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Spain

The best beaches in the Balearics

# Clear waters and calm coves

These Spanish islands may draw crowds, but visitors can still kick off their sandals in idyllic seaside settings, says **Annie Bennett**

Majorca

DEIÀ

**Why go?** Even though it is tiny and shingly, this cove on the steep north-west coast has fantastically clear water and magical light. Rocky cliffs curve around the bay, making it feel like a secret hidden paradise.

Who goes?

Locals, people who see the advantage of pebbles over sand, and a surprising number of well-known faces. Deià is one of the chicest places in Majorca. British poet and novelist Robert Graves used to come down for a dip every day when he lived in the village.

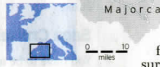
**What is there to do?** Swimming and snorkelling in the sapphire sea – and trying to see if there's anyone famous on that yacht moored by the jetty.

A path leads around to the Sa Pedrissa watchtower if you can muster the enthusiasm to shift yourself from the beach or the bar.

Bars and bites

There are a couple of lively restaurants right on the beach, Cas Patro and Can Lluç, that are perfect for fish, salad and lots of the surprisingly good Majorcan wine – or for just drinking cold beers all day. It's quite a happening scene down there, at any time of day.

**Getting there** Drive through Deià



Pregonda beach, Menorca, above left; a bar in Muro, Majorca, above, right

towards Sóller. Just outside the village, look out for a turning to the left and drive carefully down the winding lane. You have to walk the last 200 metres.  
**☎ Tourist information** (00 34 971 173990; [www.illesbalears.es](http://www.illesbalears.es); [www.infomallorca.net](http://www.infomallorca.net))

MURO

**Why go?** On the north coast of the island near the resort of Alcudia, Muro is a never-ending stretch of fine, golden sand. Although flanked in parts by dunes and pine and juniper trees, there are a lot of hotels, too. This is a blue flag

beach with access for people with disabilities and lots of facilities.

**Who goes?** Local families and tourists of all nationalities.

**What is there to do?** You can wade out quite a long way in the clear water



*In Deià there are a couple of lively restaurants right on the beach perfect for fish, salad and lots of Majorcan wine – or for just drinking cold beers all day*

trees and holm oaks, it is often warm enough to sunbathe here, even in winter.

**Who goes?** Far too many people unfortunately, in summer at least. Go in spring or autumn to get the full impact of its beauty without the crowds.

**What is there to do?** Float in the sea, or walk around the path to the smaller Macarelleta cove, which is also gorgeous and popular with nudists.

**Bars and bites** The Susi restaurant (00 34 971 359467) right on the beach does a great selection of *raciones* (larger tapas portions) to share. Grab a table early or you'll stand no chance.

**Getting there** It is on the south-west coast, 10 miles from Ciutadella. Take the road to Sant Joan de Missa, then follow signs to Macarella. It takes about 20 minutes by car, or an hour by bike. There is a free car park 15 minutes' walk from the beach and a pay car park five minutes' walk away, though you'll be lucky to get in there.

● **Tourist information** (00 34 971 382693; [www.illesbalears.es](http://www.illesbalears.es); [www.platgesdebalears.com](http://www.platgesdebalears.com))

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» [telegraph.co.uk/bestbeaches](http://telegraph.co.uk/bestbeaches)

### PREGONDA

**Why go?** Pregonda is a long beach with reddish-gold sand and pink rocks – creating the effect of a lunar landscape – and flanked by dunes and green fields.

On the quieter north coast of Menorca, there are tiny islands just offshore that protect the bay from the northerly winds, so the sea is usually millpond-still and crystalline.

**Who goes?** People who are prepared to hike for half an hour along a track with no protection from the blazing sun – you know the type. But it's worth it when you get there.

**What is there to do?** This part of the coast is a marine reserve and is home to a colony of rare Audouin seagulls. The calm conditions make this a great beach for snorkelling and diving. Take a mask at least.



### Bars and bites

Take a picnic and plenty of water with you as there

are no facilities on Pregonda, although there is a *chiringuito* (seaside snack bar) on the nearby Binimel-la beach, serving snacks and meals. Many beaches on Menorca don't have litter bins, both for aesthetic purposes and to encourage people to take their waste away, so make sure you take any rubbish with you.

**Getting there** Pregonda is six miles from the town of Es Mercadal. Follow signs north towards Cavalleria, then turn off west to Binimel-la beach, where you will have to leave the car and proceed on foot.

● **Tourist information** (00 34 971 158430; [www.e-menorca.org](http://www.e-menorca.org); [www.visitmenorca.com](http://www.visitmenorca.com))

before getting out of your depth, so this is a great option if you have small children. You can hire a pedalo or take a boat trip. It's often a bit breezy, so good for kiting too. If you're after some peace, paths lead to the Albufera nature reserve, the island's largest wetland area.

**Bars and bites** There is no shortage of bars and restaurants, whether you want paella, tortilla, *patatas bravas* or pizza. If you walk along far enough, there are quieter parts of the beach with picnic areas in the shade of the trees by the dunes.

**Getting there** From Alcudia, drive along the bay, past the S'Albufera Natural Park. There are lots of free places to park. You can also get there by bus.

● **Tourist information** (00 34 971 891013; [www.platgesdebalears.com](http://www.platgesdebalears.com); [www.ajmuro.net](http://www.ajmuro.net))

## Menorca

### MACARELLA

**Why go?** Macarella is an idyllic cove with fine, white sand where the sea is a calm pool of turquoise water. Sheltered by hills covered in pine