crazy when you cram them all in one after another.”

Chef Charlotte. The only unresolved feelings a charter chef has time for is usually about the guests' latest menu request. The tender needs fuel, there are four extra people for lunch at anchor, the boss has changed to-morrow's destination, twice, the washing machine's leaking, and the avocados delivered that morning could be used as defensive weapons.

The crew are there to make everything look effortless. It isn't. Depending on their role, they may be navigating, cooking, cleaning, serving, maintaining, launching tenders, ironing, polishing, provisioning, planning itineraries or quietly attempting to fix something extremely expensive before its owner notices it has stopped working.

And then doing it all again tomorrow.

That doesn't mean yacht crew never have fun. Of course they do. Young people live and work together in beautiful places under intense pressure. Friendships form, romances happen, parties happen and occasionally, chaos also happens.

Just perhaps not before every commercial break.

Season 5 of *Below Deck Mediterranean* (2020) was filmed across the Balearic Islands, with its main homeport set in Port Adriano, Mallorca, and scenes around Palma

There's also an entire side of yacht life which rarely makes glamorous television.

Winter shipyards in the rain. Bilges. Laundry mountains. Provisioning. Maintenance. Scrubbing decks. Removing highly dubious stains. Cleaning fridges. Polishing stainless until you begin to question every decision that led you to this point.

Captain Richard Vincent had one question about *Below Deck*: "Do they fish tampons out of the toilet macerator and/or shit tank on the show?"

Now that is real below deck activity.

Chef Hollie Duncan spent 13 years in yachting and never had a single crew hookup. For her, a three-hour break meant sleep, and even finding time to wash her hair felt like a luxury.

Meanwhile, former yacht chef Andrea Hart watches those short-televised charters and dreams of the turn-

around time. "I wish." Her reality included several trolleys of provisioning, a declined credit card and frantic phone calls while there was still more shopping to do.

Nobody has commissioned that episode yet...

This is another point on which actual crew become rather animated.

No, on most yachts you cannot simply crack open the owner's champagne, leap into their jacuzzi and start playing spin the bottle.

Captain Daniel Bustamante runs a superyacht with ten crew and says alcohol is treated with "zero tolerance" onboard. His crew don't use the jacuzzi or yacht toys either.

Other crew pointed out that modern yachties are just as likely to spend their free time hiking, diving, exercising or exploring wherever the yacht has taken them.

Which admittedly makes considerably less exciting television than somebody snogging their colleague after six tequilas and some skinny dipping.

No. But yes. The yachts are real. The work is real. The pressure is real. Difficult guests, exhausted crew, personality clashes, ridiculous requests, romances, sackings and disasters most certainly exist.

I've heard enough stories over the

past two decades to know that reality can occasionally make *Below Deck* look positively restrained.

But professional yachting is also an exacting hospitality business where guests can be paying hundreds of thousands a week and crew are expected to operate at an extraordinarily high standard. Most days involve far more work and far less drama than television would have you believe.

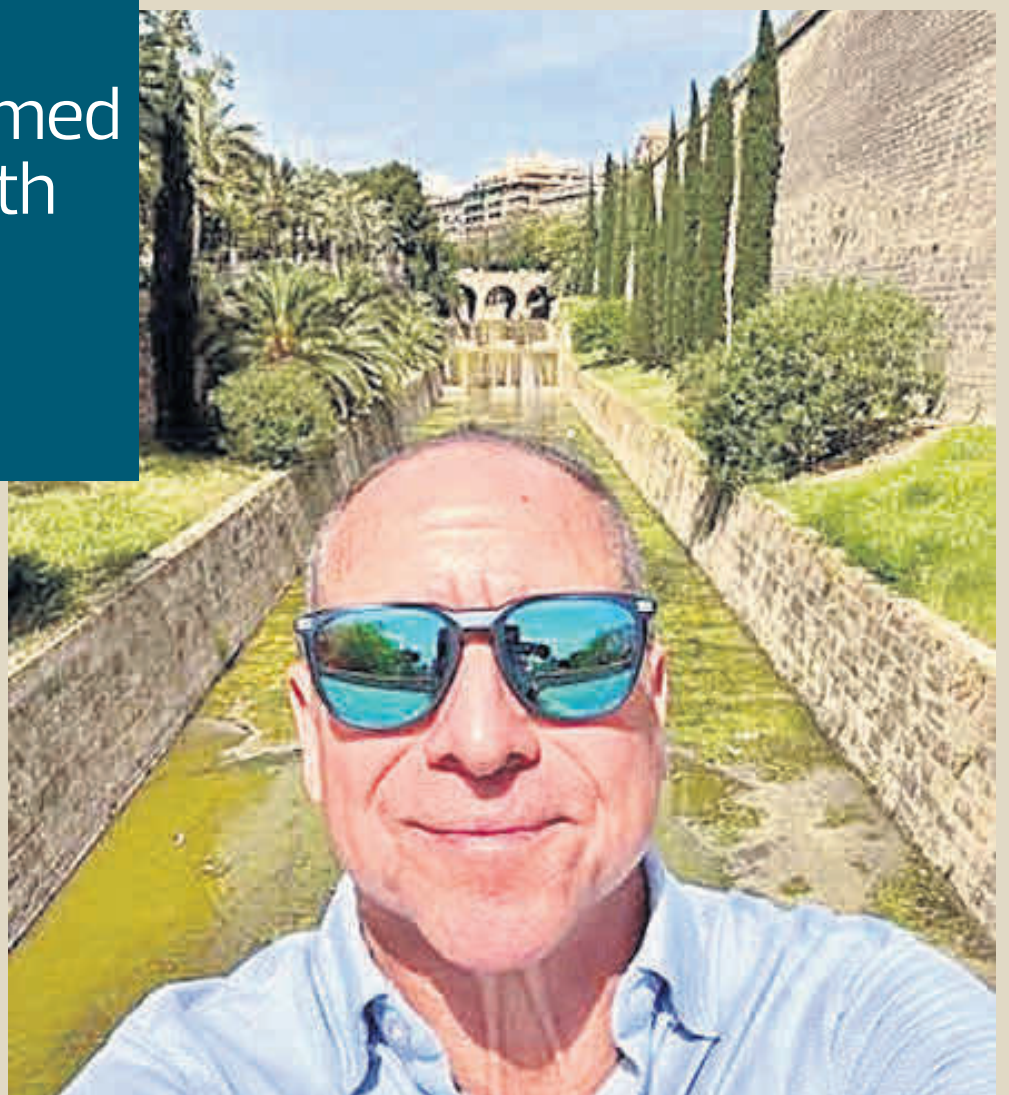
And perhaps we're asking the wrong question anyway. Nobody watches *Selling Sunset* and assumes their local estate agent spends Tuesday afternoon selling a \$30 million mansion before drinking champagne beside an infinity pool.

Below Deck deserves the same courtesy.

It's entertainment. It takes a strange, intense, occasionally ridiculous industry and turns the volume up until we can hear it from the sofa.

Is it yachting? Yes. Is it normal yachting? Give your head a wobble. Please.

"Other crew pointed out that modern yachties are just as likely to spend their free time hiking, diving, exercising or exploring wherever the yacht has taken them."



Captain Glenn Shephard of *Below Deck Mediterranean*, home from home in Mallorca

Mallorca, home of the superyacht

Mallorca has over 60 superyachts permanently berthed year-round, and logs over 2,000 superyacht visits each summer during peak season (July and August).

● **Permanent Berths:** More than 60 superyachts stay docked in Mallorcan ports year-round as the Mediterranean's fourth-largest superyacht base.

● **Summer Traffic:** The island records more than 2,000 individual superyacht visits every summer season.

Major Marinas:

● **Club de Mar Mallorca:** Features 543 total moorings, including over 70 dedicated superyacht berths for vessels ranging from 40 to 170 meters.

● **Port Adriano:** Offers 487 moorings for yachts up to 80 meters alongside an on-site shipyard and dry dock.

● **Puerto Portals:** Provides 701 moorings for yachts from 8 to 60 meters, frequently hosting high-profile vessels.

● **Real Club Náutico de Palma:** Accommodates some of the largest mega-yachts in the Bay of Palma.



TOURISM: the Enduring Bond Between Britain and the Balearics



by **GABRIEL ESCARRER**
Chairman & CEO,
Meliá Hotels International

As the 2026 summer season draws to a close, there is much for the Balearic Islands, and indeed Spain, to reflect upon with optimism. Despite an increasingly complex global landscape marked by geopolitical uncertainty, economic volatility in many markets, and ongoing concerns around sustainability and climate resilience, travel continues to demonstrate an extraordinary capacity to connect people, cultures and economies. And nowhere is this more evident than in the enduring relationship between the Balearic Islands and the United Kingdom.

For generations, British travellers have been far more than visitors to our shores. They have become part of the social, cultural and economic fabric of destinations such as Mallorca, Menorca and I can safely say that modern tourism in the Balearics, and much of Spain's tourism success story, has been built alongside the trust, loyalty and affection of the British market.

The good news is that this relationship remains as strong as ever: British visitors continue to be among the most valued guests arriving in our islands, appreciated not only for their volume but also for their deep emotional connection with the destination. Many families are now in their second or third generation of holidaying in Mallorca, creating a remarkable bond that transcends tourism statistics.

At Meliá Hotels International, we have witnessed firsthand how traveller preferences have evolved. Today's British customer is increasingly seeking authentic experiences, higher-quality accommodation, wellness, gastronomy, sustainability and a more meaningful connection with local communities. This evolution is helping drive a positive transformation across the destination, and few places illustrate this journey better than Magaluf, that, through close collaboration between Spanish and British institutions and investors, - with the significant commitment of Meliá Hotels International -, has undergone a profound repositioning over the last decade. The result is a more sustainable and balanced tourism model, creating greater value for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

This transformation reflects a wider trend across the Balearics. The challenge today is not simply to attract more visitors, but to create more value through tourism while preserving what makes our islands unique. Quality, sustainability and coexistence must continue to guide the next phase of our development, as tourism increasingly favours the "V" of Value



Gabriel Escarrer, CEO of Meliá, and Rafa Nadal at the launch of the new hotel brand in Magaluf. PHOTO: MELIÁ HOTELS



I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the British travel industry, its professionals and, above all, the millions of British guests who continue to place their trust in our destinations year after year.



INFORMATION

Gabriel Juan Escarrer Jaume (born in January 1971 in Palma de Mallorca) is a Spanish businessman and the current chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of Meliá Hotels International.

Biography and Education

» **Birth:** January 1971, in Palma de Mallorca
» **Family:** He is the son of Gabriel Escarrer Juliá, founder of the hotel group, who died in November 2024. The Escarrer family controls a large proportion of the company's share capital.

» **Education:** He graduated in business and economics from the Wharton School of the

University of Pennsylvania, specialising in finance and business management, and holds an MBA from ESADE.

Professional Career

» **Early career:** He worked in the financial sector in New York for Salomon Smith Barney before joining the family business.

» **Meliá Hotels International:** He gradually took on greater executive responsibilities before succeeding his father in running the company. The formal handover took place in 2016, and he became chairman in 2023.

» **Leadership:** Under his leadership, the group has driven digitalisation, international expansion and the hotel chain's sustainability strategy.

over the "V" of Volume, and travellers are becoming increasingly discerning when it comes to sustainability and authenticity.

Looking ahead to 2027, there are every reason to be confident; tourism demand fundamentals remain strong, particularly among British travellers, who continue to view the Balearic Islands as one of the most attractive and reliable destinations in Europe. Excellent air connectivity, world-class hospitality infrastructure, safety, climate, natural beauty and cultural richness provide a competitive advantage that few destinations can match.

For this reason, as we gather once again at World Travel Market in London, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the British travel industry, its professionals and, above all, the millions of British guests who continue to place their trust in our destinations year after year. The future of tourism will undoubtedly evolve. But the friendship between the United Kingdom, the Balearic Islands and Spain remains one of the strongest foundations upon which that future will be built.

MELIÁ HOTELS INTERNATIONAL 70 YEARS

Most Sustainable Hotel Company in Europe
according to S&P Global Sustainability Yearbook 2026

Travel *for*
GOOD

Because the best journeys leave something good behind.
For seven decades, we've believed in the power of travel to bring positive change
to communities and the world around us.

GRAN MELIÁ
HOTELS & RESORTS

The MELIÁ
COLLECTION

ME
BY MELIÁ

PARADISUS
BY MELIÁ

MELIÁ
HOTELS & RESORTS

ZEL

INNSIDE
BY MELIÁ

SOL
BY MELIÁ

AFFILIATED
BY MELIÁ

CIRCLE
BY MELIÁ

MELIÁ
REWARDS

MELIÁ
pro

melia.com



by **VICKI MCLEOD**



Refurbished hotels, a renewed seafront and a growing cultural programme are broadening Magalluf's offer. What will this next chapter mean for visitors, businesses and residents?

A familiar name, a changing destination

Magalluf has a reputation that travels well beyond Mallorca. For generations of British holidaymakers, its name has meant sunshine, beach days and nights that stretch into the following morning. For others, it has become shorthand for the excesses of a holiday resort whose busiest streets have supplied more than their fair share of headlines. That reputation can make it easy to overlook what is happening on the ground. Years of private investment and public improvements have been changing the resort's accommodation, its seafront and the experiences offered to visitors. Hotel operators have been developing different propositions for families, couples and people combining holidays with work and even a literary festival has become part of the cultural calendar while the EU funded renovated promenade has provided an improved public space beside the sea. With the final phase of the beachfront works now open since May 2026 and further public funding allocated, this is a useful moment to examine how far Magalluf has come, and what remains to be done.

The investment behind the changes

Melia Hotels International has been central to



the process: the group has invested more than €230 million in repositioning 11 hotels in Magalluf over the course of its redevelopment programme. The scale is impressive, but so is the approach as much of the resort's changing appearance comes from existing hotels being refurbished, redesigned and then re-marketed to a completely different group of customers. The redevelopment of the former Jamaica Hotel site is a great example: in July 2018, the Calvia Beach Plaza hotel and Momentum Plaza opened, bringing accommodation, shopping, restaurants and public space into the same project. The project was designed to improve the experience beyond the hotels, creating places to eat, shop and spend time that would appeal to a broader range of visitors.

From BH Mallorca to family holidays

One of the clearest examples of changing direction is the redevelopment of the former BH Mallorca complex. Since 2024 a programme involving more than €20 million of investment has focused on refurbishing three properties under Fergus management: Fergus Club Mallorca Waterpark, tent Calvia Beach and tent Mojito Suites. The four-star Fergus Club Mallorca Waterpark, with 656 rooms, was repositioned around family holidays. Pools, slides and premium facilities became central to an offer aimed at parents and children. While the two "tent" properties offered another approach, combining practical accommodation with flexible services, including brunch available until early afternoon with their intended audience including couples and groups of friends.

Digital Nomads, another way to stay

Other hotel concepts reflect changing expectations about what a holiday could provide, Hotel

Tangerine by Honne Hotels has promoted a fully refurbished three-star superior property for guests aged 16 and over. Its offer combines Mediterranean design with a gym, coworking space, unlimited brunch and an emphasis on relaxed stays. The co-working is an interesting addition... The hotel is explicitly marketing this space to digital nomads and business travellers seeking to combine work with time in Mallorca. It illustrates how operators are now building different experiences around the familiar attractions of sunshine and the beach.

A new face for the seafront

Private investment is one part of the wider undertaking. Hotel operators can transform their own buildings, but the streets, public spaces and surrounding businesses help determine how the resort is experienced as a whole. The promenade redevelopment is one of the most visible recent public improvements. In May 2026, Calvia Town Hall opened the second phase of the Gabriel Escarrer Julià seafront promenade, completing the beachfront renovation. Named after the late founder of the Melia hotel group, the promenade has been redesigned to create a more accessible space for residents and visitors. This phase covered 286 metres of seafront, with improvements to adjoining streets and steps. The redevelopment was supported by European Next Generation funding and the Sustainable Tourism Tax.

Culture enters the picture

Magalluf's cultural programme adds another dimension to the story. The Festival de Literatura Expandida de Magalluf, known as FLEM, recently returned to the resort for its latest annual event. Organised around books, writers and creative encounters, it adds a literary identity to a place more commonly associated with nightlife. But

it's not just about bringing a more cultural aspect to the area, as an autumn festival gives people a specific reason to visit beyond the height of summer.

Music has also become a large part of the image of Magalluf through Mallorca Live and Es Jardi, both highlighted by Calvia as important elements of its cultural and tourism strategy. The challenge is to turn individual occasions into lasting benefits.

Attendance alone cannot establish whether independent businesses gain repeat customers or whether the season becomes meaningfully longer.

The next stage of public investment

Last month Calvia announced an allocation of approximately €16.8 million under the Balearic Sustainable Tourism Tax plan for 2026–2027. Almost €8 million of that total is specifically directed towards Magalluf's responsible tourism, security and related improvements.

The improvements will include additional local

police resources, security and surveillance systems, support for the foreign tourist assistance service and initiatives associated with the "Magalluf for All" campaign.

The measures address aspects of the destination that hotel refurbishment alone cannot resolve. How safe people feel, how public spaces are managed and how visitors behave all shape the experience of a resort. They will also influence daily life for people living and working nearby, whose needs remain part of Magalluf's future.

What does change mean for local people?

The resort's next chapter will depend partly on whether the benefits reach beyond its largest hotel businesses. An independent restaurant owner may judge progress through customers coming through the door and a worker may assess it through the length of their contract and the cost of living nearby, or a resident may place greater value on quieter nights, maintained streets and accessible public spaces. These dif-



Stars of *Coronation Street* Betty Driver, Doris Speed and Jean Alexander (top row), with Julie Goodyear, Eileen Derbyshire, Anne Kirkbride, Thelma Barlow and Barbara Knox (bottom row), enjoyed a trip to Mallorca back in 1974. PHOTO: GRANADA TELEVISION

ferent perspectives will help test and guide the ambitions behind the investment.

Longer hotel opening seasons could support more sustained employment and trade, but the effect needs to be understood through local experience. Similarly, higher visitor spending only tells part of the story unless we know where that money goes.

Housing is already recognised as a challenge. This year Melia's Gabriel Escarrer Jr (the son of the late founder) identified access to housing for workers as being among the issues requiring attention, alongside urban improvements and travel connections between Calvia and Palma. A destination relies on people to provide its hospitality. Their ability to live and work there is fundamental to its future.

Writing the next chapter

Magalluf's beach, accommodation and established appeal remain its foundations. Around them, refurbished hotels, an improved promenade and cultural events are creating a broader offer. The investment and physical changes can be documented, but their wider effects will emerge through the experiences of visitors, businesses, workers and residents.

For some, progress may mean finding a family holiday in a place they had previously overlooked. For others, it may mean a public space they enjoy using, more reliable employment or customers arriving beyond the busiest summer weeks.

There is room for Magalluf to retain its energy



while expanding what people expect from it. The next chapter will be shaped by how successfully that ambition becomes a shared experience, for the holidaymaker arriving for a week and the person who calls the resort home.

WHERE WILL CALVIA SPEND ITS TOURIST TAX FUNDING?

Almost **€17 million** will be invested in Magalluf and other areas of Calvià through two funding allocations.

NEARLY

€8 million

FOR MAGALLUF



More local police officers and crime prevention measures.



Improved security and video surveillance systems.



Support for the Civil Guard's Foreign Tourist Assistance Service (SATE).



Awareness campaigns under the "Magalluf for All" initiative.



Upgrades to municipal infrastructure and public services.

A FURTHER

€8.21 million

FOR LOCAL PROJECTS



Santa Ponsa waterfront (Phase II)
€2,414,174.11



Peguera promenade (Phases 3 and 4)
€2,386,185.69



Ca ses Monges convent, Es Capdella
€1,546,868.78



Cala Blanca, Costa de la Calma
€1,263,927.51



New public car park in Santa Ponsa
€598,037.62



Stage for events in Son Caliu
€100,000.01



Renaturalisation of Playa del Mago and Caló del Rei (Portals Vells)
€100,105.66



Calvia has been named one of eight finalists for the European Capital of Tourism 2027 title, with the final presentation taking place in Brussels on November 18 and 19.



SAVE
UP TO
20%
ON ALL
FLIGHTS

GET FIRST PICK THIS PAYDAY!

Jet2[®].com
Friendly low fares[®]

Discount varies by date and route. T&Cs apply: [Jet2.com/promotions](https://www.jet2.com/promotions).

What's On All Year Round

Festivals, traditions, music, food, sport and more – all year round in Mallorca.



FESTIVALS



TRADITIONS



MUSIC



FOOD & DRINK



SPORT



OUTDOORS

JANUARY

by **ANDREW EDE**



FIRE, FAITH AND FIESTA

The bells ring out, the traditional twelve grapes of good luck and prosperity are eaten, the cava flows and the parties in squares across Mallorca get into full swing. Celebration time but the celebrations certainly don't end around five or six o'clock on New Year's Day, for these are celebrations that are a prelude to a month of almost non-stop partying.

The New Year marquees are packed away to make space for Royal Pages to receive the letters of the island's children. **The Three Kings!** Such anticipation, such excitement. On the night of the fifth of January, Melchor, Gaspar y Baltasar miraculously appear simultaneously in the city, the towns, the ports, the villages. They come by boat. The Kings' greetings on the quayside in Palma herald the grandest of the island's cavalcades - one hundred years or so of custom now a wonderment of floats and fantasy. By land, by sea, the Kings have even been known to descend from the skies. Carriages and horses convey the cavalcades of Magi and their attendants to the adornments of the baby Jesus in church nativities, to town hall balconies for more greetings and to the eager recipients of the Kings' gifts. Such spectacles. But there will be more. Very much more.

Sant Antoni Abat is Mallorca's unofficial patron saint. The cult of worship of Anthony the Great dates back to the early decades following the conquest of Mallorca in 1229. Sant Antoni, the father of monasticism, the saint of the animals, the saint whose followers treated ergotism - St. Anthony's Fire - the saint who was tormented by demons. Fiestas for Sant Antoni can be traced to 1365 in Sa Pobla, which is today the epicentre for rituals of the saint dancing with demons, for the blessings of animals, **for the bonfires that mark a renewal. Everywhere there is the smell of wood smoke and of barbecues, and from the darkness of January nights emerge the beings of the**



demons who run with fire. The correfoc!

The gangs of demons with their grotesque appearance, their fire-spitting tridents, their warnings of devilment, their batucada drummers with incessant rhythms are a relatively new phenomenon - some fifty years old. These are demons who have escaped from a centuries-old religious theatre that originally positioned them as protagonists in processions for Corpus Christi as well as for fiestas in Sa Pobla. They are one variety of demon, the different guises making them central to the island's fiestas. The demon and Sant Antoni are true symbols of Mallorca.

Mid-January and the celebrations blur into one. January 16 is the eve of **Sant Antoni**, the 17th is day, and when the blessings can be on such a scale that whole flocks and herds can be manoeuvred through village centres. There is no pause, as another great saint of Mallorca, **Sant Sebastià**, is honoured. No more so than in Palma. Sebastian is the city's patron saint. He once rid the city of the plague - or rather, a bone from an arm managed this feat in 1523. Sebastian, a time for more bonfires and barbecues, for concerts in Palma's squares (the **grand party night of January 19**), and for fire-running on an awesome scale. Palma does this twice a year - once in winter, once in summer. Numerous gangs of demons are let loose, accompanied by beasts of fire. The dragon, Drac de na Coca, ap-



pears before this massive correfoc. A real beast rather than a legend in that an escaped crocodile was taken to have been a dragon by seventeenth-century residents of Palma, it breathes fire and lights the bonfire in Plaça Major on the January 19 party night. The music ranges from folk to rock to jazz to urban.

And finally it is time to catch breath, although not the riders taking part in the end of January cycling event. Mallorca is Europe's premier destination for winter cycling training, and the Gardens Hotels Luxcom Challenge Ciclista, with both women's and men's challenges, is the culmination of this training.

January 5: Three Kings parades. Whole of the island. (evening).

January 16: Sant Antoni Eve. Especially in northern and eastern Mallorca, e.g. Alcudia, Artà, Manacor, Muro, Pollensa and Sa Pobla.

January 17: Sant Antoni. Animal blessings across the island.

January 19: Sant Sebastià party night. Palma.

January 23-31: Gardens Hotels Luxcom Challenge Ciclista. Various locations



FEBRUARY

ALMOND BLOSSOM AND CARNIVAL MAGIC

'Festa de la llum', festival of light is how Palma Cathedral has dubbed a phenomenon that occurs two times a year - February 2 (Candlemas) and November 11 (the feast of Saint Martin). The dates are equal periods from the winter solstice and when the morning sun (around 8am) produces the 'vuit', the figure of eight created by the reflection of the main rose window - the Gothic Eye - under the smaller window.

In 2007, the Balearic Mathematics Society drew attention to the phenomenon. It had obviously been known about for centuries - the rose window was installed in the 14th century and the stained glass in the 16th century - but it had never been

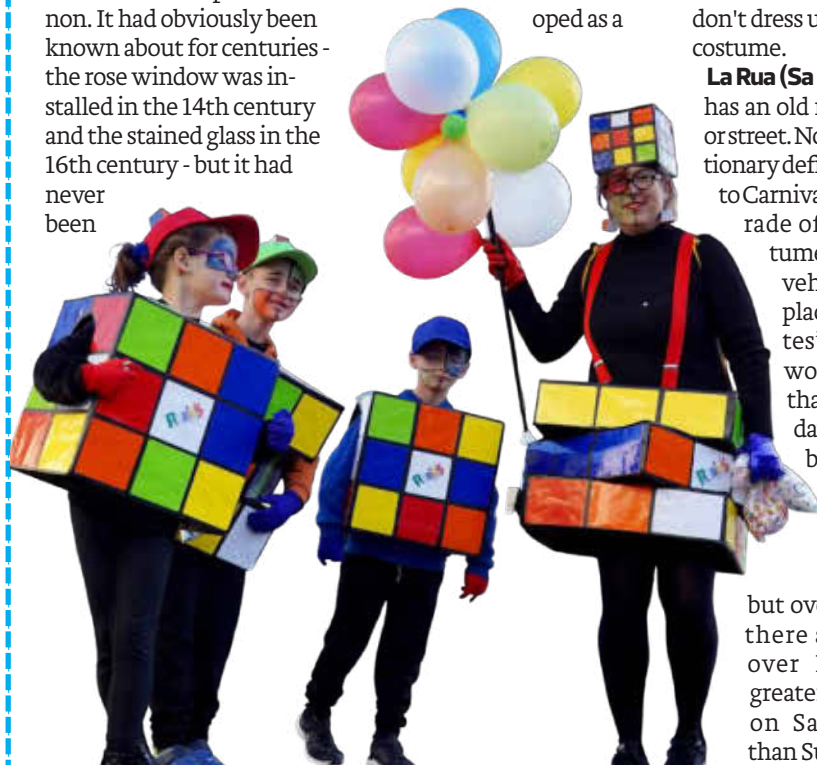
popularised. It has since become very popular.

The landscape of Mallorca in February is characterised by the fields of almond blossom - an amazingly beautiful sight. In Son Servera there has been an **almond blossom fair** since 2010. Held on the first Sunday in February, the location is the estate of Ca s'Hereu, which is now an agrotourism finca but has a history that dates back to the thirteenth century. This was one of the possessions that came to be owned by the Servera family, who gave their name to what developed as a

population centre, then a village and finally a municipality. Until the 1970s, Ca s'Hereu was a working farm.

The timing of Carnival is obviously determined by when Easter falls. In 2027 it will be very early - the weekend of **February 6 and 7**. Carnival is one of those annual occasions for a good old party, a load of fun and for potentially winning some money. It depends on the town hall and the category, but prizes can be up to 500 euros. But it's not really about the winning, it's the taking part that counts - or the watching for those who don't dress up or put on a costume.

La Rua (Sa Rua in Mallorquí) has an old meaning of way or street. Nowadays, the dictionary definition is specific to Carnival. This is "the parade of people in costumes and decorated vehicles that takes place at 'Carnestoltes'", the very old word for Carnival that is still used today - it means forbidden meats in reference to Lent. Palma has the largest Rua (obviously), but over the weekend there are parades all over Mallorca, the greater number being on Saturday rather than Sunday





blauhotels.com

Easter also dictates when Mallorca's biggest funfair is held. Or should it be Palm Sunday, as Fira del Ram refers to the Palm Sunday origin of the fair either in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries (it is disputed). Needless to say, today's fair is nothing like it used to be. Lasting for several weeks, it will run throughout March and up to Easter. The precise start date isn't available at present; this may be in February.

On March 1, 1983 the Balearics were officially granted autonomy. The following year the day was declared a festa and in 1999 became a public holiday. There will be a wide range of events over the final weekend of February and on the first of March. Mainly in Palma, appropriately enough as it is the seat of government, these typically range from a market for DO products and a Balearic cuisine fair to open days at places like the Balearic Parliament, to cars doing stunts and DJs and bands. Something for everyone.

Marratxi's Fira del Fang, the Ceramics Fair, was established in 1984 with the precise intention of supporting the labours of ceramicists, especially those from Marratxi. By the time it reached its thirtieth edition, the fair had become that greatly appreciated that it was honoured by being awarded a national prize from the Spanish Association of Ceramics' Towns. In the commendation, it was noted that the fair had contributed to the "prestige and diffusion of Spanish ceramics". The association between Marratxi and ceramics is an historical one, which is today reflected by the



MARCH

FAIRS, FAST CARS AND EASTER TRADITIONS

March 1: Balearics Day. Mainly Palma.

March 4-6: Rally Clásico. Base, Puerto Portals.

March 6-14: Marratxi Ceramics Fair.

March 14 (to be confirmed): St. Patrick's Day. Santa Ponsa.

March 21-28: Holy Week.

number of ceramics businesses, especially in Portol.

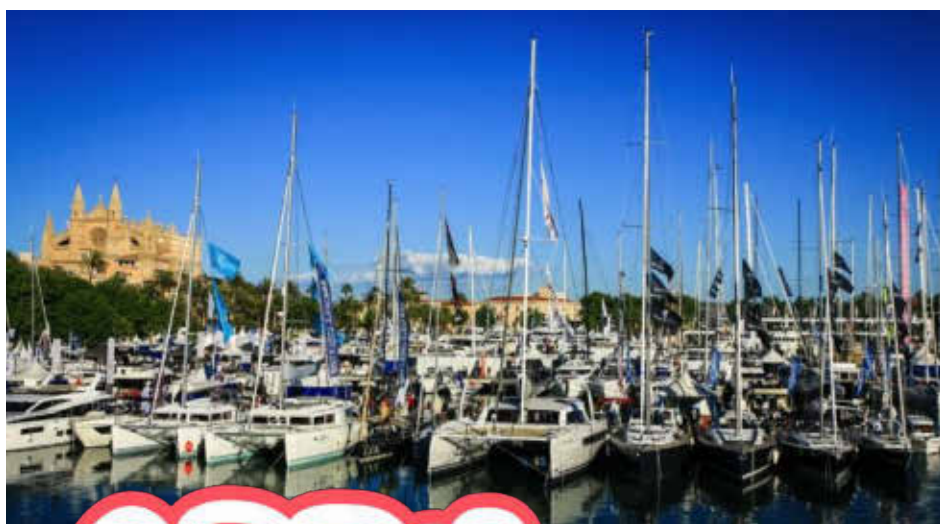
The **2027 Rally Clásico Puerto Portals** will be the 23rd edition. Over three days, the rally attracts more than 100 cars in various categories. A highly popular event, there are always some outstanding classic cars, such as MGs from the 1950s and Jaguar E-Types and Austin Healeys from the 1960s. Based in Puerto Portals, the stages are held in the Tramuntana Mountains.

In 2006, the Irish broadcaster RTE posted an article onto its website. The opening sentence read: "If Santa Ponsa did not exist, Ireland's holiday culture would have had to create it." The Irish didn't create Santa Ponsa, as it was - by the start of the 1970s - already a thriving resort, but the Irish connection was made in that decade and largely due to tour operator Joe Walsh. Santa Ponsa is Mallorca's centre for **Saint Patrick's Day celebrations**. In addition to children's activi-

ties and an artisan market, there is live entertainment - music and dance - and plenty of food and drink. And you would never guess that the food and drink might include Dublin Coddle and Guinness.

Easter in Mallorca is a period for solemn and emotional processions. Holy Week will start with the processions for Palm Sunday on March 21. These feature the specially prepared white palms crafted into different shapes. The upper parts of the trees are tied and covered, the lack of sunlight prevents photosynthesis and the leaves grow straight and white. The end-product is transformed into various shapes. There are various star styles, the long, braided 'cadeneta' and the elaborate 'margarita' bow. Alternatively, there is the simple, straight white palm, which is what is most commonly seen.

The most important procession in **Palma is Crist de la Sang** on Maundy Thursday (March 25). Lasting more than five hours, it involves almost 5,000 members of the city's 33 brotherhoods. The procession is organised in reverse order of brotherhood seniority. The image of Christ on the cross is the most revered in Mallorca along with the Virgin of Lluç. It is housed in the Church of the Annunciation (Església de l'Anunciació also known as Església de la Sang), which was built in the late fifteenth century next to the Hospital General. The procession has been an Easter custom in Palma since 1564. On **Good Friday**, the 'davallament' descent from the cross is reenacted in various parts of the island. Felanitx and Pollensa are regarded as being the most powerful.



APRIL

FROM WINE AND ROSES TO SUPERYACHTS

Dates of certain spring fairs are determined by when Easter falls and so, for instance, Santa Margalida's will be in March on Palm Sunday. The Andratx fair is normally the first weekend of April, while Muro's is the weekend after Easter, which is when Palma celebrates **Angel Sunday at Bellver Castle**. Other fairs include Calvia's, dedicated to goats and sheep, and Puerto Alcudia's boat show and sepiá (cuttlefish) gastronomy fair.

In the summer of 1999, a group of friends formed an association that brought together those involved with winemaking and others who wanted to learn about wine. Five years later the first **Pollensa Wine Fair** was held. The island's top wine event, up to 40 bodegas are represented each year.

In 2024, Calvia town hall, with the support of the Bulletin, initiated a celebration of **St. George's Day**. An obviously English-themed occasion, the highly successful launch included concerts, sport, gastronomy, artisan market and circus acts.

Otherwise in Mallorca, St. George is Sant Jordi, the day sometimes referred to as

the day of books and roses, reflecting traditions of gift-giving by partners.

The **Mallorca 312** is the island's biggest cycling event of the year. So popular is it that it sells out in a matter of hours. 8,500 cyclists take part on one of three routes, the longest being 312 kilometres; the others are 167 and 225 kilometres. Each year there are honoured participants, former professional cyclists.

The **Palma International Boat Show** has developed over the years into one of Europe's premier events. Record numbers of participating companies are now represented with equally record numbers of boats. A feature of the show is the Superyacht Village, dedicated to some of the finest 24-metre-plus superyachts currently on the international brokerage and charter market.



A background image of autumn leaves in shades of brown, orange, and red, creating a warm and seasonal atmosphere.

AUTUMN FLAVOURS

Castillo Hotel Son Vida, a Luxury Collection Hotel
C/ Raixa, Palma de Mallorca



**CASTILLO
HOTEL
SON VIDA**
MALLORCA

MUSHROOM MENU NOV 9 - 15

GAME MENU NOV 23 - 29

Discover at Es Balcó de Son Vida two four-course menus celebrating autumn's finest flavours: the earthy richness of seasonal mushrooms and the deep, refined flavours of game, finished with a decadent chestnut and chocolate dessert.

restaurantes.castillomallorca@arabella.com
+34 971 493 493

MAY

MOORS, MARKETS AND MEDIAEVAL MAGIC

Fairs in Costitx, Estellencs (wine and cheese), Ses Salines.

May 1-2: Majorca Beach Rugby. Magalluf.

May 6: Dijous Gros fair. Inca.

May 6-17: Mallorca Football Tournament. Santa Ponsa.

May 8: Zafiro Ironman

70.3. Puerto Alcudia.

May 8-9: Campos Fair, Sineu Fair.

May 10: Es Firó. Soller.

May 14-16: Mediaeval Market. Capdepera.

Mid May: Wine Days Mallorca. Binissalem and elsewhere.

May 30: Dance of the Eagles and Sant Joan Pelos. Pollensa.



They refer to it as Es Firó, the day after the May fair in Soller. While it implies a form of fair, Es Firó in Soller has an altogether different meaning - it is the day for the reenactment of events that occurred on May 11, 1561. Moors versus Christians, the Moors having been Ottoman pirates who raided Soller on that day. There are heroes and there are heroines, notably Captain Joan Angelats and the Brave Women. The chief villain of the piece is Ulutx Ali. After some six hours of mock battle in both Puerto Soller and Soller, the captain overcomes the Moors commander. This climax is a fabrication, but no one minds; it's the spectacle that counts. And what a spectacle it truly is; an undoubted highlight of the Mallorcan years.

Soller's fair is one of many. For the most part these are traditional May and spring fairs. There are three on **May Day**, one of them in the village of Costitx. The flowers fair, this offers a sight to behold - a village adorned and decorated with flowers. Among the various other fairs, one stands out above all others, for it is Mallorca's oldest fair - Sineu's. It's said to date from 1318, although there is some debate about this. Let's just say that it has a very long history. Sineu is a celebration of rural Mallorca, as is the Campos May fair, a highlight of which is the contest for Friesian cows. It doesn't really get much more rural.

The Binissalem DO was Mallorca's first wine designation of origin, and it organises **Wine Days Mallorca**, a ten-day series of events related to the wineries in Binissalem and the other municipalities covered by the DO.

If Sineu can unquestionably point to a mediaeval past, then so can Capdepera. Its castle was built in the fourteenth century, and over a weekend in May the castle is one of the locations for what, since the first in 2000, has become a hugely popular event - the **Mediaeval Market**. Other than stalls with a mediaeval theme, there are fantastic characters, there is mediaeval combat, there is dance and music.

May has its share of top sports events that attract participants from far and wide. Magalluf stages the **Majorca Beach Rugby** tournament, Santa Ponsa has the Mallorca Football Tournament, and Puerto Alcudia is the base for the Zafiro Ironman 70.3, a challenge taken up each year by some 4,000 athletes.



ROCK STARS, FIRE DEMONS AND TENNIS CHAMPIONS

The **Mallorca Live Festival** was first held at the end of April 2016. The venue was the Son Fusteret showground in Palma. The festival aspired to fill a notable gap in Mallorca's music scene. There was no truly international festival for pop, rock, indie and other genres in Mallorca; not one to attract really top acts. In order to meet this ambition, a different venue was sought. It was found in Magalluf, the site of the old Aquapark.

The festival is now well and truly established. It has proved to be an overwhelming success. Acts in 2026 included **The Prodigy**, **Kaiser Chiefs** and **David Guetta**. There are different stages for artists from Spain, Europe, the States and beyond, while the site is put to greater use than just the festival. From mid-July to end-August, the **Es Jardí** (Garden) season also brings leading performers to Mallorca.

June is the month when the summer fiestas get into gear, the first being for Sant Joan, John the Baptist, whose feast day of June 24 ties in with rituals for the summer solstice. In Mallorca these can mean going to beaches on the eve of Sant Joan, though having small bonfires on beaches (linked to fertility rites) is now frowned upon. But fire is never far away when the fiestas are under way, and June 23 is the Nit de Foc, **Night of Fire in Palma**. This is the second of the city's annual huge demons correfocs (plus assorted beasts of fire), the first being in January for Saint Sebastian.

There is a character in Mallorca known as **Sant Joan Pelós** (or Pelut). Based on John the Baptist, the translation can be taken to mean Hairy John. The hairiness refers to animal skin, but over time the popular image is of a long-haired John with a



June 11-12: Mallorca Live Festival. Magalluf.
June 20-26: ATP 250 Mallorca Championships. Santa Ponsa.

June 23: Nit de Foc, Night of Fire. Palma.

June 24: Dance of Sant Joan Pelós, Felanitx; Sant Joan Pelut, Sant Llorenç.

Fairs and fiestas in Lloseta (shoes), Biniali (traditional games), Sa Pobla (potato gastronomy), Santa Ponsa (Andalusian), Selva (myrtle), Porreres (apricots); Sant Joan fiestas (June 24) in Calvia, Deya, Mancor de la Vall, Muro, Portopetro, Sant Joan, Son Servera; Sant Pere fiestas (June 29) in Andratx, Bugar, Colonia Sant Pere, Esporles, Puerto Alcudia, Puerto Pollensa; Sant Marçal fiestas (June 30) in Marratxi.

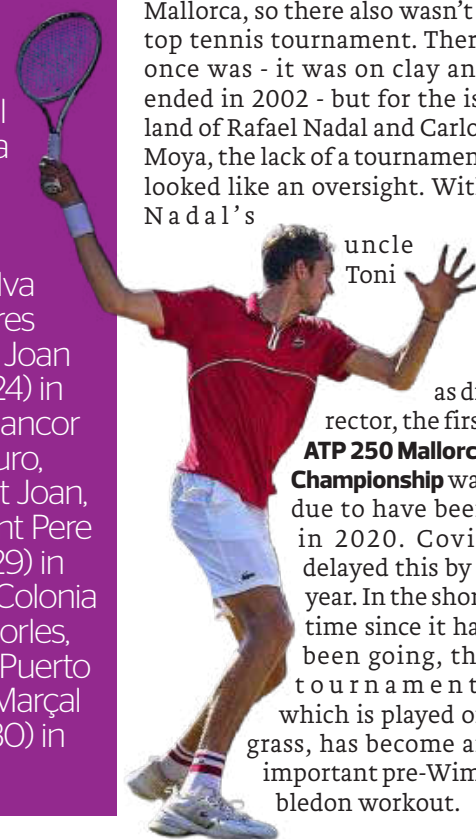
mask. This is how Sant Joan Pelós is in Felanitx and Pollensa. In Sant Llorenç he has a short back and sides and no mask.

The **Felanitx John**, who dances on June 24, has been declared a fiesta in the cultural interest, meaning that measures must be taken to preserve and indeed promote the tradition. There are only four Hairy Johns (Sant Joan has one as well), and they all share a common background of having developed from old processions for Corpus Christi. In Pollensa, the John dances on the Sunday following Corpus Christi (at the end of May in 2027). He is accompanied by the Eagles, two young women with dresses containing jewels and figures of an eagle around their waists; these eagles also have their roots in **Corpus Christi celebrations**.

Rather like there didn't used to be a major pop festival in Mallorca, so there also wasn't a top tennis tournament. There once was - it was on clay and ended in 2002 - but for the island of Rafael Nadal and Carlos Moya, the lack of a tournament looked like an oversight. With Nadal's

uncle Toni

as director, the first **ATP 250 Mallorca Championship** was due to have been in 2020. Covid delayed this by a year. In the short time since it has been going, the tournament, which is played on grass, has become an important pre-Wimbledon workout.



Our Lady of Carmel Fiestas: Cala Bona, Cala Figuera, Cala Ratjada, Es Capdellà, Porto Cristo, Puerto Andratx, Puerto Pollensa, Sa Rapita.

Sant Jaume Fiestas: Alcudia, Algaida, Binissalem, Calvia, Manacor, Portocolom, Sa Pobla, Santanyi.

Other fiestas include: Arenal (Christopher, July 10); Inca (Abdon and Senen, July 30); Petra (Praxedis, July 21); Sa Pobla, Santa Maria and Santa Margalida (Margalida, July 20); Valldemossa and Vilafranca (La Beata, the Mallorcan saint Catalina Thomàs, July 28).

The high summer, and Mallorca is outdoors, celebrating fiesta after fiesta after fiesta. Standing out among all the colour, the music and the dance are the fiestas for Our Lady of Carmel (Mare de Déu del Carme) and **Saint James** - Sant Jaume in Catalan but known throughout Spain as Santiago, one of the two national saints. The respective dates are July 16 and 25.

Our Lady of Carmel is the patron of seafarers and of the Spanish Navy. The navy's hymn goes: "Hail, the star of the seas. Of the iris seas, of eternal bliss. Hail, O Phoenix of beauty. Mother of Divine love." The Star of the Sea, Estrella del Mar, she was the Carmelite Order's Stella Maris, her feast day owing everything to an English saint, Simon Stock. On July 16, 1251, he supposedly had a vision of the Virgin Mary holding a scapular (originally a monk's apron). This came to be the Brown Scapular, the Scapular of Our Lady of Carmel.

Like the fiestas at the end of June for **Sant Pere**, Saint Peter the Fisherman, Our Lady of Carmel is marked by

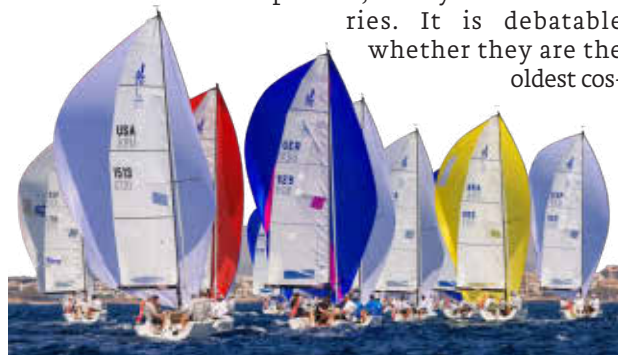
JULY

SAINTS, SEA BREEZES AND SUMMER SOUNDS

flotillas with an image on the lead boat - in this instance the Virgin Mary. The fiestas are mostly in coastal places. In Puerto Pollensa, the images of both the Virgin and Saint Peter are carried, the celebrations in Puerto Pollensa climaxed with one of the longer correfocs and then fireworks.

Nowhere does **Sant Jaume** on more lavish a scale than **Manacor**. 'Knights' on horseback carry and deliver the standard of Saint James, and there is the 'race of the ring' for horses along the Via Verde (Green Way). The 'encamisada' procession is one of the great fiesta occasions; there are horses and there is also what is like a pantomime horse, the 'mulassa' mule. In Algaida, meanwhile, the cossier dancers perform, as they have for centuries.

It is debatable whether they are the oldest cos-



siers. Montuiri, where the dancers appear for Saint Bartholomew in August, also lays a claim. The origins, as with many a fiesta tradition, lie with the mediaeval Corpus Christi processions.

The Mallorca Live Festival in June is the island's biggest music event, but there are any number of other festivals. One is the **Deya International Music Festival**. It runs from July until the end of September. Attracting leading musicians from all over the world, the main venue is the Son Marroig

estate in Deya, where the mirador viewpoint gives a spectacular view of the sea and of the Sa Foradada peninsula, the rock formation with a hole in it.

The first concert for the **Sa Pobla Jazz Festival** is usually right at the end of July. 2027 will be its 33rd year, outstanding names from the world of jazz who have performed in the past including Kenny Garrett and McCoy Tyner. At the mediaeval Bellver Castle in Palma, the Balearic Symphony Orchestra holds a season of concerts. The orchestra, which is active throughout the year, is an institution in which Mallorca takes great pride, its reputation for attracting the very finest soloists having grown over the years; the concerts at the castle are testament to this.

'**Sons de Nit**' (Sounds of the Night) is an ongoing season over the summer with concerts at various locations. Suzanne Vega and Rufus Wainwright have been among artists in previous years.

Also at the very end of July, the **Copa del Rey Mapfre Regatta** gets under way. Based at the Real Club Náutico de Palma, the regatta always has one very famous participant - King Felipe. Around the time of the regatta, the Royal Family spend their summer holidays in Mallorca; they stay at the Marivent Palace in Palma.



AUGUST

PIRATES, PARTIES AND FESTIVAL SPECTACLE

"Mare de Déu dels Àngels, assistiu-nos. Pollencins, açauvos. Els pirates són aquí. (Mother of God of the Angels, help us. People of Pollensa, get up. The pirates are here)." The words of the Pollensa hero, Joan Mas. Supposedly spoken on the night of May 30, 1550, they are now uttered on the second of August as Pollensa's La Patrona Fies-

tas prepare for battle.

The **Moors and Christians re-enactment in Pollensa** doesn't have the scope of Soller's in May in that there is no action in the port. It also doesn't last as long, but it doesn't lack for spectacular, as Joan Mas encounters the pirate commander, Dragut, before all hell is let loose in the narrow

streets before concluding in the wider open space of the one-time football ground, Can Escarrinxo. The clash isn't as long as Soller's, but the day itself is much longer, starting as it does with the Alborada dawn wake-up by the band of music at 5am.

Sant Elm also has a Moors and Christians fight, a far more low-key event as part of its fiestas, the month of August being characterised by major celebrations for Sant Roc (August 16), Sant Bartomeu (Bartholomew the Apostle, August 24) and the Mare de Déu d'Agost (the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, August 15). The latter of these mark something of a climax

to the entire summer at a time when there are usually more people in Mallorca than at any other time of the year. August 15 is a public holiday, and the fiestas are the excuse for some of the craziest of events.

The **neo-fiesta**, a fiesta within a fiesta, is a relatively new phenomenon. Initiated by young people in different municipalities, it typically involves a fight of some sort. In Sencelles, for instance, two giant bales of straw and a load of water are the ammo. The most popular of the lot is Sineu's 'Mucada'. Based on the tale of a mythical bull-like demon - the Muc or Much - who lives on a nearby hill, this is an all-day event of processions and general partying that attracts people from across the island.

Can Picafort's duck release is another very popular event. Until 2007 there were real ducks for people to catch. They are now rubber ducks. Catch the right duck and there's a prize. Young and old dive into the sea or take a lilo or boat in picking up their ducks. Colonia Sant Jordi and Son Serra de Marina also have duck releases, but Can Picafort's was the original; it dates back to the 1930s.

A lesser-known saint is **Candida**, one of Lluçma-

Mare de Déu d'Agost Fiestas:

Caimari, Cala d'Or, Campos, Can Picafort, Puigpunyent (also Sant Roc), Sencelles, Sineu.

Sant Bartomeu Fiestas:

Capdepera, Consell, Montuiri, Ses Salines, Soller, Valldemossa.

Other fiestas include:

Arta (Salvador, August 6); Felanitx (Augustine, August 28); Palmanova, Sant Llorenç, Selva (Lawrence, August 10).



jor's patrons. The feast day is the eleventh, when there are dances by the cavallet cottoners, arguably the oldest of all Mallorca's folk dance troupes. They date back to the mid-fifteenth century, having been imported from Barcelona. All children, they wear horse figures around their waists.

Back in Pollensa, and once they've cleaned up after the Moors and Christians, it is time for the **Pollensa Festival** to start. Founded in 1962 by British violinist Philip Newman, this is unquestionably one of the island's premier festivals, all the concerts being held in the cloister of the Sant Domingo Convent and boasting major international musicians. Soprano Jeanine De Bique and conductor Sir Mark Elder were among musicians in 2026.

Pollensa's isn't the oldest festival. This honour goes to the **Chopin Festival in Valldemossa**, the first having been in 1930, almost one hundred years after Chopin and George Sand famously wintered at the Charterhouse in Valldemossa. A much newer one, over three days in the middle of the month, is at a one-time military fortress. This is the Cap Rocat luxury hotel in Lluçmajor.

SEPTEMBER

DEMONS, GRAPES AND UNDERWEAR RACES



Mare de Déu de la Salut Fiestas: Banyalbufar, Costitx, Fornalutx, Lloseta, Maria de la Salut, Palma.

Mallorca's "most typical procession". This is how the procession for La Beata in Santa Margalida is described. One might argue that it is in fact the least typical procession. There is nothing else like it and it is fabulous.

La Beata, Saint Catalina Thomàs, was born in Valldemossa in 1531 and died in Palma in 1574. She was beatified in 1792 and canonised in 1930. Her association with Santa Margalida was precisely zero, but it was Santa Margalida that came to honour her more than either Valldemossa or Palma. One of the parts of the island that celebrated the beatification, Santa Margalida kept this going, grafting on the story of how the saint as a girl encountered an envious demon who snatched a jar of food she was taking to some poor harvesters. The **demon smashed the jar** and buried it, only for Catalina to retrieve the food, which turned out to be even tastier than prior to the demon's intervention.

This is why there is nowadays a great deal of pot-smashing. Around 150 demons take part. The whole of Santa Margalida seems to turn out. Various dignitaries (politicians, for the most part) are in attendance. Couples (some with children) in traditional dress are part of the procession. And above all, there are the demons smashing their pots in front of a defiant La Beata. An extraordinary event. It always takes place on the first Sunday in September.

The Moors and Christians of Pollensa and Soller recall a time when there were regular raids by Ottoman pirates. In Santa Ponsa, the roles were reversed. It was the Christians who were attacking. The forces of King Jaume I of Aragon arrived in Santa Ponsa on September 10, 1229. Their mission was the conquest of Mallorca.

The **fiestas for Reien Jaume** (King James) are the grandest in Calvia. In their current form, they are relatively recent - some thirty years old - but a highly traditional feel has been created by introducing certain rituals, such as the delivery of the standards. And they are of course an excuse for a fine old party over several days.

Otherwise in September, the main fiestas are for the birth of the **Virgin Mary** (September 8). These fiestas have different names depending on where they are held. In Palma they are Mare de Déu de la Salut, literally Mother of God of Health, who is the city's second but minor patron. In 2025, the town hall decided to give the fiestas greater emphasis - there had been no events of note for years - and this was in the form of a huge music event in the Parc de la Mar by the Cathedral which is now becoming established. John Newman was a headliner in 2026.

One certainly can't overlook the bizarre go-



Other fiestas include the Cala Millor Tourist Fiestas to tie in with World Tourism Day, September 27.

ings-on for **Sant Mateu** (Matthew) in Bunyola around September 21. The winning isn't what matters, it's the taking part and, most importantly, the dressing up in nothing more than underwear. Yes, **Bunyola's neo-fiesta is an underwear race.** More in keeping with the battle theme of the neo-fiesta, in Binissalem they head off to the sports ground in order to hurl grapes and smother one another with juice.

This is for the **Vermar grape harvest fiestas**, which have come a long way from their mid-sixties origin of a gathering of wine enthusiasts, one of whom was celebrated Mallorcan author, poet and playwright, Llorenç Moyà. A grape-treading contest is another feature of the fiestas, the must from this providing the offer to Santa Maria de Robines by vermadors and vermadores, young people of Binissalem in traditional dress. This offer is on the final day, the last Sunday of the month, when there is also an extremely popular wine fair.

September sees the return of the fairs. Arta's is the first, and the main one is in Llucmajor at the end of the month to coincide with Michaelmas, September 29, the feast day of the Archangel Michael (Sant Miquel). Llucmajor has four fairs, and they continue into October.

Art and the performing arts are features of September. Art Palma Contemporani is the association of contemporary art galleries in Palma. Founded in 2004, it seeks to boost the city's cultural life through the work of artists. The association is the organiser of **Palma's Night of Art**, Nit de l'Art, which has been going longer than the association. A pioneering event in Spain, 2026's marked the 30th anniversary. Numerous galleries and cultural centres take part in the exhibitions. The 2027 date has yet to be officially announced but will probably be Saturday, September 18.

September 12 is Mallorca Day. The first was in 1997, the date having been changed for a brief while to December 31. In 1276, King Jaume II's coronation was on September 12. On that day his father's will was confirmed. King Jaume I had

drawn up what was in effect a Magna Carta for Mallorca, and the independent Kingdom of Mallorca was also verified. On Mallorca Day (and days leading up to and after it), there are various events and activities - concerts, guided tours, giants procession, artisan market and more. These are mainly in Palma. September 12 is also the feast day for Our Lady of Lluc, Mallorca's patron.



OCTOBER

ART NIGHTS, JAZZ AND ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

In 1543, two councillors from Llucmajor travelled to Barcelona, where the court of Holy Roman Emperor Carlos V (King Carlos I of Castile and Aragon) was in residence. They wanted him to grant the town a weekly market and annual fairs, as Inca and Sineu had enjoyed for years. Carlos recalled the island with "a beautiful memory" and granted their request, decreeing that fairs should be held between the feast days of Saint Michael and Saint Luke, in perpetuity. He wanted the "fairs of King Carlos" to be unlike any others in the Kingdom of Mallorca.

Inca and Sineu challenged the decree in court but lost. The **first Llucmajor fair took place in 1546**, laying the foundations for the town's four annual fairs. Today, Llucmajor and Inca host some of the island's biggest, combining rural traditions with attractions ranging from sport and technology to art, gastronomy, music, cars and mediaeval markets.

October brings fairs across the island. Alcudia holds its event at the beginning of the month, while Esporles specialises in sweet treats, including chocolate, pastries and cakes. Other towns and villages with fairs include Alaró, Algaida, Campos, Consell, Felanitx, Lluc, Petra, Porreres, Port d'Andratx and Santanyí.

Food is a major attraction at **Cala Ratjada's Fresh Fish Weekend**, dedicated to the llampuga, or dolphinfish. In Sant Joan, barbecued food

October 1-3: Magalluf Expanded Literature Festival. (To be confirmed.)
October 12-17: International Masters Cycling Week. (TBC.)
October 14-16: Challenge Peguera Mallorca. (TBC.)
October 17: TUI Marathon. Palma. (TBC.)
October 28-31: Rolex Challenge Tour Grand Final. Alcandada. (TBC.)

and botifarró sausage take centre stage. The event began in the 1960s, organised by local motorcycling enthusiasts.

Calvia offers another gastronomic highlight with **La Mostra Calvià**, when restaurants across the municipality prepare special menus. The event usually takes place twice a year. Beer lovers can also enjoy **Oktober-fest** at the El Molino show-ground in Santa Ponsa.

Art events are flourishing, with Porreres, Sa Pobla, Santanyí and Ses Salines following in g

lead. October also features major sporting competitions. The **TUI Palma Marathon** is expected on October 17 in 2027. The **International Masters Cycling Week** comprises five races, ending with the European Masters Cup.

Challenge Peguera Mallorca brings triathletes to the island, while the Rolex Challenge Tour Grand Final takes place at Alcandada Golf Club in Alcudia, offering male golfers the chance to compete for places on the main European Tour.

Culture extends beyond the galleries. The **Magalluf Expanded Literature Festival** offers a weekend of literature, books, art and music in unconventional spaces. First held in 2021, it has welcomed writers including André Aciman, *Trainspotting* author Irvine Welsh and Helen Fielding, creator of Bridget Jones.

The **Jazz Voyeur Festival** celebrates its 20th edition in 2027. Usually beginning in October and continuing until December, it stages international concerts at venues around Palma. This year's programme includes guitarist Al Di Meola.

Although October has few traditional fiestas, two events bring a festive atmosphere. On the first **Saturday of the month, Valldemossa stages its Moors and Christians** reenactment, recalling a raid on October 1, 1552. According to local tradition, Ramon Gual and 36 men repelled 400 attackers. Aina Creus, the grandmother of Saint Catalina Thomàs, was supposedly among those captured. The reenactment began in 2014.

Palma celebrates La Beata in mid-October. More accurately known as La Beateta, the event depicts Saint Catalina Thomàs as a young girl, carried on a triumphal carriage and accompanied by angels played by small children. It is a charming reminder that the island's calendar remains full of tradition and spectacle long after summer ends.



NOVEMBER

There are different interpretations of the 'bo' in **Dijous Bo**. Good Thursday is the standard meaning, but others aren't a single word. They are explanations for the amount of trade once carried out or descriptions of the size and scale of the fair, this latter one being justified in the present day. The last of the Inca fairs, it is the largest of all Mallorca's fairs, a day out for the islanders. Dijous Bo is a massive social occasion.

The first documented reference to Dijous Bo comes from 1807 but it is much older. How old is open to debate, but the fact that it is a Thursday does appear to stem from the establishment of the Thursday market in the 13th century. In mid-November its date is determined by the feast of Saint Luke (October 18), while a further reason for it being a Thursday is that the fourth Sunday after Luke is reserved for one of the few November fiestas - Santa Maria la Major, when Inca rivals Palma for a huge correfoc of demons.

The month starts with **All Saints**, a time for visiting the cemeteries and laying flowers. Mallorca's festivities for Allhallowtide have been influenced by foreign customs

but they have also retained traditions, such as with food - bunyol doughnuts, rosaries of sweets, 'panetets de mort' that over the years have been developed for a sweet tooth.

The **mediaeval market of Inca's third fair** pulls in people in just the same way as Dijous Bo. Hugely popular, it helps to place Inca at the top of the fairs' league, but there are plenty of others. Some are themed - **Llubi's honey fair**, **Muro's pumpkin fair**, **Caimari's olives fair**. They reckon that Caimari's olive oil is the best there is, but then 'they' are from Caimari.

Pollensa's artisan fair has pushed leading-edge artisan design to the fore, while Pollensa maintains the fair's roots (18th century) with attractions like the local lamb, for which Pollensa is celebrated. Sa Pobla's long association with rice-growing is



highlighted at its fair, the municipality's rice production more recently linked with the 'bomba' rice for dishes such as 'arròs brut'. In Mancor de la Vall there are mushrooms, the 'esclata-sang' most obviously (the bloody milk cap).



In **Santa Maria del Camí**, part of the Binissalem DO for wine, there is a fair for the year's nouveau. And gastronomy is most definitely to the fore in Palma, where the **22st TaPalma** is being celebrated this year from November 2 to 8. A competition for the best tapas at the city's Palacio de Congresos is the prelude to four days of tapas routes - 50 or so bars and restaurants with high-quality tapas at very economical prices.

The **Alternatilla Jazz Festival** gets under way. This festival has venues across the island as well as in Palma and each year has an invited country; it continues into the first week of December. Music of various styles is on offer early in the month at **Palma's Fira B**. Described as "the professional market for music and the performing arts in the Balearics", music is in November and the performing arts in October. The concerts range from pop and rock to jazz, folk, classical, world and electronica. Many are free, others have a nominal price, and they showcase talent from overseas and Mallorca. An indispensable way to get to know about the island's contemporary music scene.

And November of course means that Christmas is coming. The **lights will go on in Palma** towards the end of the month - an occasion always accompanied by the spectacular - and the Christmas market will open with stalls in various parts of the centre of the city. The magic of Christmas truly arrives.

Cant de la Sibil·la, the Song of the Sybil, was declared a Unesco masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity in 2010. Its roots date back much further than the thirteenth century, but it was in that century that the chant became part of the liturgy in Mallorca. The Unesco declaration owes a great deal to the fact that Mallorca defied a Council of Trent decree in 1568, which covered anything that challenged the principle of churches being exclusively for prayer. And this included visions of the Apocalypse.

The **Sibil·la deals with the Last Judgement**. It is a dark prophesy, but for reasons that no one has been able to explain, Mallorca was deter-

mined to maintain it, the inclusion in Christmas celebrations having well predated the Christian conquest of Mallorca in 1229. The Church resolved that it could only be at Christmas, yet there was never any reference to Christmas until quite recently. "Humble Virgin who gave birth to the infant Jesus this night" was the inclusion.

Once upon a time it used to be sung by a boy. It is now usually sung by women and forms part of the Matins services on Christmas Eve at



DECEMBER

churches across Mallorca. The other two elements are the Cant de l'Àngel (Song of the Angel), which originated at Lluç Sanctuary in the late nineteenth century, and the **Sermó de la Calenda** (Sermon of the Calendar), believed to have originated at Palma Cathedral in the sixteenth century. A boy announces the birth of the Son of God and invites the faithful to celebrate and share the joy of the birth.

December is a month with deep historical and cultural tradition

in Mallorca. As well as the Sibil·la there is the **Festival of the Standard**, sometimes said to be the oldest national festivity in Europe. Held on New Year's Eve, it celebrates the taking of Madina Mayurqa (Palma) by Jaume I on December 31, 1229. This is nothing like it once was, a highly prominent feature of the celebrations in Palma on New Year's Eve explaining how the processions used to be in bygone days. '**Sa Colcada**', The Cavalcade, is a 19th-century poem about those days that is now

represented in song and dance.

The circus comes to town for Christmas, the **Circo Alegría** company having

been a feature at Palma's Son Fusteret showground for some years. As well as the **Christmas market in Palma**, which runs until January 6, other notable markets are in Inca, Manacor and Puerto Portals. The German **Weihnachtsmarkt** is to be found in Santa Ponsa.

In Sineu, the **Saint Thomas Fair** over the second weekend of the month has its Christmas stalls and also its 'Mostra de Matances'. The matances refer, strictly speaking, to the slaughter of animals - pigs in this instance - but there is a broader meaning to include the products.

Gruesome it might perhaps sound, but this slaughter once used to be commonplace. One pig could keep a family going for months, depending on the product. The **matances' season** traditionally starts on November 11 (the feast of Saint Martin),

but the slaughter can be any time in the lead-up to Christmas. It is now far more regulated than used to be the case (f o r

health reasons) and isn't anything like as common, but matances remain a highly traditional aspect of the island's gastronomic culture. Sobrassada is one of the products, and there is plenty of it at the fair.

There are Christmas concerts aplenty. The Balearic Symphony Orchestra typically performs at the Cathedral. Choirs include Capella Mallorquina, formed in the 1960s and famed in particular for the concert in the Torrent de Pareis in Sa Calobra at the start of July. Handel's 'Messiah' is a classic for a Mallorcan Christmas.

Also in December, there are **Montuiri's Partridge Fair** (first weekend), Marratxi's **Almond Milk Fair** (mid-month), and **Capdepera's Festa de l'Esperança** (December 16-17), which recalls a pirate raid that was foiled by a miraculous fog that descended. And then comes Christmas itself. Apart from the highly traditional services with the Sibil·la on Christmas Eve, the celebrations do reflect cultural backgrounds. For many Mallorcans, Three Kings remains the main event over the whole festive period. But Papa Noel, Father Christmas, is ever more visible, and Christmas Eve in particular has become a party night, with some town halls now holding events in addition to those to be found in clubs.





GET FIRST PICK
THIS PAYDAY

FAMILIES
SAVE

£400

ON ALL HOLIDAYS

PLUS, SAVE MORE WITH **myJet2**

Jet2holidays[®]

Based on four people sharing. T&Cs apply, see [Jet2holidays.com/promotions](https://www.jet2holidays.com/promotions).





VILLAGE LIFE

Discover Mallorca beyond its beaches with scenic **hiking trails through the Tramuntana mountains, charming villages** steeped in history, and traditional markets filled with local produce, crafts and island specialities. Experience the **authentic side of Mallorca**, where nature, village life and centuries-old traditions come together.



Traditional markets in Mallorca

Mallorca's traditional markets are a wonderful way to discover the island's local produce, crafts and village life. Most towns hold a weekly street market, with stalls selling fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, olives, almonds, pottery, leather goods, textiles and traditional Mallorcan products.

Here are some of the best-known markets to visit, particularly if you are looking for authentic local character rather than just tourist souvenirs.

1. Sineu Market – Wednesday

Best for tradition

One of Mallorca's oldest and most authentic markets, dating back to 1306. It is famous for local produce, cheese, cured meats, wine, handicrafts and its livestock section, a rare surviving tradition on the island.



2. Inca Market – Thursday

A large, traditional market in Mallorca's leather-making town. Look for shoes, leather goods, clothing, food and local specialities. It is a good choice for combining shopping with a visit to the island's inland countryside.



3. Santanyi Market – Wednesday and Saturday

Set among the golden-stone buildings of the town centre, this lively market offers crafts, ceramics, textiles, clothing, fresh produce and souvenirs. Saturday is particularly popular.



4. Santa Maria del Camí Market – Sunday

A bustling village market with a good selection of local food, cheese, cured meats, bread, clothing and household goods. A lovely way to experience a traditional Sunday morning in Mallorca.



5. Pollensa Market – Sunday

Held around the main square and historic streets, this market combines local produce and traditional goods with crafts, textiles and gifts. You can round off the morning with coffee in the square.



6. Arta Market – Tuesday

A traditional northeast Mallorca market with food, ceramics, woven goods, soaps and other handicrafts. It is ideal for exploring alongside Artà's old town and hill-top sanctuary.



7. Pere Garau Market – Monday to Saturday

One of Palma's more everyday, local markets, popular for fruit, vegetables, fish, meat and other fresh ingredients. Choose this one for a glimpse of residents doing their weekly shopping rather than a predominantly tourist-oriented experience.



by **ERICA LAY**

I should really preface this article with some important information. This is not another hardcore Mallorca hiking guide; there are plenty of those out there already (I've written my fair share), so let's switch it up. This time, I wanted to share a little bit of my story and how hiking became the third person in my marriage, and why I firmly believe that Mallorca has a trail for everyone, regardless of ability. Possibly even that member of the family who's walked three paces and is complaining their feet hurt.

I've lived on this particular rock for nearly twenty years, but did not come here as a seasoned hiker. I arrived knowing nothing about the joys of Decathlon or North Face, thought Nordic poles were for old people and laughed at anyone wearing zip off trousers.

Ok, I still laugh at zip-off trousers, and I'll die on that hill.

Anyway, one October about ten years ago, a chef working with my husband turned up gushing about a wonderful hike he'd done at the weekend. Long story short, weekends at the beach were now cancelled as it wasn't warm enough, and we needed another activity. So that Sunday, clutching Chef's battered hiking book, we put our trainers on, grabbed some water, and headed off for our first hike.

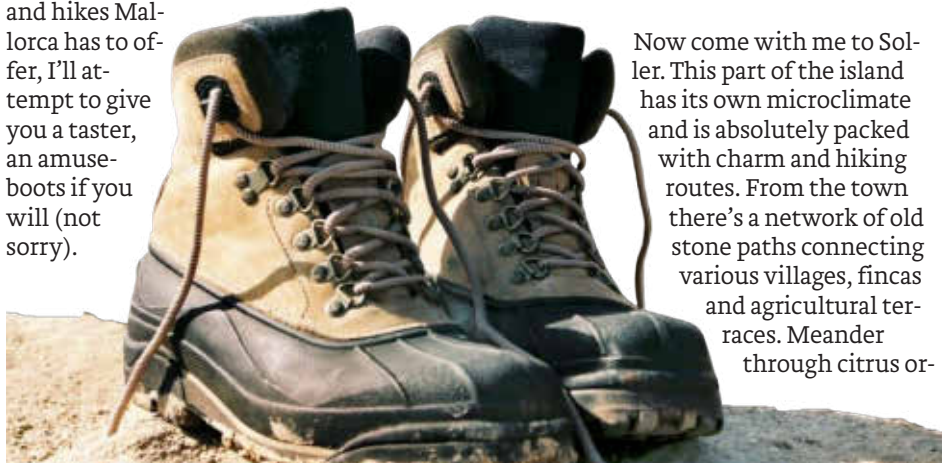
We loved it. Approximately five minutes later we acquired backpacks, better trainers, and a desire to hike every weekend. Now, most of these walks revolved around ending up somewhere we could have a nice lunch, but when we started going further afield, we took lunch with us. There's something rather magical about smashing down a ham and cheese baguette with an incredible view.

A couple of years later, we moved out to the countryside, adopted a rather demanding German Shepherd, and hiking became a daily activity. We went from city-dwelling wine-bar frequenters, to being dragged up mountains before work at stupid o'clock by a furry dictator and loved every minute.

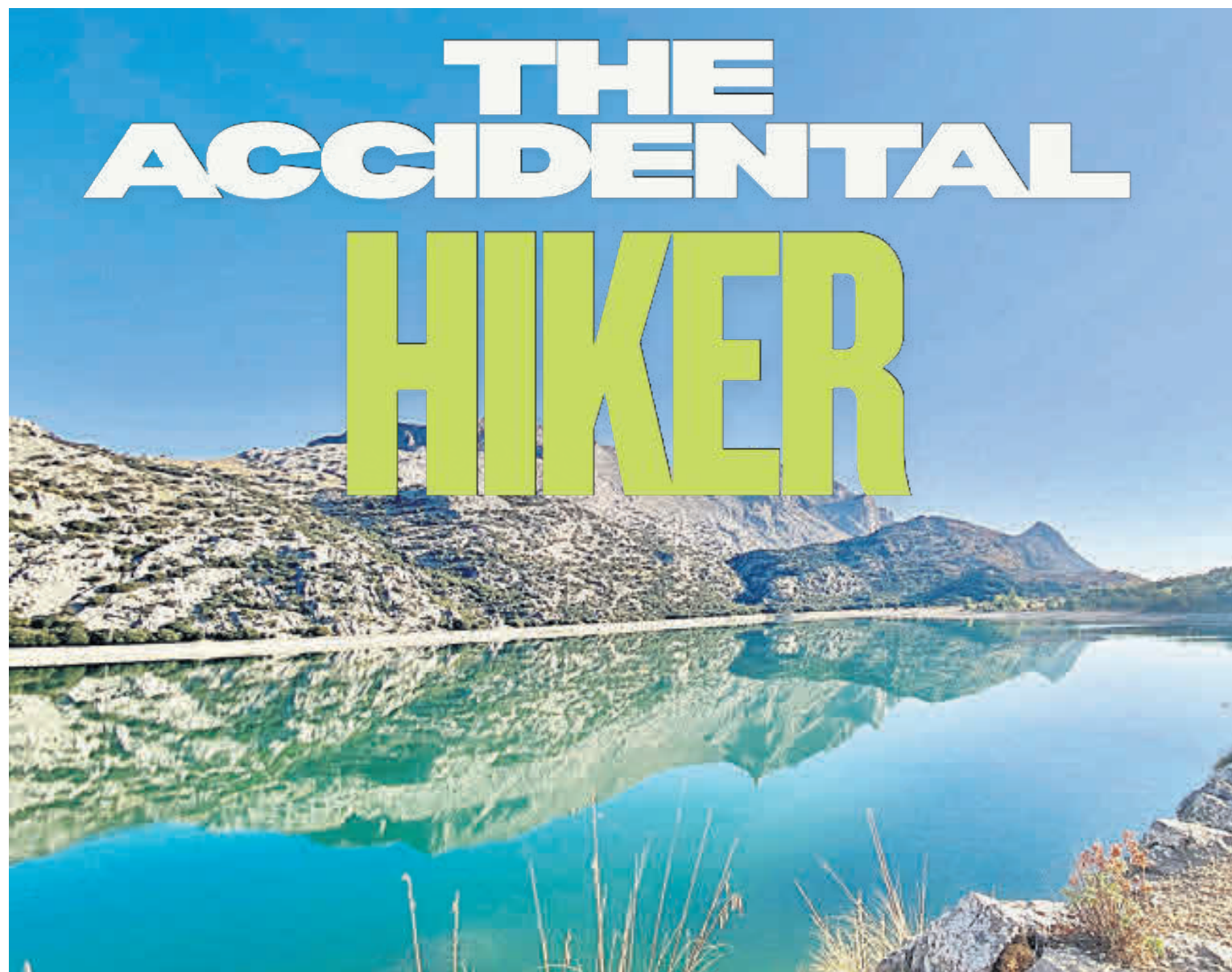
Now that Nala is officially a senior citizen and my hip's also not getting any younger, we've adapted our hikes, and in doing so we've realised that we don't have to climb a mountain and spend hours self-flagellating to achieve an incredible view and plenty of smug photos for Instagram. There's truly a hike here for everyone. And that's what I'm finally getting to. Thanks for bearing with me.

Now, while it's impossible to cram in all the wonderful walks

and hikes Mallorca has to offer, I'll attempt to give you a taster, an amuse-boots if you will (not sorry).

**Soller**

Now come with me to Soller. This part of the island has its own microclimate and is absolutely packed with charm and hiking routes. From the town there's a network of old stone paths connecting various villages, fincas and agricultural terraces. Meander through citrus or-

**Cuber**

I'll start by saying: you don't have to climb mountains. Get in the car. Drive to Cuber, the big reservoir, and you can do a fantastic fairly flat 4-5km walk around it. If you're feeling feisty, carry on up the Coll d'Ofre for a spectacular view overlooking the water, and if you like, you can keep on extending the route. Don't forget your packed lunch, there's no café up there. Only judgmental goats. In abundance.

Lluc

If you head to Lluc Monastery there are plenty of trails for all abilities (including little ones) with educational stops, winding through forests, old rock formations (hello Mr Camel) and also the occasional cave. Plus, at the monastery there's ice cream, restaurants, and a bar. Because: REWARDS.



Now, while it's impossible to cram in all the wonderful walks and hikes Mallorca has to offer, I'll attempt to give you a taster, an amuse-boots if you will (not sorry).

chards to Biniaraix where you can pick up a coffee and a sandwich before doing the famous Barranc de Biniaraix trail (if you're hardcore, that one's tough) or head to Fornalutx, a picture postcard mountain village with flower filled balconies and wonderful views. They also do great carajillos. I had to try one for research purposes. There's a circular route connecting all three called La Volta dels Pobles de la Vall. It's about 10km and takes 3-3.5 hours. But allow longer. For obligatory





Cuber reservoir.
PHOTOS: ERIKA LAYS



Mortitx.

snacky stops. It's cultural. You have to.

For something a little less ambitious, from the port you can do a 6km loop that goes up the mountain through donkey paddocks (please shut the gates, or the donkeys will file formal complaints), olive groves and forest, offering a ridiculous view of the bay. If you're an early riser, I really recommend heading up there around sunrise. Soller port is on the north coast so you won't see the actual sunrise – instead you get the most incredible skies bursting with colours. And if, like me, you misjudge the time and get up there too early, the port looks equally stunning with all the twinkling lights. This path leads you to the lighthouse and one of the accommodations on the GR221 (see below), before winding down on a quiet road back into the port. Where your hotel breakfast buffet awaits. Go on, have that extra pastry. You've earned it.

Coastal routes

Coastal routes here are in abundance. You don't need to hire a car and go inland if you're staying anywhere by the sea there will be hikes near you. And with boardwalks and paved promenades in many coastal areas, there are also plenty of options suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Here are a few of my favourites.

Go on a short coastal adventure, Cap Andritxol from Cala Fornells offers fabulous views without taking up an entire day. If you fancy something more adventurous tackle Sant Elm to La Trapa, with its monastery ruins and views across to Dragonera. A bit more demanding but worth it. A northern favourite is Boquer Valley near Port de Pollença, famous for bird nerds (but sadly not dog-friendly, sorry Nala).

East coast and the Alcudia peninsula also offer a ton of alternatives. So wherever you're staying have a little look on All trails or pick up a local hiking map, you'll be surprised!

Inland

Back inland, for those opting for agroturismos in the middle of the island for peace, quiet, a private pool and excellent food, it's worth noting that lots of hikes begin and end at a vineyard. Oh no.

Go for a walk down the public paths and quiet country lanes. Wander past vineyards, olive groves, farmlands and old stone fincas to see almond blossom in the late winter, citrus in spring, and grape harvests in autumn.

I'm growing to appreciate these walks more than the famous ones to be honest. Greeting locals and watching real life on the island unfold before me. Pretty sure the pickers wave at me in sympathy, muttering "look it's the crazy dog lady again" but I'm ok with that.

If you enjoy discussing elevation gains, technical difficulty and the merits of various hydration systems, ask your doctor if one of these could be right for you.

As you can see, there's so much more to Mallorca than just beaches and bars. Every path here tells a story – of monks, smugglers, pirates, shepherds, soldiers or maybe it's just Glenda who fell over on the way back to the hotel after too many sangrias, still clutching that battered old hiking guidebook.

It's me, I'm Glenda.

THE BIG ONES

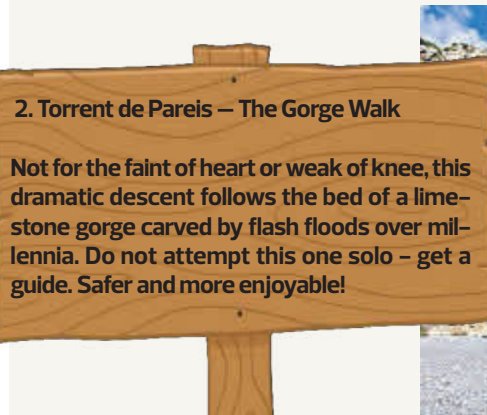


I can't, in all good conscience, write an article about hiking in Mallorca without giving a little nod to The Big Ones. So think of these as either "maybe we'll tackle one this time" or "next time, and let's tie it into that lamb restaurant Rick Stein banged on about instead."



1. The GR221 – "Ruta de Pedra en Sec" (Dry Stone Route)

The granddaddy of them all, this 150km+ network of ancient paths runs from Andratx in the SW all the way to Pollensa in the north.



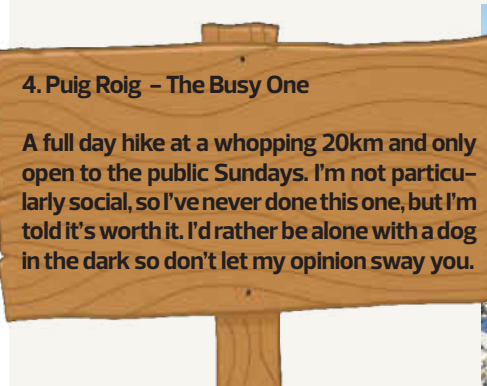
2. Torrent de Pareis – The Gorge Walk

Not for the faint of heart or weak of knee, this dramatic descent follows the bed of a limestone gorge carved by flash floods over millennia. Do not attempt this one solo – get a guide. Safer and more enjoyable!



3. Puig de Massanella – Climb to the Sky

Massanella is Mallorca's second-highest peak and one of the most satisfying climbs on the island. The views stretch across the entire Tramuntana to the sea. The route starts from Lluc Monastery. Expect steep sections, rocky paths, ice houses (yes, really), a lot of sheep, and a real sense of achievement at the top.



4. Puig Roig – The Busy One

A full day hike at a whopping 20km and only open to the public Sundays. I'm not particularly social, so I've never done this one, but I'm told it's worth it. I'd rather be alone with a dog in the dark so don't let my opinion sway you.



5. Cova de ses Bruixes – The Witches' Cave

A challenging hike through the rugged Mortitx landscape towards a cave with a rather intriguing name. We attempted this one, got spectacularly lost, added two entirely unnecessary hours to the adventure, and I hated it. Apparently, it's beautiful if you know where you're going. Take a guide.

Mancor de la Vall's annual craft beer festival brings together independent brewers, beer lovers and live music.



Mancor de la Vall raises a glass to Craft Beer

● Every September, the tranquil village of Mancor de la Vall comes alive with the **Mostra de Cervesa Artesana**, an annual celebration of craft beer, live music and local culture. Organised by the brewing brotherhood Llépols del Llúpol, the festival brings together independent brewers and beer enthusiasts for an afternoon and evening of tastings, concerts and community spirit. With dozens of craft beers to sample and free entry, it has become a popular fixture in Mallorca's events calendar, attracting visitors keen to discover the island's growing craft beer scene.



More than just a beer festival, the event captures the welcoming, lively character of Mancor de la Vall, bringing residents and visitors together in the heart of the village. Its combination of independent brewing, live entertainment and traditional village atmosphere makes it an appealing way to experience a different side of Mallorca, beyond its beaches and busy tourist resorts.

LIVING IN A MALLORCAN VILLAGE

by **PETER CLOVER**



Many people who re-locate to Mallorca immediately strive for the archetypal white-washed villa, sporting sea views complete with infinity pool and barbecue-based sun terrace! Although when I see that written down, it doesn't sound too shabby!

However, fantasies aside, I didn't want to retire poolside, soaking up the sun all day with a never-ending piña colada in hand. I didn't want to become a 24/7 tourist. I needed to work, plus I wanted the full, genuine, authentic Mallorcan experience. It became an obvious choice to live in the countryside close to a village, so we went ahead and built a traditional Mallorcan house, which represented

a more rural experience, on the edge of everything!

However, after five years in the countryside, we moved into a wonderful townhouse in Mancor de la Vall. Rural living was great, but immersing ourselves in the heart of a thriving village was a completely different experience!

Dozing on the slopes of the Sierra de Tramuntana mountain range, Mancor de la Vall embraced the embodiment of a typical, village atmosphere, nestled within a cozy surround of quaint, stone-built houses, charming cobbled streets and squares. Yes, squares! We had two! An upper one, overlooked by the impressive parish church of Sant Joan Baptista. And subsequently, a lower one, not particularly overlooked by anything significant other than a bar and a pharmacy, both essential items in a small town/large village environ.

One of the unparalleled joys derived from living in a typical Mallorcan village is that you can casually stroll into the very heart of the community



within minutes. Luckily, Mancor de la Vall had an incredible thirst for 'fiesta' with a reputation for unabashed celebration. So, there was always something going on! Their spirit of 'joie de vivre' was so joyous and infectious it was simply impossible not to get involved.

For me, village living meant creaking open those painted window shutters each morning onto an authentic Mallorcan lifestyle. We had brilliant neighbours, affording a daily opportunity to chat about local news and glean all the gossip. Morning rituals usually included an early trip to the bakery, no more than a quick stroll down the hill. Of course, that would always mean taking a quick, compulsory morning coffee to break the journey!

Now, it may only be a cup of coffee to many, but in a village, this restorative brew has almost evolved into a religious order. Café culture in Spain has always been 'de rigueur', and nobody does it better than they did in our bustling village. Everyone seemed to find some time during their busy day to stop off at the local bar. Historically, cafés in Mallorca have always been an important social gathering point. Even a few small tables placed outside on a dusty roadside, somehow manages to create an instant atmosphere. It's a continental thing that definitely needs a Latin spirit to work. Our favourite bar was packed to the gills most mornings, as locals gathered before their day kicked-off. It was a frenetic, noisy hub, but that's what the heart of a village café culture is all about – meeting and greeting.

The local ladies perch at cramped tables like hens around a corn-feeder, clutching wicker baskets as they chatter with friends. The men roost apart, and remain long after the girls have left for home to get that all important 'sofrito' simmering, sitting for hours, watching the world go by. And no-one ever asks them to vacate the tables or buy a second drink; another village tradition born out of

local born elders! Our regular coffee morning rituals never failed to feed my Mallorcan spirit, and made me feel immersed, and very much part of the village set up. Sitting at a cosy table under the dappled shade of a tree became my summer office space where I would draft out articles and work on my latest book. Socialising was a welcome option, never a trial or chore.

It was easy to tell when morning advanced into lunchtime, without even looking at your watch or listening to the church bells. You simply knew that when the aroma of onions, garlic and tomatoes, wafting through the village, became irresistible, it was 'sofrito' time, and home was calling!

Like most villagers, we embraced the daily option of eating our main meal at lunchtime, opting for a traditional, lighter snack in the evenings, usually a popular P'amb Oli – the Mallorcan staple equivalent to an open sandwich, at its most basic, grated tomato on lightly toasted bread, drizzled with virgin olive oil.

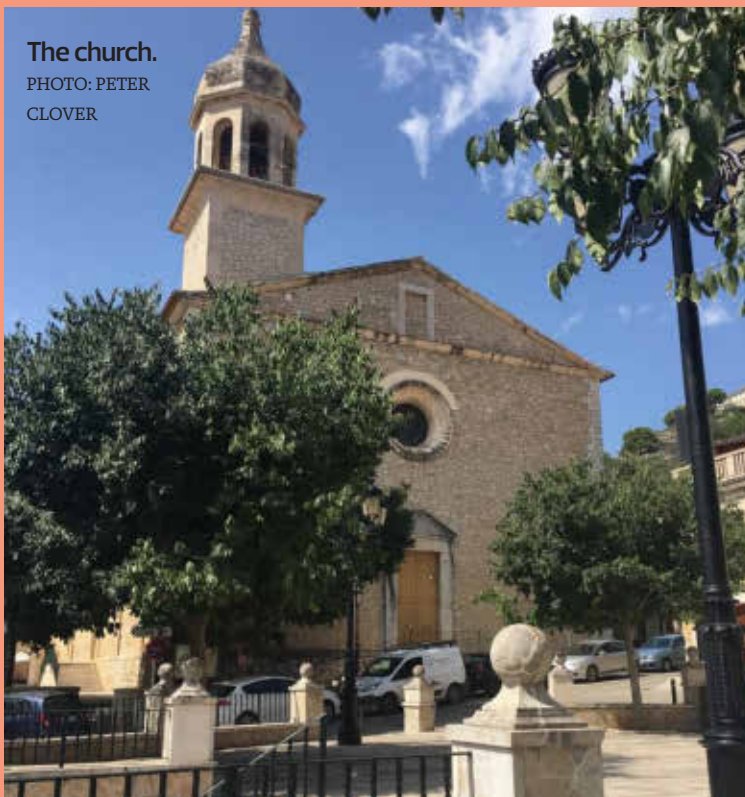
Living in a Mallorcan village, it's almost impossible not to get drawn into the local ways and addictive traditions. Being gregarious by nature, we integrated very quickly, learnt to cook local dishes and were gifted with gastronomic fayre by neighbours when celebrations called for the speciality of empanadas, cocarros, cocas, rubiols, cremadillos, crepsells, and other delectable pies and pastries that only the local housewives seem to be able to master.

Being invited to join in with all the village fiestas and street celebrations, torradas and barbeques was an absolute honour, which we would never have experienced had we chosen to live in a typical tourist environ. We truly embraced the heart of a Mallorcan community which beat in our chests and flowed through our veins. Even now, the smell of a frito cooking somewhere immediately takes me back to that wonderful essence of village life. The best!



The church.

PHOTO: PETER CLOVER



The weekly market takes place every Monday, from 8am to 1pm, in the Plaza de Dalt. PHOTO: TOMAS MONTES PALMER

Mancor de la Vall celebrates Mallorca's autumn mushroom season

● Every November, Mancor de la Vall celebrates the Fira de l'Esclata-sang i de la Muntanya, a popular autumn fair dedicated to one of Mallorca's most prized wild mushrooms. First held in 2003, the event celebrates the island's rural heritage, mountain landscape and seasonal gastronomy. The esclata-sang, known in English as the saffron milk cap, takes centre stage in traditional Mallorcan cuisine, with local bars and restaurants showcasing dishes featuring the distinctive reddish mushroom. Visitors can also browse stalls selling local produce, artisan goods and traditional crafts.



Beyond its gastronomic appeal, the fair offers a lively programme of cultural activities celebrating Mallorcan traditions. Previous editions have featured traditional dancing, giants and big-headed figures, live music, children's activities and the spectacular correfoc, in which fire-running performers fill the streets with fireworks. Combining food, folklore and community spirit, the fair provides an excellent opportunity to experience the authentic character of Mallorca's inland villages during the autumn season.





PHOTO: PHOENIX MEDIA MALLORCA / MDB FILES

long and healthy lives. One of the recurring themes is the importance of social connection, having a purpose and remaining part of a community as we grow older. I have no idea whether the residents of S'Arracó live any longer than anyone else, but watching that little group in the bar, I can't help thinking they're getting something right.

And Ca'n Guiem Nou isn't simply a gathering place for the older generation. Everyone goes there. Mallorcans, British, Germans, young families, older residents, people popping in for a quick coffee and others who appear to have nowhere particularly urgent to be. It's the sort of place where you can arrive on your own without ever really feeling alone.

And that sense of community extends well beyond the bar. For such a small village, S'Arracó has a remarkably enthusiastic social calendar. There's Sant Antoni, Carnival, the wonderfully peculiar Burial of the Sardine, the summer verbenas and the bunyols celebrations, which took place just last weekend.

There's always something happening, some excuse to get together, eat, drink, celebrate or dress up.

What I love about these celebrations is that they belong to the village. They're not spectacles created for visitors.

They're occasions when neighbours come together, children grow up participating in the same traditions as their

parents and grandparents, and people who might otherwise have little in common find themselves sharing a table or a conversation.

Of course, S'Arracó has changed during the years I've lived here. Mallorca has changed enormously, and no village is entirely insulated from the pressures of modern life, tourism and an increasingly international population. But I don't think preserving a village's character means refusing to let anything change, sometimes it simply means making room for avocado on toast without taking pa amb oli off the menu. What matters is preserving the things that are harder to put a price on: familiarity, kindness. The knowledge that someone will notice if you haven't been around for a while. The comfort of walking into a room and knowing you belong there.

I often think about Paquita buying that present for Gigi all those years ago. At the time, she probably thought very little of it. For her, perhaps it was simply what you did when someone in the village was having a baby. For me, it was one of the first signs that S'Arracó was going to be somewhere special. These days, Gigi is grown up, Guiem and Paquita are enjoying their version of retirement, and the bar serves avocado toast. But the coffee is still excellent, the familiar faces are still there, and every time I walk through the door, I feel at home. Which is why, when someone tells me they're leaving S'Arracó, I still can't quite understand it. Where on earth could be better?

by **VICKI MCLEOD**

In a small village in the southwest of Mallorca, an old-fashioned bar, a good cup of coffee and a strong sense of community make it very difficult to imagine living anywhere else.

I don't really understand people who choose to stop living in the village of S'Arracó. In fact, I find it rather insulting. Why on earth would anyone voluntarily abandon what I consider to be the loveliest village in Mallorca? Admittedly, I'm biased. I've lived here for more than twenty years, and somewhere along the way this little village tucked into the glorious Unesco World Heritage site Tramuntana mountains behind Andratx became much more than somewhere I was living. It became my home.

Fewer than a thousand people live in S'Arracó. It's a mixture of Mallorcan families, international residents, people who have been here for generations and relative newcomers. An estimated 30 per cent of residents are foreign nationals, but for me, the interesting thing about the village isn't where everyone comes from. It's what brings us together, and much of that happens at the local bar Ca'n Guiem Nou. There's the date, 1859, of when the bar was founded carved into the stone at the entrance to the bar. Inside, the traditional wooden furniture, tiled floors and familiar faces give the impression that life has been unfolding here at its own pace for a very long time.

The coffee, incidentally, is magnificent. Forget the overpriced flat whites served in London coffee shops. Give me a cafe con leche at Ca'n Guiem Nou any day of the week. But that's just the start of why this bar is so special to me: when I first arrived in S'Arracó, I was pregnant with my daughter, Gigi. I barely knew anyone, and Paquita, who owns and ran the bar with her husband Guiem, hardly knew me. Nevertheless, when Gigi was born, Paquita bought her a present of a pair of very cute dungarees. It was such a simple gesture, but I have never forgotten it. There was no par-

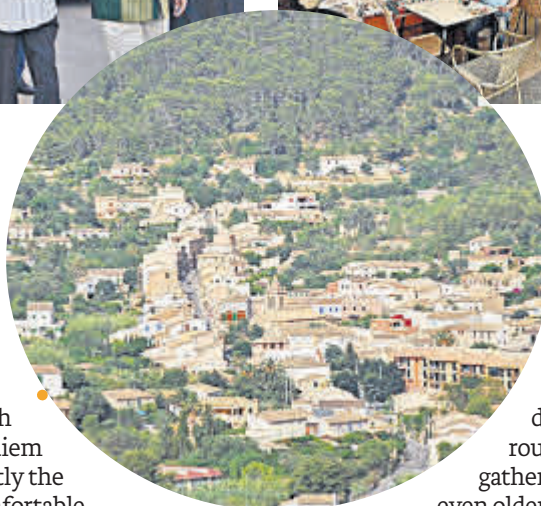
Where everybody knows your name:

Finding belonging in S'Arracó



ticular reason for her to do it, other than kindness. I was new to the village, and she made me feel welcome.

More than twenty years later, when I walk through the doors of Ca'n Guiem Nou, I still feel exactly the same way. Safe, comfortable and completely at home. Guiem and Paquita have now largely retired, with the next generation taking over the business. There have been a few innovations along the way. These days you can order avocado on toast alongside the traditional pa amb



oli, a small culinary concession to changing tastes. But Guiem and Paquita haven't gone anywhere. They're in the bar every day, usually surrounded by a little gathering of people even older than them-

selves. Watching them take care of their aunties, uncles... the elders of the village, is one of my favourite things. It reminds me of the conversations about Blue Zones, those places around the world where people are said to enjoy unusually





Capdepera Golf combines spectacular fairways with a welcoming clubhouse and restaurant, where visitors can enjoy Mediterranean cuisine, stunning countryside views and genuine Mallorcan hospitality in a relaxed, family-run setting.

Capdepera Golf: Family paradise where the greens speak for themselves

Escape the crowds and enjoy affordable luxury, breathtaking scenery and a warm welcome at one of Mallorca's most charming golf clubs.

Nestled in the green mountains of the Muntanyes de Llevant on the East Coast of Mallorca lies Capdepera Golf Club, a club where friendliness and an atmosphere of relaxing in beautiful nature are the goal. A Mallorcan affordable luxury golf experience in original nature, far away from the stress and hustle and bustle of city life.

A family run golf course that prides itself on making guests feel like they have the gift of time in original Mallorca. No large urbanisation, no stress. Just the luxury of being in nature, looked after by people who care and want to make your day a day to remember.

Manager Sara-Virginia (Savi) Adams is the only female to run a golf course in Mallorca and together with her hand-selected staff has continually increased

the quality of the course each year, culminating in a 500.000€ investment into new tees this summer. The tees have been covered with a new type of Bermuda grass delivered from the mainland that is resistant to salt and other particles found in the reused water all courses on the island must use. All works are now completed and the golfers are enjoying the wonderful quality.

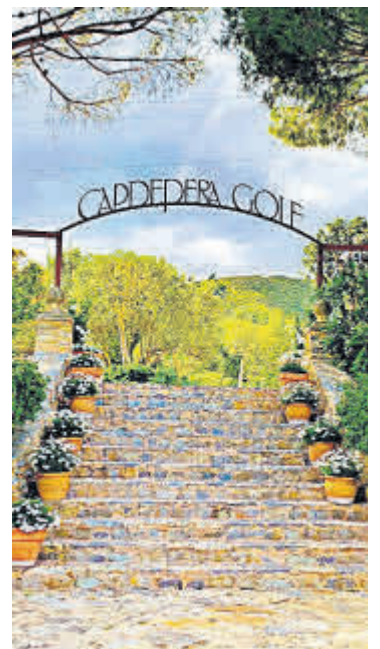
The female touch gives Capdepera Golf a bit of a warmer, less commercial

Manager Sara-Virginia (Savi) Adams is the only female to run a golf course in Mallorca.



feel overall. The golf shop and restaurant are as much a highlight as the golf course and staff is selected for their friendliness and multi-lingual ability to communicate with the guests. Savi is German, her husband is English with Irish heritage and their children grow up speaking Spanish, German and English. The family feels as at home in Mallorca as they do in Germany or England and this shows in their understanding of their guests. The staff speaks languages the guests feel welcomed by and at home with, giving guests an original luxury Mallorca experience while feeling relaxed and familiar.

The restaurant and beautiful terrace are a highlight, with golfers and non-golfers welcome. The food is mostly Mediterranean inspired, and you can enjoy Spanish Tapas or Paella. But the best sellers are the famous Club Sandwich, excellent Burger and Caesar Salad and homemade cakes. Capdepera has something for everyone who wants a lovely day away from stress.



Capdepera Golf Club

Carretera de Artà - Capdepera km 3,5 07570

Artà - Mallorca

+34 971 81 85 00

info@golfcapdepera.com

@capdeperagolf



Sustainable
Balearic Islands

Financed by the Tax
Sustainable Tourism

A WINTER *IN MALLORCA*

Where the pace slows, the light softens,
and traditions **bring people together.**



Govern de les
Illes Balears



Consell de
Mallorca



Fundació Turisme
Responsable
de Mallorca