

YOUR FULL FIVE-DAY WEATHER FORECAST: SEE INSIDE

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Put up or shut up:
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Bars and
restaurants to
open their
interiors from
next Monday:
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WAITING FOR THE JAB



● Mass vaccination gets underway across Majorca: See Page 4 Inside Today.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Palma.—The race to roll out vaccination passports is spurring competition among travel companies and tourist destinations for the large number of Britons set to receive COVID-19 shots before the summer.

Thanks to its swift vaccine deployment here, Britain is the only major European country likely to inoculate a large share of working-age adults by the peak season. They may become the first big regional test of digital health credentials in development.

Airlines such as easyJet saw outbound

bookings from Britain surge last week as the government raised the prospect of a return to quarantine-free summer travel, and the European Union agreed to develop vaccine passports under pressure from tourism-dependent southern countries. But cooped-up consumers' getaway plans face reality checks – from unpredictable virus variants to lingering EU divisions over vaccine passports, with France leading resistance from several states over political and discrimination concerns.

Britain's tentative move towards restor-

ing travel “puts pressure on other countries to do the same, which is good for us”, said Grigoris Tasios of the Greek Hoteliers' Federation. Greece has eased restrictions for vaccinated Israelis and is discussing a similar arrangement with the UK.

Tourism from Germany, another big travel market lagging the UK on vaccinations, hinges on Berlin dropping quarantines for tested passengers, Lufthansa Chief Executive Carsten Spohr said this week.

In the aftermath of Britain's departure from the EU, its reputedly unruly tour-

ists are at the centre of a battered travel industry's summer hopes.

Spain, typically Britons' number-one destination by far, has pushed hard for EU vaccination certificates. The island of Majorca's mostly shuttered hotels anxiously await details, their spokeswoman Maria Duran said.

“We're paying very close attention to the UK, the first country to design and share a roadmap for restoring mobility,” she said. Spain saw UK visitor numbers plunge to 3.1 million last year from more than 18 million in 2019.