



MINI GUIDE July 2010



Mallorca, Spain

Fold 2

WHY GO?

At 60 miles across, there is more to the largest of the Balearic Islands than beach towels – from the Serra de Tramuntana mountain range in the northwest to the attractive old quarter of the capital Palma de Mallorca. And yes, there are unspoiled beaches to discover too.

WHEN TO GO

The sea is at its most inviting in the high season (July to mid-September), and large coastal resorts mostly shut down from November to March. Country hotels often stay open however, and Mallorca's varied landscape means there's plenty to do (and lower prices) outside the high season.

HOW TO GO

Almost every UK airport has direct flights (2½ hours from London) to Palma de Mallorca, although some only run in summer. Flights start at around £45 return with airlines such as easyJet, Ryanair, Thomson Airways, Thomas Cook and Jet2.com.



LEFT View of Platja de Tramuntana.
RIGHT Load up on lobster

See

BEST FOR ARCHITECTURE 1

Old Palma is a warren of twisting lanes and sunny squares filled with dozens of historic courtyard houses. At its centre, the Gothic cathedral is one of Europe's largest, and the Palau de l'Almudaina opposite is a royal palace built in partly Moorish style (palmademallorca.es).



Explore the austere stone-walled rooms of the Palau de l'Almudaina

BEST FOR BEACHES 2

A narrow road through pine woods east of El Toro leads to Cala Portals Vells, one of three balmy inlets. Turquoise waters lap the wide, sandy beach dotted with straw umbrellas, and to the south a walking trail leads to caves in the rock walls.

cuevaseldranch.com; Carretera de les Coves; tours daily; £9.90).

BEST FOR VIEWS 4

The ruined fortress of Castell d'Alaró sits atop the mighty bluff of Puig d'Alaró (821m), commanding the island's interior. It's a two-hour hike from the village of Alaró, or 15 minutes from the car park.

BEST FOR CAVES 3

A 15-minute walk from the centre of Porto Cristo, the Coves del Drac (Dragon's Caves) are an otherworldly forest of stalactites and stalagmites. The hour-long tour descends through theatrically lit chambers to a subterranean lake. Arrive early to beat long summer queues (00 34 971 820753;

BEST FOR ATMOSPHERE 5

The village of Deià, in the shadow of the Tramuntana mountain range, has a cluster of stone buildings on a conical hill overlooking the sea. The hillside around are terraced with citrus, almond and olive trees (deia.info).

Eat & drink

Inside a typical Mallorcan pati (courtyard house) in Palma is cocktail bar **Abaco 6**, which is lit by candles and crammed with elaborate floral arrangements, cascading towers of fruit and bizarre artworks (00 34 971 714 939; bar-abaco.com; Carrer de Sant Joan 1, Palma; 8pm-late).

The enduringly popular **La Caracola 7** in the fishing port of Portopetro has been pleasing diners with stuffed squid, soups and tumbet (layered sautéed vegetables topped with tomato sauce) for 20 years (00 34 971 657 013; Avinguda del Port 40, Portopetro; mains from £5).

What better place to get stuck into fish than **Casa Eduardo 8** behind Palma's fish market? This place has been going since the 1940s, and signature dishes include a lobster paella, £21 (00 34 971 721 182; Travessia Pesquera, Palma; lunch and dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun, sometimes closes in winter; meals from £30).



Full of Mediterranean flavours, tumbet is a big hit at La Caracola

Set in a former private house in Pollença, **Restaurante Clivia's 9** speciality is llobarro de palangre al vi blanc – sea bass steamed in white wine (00 34 971 533 635; Avinguda Pollentia, Pollença; closed Wed, mid-Nov to mid-Dec and Feb; meals from £39).

Benet Vicens is one of the island's foremost chefs. **Béns d'Avall 10** has a romantic terrace overlooking the sea and its tasting menu (£58) has dishes such as prawn carpaccio in a champagne marinade (00 34 971 632 381; benetvicens.com; Urbanització Costa Deià; closed Mon).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

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Getting around

📺 See 🍴 Eat & drink 🛏 Sleep

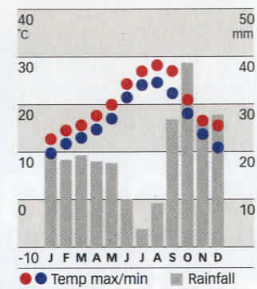


Essentials

FIND YOUR WAY

For bus route and timetable information contact Transport de les Illes Balears (00 34 971 177 777; tib.caib.es, in Spanish). Rental cars allow more freedom to explore – prices start at about £21 a day (try hasso-rentacar.com), with companies based in Palma.

CLIMATE



TYPICAL COSTS

- Ensaimada pastry £1
- Mid-range meal from £21
- Mid-range hotel from £55
- High-end hotel from £145

Sleep

Hidden in what could almost be described as jungle above the village of Deià, **Pensión Miramar 11** is a 19th-century stone house with sea views. The dining room is decorated with the works of painters who have stayed in its nine rooms over the years, and the gardens are a shady retreat (00 34 971 639 084; pensionmiramar.com; Carrer de Can Oliver, Deià; from £55).

Close to Cap des Pinar, a side road winds up to a magnificent viewpoint and an early 15th-century hermitage. **Ermita de la Victòria 12** has 12 rooms with white walls, cream linen and timber window shutters and beams (00 34 971 549 912; lavictoriahotel.com; Carretera Cap des Pinar; from £71).

The 32-room boutique **Misión de San Miguel 13** is a real find in Palma. Located on a side street off Carrer dels Oms, the spacious rooms are quiet, there's a relaxing patio area and the restaurant serves a fabulous breakfast (00 34 971 214 848; hotelmisiondesanmiguel.com; Carrer de Can Maçanet 1; from £99).



Relax at secluded Es Castell, in the foothills of Mallorca's mountains

The eight rooms of **Hotel Sant Salvador 14** echo the dignified character of this restored manor house. Each room is different – some go for canopied beds and rich fabrics, others a more contemporary look (00 34 971 829 555; santsalvador.com; Carrer del Castellet 7, Artà; from £96).

Es Castell 15, in the shadow of the mountains, is a 14th-century farm estate that encompasses stone houses and 300 hectares dominated by olive trees. Rooms have a rustic feel, with terracotta floors and timber furniture, and the restaurant serves the estate's produce (00 34 971 875 154; fincaescastell.com; Carrer de Binibona, Caimari; from £125).

Your recommendations

16 HEAVENLY PEACE We have stayed at **Lluc Monastery** on several occasions, arriving by bus from Palma early to book a room, and have always managed. The atmosphere is very calming when all the day trips have departed, and the countryside around lends itself to many easy walks. The rooms are basic but have private facilities and some are self-catering. A very pleasant way to spend a couple of nights away from the hustle and bustle of the seaside resorts (00 34 971 871 525; lluc.net; Monestir de Lluc). *Sinclair Ashman*

17 COASTAL DRIVE If you hire a car, drive into the **Serra de Tramuntana**, a very scenic mountain area in the western part of Mallorca, full of unspoilt villages away from the tourist traps. Stop at the pretty village of Estellencs for a wander along its narrow old streets. Take a photo at the Mirador de ses Ànimes. Continue to Valldemossa, nestled in a picturesque valley. Chopin spent some time in the

monastery here. You can visit the cell where he lived, see his piano and some manuscripts, and enjoy a short recital.

Jill Hanlon

18 VINTAGE TRAIN TRIP Lonely Planet forum users (lonelyplanet.com) rate the old timber-panelled train from Palma to **Sóller**. The line runs through ever-changing countryside, and ends just a tram ride away from the sea (trendesoller.com; 1½ hours; £9 single).

FIND OUT MORE

Lonely Planet's *Mallorca* (£10.99) is a comprehensive guide to the island, covering the six main regions, transport information and background. For more information, check out infomallorca.net, abc-mallorca.com and mallorca.com. First World War poet Robert Graves lived in Deià and wrote a book on his adopted homeland, *Majorca Observed*.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ALAMY, GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK

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